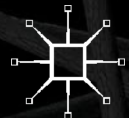
CULTURAL SOCIOLOGY

Angry Abolitionists and the Rhetoric of Slavery

Moral Emotions in Social Movements

Benjamin Lamb-Books



Cultural Sociology

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Moral Emotions in Social Movements

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To the healers in society:
dedicated doctors,
discerning counselors,
inspiring ministers,
eloquent entertainers,
and persistent protesters…

Series Editor's Foreword

After having been contained within the margins of small religious communities like the Quakers, abolitionism entered the wider American political discourse in the 1830s and, as a social movement, became a powerful force in putting an end to slavery in the USA. Slavery was formally abolished in 1863 in the midst of the Civil War. Anger, violence, and bloodshed played not a small role in this struggle; the emancipation of slaves required military force. The 'anger' of the Abolitionists studied by Benjamin Lamb-Books was not expressed through violence, but through rhetorical force. His concern is with the micro-sociological processes that turn moral emotion into political action. This calls for focus on the performance of opposition, with how social movements move from rhetoric to action, to doing things with words and phrases. In a theoretically sophisticated analysis, Lamb-Books richly details the rhetorical strategies employed by American abolitionists, black and white.

Angry Abolitionists and the Rhetoric of Slavery deepens existing historical accounts of American abolitionism at the same time as it enhances the growing literature on the role of emotions in political and cultural mobilization.

Acknowledgments

The publication of this book feels like a small miracle. Moral emotions overwhelm me now after benefiting from the extravagant contributions that others have made. I thank Danielle Lamb-Books first and foremost for being there, calmly and happily, in the midst of it all and for being my main source of emotional energy. I am not sure what I did in a past life to earn the friendship of Brian Hamilton, but I do know I would be socially and intellectually adrift without him. I also want to pay tribute to the constant, many-times multimodal, support from members of both Lamb and Books families.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction: Making It Stick

The constellation of causes of the American civil war, by now a story well told, has been mapped out to the satisfaction of prior specialists. The primary driver of the nation's polarization and radicalization was *racial slavery* as mediated by fundamental disagreements over its legitimacy and humanity, its profitability and perpetuity. Though historians will continue to write nuanced narratives of the abolition of US slavery and its passage through destructions of war, a range of acceptable macrostructural interpretations has been established. Extensively charted likewise are the antislavery ideas behind those disagreements, their historical origins and cultural *logos*. Seeds of antislavery thought have been traced with fine precision through millennia-deep philosophical and religious traditions.

Questions remain though concerning antislavery as process rather than outcome, as *pathos* rather than *logos*. How did the antislavery impulse spread and stir the imagination of antebellum folk? How did the grassroots movement for abolition maintain its crescive momentum? How did protest rhetoric and its rituals enflame both missionary proponents and reactionary opponents? It appears that an important strip of the story of American slavery's abolition has yet to be told.

One remaining piece of the puzzle then is *microsociological* in nature, having to do with less-understood temporal and collective processes, the intriguing qualities of momentum that social movements develop. For the microsociological project, finding answers to the questions listed

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before you would be the very same as providing an account of what made abolitionist discourse stick in the USA, of how antislavery meanings successfully acquired their affective attachments and default status. The term 'microsociology' contains a double reference to both the interactional level of society and to a method of social–scientific inquiry based upon close observations of the social encounters between people. It is an analytical approach to social life that hinges our attention to the face-to-face level of interaction, both for the inherent interest of learning about social psychology and also to contribute to our explanation of social happenings on a larger scale. Microsociologists are in the business of studying situational encounters and socioemotional dynamics, the flows and patterns of communicative interactions as they unfold in time (Collins 1987, 2004; Ermakoff 2008; Jasper 1997; Summers Effler 2010).[1]

With the abolition of slavery, the American abolitionists achieved a great victory. It was certainly celebrated as such, stark though the tolls of war. The present work, instead of another examination of the origins or outcomes of the antislavery movement, directs our attention to a different part of the story, another crucial piece of the *long arc of the moral universe in which history bends toward justice*.[2] I am referring to the day-to-day rhythms and ritual successes of abolitionism *en route* to emancipation. Just as important to the spread of antislavery thoughts and preferences—the structure of preferences and attitudes that constitutes a 'social movement' (McCarthy and Zald 1977)—is the process of maintaining movement momentum, sustaining and accelerating a collective moral campaign as well as achieving member commitment and persistence in protest (Summers Effler 2010). A microsociological view of the temporal processes of social movements directs our inquiry toward the affective dynamics of the contentious gatherings of which a social movement is composed (Eyerman 2005). What sort of communicative interaction is protest rhetoric? What skills of interpersonal persuasion did the abolitionists possess? What ingredients in abolitionism's repertoires of contention were most effective? Why did they sometimes choose to provoke rather than persuade? How was such a highly unpopular movement so successful in the long run?[3]

The idea that antislavery abolitionism was a hugely successful social movement should not come as a surprise. If it does so, it is because in the last century of historical writing about American abolition either the abolitionists were blamed for causing a needless civil war or they were dismissed as a mostly useless crew of utopian absolutists, holding no sway over the

real power politics of slavery. Until recently, the abolitionist movement was in the main considered a failure given the devolution of deliberation into a war that no one initially counted on as being necessary for emancipation.

The tide has fully turned in contemporary abolitionism studies. A less biased appraisal of the social movement now notes its immense national impact through political realignments and civil disobedience—the 'disruptive power' that Frances Fox Piven (2006) identifies in her brief but insightful analysis of the antebellum activists. Immediate abolition was not an impossibly ignorant demand. It merely meant that the inevitably gradual process of emancipation should be begun immediately by banning slavery in federally owned lands, the District of Columbia and the territories, and by not permitting any more slave states into the Union. Historians today recognize that early abolitionist thought of the 1830s and the later Republican politics of slavery were continuous, not discontinuous, phenomena (for a recent summary, see Oakes 2014). The illegal defiant actions of black and white northerners in hosting fugitive 'property'—'stealing' under federal law southerners claimed—and in resisting slave bounty hunters—'kidnappers' northerners replied—utterly infuriated southern politicians, much as federal law enforcement of the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law outraged common northerners. The fugitive slave issue and the question of the criminality of harboring fugitive property tore the republic apart like no other issue (see Davis 2014 for a recent overview).

That the abolition of slavery was incredibly violent in the USA is well known. Mass emancipation through military force, almost all would agree, ranks among the most significant transformative events of US history. Yet, there is a dearth of investigation into the specific microsociological processes cumulatively leading up to this monumental event. The conflict over slavery did not appear overnight. It grew, widened, and deepened by public rhetoric in town halls and on the streets, through mass-communication technologies and civil-society organizations. Strictly speaking, there was no conflict over slavery apart from the rhetoric of slavery.

By the phrase *rhetoric of slavery,* I mean to highlight the actual communicative processes of slavery's problematization and what made antislavery discourse endure, or at least more sticky in American culture than proslavery ideology. Most examples of the rhetoric of slavery in this study are of formal abolitionist public address, instances of what I shall call *oratorical rhetoric* as a subspecies of rhetoric in general. Oratorical rhetoric in this book includes the events and actions surrounding public speaking at the

sites of protest. But I have also come to identify and include even partly sub-linguistic human emotions and actions as part of the broader *anthropological rhetoric* of slavery for contributing to slavery's delegitimization.[4]

Microsociologically speaking, abolitionism was the process of generating and disseminating a compelling rhetoric of slavery to discredit the institution. Abolitionism as microdynamic process was the *anti*-rhetoric of slavery, which is to say, creative public rhetorics against slavery are what made abolitionism 'move.' In the next chapter, I will argue that all social movements *are rhetorics* in the deeper anthropological sense of seeking to remake social reality through communicative action according to their own imaginaries. Social movement persistence and expansion involves the situational exercise of multiple modes of communication, in addition to the activities of framing and bargaining that previous social movements' scholars have privileged. The day-to-day rhythms and successes of abolitionism occurred on the ground and in the streets through rhetorical performances aiming to persuade and provoke. Extension of the antislavery reference group, on one side, and intensification of emotional bonds among conscience constituents, on the other, were practical accomplishments temporally and emotionally achieved through the unfolding rhetoric of slavery.

A common distinction is made in rhetorical criticism, following Aristotle, between the three 'means of persuasion' internal to a speech: logos, ethos, and pathos. Previous historical and sociological accounts of abolition have primarily focused on the *logos* of antislavery thought and political debate over slavery. They prioritize the propositional argumentation about slavery and its legal justifications. These accounts emphasize the cultural, religious sources of antislavery thought and the evolution of policy proposals for abolition. But logos by itself does not take us very far in understanding what made antislavery discourse stick *in situ*.

Logocentric histories fall short when explaining the actual processes of social change, how movements publicly appeal to spectators, expand their conscience constituencies, and intensify their emotional hold over participants. As most social psychologists will tell you, logos by itself usually fails to persuade. Persuasive effects, if attained by a rational argument, a big *if*, are more likely due to what psychologists refer to as priming associations, halo effects, or affect balance. The relevant microdynamic processes are social, emotional, and performative. Reason by itself does not inspire, energize, and convert people. Emotion does that much better (Appiah 2006 has a beautiful exposition of these points). As a growing number

of sociologists have found, emotion is fundamental to the social movement processes of social change (for a recent overview, see Jasper 2014; also Flam and King 2005). The better question, then, is how are specific *moral emotions* that are closely associated with collective problem solving and struggle aroused? And how is the emotional reframing of reality (Flam 2005b), not unlike a conversion experience, accomplished through movement culture and rhetoric?

Now we have fully entered the affective terrain of ethos and pathos, the two means of persuasion that are more useful for understanding the political and performative potency of protest rhetoric. *Ethos* refers to impressions of virtue or vice made by a speaker. *Pathos* to how rhetorical appeals stir strong emotional experiences in audiences. The Roman orator Cicero tended to associate ethos with positive affects in the presentation of self, namely, appearances of honesty and trustworthiness. Pathos he associated more with provocation, the incitement of violent negative emotions such as shame, anger, or hatred. Incorporating ethos and pathos into the sociological lexicon of social movement studies comes not without a certain bending of their classical usage though. I shall use them as dramaturgical tools for extracting the social status implicatures of protest rhetoric (loosely corresponding to ethos) and the emotional effects of these status implicatures (loosely corresponding to pathos). In a microsociological analysis of records of protest rhetoric, ethos–pathos configurations of status implicatures are what makes discourse sticky and, as was often the case, *get stuck* bitterly and unpleasantly in unsympathetic spectators who found them hard to swallow. Positive and negative types of affect, both 'ethos' and 'pathos' as I develop the terms, were crucial to the power and persistence of abolitionist protest rhetoric.[5]

In a nutshell, the US antislavery movement was successfully sustained from the ground up through rhetorical performances of ethos and pathos. Ethos and pathos are species of affect experienceable by protest audiences whether composed of like-minded constituents, casual onlookers, or detractors averse to the reform cause. The ratio-composition of these three classes of auditors matters greatly for how protest rhetoric is delivered, adjusted, and received. The social movement audience (the *reception field* as theorized in Chap. 7) exerts a strong influence over what emotional configuration of ethos–pathos is delivered by protest leaders. By reexamining vivid and moving case studies of abolitionist orators and their audiences, we will see how the emotionally intense, performative powers

of protest rhetoric emerge relationally from within the transpersonal social exchanges occurring at contentious gatherings.

This relates to a larger topic in sociology of *charisma* and its peculiar mobilizatory, inherently social nature. Charisma is a social movement phenomenon par excellence: social movements make charisma, and charisma makes social movements (Collins 2001). While the microdynamics of charisma fell out of favor for a while in social movement studies during its long detour through various forms of macrostructural theory, they have finally reentered the spotlight. Yet, the examination of how charisma works social-psychologically, and moral-emotionally, has hardly begun. Filling in this picture is one of the major aims of the present study. Sociologists so far have correctly come to view charisma not as an individual property but as a highly unequal privilege. But it is also an outcome of the movement's strategic adaptability to the 'rhetorical situation' (Bitzer 1968; Jasper 2006, 2010). Part of the problem has been the enduring theoretical influence of Weberian studies, in which charisma is a type of legitimate domination not having much to do with the dramaturgical qualities of contentious performances. Hence I must suggest that Weber's ideal types have become a tired terministic screen in the analysis of charisma in social movements. They have in practice taken our focus away from the affective mechanics of rhetorical performances, for instance, the emotional pathways and effects of status implicatures. We will see that one of the special performative properties of charismatic protest rhetoric comes from dramaturgical attunement to and adjustments of *status* dynamics present in movement audiences. This brings me to one more minor point before we begin: since I shall discuss theories of status in more depth in Chap. 2, it must suffice for now to note that 'status' here refers to quite general feelings of respect or disrespect between people, according or withholding deference in the interactionist sense, not to be confused with 'status groups' as theorized by Max Weber and Randall Collins (see Collins 2000; cf. Sauder 2005).[6]

The Multimodal Style of History

In the nineteenth-century USA, racial slavery was a controversial 'social problem.' Recent sociologists who study social problems have usefully drawn upon rhetorical theory to examine the role of communication and framing in motivating collective action. The social-constructivist lens they tend to share does not deny the structural reality of things like inequality and deprivation. It does focus attention on how these things are perceived

through language, prototypes, and attitudes that only acquire cultural resonance in certain social contexts. For example, even the problematization of slavery, the now so pejorative 'property in man' was a gradual and arduous rhetorical labor of a vast number of people. Surprising though it may be, if American slavery was not problematized over time through frames that struck a chord in its historical context, it would still be around today, and necessarily so. Intriguingly, the chords that struck the imaginations of antebellum folk are not the ones that tend to ring in our ears today in association with modern-day slavery. Abolitionist frames varyingly and metaphorically equated slavery with sin, tyranny, and cruelty—the three dually cognitive–affective *pathos-oriented problematizations* I analyze in detail in Chap. 4. About this, social problems constructivists are right: it is hard to imagine what the antebellum 'conflict over slavery' looked like apart from these culturally specific words and ideas that made up the rhetoric of slavery.

Several difficulties begin to arise though when approaching the abolitionist view of slavery in this light as a constructed social problem. In a strict constructivist interpretation, all dynamism is lost: discourse or frame analysis by itself fails to explain the abolitionist conversion experience, deepening or weakening levels of commitment, decreasing or heightening intensity in the slavery debate. Dissecting frames and symbols alone does not take us very far in understanding those affective processes of intension and extension in abolitionism. Why not? For one, the deep structures and implicit rules of discourse are notoriously slow to change and resilient to institutional changes. While relatively autonomous, discursive transformation often 'lags behind,' or possesses incongruous dynamic relations with, changes in other social domains.

Additionally, a major limitation is encountered when relying solely upon discursive structure to account for the crescive dynamics and pathways of abolitionism, a social movement, we should note, that took off at the exact time as the discourse of slavery was becoming more static and essentialist. For instance, according to historian James Oakes, 'For a quarter of a century, from the late 1830s until Congress finally abolished slavery in Washington, D.C., in 1862, the terms of the debate never really changed…At stake was the legitimacy of slavery itself, the right versus the wrong of "property in man"' (2014:68). This would suggest that the abolitionist social *movement* cannot be understood fully within the parameters of the cultural turn in historical sociology (among academic sociologists, the latter trend is also known as the 'third wave of historical sociology,' see Stamatov 2011). Instead, the primary historical agency of abolitionism

as a temporal process can be better located in the microdynamics of the rhetoric of slavery, in the continuing active operation of its affective mechanisms while the discursive binaries at stake were relatively static. It is creative rhetoric and communicative interactions that move movements and trigger transformative events, not culture considered abstractly.[7]

Discourse analysis by itself is *logo*centric. It contains no account of the actual emotional pathways of persuasion and provocation that energize the extrainstitutional collective action of social movements. And if any social practice paradigmatically exceeds language by traversing multiple modalities of communicative interaction, it is emotion. This is especially relevant to understanding the variable stickiness of antislavery thought having as it did a millennia-deep pedigree in Christian and republican traditions. The historical life of the relevant frames long preceded the effective problematization of slavery. Not much was novel in the ideas of immediatist abolitionism in the mid-1830s except perhaps the emotions, their speakers, and their disruptive effects. But in the main these are rhetorical differences in ethos and pathos, *not logos*.[8]

Something fishy occurs then when certain symbolic patterns are analytically consolidated into the label of 'frame' without any reference to the affective dimension. Surely these symbolic patterns are characterized by more than their resemblance to the pregiven beliefs and attitudes of audiences. Most of the cultural content we label 'frames' are in fact new ways of expressing unoriginal ideas so as to give them extra *umph* in their public delivery (as psychologist Sylvan Tomkins would say). Every frame is a set of ideas packaged so as to increase their affective appeal. Frames are like a collective form of trance work operating through associations and suggestions, experimenting with people's affective attachments. Their ability to hold audiences captive does not come purely from within the semantic content of a frame. Much of the performative power, I would venture, instead derive from the social relationship in which a frame is proposed, the socioemotional attachments reinforced or torn asunder, and the emotionally loaded status implicatures sown into the package. Such emotional microprocesses increase the power capabilities of a social movement, but in protest rhetoric this is a civil-society sort of power produced not by force but by status claimsmaking.

For these reasons, conventional sociological constructivism of the *mono-modal* type fails to explain the temporal dynamics of immediatist abolitionism. Many of the core antislavery movement 'frames' were not original to it, yet their scalar emotional intensity was undergoing change

of a different kind in the 1830s through 1850s. Novel performances of ethos and pathos were scaling higher plateaus altogether, for example, in dignified argumentative public addresses by black abolitionists, or in the subversive appearance of women orators before 'mixed' audiences, or in the provocative eloquence of abuse which caustically violated gentry norms of deference. The affective dimension of these new forms of protest rhetoric mattered greatly for the expanding reach of the antislavery movement. Historians skeptical toward abolitionism's successes fail to appreciate these shifts in emotional tone and style, a short-sight not unrelated to the microsociological point that the processes of social change cannot be observed by looking at culture nor social structure alone (Summers Effler 2002, 2005; Turner 2007).

For this project I define affect as a type of communicative action uniquely based on psychophysiological arousals of the body that engender a subjective state of *qualia* or tone.[9] Affect is also the umbrella term for feelings of all kinds, moods, short-term emotions, and longer-lasting emotions as well (cf. Jasper 1998). This definition situates affect in the same general class as language with respect to their common ability to become meaningful modes of communication (though both seem to have potentially useless, playful properties as well). Affective experiences are not necessarily linguistic though. Babies can cry. Adults can be depressed without knowing it. While not linguistic in itself, affective experiences are 'semiotic'—they make meanings by *marking* the body. A blush signifies unwanted attention and embarrassment. Feelings can be recognized and shared through bodily cues, facial countenances, rhythm, postures, vocal pitch and tone, and so on. My definition thus recognizes that affect can potentially be an autonomous mode or media of social communication (autonomous from language, we should say, not power).

As two analytically distinct but constantly overlapping modes of communication, language and affect are socially oriented and thus intrinsically meaningful. If compared directly, affect is often a more automatic or even subliminal form of intersubjective communication than language, present just as much in how things are said, the nonverbal, and what is not said. Even when accompanying speech utterances, affect at its core has a constitutive nonlinguistic kernel. Its media are those psychophysiological arousals experienced qualitatively and often communicated to others without our conscious permission. The main nonlinguistic medium available to affective communication is social–psychological expression and suggestion (perhaps 'mimesis' is the term some would prefer) occurring through

embodied nonverbal cues and gestures (Blackmann 2012; Summers Effler et al. 2015). Even when emotion is culturally and cognitively regulated, the affective dimension sneaks through under our radar.[10]

In summary, the specific qualities and powers of affect include: (1) unconscious automaticity and associative tendencies, (2) psychophysiological coherence, (3) embodied nonverbal communicative capabilities, and (4) strong socially oriented dispositional tendencies.[11] The affect theory I am articulating here is admittedly anthropocentric though other animals undoubtedly have affective experiences as well. The important theoretical implication of my approach is that *human emotionality* is reciprocally interconnected with culture and structure.[12] The psychological and affective capabilities of humans—our complex palette of socioemotional 'instincts'—are not completely passive in these relationships. Such socioemotional proclivities are *drivers* of both social order and cultural change.[13]

This conception of affect as a semiotic modality of communicative action has radical implications for the way we study culture and emotion in social movements. Scholars in the field are right to note that collective emotion frequently operates to reinforce and to counter efforts at change (Flam 2005b; Jasper 2014). The challenge involves specifying which sort of affective experiences in particular tend to motivate and energize protest rhetoric. In the next chapter, I point to the formative role of anger and threats mixed with optimism and creativity (as does Flam 2000). Until these affective-experiential conditions are theorized more systematically—until grounded in the socioemotional needs and capabilities of humans—studies of social movements and emotions will continue to be an ad hoc hyphenated affair. By incorporating the latest empirical research into the human psychology of status-oriented emotion, the microsociological perspective can revolutionize our understanding of the peculiar extrainstitutional events and endurances that compose social movements.

The project has already begun in recent, exciting sociological theorizing by Randall Collins, Helena Flam, James Jasper, Erika Summers Effler, Jonathan H. Turner, among others. This inquiry gets a head start only thanks to their formative contributions. Specifically, my starting line is the dramaturgical linkages that have been uncovered between status claims-making on one hand and affective experience on the other. In the next chapter, I propose that protest rhetoric orients speakers and audiences through implicit social implicatures that tend to arouse a set of affective experiences that psychologists refer to as the moral emotions—anger,

shame, contempt, reciprocity, and so on. Analytically, my approach identifies, clarifies, and explains the many interlinkages between rhetorical performances of status and moral–emotional experiences of both speakers and their audiences.

The chapters that follow all specify various social–psychological microdynamics through which affect drives, mediates, and sustains protest. The core thesis of this book is that the moral emotions, derived from group-oriented socioemotional instincts, are stimulated through the implicit status claimsmaking of protest rhetoric. Why is this significant? Mainly because the moral–emotional arousal achieved and shared through rhetorical action at contentious performances then animates and enlivens the 'hot cognitions' of injustice that protest speakers and audiences together focus their attention on (Gamson 1992). Joint attention and shared mood at protest meetings, as described by interaction ritual theory (Collins 2004), are social conditions primed for the emergence of symbols, values, and sacred objects. In the context of social movements, this socioemotional pathway ensures the efficacy and stickiness of discursive problematizations. Status claimsmaking in protest rhetoric activates and channels moral–emotional capabilities toward historically specific objects of representation, in the case of abolitionism, slave owners and those enslaved by them.

Overview of the Chapters

Historians of abolitionism are likely to be wary of my characterization of the abolitionists as 'angry' and as highly concerned with 'status.' Similar concepts in the functionalist collective-behavior tradition were used to dismiss the abolitionists as irrational apolitical fanatics in mid twentieth-century scholarship. In the second chapter, I explicate my theory of status rhetoric and emotion, contrasting my proposal to these previous reductionist accounts. The final section telescopes outward to introduce a *big rhetoric* perspective on the sociology of social movements and emotion.[14] Drawing upon affect theory, rhetoric, and the pragmatist theory of creative action, I sketch a new approach to the sociological analysis of extrainstitutional collective action.

While the abolition of slavery is a neglected topic in sociology, it has received scores of attention from historians, exponentially so in recent years. Chapter 3 delves into several historiographical issues in the study of American abolitionism. I provide an overview of the most current

historical data on the abolitionist movement, including what social groups were more likely to be attracted to it and participate in it. I pay particular attention to the religious nature of the antislavery movement and how evangelical Christianity shaped the social movement's style of mobilization and persistence. The goal of this chapter is to both contextualize abolitionism historically and offer a more accurate conception of the movement's scope.

In Chap. 4, we see that the problematization of slavery through abolitionist discourse was as much an affective process as a cognitive one. Through rhetorical performances of pathos, slavery was imagined intermittently as a national sin, a corruption of power, and a form of cruelty violating human sentiments. Abolitionist leaders drew upon these historically available emotional frames to construct slavery as a moral outrage (on the role of moral shock in mobilization, see Jasper 1997, 2014). Successful frame-alignment produced experiences of moral pathos in the audience, for example, horror over the nature of slavery and guilt at one's personal complicity with it. The three chapters of Part I together provide us with a systematic overview of abolitionist discourse, the forms of and participants in antislavery protest, as well as of how prior scholarship has failed to do justice to antislavery rhetoric and emotion.

Part II of the book interrogates how status stratification altered the emotional expressions and experiences of protest rhetoric. The deeply segmented structure of the abolitionist movement presents us with a chance to analyze status inequalities internal to social movements and their emotional effects. How do forms of charisma vary? What combination of ethos, pathos, and logos is most empowering to the most subordinated? How is the emotional energy of charismatic rhetoric constrained and enabled by social inequalities like race and gender? In the theory I develop, social positions of status subordination sharply limit public speaking possibilities for a variety of reasons. In reaction to rhetorical disadvantages by race and gender, the microdynamic pathways tend to feature similarities across cases because of the nature of status as a kind of emotional resource. Status subordination cutting across and within movements gives rise to emotional inequalities that constrain opportunities for public speaking and persistence in protest. However, many status-subordinated actors find round about ways of seizing the stage, surmounting the status binds and inventing distinctive forms of charisma in the process. How do they do it? I examine two exemplary pathways, two types of rhetorical responses to the status subordination internal to social movements: feminist ethos work

in Chap. 5 and the rhetoric of recognition in black abolitionist discourse in Chap. 6. Both were innovative strategies for generating emotional energy when it was in scarce supply (ex nihilo, I shall suggest, from heterodoxic status imaginaries). Interestingly, those abolitionists subordinated by racial and/or gender status within the movement tended to share a cautious reluctance to performing the pathos-oriented modes of protest rhetoric so prevalent among white/male abolitionists like Phillips. Pathos was considered too deviant and provocative when coming from nonwhite/nonmale orators and thus was too prone to backlash. Part II thus examines various instances of emotional inequality and emotional privilege within abolitionism, for example, public meetings tolerating white abolitionist expressions of anger but requiring black abolitionists to suppress such intense affect, or risk violent backlash (and incidents of physical assault on black public speakers are numerous).

One reason abolitionism has attracted so much historical attention in the USA is because, by most accounts, from it originated the early women's rights movement. Chapter 5 analyzes status binds and emotional inequalities in public speaking emerging because of gender status subordination, especially given the imminent threat of backlash against the gender deviances of women abolitionist rhetors. What motivated some abolitionist women to take extreme rhetorical risks in the face of enormous social opposition? This leads me to compare two patterns of 'feminist-abolitionism.' Comparing ethos work across the two types sheds light on how emotional inequalities get translated into protest rhetoric and its status implicatures. *Patrician-feminists* were able to overcome public speaking status binds through a habitus of formal education and social privilege. Relatively deprived, the *prophetic-feminists* resorted more to a religious habitus and theological vision to overcome those same gender binds. I theorize this practice of spiritual coping as a creative status summoning that enabled a risk-immune style of public speaking 'inspired by the spirit.' Status summoning refers to the rhetorical extraction of emotional energy from culturally autonomous religious formations and their alternative status imaginaries.

Chapter 6 then investigates the dynamics and dilemmas of black abolitionism. As public speakers, black abolitionists were racialized and marginalized by predominantly white antislavery organizations. Black abolitionist discourse developed distinctive *indexical* properties out of greater personal, familial, and historical experience with slavery as well as from a higher vulnerability to the violence and disrespects of systemic racism. As

in the anteceding chapter, many black abolitionists focused on doing ethos work through testimonial speech. This entailed performing respectability on stage while being tokenized as a representative of the 'sable' race. Additionally though, black abolitionists also formulated a more logos-oriented rhetoric consisting of arguments for interracial social *recognition* in response to the racial blindness of their white colleagues. As I envision it, the *rhetoric of recognition* takes a more indirect approach in appealing to the moral emotions through rational arguments about the nature of humanity and human flourishing than *status rhetoric*, though the two overlap quite a bit.

Lastly, in Part III we engage more substantively with the social–historical consequences of abolitionist status claimsmaking and moral emotions. Along these lines, the objective of Chap. 7 is to examine protest rhetoric from the point of view of the audience. Analytically, I construct a theory of the reception fields of protest rhetoric to get at how charisma emerges relationally through interactive status dynamics between speakers and listeners. For this query, empirically, I reconstructed elements of audience affective experience using nineteenth-century newspaper transcriptions of antislavery meetings. Through textual traces of audience actions and interruptions we can observe the intense emotional effects of status rhetoric upon audiences. We also can see why rhetorical 'success' in abolitionism was not equivalent necessarily to achieving persuasion through positive affects. In the abolitionist tactic of agitation, heightening dissensus was often just as effective in bringing about emancipation over the long run (Piven 2006). Many audiences were especially enraged by the abolitionist performance of alternative racial and gender status imaginaries.

Chapter 8 ponders the broader historical significance of the abolitionist movement and the role of antislavery emotion in pushing forward the longer sequence of mass emancipation in the USA. To supplement the macrohistorical account, I argue that the microdynamics of status rhetoric and emotion were mediating factors. Why was the abolition of slavery in the USA so violent, is the right question to ask here. Evidence is not hard to find on how infuriating abolitionist rhetoric and actions were to Southern political elites. As in a previous chapter on gender deviance in rhetoric, I incorporate *moral panic* theory to take a new angle on the old question of civil war causation. I propose that abolitionist experimentations with antebellum status imaginaries, especially the dominant imaginaries of race and gender, were not only provocative but also a pivotal wedge in the escalation of conflict. The specter of citizenship, white-male ethnic

supremacy *versus* the formal-legal equalization of status, was the point of contention where no compromise could be imagined. Hence the third and final part of the book is aptly entitled, 'Affect Matters.' Antislavery emotions were not mere epiphenomenal effects of more real institutions and mechanisms, for they played a pivotal role in the termination of America's peculiar institution.

Notes

1. Note that the basic unit in sociological microdynamics is not the individual but rather relational interactional processes, that is, the social situation or conversational encounter (Collins 1987; Turner 2012). In interaction ritual chain theory, Randall Collins embraces a 'situational reductionism' but not an individualistic one (Collins 1987). With regard to cultural and historical sociology, a pertinent question for microsociology is whether it insists upon downward reduction or if it can recognize *emergent* macrodynamics in both social structures and structures of meaning. I take the latter complementary approach in this book, leaning heavily on cultural sociology theories of discourse and social imaginaries (cf. Chap. 4).
2. To allude to the famous line by abolitionist preacher Theodore Parker: 'I do not pretend to understand the moral universe; the arc is a long one, my eye reaches but little ways; I cannot calculate the curve and complete the figure by the experience of sight; I can divide it by conscience. And from what I see I am sure it bends toward justice,' and later made famous by Martin Luther King Jr.
3. I reject skeptical arguments that claim abolitionism as a social movement was mostly a failure rather than mostly a success (for a recent skeptic, see Grinspan's recent piece in *The New York Times*, 'Was Abolitionism a Failure?' Feb. 1, 2015). By most any contemporary measure, the abolitionists were in fact very successful. I think the fallacy here is insisting only on the immediate sequence enacted by political agents of war exclusively in explaining abolition, rather than incorporating both indirect and unintentional consequences in the wider sequence of abolition. Another prevalent fallacy is limiting conceptions of success to persuasion rather than including provocation and what Piven (2006) theorizes as defiance or disruptive power. Seeing the abolitionist social movement as successful though is not the same thing as asserting that everybody in free states back then was an abolitionist, a clearly comforting but false myth. Abolitionists were indeed a despised unpopular minority even in the North into the 1860s and beyond.

4. Rhetoric refers to the intentions, strategies, and situational effects of communicative action. As George Kennedy defines it (1992), the rhetorical dimension of social life features the energies or drives compelling interactants to create signs in order to persuade or move alters in some desired way. This view of rhetoric, which overlaps but differs from cultural theory, derives from Kenneth Burke, Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, Wayne Booth, Thomas Farrell, and others.
5. 'Group meetings are a kind of social machine for transforming energies' (Collins 1991:41). By Collins's criteria, protest rhetoric is 'successful' if it amplifies an initiating short-term emotion or if it transmutes that emotion into something more cathartic and enduring (Collins 2001). The purpose of formal rhetoric within social movements is emotional transformation.
6. Social status, for Collins, refers primarily to levels of inclusion and belonging in groups that periodically come together to meet in person. A status dimension is present in interaction rituals 'insofar as the group is assembled and some membership feelings are being generated' (1990:38). Determined by social network density and composition, these dynamics are more 'horizontal' than 'vertical' in Collins's interpretation. The person who is located at the center of attention (the star or celebrity) has higher status than the mere spectator participant who in turn has higher status than those on the fringe, the uninvited, or the excluded. Status is about popularity, for Collins, who knows who, and who generates the buzz.
7. In venturing this critique, I tread down a post-Parsonian path already forged by Mustafa Emirbayer and his colleagues in viewing the social-psychological modalities of affective attachments as somewhat autonomous, agentic, and constitutive (Emirbayer 1996, 1997, 2005; Emirbayer and Goldberg 2005; Emirbayer and Mische 1998).
8. Previous microsociologists have entitled this the 'cognitive bias' in contemporary sociological theory (a critique voiced by Randall Collins, James Jasper, and Deborah Gould especially). The main problem is constructivism's tendency to be *mono-modal* in its attention to language rather than *multimodal* in considering multiple registers of practical semiotic modalities such as emotion and mood. Social problems construction is a rhetorical process depending and drawing upon human emotionality. The widespread cognitive bias in contemporary sociology continues to hinder our understanding of culture, power, and social movements. Overcoming any cognitive bias though requires the availability of some alternative, thus, I next introduce affect theory as a better option.
9. The proposed definition of affect assumes minimal psychophysiological coherence in the body, that is, that feeling-states always involve some kind of physiological arousal. This is an assumption that recent 'psychological constructivists' have called into question. Psychological constructivism as I

understand it claims (1) that affect is not different in nature from cognition, (2) that emotions are not 'discrete' in basic types, and (3) that the three main components of an emotion (physiological, subjective, and behavioral) do not always adhere together. I am more sympathetic to the first two claims, but regarding the third, I have difficulty thinking through the nature of feeling-states apart from some physiological basis even if it is less observable in conventional signs of arousal.

10. Psychologists like Paul Ekman have devised sophisticated ways of detecting regulated emotion through nanosecond-long facial reactions. His techniques though would not apply to Hochschild's 'deep' mode of feeling work, which changes the actual affective experience itself.
11. Regarding these characteristics of affect, sociologist Jonathan H. Turner (2007) suggests that the complex emotional palette of humans was selected evolutionarily for its fitness value in strengthening group-level bonds and coordination (relative to primates). Humanity's sophisticated emotional capabilities likely evolved for their prosocial functions. For example, guilt, shame, embarrassment, and empathy are typically seen as the quintessential 'moral emotions' of humans (Haidt 2003; Massey 2002; Tangney et al. 2007). They are typically predicated upon the welfare of others and elevate the normative social order above self-interests. According to Turner and Massey, human emotional capabilities evolved before linguistic capabilities. Our wider emotional palette enhanced group coordination, communication, and, thus, group-level survival. The latest scientific picture of the emotional instincts stresses the 'survival of the kindest,' the socially attuned and the empathetic human ancestors (de Waal 2008, 2010; Keltner 2009; Massey 2002; Niedenthal and Brauer 2012).
12. Another major weakness of many cultural and structural sociologies of emotion is that both hold purely unilinear deterministic views of emotion. Most emotion researchers in sociology either adopt a complete cultural constructionism or subscribe to some 'structural' interactionism in explaining emotion (Summers Effler 2005).
13. Some socioemotional proclivities like love, fear, anger, play, grief, care, and curiosity, Jaak Panksepp demonstrates, often revolve around neuronal activity in the subcortical 'limbic system' (Panksepp and Biven 2012; but cf. Davidson 2012 for a counterbalancing perspective on this).
14. While social movements and protest rhetoric has been studied before by many rhetoricians (see Brown and Morris 2013; Simons et al. 1984), the approach has not been nearly as influential within sociology.

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PART I

Moral Emotions in Social Movements

CHAPTER 2

Indignant Hearts of Protest

The abolitionist community of antebellum Boston felt immense pride in their port city. They constantly invoked local memories of the revolutionary war. Boston represented freedom and independence from tyranny, the deep national values and scripts religiously reaffirmed at their antislavery public speeches and festivals. The city was also known as the intellectual capital of the nation in philosophical prestige and free thought, a different but similar expression of those same sentiments for independence. Abolitionist intellectuals tried to extend the honorable reputation of their home to the problem of slavery. They spoke of slavery as a deprivation of rights and as a form of tyranny much worse than the 'taxation without representation' that a prior generation of Bostonians revolted against.

Lawyer-turned-activist Wendell Phillips along with his local abolitionist colleagues formed the Vigilante Committee of Boston. Together, they organized covert city safe havens for fugitives and arranged sources of aid to free blacks. After Congress passed the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law upping the punishments for harboring runaway slaves, their pride in Boston as the beacon of liberty took a terrible hit. The new law harshly punished any citizen who aided a fugitive slave, and it greatly increased the vulnerability of free blacks to abduction into slavery. Not only a symbolic affront, it was also an all-too-real political encroachment upon their home by the corrupt 'Slave Power,' their name for the dynastic influence of southern slaveholders upon national politics. Quite soon after the 1850 compromise, conflicts between law enforcers and law resisters erupted in the streets.

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In 1851, Thomas Sims found shelter in a Boston boardinghouse after his long flight from enslavement in Georgia. He also received aid from the underground Vigilante Committee. In April of that year, Sims was recognized on the street by slave bounty hunters and then arrested by federal commissioners. Especially enraging to former lawyer Wendell Phillips and his colleagues, Sims was held prisoner within the walls of the downtown courthouse. Making an example out of him, the makeshift prison was guarded by hundreds of subpoenaed soldiers. Especially anathema to Bostonian republican sentiments was the vivid imagery of standing armies and federal force. Heavy metal chains were draped across the front doors of the courthouse. Adding insult to injury, this could be nothing but an omen of the nefarious national ambitions of southern politicians so willing to infringe upon the rights of northerners.

Behind the scenes, the Vigilante Committee plotted its options. Plans ranged in consideration from a prison-break rescue to bribing the sailors who would likely transport Sims back to slavery. As lawyers pleaded futilely on his behalf, an open-air meeting assembled in the Boston Commons. There Wendell Phillips raised his sonorous voice and called upon the public masses to free Sims by any means necessary.

> Should any officer under this law or any other, attempt to take wife or relative of mine into bondage, I should feel justified, by every law of God and man, in shooting that officer. What I should do myself, I am ready to countenance every other man doing.[1] Our laws in general, and this one in particular, puts the slave out of the pale of society; it utterly disfranchises him, denies him all shadow of protection. He is covered by no civil protection, bound by no civil duty; he is remitted back to his natural rights. In his case, I would fill my pockets with pistols, and thus secure myself a trial by a Massachusetts jury. *The sympathies of the people* would gather round such a man, put on trial for such an offence. The mortal hatred which would set the hounds of the law, thirsty for our blood, all on keener scent if we stood charged with legal offences, would not reach him. *The instinctive sense of right, from which no people, however base, can wholly free themselves would be his protection.*
>
> With regard to ourselves, I wish Massachusetts men would crowd our streets, and surround that chained Court House in hundreds of thousands; I would that if this vile deed is to be done, it should be done in the presence of as many *indignant hearts* as possible; that they should be obliged,

> in taking that unhappy man away, to walk over our heads. *It will be a damning disgrace to Massachusetts*, if a man standing on free soil, and entitled to the presumption that he is a freeman, is dragged from her limits back to bondage, without a jury trial, without any thing worthy of the name of a trial or of evidence against him. It will be a damning disgrace if such a man can be dragged back without the rails of every rail track being torn up, without every village on the route rising en masse to block the wheels of Government (*The Liberator* April 11, 1851; *emphasis mine*).

In this impromptu public speech, Phillips rested the honor of all Massachusetts upon the fate of Sims. He warned his audience twice of the imminent threat of 'damning disgrace' to their home state. Phillips, a prominent leader of the Garrisonian New England abolitionists, excelled at maximizing the violent sentiments of his audiences, that is, he could easily and eloquently elicit *pathos*. His speech emanated with scripts for experiencing righteous anger—our 'indignant hearts,' our 'instinctive sense of right'—framing the situation as one of a trial by public opinion.[2]

Phillips's immediate intention here was to organize a local massive response of disruptive power—*ready yourselves to tear up* '*every rail*' *necessary* to obstruct law enforcement and to resist the forcible rendition of Sims back to the land of slavery that he risked his life to escape from. Phillips encouraged his onlookers to participate in the imminent *contentious gathering*. Sociologist Charles Tilly (2008) defines social movements as complexes of public collective performances. A social movement is a sustained campaign of reform-related contentious gatherings in which public claimsmaking is dramatized on behalf of some who are not present in addition to the gathered claimants.[3] As Tilly has extensively documented elsewhere, nineteenth-century movements drew upon and adapted relatively stable repertoires of collective action. The emerging scripts of that era looked to contentious gatherings for the expression of popular sovereignty or what Phillips longingly called the trial of public opinion. In the democratic imaginary, the larger and more committed the claimsmakers, the closer the will of the people was approximated. Phillips enacted these new repertoire scripts in his proclamations for worthy Massachusetts 'men to crowd the streets' and 'every village on the route rising en masse' to join the protest. What is going on here? Mainly Phillips is attempting to organize a 'WUNC-display,' Tilly's shorthand for public social movement demonstrations of Worthiness, Unity, Numbers, and Commitment (Tilly 2008:121; I return to the 'WUNC-display' concept in Chap. 7).

Abolitionist demonstrations did try to publicly perform and dramatize the will of the people. But they were also performances oriented upon *status* in a more general sense.[4] Status in interactionist sociology refers to the evaluative sociocognitive processes of sorting people and treating them with different levels of prestige, worthiness, deference, and/or respect (I shall review several competing theories of status below). Abolitionist meetings and speeches were replete with what I label *status claimsmaking* and the *status implicatures of protest rhetoric* to understand the main emotional pathways of charisma in social movements. Abolitionists made positive status claims on behalf of their antislavery societies and antislavery reference groups. Early British and American reformers were perpetually commemorated and hailed as saintly and courageous. Other abolitionist attendees were assured of their moral righteousness and character in displaying sympathetic sensibilities toward the enslaved. Conversely, much abolitionist rhetoric was oriented upon degrading the status of slaveholders or any other opponents of the antislavery reference group. A common insult in the rhetoric of slavery was to accuse one's opponents of a lack of feeling. According to the moral grammar of late sentimentalism, insensitivity to the pain of other bodies was a troubling sign of one's own inhumanity (Abruzzo 2011). In abolitionist words, slaveholders could not resist the temptation to abuse their power and become cruel (see Chap. 4 on the dominant emotional frames of abolitionism).

The arrest of Sims was an event for Boston abolitionists not unlike Phillips's conversion experience to radical abolitionism after the 1837 murder of antislavery printer Elijah Lovejoy. 'Events' in historical sociology refer to transformations in durable cultural-and-social structures (Sewell 2005, 1996). Events such as pivotal turning points in the lifecourse of a social movement are unusually emotionally intense (Eyerman 2005). They can result in sudden changes in the overall movement tone and mood, what Guobin Yang (2005) calls 'critical emotional events' as defined by their escalating or de-escalating effects upon the campaign of protest.[5] Such events in social movements excite the emotions and motivate redefinitions of the situation through performative and dramaturgical discourse. They come into being temporally through the shifting relationships between movement challengers, opponents, and onlookers.

Federal military enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law was one such critical emotional event for the Boston abolitionists. It triggered local outrage, feelings of despair, powerlessness, and thus shame and anger. Social movements foment and ferment through such acts of emotional

transformation (Collins 2001; Eyerman 2005). Their persistence partly depends upon amplifying these initiating emotions and transmuting pangs of frustration into something else. Maintaining momentum in a campaign of protest depends upon successfully transforming feelings of loss and shame into more potent solidarity-based emotions. Likewise, Phillips provoked 'indignant hearts' on behalf of Sims through various appeals to righteous anger. When feelings of anger are attached to some specific offending object—slave bounty-hunting, the arrest of Sims, arming the courthouse—anger evolves into moral indignation (according to Hochschild 1983:236). Framing Sims as a martyr–victim of the Slave Power, Phillips promoted altruistic anger on his behalf. Bostonians who had never heard of Sims before were encouraged to identify and empathize with him. Even third-party spectators could be moved by the unfairness of his plight. And yet, this altruistic anger subtly complements and is embedded in more egocentric expressions of localistic outrage as well.

The microsociology of Randall Collins (1990, 2001, 2004) helps to make sense of the significance of such protest rhetoric as an integral part of the ritual processes that inspire, energize, and sustain social movements *via* the joint attention and assemblies through which they generate group solidarity. Collins bridges Durkheimian theories of solidarity, ritual, and collective emotion with Weberian theories of power, conflict, and domination; however, he credits Erving Goffman the dramaturgist and Harold Garfinkel the ethnomethodologist with providing the keys to the synthesis of interaction ritual chain theory. Broadly, both Goffman and Garfinkel forged innovative interactionist perspectives from the close empirical analysis of everyday social behavior. From Goffman, Collins takes the redescription of the situational conversational encounter as rituals of play-acting. From Garfinkel, he inherits a deep appreciation of social reality as an accomplishment through routines possessing long-lasting emotional tones of ordinariness that people in the main avoid questioning.[6] Thus social order maintains itself from a lack of rationality (that would discern the arbitrariness) and from a lack of cognition (including explicit cultural knowledge). Instead, the production of emotional energy through routinized rituals is the crucial explanatory factor in the sustenance of various macropatterns of social life, including for our purposes, the social movement campaign.[7]

Righteous anger, for Collins, emerges when ritually generated moral solidarity, the group's sense and symbols of itself, is violated (Collins 1990). Manifestations of socially produced emotional energy include the

potent emotions of *indignation* as in feelings of righteous anger toward moral offenders or violators of a group ritual. Intense group angers can be aroused and directed toward people who are deemed a threat to the group's moral solidarity. Yet, ritual theory would predict that the relevant collective emotions primarily flow from internal ingredients of the ritual, such as mutual attention, rhythmic entrainment, mood, and exclusion of outsiders. While these ritual ingredients are indeed important elements of the process of emotional transformation in social movements, they do not by themselves fully capture the affective dynamics by which abolitionist protest rhetoric acquired its emotional and performative power.[8] In Phillips's public appeal to resistance, for instance, more salient is the provocation of honor sentiments, how he symbolically mines for the moral emotions and mobilizes others by constructing status claims (as well as threats to the status of local reference groups).

As a result of the trafficking of Sims back to slavery, abolitionist rhetoric grew even more angry and apocalyptic. When a reference group experiences a sudden loss in status and power, with that loss being attributable to the specific agency of someone else, feelings of anger tend to follow (Kemper 1978, 2011). Even more than appeals to pure empathy, Phillips devotes much of his speech upon arousing these status-oriented emotions. He aims to link up his audience's sense of their own status with the troubling fate of Sims. In Phillips's rhetorical imagination, the honor of all Massachusetts men rises and falls with the outcome of this event. The speech thus dramatizes a competition for status through a bevy of social implicatures. Here I am adopting a Goffman-inspired dramaturgical conception of status (cf. Sauder 2005). Communicated through ubiquitous social implicatures of (dis)respect, status is a 'deference-emotion system' underlying, motivating, and intersecting with language-use in general (Scheff 1988, 1990, 1997).[9] How is this relevant to social movement processes? In my formulation, the implicit status claimsmaking of protest rhetoric accomplishes a fair share of the critical task of emotional transformation, increasing the potency emotions of participants, such as anger and outrage, through the performative dramatization of a reference group's status and threats to it.

Righteous anger was the dominant movement mood of immediatist abolitionism (not guilt nor paranoia as previous historians have posited). But the personal experience of indignant hearts was surely an overdetermined one and rife with inequality, including status inequalities internal to abolitionism. The abolitionists were angry for many different reasons. Diverse abolitionists felt different kinds and degrees of anger toward dif-

ferent kinds of injustices. For example, many antislavery emotions were thoroughly mediated by religious symbols and narratives. The abolitionists felt righteous contempt for the wicked powers of the world. Some developed a prophetic style of condemning the nation for its sins. Because of racial and gendered inequalities, some expressions of anger were not tolerated among minority groups subordinated by and within the movement (Chaps. 5 and 6 extend this point). Many black abolitionists were tired of constant disrespect in everyday civil society and chronic stereotyping by their white colleagues. Some feared for the lives of their families or feared of their own possible abduction by slave-traffickers. In general, the abolitionists were frustrated with their relative powerlessness and found anger to be an effective emotion for summoning continued confidence and strength when the situation seemed to be worsening.

In the present work, I zero in on the moral–emotional functioning and collective-action consequences of the dramatization of status in protest rhetoric. I find that charismatic protest leaders were movement participants who, through relational experiences with audiences, learned how to stimulate, strengthen, and channel moral–emotional sentiments toward historically specific outlets. As I shall extensively document, the primary way charismatic abolitionist leaders accomplished this feat was through artful implicit status claimsmaking in antislavery argumentation. In public squares and religious churches, antislavery sympathizers were praised for their conscience and character (these being forms of ethos, see Chap. 5). They were also challenged to stay true to the antislavery lifestyle and not compromise their moral purity. Conversely, hecklers and compromisers were masterfully belittled and shamed by orators who invented the eloquence of (ad hominem) abuse so productive of pathos, as practiced by Wendell Phillips, Sojourner Truth, Angelina Grimké, and Frederick Douglass.

The rhetorical talents abolitionists had for mesmerizing audiences, their charisma, stemmed from the accumulated learning of many oratorical occasions. Many of their creative rhetorical experimentations, whether witty zingers or lines that fell flat, have been historically recorded. Newspaper accounts of their speeches that include applause lines and hissing read like an instruction manual in eloquence. Through a close affective-hermeneutical reading, the performative and emotional dynamics of charisma can be uncovered (for methodological details, see Appendix). Much audience emotional intensity, I have found, was generated by their dramaturgical experimentations with perceived status, including upon the dominant racial and gender status imaginaries of their social context.

Thus, interpreting protest rhetoric requires both a cultural sociology of the relevant status imaginaries and a dramaturgical analysis of the contentious performances occurring at protest gatherings. The historical evidence led me to treat status itself as a generative, malleable, and nearly inexhaustible emotional resource for social movement processes. As a special sort of creative communicative action, believable status claimsmaking is a learnt technique of affective maximization. Reconstituting status imaginaries was a resource for mobilization through outrage as well as for movement persistence through collective identity and embattlement. Furthermore, the status implicatures of their protest rhetoric contributed to the solidification of abolitionist social constructions of slavery as a national problem. By attaching their rhetorical arguments about slavery to perceptions of unfairness and injustice, it made the problematization of slavery more compelling. Social movement theory therefore must thus be mindful of the moral emotions to fully understand collective-action processes of problematization, identification, persuasion, persistence, and so on. Our theoretical *minding* of the moral emotions corresponds to their practical *mining* of them.

Bringing Status Back In

Since most social movement participants are outsiders to the halls of power, their dependence upon the rhetoric of status in cultivating moral influence is much more fundamental than previously acknowledged (though hinted at in Tilly's WUNC displays concept; on civil society discourse, see Alexander 2003, 2006). Efforts to bring status back into social movement studies, however, must navigate between the two major mistakes of past theories of 'collective behavior.' On one hand, many critical theorists subscribed to a voluntaristic overemphasis on affective manipulation by charismatic leaders. On the other hand, many mid-century sociologists conflated status deterministically with large reified social structures like class and ethnicity (and with social networks, for a more recent iteration of this tendency, see Collins 2000).

The public contentious gatherings of social movements are typically comprised of political outsiders or nonelites who participate in symbolic demonstrations external to the headquarters of power (Goldberg 1991; Staggenborg 2011; Tarrow 2011). Grassroots protesters either lack access or refuse the resources of coercion. This does not mean they are without power. It does mean though that social movements strive to cultivate a dif-

ferent form of power, namely, moral influence. The 'call to arms' of social movement mobilization is mostly figurative. Successful performances of moral authority derive from an altogether different game, that of *symbolic politics* (Gusfield 1986). Movement activists struggle to project high status in the eyes of civil society, to compete for public attention, and to convert their status claims into moral influence. They rely upon and often excel at status claimsmaking for purposes of both persuasion and provocation.

A common theoretical convention, inherited from Weber, is to distinguish between *status* and *power* in interpreting two related but different dimensions of social stratification (Weber 1946, 1968; whereas authority or legitimate domination involves a sort of 'status grant' to power-holders, see Kemper 2011). Whereas power refers to the ability to give orders, for Weber, status refers to voluntary membership in cultural groups of varying prestige, esteem, and deference (Collins 2000; Sauder 2005).[10] Recent status theorists though envision it more as an iterative and interactional, less voluntary process (Ridgeway 2011; Sauder 2005; Scheff 1997). Status is both a producer and product of interactional processes insofar as they are influenced by cultural stereotypes. Status orders are constructed and performed, potentially negotiable yet obdurately persistent.[11] Thus we could view status as a kind of belief-dependent emotional resource for interactions, including public speech and protest. Status hierarchies are *structures*, much in the sense intended by William H. Sewell Jr., 'structures' being constituted through a reciprocal interplay of virtual cognitive schemas and material resources (see Ridgeway 2011). To put it in another way, status no longer fits the chronic dichotomy between culturalist and structuralist theoretical approaches, a dichotomy which sociologist Francesca Polletta has argued is a pernicious one for interpreting social movements (Polletta 1997; an argument also made by Summers Effler 2005). Status is social–structural—emerging and inhering in the relationships between social positions as if on a field—*and* it is cultural.[12]

Unfortunately, the fate of status concepts and status theory in social movements research has not been kind. Current discussions of contentious performances profitably draw upon a revival of theories of culture, emotion, and performance. Yet status concepts and status claimsmaking continue to be neglected in the mix most likely because of their received associations with classical tension theory and unpopular functionalist models of collective behavior. If not ignored altogether, they appear only by a different name. It appears that status concepts are suffering roughly similar theoretical vicissitudes as emotion concepts did before the full resurrection of the

latter in the past two decades. In both cases, social movement theory reacted against classical, functionalist models of collective behavior rightfully criticized for objectivistic and psychologically reductive assumptions about the nature of social protest and the character of protesters. Considering emotion, protesters were seen as so overly emotional so as to be irrational and apolitical. Considering status, protest was seen as a sometimes pathological symptom of status inconsistencies or threats caused by objective social changes. Writing in 1955, sociologist Daniel Bell stated, 'It is not surprising, therefore, that the political movements which have successful appealed to status resentments have been irrational in character, and have sought scapegoats which conveniently serve to symbolize the status threat' (Bell 1955:168; quoted in Buechler 2011:87). In criticizing these caricatures, both concepts disappeared in the 1980s while the instrumental–rational and properly political nature of contention was instead highlighted.

Mid-century status theory explained away the causes of extra-institutional action through rapid systemic changes triggering social and psychological strains (Bell 1955; Kornhauser 1959; Lenski 1954; Smesler 1962). In strain or tension theory, status and class became slippery concepts easily confused with each other (Wood and Hughes, 1984, make this observation). Status inconsistencies and relative deprivation caused individuals to feel stress, anxiety, and alienation. Reform efforts emerged after status groups experienced threats to their normative dominance and reputation (Gusfield 1986). Status threats and gains were mostly objective features of the social environment given large-scale industrial and economic transitions.

The older version of status theory was also incredibly reductive. Protesters were not conscious of the real motivations and impulses propelling their discontent (a critique voiced by political process theorists; McAdam 1999:16). Protest was not directly political, but served a psychological function of substitute satisfaction, easing repressions and enacting the fantasy 'short-circuits' of generalized beliefs (Smesler 1962). Status dynamics supposedly operated behind and through unknowing protestors like a ventriloquist. Not surprisingly, status theories became unpopular in social movements studies.

In the neighboring discipline of history, the influence of functionalism and collective behavior theory likewise had souring effects upon the history of abolitionism. Objectivistic status concepts have similarly haunted historical representations of the American abolitionists and they continue

to exert a powerful influence over how the nineteenth-century radical abolitionists are characterized to this day. Many mid-century historians unsympathetically portrayed the abolitionists as irresponsible, overemotional idealists (Curry 1965; Donald 1970 [1956]; Donald 1965; Elkins 1976 [1959]). They were apolitical absolutists who disrupted a more conciliatory political approach to ending slavery through compromise, hence, were somewhat to blame for the secessionist movement beginning the American Civil War (the view of Elkins 1976 [1959]). William Lloyd Garrison especially was lead devil, corrupting Wendell Phillips and others with perfectionist doctrines (Hofstadter, 1989, makes this suggestion).

Historians of abolitionism borrowed status concepts liberally from the social sciences, leading to wide-ranging explanatory references to status decline, institutional deprivation, and class anxiety. All the same mistakes of objectivism and reductionism were endured in the historiography of abolitionism in the USA. And historians have had to find their own way out of the anti-humanist hermeneutic entailed. In the past few decades, historians have struck a more balanced tone toward the American abolitionists, more appreciative of the ways they confronted the explosive antebellum climate of rising white-supremacist nationalism while often falling short (Goodman 1998; Jeffrey 1998; Mayer 1998; Newman 2002; Stauffer 2002; Stewart 1996). Dismissive accounts of the antislavery radicals through psychological caricature have at least temporarily stopped. However, as outlined above, there is a better approach to a status-sensitive analysis of abolitionism that does not contribute to the movement's devaluation, but rather takes the context and creativity of the abolitionists more seriously. Status concepts can be used, not to discredit the egotistical or narcissistic but to show how the abolitionists persistently attempted to persuade and provoke others in a systemically racist environment.

While the reaction against functionalist psychologism by new schools of thought was certainly needed and understandable, there is a missed opportunity here for reconsidering the uses of status in moral protest from within the cultural and emotional turn of recent social movement studies. Status theory, among other things, can help explain the production of contentious moral emotions. Given the increasing emphasis on emotionality in collective action, one would hope more attention would be paid to how moral–emotional elements of injustice, grievances, and discontent are stirred on a collective level.[13] Many of the 'moral emotions' (anger, shame, reciprocity, contempt, etc.) are superlatively sensitive to shifting

status dynamics. They emerge from within the interactional 'status-power matrix' to use Theodore Kemper's phrase (2011). Status claims are affectively loaded, so to speak, in the emotional rewards or frustrating spurs delivered to audiences.[14]

A fuller understanding of protest rhetoric involves treating status dramaturgically as a negotiated, performed, generative emotional resource. Given the quite restrictive power limitations set upon publics in modern state societies, the emotional energy extracted from status claims-making enables an alternative pathway toward gaining influence and power—through public opinion and civil society discourse (Alexander 2006; Schudson 1999). Among movement audiences, status rhetoric fosters the sense of moral authority and of charisma attached to the leaders of reform. The construction of status threats fosters the negative affects of alarm, anger, and moral outrage (Flam 2005b; Jasper 1997; Gusfield 1986; Tarrow 2011). Possessing higher status engenders positive affects (Kemper 2011; Turner 2007). The accumulation of status or symbolic capital can be a potent cultural–emotional resource in itself for mobilization, one that is constantly circulated through sociocognitive expectations and communications.

Lastly, efforts to recover status theory must navigate between two major mistakes made in past theories of collective behavior: the voluntaristic overemphasis on affective manipulation by charismatic leaders and the deterministic conflation of status with large reified social structures. For this purpose, I shall propose a concept of *reception field* to refer to the relational, fluid status dynamics between movement leaders and audiences during a contentious performance through which charisma emerges. In reception fields, status-differentiations and rhetorical agencies mutually condition each other. In other words, status significations and imaginaries are being appealed to, performed, and renegotiated through discourse. This is an ongoing and highly emotional process structured by the relational, interactional 'status-power matrix' (a temporal process much more fluid than Bourdieu's 'field' concept; see Chap. 7 for more detail).

Status is a highly transposable currency that can be exchanged through creative rhetorical performances (as well as other forms of discourse not relevant to this paper). While quite common among the social implicatures of rhetoric, status is certainly not the only currency accounting for the affective intensities of movement audiences. There are a host of other relevant factors here that can contribute to eloquent rhetoric such as aesthetic format, intellectual vision, vocal texture, non-

verbal body language, set-up and appearance, a sense for rhythm, talents at improvisation, and so on (Clayman 1993; Collins 2004; Heritage and Greatbatch 1986). Such potential contributors to eloquence are likely interwoven together with status claimsmaking by the practical skills of experienced orators.

In the chapters that follow, I reveal the abundant social implicatures of protest rhetoric, what I shall refer to as status claimsmaking and sometimes just status rhetoric. I suggest that contentious gatherings and symbolic demonstrations can generally be interpreted as performances of heterodoxic status imaginaries on behalf of movement claimants and their clients. Emerging from the relative powerlessness of contenders, and sometimes from the threatened power of privileged groups, the language-game of status in seeking moral influence is fundamental to protest. This is certainly not an unprecedented insight. But it seems to be a forgotten one or, at best, an underappreciated one in recent studies of social change.

Min(d)ing the Moral Emotions

Moral emotions are embodied dispositional responses toward the fulfillment or violation of certain socioemotional expectations at least partly innate to human beings. In other words, we human mammals are especially sensitive to social slights and offenses. Though sociologists more often focus on the culturally constructed components of emotion, the emotional brain seems at least partly hard-wired to be responsive to community, reciprocity, and status offense. The difficulty is with defining 'moral' precisely, clearly not equivalent to 'ethical' or 'egalitarian' or even 'altruistic.' On this point, the psychologist Jonathan Haidt acknowledges that, 'there is no neat division between the moral emotions and the nonmoral emotions' (Haidt 2003:854). In my view, many emotions ranging from envy, grief, to disgust could be or become a moral emotion if group-oriented values or expectations are at stake. Moral emotions are the complex psychological apparatus predisposing humans to form reference group attachments and be especially sensitive to standing within the group.

The moral emotion category has in fact recently been expanded to include a wider range of emotions, including but not limited to guilt, outrage, feelings of unfairness, a sense of social debt, loyalty, reciprocity, anger, or indignation—a list invoking many of the emotions most prevalent at contentious gatherings. It is quite probable that moral emotions derive their exceptional psychic energy from our socioemotional sensitivi-

ties to community, social order, and violations of the moral order. Moral emotions are dependent upon social expectations and predisposed toward corrective action. They are a communicative mode of our embodied engagement with events in the social world.

While partly 'hard wired' in humans, moral emotions are not 'naturally' directed toward the dispossessed or enslaved. They had to be re-wired through new imaginary maps, which is to say, by new moral cartographers and practical map-readers. Moral emotions were attached to the slave by moral entrepreneurs and their rhetorical performances over time. Stimulating or 'mining' the emotional instincts to reconstitute and intensify reference group allegiances is a central task of social movements. In summary, moral emotions are merely the embodied dispositional tendencies arising from the group-attuning instincts of the human animal. But they can become powerful affective social–psychological mechanisms of collective action.

The existence of our moral–emotional capabilities or instincts is precisely why status claimsmaking is so important to social movement processes. Status-rhetoric appeals to the socioemotional instincts for respect, reciprocity, and community. It conditions and enables the formation of new protest reference groups, a resocialization in different feeling rules, and facilitates the critical emotional energies of solidarity and stamina. Status claimsmaking is a powerful affective instrument of charismatic leaders during contentious gatherings. It can potentially reconfigure human moral–emotional capacities and attachments. Social movements mine for the moral emotions because of their immense social–psychological power over us. Sociologists then would be wise to keep them in mind.

Nonetheless, moral emotions perhaps more often than not place us at odds with challenges to the social order. Moral emotions are just as present and active in facilitating harsh reactions to the protesters who dare deviate from social convention. Hence, I take a critical view of the relationship between social movements and emotions: emotions are frequently agents of conservation, suppression, and demobilization in addition to their role in energizing protest (Kleres 2005). Uncritical views of the subject may stem from the obvious etymological affinity between 'movement' and 'emotion' (see Gould 2009:3–4). Given that 'emotion' roughly means *movement* in Latin, the tautological affinities are irresistible but hinder empirical analysis. Thus it is all the more important to resist assuming a necessary relationship between the two objects of empirical inquiry. Flam (2005b) describes the *cementing emo-*

tions of domination that chronically hinder mobilization efforts, including shame, fear, and even several positive emotions like security and gratitude. The attachment of the moral emotions to social order is part of the many difficulties thwarting the organization of protest: passionate emotions also function effectively to reproduce inequality and resist progressive social changes.

In a critical view of the subject, both 'positive' and 'negative' emotions play an important role in social movement processes.[15] On one hand, high levels of positive emotion can potentially have mobilizing effects (Collins 1990, 2004; Turner 2011). Movement leaders try to boost the hope and optimism of participants in overcoming resignation or cynicism. Charisma produces solidarity and loyalty among movement participants. For example, the mutual-aid-based feelings of solidarity that sustained participation in the Catholic Worker movement were generated by religious rituals, vulnerability, and shared laughter (Summers Effler 2005). Further, different social movements cultivate distinctive subcultural configurations of positive emotion. Activists in feminist peace and labor organizations, for instance, experimented with a more empathetic style of co-organizing based upon familial feelings of 'sisterhood' (Roth 2005; Taylor and Rupp 2002). Elsewhere, shared perceptions of the sacrifice of others generated 'mutual escalating commitment' to the cause of protest and to each other (Kearney 2014). In general, for social movements, high numbers and turnout in demonstrations tend to produce positive group-based emotions including solidarity and confidence (Kemper 2006).

On the flip side, the role of negative emotions in motivating contentious performances cannot be overestimated. The production of moral shock is a motivational catalyst across many social movements (Jasper 1997, 2014). William Gamson (1992) describes how activist groups foster the 'hot cognition' of injustice (i.e., perceptions and feelings of unfairness). Some activists perform 'breaching events' in public to surprise and shock audiences out of complacency (producing contempt and disgust as well, Benski 2005). Constructions and rumors of a threat mobilize collective efforts to prevent or ward off that threat from occurring. In Not-In-My-Backyard movements, groups come together out of shared anxieties and insecurities, for example, over nuclear energy facilities, environmental pollution, or plans to build a homeless shelter next door (Jasper 1997). Threats that propel collective action range from insults to honor, to mistaken perceptions of economic competition, to rumors of imminent violent victimization. Collective anxieties and fears can drive the radicalization

of social movements toward violence (Tarrow 2011; Chap. 8 applies this insight to the abolition of slavery).

Among the moral emotions, *anger* in particular has a special relationship to social movement mobilization (Flam 2005b; Jasper 2014). There are many manifestations of angry affects in protest that are not purely egocentric, reactionary, or self-interested, as anger is usually perceived to be in today's public discourse. While anger does frequently arise from externally attributed status losses, as Kemper (2011) describes, angry feelings can also emerge when one has no 'status stake' in an event whatsoever. Social psychology experimenters have found that personal feelings of anger can be produced empathetically just by observing a third party being treated unfairly (Haidt 2003). These are undoubtedly complicated matters, but it seems that while standards of fairness are culturally relative, our psychic sensitivity to unfairness is not.[16] Anger is a common emotional expression that frequently occurs when that psychic sensitivity gets tripped. According to Haidt, 'anger is perhaps the most underappreciated moral emotion.'[17] As noted, the self can have little to no personal stake in the matter but still feel angry or empathetic to some perceived injustice. Of course, anger can have a darker, more hostile side, it often does, though we should note that very few episodes of anger actually lead to violence (Collins 2008; Malešević 2013).

Among the most effective of moral emotions then for ensuring movement momentum is anger. Anger is one of the most observed and most researched among the recurrent emotions of social movements (see Flam 2005b for an overview). Some social movement researchers go as far as to label it a sort of 'prerequisite for protest.' Among social psychologists, anger is what is known as a 'potency emotion' (Shieman 2006). It activates adrenaline and preps the body for action, disposing one to corrective action and summoning the psychic energy needed to overcome inhibitive fears. Black women activists in the Civil Rights movement intentionally utilized anger as a resource to surmount fears of the consequences of protest (Robnett 1997). Engendering collective anger enabled gay and lesbian activists to resist stigmatization and shame in AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP) (Gould 2009). Anger at being humiliated by the government motivated Chinese student activists to march on Tiananmen Square (Yang 2005). These are just a few illustrations of the emotion's often quite crucial role in protest.

Feelings of anger, like shame and several other emotions, also have recursive effects. Expressing anger by itself can trigger increases in psychophysiological meters of arousal (through what is no doubt a complicated

affective-cognitive circuitry of the nervous system). In many situations, the expression of anger can be healthy and quite effective in producing socially desired effects (Kasdan and Biswas-Diener 2014). Contrary then to impressions that anger is a reactionary, egotistical, and counterproductive emotion, anger in fact can be useful progressively and collectively. Anger is a potent emotional resource for instigating resistance by subordinates, being almost necessary to feel if there is a high chance of repression by more powerful elites.

However, because of structures of domination and status subordination, anger and related contentious emotions are a very unequal resource. Sociologists have observed higher levels of chronic frustration or stress (qua anger without relief) among poorer social classes (Carr 2014). Others have posited that the chronic accumulation of negative affects of strain and stressors increases the likelihood of crime (Agnew 1992). The most comprehensive sociological studies of anger have shown that the probability of feeling anger has a nonlinear relationship with social class (Collette and Lizardo 2010). Anger is more common at the polar extremes of class structure: in chronic frustrations and angry moods among the poor, on one side, and in acute expressions of anger among elites toward their status-subordinates, on the other (Collette and Lizardo 2010; Shieman 2006). If getting angry at something or someone is a near universal experience, the privilege of expressing anger in many institutional contexts is usually not. As the feeling rules dictate, no one is supposed to express anger to *superordinates* (Hochschild 2003; Lively and Heise 2004). Rather, as Flam observes, 'Positive feelings flow up and negative feelings flow down the social hierarchy' (Flam 2005b:22). Members of status-subordinated groups are expected to contain their anger, if anything, internalizing it through shame and self-blame.

Emotions are distributed unequally across social classes, not only in disparate rates of negative affects, but also in the privileges and risks tied to the communication of 'outlaw emotions' which may include anger (Jaggar 1989). This has important implications for how social movement emotions are studied. Status inequalities internal to movements bestow various emotional privileges upon movement elites. For a variety of reasons including the racializing stereotypes of minorities as uncivilized and aggressive, the repercussions and dangers of asserting anger in public can be greater for status-subordinated participants of social movements. As a result, minority activists are compelled to resort to various rhetorical strategies, including the suppression of certain affects and their emotional intensity

(what I term the 'affect suppression bind' in Chap. 6). For example, in Chap. 5, I shall describe how abolitionist women were socially compelled to orient most of their public rhetoric upon the production of positive affects in the presentation of the self (ethos) instead of the negative emotions of pathos. Likewise, black women orators did enormous emotion work in the form of affect suppression and performances of respectability to lessen the chances of backlash. Interestingly, Frederick Douglass navigated the status binds somewhere in between affect-suppression on one hand and the freedom to speak abusively on the other (see Chap. 6). In American society past and present, the status-oriented emotional resource of anger intersects with race, class, gender, sexuality, and other bases of social stratification.

Though often labeled a 'negative emotion,' anger actually has a prosocial character similar to other group-oriented moral emotions. Anger can even reveal an intuitive empathetic kernel when activated in those third-party witnesses. I can be angry at your disadvantage, your experience of disrespect and unfairness, even though I am personally unaffected and relatively privileged. Such 'cosmopolitan' instances of anger abounded in abolitionist history as we will see (in accordance with Appiah 2006). To understand the collective-action functions of anger then, it may be useful to think tentatively in terms of two faces of the moral emotion, between *altruistic* anger and *egocentric* anger. Altruistic anger is especially important in understanding the *external* emotional dynamics of a movement, how it appeals to and stirs up a conscience constituency, as Collins (1990) notes, often after disturbingly publicized instances of martyrdom. These are the emotional microdynamics of social movement extension. I should note though that the distinction between altruistic and egocentric anger is a blurry one. Even when anger erupts at a perceived insult to the self, from a personal experience of a status–power threat, the trigger is often the perception of *injustice*, some unfairness or perceived moral violation of reciprocity and the social order over and above self-interests.

As for the internal emotional dynamics of social movements on the other hand—the social–psychological processes of intensification—the production of *egocentric anger* is very effective in sustaining momentum, even more so than altruistic anger by itself. This form of anger as a more ego-syntonic moral emotion corresponds to human socioemotional instincts toward *assertion*.[18] My rhetorical analysis of abolitionist public speeches reveals how protest performances target, excite, and direct egocentric anger toward opposing contenders and concrete movement goals.

As we will see, egocentric capabilities and desires for assertion can be aroused through status claimsmaking, just as those antislavery emotions of pride and shame were evoked by threats to the reputation of the self and the honor of one's local compatriots.

There is a deep historical irony here and an important lesson to be learned about the processes of social change. Past historians egregiously criticized specific abolitionists for not *really* caring about racial equality. Abolitionists, white and black, were dismissed for being overly obsessed with their own status rather than truly concerned about the violence of slavery and black civil rights. The rhetoric of antislavery was demythologized as a mask of the crude politics of celebrity reputation. My account of angry abolitionist rhetoric indicates exactly what is wrong with this historical cynicism. Key to movement microdynamics is *not suppressing* the status-sensitive socioemotional instincts of assertion but rather *appeasing and harnessing* them toward local reciprocity, for instance, through egocentric status implicatures that align them up with ethical projects. To illustrate this, I opened this chapter with the story of Wendell Phillips and how he marshaled very provincial prides—in Boston, Massachusetts, and New England—in the service of resisting the slave bounty-hunting business.

The sociological and rhetorical analysis that follows reveals the impossibility of separating altruism toward distant strangers from abundant status implicatures in abolitionist public address. The proto-humanitarianism of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century abolitionism was thoroughly shaped by the status dynamics of a variety of religious and political fields (Stamatov 2013). The abolitionists marshaled, transmuted, and channeled the volatility of status sensitivities into quintessential social movement emotions, like indignation, solidarity, outrage, and moral righteousness. In this way, abolitionist protest rhetoric seamlessly blurs altruistic and egocentric moral emotions together.

Affect, Big Rhetoric, Creativity: A New ABCs of Social Change

'Indignant hearts' abounded in abolitionism. While the presence of anger has been well observed in previous social movement research, as reviewed above, I approach it as one of the moral emotions in this work, giving a more foundational role to them and the rhetorical creativity they stimulate

and are stimulated by. This section more fully articulates the rhetorical perspective I bring to the sociology of social movements, and I shall outline some of the rhetorical tradition's main contributions to the study of affect, performance, and creativity in protest. What work can the concept of rhetoric do for the microsociology of social change? Here I tap into the theoretical vision of *big rhetoric*, a general anthropological–hermeneutical view of rhetoric as essential to a wide variety of human social practices.

Rhetorical theory highlights the intentions, uses, and effects of meaning-making.[19] Rhetoric is not so much a particular form of culture as it is the performative dimension of culture. In Kenneth Burke's classic formulation, *all symbolic language is action* (Burke 1966). Or as several rhetorical theorists have put it more recently, there is no 'zero-degree rhetoric' in culture (Strecker and Tyler 2009; cf. Simonson 2014). Which is to say, cultural action is always doing something to someone for some purpose. Traditionally, rhetoric has been introduced as the arts of persuasion, but there is also an alternative lineage of rhetoricians who prefer a more inclusive definition of rhetoric as any communicative action that moves, incites, or produces social effects of any sort (Carrithers 2009:6; Gross and Kemmann 2005). Rhetoric is a dynamic performative dimension of social life that intersects with culture and communication. As I understand it, the rhetorical perspective examines how and why people try to get things done through a variety of semiotic modalities, including but not limited to linguistic communication. When using the concept in this 'bigger' sense, I shall speak of *anthropological rhetoric*. The term is meant to convey a sense of rhetoric as the practical purposes motivating everyday meaning-making. One promise of big rhetoric, as I elaborate below, is achieving a better understanding of the actual experiential and affective processes of mobilization and social change. I draw upon the philosophical–anthropological hermeneutic of Burke, Kennedy, and others in viewing rhetoric as that 'sense of urge and energy' to act upon others and the world to alter and change reality (the phrase is actually from the anthropologist Carrithers 2009).[20]

The usual prototype of rhetoric is formal persuasive oratory or the practice of public speaking. When talking about these public speaking activities, I use the more narrow term *oratorical rhetoric* qua a subspecies of *anthropological rhetoric*. Oratorical rhetoric is the more conventional conception of rhetoric extending back to antiquity. Aristotle defined rhetoric as the art of probable demonstration in public. He envisioned its use most commonly for purposes of political deliberation. The Western rhetorical tradition often followed the view of rhetoric as a mode and style of speak-

ing through language: rhetoric is the kind of speech based upon practical reason (*phronesis*) for purposes of persuasion. It consists of arguments that mix together logic and assumption presented for an audience to judge. As a specific type of speech occurring in specific settings, rhetoric differs from most ordinary conversations in its level of reflective, monologic, and partisan qualities (Farrell 1993).

Oratorical rhetoric can be conversational in style, but it typically has a more judicial or cumulative form than an ordinary conversation. In contrast, anthropological rhetoric includes both formal and informal speech. It views both of them as kinds of semiotic modalities operating with communicative purposes in mind.

Lovingly nicknamed 'big rhetoric' by contemporary theorists, anthropological rhetoric refers to any human remaking of reality by means other than the use of force (Fahnestock 2013; Schiappa 2001). Similarly, Wayne Booth (2004) defines rhetoric as 'the entire range of resources that human beings share for producing effects on one another by the use of signs.' Rhetoric is the possibility, intention, and medium of remaking the socio-emotional world through meaningful human action. Big rhetoric stresses the practical, cultural, and constitutive properties of communicative action. This broader conception of big rhetoric is inspired by the writings of Kenneth Burke (1966), George Kennedy (1992), among others. Their theoretical heirs recognize the rhetorical dimension as being more inclusive in principle than persuasion and linguistic components per se. For example, emotions are not just the motives or effects of rhetorics—they are rhetorics. Even the nonverbal expression of emotion is its own semiotic modality of communication. With or without language, moral emotions are psychophysiological dispositions and signals orientated to correct or at least remake-the-world in miniature, and hence, have a rhetorical dimension.

As a mode of pragmatist thinking, rhetoric provides a useful redescription of the conditions of the possibility of social change.[21] Both rhetorical theory and pragmatism highlight human situatedness and creativity in the material world. They both share an epistemic interest in the social situatedness of human cognition and action, how humans can intelligently revise ineffectual beliefs as a result of mediated encounters with the real. Their main theoretical strength comes from how they envision an ontological dialectic between culture, the world, and human creativity—the practical problem-solving adjustments of things in relationship to the self. Creativity suggests that humans work innovatively within and through the systems conditioning them (Csikzentmihalyi 1996; Perrin

2006). In situations of self-doubt and social uncertainty—those vintage Heideggerian moments of 'breakdown' in Dasein's practical being-in-the-world (Heidegger 1962)—human action shines in its capabilities for learning, recalibrating, and bolstering intentionality (not to be confused with 'teleological' instrumental rationality for Joas 1996). In both pragmatism and rhetorical theory, human action is desirous and creative: desirous in the sense of feeling those urges and energies to adapt and adjust; creative in the sense of imaging alternatives through practical problem solving. This is the *homo rhetoricus* of anthropological rhetoric: how humans collectively respond to practical failures and sufferings through creative meaning-making.

Unfortunately, pragmatist social theories remain incomplete when it comes to contentious politics. They are not immune from the 'cognitive bias' that has likewise afflicted contemporary sociological theories of culture, power, and action. The problem is that emotion has a millennia-old history of being seen as derivative and dependent upon the beliefs of the mind. From Aristotle to Descartes to Geertz, emotions have been claimed to be derivative of cognitive appraisals and/or culture. Similarly, the role of affect in stimulating creativity is mostly overlooked, for instance, in pragmatist Hans Joas's reconstruction of the conditions of the possibility of intentional action and the collective intentionality of democracy (Joas 1996). He singles out situatedness, corporeality, and sociality as the main ingredients of creativity, yet his anthropology is so minimalist that he disavows any substantive conception of the moral emotions (his Gehlen-inspired philosophical anthropology hints of Sartre's view of human subjectivity as pure nothingness). This leaves no room for the motivational role of affect in driving the creative problem-solving activities so well highlighted by pragmatism.

In pragmatism and rhetorical theory, we have a remarkable, and theoretically rare, account of the conditions of the possibility of social change. In contrast to Joas's pragmatic action theory, rhetorical theory touches more upon the affective dimension in thinking about intentionality, the impulses, and energies of world (re)making. Unfortunately, some theorists (surely poststructuralist) of big rhetoric treat affect as a vague naturalistic impulse of all things toward motion. These big rhetoric approaches are promising given their dialectical realism, historicity, and dispositionalism. But we can do them one better by tethering anthropological rhetoric more closely to human emotionality. By centering more upon the moral emotions, big rhetoric (and pragmatism) can improve how we study collective action of all kinds.

Taking off in recent decades, the so-called affective sciences are finally able to overcome the persistent 'cognitive bias' of Western philosophy and social theory. Adequately in my mind, they do so by destabilizing if not inverting our picture of the relations between emotion and reason, affect and belief (after meticulous experimental research). In the mid-twentieth century, Sylvan Tomkins considered affect to be the 'primary motivational system' that adjudicated between drives and cognitive demands. Psychologists after Tomkins have demonstrated how drastically emotions shape our sociocognitive perceptions, expectations, judgments, and behaviors (see Keltner et al. 2014). Obvious though it may be, your chances of being helped by someone are much greater if they are in a good mood. Your chances of writing skeptical critical prose, on the flip side, are greater if you are depressed (ibid). Any future (collective) action theory must acknowledge that emotion and moods matter hugely in communicative and practical social action (Doan 2012; Silver 2011).

The list of activities involving some 'primary process' of affect keeps growing (i.e., some limbic or subcortical neuroaffective activity).[22] Emotional processing is central to the 'fast thinking' part of the brain that the psychologist Daniel Kahneman (2011) conveniently labels System 1. Affective valences and associations frequently generate the heuristics drawn upon in processes of decision-making, efficiently so if not always correctly (Kahneman 2011). In other words, humans often make judgments rapidly and unconsciously based solely upon an affective processing or read of the situation (the 'affect heuristics' of System 1). Emotions in principle can also take the form of an automatic bodily reaction that precedes and informs neocortex cognition and language-use (Turner 2007). Collins (1993) has argued that all rationality has affective foundations, an insight not without some psychological evidence (Damasio 1994). Lastly, Haidt's examination of the moral emotions, including anger, looks at how they serve rapid-fire functions of intuition. Their prosocial bias, he argues, influences everything from moral attitudes to political preferences (Haidt 2012; cf. Shweder 2003).

When these implications are appreciated, affect theory has the potential to reconstruct our microsociology and to enable a new human-emotions perspective on how social movements keep moving or fail to. Humans are always already affectively engaged in the world. First, to the microsociologists, what is a social 'situation' if not a detached strip or artificial slice of the temporally changing configurations of the socioemotional stream of human interactions? The 'social' is always already relational and dynamic

(Emirbayer 1997; Emirbayer and Goldberg 2005). It is affective through and through—human emotionality is a motive, medium, and outcome of social action. In the end, 'situation' is an arbitrary term for describing what is happening in the socioemotional order, through affective meanings, and how lived relationships between people are changing—these being constitutive of 'definitions of the situation' (Heise 2007). Social situations exist because of the ongoing human sensitivity toward affectively valenced social affordances, that is, the socioemotional cues of other people, and how their embodied semiotic 'calls forth' creative action (Joas 1996). Psychophysiological affects can be more or less automatically aroused by happenings in the interactional order, via the relational social implicatures communicated by others and/or tacit temporary realignments to the operative pregiven status hierarchy. Inversely, socially molded feeling-states, emotional energy, and moods come together to guide, drive, and adjust interpersonal behavior in an ongoing mutual-feedback loop. The socioemotional stream of human relationships flows on (Castoriadis calls it 'social magma'). Social reality evolves and emerges from we interacting socioemotional pods and processes. Thus, new 'situations' are always already mediated by affective conditioning through interaction, which continually cumulates, maintains, and updates the associative 'personal-world' nexus of action (Kahneman 2011; cf. Collins 2004).

Second, social movements revisited in this light are extra-institutional transpositions of more primary collective-emotional processes of problem-solving that have an affective stimulus. Social movements consist of protest rhetorics that emerge as creative problem-solving responses to frustrating encounters with the all-too-real sacrifices required for some by society (i.e., inequality, suffering, alienation). As the pragmatists observe, impulses to creativity arise when our habitual beliefs fall out of tune with the environment. New actions and adjustments then take place that either adapt the self or alter reality so that a better 'fit' can be found.

Another way of putting this would be to say that social movement processes are animated by all so anthropological 'urges and energies' to remake social reality, sometimes even according to alternative imaginaries created *ex nihilo* (Castoriadis 1987; cf. Clemens 2007). The aim to adjust society or some subsystem of society that is not working out adequately is after all the domain of rhetoric par excellence. Now, having anchored rhetoric in human emotionality, we are in a better position to see what specific collective-emotional processes are crucial to the formation of social movements.[23] The question becomes, what emotions are produced by those

Heideggerian moments of practical breakdown when humans become aware of a lack of fit in the affectively conditioned nexus of personal-worlds vis-à-vis social realities? When business as usual, habits, and motivational ends are thwarted within society, *frustration* is an immediate oft-automatic emotional response. Negative emotions serve as initial cues and impulses to the rhetorical creativity that moves social movements. Not coincidentally, the most salient emotion associated with impediments that frustrate intentional action is *anger*. Anger and related negative emotions arise when worldly resistance to our projects and habits is encountered (on the phenomenological origins of anger in goal frustration, see Katz 1999). Again, according to Kemper (2011), anger is the emotion that arises when the frustrations of status loss are externally attributed, being channeled into what sociologist Abigail Saguy (2013) entitles a 'blame frame.' In externalizing attribution, and by rapidly prepping 'potency' reactions, anger is a crucial moral–emotional resource for many movement processes.

Of course, widespread anger or frustration is not a sufficient condition for movement formation, but it seems to be a necessary one minimally as well as being a crucial resource in itself for movement persistence. Previous sociologists have noted that some presence of positive emotion (e.g., confidence, self-efficacy, and hope) also seems to be part of the collective-emotional catalyst (what McAdam 1999 and Flam 2005 refer to as *cognitive* and *emotional liberation*, respectively). No doubt, the resources of positive emotion are distributed unequally across society, helping to explain why the modern social strata most likely to participate in protest tend to be 'from the middle' rather than from the poorest classes (Turner 2015; I discuss how exceptions to this 'rule' may arise in Chaps. 5 and 6). Here, my main point is that social movement processes are abundantly and substantively affective throughout their entire lifecycle, that specific and partly innate kinds of human emotionality stimulate protest rhetoric and are stimulated by it.

The perspective articulated above applies well to other social movement processes in addition to mobilization: to dynamics of problematization, persuasion, persistence, attrition, and even dissolution. In studying these other processes, I likewise recommend attention be paid to the moral emotions, what is happening with them and how are they being mined or re-attuned? Specifically, how is status claimsmaking, implicit bids for status and power in protest rhetoric, influencing the moral–emotional experience of challengers and their onlookers? WUNC displays are just one specimen of the wider category of status rhetoric. Moving beyond the

affective stimuli of movements, status-oriented contentious performances are effective because of our moral–emotional attunements.

The creative collective problem-solving efforts of social movements, qua anthropological and oratorical rhetorics, have an affective stimulus. Our socioemotional instincts are highly sensitive to social wrongs or offenses to community, especially toward disorder, unfairness, lack of reciprocity, lack of care for dependents, and so on. Negative moral emotions are produced by the rapid, oft-automatic affective ascertainment of such social wrongs, with moral–emotional sentiments responding automatically to practical social frustrations. *Anger* is the pivotal moral emotion for movement processes because it combines the feeling-states of frustration with the psychophysiological 'potency' arousals that generate a sense of self-efficacy and that prep dispositional action (to overcome the obstacles causing frustration). Hence, the psychophysiology of anger is common motivator behind so many of the moral–emotional manifestations that appear in social movements, for example, moral outrage, indignation, contempt, righteous condemnation. While other moral emotions can serve the same constitutive interests in protest rhetoric as anger does, paying closer attention to anger is particularly useful in elucidating the fundamental interconnections between social movements, emotions, and rhetoric. In its distinctive configuration of negative emotion and self-efficacy prepping, anger is the common denominator of affect that stimulates and contributes to diverse rhetorical performances of social-problems construction, blame frames, and alternative status imaginaries.

Finally, if situations are at root ongoing socioemotional configurations, the social situations that often trigger anger are the ones in which *status* is at play. In other words, the affective affordances that provoke anger automatically largely have to do with violations of routine or events in the interactive status order. Like the definition of the situation, distributions of status are conditioned by socioemotional relationships or webs of affective attachments. Treating others with deference, for example, usually includes some moral–emotional component of gratitude, respect, and awe (Haidt has analyzed these latter emotions as the *other-praising category* of moral emotion). According and withholding status can also be potentially sub-linguistic socioemotional processes (we could look at how primates negotiate status hierarchies, for instance, as sociologist Jonathan Turner has in Turner 2007; see also my Methodological Appendix). Likewise, successfully receiving high status itself is a sort of emotional resource. Status seems to be *the* moral–emotional resource par excellence.

In the picture that emerges from incorporating rhetoric and the affective sciences into social movement theory, the relational socioemotional drama of status trips, steers, and channels the moral–emotional capacities of humans. This applies to both the positive emotions of deference and the negative emotions of anger. Affective events in the dynamics of status, that is, mediated encounters with the affective affordances of threat or perceived valences of unfairness trigger the imaginative rhetorical urge to remake the social world. In this new microsociological ABCs for social movement studies, charisma has a foundational relationship to the implicit status implicatures of protest rhetoric. The charismatic orator is someone, who, through receiving high status by audiences, has discovered and come to embody a lay learning of the ABCs that are elaborated more explicitly here. On this point, Collins suggestively writes, ‘An individual can dominate other people mainly by taking advantage of their feelings of solidarity…Whoever knows how to arouse these feelings in others has a crucial weapon, to use for good or evil’ (Collins 1991:25–26).

This book shows that abolitionist protest rhetoric was replete with such status-based arousals of the moral emotions. Their contentious performances cited and constructed alternative status imaginaries. In Chap. 6, to take another example, black abolitionists made bids for higher status within the movement, and within society at large, through republican and religious tropes emphasizing the virtuosity of people of color. Now we can see how this is an instance of both oratorical and anthropological rhetoric. Responding to real social frustrations and deprivations having to do with racial inequality in the USA, abolitionists envisioned and communicated a different symbolic distribution of prestige to resist racialization and racial stratification. Alternative symbolic distributions were creatively imagined and applied inventively to the immediate social situation. Through imaginative status claimsmaking, abolitionist public speakers attempted to reconstitute the status dynamics of their immediate reception field. Not surprisingly, given the implied violations of the status order, the heterodoxic status implicatures of black abolitionist discourse were received with emotional intensity—in both extreme positive affects and extreme negative affects among audiences. Abolitionist rhetoric worked or backfired because of the human sensitivities toward social status and near-constant desires for respect. Status claimsmaking in protest rhetoric appeals to, attunes to, and activates our socioemotional instincts.

Social movement culture and rhetoric thus function performatively in aspiring to remake social reality in their own imaginaries. Even multi-

institutional movements not targeting the state hold these aspirations to reconstitute their social context in some way. So if rhetoric is the art of worldly adjustment through gestures and cultural performances, the concept has a special affinity with the processes of social movement protest. Social movements do more than contain campaigns of rhetoric. They are rhetorical organisms aiming to alter social reality. Social movements are affectively animated rhetorics—Angry Rhetorics.

Notes

1. Note that in this passage Phillips is supposing what he would feel if he were black in Boston.
2. In *Slavery By Trial*, DeLombard (2007) shows how thoroughly saturated abolitionist discourse was with legal metaphors of trial by public opinion.
3. According to Charles Tilly, nineteenth-century movements learned and adapted long-enduring repertoires of collective action to local contexts. The very form of the 'social movement' and its demonstrations was contingently assembled together from nineteenth-century scripts combining petitioning, meeting in public, new political ideas about popular sovereignty, and single-issue reform organizations such as antislavery societies (cf. Rudbeck 2012).
4. Tilly's theory of contentious performances is only minimally 'performative' in this sense. In the main, he avoids the intellectual tradition of performance theory (see Eyerman 2005 for discussion).
5. Yang (2005:81); Jochen Kleres (2005) describes how the fall of the Berlin Wall led to the demobilization of eastern German gay and lesbian activism.
6. 'One could well say that everyday life reality-construction is an emotional process, and that the emotions that uphold reality come forth in intense form when the social reality is broken' (Collins 1990:30).
7. *Emotional energy* is one of the key concepts of Collins's interaction ritual chain theory. However, it is fundamentally a metaphor for him. There are actually many different types, levels, and manifestations of emotional energy depending upon the sort of social rituals. If there is a common denominator across emotional energies, it is the anticipatory confidence that rituals of the present and future will be successful. Emotional energies have both a 'personal side' and a 'group side.' The personal side is individual self-confidence and enthusiasm for taking the initiative in social situations. It is simultaneously physiological and psychological, ranging from pride (high emotional energy) to shame (low emotional energy). It can also be stored in cognitive expectations regarding one's ability to give orders (power rituals) and/or

be accepted by a social group (status rituals). The 'group side' of emotional energy is moral solidarity, which manifests itself in group-supportive and group-defensive behaviors, such as punishment of ritual offenders and righteous anger toward them. Collins (1990) also describes the contagious feelings of moral panics as being the stronghold of group solidarity over the individual (we will see the special relevance of these insights on righteous anger and moral panics in the chapters that follow).

8. How the microsociological processes of abolitionist persistence worked through protest rhetoric does not adequately fit into Collins's theory because of his view of emotional energy as an outcome of ritual elements internal to the 'situation' relatively removed from ('hierarchical') status inequalities and his rather restrictive 'horizontal' conception of social status as network-based. Ritual theory actually thwarts an appreciation of how antislavery frames acquired their affective 'umph' through status claims-making, which in turn was conditioned by the macrocultural frames (or status-beliefs) contained in widely distributed stereotypes (Ridgeway 2011).
9. Thomas J. Scheff (1988) distinguishes between communication mechanics (or language) and what he terms the 'deference-emotion system' in social action. This system refers to the social–psychological processes enabling norm-based action and thus social conformity. It operates primarily through the specific emotions of pride and shame, the two 'master social emotions.' Arising from the perception of others' evaluations of the self, variable self-feeling states of pride and shame are continuously present in action and provide useful cues concerning the state of the social bond. Empirically, the two systems of social action work in tandem with each other: ordinary language-use (the communication system) is saturated with Goffman's constant signaling of social worth (the emotion-deference system). The two overlap even in banal formal features of rhetoric, such as the conversational rhythm of turn taking. Interrupting someone who is talking, instead of listening, is not just a neutral form of communication but an implicit status statement, as conversation analysis has shown.
10. For Collins, status groups are membership-based culturally oriented communities composed of people who know each other and meet to exchange some form of cultural capital or distinction. 'Status groups [consist] empirically of people who are habitual conversational partners in nonhierarchical situations' (Collins 1987:201). Yet, Collins also asserts that all rituals have a status component: 'Every interaction is producing both status membership effects and power effects' (ibid). By definition, rituals include some persons and exclude others; they attempt to focus join attention on some persons and not others. At other times, he distinguishes between *power-rituals* per se and interaction rituals that are primarily oriented upon the production and reproduction of status. *Status rituals*, in a more Weberian

sense, are a class of interaction rituals organized by tight-knit cultural communities. The main status rituals in the contemporary USA are in the spheres of higher education, entertainment, religion (though perhaps less so today), and civil society, for example, modern philanthropy and charity work (Collins and Hickman 1991; Collins 2000). Unfortunately, Collins is needlessly leading us into terminological confusion here given how psychologists and indeed most sociologists use the term 'status' more interactively (including Ridgeway, Kemper, Scheff, and many others; see Sauder 2005 for an excellent overview). To avoid these conceptual and terminologies confusions surrounding 'status,' I propose we restrict the meaning of phrase 'status groups' to the Weber–Collins line of thought, while keeping a more general Goffman–Ridgeway understanding of 'status' itself as 'a relationship of deference and esteem among actors' (Sauder 2005). Racial status, gender status, religious status, and other kinds of status are *vertical/hierarchical* types of stratification dependent upon cultural frames or stereotypes (thus my usage of status terminology corresponds more to Ridgeway than Collins).

11. The branch of microsociology known as expectations states theory has excelled at analyzing such status inequalities in group settings as well as how they are perpetuated through interpersonal communication (rhetoric) and emotion. In Ridgeway's iteration, cultural beliefs about status—categoric 'person-construing' frames or stereotypes—influence the social expectations brought into cooperative interactions. Specifically, stereotypical expectations concerning *competence*, a core modern manifestation of status, influence how people treat each other and how people perform in cooperative tasks as a result. In turn, relative differences in performance materially reproduce status inequalities. Hence, for Ridgeway, status inequality is a relatively autonomous self-persisting dynamic in modern societies. Of particular relevance here, Ridgeway (2006) observes the influence of status-belief expectations upon the emotional dynamics of groups. Emotions such as confidence, pride, shame, shyness, and aggression are strongly biased by status inequalities. Negative affects tend to arise when performance expectations are thwarted. A common example is this is when status-subordinated people exert more agency than their stereotype would suggest. This could include talking more, interrupting, speaking with authority (leadership), or defying the deference expected of status-subordinates. Such a situation often creates anger, contempt, and potentially violent backlash against the status offender (e.g., against professional women leaders in Ridgeway 2011). A second related concept that will be of enormous value in later chapters is the 'status binds' that subordinates face. As I discuss in Chaps. 5 and 6, a status bind refers to a no-win situation, the lack of any meaningfully non-derogatory course of action. It is

the counterpart to the relative privilege or freedoms of superordinates. I will identify several status binds in public speaking, for example, when status superordinates are relatively freer to incite violent emotion (pathos) in a way that status subordinates are not (see Chaps. 5–7).

12. Ascriptions of status draw upon the cultural imaginaries of status-belief systems, such as the unequal distribution of competence via primary person-construal devices like gender and race (Ridgeway 2011). In status construction theory, status-beliefs are formulated through the repeated, relational experience of material resource advantage–disadvantages, which eventually become codified through stereotypes (Berger et al. 2002; Ridgeway 2011; Ridgeway and Bourg 2004). Status-beliefs can then be diffused in the macrocultural order in categories and symbols that unequally distribute esteem, competence, and worthiness.
13. Frame analysis is currently the predominant way of addressing this question. While there are some affinities with the frame analysis of frame-alignment processes, rhetoric directs our attention more to the creative invention of compelling arguments in response to some set of situational exigencies that seem to call forth a collective response (on the rhetorical situation, see Bitzer 1968). If a frame mostly describes the conceptual content of powerful cultural metaphors, rhetoric describes the performative intentions, implicatures, and effects of cultural action. Rhetorical leaders speak in response to contingent events and they are motivated by an intentional urge to remake the social world (Carrithers 2009, pp. ix-x). James Jasper (2010) similarly contrasts rhetorical to other cultural approaches in social movements theory. He proposes that rhetoric 'encourages the cultural analyst to be precise about what purposes and outcomes the players seek' (p. 79). Questions about intent, strategy, and effects become more important (on the strategic perspective, see Jasper 2004, 2006).
14. Sociologist Theodore Kemper is a structural interactionist, another important trajectory of post-Goffman microsociological theory. In Kemper's status–power theory of interaction, emotion is the physiological by-product of status–power claimsmaking efforts based on whether they fail or succeed. For instance, feelings of *anger* are triggered when an alter is seen as being the cause of the status loss of the self. Kemper labels the feelings of backlash against a status-offender the emotion of *contempt*. In his writings can be found many similar pithy explanations of the basic emotions, addressing in what sort social situations happiness, sadness, shame, guilt, and so on are likely to arise (Kemper 1978, 1990, 2011). Emotional experience is the result of interactional outcomes in the status–power matrix. The social reference groups that an individual has internalized mediate such experiences. Humans tend to be sensitive to status claims based upon the reference groups they were socialized into. Belonging to multiple ref-

erence groups roughly determines which set of status claims one finds relevant and emotionally pertinent.

15. Distinguishing between positive and negative emotions is a well-established convention in the sociology of emotions. The danger is that researchers use these terms uncritically in ways reflecting the normative evaluations of our hegemonic emotion culture. In fact, negative emotions can be 'positive,' that is, prosocial, healthy, or effective, as I will discuss below.
16. The best general textbook published in the psychology of emotion writes, 'We are exquisitely sensitive to who deserves what, and to cheaters' (Keltner et al. 2014 in *Understanding Emotions. Third Edition*).
17. Social–psychological experiments observe that even third-party witnesses experience the dispositional arousal of anger that is desirous of corrective action. The full Haidt quote: 'Anger is perhaps the most underappreciated moral emotion. A search of PsycINFO shows that anger is usually thought of as an immoral emotion…a dark primal urge that must be suppressed by cultural and educational forces. But for every spectacular display of angry violence, there are many more mundane cases of people indignantly standing up for what is right or angrily demanding justice for themselves or others' (Haidt 2003:856)
18. I echo psychologists of emotion who identify assertion as one of a few universal emotional dispositions (four namely, *attachment*, *affection*, *assertion*, and *aversion*; see Keltner et al. 2014).
19. Among the few social movement scholars who actually discuss rhetoric in this more nuanced sense—rather than as a mere synonym for framing—James Jasper suggests that rhetoric 'encourages the cultural analyst to be precise about what purposes and outcomes the players seek' (Jasper 2010:79). Rhetoric is *strategic* symbolic action in its emotional impulses, media, and effects (cf. Jasper 2004, 2006).
20. Here, I must provide Carrither's marvelous elucidation of anthropological ('big') rhetoric in full: 'What does the notion of rhetoric do for, and to, the notion of culture and the practice of explaining cultures and societies? In the first place, it acts as another therapeutic corrective: our customary ways of talking and writing about society or societies had almost always assumed that there was something automatic at play, such that things could just go on and on without will. Rhetoric, on the other hand, places the will to make something happen, to make something change (or to make something abide against change), at the very foundation of our ideas about ourselves. It recognizes, in other words, the constant itch to adjust, move, improve, remove, and overcome the momentary and not so momentary conditions and needs which are a part of our, and indeed all animals', circumstances of life. So the urge among us, as a so very social species, to act on others, or to persuade others to act for or with you, is therefore foun-

dational; it is to be expected, just as change is to be expected; and therefore the view we have across human life is one in which people are always seeking to convince one another for this purpose or that…[The *palaestrum/* wrestling school captures] the sense of urge and energy on one hand, and the sense of the world's resistant material on the other, that is immanent in the notion of rhetoric' (Carrithers 2009:ix-x).

21. Peter Simonson is my main instigator on theorizing the intersections between pragmatism and rhetoric. Hope I got it right, Pete!
22. The notion of 'primary processes' is of course from Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*, a conception that continues to influence contemporary dual-process models of cultural action (Vaisey 2009). On this note, it should be recognized that there were many important intellectuals who resisted cognitivism long before American microsociology took off. The main ones that come to mind are David Hume, Friedrich Nietzsche, Sigmund Freud, Martin Heidegger, John-Paul Sartre, and no doubt others I am forgetting.
23. In other words, my theoretical reconstruction of social movements through big rhetoric leads to an even greater appreciation of the affective dimension of social movements. Homo rhetoricus is affected by socializing and socializes through affects. My argument here mimics Joas's reconstruction of the social conditions of the possibility of rational action (Joas 1996), but instead I have sketched a possible reconstruction of the socioemotional conditions of the possibility of collective action while retaining his view of creativity as problem solving.

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CHAPTER 3

Moving Contexts of Abolition

Downtown Philadelphia, construction of the new civic center Pennsylvania Hall was finally complete by the summer of 1838. Reformers planned it to be a place for lectures, conventions, debates, and worship. Its actual construction was the purely voluntary product of the 'organizing impulse' of local grassroots associations (Schudson 1999). Abolitionist societies had worked hard at fundraising and garnering support for the project. The over $40,000 price tag was raised by selling thousands of shares to white and black philanthropists and entrepreneurs of the city. Much of the principal was earned through the hard work of the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society (PFASS) under the leadership of Lucretia Mott.

At the opening dedication, abolitionists affirmed that the building stood as a testament to the antislavery principles of liberty and human rights. Indoors, the hall was majestic by nineteenth-century standards. It 'could hold 3,000 people, with meeting rooms available for smaller gatherings. Design highlights included gas lighting and a ventilator at the center of the ceiling that was shaped like a sunflower with "gilt rays." At the center of the sunflower was a concave mirror, "which at night sparkled like a diamond." Over the stage was an arch inscribed with the words, "Virtue, Liberty, and Independence"' (Faulkner 2011:76).[1] PFASS members served an opening feast in its honor, or at least the best buffet one could manage when limited to nonalcoholic beverages and 'free produce' not tainted by slave labor.

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Abolitionist women from around the nation congregated together the third week of May to hold the second annual Anti-Slavery Convention of American Women in the brand new hall. The conference schedule featured a series of well-respected speakers and events promoting antislavery awareness. After a year of almost steady circuit travel and lecturing, the Grimké sisters would be in attendance with the by-now legendary Angelina Grimké slated to speak.

Born in the South, Angelina and Sarah Grimké were raised wealthy on a slavery plantation near Charleston, South Carolina. They vividly recalled for audiences childhood memories of screaming slaves being whipped. After joining her sister Sarah in Philadelphia to get away from her unrepentant family, Angelina soon committed herself to William Lloyd Garrison's program of immediate emancipation as a 'cause worth dying for' and was promptly banned by the state of South Carolina from ever returning to Charleston (on the life of Angelina Grimké, see Ceplair 1989; Lerner 2004).

From 1837 to 1838, a long grueling lecture tour of New England by the Grimké sisters acquired national notoriety after they publicly and blatantly violated standards of feminine propriety by speaking before multiple 'promiscuous audiences' (i.e., assemblies that tolerated and intermixed both 'sexes,' Zaeske 1995). Soon people opposed to the very idea of women public speakers started to heckle and berate Angelina as a 'Devilina' (see Chap. 5 for more detail). Of significance to our story, Angelina was that week in May also wedding the foremost Western antislavery crusader, Theodore Dwight Weld (see Abzug 1980).

Several other prominent women abolitionist leaders would be speaking as well. Abby Kelley was preparing for her first public antislavery speech (Salerno 2005). She would soon be asked to join the executive committee of the American Anti-Slavery Society (AASS). Her nomination would result in the schism of the organization between progressive feminist-leaning Garrisonians and more conservative abolitionists who did not think it proper for women to conduct meeting business (Kraditor 1969). Lucretia Mott, long known for her Quaker ministry and interracial hospitality, was also active in the planning and proceedings of the convention. She had been insistent that her black 'sisters' be encouraged to attend (Faulkner 2011). In fact, black women's turnout and participation in 1838 proved to be considerably higher than the previous 1837 convention in New York City.

Trouble was brewing though even on the first day of the convention. A rumor caught fire in the city that Angelina Grimké had actually married a black

man instead of Theodore Weld. Fears were stoked that Pennsylvania Hall was the new site of an abolitionist conspiracy to encourage the 'amalgamation' of the races. Local newspapers printed reports of the indecency of white men being 'seen gallanting black women to and from the Hall' (Faulkner 2011:76). Placards and broadsides denouncing the convention kept cropping up across the city. One of them read, 'Whereas a convention for the avowed purpose of effecting the immediate abolition of slavery in the Union is now in session in this city, it behooves all citizens, who entertain a proper respect for the right of property, and the preservation of the Constitution of the United States, to interfere, forcibly if they must, and prevent the violation of those pledges heretofore held sacred' (Faulkner 2011:77).

The newspaper reports were not entirely mistaken in their charges of interracial mixing. The convention was radically more integrated than most northern institutions. By the third day of the convention, a crowd of thousands had gathered outside the hall. Like other anti-abolitionist mobs erupting across the country in the past few years, this one quickly progressed from heckling and insults to vandalism and violence. They lofted rocks and brickbats (broken bricks) through the windows of the hall. Nevertheless, the abolitionist women indoors attempted to keep on schedule. In response, they raised their voices all the louder to be heard over the din and racket all around them. At one point, during the public chaos of May 16, Angelina Grimké rose to spoke in spite of the great noise. Fortunately, a newspaper transcriber was present, recording her lines along with the loud interruptions (indicated by the bracket marks [ ] below). Here are a few excerpts from that speech:

> [Just then stones were thrown at the windows,—a great noise without, and commotion within] What is a mob? What would the breaking of every window be? What would the levelling of this Hall be? Any evidence that we are wrong, or that slavery is a good and wholesome institution? What if the mob should now burst in upon us, break up our meeting and commit violence upon our persons—would this be anything compared with what the slaves endure? No, no: and we do not remember them 'as bound with them,' if we shrink in the time of peril, or feel unwilling to sacrifice ourselves, if need be, for their sake. [Great Noise.]
>
> Many persons go to the South for a season, and are hospitably entertained in the parlor and at the table of the slaveholder. They never enter the huts of the slaves; they know nothing of the dark side of the picture, and they return home with praises on their lips of the generous character of those with whom they had tarried. Or if they witnessed the cruelties

> of slavery, by remaining silent spectators they have naturally become callous—an insensibility has ensued which prepares them to apologize even for barbarity. Nothing but the corrupting influence of slavery on the hearts of the Northern people can induce them to apologize for it; and much will have been done for the destruction of Southern slavery when we have so reformed the North that no one here will be willing to risk his reputation by advocating or even excusing the holding of men as property. The South know it, and acknowledge that as fast as our principles prevail, the hold of the master must be relaxed. [Another outbreak of mobocratic spirit, and some confusion in the house.]
>
> [Shoutings, stones thrown against the windows, &c.] There is nothing to be feared from those who would stop our mouths, but they themselves should fear and tremble. The current is even now setting fast against them. If the arm of the North had not caused the Bastille of slavery to totter to its foundation, you would not hear those cries. A few years ago, and the South felt secure, and with a contemptuous sneer asked, 'Who are the abolitionists? The abolitionists are nothing?'—Ay, in one sense they were nothing, and they are nothing still. But in this we rejoice, that 'God has chosen things that are not to bring to nought things that are' [Mob again disturbed meeting.] (Grimké [1838] in Lerner 2004:271–273).

The disruptions from outside showed no sign of stopping. Attacks on the building by miscellaneous projectiles were getting worse. According to one historian of the event, the 'white women [abolitionists] may not have appreciated the real dangers faced by black women when participating in interracial antislavery organizations' (Salerno 2005:87). Angelina though was starting to come to terms with the danger they were all in should the out-of-control situation literally turn incendiary.

Hence, she proposed that white women link arms with their black sisters to buffer them while exiting the building. This was surely a kind gesture but not the best one for diffusing crowds angry over abolitionism's supposed amalgamationist plot. Fortifying their sister solidarity with pride, the women marched out of the hall and into the street turmoil. They were physically pushed in their egress, hissed at, and assaulted with slurs: 'Down with the Quaker, down with the nigger's friend' (quoted in Faulkner 2011:79). Yet none of the women were seriously injured as they left the scene as fast as they could. The following day, the still active crowd stormed the hall and set fire to the stage. By that night, the glories of Pennsylvania Hall had been reduced to ash and ember.

Who Were the Abolitionists?

Antebellum abolitionists in American history are intermittently considered nothing and everything. The radical abolitionists themselves embraced their weakness and folly as resolutely as martyrs who train themselves for fate's necessity. In Grimké's prophetic vision above, the apparent foolishness of the abolitionists would ultimately be vindicated by a deeper providence. Abolitionism as a sustained campaign of protest upset many northerners as well as southerners, and not purely because of their commitment to the abolition of slavery, which after all was not exactly a novel idea at the time. Contempt for abolitionism stemmed from how the abolitionists egregiously violated the dominant racial and gender status quo. The very word 'abolitionist' to most northerners was loathed, more of an insult in their eyes than a badge of pride.

By examining Grimké's speech above, we learn more about what and whom the abolitionists defined themselves against. This being-against posture, the 'anti' stance-taking now so common in civil society, was itself a new phenomenon in the changing repertoires of protest. Abolitionist identity was formed in opposition toward slaveholding, much as the abolitionist social movement *was* the process of constructing slavery as a national moral problem. Taking up an antislavery stance meant *not* being 'callous' or 'insensible,' as unrepentant slaveholders were, and *not* 'remaining silent.' Abolitionists stood against the 'holding of men as property' because they knew it to be, *felt* it to be, an unwarranted cruelty against human nature. They saw themselves as a people of great feeling and sensibility. Their own identity acquired meaning by these contrasts. To them, abolitionism meant feeling a natural sympathy for victims who actually had to endure daily 'violence against their persons.' The speech thus constructed an antislavery reference group by drawing symbolic boundaries along lines of emotion and morality. The emotion work of sympathy for the enslaved performed for them symbolic boundaries between the righteous and the callous (cf. Wilkins 2008a, b).

In 1838, Angelina Grimké's rising fame as a renegade reformer matched that of William Lloyd Garrison. As one of the most important early leaders of immediatist abolitionism, her speeches were suffused with dramaturgical performances. Notice, for instance, her deftly Christian-framed treatment of status. In her words, abolitionism sought to change public opinion, winning over 'hearts,' such that no future northerner would be

willing to 'risk his reputation' by condoning or compromising with slavery. Notice as well the operative status implicatures: God, principle, sensibility, and sacrifice are all placed on the side of the abolitionists. Abolitionist orators like Grimké excelled at making bids for status and performing new status imaginaries, not just for the presently gathered antislavery reference group, but also on behalf of the main abolitionist client, enslaved blacks, and in many speeches, black people in general. In speaking on behalf of a client, the abolitionists wove their status together with the status of those not present to represent themselves (in Chap. 5 on gender and ethos in abolitionism, I describe this as the duality of abolitionist ethos).[2]

Historians rarely agree on who counts as an abolitionist.[3] One problem is agreeing upon which ideological threshold of position-taking must be crossed, being a gradualist or an immediatist, being for black civic equality or abolition alone, not to mentioned additional complicating factors, such as level of racial paternalism (e.g., subscribing to racializing beliefs), willingness to compromise (e.g., moral absolutism), degree of support for colonization (e.g., racial separatism), and so on. One convention shared among many historians is to distinguish between 'abolitionist' and 'antislavery.' Pierson clarifies, 'Historians have labeled the radicals who pressed for the most sweeping social changes *the abolitionists* while calling the moderates *antislavery*' (2003:4, *emphasis mine*). The distinction is not an unproblematic one: it adheres to a quite traditional historiographical framework in which the Garrisonians were mostly apolitical religious fanatics in contrast to the sensible antislavery politicians who tried to work out compromises. The abolitionist–antislavery distinction is itself an interesting historical artifact inherited from antebellum political discourse: even then the abolitionists got labeled and dismissed as apolitical for their reluctance to compromise. The so-called 'abolitionists' were despised for their absolutist immediate emancipation slogan and for their ultraist reform stances even by many 'antislavery' sympathizers. They were pejoratively compared to the more highly esteemed policy position of 'colonization' and 'non-extensionism' (despite many of the substantive differences with the latter being relatively small, Oakes 2014; southern politicians did not think there much a difference either). There are many reasons to be skeptical of the distinction's analytical value.

More recent scholarship has suggested that the conventional abolitionist–antislavery distinction smoothed over considerable complexity and ambiguity. Today, historians often prefer to blur the boundaries. Caleb McDaniel (2013) argues that even Garrison the quintessential radical abolitionist was

not as apolitically minded as previous historians have depicted him (see, for instance, historian Bruce Laurie's anti-Garrison polemic in Laurie 2005). Stacey Robertson (2010) shows that the principled factionalism common in New England cliques was less important to the pragmatic coalitional abolitionist movements of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and the old Northwest. Many historians have also rightly noted that the political–apolitical dichotomy thwarts interpretation of black abolitionists who were often highly moralistic and highly political. Their speeches defied the radical–conservative factional divisions of the movement (Ball 2012; Ripley 1991). Thus the many crosscutting ideological differences internal to the movement against slavery makes any simplistic abolitionist–antislavery distinction unfeasible as is the case in fact with most political labels in the USA to this day. Too many antislavery activists get excluded from the social movement heading for minor reasons, like by supporting a more gradual course of emancipation or even by voting for a third-party Liberty politician.[4]

To handle this complexity better without losing the ability to measure the social movement, I here draw upon the theory proposed in the previous chapter in order to sort out the conceptual question of abolitionism's boundaries. In the framework of affect theory, big rhetoric, and creativity, an abolitionist was anyone whose particular 'inner-world' experience of moral emotions, for whatever reason, put them at odds with slavery. Abolitionists *were moved* and subsequently *moved against* slavery. The main benefit of this approach is that its more inclusive scope conditions make the borders of the movement more open to the many multimodalities of antislavery resistance. As suggested in the Introduction, the protest rhetoric that moved abolitionism as process is not limited to discourse, texts, nor the textual records of oratorical rhetoric. The movement also consisted of big-rhetorical forms of meaning-making, a wider range of affective inclinations, urges, and intentions contributing to the delegitimization of slavery. For example, someone whose sentimental inclinations led them to sign a public petition or donate to an antislavery society was an abolitionist. Someone whose anger and contempt toward slaveholders led them to pick up a gun against slave bounty hunters is also an abolitionist albeit in less 'rhetorical' respects. Someone who hosted a covert station for fugitive slaves, whether acting out condescending pity for the weak or out of a sense of obligation to humanity, also counts. The social movement as a whole is much wider than the textual remnants that have survived the tragic wreckage of history. It makes more sense to center our definition in principle upon the broader anthropological rhetoric of

resisting slavery through any semiotic modality so as not to exclude the participation of the subaltern, the murdered, the mute, the illiterate, or the otherwise historically forgotten.

These claims concern conceptual method but they are important. It suggests that we acknowledge that abolitionism's borders as a social movement were more porous and wider than traditionally thought. Thus an abolitionist was someone whose relational configuration of *moral–emotional dispositions* inclined them against slavery so as to compel them to express antislavery sentiments in a variety of possible ways not limited to public address.[5] In other words, true abolitionism included both the self-described 'abolitionists' and people who disliked that label or perhaps had never even heard of it altogether. This analytical definition and reorientation necessarily follows from our discussion of the rhetoric of slavery in the prior chapters.[6]

Who counts as an abolitionist is harder to settle empirically. The broader conception though resonates with the boundary-work contained in Grimké's above speech, by putting the dispositional agency of moral emotions front and center, an abolitionist was anyone who feeling slavery to be a social wrong resisted its power and perpetuity—being moved to move against its *power*. Not coincidentally, the proposed definition also resonates with later Foucault's conceptualization of *resistance*. In his words, abolitionism could be described as a 'plurality of resistances':

> points of resistance are present everywhere in the power network. Hence there is no single locus of great Refusal, no soul of revolt, source of all rebellions, or pure law of the revolutionary. Instead there is a plurality of resistances, each of them a special case: resistances that are possible, necessary, improbable; others that are spontaneous, savage, solitary, concerted, rampant, or violent; still others that are quick to compromise, interested, or sacrificial; by definition, they can only exist in the strategic field of power relations...Are there no great radical ruptures, massive binary divisions, then? Occasionally, yes. But more often one is dealing with mobile and transitory points of resistance, producing cleavages in a society that shift about, fracturing unities and effecting regroupings, furrowing across individuals themselves, cutting them up and remolding them, marking off irreducible regions in them, in their bodies and minds. Just as the network of power relations ends by forming a dense web that passes through apparatuses and institutions, without being exactly localized in them, so too the swarm of points of resistance traverses social stratifications and individual unities. And it is doubtless the strategic codification of these points of resistance that makes a revolution possible (Foucault 1990:95–96).

Foucault came to see that wherever there is power, there is resistance. Mutatis mutandis, I argue that wherever there is slavery, there is abolitionism. Abolitionists challenged the legitimacy of slavery by word and by deed, by nonviolence and by violence. Someone resisting slavery with their feet by fleeing the plantation regime should be included as part of the social movement against slavery—a social movement after all being that crescive permeable structure of preferences and attitudes—even if we have no historical record of their movements. Sometimes the resistance motivated by the socioemotional instincts is sheer survival. The rhetorical dimension can still be located even here in the implication that slavery is not just, that slaves are not 'happy' with their bondage—a frequent claim made by proslavery writers, an argument contradicted by the subaltern quasi-communication of fugitives. All semiotic modes of rhetoric challenging the legitimacy of slavery, whether oral, written, embodied, or tacit, were part of abolitionism.[7]

This discussion does not imply that we cannot get a better sense of what sort of individuals and communities were more likely to participate than others, nor that we cannot obtain a thicker description of what sort of social movement this was. In the next section, I consider several distinguishing cultural and structural properties of the movement (its macroscopics). Then I compose a more detailed social profile of the movement's individual participants (its microscopics). Lastly, I outline some of the more important dynamics of the temporal ecology of the movement as it impacted and creatively adjusted to its main political opponents (its telescopics).

Movement Macroscopics: A Bird's-Eye View

Social movements have a two-way reciprocally dependent yet creative relationship with their cultural and historical context. The dual relationship conditions the affective and rhetorical processes of social movements. The collective moral emotions that launch and sustain a movement direct their outrage against some historically objectivized social wrong. At the same time, moral–emotional experiences are conditioned by dominant emotion cultures and their culturally evaluative schemas of right and wrong. The relationship between context and creativity is even clearer in oratorical protest rhetoric. Eloquent speakers present timely and alternative avenues into the future, while drawing upon past values and memories shared with an audience.

Understanding abolitionist oratory and its function in the social movement requires some historical contextualization especially for twenty-first-century readers who are right to intuit both strangeness and modernity in the movement. Many of our ready-to-hand prototypes of 'social movements' fail to recognize the historical novelties and oddities of abolitionism as a mass religious movement. The early nineteenth century was an unsettled period of momentous change. It was a time shaped by accelerating technological development, widespread religious revivals, exponential population growth, and the rise of modern democratized political parties. The repertoires and frames of collective action were up in the air. Many of our current repertoires of protest, as well as the language of 'social movements,' were in fact forged by moral entrepreneurs during this time period.

In the decades following the War for Independence, the American population actually became more religious. New theologies, denominations, and millennial prophecies swept up individuals from across the nation and their worries away. Mainstream politics, higher education, and voluntary associations were organized by and staffed by the religious (Collins and Hickman 1991; Young 2006). Christianity was superlatively hegemonic as we might say today, and Protestantism had not yet lost its communitarian and totalizing qualities. Though recently disestablished from state rule, religious discourse continued to provide comprehensive scripts and proscriptions for all spheres of life (including codes of ethics in family and in business). Further, many of the organizational models and logics of popular democracy emerged from schemas that were initially religious in nature (Stamatov 2011).

In the antebellum USA, religious institutions were among the most powerful of powers. Religion provided both a basis for social status stratification and a main source of social power—it enabled intensive forms of social control and governance even more so than the still weak state bureaucracies. Which is to say, religion was still the main source of 'political power,' the type of power that regulates and compels obedience (Mann 1986). At the same time, the American religious field was also a driver of vast social changes. The very existence of social movements, among many other features of nascent civil society, had evangelical roots according to Young (2006). The first national campaigns for moral reform, concerning temperance and slavery, were forms of 'confessional protest' that drew upon and fused religious schemas of collective sin and personal confession (Young 2001, 2006).

Abolitionism was as much a religious movement as a social movement. It devised new theologies, rituals, and even opened separate 'come-outer' churches oriented upon antislavery missions. It shares in many of the notable features common to *modern religious social movements* as astutely analyzed by sociologists Nancy Davis and Robert Robinson (2012). Abolitionist rhetoric from the beginning targeted families and individuals in their private lives. As self-described moral suasionists, the abolitionists sought the personal repentance of slaveholders and any northerners complicit with the slave economy. The federal government was not even an initial target at all. Instead, abolitionists *bypassed* the federal state. They engaged in alternative state-like institution-building efforts of their own (this is what Davis and Robinson 2012 refer to as 'bypassing the state'). Abolitionists founded and established new schools, new businesses, new churches, and offered a variety of social services to blacks entangled by discriminatory laws.

Abolitionism comprised the dual 'strict and caring sides' quite common in religious social movements (Davis and Robinson 2012). In other words, the abolitionists were highly concerned with individual moral discipline and personal edification according to emerging middle-class norms of respectability. But the movement also had a strong 'social justice' side as well. It got much of its egalitarian impulse from Christian revivalism, although its social-justice efforts were applied more across racial caste than to the economic poor per se. Abolitionists formed interracial mutual aid societies and associations, some open and public, some more secretive and illegal. Examples include uplift societies, vigilante committees, debt relief funds, land communes, legal services from lawyers, and illegal services from lawbreakers along the Underground Railroad. The wide range of multi-institutional efforts made abolitionism to some extent a subversive 'state within a state,' not only bypassing the state but occasionally embracing mass defiance of state laws, notably the fugitive slave laws sanctioned by the federal constitution.

Importantly, abolitionism was a *multiracial* campaign, much more racially integrated than most religious movements, including other multiracial religious organizations (MROs). Here, we should also note how *mutual* the mutual aid projects of interracial abolitionism were. White abolitionists like Garrison depended substantially upon the patronage of black elites like James Forten (Davis 2014). Further, the white–black collaborations and cross-fertilizations of the 1830s were an important innovative development, helping to persuade many white abolitionists to reject anti-black colonization schemes.

The movement's multiracial character also generated deep internal tensions and dynamics. One example is the *humanitarian* attitude of northern abolitionists, including interestingly many sentiments expressed in black abolitionist discourse.[8] Most northerners were humanitarian in how they practiced sympathy and pity for the pain and suffering of distant strangers (or, more accurately, representations of these distantly imagined others). Diaries reveal white abolitionists meditating upon the torment of the slave and being moved to tears. Expressing moral sensitivity toward pain, historian Margaret Abruzzo (2011) observes, was a new way of performing high religious status. This racializing other-focused discourse gives the caring side of the movement a unique twist. The main social justice sought was an end to the cruelties of slavery, an end to its torture of the body as well as to the effects that the deprivation of human liberty had upon the soul. Today, we are easily alarmed about ambiguities of humanitarian discourse—its victimization, racial condescension, and imperialist ambitions. But all of these critiques can be made of abolitionism as well as a proto-humanitarian movement that simultaneously resisted and reinforced racial status inequalities (i.e., its social movement organizations [SMOs] did not escape many of the difficulties and dynamics of power that afflict most contemporary MROs to this day, see Edwards et al. 2013).

Like religious movements, abolitionism inspired utopian branches that withdrew from urban affairs and founded alternative farms and communes. Some more utopian-minded leaders of the movement resisted the 'single-issue' platform and embraced a wide range of issues, such as women's rights, temperance, church reform, anti-Masonry, and, even in some cases, socialism and labor reform. Such broad multi-issue agendas are another common characteristic of religious social movements (Davis and Robinson 2012). However, the feminist and human rights discourse of the radical wings was much more progressive than the typical strict moral side of religious movements concerning gender and sexuality especially. Such utopian attitudes and 'ultraist' rhetorics were deeply controversial among participants in the movement. Less feminist, conservative abolitionists preferred to keep reform activism grounded solidly in existing churches. Both they and many black abolitionists protested the inclusion of other issues such as women's rights that could detract from the movement's focus on abolishing slavery. They worked together to protect a single-issue platform.

Again, the comparison with Davis and Robinson's ideal–typical *religious* social movement is illustrative. It can be utilized to throw peculiar

elements of the abolitionist movement into sharper relief. First, the 'strict' moralizing side of abolitionism had unexpected crossovers into the 'caring side' oriented upon racial social justice. Several of the most resonant frames in abolitionist rhetoric were oriented upon the personal and sexual sins that, abolitionists claimed, necessarily accompanied the institution of slavery. Motivated by ideals of femininity and masculinity, abolitionists thus criticized slavery's corrosive effects on the black family, manliness, and the innocence of children. Thus, contra Davis and Robinson, racial egalitarianism and the very problematization of slavery in abolitionism cannot be subsumed wholly under the social justice, mutual aid wings of the movement. Some of the scripts for racial equality against slavery's abuses sprung from the ultra-moralistic or 'strict' Victorian culture of the nineteenth century.

Second, and vice versa, the 'caring' side of abolitionism contained hegemonic elements. One, as already mentioned, its humanitarianism could be paternalistic and condescending in the moral sentiments evoked by representations of victims of racial slavery. Two, and economically speaking, the abolitionists were strongly attracted to laissez-faire ideology, from which they *liberally* borrowed free-labor frames to problematize slavery as an inefficient system of forced labor. This intellectual inheritance makes it impossible to subsume abolitionism within sociology's 'systemic versus antisystemic' distinction (i.e., our group speak for capitalist class projects and resistance to proletarianization). Abolitionism was *not* a Polanyian movement consisting of local communes striving to protect themselves from the destructive effects of modernization.[9] Davis (1975) famously argued that antislavery ideas partly served an emergent hegemonic function for capitalist industrialization.[10] Some antislavery arguments appealed to managers and wageworkers because of their implicit concern for the status of the dependent worker in the new economy who had to work for another person for subsistence (i.e., they sought to distinguish wagework from the condition of slavery, two states of work that were blurred in earlier republican discourse of independence versus servitude). In other words, abolitionist discourse actually served both systemic and antisystemic functions in American society. The abolitionists were both 'moralists and modernizers' to borrow a phrase from the historian Steven Mintz.[11]

If abolitionists were united by their affective aversion to slavery, otherwise they did not have much in common. Their SMOs were superbly divisive and competitive with each other. Like historians, they disagreed over who really counted as an abolitionist and what was required for group

membership. They offered competing problematizations and conflicting tactics for contention: from individual moral suasion to political party formation to inciting violent revolution, for example, the method of terror adopted by John Brown and his followers. There were multiple cliques and nodes of networking around diverse patrons and leaders, and there was no overarching organization managing the movement. The movement was highly decentralized with many communities of support far too autonomous to register as a local auxiliary of some larger society. The biggest SMO, the AASS, ceased to credibly speak for the movement after its schism in 1840.

Abolitionism was not immune to the accelerating unsettled times of early nineteenth-century American society. One quality abolitionism certainly shared with religious movements was the tendency to fall apart. Its internal divisiveness and factionalism increased over time. The early integrationist optimism of the 1830s gave way to increasingly separatist sentiments in the 1840s and 1850s (Stewart 1998, 2008). A bit of the age's culturally *crumbing cosmos* seems to have been refracted through its disunities (Abzug 1994).

In what sense then was abolitionism actually a social movement? Certainly not in the sense of today's professionally managed civil-society organizations. The movement was more of an outpouring of the civic-popularization of politics occurring across the country at the time, the *mass* dimensions of which first led observers to use the label 'social movement,' a name we have been stuck with ever since. Sociologist Michael Schudson (1999) situates abolitionism within what he calls the Second Era of democratic citizenship, in which the politics of deference toward local gentry gave way to the national 'politics of affiliation' and a 'new egalitarian ethos' (Schudson 1999:5–6). Northern abolitionists were devotees of the common civic rituals of the republic, lyceums, uplift societies, preaching, festive street culture, party marches, commemorations of liberty, and endless organizing (Schudson nicknames it the 'organizing impulse'). They expressed their antislavery opinions through all the public means available to them, and they imitated their impassioned political context, which often featured the soaring oratory of the revered. Abolitionism's momentum as a social movement was partly fueled by the erstwhile *associational* participatory mold of American civil society (as opposed to today's managerial organizations and membership lists). Antislavery newspapers, for instance, were not mere 'zines' to be consumed. They were the communicative instruments of participatory associations consisting of dispersed members

who desired to keep in touch with each other and exchange pertinent information (Schudson 1999:122–123).

Movement Microscopics: The View from Within

Antislavery abolitionism was a massive, highly religious, interracial social movement. The closest historical parallel to it in American history is, predictably, the Civil Rights movement of the twentieth century. In this section, I assemble a social profile of the abolitionist protestors by synthesizing the best historical scholarship available. An initial disclaimer though, most previous quantitative scholarship on the topic predicates abolitionist membership upon oratorical and/or organizational participation, which we have already judged to be unsatisfactory for the broader big-rhetoric view.

As a mass movement with mass-oriented tactics, abolitionism took off in the 1830s. There were a total of 120 antislavery groups before 1830, ranging from New England to the Upper South, with approximately 7000 members total. By 1840, there were 1350 antislavery organizations with over 250,000 members (Howe 2007; Young 2006). At least one historian though puts the tally in 1840 closer to 500,000 by including the various organizing activities of free blacks (Horton 2013). By far, most nonabolitionist white northerners did not care about the sufferings of the South's slave population—*why would one care* about the affairs of distant strangers? Historians estimate that peak participation in the movement occurred in small to midsized villages scattered throughout New England and the Old Northwest. Among the most supportive of northern communities, abolitionists counted among them 10–15 % of the population at most. Historian Daniel Walker Howe (2007) notes that official national membership reached over 2 % of the total US population before the war. Antebellum abolitionism, he suggests, was comparable in size and influence to today's National Rifle Association. The states with the greatest number of antislavery organizations were New York, Massachusetts, and Ohio, followed by Pennsylvania, New Hampshire, and Vermont.

Growing recognition of the multiracial composition of the antislavery movement is the most important historiographical development of the past two decades in the field of abolitionism studies (discussions of the shift can be found in Davis 2014; Harrold 2001; McCarthy and Stauffer 2006; Newman 2002; Sinha 2006, 2012). Unfortunately, most previous sociological studies of abolitionism tend to reinforce the narrower

white/male centric view of the movement. About the shift, historian Eric Foner writes, 'Increasingly, blacks—not white abolitionists—occupy center stage. Slave resistance is now seen as central to the process of abolition in the United States' (Foner 2014). It is also better acknowledged now that free black clerics, business owners, and teachers kept antislavery culture alive in the dormant years of abeyance in between gradualism and immediatism (Newman 2002). Additionally, the northern black community largely bankrolled the early immediatist organizing of the 1830s. Free blacks further convinced several white allies, including Garrison, of the moral fallacy of the American Colonization Society (ACS) with its program of 'voluntary' expatriation.

Although we know that racial inequalities and racism deeply divided the social movement, it is not possible to know what percentage of abolitionists was black. The question is further complicated by the holistic, pragmatic nature of much antebellum black protest. Black participants interpreted a wide variety of everyday activities as antislavery performances even if they were not officially associated with 'abolitionism' in doctrine or organization (Ball 2012; Ripley 1991). In my conceptualization of abolitionism as a moral–emotional movement, most northern free blacks are included. For instance, widespread socioeconomic efforts among black communities at 'elevation' and 'uplift' were part of a meaningfully embodied argument against anti-black racism and against the legitimacy of slavery, and hence, part of the rhetoric of slavery.

Many of the movement's white participants, if alive today, would be seen as quite racist (see Chap. 6). They held and communicated racialized conceptions of black inferiority even on the public stage. Disliking slavery and desiring its eradication was fully compatible with resignation toward the fact that formerly enslaved black people would never be capable of assimilation into the American citizenry. Many abolitionist SMOs were informally segregated. Some officially excluded blacks from membership. Racial segregation in abolitionism was both vertical *and* horizontal: higher paid officer positions in the SMOs were largely reserved for whites; the developing tradition of holding autonomous Negro National Conventions in the 1840s leads one historian to see an increasing separatism and essentialist 'racial modernity' within the movement (Bell 1957; Stewart 1998). However, other abolitionist groups were quite radical for fostering levels of interracial friendship unusual even in today's MROs (and were partly inspired by romanticist discourse according to Stauffer 2002).[12]

White and black women were crucial to the growth and spread of abolitionism. The movement's accelerated diffusion in the 1830s depended greatly upon women's often behind-the-scenes organizing labors. According to Jeffrey (1998), ordinary women workers formed the backbone of the movement through huge amounts of time spent managing boycotts, all-female societies, fundraisers, and mass petition drives (cf. Zaeske 2003). Women across classes participated in organizing and fundraising efforts. Spinners and weavers in small to midsize towns found the movement appealing. Abolitionist women also found the social movement to be a potential resource for improving their own status, whether through higher spiritual displays of care or by exploring opportunities for public demonstrations (Pierson 2003; Roth 2014).

While abolitionism was expanding its membership in the 1830s, its geographical scope became more 'sectional' or polarized along regional borders. In response to both actual and rumored slave rebellions, southern tolerance of antislavery rhetoric dwindled quite rapidly. Reacting to slave rebellions and the radicalization of antislavery tactics, debating slavery in any form was suppressed. Young (2006) observes abolitionism's wide geographical scale though across the northern states and territories, from New England coastal ports and metropolitan cities to rural frontiers. Many small-time white settlers of the frontier were adamantly antislavery because they did not wish to compete in expanding agricultural markets with slave owners. In this respect too, the movement was broad, decentralized, and open to diverse local incarnations. Indeed, abolitionist organizing was typically accompanied by deep local prides and memories, for example, the high New England regional patriotism of the Yankee spirit (Arkin 2001; Laurie 2005).

Abolitionist membership tended young and highly religious. New members were often inspired by the egalitarian conversionism of the Second Great Awakening. Most abolitionists were Christian Protestants, but some Jewish and 'freethought' rationalists can be found among their ranks, such as Ernestine Rose.[13] Christian denominations with high rates of support included Presbyterian, Congregationalist, Baptist, Methodist, African Methodist Episcopal, Quaker, and Unitarian. The 1830s wave of immediatist abolitionism was highly evangelical in character. It posited the power of 'moral suasion,' conviction by preaching the word, emotional appeals to individual conscience, and subsequent repentance from a life of sin. Even the radical, less ecclesiological abolitionism of Garrison and the

Grimké sisters had a fundamentally Christian evangelical character in many respects (though it abandoned scriptural inerrancy).[14]

Abolitionism attracted participants from all over the economic spectrum, from elite families and middling entrepreneurs to poorer wageworkers. Within each stratum several factors were correlated with increased likelihood of antislavery support. The 'conscience constituency' was motivated by liberal 'new economy' principles, such as free contractual labor, equal opportunity, and upward mobility (Foner 1970). Antislavery branches of the movement resonated in particular with the aspiring, the commercial, and the entrepreneurial classes (Davis 1975; Goodman 1998). Members of antislavery societies were most often also participants in the new market economy, typically as working-class wage labor or middle-class professionals. Despite the prominent leadership and celebrity of several wealthy elites (e.g., Wendell Phillips, Gerrit Smith, and the Tappan brothers), heirs of the old gentry were relatively underrepresented (Aptheker 1989). Individuals among what historians call the 'middling classes' were, in contrast, more highly represented (Laurie 2005; Mintz 1995).[15]

In Edward Magdol's social history of the movement, the antislavery 'rank and file' was predominantly young, market-oriented, managers or their employees, dwellers of midsized industrializing towns of the northern USA (Magdol 1986). His demographic snapshot emerged from an occupational analysis of antislavery society members, petition signers, and voting records. Magdol's work has been celebrated as moving beyond narratives biased toward the wealthier elite leaders of the movement (his work was echoed later by Aptheker 1989 and Laurie 2005 among others). Prior historians were quite off key in their portrayal of abolitionists as gentry elites expressing status anxieties in the new economy (as discussed in the previous chapter). In reality, abolitionism benefited enormously from anti-aristocratic republican sentiments common among the working and middling classes.[16]

Through the vogue of cliometric analysis, historian Robert Fogel (1989) examined how the depressed economy of the 1840s and 1850s disgruntled the working classes toward rising rates of (Irish, Catholic) immigration. He argued that abolitionism benefitted from increased nativism that turned wageworkers against the Democratic Party, which was more favorable toward immigrants and ardently proslavery. The hypothesis fits with how other historians have characterized the antislavery political parties in their struggles against the second-party system (Pierson 2003). It also helps to explain why the abolitionist movement could exude strongly

Victorian Protestant middle-class values—hard work, temperance, frugality, emotional restraint—even though many supporters were lower on the middling scale. Related, sociologist Joseph Gusfield (1986) demonstrates how the prohibitionism of the temperance movement—and many abolitionists were also temperance activists—served functions in both middle-class and nativist cultural agendas.

Assembling a social profile of such a diverse movement is no easy task even when relying upon the best available historical evidence. Nonetheless, to summarize, abolitionists were more likely to be middling new-market men and women. They were indeed moralists and modernizers (Mintz 1995). The average rank and file tended young, evangelical, and upwardly aspiring. They propagated free-labor values and held localistic prides and ambitions. Some were quite wealthy property-holders, but most were not. Some abstained from all voting for religious reasons, others ran for political office. Participants in abolitionist protest events ranged across the stratification hierarchy from white male millionaires (e.g., Gerrit Smith, Wendell Phillips) to black female domestic servants (e.g., Sojourner Truth, Maria Stewart). Whites and blacks alike tended to perceive the mission of abolition through a religious lens. Many of the most effective and enduring activist leaders came from northern free black communities or from slavery itself.

Movement Telescopics: The View Over Time

A third and final dimension of abolitionism as a social movement is qua temporal process, that is, as part of a larger narrated sequence of interactions between proponents, opponents, and onlookers of the antislavery cause. We may refer to this dimension as the temporal ecology of the politics of abolition. Time matters greatly because the situational creativity of abolitionist protest rhetoric cannot be understood apart from its specific audiences, which in turn were embedded within moving historical contexts. All social movements 'move' within a dynamic political ecology of challengers, factions, publics, supporters, and/or incumbents. A recent cadre of sociologists has termed these institutional interactions the 'dynamics of contention.' My point is that the manifest and latent meanings of protest rhetoric are thoroughly conditioned by an interactional sequence. If an opponent becomes more repressive or if onlookers become cynical, the protest rhetoric that moves movements adapts to the new situation or else becomes ineffectual. Like creativity in general,

the collective problem-solving efforts of social movements emerge from within systems of relationships in space and time (embedded in the moving contexts of protest). In this way, a telescopic view complements and, to some extent, synthesizes the macro and micro dimensions of the movement as described in the prior two sections.

A temporally minded perspective is also crucial for understanding how the abolitionist rhetoric of slavery played a part in bringing about the actual abolition of slavery.[17] The interactional sequence can reveal how microdynamics of protest cumulate up to social–historical 'events' in the more macrodynamic sense intended by Sewell (2005). As transformations in enduring structures, major historical *events* occur when microsociological processes build up and puncture macrodynamic chains of structures that are otherwise self-reproducing. Sewell thus discusses the need for an 'eventful' historical sociology sensitive to the multiple temporalities of history, the 'heterogeneous temporalities of causality' as he puts it (Sewell 2005; cf. Clemens 2007). Events are his term for those interstitial crossovers between microdynamic time and macrodynamic structure. And Sewell suggests that these events foster relatively rare 'unsettled times' when microprocesses impact and revolutionize political and cultural structure (Swidler 1986).

The transformative processes bringing about events of this magnitude, according to Sewell, are path-dependent. In interactional sequences, strategic action is conditioned by parameters set in the past, but situated creativity can also set new parameters that alter and constrain future possibilities. Microsociological agencies always work within larger macrodynamic sequences (even if to change it). An eventful sociology of social movements thus must take care in specifying both how social movements make forced choices and how those forced choices can nevertheless *eventually* be transformative ones (here borrowing the phrase 'forced choice' from Zizek 1989; cf. Clemens 2007). While I did not find it feasible to design this book through a chronological narrative of events—which is what eventful sociology would require to some extent—a telescopic overview is necessary for appreciating the formative power and influence of the rhetoric of slavery. Here, I shall briefly sketch the historical causal arc that I find most convincing, elaborating upon Piven (2006) in highlighting the provocative role of abolitionist *agitation*. Disruptive power, and the tactics of agitation, was the 'forced choice' of abolitionism that through its moral–emotional mechanisms came to have macrohistorical effects.

One matter upon which American historians tend to agree concerns the skeletal sequence of events radicalizing the abolitionist movement as well as the various missteps and overreactions by specific southerners, which dramatically intensified the political conflict between free and slave states. Early on, the publication of black Bostonian David Walker's confrontational *Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World* deeply upset southern governors and politicians. According to one North Carolinian official, the *Appeal* treated

> in most inflammatory terms of the condition of the slaves in the Southern states, exaggerating their sufferings, magnifying their physical strength and underating the power of the whites; containing also an open appeal to their natural love of liberty; and throughout expressing sentiments totally subversive of all subordination in our slaves; and inculcating principles wholly at variance with the existing relation between the two colours of our Southern population…Every means which the existing laws of our State place within the reach of the police of this place are promptly used to prevent the dissemination of Walker's pamphlet, and to restore confidence to our fellow citizens… (quoted in Hinks 2000:104–5).

Many southerners in fact blamed Walker, as well as Garrison's new *Liberator*, as responsible for Nat Turner's violent slave rebellion in Virginia, 1831. A few years later, abolitionists initiated a mass-mailing campaign that flooded the South with antislavery pamphlets. The 1835 postal campaign was met with widespread outrage and censorship. Slaveholders were outraged that abolitionists would utilize recent technological innovations in printing and transportation against them (Schudson 1999). They saw the propaganda as part of a conspiracy to incite more violent slave insurrections. In the eyes of several southern politicians, the abolitionist literature was a plot to 'rouse and inflame the passions of the slaves against their masters, to urge them on to deed of death' and it 'proved beyond a doubt that a systematic attempt is making by some reckless persons at the North to sow sedition among the slaves at the South' (quoted in Schudson 1999:105; quoted in Hinks 2000:106).

Abolitionists also started experimenting with the petition as an instrument of protest. Mass signature drives produced antislavery petitions with an unprecedented numbers of signers, hitting the millions mark by the late 1830s. That approximately 70 % of all antislavery petition signers were women, among them 'moral mothers' of the republic, only added to the

panic among southerners. In response, the House of Representatives in 1836 passed a gag rule tabling all antislavery petitions instead of sending them to committee. The Congressional censorship continued a pattern in which the political opponents of abolitionism overreacted in ways that estranged more people than just abolitionists. Northerners formerly indifferent to slavery became concerned with civil liberties being violated.

If there was one thing the abolitionists were good at doing then, it was 'agitation,' the word that became key to the Garrisonian parlance of protest. Abolitionist rhetoric provoked strong countermovement protests. Anti-abolitionist riots, like the one beginning this chapter, similarly had unintended consequences. They produced new 'law-and-order' allies to the abolitionist social movement (Ellingson 1995). Or, they radicalized the antislavery commitments of sympathizers like Wendell Phillips who only spoke out in protest after the murder of abolitionist printer Elijah Lovejoy in 1837.

These are just several of the 'critical emotional events' that affected the evolving relationships between various stakeholders in the conflict over slavery. They serve to illustrate the chain of actions-and-reactions caused by abolitionist protest rhetoric, albeit often more via emotional provocation (pathos) than via rational persuasion (logos). A rare temporal–political analysis of abolitionism that extends this analysis comes from Piven (2006). She makes the strong argument that ordinary American abolitionists were successful, indirectly, in achieving the movement's primary objective of slavery's complete abolition. In Piven's account, mass emancipation resulted from the *disruptive power* of the abolitionist movement, that is, from its radical embrace various legal and illegal tactics of defiance. Among the most significant effects of abolitionist demonstration, some after all hailing 'Disunion!' and 'No Compromise!' was the fracturing and destabilization of the Second Party System, the competitive Democratic and Whig political parties of the 1830s and 1840s that had operated with a gentleman's agreement to not discuss slavery as a federal issue. But the very vocal abolitionists forced public consideration of the issue against the wishes of almost all political elites. Schudson similarly observes, 'The whole course of national political development from the War of 1812 to the Civil War can be seen as a set of maneuvers to keep from making a decision about slavery' (1999:140). With antislavery's growing conscience constituency and the rise of the moderate antislavery Republican Party, this was no longer feasible in 1860.

According to Piven (2006), immediatist abolitionism ended 'the politics of avoidance and accommodation' that free and slave states had mutually maintained for decades. Through civil noncooperation and criminal defiance, including resistance to fugitive slave laws, they punctured through the gentleman's social compact. This strategy was not necessarily intentional. The troubling 'electoral dissensus' along sectional lines was actually more of an unintentional consequence of how abolitionist petitions and propaganda provoked fierce southern opposition. Southern politicians became more reactionary, defensive, and unwilling to make any further compromises. After the presidential elections of 1856 and 1860, southerners realized their dynasty over national politics was over. They soon seceded to protect their right to 'property in man' from possible federal strictures.

We should keep in mind however that most abolitionist 'challengers' did not interact with the mainstream political parties. Instead, they formed associations that more often than not preached to the choir. Piven is right to stress how mediated and unintentional the causal influence of the abolitionists was upon the total political ecology of the social system. Her reconstruction is echoed by recent historical scholarship that pinpoints the fugitive slave issue as the truly pivotal one in the escalation of the conflict over slavery (Davis 2014, among others).

The sequence of mass slave emancipation in the USA was a diffuse cascade of both intentional and unintentional consequences. Abolitionism was manifestly unsuccessful in converting slaveowners to their point of view through moral suasion through logos. Abolitionism was indirectly or *latently* successful though in inciting an egregious overreaction by certain southerners that offended the sensibilities of many northerners not initially of the conscience constituency. The dynamics-of-contention perspective would focus attention on the political opportunity structures resulting from demography, technology, or increasing division among elites. In contrast, my rhetorical account gives more weight to abolitionist agency, contentious performances and their incendiary effects. This implies a broader vision of what constitutes successful protest rhetoric as provocation in addition to persuasion. In the quest to abolish slavery, the agitation of violent emotions (pathos) could be just as effective as conciliatory argumentation (logos, and to some extent, ethos). Again then, to return to the refrain, these are reasons for not underestimating the moral emotions of protest rhetoric.

Notes

1. Webb (1838); Anti-Slavery Convention of American Women (1838). Among secondary accounts of the antislavery organizing behind and activities within Pennsylvania Hall, I am mainly relying upon Faulkner (2011) and Salerno (2005).
2. Undoubtedly raising all the perplexing representational and ethical questions associated with speech, representation, and the subaltern, Spivak (1999). The slave in abolitionist discourse fits Spivak's subaltern who because of discursive power cannot speak for herself.
3. The question is deceptively simple and actually quite difficult to answer. For a small taste of the terminological difficulties: did one have to subscribe to the proposal of immediate emancipation to be an abolitionist? What if we have no historical records of one's verbal consent? Were all free blacks engaged in communal elevation efforts abolitionists? Is signing a petition enough to warrant treatment as an abolitionist? Did one have to make a speech or join a society to count as a true abolitionist? Did one have to be willing to confront angry mobs in public like the Grimké sisters? Could one be an abolitionist and make political compromises about slavery? Could one be a colonizationist or an emigrationist and an abolitionist? Could one be a racist and an abolitionist? Were nonextensionist politicians who feared and despised the Slave Power abolitionists (or just 'antislavery')? Were slaves who resisted slavery with their feet abolitionists?
4. Garrisonians advocated not voting. Voting was a compromise with unchristian powers. Thus, contrary to the old historiographical convention, supporting an antislavery political party does not automatically disqualify one from being treated as an abolitionist, as Michael Pierson and other historians suggest. Pierson (2003) claims Harriet Beecher Stowe and Lydia Maria Child are not abolitionists while in my definition, they most definitely are.
5. My proposals for social movement theory embrace 'dispositional explanations' of the sort unfairly barred from historical sociology by Tilly.
6. The subsequent approach I am proposing has some similarity with the frameworks of Alan Kraut (1983) and Herbert Aptheker (1989) in labeling the entire post-1830s antislavery field 'abolitionist' while recognizing the diversity of possible antislavery stances, the most extreme of which having been labeled 'abolitionist' in the past. I instead use the term *radical* abolitionist or Garrisonian to refer to this branch of abolitionism.
7. A related distinction worth making here is between micro-resistance and macro-resistance (Fleming and Spicer 2007), my argument being that both kinds when directed against slavery are included in the definition of abolitionism. There are some hard cases here though. While John Brown was clearly an abolitionist, I do not consider all Union soldiers to be abo-

litionists by virtue of violence against southerners alone. Killing a slave master is not necessarily an instance of the rhetoric of slavery, but it could be if it was intended as a meaningful statement against slavery inspired by moral–emotional aversions to slavery. If pressed, I would say the rhetorical dimension is not the violence itself (by definition) but the symbolic and performative significance of the violent act. Hence, my conceptual method is by no means in danger of including everything or everyone.

8. Stamatov (2013) defines humanitarianism as long-distant advocacy. Abruzzo (2011) defines humanitarianism as the problematization of bodily pain. I tend to combine these definitions in how I think about the historical specificity of humanitarianism as a historically contingent set of meaning structures shaping the moral emotions. In my survey of black abolitionist rhetoric, the degree of humanitarianism varies it seems according to personal or familial experience with slavery. Then there are examples of northern free blacks 'awakening' to the threat that slavery poses to them, and shedding the humanitarian language as a result (this is what I mean by *indexical awakenings* in Chap. 6). Overall, black humanitarianism decreases as racial essentialism increases in the 1840s.
9. Unfortunately, the otherwise impeccable Craig Calhoun (2012) gets American abolitionism wrong here by extrapolating from European frameworks of capital/labor to which E.P. Thompson's moral economy and Polanyi's double movement are more applicable.
10. More recently, Davis (2014) has implicitly backed away from the strong hegemonic argument by examining how more 'socialist' themes were not foreign to prominent abolitionists including Frederick Douglass.
11. Again, Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* is a good reference point here. Like the Quaker reformers who Foucault traces in all their ironies, they strove intentionally for moral change while unintentionally rationalizing new forms of power.
12. After a revisionist generation of historians (from the 1970s on) severely criticized the 'racist myopia' of white abolitionists (Fogel and Engerman 1974; Pease and Pease 1974), current historians of abolitionism now cautiously defend its relative egalitarianism and integration (see McCarthy and Stauffer 2006; Sinha 2006, 2012; Sklar 2007; Stauffer 2002). I discuss these trends further in Chap. 6.
13. I do not believe this challenges my conceptualization of abolitionism as a religious field/social movement. Despite our prototypes of intolerance, orthodox religious movements often tolerate the participation of heterodox minorities (see Davis and Robinson 2012).
14. I discuss the meaning of the term 'evangelical' more in the next chapter when I analyze its emotions and frames. Suffice it here to say, we need to be careful to not confuse evangelicalism with modern 'scripturally literal' fundamentalism. Sociologist Michael Young (2006) and other historians

observe some tension between strands of evangelicalism, between more orthodox and more heterodox branches of abolitionism. Orthodox supporters, often Presbyterian or Congregationalist, made their antislavery activities revolve around church institutions. Many Christian evangelicals in these denominations had contempt for the reform radicalism associated with Garrison (e.g., the nonfeminist evangelicals depicted in Hansen 1993).

15. Historian Bruce Laurie defines the middling classes as that 'spongy social layer of petty proprietors and small farmers poised between the established middle class and the working class' including mechanics, small retailers, and petty professionals (Laurie 2005:xi); the term is sometimes contrasted with more well-established middle to upper classes.
16. Despite the associations of antislavery with the British Empire (McDaniel 2013). For Aptheker (1989), this makes abolitionism amenable to a Marxist–DuBoisian analysis: 'The great body of adherents of the antislavery movement were black and white folk with working-class ties; nor were the Abolitionist rural workers part of the affluent landed and farming interests. The most avid opponents of Abolitionism were the rich—the slaveowners and their lackeys, the merchants and their servitors, the dominant figures in politics, the press, the churches, and the schools' (Aptheker 1989:41). 'The evidence confirms the views of Wendell Phillips and Thomas Wentworth Higginson—despite dissenting opinion from a considerable number of historians—that the propertyless, the workers, artisans, and poorer farmers formed the vast majority of the mass following without which Abolitionism would have been inconsequential' (1989:46).
17. This is the question of abolitionism's outcome, its causal effects upon the historical sequence of mass military emancipation in the USA. I bracket out this question when examining the microdynamic processes of persistence. However, I briefly outline some of the major micro–macro interconnections here. I shall also propose an alternative moral-panic account in Chap. 8.

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CHAPTER 4

The Rhetoric of Slavery

Abolitionists sought to convince others that slavery was a serious, urgent social problem facing the nation. Their speeches were part of a broader discursive shift in the socioemotional *reconfiguration* of slavery as a moral abomination. Toward this aim, several key emotional figures or frames were produced by abolitionist rhetoric to problematize the bodily sufferings of the slave as illegitimate, immoral, and of national concern. Over constant adjustments to their audiences, abolitionist orators invented and arranged several problem frames so as to make them as emotionally compelling and as provocative as possible. Something previously considered natural and inevitable was transformed into a 'social problem,' which is to say, seen as morally exigent, secular in origins, and practically remediable. As this chapter observes, abolitionist protest rhetoric operated figuratively and performatively on the perceptual and affective valences of status associated with both slavery and its defenders. Here I uncover the performative, symbolic, and emotional pathways of core abolitionist frames, focusing upon the oratory of Lucretia Mott and William Lloyd Garrison in this chapter. A future chapter will approach the moral–emotional effects of abolitionist protest rhetoric from the side of the audience (see Chap. 7).

'Discourse' and 'problematization' are technical terms in the Foucauldian lexicon as they relate here (Foucault 1997, 2002). Discourse refers to unconscious modes of thought conditioning the societal possibility of experiencing historically specific objects. Discourse objectivizes morally problematic objects of collective attention and concern. It

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includes both logics of thought and practical set-ups insofar as the latter are conditioned by thought. Late in his life, Foucault saw the idea of 'problematization' as a potential unifying key to his eclectic writings. His many histories of knowledge/power share a fascination with how social objects taken for granted in previous epochs become defamiliarized and rendered problematic whether by moralization or medicalization. Quite applicable to our own case, problematization through discourse is a necessary condition animating the many medical, juridical, penal, and therapeutic reformers that appear in Foucault's histories of mental illness, punishment, and sexuality. Problematizations are a common nodal point shared by diverse constructions and approaches to some newly identified difficulty. In one of his last interviews, Foucault explained:

> The work of a history of thought would be to rediscover at the root of these diverse solutions the general form of problematization that has made them possible—even in their very opposition; or what has made possible the transformation of the difficulties and obstacles of a practice into a general problem for which one proposes diverse practical solutions. It is problematization that responds to these difficulties, but by doing something quite other than expressing them or manifesting them: in connection with them, it develops the conditions in which possible responses can be given; it defines the elements that will constitute what the different solutions attempt to respond to. This development of a given into a question, this transformation of a group of obstacles and difficulties into problems to which the diverse solutions will attempt to produce a response, this is what constitutes the point of problematization and the specific work of thought (Foucault 1997:118).

The relevant question here for abolitionism is how did slavery come to be problematized through American discursive practices? And, how were these practices diffused and delivered through the rhetoric of reformers? Foucault would identify abolitionist reform proposals as one option among many possible 'diverse practical solutions' enabled by a modern-era problematization of slavery.[1] In my terms, abolitionism constitutes one specific species of the wider rhetoric of slavery.

In addition to discourse and problematization, this chapter employs and expands the concept of 'emotional frames' in describing the pathos and moral emotions aroused by common arguments and figures in abolitionist oratory (Flam 2005b). Emotional frames did a fair share of the work of problematization on the ground, or better put, from the ground up. They were essential in how the rhetoric of slavery performatively delegitimized

the institution. The language here of framing in sociology comes from Goffman who in *Frame Analysis* deploys it to explicate the strips of background meanings and roles presumed by interactions. Goffman conceptualized frames as 'definitions of the situation that organize experience and guide actions' (Goffman 1972; quoting Saguy 2013:4). Frames give order to experience by simplifying chaos, transposing things into language, and finding correspondences between them. For the purpose of this chapter, I will sometimes distinguish between the cognitive and affective dimensions of a frame, though they are inseparable and, as suggested in the Introduction, the affective kick of the symbolic pattern is what makes a frame a frame.

In articulating the rhetoric of slavery, a useful convention of frame analysis is the distinction between problem frames, blame frames, and solution frames (Saguy 2013; David Snow makes a similar distinction). *Problem frames* are rhetorical arguments or claims about why a particular social phenomenon is problematic, indicative of breakdown or injustice, and why the public should care about it. *Blame frames* are rhetorical arguments and claims about how moral and practical responsibility should be distributed. *Solution frames* are, finally, about what should be done in response given a social problem and the distribution of responsibility. Common solution frames today, for a variety of social problems, include moralization, medicalization, securitization, and so on.

Frames are the product of rhetoric's work of figuration. All frames have a substantive symbolic dimension: frames produce the appearance of a natural resemblance between at least two heterogeneous things, one thing often being a particular practice and the other thing often being a more abstract concept. Among the three aforementioned categories of frames, *problem frames* are the most relevant to the following discussion. A problem frame is tantamount to an answer to the question, why does a particular configuration of facts constitute an undesirable state? A problem frame in abolitionist discourse can be parsed as: 'Slavery is a problem because of ________________.' A problem frame exists when a public claimsmaker compellingly fills in the blank so as to speak. Obviously, there is a close relationship between the landscape of meaning, the cultural–intellectual tradition (e.g., sentimentalism), and the rhetorical figuration of slavery that stems from it (e.g., the Sentimental frame of slavery as cruel). A frame is like a short-circuiting of a cultural tradition into a relatively simple and potent metaphorical statement that transposes cultural equivalences across signifieds and maximizes resonance to produce the 'umph' factor.[2]

To give an overview, I found that three main emotional frames were indispensable to abolitionist discourse: the Sentimental frame, the Republican frame, and the Protestant frame:

- The *Sentimental frame* problematizes slavery because of its cruelty and its inhumanity. Slavery is an affliction of the heart. Figured in the lash and the separation of families, slavery violates the fundamental moral nature of humanity based on sympathy or fellow feeling according to sentimental discourse.
- The *Republican frame* presents slavery as a social problem because it goes against values of equal rights and liberty from tyrants, the principles enshrined in the nation's collective memory of revolution and independence. Slavery is pre-eminently the deprivation of liberty. Republicanism sees slavery as a corruption of power, and as despotic and tyrannical tendencies of government that the new republic was founded against.
- Lastly, the third problem frame, the *Evangelical Protestant frame*, constructs slavery as a sin. Slavery is iniquitous on both an individual and national level (for instance, Garrison constantly claims the North is just as guilty as the South). Given the partial divinity of human beings and God's biblical instructions for how to treat one's fellow neighbor, slavery is an irremediable sin, which, like all sins according to nineteenth-century revivalists, should be repented from *immediately*. Many historians of abolitionism have here observed the intrinsic evangelical character of 'immediate' abolitionism (Davis 1962; Loveland 1966).

The three dominant problem frames in abolitionism thus offer distinctive but compatible metaphorical figurations of slavery: slavery = cruelty, tyranny, moral sin. Another commonality among the three frames is the performative power they all possessed. Each frame weaves together affective associations with concise rhetorical argumentation. Inseparably cognitive and affective, each problem frame prescribes an appropriate way of feeling toward slavery in addition to a way of thinking about slavery. On this point, Flam (2005b) has stated that, 'every cognitive frame implies emotional framing' (2005b:24). Protest claimsmakers provide an emotional reframing of reality, an alternative set of affective attachments and attitudes toward objects, opponents, onlookers, and so on.[3] Indeed, as I have argued, the cultural patterns most often identified as 'frames' by

scholars of contention often seem to be ones with strong moral–emotional components attached (e.g., disgust, outrage, shame).[4]

Processes of social problem construction are not purely logical nor solely discursive. Problematization is also an affective process oriented upon the communication and production of *pathos*—the strong and often negative emotions of an audience. The problem frames emerging from sentimentalism, republicanism, and evangelical Protestantism, are all *pathetic problematizations* (i.e., oriented upon pathos) forged, adjusted, and delivered to provoke strong audience feelings toward slavery. Each of the three frames held a moral–emotional orientation that abolitionist speakers sought to arouse:

- Sentimentalism promoted the desirability of *sympathy and pity*, two of the more positive other-directed moral emotions. Conversely, it felt *disgust* toward cruelty and bodily pain.
- The emotional resonance of republican frames was more variable: the threat of tyranny provokes *wariness* on one hand, but also *anger and contempt* toward the despotic opponent. Republicanism also encourages a *civic pride* in the republic, and thus deep *shame* when the norms and ideals of the republic are broken.
- Sin in Christian experience was affectively associated with the moral–emotional feelings of *guilt*, *disgust*, *and contempt* (toward sin in the self and the sinfulness of others).

The Sentimental Frame

In the eighteenth century, sentimentalism was already a motivational driver of antislavery abolitionism in its then gradualist forms. It continued through the 1830s to shape abolitionist protest rhetoric but with new inflections. Sentimental philosophy stemmed from a variety of religious and secular sources. One source was Anglicanism's doctrinal revolution from theologies of original sin to theologies of innate benevolence. Another source was the Scottish Enlightenment when moral philosophers like Adam Smith and David Hume grounded ethics upon humanity's common moral nature. A third source was more literary, the 'cult of sensibility' as it emerged hand in hand with the birth of the novel in the eighteenth century. At first, a medical term for the nervous system, 'sensibility' was generalized in literature to refer to the capacity of human nature to be affected and moved. Sentimentalism was a widely

disseminated transatlantic discourse that without a doubt altered the history of the early USA (with one historian even giving it partial credit for the existence of an independent American republic, Burstein 1999). Not yet coded as 'feminine' in the eighteenth century, sentimentalism made it perfectly acceptable for the highest politicians to weep out of compassion during their public addresses.[5]

The Sentimental frame of slavery emphasizes the institution's violation of the moral and affective faculties of human nature. This argument is made in several steps. The first is the Smith-ian axiom that moral action is based on the sociable, affective propensities of humankind. 'Right and wrong' are more about intuition and inclination rather than abstract reasoning. For Smith 'moral sentiments' are fundamental to human nature. We are intrinsically sympathetic beings prone to imagine what it would be like to be in the position of the other. Synonymous with 'fellow feeling,' sympathy was *the* social emotion, the glue of moral communities like the family. Inversely follows condemnation of those actions that pervert the natural bonds of sympathy. Acts of cruelty go against human nature and natural law insofar as they violate our moral sentiments.

Sentimentalism underwent several permutations before its uptake by immediate abolitionists in the 1820s and 1830s. The most important of these was a shift in its deep gendered significations. Sentimentality was increasingly coded as feminine and sympathy as essential to idealized femininity (see also Chap. 8). The heir to the eighteenth-century 'Man of Feelings' was the nineteenth-century 'Moral Mother.' Sentimentalism thus became an ideological support for separate spheres (even in Smith 'moral sentiments' were less a property of civil society and more a property of the family). Male intellectuals and politicians increasingly distanced themselves from the 'sentimentality' proper to women. By the 1830s, many sentimental scripts and prescriptions were exclusive to women's domestic sphere, governing how mothers and wives should manage the educational and moral reproduction of the household.

Predictably then was a strong gender bias in the Sentimental frame of slavery in abolitionist rhetoric. I found it to be more common among women abolitionists and highly received when sentimental motifs predominated their speeches or novels. Renowned pious Quaker Lucretia Mott was widely praised throughout New England as the 'mother' of abolitionism. Abolitionists benefitted from her acclaimed moral purity and from the associations of moral motherhood more generally. While

prominent abolitionist men still drew upon Sentimental frames and their lingering cultural resonance, they did so less frequently. Republican virtues and romantic ideals of the noble savage were replacing sensibility in the antebellum prescriptions of 'manhood' (Rotundo 1993).

More than any other abolitionist orator included in this book, Lucretia Mott's diction was thoroughly saturated with sentimentality. Over the course of decades of delivering antislavery speeches, Mott repeatedly framed slavery as 'outrage of human affections' (1980:32). Slavery to her goes against the innate goodness with which humans were created and supposed to bestow upon each other. Slavery is a state of inhumanity when the whip strikes helpless field hands or separates enslaved mothers from their children. Mott's description of slavery flows from her Quaker theology, rejecting traditional doctrines of the depravity of human nature. Mott believed that children were born with divine goodness in their souls. Indeed, it is hard to distinguish the Quaker elements of Mott's thought—the divine spark inside every human—from the sentimental elements—the moral sentiments of human nature. Her rhetoric displays a potential synergy between Sentimental and Protestant problem frames. She fuses the two in an overarching theology of benevolence in this statement:

> I believe that the principles of righteousness can be carried out through the land, and that we show our reverence for God by the respect we pay his children. We do not sufficiently exercise our high moral nature. We resist the benevolent principles and feelings that would lead us forth into lanes and by-ways, that we might comfort and save the outcast and afflicted (Mott [1841] in Greene 1980:34; all Mott quotes are from her collected speeches).

Her claim is that God created humans with a 'high moral nature' rather than in a state of total depravity. Humans have natural moral inclinations. Moral feelings lead one to comfort the 'outcast and afflicted,' including the enslaved. These moral actions abide by 'benevolent principles and feelings.'

Mott's sentimentalism enabled her to condemn slavery as an affliction of the heart. Slaveholding is a form of cruelty violating the very moral nature of humanity. In accordance with Quaker theology, Mott argued that every person should be able to discern the immorality of slavery by consulting one's conscience. Turning inward to listen to one's true moral

feelings is the basis of righteousness. Every human being knows deep down in his or her heart that slavery is wrong:

> The labours of these few pioneers [the abolitionists] have been sufficient to awake the nation to the consideration of this subject [slavery], and there is a response in the hearts of those who have not been blinded by their sectarian prejudices...in their inmost heart there is a response to the truth as it was once uttered by a speaker of the House of Assembly in Barbadoes: that 'every man knows in his heart that slaveholding is wrong' (Mott [1848] in Greene 1980:74–75).

Echoing Smith's theory of moral sentiments, Mott affirms the intuitive basis of the ethics of slavery. The human heart responds intuitively and automatically to moral truth. Later in her speaking career, Mott finds her claims vindicated in the bestseller *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. 'Why is it that HARRIET BEECHER STOWE has had such success throughout the wide world? Because her work reaches the sense of right in the universal human heart' (Mott [1953] in Greene 1980:222).

Mott's vocation as an abolitionist minister was to stir the heart toward compassion by speaking with inspiration. Right and wrong are validated through the natural experience of the tender feelings. One's inclination to feel sympathy and compassion for the slave in their sufferings constitutes her proof of slavery's immorality. The task of ministers like her was to effect 'a greater enlargement of heart in all' (ibid:56). Slaveholders have lost touched with their heart, becoming inhumane in how they treat others. In principle though, even slaveholders are redeemable for Mott if they would only cast aside their false doctrines and idols to recognize the wrongs they have done.

The sentimentalization of the enslaved, the imagination of the tortured soul inside the scarred slave's body, motivated Mott's abolitionist activism. She appealed to the sentimentalist cosmology to encourage others to long-distance advocacy (a.k.a. humanitarianism in Stamatov 2013). The problematization of slavery as an 'outrage of human affections' thus slips into exhorting others to act out of their budding empathy:

> When I look only over professing Christendom my soul mourns over the doom to perpetual and unrequited toil, the entire deprivation of rights, the outrage of human affections, and the absence of all that makes life desirable, which all unite to weigh down the lives of so many millions, while so few are ready to raise the cry of justice and mercy on their behalf...You have

> pens and voices to commend their cause to others, and to portray their miseries so as to gain sympathy. To how many towns you might go, and awaken their inhabitants to the relief of these sufferings! (Mott [1841] in Greene 1980:32).

The images of 'unrequited toil' and 'absence of all that makes life desirable' is intended to promote sympathetic action. For Mott and many other abolitionist speakers, sentimentalism was more than a set of beliefs and principles. It is in fact more than a matter of framing. The Sentimental frame of the slave's suffering in the previous passage is imbued with *pathetic* appeals to the audience.

The elicitation of sympathy in abolitionist oratory is a means to an end. It is an essential part of the strategy of 'moral suasion' that Mott shared with William Lloyd Garrison. The idea was to appeal to the moral emotions (the 'heart') of the audience in order the change their attitudes in order to shift private opinions rather than legislating morality. The presumed connections between sympathy, ethos, and moral transformation are evident in Mott's 1841 speech:

> Let us put our own souls in their souls' stead, who are in slavery, and let us labor for their liberation as bound with them. Let us look at the souls who are led away into hopeless captivity deprived of every right, and sundered from every happy association—the parents separated from their children, and all the relations of life outraged; and then let us obey the dictates of sympathy (Mott [1841] in Greene 1980:30)

Nearly all the principles of sentimentalism are distilled in this remarkable quote: the human faculty for empathetic imagination, the pathos of the suffering, the violation of moral sentiments in the rupturing of natural social bonds, the exhortation to moral action predicated upon sympathetic fellow feeling. Abolitionists like Mott found the Sentimental frame of slavery to be emotionally compelling: slavery destroys the family, it promotes hopelessness and misery, and it abuses the body with the lash. The horrific images proffered were designed to provoke indignation, because slavery is an outrage to the natural affections. Thus, sentimentalism in abolitionist discourse was more than a set of framing devices. It was a visceral performance of the pathos of indignation and pity. Grounded upon these affective experiences, abolitionists tried to resensitize people's consciences to slavery through excruciating tales of tragedy and images of brutality.

The Republican Frame

According to sociologist Robert Bellah et al. (1985), the nineteenth-century USA was becoming a less 'republican' place as measured by the classic values of republicanism, civic virtue, and sacrifice for the common good. In the decades before the Civil War however, this is probably an exaggeration. American civil society discourse continued to valorize the binaries of classical republicanism (and many scholars of nationalism argue that it has done so to this day). Republicanism as an intellectual tradition is no less complex than sentimentalism and has an even longer pedigree. While there are many historiographical debates about the truest version of republicanism, the term typically refers to a group of political philosophies advocating the protection of liberty from rule by arbitrary power. Pace Bellah, I do not make a strong distinction between republicanism and some forms of liberalism (the abolitionists preferred the term republican). Republicanism across its many different forms tended to place higher worth upon mixed government, constitutional rights, the rule of law, and a high valuation of political participation. Many of the revolutionary elites seeking American independence were motivated by classical republicanism, which for them meant self-determination and freedom from oppressive colonial power (as manifested in the issues of taxation, navies, and trade). In general, republican philosophers tended to worry about the corruption of power. They disliked 'monarchy' and hated 'tyranny.' They were also wary over the rise of the merchant classes who were seen as putting self-interest above civic virtue (Wood 1993).

Abolitionist orators sought to associate the republican symbols of the new nation with their cause. Republican frames in abolitionism constructed slavery as a problem because of its deprivation of liberties. Slavery deprives man of the fundamental right to self-ownership. Slaveholders resemble the republican's 'tyrant' who thirsts for more power and imposes unfair demands upon his subjects. Antislavery ally and transcendentalist Ralph Waldo Emerson poignantly presented the problem:

> We sometimes say, the planter does not want slaves, he only wants the immunities and the luxuries which the slaves yield him; give him money, give him a machine that will yield him as much money as the slaves, and he will thankfully let them go. He has no love of slavery, he wants luxury, and he will pay even this price of crime and danger for it. But I think experience does not warrant this favorable distinction, but shows the existence, beside

> the covetousness, of a bitterer element, the love of power, the voluptuousness of holding a human being in his absolute control…The planter is the spoiled child of his unnatural habits, and has contracted in his indolent and luxurious climate the need of excitement by irritating and tormenting his slave (Emerson [1844] 1995:17–18).

For Emerson, slavery is an unnatural imbalance of power that tempts human wickedness. It sets up the plantation class for idleness, sadism, licentiousness, and ultimate moral destruction. Abolitionists constructed slavery through the Republican frame as a lack of liberty on one hand, and an abuse of power on the other.

Slavery was interpreted as a rebellion against natural law insofar as it deprived *men* of their inalienable rights to freedom, self-control, and independence. Usage of the Republican frame in abolitionist discourse was as gender-biased as sentimentalism. Its main ideals of 'independence' and 'freedom' in antebellum culture held the gender connotations of 'manliness.' Though women could make their own distinct sacrifices for the republic, men were the default self-owners of the republic who possessed the republican rights to freedom (based as it was upon women's unfreedom; cf. Rotundo 1993 on the Masculine Achiever figure). In addition to the masculinist repudiation of the dependencies and deprivations of slavery, republicanism promoted arguments against forced labor in general (however, it did not necessarily view wage labor as much better).

Republicanism has been the source of the *master frame* of equal rights for many modern social movements. Master frames are well-understood conventions that make for easily transposable schemas applicable to many different social scenes. Often master frames are the most compelling among alternative problem frames because of their seemingly self-evident status. Garrison in some of his speeches dismissed the need of making the republican argument, presuming it part of the stock of common knowledge.

In addition to the masculinist connotations, there is also a unique race-based bias behind the appearance and frequency of the Republican frame in abolitionist discourse. Overall black abolitionism was more reverential than white Garrisonians about the status and interpretation of Republican frames (on black antebellum protest, see Chap. 6). Prominent black abolitionists found more meaning in and used Republican frames more frequently than white abolitionists. For antislavery editors James McCune Smith and Frederick Douglass, the Declaration of Independence was a sacred document, its only foible being the nation's lived hypocrisy when

set next to it. The Constitution, on the other hand, was a profane document contaminated by slaveholding interests, as McCune Smith argued in his speech, 'The Destiny of the People of Color':

> We are not in possession of physical superiority: yet we must overturn the doctrine that 'might makes right,' and we can only do so by demonstrating that 'right makes right.' This very doctrine is contained in the American Declaration of Independence, which declares 'all men to have certain unalienable rights.' But the Constitution of these United States, professedly constructed on the above principles, hold that there are some 'other persons'—besides all men—who are not entitled to these rights. We are those 'other persons;—we are the exception. It is our destiny to prove that even this exception is wrong, and therefore contrary the highest interests of the whole people, and to eradicate from the Constitution this exception, so contrary to its general principles (McCune Smith [1841] in Stauffer 2006:52).

The eloquence of identification in McCune Smith's 'we are the exception' line has a quality perhaps inimitable to white abolitionists like Garrison or Phillips (Chap. 6 further explores the indexical qualities of black abolitionist discourse). His speech exemplifies how black antebellum protest elevated the more republican Declaration over the articles of the Constitution.[6] Given the decisive preference of prominent black abolitionists for the Republican frame, historians have made too much of the tragic irony of republicanism's historical sources, that it first emerged from Roman slave laws to protect the rights of Roman citizens, and that American liberty was born from the same citizen–slave dualism. Structures of meaning do not inevitably remain in the 'constitutive' social mold of their birthplace due to some supposed relation of structural necessity—clearly ideas can shed their swaddle and become associated with alternative practices. In this case, the Roman prejudice against and exclusion of slaves, foreigners and the poor, was no longer a necessary nor unconscious connotation plaguing how black abolitionists made practical use of republican tropes.

Republican sentiments motivated Garrison to assert that any person born on American soil should possess all the privileges and rights of citizenship. He castigated proslavery politicians for viewing skin color as a legitimate basis for membership in the republic of citizens (see for instance Garrison's humorous 'A Short Catechism,' in which he mocks the anti-black racism of southerners in general, 1968:289–292). Garrison was the

main drafter behind the 'Declaration of Sentiments' founding the AASS, a document modeled on the Declaration of Independence, and subsequently, full of ardent antislavery republican arguments:

> We further maintain—that no man has a right to enslave or imbrute his brother—to hold or acknowledge him, for one moment, as a piece of merchandize—to keep back his hire by fraud—or to brutalize his mind, by denying him the means of intellectual, social and moral improvement. The right to enjoy liberty is inalienable. To invade it is to usurp the prerogative of Jehovah. Every man has a right to his own body—to the products of his own labor—to the protection of the law—and to the common advantages of society. It is piracy to buy or steal a native African, and subject him to servitude (Garrison [1833] 1968:68).

Framed by republicanism, slavery is wrong because it interferes with natural rights. 'The right to enjoy liberty is inalienable' obviously echoes the language of Jefferson. Foremost, Garrison wrote, every person possesses a 'right to his own body,' a natural right from which other civil rights follow, including free labor, legal protection, freedom of association, and intellectual freedom. When a republican legal order is in existence, according to Garrison, slavery is by definition a crime. It is 'piracy' or 'stealing' (we should note, however, that southern republicans would accuse northerners of infringing upon their republican rights to property by 'stealing' fugitive slave property).

Garrison was notorious for his fiery orations in addition to his witty editorial pen. One republican trope common throughout his recorded speeches is condemning the great hypocrisy of the nation in honoring the Declaration yet maintaining racial slavery. One of Garrison's English abolitionist counterparts, the political economist Harriet Martineau, had toured the USA in the early 1830s and published early sociological reflections on the very same gap between American morals and manners (Martineau [1837] 1981). Martineau's 'science of morals' posited that a society's level of general unhappiness was a direct result of the number of 'anomalies' that existed between a society's professed morals and its actually practiced manners. Slavery was America's most heinous anomaly. While this line became a standard argument in abolitionist discourse, Martineau's notion of societal contradictions in particular may have influenced Garrison and other American abolitionists (see for instance Garrison's tribute to Martineau, in Garrison 1968:272).

It soon became an annual abolitionist ritual to condemn the national hypocrisy of slavery on every Fourth of July through long dour addresses intended to shame the day's celebrants and sober the otherwise festive mood:

> Every Fourth of July, our Declaration of Independence is produced, with a sublime indignation, to set forth the tyranny of the mother country, and to challenge the admiration of the world...Before God, I must say, that such a glaring contradiction as exists between our creed and practice, the annals of six thousand years cannot parallel. In view of it, I am ashamed of my country. I am sick of our unmeaning declamation in praise of liberty and equality; of our hypocritical cant about the unalienable rights of man. I could not, for my right hand, stand up before a European assembly, and exult that I am an American citizen, and denounce the usurpations of a kingly government as wicked and unjust; or should I make the attempt, the recollection of my country's barbarity and despotism would blister my lips, and cover my cheeks with burning blushes of shame (Garrison [1829] 1968:53–54).

Such radical Fourth of July rhetoric is typical of radical abolitionism (including Frederick Douglass's famous 1852 speech, 'What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?'). It constitutes a whole genre of abolitionist discourse in itself. The genre features heavy use of Republican frames and political memes based on the Declaration principles remembered on Independence Day. These yearly orations were a chance for abolitionists to perform the prophet role to the republic, denouncing their society's 'glaring contradictions' and 'hypocritical cant.' Unapologetically, Garrison relished delivering shockingly unpatriotic lines, such as the above 'I am ashamed of my country,' a line that also hints at a bit of the pathos generated by Republican frames.

For Garrison, the appropriate republican emotion when reacting to national hypocrisy is shame. Shame results when the false basis of prior pride is exposed. It is a social emotion that expresses one's internal moral dissatisfaction with oneself in the eyes of the other (Scheff 1997). Shaming audiences is the Republican frame's emotional counterpart to the sympathy generated by sentimental pathos. Like sympathy, shame is a 'means of persuasion,' another localization of abolitionist pathos, encouraging and provoking auditors to form new affective attachments. Interestingly, many modern social movements after abolitionism have found the mass tactic of shaming effective in pressurizing political elites to change (Appiah 2010).

Garrison found additional ways of exploiting American pride in the Declaration and resultant discomfort with contradictions of the country's providential standing in the world. Garrison cleverly realized the geopolitical basis of modern feelings of shame in his *Thoughts on African Colonization*, his critique of the popular proposal to 'remove' freed blacks by shipping them to Liberia or other colonies:

> it is proclaimed to the world by the Colonization Society, that the American people can never be as republican in their feelings and practices as Frenchmen, Spaniards or Englishmen! Nay, that religion itself cannot subdue their malignant prejudices, nor induce them to treat their dark-skinned brethren in accordance with their professions of republicanism! My countrymen! is it so? Are you willing thus to be held up as tyrants and hypocrites forever? as less magnanimous and just than the populace of Europe? (Garrison [1832] 1968:35).

Garrison's rhetorical question plays to feelings of American exceptionalism. He challenges the national distinctions through which Americans have disassociated themselves from Old World hierarchies. The specter of the 'tyrant' continues to haunt the new republic in how African Americans are treated by their 'brethren,' repeating the Republican frame's antipathy toward monarchy and despotism.

The Evangelical Protestant Frame

US civil society was uniquely religious in the decades before the Civil War. While more Americans than not continued to have no official church membership, the Protestant worldview exerted hegemonic influence over public discourse. Many social institutions reflected Protestant Christian domination. Almost all schools of higher education were sponsored, staffed, and administered exclusively by Protestant Christians. Between 1790 and 1830, over 600 religiously affiliated newspapers were founded, some like the *American National Preacher* with high rates of subscription of around 25,000 readers (Noll 1992:227). Riding high on the gains of the Second Great Awakening, orthodox Protestant denominations by the 1820s had established a nationwide 'benevolent empire' composed of charities, temperance societies, Sabbatarian societies with Sunday school curricula, Bible distribution organizations, missionary support systems, and the mass printing of and dissemination of moralistic, millennial Christian tracts (Young 2006; Schudson1999). The American Tract Society, for

instance, printed five pages of pamphlet material for every resident in the USA in 1830 (Noll 1992:227).

The Second Great Awakening of the USA was a reaction to the deism and disestablishment tendencies of the revolutionary generation. The early republic became less secular in the first decades of the nineteenth century with the rapid growth of Methodist and Baptist denominations in addition to many other newer sects. The means of spreading religious awakenings across the country included revivalist camp meetings, outdoor baptisms, evangelical preachers, and dedicated circuit riders. Also included was Charles Grandison Finney's notorious 'anxious bench,' where sinners were pressured to reject or accept Christ in the moment and become instantly saved. Moderately antislavery, Finney was a major inspiration for the upcoming generation of immediatist abolitionists, including Lewis Tappan and Theodore Weld whose own conversion experience occurred at one of Finney's revivals (Abzug 1980; Essig 1978).

In theological terms, Finney was thoroughly 'Arminian,' which is to say that he emphasized the role of human free will in aiding the Lord's work of salvation. Finney claimed that the moment of conversion gave birth to a second stage in the life of an individual, characterized by a higher state of spiritual existence. In particular, the converted would increasingly experience the virtues of personal holiness and benevolence toward others. Benevolence in Protestant theology, as a result of Finney's generation, morphed from a pietistic attitude of praising God's goodness to a more active sentiment oriented upon the welfare of others. This is significant because 'Evangelical notions of benevolence and ability in turn shaped a new concept of sin which abolitionists applied to slavery. Once benevolence was defined as a concern for "our fellow creatures" or the rights of others, sin acquired a social connotation' (Loveland 1966:181).

The Evangelical Protestant problem frame approaches slavery through the category of sin. For the abolitionists, sin is understood to be social yet practical, being the result of individual decisions, rather than an ontological fallen state all humans are born into. In his earliest recorded speech Garrison exclaims, 'We are all alike guilty. Slavery is strictly a national sin' (1968 [1829]:60). In a later speech, he states, 'Freedom is of God, and Slavery is of the devil' (1854:6). This construction of slavery as (inter) personal sin is essential to the rise of immediatist abolitionism and what distinguishes it from gradualist abolitionism. Slavery was an evil system in an abstract sense for the gradual abolitionists, who for the most part didn't blame slaveholders *personally* for getting ensnared by the wicked

system. For the immediatists, slavery is a product of human volition. Its continued existence as a system rests entirely upon the willful moral disobedience of slaveholders. Historian Anne Loveland explains, 'When abolitionists demanded immediate emancipation, they were not merely saying that slavery should be abolished or that it should be abolished "now"; they were also arguing that abolition was fully within man's power and completely dependent upon his initiative' (Loveland 1966:184). This is a less covenantal and more personalistic understanding of sin as the product of human action. As a consequence, the problem frame of slavery of evangelical Protestantism seamlessly flows into a blame frame that identifies individual slaveholders as morally responsible for slavery. The Evangelical Protestant problem frame of slavery seems inseparable from the Evangelical Protestant blame frame. Individuals are responsible, deserving blame, for actively keeping other humans in bondage. No wonder southern slaveholders felt so insulted and enraged by the immediate abolitionists: their very salvation was being challenged! Their inclusion in communion services was at risk in denominational church debates over slaveholding (McKivigan 1980).

Abolitionist arguments of the 1830s were pre-figured by revivalist theology in the 1810s and 1820s also known as evangelical Protestantism. Among historians, Loveland (1966) makes the strongest case that immediatist abolitionism is directly 'derived' from Protestant evangelicalism, but she does not offer a clear definition of what makes an 'evangelical.' Most scholars of religion identify it with scriptural authority and the belief that faith in Christ effects personal salvation. Protestant missionaries are evangelical—they try to spread the 'gospel message' about salvation through faith, distributing bibles for nonbelievers to read themselves, attempting to convert people to Christianity. The goal of the evangelical minister is to convict people of their sin, show them how to convert—by becoming aware of sin and becoming assured of grace—and guide them through the process of repentance.

Garrison and other immediatist abolitionists envisioned a similar process happening for slaveholders. They called it 'moral suasion,' but it resembled the evangelical experience of regeneration. According to Finney's revival manual, when an individual chooses to have faith, they experience *a change in heart that leads them immediately to stop sinning*. Immediatists envisioned 'moral suasion' as a similar transformation of the heart, changing individual attitudes toward slavery, ideally serving as a means to the end of total abolition. The abolition of slavery was one piece

of a more comprehensive, eschatological program of establishing the kingdom of God on earth. 'In sum, immediatism was an exhilarating, practical faith which defined sin in concrete terms, demanded weapons to fight it, and optimistically predicted its abolition as the final step toward the millennium.' Loveland distinguishes immediatist abolitionism from earlier gradualist abolitionism on this basis: 'Immediatism signaled a change of disposition, not of discourse, in the American antislavery movement' (1966:174, 180). The abolitionists realized this could be a multi-step process for slave owners, but once slave owners become aware of their disobedience and misdeeds, the process begins at once (see also Davis 1962).

A potential flaw with the Protestant-evangelical explanation of abolitionism arises in interpreting the 'Garrisonian' or 'radical' version of immediatist abolitionism. Garrison and Mott both prioritized the moral thrust of the *evangel* relative to other typical elements of evangelicalism (as did later social gospel theologians in the liberal trajectory of American Protestantism). Mott often declared, 'if slaveholders use scriptures to justify slavery, so much the worse for scripture!' Garrison likewise was not a subscriber in scriptural authority nor church authority. Garrisonian abolitionists are sometimes called 'radical' for their rejection of and withdrawal from any social institution contaminated by complicity with slavery. They recommended that true Christians 'come out' of all sinful institutions, political parties included and almost every Protestant denomination. Garrison was a 'come-outer' religiously and an anarchist politically (Perry 1973). He did not identify with any one denomination or any specific party. Some historians thus distinguish between the radical come-outer abolitionism of Garrison's circle from the more church-centered abolitionism of Lewis Tappan and the latter's New York city circle (Friedman 1979).

For several reasons however we should not draw the religious fault lines of abolitionism along the presence or absence of evangelicalism itself. It is true that some elements of evangelicalism are missing in the Garrisonians, mainly Biblicism and a respectful ecclesiology. But to perceive the Garrisonians as less evangelical neglects how well their perfectionist moral impulse conforms to revivalist, evangelical religion. In a sense, the immediate abolitionists were all Wesleyan, implicit adherents to John Wesley's *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, agreeing with the ethical principle that all sin is voluntary and can willfully be avoided. The motifs of spiritual conversion and regeneration are strong across all the abolitionists, especially the perfectionist come-outers. Their perfectionism stemmed from a particular version of Protestant millennialism. Garrison

writes, 'It appears to us a self-evident truth, that, whatever the gospel is designed to destroy at any period of the world, being contrary to it, ought now to be abandoned.' ([1838] 1968:76). Garrisonian abolitionists were millennialists in the belief that they must be preparing themselves for the return of Christ and the Day of Judgment.[7]

Second, it should be noted that Garrison and his colleagues are still dogmatic Christians by our standards, being believers in personal salvation and the importance of faith in Christ. Garrison, Mott, Weld, and others were 'religious virtuosos,' not only in social and moral passion but also in the pursuit of status through the dynamics of religious fields (in the Bourdieu-ian sense of 'field,' cf. Stamatov 2013:94). Their immediatism is a performance of a higher religious purity with levels of Weberian 'asceticism' equal to any monk or nun. The ascetic impulse of religion toward purification is the main medium of status distinction in religious fields. This helps to make sense of abolitionism's schismatic tendencies as well. Garrisonian abolitionists are like charismatic preachers who find some grievance with organized religion and lead their disciples to break away to start a new sect. Abolitionism experienced many internal schisms and saw many new antislavery sects because it was itself a religious field (as discussed in the previous chapter), given the hegemonic Protestant influence over American civil society at the time.

Lastly, almost every abolitionist speaker uses the language of sin and personal moral evil as an essential part of how they problematize slavery. The Evangelical Protestant frame of slavery is ubiquitous. This is the third reason for applying the term evangelical to the Garrisonians, and for labeling this frame 'Evangelical Protestant' or just 'Evangelical.' Inevitably, a few exceptions present themselves still to the evangelicalism account. It is far too logic bending to apply the evangelical label to any atheistic 'free thought' abolitionist, such as Ernestine Rose, nor does it work well for some of the transcendentalists like Emerson who were also antislavery. Evangelical abolitionists contributed to the marginalization of the more heterodox or nonbelievers within the movement. In general, evangelicalism was part of the means of domination in antebellum society, part of the Protestant cosmology that maintained many hierarchical class, race, and gender distinctions. Abolitionism of course was not immune to the reproduction of these status inequalities through its practices and performances.

To substantiate these claims about immediatism's evangelical character, some exemplary instances of the Evangelical Protestant frame are examined below, including several speeches by Garrison where his religious

symbolism is most dense. In addition to the evangelical construction of slavery as personal sin, Garrison's theological arguments against prejudice and racism are also relevant to the religious significance of immediatism, so I include them as well. This first quote comes from one of Garrison's yearly Fourth of July addresses. It reveals his self-identification as a saint of Christianity and shows how he understands the close relationship between immediatist abolitionism and Christianity:

> Genuine abolitionism is not a hobby, got up for personal or associated aggrandizement; it is not a political ruse; it is not a spasm of sympathy, which lasts but for a moment, leaving the system weak and worn; it is not a fever of enthusiasm; it is not the fruit of fanaticism; it is not a spirit of faction. It is of heaven, not of men. It lives in the heart as a vital principle. It is an essential part of Christianity, and aside from it there can be no humanity...It is the spirit of Jesus, who was sent 'to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God' (Garrison 1968:199–200).

This alone is sufficient evidence for treating Garrison as a religious virtuoso. He identifies abolitionism as a true and purer form of Christianity. Abolitionism proclaims the good news of liberation to the slave; it is the 'spirit of Jesus' and an anticipation of the millennium to come. Interestingly, Garrison senses a conflict between his radical social theology and the Sentimental frame of slavery: the 'genuine' moral action of Christianity is deeper than sentimentalism's 'spasms of sympathy.' Again, as discussed previously, the backdrop to this binary distinction, Garrison's performance of manliness, is the nineteenth-century localization of sentiment in women's bodies.

A common religious motif Garrison shared with other abolitionists, including Lewis Tappan and Frederick Douglass, is the idea that Christian missionaries should work domestically as well as abroad. The slave is the heathen within who needs instruction and deliverance just as much as foreign pagans do. Abolitionists across sectarian divides routinely make the argument that missionaries should concentrate their evangelical efforts first at home by converting slaves to Christianity. One part of how the Evangelical Protestant frame problematizes slavery is its hindering of the potential salvation of the slave. The emphasis on the slave's spiritual liberation in addition to their physical liberation resonated with evangeli-

cal audiences. If the enslaved are denied religious instruction, they may never experience spiritual freedom. Even Garrison makes this argument by imagining the lamentations of the enslaved African: 'Nor have they [the American people] deprived us merely of our liberties. They would destroy our souls, by endeavoring to deprive us of the means of instruction—of a knowledge of God, and Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and a way of salvation' (ibid:55). In addition to being inherently sinful, slavery is also problematized by the Evangelical frame for denying the slave the gospel. Slavery 'destroys the soul' of the slave in addition to his or her body. This line of argumentation shows how strange and historically specific the religious–cultural problematization of slavery was.

Suppose one could ask Garrison *why exactly* he thought slavery a sin? Is labeling slavery a sin nothing more than his expression of disapproval? Can't we agree that slavery is wrong without agreeing on the philosophical reason why it is wrong? What in particular makes slavery *so sinful*? I doubt Garrison would shy away from such a conversation despite the modernist inflection of the questions. Asking someone their reasons for a moral practice quickly produces, some would say less important, religious, and philosophical differences (Appiah 2006; Rorty 1989). In Garrison's case, the thought experiment is useful because it reveals his critique of racial prejudice in addition to slavery. To treat someone differently because of the color of their skin is, for Garrison, an offense to the wisdom of God the Creator:

> I do not rejoice the less, but admire and exalt him [the Creator] the more, that, notwithstanding he has made of one blood the whole family of man, he has made the whole family of man to differ in personal appearance, complexion and habits...Surely it would be sinful for a black man to repine and murmur, to impeach the wisdom and goodness of God, because he was made with a sable complexion; and dare I be guilty of such an impeachment, by persecuting him on account of his color? I dare not. (Garrison 1968:30).

All human descendants have the same origin in Adam and Eve, for Garrison, contra early racializing ethnologists and phrenologists who posited a polygenesis of different racial human species. All humans inherit the same blood as part of one divinely created family. Combining reflections upon the *Book of Genesis* with *New Testament* scriptures, Garrison believes that diversity in 'complexion' is pleasing to God the Creator. His abolitionist biblical hermeneutics uncovers a moral message in the

doctrine of creation against *racial* slavery in particular (as well as slavery in general). Racism is an 'impeachment' of the 'wisdom and goodness of God.' A characteristically nineteenth-century theology of benevolence is apparent here as well. God is benevolent in creating the world; all creatures are good; therefore humans should be benevolent to each other in the model of God's original benevolence (and exercise a benevolent dominion over nature). Perhaps benevolence, good will toward all, is the closest we come to locating an evangelical counterpart to the pathos of the republican's shame and the sentimentalist's sympathy. All three are culturally specific moral emotions appealed to by abolitionist oratory. The moral emotion of benevolence enhances Garrison's creationist argument against slavery.

Creationism sits comfortably well with the Evangelical Protestant frame, both of which assert God's sovereignty and ultimate providence in history. In several of his later speeches, Garrison develops this more explicitly using a theology of *imago dei* to criticize racial prejudice. As articulated by Christian mythology, humans were created as a blend of dust and divinity, part sinful and partially godlike in the image of the Creator. Slavery is wrong because it treads upon the divine part of humanity, *the imago dei* (see Davis on this theme as well). Such creationist tropes frequently reappear in Garrison's rhetoric. Here are three notable examples:

(1) Slavery annihilates manhood, and puts down in its crimson ledger as chattels personal, *those who are created in the image of God*. Hence, it tramples under foot whatever pertains to human safety, human prosperity, human happiness (Garrison 1968:141, *emphasis mine*).
(2) Every man is equivalent to every other man. Destroy the equivalent, and what is left? '*So God created man in his own image*—male and female he created them.' This is a *death-blow to all claims of superiority*, *to all charges of inferiority*, to all usurpation, to all oppressive dominion (Garrison 1854:16, *emphasis mine*).
(3) But, if they [slaves] are men; if they are to run the *same career of immortality* with ourselves; if the same law of God is over them as over all others; *if they have souls to be saved or lost*; if Jesus included them among those for whom he laid down his life; if Christ is within many of them 'the hope of glory,' then, when I claim for them all that we claim for ourselves, *because we are created in the image of God*, I am guilty of no extravagance, but am bound, by every principle of hon-

> our, by all the claims of human nature, by obedience to Almighty God, to 'remember them that are in bonds as bound with them,' and to 'demand their immediate and unconditional emancipation.' (1854:18, *emphasis mine*).

The last declamation especially connects many of the theological motifs discussed above: humans are partly divine, created in the image of God and having souls that are immortal, which can be saved or lost. Garrison interweaves the creationism of *imago dei* with the Evangelical frame of concern for the slave's salvation. *Genesis* and the *New Testament* are synthesized in his abolitionist hermeneutic. They both are used as resources for arguing against slavery's contradiction of Christian benevolence. Slavery is inherently a debasement of humanity, and slaveholders are debasers of their own eternal brethren.

In the second *imago dei* quotation above, the doctrine of creation is interpreted as a 'death-blow' to all 'claims of superiority.' Prima facie this seems like a slight of hand. But for Garrison, the egalitarian and emancipatory elements of the Evangelical Protestant frame have priority over biblical exegesis. Garrison and Mott defend the 'spirit' of the text, over the 'letter' of the text. For them this meant that the kingdom of God suspended and leveled worldly distinctions. A common biblical slogan emerging from ministers of the Second Great Awakening was 'God is no respecter of persons,' a phrase that abolitionists eagerly appropriated and applied to slavery (Garrison 1854:10). As radical abolitionists, they included racial status—in their words the 'spirit of slavery'—as one more form of worldly rank that would be disintegrated in the New Jerusalem. This is a reading of *Genesis* and imago dei principles through the upside-down kingdom of St. Paul. Garrison is reading history through his favorite verse from the letter to the Galatians: 'In Christ Jesus, all are one: there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is *neither bond nor free*, there is neither male nor female' (Garrison [1832] 1968:32, *emphasis mine*).

Conclusion

Frames are powerful constructs because of their potential to stimulate the moral emotions through rhetoric that potentially rechanneling affective attachments toward new objects and outlets. The decomposition of abolitionist discourse into three main emotional frames may not seem that

innovative. However, this application of frame analysis is in itself an original contribution to the history of abolitionism. Applying the simple tools of frame theory takes a small but unprecedented step toward explaining the historical puzzle of how, why, and when slavery was morally problematized (one would think a necessary step prior to abolition). For microsociological purposes, the affective kick of the three problems frames is also crucial for understanding social movement stamina, those microdynamic processes of persistence, identification, and regeneration.

The emotional resonance of abolitionist rhetoric operated through the three pathetic problematizations discussed here. Sentimental, Republican, and Evangelical Protestant emotional frames contributed to making abolitionist ideas more compelling through the production of frame-conditioned moral emotions such as sympathy, contempt, shame, guilt, and benevolence. Charismatic orators employed these problem frames to arouse moral–emotional energies in audiences. Through emotional framing, they altered not only perceptions but also affective attitudes toward slavery. As I will observe with the status implicatures of abolitionist discourse, emotional frames were an important part of the protest rhetoric making the movement move.

Notes

1. In his writings, Foucault held that problematizations were not determined by prior, putatively more fundamental, political, or economic processes. Instead, they could be quite original, relatively autonomous shifts in discursive structure. 'Relatively autonomous' that is from economy and government, not from power.
2. For example, the Protestant frame defines slavery as a sin—the metaphorical schema of 'sin' is well understood and easily generalizable. The frame though rests upon other theological principles and narratives that give it energy, that is, the reasons an abolitionist might give for answering the question, "but why is slavery sinful?" Each of the three problem frames, identified below, emerged within and only made sense within wider cultural traditions. The frames I discuss are metaphorical condensations of meaning structures, maximizing the affective 'umph' of an alternate but intelligible way of viewing slavery.
3. Another usage of the term, 'emotional frame,' is also present in the sociological literature. Emotional framing for some scholars refers to efforts to craft protest rhetoric to resonate with pre-given emotional cultures (Ruiz-Junco 2013). Helena Flam (2005a, 2005b) is more constitutive about it,

and her formulation more in line with my views of big rhetoric and affective creativity.

4. It could be that the word 'frame' is too weak then and too cognitive to do the work needed. Alternately we can conceptualize frames as *inherently emotional frames* so as to better acknowledge their affective *kick* (as discussed in the Introduction). James Jasper's conception of the "feeling-thinking processes" of culture is especially useful here (Jasper 2014).
5. The 'man of feelings' was replaced by the 'moral mother' of sentiments by the 1830s (cf. Burstein 1999). Increasing market competition and the commodification of labor were rendered acceptable only by offering a contrast to it, a refuge where kindred spirits and human warmth still thrived, the family. Home and hearth were seen as the necessary countervailing principle to a market run by self-interests. Abolitionists gained ground by using the cult of true womanhood and images of moral motherhood as bases for condemning the cruelty of slavery (Samuels 1992; Sanchez-Eppler 1992).
6. Those who drafted the Constitution were of course of republican persuasion. The founding federalism of the US Constitution however, in abolitionist eyes, enshrined legal chattel slavery, thus violating republican principles.
7. Another example of Garrison's millennialist judgment rhetoric: "Yet I know that God reigns, and that the slave system contains within itself the elements of destruction. But how long it is to curse the earth, and desecrate his image, he alone foresees. It is frightful to think of the capacity of a nation like this to commit sin before the measure of its iniquities be filled, and the exterminating judgments of God overtake it" (1854:34).

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PART II

Emotional Inequalities of Protest

CHAPTER 5

Gender Trouble in Abolitionism: On Ethos Work

The threat of gender deviance surrounding antebellum female oratory stirred a national moral panic. Audience reactions created a shared rhetorical disadvantage among abolitionist women. Women who spoke in public about the cruelty of slavery risked being stigmatized themselves as female 'monsters.' Many scholars have taken an interest in the distinctive struggles of the 'feminist-abolitionists' who responded creatively to confining 'true womanhood' gender expectations.[1] Among them, historians and rhetorical critics have long appreciated how women reformers came to realize that their advocacy for abolition—whether by petition, boycott, convention, or oration—was hindered by women's subordination through practices of femininity that repudiated women's public-political oratory.[2] As feminist rhetorician Karlyn Kohrs Campbell writes in *Man Cannot Speak For Her*, 'They were a group virtually unique in rhetorical history because a central element in woman's oppression was the denial of her right to speak' (1989:9).

In one of the earliest studies of women's abolitionist rhetoric, *Pioneer Women Orators* (1954), Lillian O'Connor uses Aristotelian theory to interpret distinctive elements of women's antislavery oratory, including a chapter on ethos, a rhetorical term meaning persuasion through the character of the speaker.[3] O'Connor positively assesses the wider social perceptual–evaluative impact of women's presentation of ethos. She writes, 'ethical proof [ethos] had been presented by the speakers in such ways

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that, when the period ended, there was general acceptance of the fact that women could express opinions publicly before mixed audiences and yet remain virtuous and high-principled…On these two phases of *ethos*—high moral integrity and intelligence—the early women speakers made a good case for their sex' (1954:157). The performance of ethos, O'Connor argues, had repercussions not only for the cause of reform (abolitionism), but for public perceptions of femininity as well.

This chapter extends O'Connor's insight by uncovering the processes and mechanisms through which the social-movement rhetoric of ethos in particular can become a means of improving women's social status. My status theory of rhetoric builds upon an additional empirical observation relevant but absent in O'Connor's classic study: women's abolitionist rhetoric was heavily biased toward ethos relative to men's antislavery speeches and mostly involuntarily due to gender-status binds. By investigating the interconnections between status, emotion, and gender, this chapter will answer several questions, including: Why was a greater proportion of early abolitionist female oratory oriented upon ethos? What were the risks, emotions, and status processes that drove some women reformers to seize the pulpit and others to rescind it? How does ethos work actually operate upon gender practices and cultural understandings of women's status? Interpreting women's abolitionist rhetoric demands a sociological exploration into how status-disadvantaged groups, marginalized within a social movement and without, can operate upon dominant status-beliefs through performing ethos.

Abolitionist women faced a 'status bind' arising from nineteenth-century gender beliefs and practices (below I develop the notion of status binds based on the research of Ridgeway 2011; Ridgeway and Kricheli-Katz 2013; Wilkins 2012). A definitional feature of status binds is the inability to choose a nonderogatory course of action. Reform women could comply with proper biblical femininity as it was imagined, being silent and subservient in mixed-gender meetings, but in doing so risk subordination and powerlessness in reform projects. Or women could make demands and raise grievances in public, but risk being sanctioned as immodest and unbecoming. Abolitionist women who did venture in public speaking also faced a set of contradictory double standards that male orators were unaffected by. Their speeches about slavery were simultaneously received and reacted to as deviant displays of gender. Women's antislavery message was easily crowded out by, to use the iconic phrase, 'gender trouble' (Butler 1990). Attempting to ward off moral panic over gender deviance,

abolitionist women orators spent relatively greater amounts of speech time doing ethos work. And in speaking on behalf of the slave, abolitionist women were judged as making claims about the emotional nature, morality, and intelligence of womanhood itself.[4] Another layer of the gender-status bind resulted from these double standards: reform women who drew upon and strived to conform to the sentimentalization of femininity, by highlighting women's caring sensibilities and moral purity, were as a result easily dismissed as apolitical, impractical, and idealistic. Through sentimental framing, most antebellum audiences avoided taking women speakers seriously.

A general rhetorical tendency among status-disadvantaged groups is for ethos to be performatively prioritized over appeals to pathos and/or logos. In the case of abolitionist rhetoric, not having to spend as much time on self-justifications for one's speech was a nineteenth-century form of male privilege. By virtue of the public alarm and repressive response to gender deviance (see below), the status-power dynamics of northern antebellum society made it more difficult for women speakers to produce the necessary emotional energy to perform formal, public oratory (on the emotional-energy dilemmas of subordinated women, see Summers Effler 2002). The rhetorical constants of confidence and eloquence aimed at by all antebellum speakers were further out of reach for women reformers than for men because of these gender binds. As a result, abolitionist women were pressured to withhold emotional energy from the problematization of slavery to instead make 'ethical' appeals in defense of women's public communicative activities. A common pattern can be seen in the relationship between status inequality, emotion, and rhetoric, not just for women abolitionists but for many disenfranchised groups struggling for recognition and rights. Heightened scrutiny of ethos and, in response, more intense *ethos work* frequently follows from being rhetorically disadvantaged by a variety of status binds. Ethos work is thus one kind of public speaking bind arising from status inequality (while a kind more oriented upon logos and recognition will be analyzed for black abolitionist discourse in the following chapter).

This chapter shows that women abolitionists developed three different activist styles in response to the rhetorically disadvantaging situation of gender deviance. Many abolitionist women found public speaking too risky and withdrew from public claims-making altogether (though when they did, they often sought out and invented other sorts of antislavery rhetorics, see Jeffrey 1998). Constructing my own cultural–sociological

theory of emotional energy, I try to answer the question: why were some able to cross the status-power hurdle of gender deviance, but not others? This chapter argues that it was not a matter of individual talent and personality. Rather, the unequal distribution of emotional energy between abolitionist women enabled a select few to do ethos work in the effort to surmount gendered public speaking binds. The chapter then compares two types of feminist ethos work in abolitionism, the patrician-feminist and the prophetic-feminist, examining how they activated or generated the necessary emotional energy from different sources.

The empirical scope of this chapter is limited to antebellum antislavery addresses by women, concentrating on the 1830s decade. I compare and contrast two prominent women abolitionists from the very first generation of female orators in the USA, Maria W. Stewart and Angelina Grimké. These two public speakers exemplified different patterns and pathways between social status, emotion, ethos, and public speaking. The ideal-types I construct however are not solely inducted from their few surviving speeches, but pulled together from a wider qualitative, content analysis of 41 speeches total by 17 abolitionist women (5 white; 12 black) from 1828 to 1861.[5] By examining alternative ways of translating emotional energy into the willingness to take rhetorical risks, I observe a relationship between emotional inequalities—the unequal distribution of emotion resources by prior social status—and the variant of feminist ethos performed. Contributing to current debates in the sociology of emotion over the role of status (Collins 2004; Kemper 2011; Turner and Stets 2005), the chapter highlights the less predictable capability of some of the most dispossessed abolitionist women, low-wage black women workers like Maria Stewart, to summon status and its emotional rewards from relatively autonomous cultural sources.

Emotional Inequalities of Ethos Work

In this section, I develop a social–psychological, cultural–sociological conception of ethos in relation to the Western intellectual tradition of rhetoric and suggest how a historical–sociological analysis of the subject might proceed. An extensive orientation upon ethos was one of the first patterns to emerge in my study of women's abolitionist rhetoric. Women orators had to argue for their credibility and reliability before their antislavery message could be taken seriously. This was a mostly involuntary gender bias or constraint given women's position of status disadvantage and the

harsh climate of reactions to the 'monstrosity' of female oratory. In other words, the ethos work of women abolitionists was a response to the status binds and double standards of being judged aversely merely for being a woman on stage. As we will see, not all abolitionist women were willing to perform public ethos work, which was risky and usually depended upon the prior possession of significant reserves of emotional energy.

At the same time, ethos work was not completely involuntary. Appeals to ethos were performatively prioritized by abolitionist women who struggled for greater rhetorical agency. Ethos work aimed at changing a group's perceived status more generally. Appeals to ethos have been a go-to rhetorical strategy for many dispossessed groups throughout history, a valuable tool for resisting status subordination. The right to speak in public deliberative settings is closely guarded and bound up with rights of citizenship and autonomy in the Western political imagination, making ethos a sort of requisite for greater status equality. Performing ethos was often an intentionally chosen strategy in reaction to status subordination.

Ethos in the rhetorical tradition refers to qualities of the speaker that enhance his or her favorability before the audience. According to Aristotle, ethos is a 'means of persuasion' internal to the delivery of a speech. Making an impression of moral integrity and virtue could help make audiences more receptive to one's argument. In Aristotle's original formulation, ethos is the mode of 'probable demonstration' that is based on the character of the speaker—in contrast with pathos, the emotional inclinations of the audience, and logos, the rational argument contained in the message of the speech. With political deliberative settings in mind, Aristotle broke ethos down into 'three things making the orator himself trustworthy...good sense, goodness, and good will' (quoted in Wisse 1989:29). Aristotle is also known for offering a rather rationalistic conception of ethos in his attention to the intellectual qualities of reliability and credibility.

Unfortunately, Aristotle's conception of ethos is less than adequate for interpreting women's abolitionist rhetoric. The rhetorical tradition after Aristotle grew more flexible and fluid in the conceptualization of ethos. Cicero, for instance, tends to associate ethos with any and all qualities enhancing the favorability of the speaker, including the 'gentler emotions' that improve how an audience feels toward a speaker. According to rhetoric scholar Jakob Wisse, ethos is still abundantly emotional for Cicero but refers to a different set of emotions when compared to pathos (also Kennedy 1998:224). Ethos includes any character trait that produces

feelings of sympathy for the speaker. It is 'that gentleness, which wins us the favor of the audience,' associated for Cicero with properties of confidence, calmness, dignity, and 'personal humanity' (Wisse 1989:238). In contrast, pathos is the excitation of violent emotions in the audience—a different set of emotions like anger, fear, joy, grief, indignation, and so on. While Wisse wishes to prove that there is no necessary conceptual overlap between ethos and pathos, this point seems less relevant for the study of women's abolitionist rhetoric: women making public claims to ethos in itself could provoke 'violent emotions' against female orators (though this reaction would not be read as a standard/successful instance of ethos and pathos).[6]

Cicero and the Roman rhetorical tradition also treat ethos more practically than Aristotle, for instance, recognizing the influence of prior social standing upon the speaker's impressions. Aristotle bracketed this out as 'atechnoi'—not of the technique, that is, not an internal means of persuasion. However, the question of the relationship between prior reputation (social status) and ethos (internal or rhetorical status) does not seem resolved within the rhetorical tradition and begs for a more sociological analysis. Lastly, given the juridical settings of Roman theorists, ethos could refer to the character of the speaker or the character of a client for whom the speaker is an advocate, much as a lawyer. The Roman dual conception of ethos, potentially more relational than Aristotle, seems immediately more applicable to abolitionist speakers who were making status claims, not just for themselves, but also on behalf of the character of enslaved persons. For example, the successful performance of women's abolitionist ethos had implications for how slaves were viewed, for instance, as humane victims worthy of sympathy.

The full analytical potential of the concept of ethos for the sociology of gender, emotion, and social movements has hitherto not been explored. A sociological approach though would part with the rhetorical tradition on several points. In particular, sociologists would have a greater interest in the social conditions of ethos, its cultural and affective content, as well as its performative properties. Here I offer a few broad principles for sociological investigation incorporating social–psychological theories from the sociology of emotion.

Ethos is the rhetorical performance of the *status* of the speaker. It involves the production of positive affects in the presentation of the self. It is a status claim to a worthwhile persona, that is, someone who because of his or her status should be listened to (for a similar approach, see Kemper

2011:95–98). A speaker's style of ethos depends significantly upon the culturally specific stereotypes that inform dominant status-beliefs. The speaker's reference group may possess these status-beliefs or they may be assumed by the speaker to be possessed by audience members.

Multiple levels of status claimsmaking go into the performance of ethos. At the most basic level, the right to speak itself is a prerequisite status claim for ethos work. Public speaking itself is an originary status claim that if accepted signals legitimacy and social membership in a community. An enslaved person, for instance, is usually denied the ability to do the status claimsmaking of ethos work; he or she is treated more commonly as 'socially dead' (Patterson 1982). Polluted identities can be excluded and stigmatized, such that audiences disavow any possibility of ethos. Originary social exclusion from speech can be seen when hecklers refuse to listen at all to black abolitionists. The recognition of authority is a minimal condition of the possibility of ethos—it can be effectively denied, but it can also be seized in surprising ways (as suggested by Butler 1997).

More nuanced layers of ethos work are similarly status imbued. Complicating the basic authority to speak would be Aristotle's attention to reliability and trustworthiness as qualities of ethos. If a speaker is deemed mad or not interested in the welfare of others, audiences will tend to not take him or her seriously. Ethos at this level is a 'credibility struggle' to borrow a term (Epstein 1996). Impressions of coherence and consistency are most important. Thus credibility, the elements of Aristotle's 'good sense,' also seems to be a sort of necessary condition, like authority, for persuasive public speaking. Abolitionists frequently found that they had to be explicit and detailed about their sources of evidence on the cruelties of slavery before various publics would believe them.

If authority and credibility are the 'thin' necessary conditions of ethos work, affective-meanings are the 'thickest' layers of ethos. Drawing upon culturally specific values and reference groups, speakers produce positive affects in the presentation of the self. In principle, given cultural difference, there seems to be an infinite number of ways of attaining positive affective-valuations of the speaker's personality. This level of status claimsmaking includes all available symbols and significations connoting character, comportment, dignity, humanity, importance, integrity, and so on. It emerges from the cultural–moral beliefs and values of a society and its publics. For example, given permutations in late sentimentalism, confessing the depth of one's feelings and sympathy toward the bodily pain of others was a popular signifier of one's moral character and humanity in the

antebellum literature (Abruzzo 2011). This is merely one cultural imaginary feeding the speaker's self-presentation of positive affects.

Ethos work is an intensively affective form of relational labor. The emergence of ethos consists in the production of a series of affective-meanings inclining audiences toward speakers and/or the reference groups of the speakers. More consistently than pathos, ethos involves the generation, performance, and maintenance of positive affects in the reception field of the speaker. Producing such positive affects through ethos work, resulting in affective-attachments to the speaker, can create the sense of experiencing a charismatic orator. Charisma is largely accounted for by how successful ethos work produces personalistic attachments to the self of the speaker through the medium of positive affects. Pace Aristotle, ethos is thoroughly emotional as well as rational or cognitive. Ethos work aims at the affective-meanings that audiences hold toward groups of people and the symbolic markers of them contributing to status-beliefs. In terms of affect control theory, ethos work consists in symbolic operations upon the affective-meanings of status-beliefs (Heise 1979; Rogers et al. 2013). It trades in and operates upon the affective valences of stereotypes.

Ethos is a distinctive form of ad hominem status rhetoric, but focusing on self-elevation rather than the denigration of others, the latter being more common in, for instance, Wendell Phillip's radical rhetoric. His eloquence of abuse was another form of status rhetoric, like ethos. But it was much more other-directed, and animated by the aim of putting antislavery's opponents down. Abusive antislavery rhetoric is also *ad hominem* but aligns better with *pathos* as to the production of negative affects as compared to the egocentric positive affects of ethos. Both ethos and the eloquence of abuse are rhetorical performances of status though and can be incidents of 'constitutive rhetoric,' in which audience prejudices and affective-attachments are reconfigured (Charland 1987).

In terms of status theory, ethos is more of a bid for status rather than an inheritance of durable status inequalities. It is a more ephemeral, performative wage for credible status that fluctuates with the argument and rhythm of the speaker's rhetoric. Its existence is temporal and temporarily lasting at least as long as the speaker's presentation of the self. Many different mediums of signification can be involved in its generation of positive affects, from bodily appearance, clothing, posture, and gesture to the spoken words themselves. However, the rhetoric of ethos is only a microcosm of status varying in its degree of alignment or deviance from dominant status-beliefs. Ethos is a kind of *performed status* of the speaker

in distinction to the speaker's *received status*, to redescribe Aristotle's distinction between external and internal means of persuasion. Or, making a distinction between rhetorical status (ethos) and other social statuses is another useful way of thinking about it.

Ethos can be the performed status, not only of the self but also of reference groups and other ascribed categoric groups that the self is identified with. The status rhetoric of ethos works on multiple levels of status-perceptions simultaneously, and this seems to be especially the case for status-disadvantaged groups because of the double standards applied to them. In addition to an individual's presentation of self, ethos is implicitly read as a social performance as well. Thus, the ethos work of abolitionist women could benefit status-perceptions of more identities than the identity of the individual speaker. Positive affects could be directed through rhetoric's 'halo effects' toward all abolitionists, to all slaves or, potentially, to all women as a sociocognitive category. Performing one's right to speak about slavery involved renegotiating women's general gender status. Further, the ethos work of abolitionist women was relationally inseparable from claims about the racial status of the slave, every speech co-articulating race and gender. Historian Sarah Roth (2014) argues that as white women's status increased in antebellum popular culture, the status and power of black men correspondingly decreased. A web of relational ascriptions and group affiliations is thus in play in ethos work.

The ethos-oriented production of positive affects in the presentation of self can be hard work especially for members of status-disadvantaged groups who seek to participate in a social movement. It is a practical skill dependent upon emotional resources that not everyone can access equally. Ethos work depends upon some level of existing *emotional energy*. Without emotional energy, subordinated individuals do not have the will or stamina to engage in the difficult work of publicly, imaginatively renegotiating status-beliefs (cf. Summers Effler 2002). In Collins's interaction ritual theory, emotional energy is conceptualized as the 'enduring emotions that give people high or low levels of energy in diverse situations, that keep their enthusiasm up or bring it down, and that make them initiate or fail to instigate interactions' (Turner and Stets 2005:74). Without emotional energy, the risks assessed with public speaking opportunities (e.g., willingness to be perceived as gender deviant) are not seen as worth taking. Groups with low levels of emotional energy find themselves dispossessed of speech opportunities and unwilling to go against the grain of dominant gender expectations. Emotional energy is not

purely an individual phenomenon. It emerges from and during ritualistic relationships including the rhythmic dynamics of entrainment occurring during a speech (Collins 2004). On this point, interestingly enough, 'confidence' etymologically means having 'faith together' (see Simonson 1999). A receptive entrained audience may enable a greater tolerance for risky ethos work. I will argue though that there are many different possible sources of the emotional energy used to do ethos work, two of which are discussed in this chapter.

When examining the various possible conditions of emotional energy, it quickly becomes clear that there is unequal distribution of a kind of social capital determining courses of rhetorical action from behind the scenes despite appearances and claims of the charismatic speaker to the contrary. Here the frequent reciprocal relationship between performed rhetorical status and 'received status' must be acknowledged. Social status tied to an individual's social standing preceding the rhetorical performance, whether from class respectability or family prestige, is entirely relevant. Note, Aristotle's rhetorical framework excludes received status as 'external' to the means of persuasion, underestimating the porous borders between the two. Received status influences the presentation of the performed status of the self both in the individual's dispositions and in audience perceptions of the speaker's reputation, celebrity or notoriety. From the theories of Kemper (1978, 2011), we would expect speakers from high-status backgrounds to be more able to access reserves of stored emotional energy than low-status individuals. Conditioned by 'received' status differences, the emotional energy enabling ethos work is distributed unequally. There are important exceptions to this rule though, instances where the absence of received status does not prevent unpredictable, extraordinary performances of rhetorical status. These more rare cases can only be accounted for through some recognition of the relatively autonomous cultural sources of emotional energy (see section below on 'prophetic-feminism'). Ethos work can be a powerful tool of social movements, albeit often involuntarily for status-disadvantaged actors, but it in turn depends upon emotional resources that are distributed unequally across social-movement actors.

The Monstrosity of Female Oratory

Historian Varon (2008) has argued that struggles and anxieties involving femininity were central to the abolition of slavery, as central as were violent masculinities. In the early nineteenth century, sentimental frames were

increasingly localized in 'women's sphere' and applied more exclusively to white women's bodies (Burstein 1999). Framed by the sentimentalization of femininity, women in public could signify religious reverence and moral purity. Consequentially different sides of the slavery debate tried to control the location and interpretation of women's bodies in public spaces. Political parties increasingly invited women on stage as idealized helpers and moral mothers to stand beside male candidates for office in the 1840s. They tried to capitalize on associations with the feminine virtues of piety and decency, though simultaneously performing masculinity to avoid their apolitical connotations (a frequent disavowal or contradictory splitting by gender, see Pierson 2003; Ryan 1990; Varon 1998; Zboray and Zboray 2010). At the same time, women were also finding public roles and attention through novels, magazines, and benevolent societies. Women's participation in charities and benevolent organizations was okayed as a natural extension of moral-sentimentalized femininity even if it technically occurred outside domestic spaces (Ginzberg 1990).

Middling women activists and entrepreneurs found cracks in the edifice of 'separate spheres' even while adhering to the discursive logic of domesticity itself (Kerber 1988; Smith-Rosenberg 1985). More troubling however were the radical abolitionist women who were less loyal to fulfilling the mores and ideals of a proper lady. American civil society was uniquely religious in the decades before the Civil War as were most of the era's social movements for reform (on forms 'confessional protest' in the 1820s and 1830s, see Young 2002, 2006). Gender essentialism was naturalized through commonsense, science, and religious discourse. In the last of these, sexual difference was biblically commanded and divinized as part of the sacred social order. St. Paul's epistolary injunction for women to 'submit' and 'remain silent' at religious gatherings was frequently appealed to. Public speaking presumed authority, which in turn presumed masculinity. These gendered scripts and scriptures made formal oratory one of the most closely guarded instruments of male domination in the public domain. Women who struck the formal rhetorical pose committed major gender deviance against patrimonial, biblical traditions of male authority. Transgressions against the rule of public silence could incite religious policing, excommunication, or violent backlash in the form of various missile projectiles to torching offending venues.

The country's harsh reaction to freethinker, lecturer Frances Wright in the 1820s exemplifies the traditional interdictions against women's speech and related processes of gender-status backlash. A sojourner from Scotland,

Wright delivered public speeches advocating for emancipation and women's education, and her disciples joined communitarian experiments that were widely seen as scandalous. She was denounced as 'blasphemer' and a 'female monster' (quoted in Varon 2008:131). Part of the outrage was directed at her advocacy of radical gender egalitarianism and 'free love' outside of marriage. After Wright's utopian commune in Tennessee failed, 'sexual scandal was attached to it and her' (Ceplair 1989:7). In newspaper coverage and social attitudes, she became the prototype for the deviance and licentiousness associated with women public speakers. Moral-panic-like reactions reinforced the perception of female oratory as a 'form of exposure that carried with it, for women, the taint of sexual impropriety' (Varon 2008:131). Some early women abolitionists in fact were accused of 'Fanny Wrightism,' a charge against the inherent moral wrongness and sexual monstrosity of female oratory (ibid).

In antebellum times, not all forms of oratory were perceived as equally transgressive for women. There were multiple levels of taboo with varying degrees of associated risk. Women found less risky outlets for speech in all-female societies. Segregation by 'sex' was a common form of social control that tolerated women's speech in all-female settings. The rapid proliferation of antislavery societies in the 1830s was shaped by the sex-segregation of female auxiliary societies meeting separately from men. However, even in these settings, women's adoption of the procedural conventions of business meetings made some nervous. But such mild forms of gender deviance were rendered more tolerable through the logic of gender segregation.

Much more alarming were women abolitionists who ventured to speak to 'promiscuous' audiences composed of men and women (on the 'promiscuous audience' controversy, see Zaeske 1995). This was generally perceived as a violation of sacred scriptures endorsing authoritative masculinity and submissive femininity. The unthinkably worst form of gender deviance in public speaking consisted of women orators who dared to share a stage on equal ground with men. Women who formally and rationally debated men in public provoked probably nearly everyone. Here abolitionist women grossly violated 'true womanhood' and challenged male authority by disagreeing and arguing with men about the ethics of slavery. Predictably when the Grimké sisters from the South began violating these prohibitions including the last in their 1837–38 lecture tour, Congregationalist clergymen Massachusetts responded with a public letter condemning the impropriety: 'when she [woman] assumes the place

and tone of man as a public reformer, our care and protection of her seem unnecessary...and her character becomes unnatural' (quoted in Campbell 1989:24). The clerics issued a general reminder to churches that women were to obey, not teach, as clearly prescribed in the New Testament. The letter reinforced the attitude that female orators were 'unnatural' monsters shadowed by the specter of Fanny Wright.

The antebellum moral panic over female oratory stemmed from perceived threats to traditions of male authority. As in other moral panics, rumors about the dangers of these 'folk devils' spread rapidly across regions and classes. Angelina Grimké was actually nicknamed 'Devil-ina.' Newspaper accusations against abolitionist women speakers ranged from charging them with immodesty and indelicacy to downright insanity. Publicity undermined the praised moral superiority and gentler domestic nature of women. 'In short,' preached Boston minister Hubbard Winslow, 'when the distinguishing graces of modesty, deference, delicacy, and sweet charity are in any way displaced by the opposite qualities of boldness, arrogance, rudeness, indelicacy, and the spirit of denunciation...they [women] have stretched themselves beyond their measure and violated the inspired injunction that saith… "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection, but I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence."' (quoted in Hansen 1992:83). Such ministers perceived women's public speaking as a 'usurpation' of man's authority.

Prohibitions against female oratory were rooted in conceptions of 'true womanhood' and applied to both white and black women. Black audiences of abolitionist Maria W. Stewart pelted her with tomatoes and ridiculed her claims to divine inspiration as blasphemous. An early black reformer, Stewart was demonized five years before the Grimké sisters took the stage. Historian Shirley Yee captures how the cultural anxiety over gender deviance cuts across races: 'Public speaking, more than any other abolitionist activity, seemed to spark the greatest conflict between the sexes. Public opinion was slow to accept female lecturers, regardless of race, because public speaking was an activity in which an individual assumed the role of authority long the domain of political leaders and a predominantly male clergy and forbidden to women by social and religious custom'(Yee 1992:114–5). In *Black Women Abolitionists*, Yee further observes that many black women voluntarily tried to conform to the ideals of true womanhood as a means of performing racial respectability, despite the severe economic difficulties facing most northern black residents.

In summary, female oratory was a form of gender deviance creating major rhetorical disadvantages for abolitionist women. Women's public speaking about political issues like slavery was widely seen as too transgressive and threatening to clergy, politicians, and other patriarchs. Public speaking gender deviance was likewise too controversial for many of their abolitionist colleagues. As much as the antislavery politics tried to profit by association with women's innate moral superiority and sympathy (Pierson 2003), it was also the 'woman question' that split the AASS apart in 1840, a testament to the power of horizontal and vertical sex-segregation norms of the time (Kraditor 1969). Women who spoke in public about the evils of slavery risked stigmatization as female 'monsters.' Most abolitionist women were well aware of the risks and that their antislavery speeches were read, feared, and maligned as violations of femininity. They responded to gender-status binds in a variety of ways, as we will see, depending on the emotional and cultural resources available to them.

Patterns in Women's Abolitionist Rhetoric

Choosing to be an antislavery lecturer was a highly self-selective process. Gender-status binds intensified the self-selection of those women willing to take rhetorical risks. Emerging from the social situation of rhetorical disadvantage, outlined above, women's abolitionist rhetoric displays several common features. As mentioned, the first is devoting a greater quantity of speaking on ethos rather than logos and/or pathos. The surviving records of speeches of Angelina Grimké for instance are almost entirely filled by ethos-related arguments. For example, she describes at length growing up in the South (Charleston, South Carolina) and feeling instinctive revulsion toward slavery from early childhood. 'As a Southerner I feel that it is my duty to stand up here tonight and bear testimony against slavery. I have seen it—I have seen it. I know it has horrors that can never be described. I was brought up under its wing: I witnessed for many years its demoralizing influences, and its destructiveness to human happiness' (Grimké in Lerner 2004:270). Having first-hand experience with slavery, from being raised on a slave-labor plantation, proved to be a major means of securing credibility for Angelina. Her speeches have a testimonial quality that makes their claims seem more 'reliable and trustworthy' in accordance with the Aristotelian rationalist mode of ethos. Other women abolitionists who could not point to direct familiarity with slavery still incorporated evidence and references to give their ethos the same quali-

ties of good sense. Since women were not as likely to have their rational arguments taken seriously, even when presenting the same data as men abolitionists, evidence centering is one form of gender bias in ethos work emerging as a result of status binds. Women abolitionists felt even greater pressure to ensure the strength and accuracy of their evidence, since audiences would be more skeptical toward the intellectual–rational trustworthiness of women's appeals.

In addition to dwelling upon ethos, the content of 'ethical' appeals was often quite similar across abolitionist women. Claiming divine inspiration for and citing biblical precedents of woman's speech were a common motif in the speeches of Maria W. Stewart, Lucretia Mott, and Angelina Grimké. Known by historians as America's first woman political speaker, Stewart constructed a religious-moral ethos to justify her speech: 'Be not offended because I tell you the truth; for I believe that God has fired my soul with a holy zeal for his cause' (Stewart, quoted in Richardson 1987:52). Below I will analyze Stewart's rhetoric to illustrate the prophetic-feminist ethos.

Abolitionist women developed a uniquely 'feminine style' of ethos. According to Campbell (1989), this consisted of practical exhortations by female orators to women audiences, developing the consciousness of sisterhood and woman's potential moral agency. Abolitionist women claimed authority from the greater moral superiority of their 'sex' and natural inclinations of sympathy. They utilized the localization of late sentimentalism in femininity as a cultural resource for ethos work.

Women's putative propensity toward emotion and relatively greater sensibility was another source of their credibility in moral reform efforts. Angelina Grimké emphasized the depth of her personal feelings of the misery of slaves vis-à-vis morally bankrupt southerners and some northern travelers to the South: 'if they [visitors to the South] have witnessed the cruelties of slavery, by remaining silent spectators they have naturally become callous—and insensibility has ensued which prepares them to apologize even for barbarity. Nothing but the corrupting influence of slavery on the hearts of the Northern people can induce them to apologize for it' (Lerner 2004:271). Drawing upon the emerging humanitarianism, which grounded moral virtue upon sensibility, Grimké thus assailed those who were 'callous' and 'insensible' toward the cruelties of slavery (on antislavery humanitarianism, see Abruzzo 2011). The more sensitive sensibility of women was one possible source of character praise and attribution of 'good will.' Performances of women's naturalized humanitarianism were thus another source of ethos-qua credibility and trust-

worthiness: women's authentic feelings and 'hearts beating' for victims of slavery could be ethical appeals to their goodness and good will as orators (Robertson 2010).

Women's Abolitionist Rhetoric (Differences)

Though the rhetorical disadvantage of gender deviance was shared, abolitionist women reacted to it in different ways. Differences in women's abolitionist ethos stemmed from a wide variety of sources, including religious denomination, school education, family background, cultural capital, regional custom, and so on. They differed in how orthodox or heterodox they presented themselves. They also differed in level of concern for anti-black racism alongside slavery and abolition. Black women's abolitionist ethos ranged from participating in the 'politics of respectability' to prophetic jeremiads against overlapping oppressions (Yee 1992). A main division among abolitionist women was the very same 'woman question' so vexing to men abolitionists. Women were likewise split over the degree of feminism appropriate to include in antislavery activities.

In *Strained Sisterhood*, historian Debra Gold Hansen examines the rifts that grew between members of the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society and eventually led to the disbanding of the organization in 1840. The main division Hansen explores is between wealthier, well-educated, more religiously heterodox women (such as Lydia Maria Child and Maria Weston Chapman) and evangelical, middling women more traditionalist in their conceptions of reform (whom I don't consider in this chapter). Hansen convincingly shows how family class background and social standing influenced self-selection into these two conflicting factions in their disagreement over appropriate expressions of female activism. Members of the first higher-status group were often religious dissenters—of Unitarian, Quaker, or 'come-outer' sectarian persuasion—and were much more likely to embrace the cause of women's rights as fully compatible with their abolitionist agenda. They aligned themselves with Garrison's inclusive 'ultraist' vision of reform. In the next section, I offer an ideal–typical classification of them as *patrician-feminist* given the relevance of social standing and local elite reference groups to their ethos work.[7]

Members of the second, more popular group in the Boston female society associated more with Baptist and Congregationalist denominations. Inspired by evangelical revivals, their religious worldview included adherence to a scripturally delineated gender division of labor. Hansen

calls this group the 'non-feminist church-oriented' clique of antislavery women. They felt more comfortable organizationally with gender-segregated female-only societies serving as supportive auxiliaries to men. This faction felt bound to Pauline instructions for women to keep silent and not to teach. The second ideal-type is thus more a part of the negative background screen consisting of like-minded abolitionist women who disavowed ethos work altogether and especially avoided the taint of 'women's rights' rhetoric. Instead of preferring the discourse of women's duties rather than women's rights, they were more concerned about reconciling their antislavery activities with the discourse of domesticity.

Indeed most abolitionist women avoided the stigma of gender deviance associated with female oratory. Instead they sought, invented, and experimented with other less oratorical venues for antislavery work aligning more easily with the cultural logic of femininity (see Jeffrey 1998). Antislavery 'rank and file' women found other means of expressing themselves, alternative embodied rhetorics, and other ways of supporting the antislavery cause that did not involve egregious rhetorical risk-taking.

Hansen's case study of 'strained sisterhood' usefully contrasts the interconnections between prior social standing and the degree to which abolitionist women took feminist rhetorical risks. We can conceptualize the division as being between feminist abolitionists socialized in patrician families to be more *risk-tolerant* and women socialized in middling families to be more *risk-averse*. In other words, evangelical abolitionist women of lower to 'middling' class were much more likely to be risk-averse to being tainted by gender deviance. Here Hansen describes the more reluctant disposition toward female oratory:

> [Many] evangelicals *refused to voice their complaints* during meetings, some 'out of sisterly regard' for the radicals' feelings [patrician-feminists], others because of inexperience in large public forums. *As Lucy Parker explained*, *she*, *like many in the society*, *was* '*a poor speaker* [*so*] *rather than expose herself to ridicule she had been silent*.'...Judith Shipley commented that she did not participate in the debates since 'it was of no consequence what she thought individually' and she was 'willing to give up her feelings about it' (Hansen 1992:112–113, *emphasis mine*).

Members of this faction preferred silence, conflict avoidance, and felt as though they were 'poor speakers.' In contrast, upper class abolitionist women from wealthy, prestigious, highly educated families were more

comfortable in positions of antagonism and more likely to embrace public speaking as deserving a place within women's activist repertoire. Their habitus of privilege predisposed and gave them more confidence toward women's public speech.

We can therefore draw a close relationship between class position, family prestige, degree of feminism, and the willingness to take rhetorical risks. Patrician-feminists could *activate* emotional energy from prior social standing in order to perform the ethos work necessary to surmount women's public speaking binds. Middling nonfeminist abolitionist women possessed lower levels of emotional energy and as a result lacked the confidence needed to take such rhetorical risks. They withdrew from feminist ethos work.

This outcome was not so much a product of individual differences in natural oratorical talents. It was more due to socially structured differences in status-based emotional resources. Emotional inequality intersects with gender and divides 'sisterhood' in ways having implications for rhetorical agency. Emotional resources bequeathed by received status are constraining and enabling of the possibilities for rhetorical risk-taking by subordinated groups. Here, the unequal distribution of emotional capital partly accounts for differences in why groups choose to accept, cope, and/or protest gender-status binds through different postures of feminist ethos. The patrician-feminist ability to disregard stereotypes of traditional femininity and the public moral panic over gender deviance depended in large part upon the pre-performative activation of emotional capital.

A third form of feminist ethos work also existed among abolitionist women and presents an exceptional case of much theoretical interest to existing (sociological) social psychologies of status-oriented emotions and emotional energy. In the prophetic-feminist ethos, abolitionist women seem to have generated emotional energy ex nihilo by drawing upon the promissory notes of culturally autonomous sources. They appealed to sacred scriptures, like the second risk-averse group, but interpreted them through the Christian-millennial lens of radical racial and gender egalitarianism. They confronted the stigma of gender deviance head on in public, like the patrician-feminists, but they did so by summoning alternative status imaginaries rather than by activating emotional energy from prior social standing. Prominent examples here include Maria Stewart, Sojourner Truth, Ernestine Rose (with some qualifications given her atheism) and for certain reasons specified below, Angelina Grimké's 1838 May address to the Second Convention of Anti-Slavery Women at Pennsylvania

Table 5.1 Ideal–typical Comparison of Patrician- and Prophetic-Feminist Ethos Work

Table 1	*Patrician-Feminist Ethos*	*Prophetic-Feminist Ethos*
Status	Prior social status appealed to and performed	Prior status matters less, or circumstantial dispossession
Culture	Secular-liberal tendencies	Radical-religious tendencies
Reference group	Local elites	Distant imaginary reference groups
Ethos work	Activation of reserves	Summoning ex nihilo
Emotional energy	Risk-tolerant levels	Risk-immune levels
Women's rights	Humanist schemas	Millennial schemas
Femininity	Sensible and morally superior	Victimized but redemptive

Hall. In prophetic-feminist ethos work, background or 'external' social status seems to matter less in accounting for rhetorical intensity or 'eloquence.' Instead, the emotional-energy fueling ethos work has to be invoked ex nihilo from immaterial, culturally autonomous sources. See Table 5.1 for full comparison. Alternative status imaginaries are cited and performed through prophetic speech. I argue that the very existence of prophetic-feminism calls for a cultural–sociological analysis of sources of emotional energy that moves beyond current social-psychological theories from Kemper to Collins.

The two types of feminist ethos work, patrician and prophetic, are ideal-types in the Weberian sense of the term. They are one-sided exaggerations not perfectly realized in the social–historical world. They are however heuristic constructs enabling some causal conjecture, in this case, about effects of unequal emotional capital upon the willingness to take feminist rhetorical risks. They are also ideal-types in another sense, the classification being fluid, not fixed. Individuals may have some features of both, or over the course of a lecture tour, oscillate between types. This seems to be the case in what can be reconstructed of Angelina Grimké's brief rhetorical career. However, switching between types of ethos work is not completely random. The ideal-types indicate typical sources and differing causal pathways of generating emotional energy. This ideal–typical comparison helps to explain, for instance, why and how Grimké experienced a rhetorical radicalization during the events surrounding the burning of Pennsylvania Hall in May 1838.

The Patrician-Feminist Ethos: Activating Emotional Energy

Female orators who did brave the charge of 'Fanny Wrightism' like Angelina Grimké found themselves stuck in a gender-status bind in which a greater proportion of their speech had to be spent doing the ethos work that prominent male abolitionists like Wendell Phillips and Frederick Douglass often breezed through en route to the pathos-oriented excitement of violent emotions. Patrician-feminists were usually abolitionist women from wealthy, prestigious families. They were distinguished by being able to transfer funds of emotional energy toward a risk-tolerant, liberal feminist ethos that affirmed the American citizenship of women and women's equal human rights. Prominent examples here include Lydia Maria Child, Lucretia Mott, Angelina Grimké, Maria Weston Chapman, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Lucy Stone among others. Patrician-feminist abolitionists cultivated a progressive, more secular self-gravitating toward republican rights discourse and budding humanist ideology, including Garrison's human rights language. Patrician-feminists explicitly aligned themselves with the 'ultraist' reform platform of Garrisonian abolitionism. Like Garrison, they held the social problems of slavery and women's rights, among other reform issues of the day, together co-extensively through an androgynous cosmopolitanism. Their ethos work was partly enabled by a habitus of privilege formed from socialization into well-educated, prestigious, and progressive families. Upper class families and female academies trained them to be more at ease with formal speaking. As a result, they could access numerous sources of emotional energy, including family prestige, cultural capital, and class respectability. The patrician-feminist ethos was a rhetorical performance crafted for local reference groups tending to consist of the wealthy, well-educated heterodox elite.

Angelina Grimké was among the first generation of abolitionist women public speakers. Over a short but intense lecture tour, 1837–38, she rapidly rose to obtain celebrity status in New England and the Old Northwest. Hailed as an inspiring symbol of progress by her supporters, to her opponents she was an example of everything heinous about abolitionism, who bestowed the 'Devil-ina' nickname upon her. In first-hand reports, Grimké is described as transforming herself on stage from a pale anxious lady to a beaming charismatic figure, for instance, according to one report by Lydia Maria Child (Berkin 2009:65). Wendell Phillips finds remarkable Grimké's 'serene indifference to the judgment of those

about her' (quoted in Berkin 2009:67). How was Grimké capable of such 'serene indifference' to the moral panic stirred by her public speaking, and how did she overcome gender binds by transforming her nervousness into confidence on stage?

To a large extent, Grimké was able to 'cash out' emotional energy from an early training in holding high-status dispositions. Born to one of the wealthiest families of Charleston, South Carolina, her father was a prestigious Episcopalian judge and she was raised among the plantation elite (ranking among the wealthiest Americans at the time). Even at an early age, Grimké experimented with her privilege by refusing religious confirmation into the Episcopalian church, instead beginning a life of anti-establishment religious dissent. In her diary she wrote, 'I feel that I am called with a high and holy calling' (quoted in Berkin 2009:12). Moving north to Philadelphia and converting to abolitionism, she was one of the few women invited to the AASS's training of an army of field agents, hubristically titled the 'Seventy Apostles.' She quickly acquired a network of elite supporters from Boston to New York City who helped to arrange her travel and speaking venues. After being publicly scorned by America's most famous lady, Catherine Beecher, as well as by the general association of Congregationalist ministers, she boldly wrote counter-rebuttals defending her egalitarian humanist vision. Soon she was the object of courtship of abolitionism's most prominent Western leader, Theodore D. Weld.

Only a few fragmentary records of her speeches exist, but they are widely accessible today. All of her speeches are heavily oriented upon ethos. She emphasizes themes of universal morality and rights irrespective of sex, tropes common to a patrician-feminist ethos as I define. One of the reasons Angelina Grimké was prized so highly by Garrisonian abolitionists was for her authenticating southern credentials. She could refer to her personal eyewitnessing of slavery's cruelties as a plantation child. Her testimonial ethos was a form of proof in the frequently 'forensic' mode of abolitionist rhetoric (on public trial metaphors in abolitionist literature, see DeLombard 2007).

Grimké's speech before the Massachusetts state senate in 1838 was an unprecedented suspension of dominant gender norms. Her performance was very formal and highlights her respectability and credibility as a former southerner:

> I stand before you as a southerner, exiled from the land of my birth, by the sound of the lash, and the piteous cry of the slave. I stand before you as a

> repentant slaveholder. I stand before you as a moral being, endowed with precious and inalienable rights, which are correlative with solemn duties and high responsibilities; and as a moral being I feel that I owe it to the suffering slave, and to the deluded master, to my country and the world, to do all that I can to overturn a system of complicated crimes, built up upon the broken hearts and prostrate bodies of my countrymen in chains, and cemented by the blood and sweat and tears of my sisters in bonds (Grimké [1838] in Lerner 2004:268–9).

The speech manifests several qualities of patrician-feminist ethos work. Ethos is indicated in the repetitive figuration that directs attention to the character of the speaker. She presumes that her southern background ensures that her claims are trustworthy and reliable. She also displays ethos work in performing her moral goodness and benevolence by drawing upon republican schemas of 'inalienable rights.' The politics here show clear secular-humanist tendencies.

This speech must be interpreted in relation to the gender binds of her context, which would have been felt intensely in the halls of the state senate. In between the lines of her antislavery message is a feminist argument for improving women's status, though her feminist ethos is still saturated with the sentimental logic of proper femininity as when she displays those deep naturalized feelings of sympathy toward the slave and especially her 'sister in bonds.' She reinforces the public enthymemes associating true womanhood with civilization's higher sensibility to pain, indicating women's moral superiority. Her strong humanitarian language of 'blood and sweat and tears' affirms the moral idealization of femininity. The speech also illustrates how the performance of ethos constitutes a means of persuasion: if women's natural/higher moral sensibilities condemn slavery, then should not civilization as well?

Ethos work is also apparent in another section of the same speech. Before the following passage, she argues from scriptural precedents for the public work of abolitionist women. Then she compares the moral refinement of contemporary reform women with the morally degraded means of persuasion used by the biblical Esther to persuade the King of Persia to free her people:

> Mr. Chairman, it is my privilege to stand before you on a similar mission of life and love; but I thank God that we live in an age of the world too enlightened and too moral to admit of the adoption of the same means [as Queen Esther] to obtain as holy an end. I feel that it would be an insult to

> this Committee, were I to attempt to win their favor by arraying my person in gold, and silver, and costly apparel, or by inviting them to partake of the luxurious feats, or the banquet of wine. I understand the spirit of the age too well to believe that you could be moved by such sensual means—means as unworthy of you, as they would be beneath the dignity of the cause of humanity. Yes, I feel that if you are reached at all, it will not be by me, but by the truths I shall endeavor to present to your understandings and your hearts (Grimké [1838] in Lerner 2004:268).

This ethos work includes themes of women's moral respectability as a legitimating rationale for their public speech. It is an assertion of authority as the right to speak, justified again mostly through evaluative affective-meanings (moral goodness). A likely subtext of this section of the speech is Grimké's disavowal of the illicit sexual connotations attached to women public speakers. In referring to the age's progress beyond the sensual means of persuasion used by Queen Esther, Grimké disassociates herself from the stigma of Fanny Wrightism. Lastly, Grimké again highlights the universality of humanity and truth irrespective of sex. Women are bound to the same natural laws as men, the laws that give all humanity the voice of conscience and reason. A minimal ethos-oriented appeal to 'good sense' or intellectual trustworthiness animates these tropes.

Grimké's humanism and universalism exemplifies how the patrician-feminist persona activates emotional energy in order to overcome gender binds through ethos work. The conditions and possibility of patrician-feminist ethos work can be understood through existing social-psychological theories of emotion (e.g., Collins's theory of emotional energy and Kemper's status-power theory). Given her class and status background, her habitus of privilege, Grimké could access large stores of emotional energy, activating them as needed. Her reserve of emotional energy enabled her to transform herself on stage from anxiously deviant to serenely respectable. Her formal oratory was not a radical departure from already-possessed inclinations toward autonomy and confidence. High levels of emotional energy can be seen across the range of ethos-related traits discussed above, from the initial willingness to take rhetorical risks to other forms of religious and ideological deviance as well. The patrician-feminist ethos was risk-tolerant and comfortable with dissent in multiple ways. Grimké and other patrician-feminists incorporated feminism into abolitionism through humanist schemas. Among the diverse groupings of abolitionist women, they were the most able to tackle the question of women's secular political status and means of improving it head on.

Status Summoning: The Prophetic-Feminist Ethos

There are other means of rhetorical self-transformation and alternative styles of ethos work less reliant upon prior social standing. Prophetic-feminism constructed an ethos based on persecution and martyrdom. Less secular and more Manichean than the Victorian discourse of the patrician-feminists, prophetic speakers divinized themselves, drawing upon hermeneutic scripts and identifying with the chosen people. They interpreted and criticized slavery and racism through the religious imaginaries of sacred texts. Credible ethos was more difficult to achieve because of their low prior social standing. Confidence and trustworthiness had to come from other sources besides prior familial-cultural prestige. Instead of activating emotional energy from high-status positions, they developed ways of summoning emotional energy from religion via religious status claimsmaking.

In the prophetic style of feminist ethos, abolitionist women speakers motivated and energized themselves by calling upon the cultural gods and invoking religion's promissory notes. More likely to emerge in the rhetoric of black women speakers, the prophetic-feminists often lacked the white privileges invisible to patrician-feminists. Racial dispossession complicated and multiplied their gender-status subordination. Often in proportion to their degree of marginalization by race, class and gender, they drew upon the evangelical, millennial cognitive-emotional resources of Protestantism. Ethos was less an activation of emotional energy from embodied-socialized sources, and more of a *summoning of emotional energy from the immaterial*, that is to say, the affective-meanings associated with religious collective representations. In status summoning, prophetic-feminists forged ethos from more distant reference groups vis-a-vis the local elite reference groups of patrician-feminists. Their reference group was the invisible church of the persecuted and martyred.

Prophetic-feminism developed an idiosyncratic but comprehensive vision of justice that criticized multiple forms of oppression through an evangelical religious lens. As speakers they drew upon the cultural schemas and frames discussed in Chap. 4 under the Protestant-evangelical rhetoric of slavery. For them, the issue of slavery and women's rights was unified through scriptural hermeneutics or a 'Bible politics' (to use a phrase from historian John Stauffer's study of radical abolitionism, Stauffer 2002). These elements clearly predominate in the speeches of Maria W. Stewart who some historians hail as America's first woman political speaker (Richardson 1987).

Not much is known about the biography of Stewart. She was an orphan from Connecticut who moved to Boston sometime in her 20s. She probably worked intermittently as a low-paid teacher and a domestic servant. Her speeches address the unique oppressions faced by free black women given social inequalities in education, marriage, and domestic-labor markets (see the next chapter for more about Stewart). In a speech from 1833, Stewart describes the religious experience that led her to take the pulpit and persevere behind it:

> I felt that I had a great work to perform; and was in haste to make a profession of my faith in Christ, that I might be about my Father's business [Luke 2:49]. Soon after I made this profession, The Spirit of God came before me, and I spake before many. When going home, reflecting on what I had said, I felt ashamed, and knew not where I should hide myself. A something said within my breast, 'Press forward, I will be with thee.' And my heart made this reply, Lord, if thou wilt be with me, then I will speak for thee as long as I live. And thus far I have every reason to believe that it is the divine influence of the Holy Spirit operating upon my heart that could possibly induce me to make the feeble and unworthy efforts that I have (Stewart [1833] in Richardson 1987:67).

The speech exemplifies the affective dynamics at play in the feminist-prophetic style of ethos work. Stewart came from humble origins and experienced the degrading segregated labor markets in domestic service. In the social hierarchy of the day, she was very low status (in terms of received status). Her authorization to speak and the performed status of her ethos owed less to pre-existing dispositions of high emotional capital and more to the schemas and symbols of evangelical religion. She claimed no education but the 'teachings of the Holy Spirit' (Stewart 1832 speech, Richardson 1987:45). Rhetorical self-divinization, or the pre-emptive ownership of divine messages, is a hallmark of radical prophetic rhetoric (Darsey 1997).

It is all the more remarkable, given her class and status background, that Stewart was able to surmount overlapping gender and racial binds to speak out publicly. Fiercely opposed, crowds hissed at her, heckled and pelted her with tomatoes. Where then did her emotional energy and stamina come from then? In a speech delivered in Boston, 1832, Stewart unveils a bit of the sort of emotional energy that energizes the prophet figure:

> The frowns of the world shall never discourage me, nor its smiles flatter me; for with the help of God, I am resolved to withstand the fiery darts of

> the devil, and the assaults of wicked men...I fear neither men nor devils; for the God in whom I trust is able to deliver me from the rage and malice of my enemies, and from them that rise up against me (Stewart [1832] in Richardson 1987:50).

Stewart adopts an otherworldly frame of reference, detached and transcending the sins of the world. She dis-identifies with local status politics, instead internalizing the distant reference groups imagined by evangelical Protestantism. Her otherworldly reference group leads her to feel determination and courage when surrounded by her worldly enemies. Compared to the patrician-feminism, Stewart's willingness to take rhetorical risks seems even greater; I thus deem her emotional energy 'risk-immune' in contrast to the 'risk-tolerant' ethos of patrician-feminism. Further, her rhetoric is entirely feminist, but in a less abstract way: she condemns the 'assaults of wicked men' and the moral failures of black men. Her otherworldly religious schemas seem to immunize her to very real local threats of humiliation and violence. She also pushes ethos work to the limit: in her quite explicit rejection of performing 'good sense' or 'good will,' she risks alienating audiences. Predictably some auditors dismissed her as insane and blasphemous, rejecting her ethos work in self-divinization. The prophetic-feminist ethos exceeds the conciliatory, deliberative aims of the Aristotelian rhetorical tradition (one reason Darsey labels it 'radical rhetoric,' Darsey 1997).

In contrast to patrician-feminism's activation of confidence from received social status, Stewart summons emotional energy from imaginary sources, such as cultural gods, distant reference groups, and religious promissory notes. The last of these is evident here:

> Do you ask, why are you ['daughters of Africa'] wretched and miserable? I reply, look at the many of the most worthy and most interesting of us doomed to spend our lives in gentlemen's kitchens...But ah! methinks our oppression is soon to come to an end; yea, before the Majesty of heaven, our groans and cries have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth [James 5:4]. (Stewart [1832] in Richardson 1987:48–49).

Again we see that Stewart's feminism is practically situated in the real problems of marginalization and dispossession in the lives of black women. Women of color were widely assumed to be domestics in northern cities. In the face of racial oppression and despair, Stewart summons energy

from millennial hopes: she claims the 'Lord of Sabaoth' is responsive to injustice and pain and will intervene to end the oppression. Her optimism comes from millennial predictions about the coming of heaven on earth. Interestingly, her religious assurance in the ultimate victory of the righteous is echoed over two decades later by another prophetic-feminist abolitionist, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper:

> Slavery is mean, because it tramples on the feeble and weak. A man comes with his affidavits from the South and hurries me before a commissioner; upon that evidence ex parte and alone he hitches me to the car of slavery and trails my womanhood in the dust...God is on the side of freedom; and any cause that has God on its side, I care not how much it may be trampled upon, how much it may be trailed in the dust, is sure to triumph (Watkins Harper [1857] in Foner and Branham 1998:307).

Harper's eloquence stems partly from her repetition above of the words 'trampled' and 'trailed in the dust.' She figures slavery and womanhood together as positions of the victimized, persecuted weak, but with a twist. In the millennial cosmology of evangelical Protestantism, God is on the side of the weak and oppressed. Harper comes to feel the same hope that Stewart did in her prediction of all wrongs be righted and abolition eventually triumphing. The cultural promissory notes of religion are one potential source of emotional energy for public speaking.

Prophetic-feminism relies upon status summoning to accomplish ethos work. Status summoning is an alternative way of generating the emotional energy needed to overcome gender-status binds in public speaking. It seems to emerge unpredictably from some people's experience of dispossession, when there is little pre-existing privilege to cash-out on, through a religious framing of injustice. As we have seen, some key mechanisms can include the internalization of distant or imaginary reference groups (e.g., the martyred, the Israelites of the exodus, the invisible church, the heaven-bound) as well as subscription to culturally autonomous promissory notes (e.g., the ultimate victory of the righteous, the leveling of social difference in the new Jerusalem, the heavenly inheritance of the poor). Prophetic-feminism has a providential millennialist view of justice, problematizing gender status through biblical narratives (on redemptive womanhood, see Cutter 2003). Its abolitionist rhetoric especially enjoys the chiasmic tropes and resources of evangelical Protestantism, through which alternative status imaginaries are envisioned and performed.[8]

Through these means, some abolitionist women were able to generate emotional energy ex nihilo (on the formation of cultural imaginaries ex nihilo, see Castoriadis 1987 and Clemens 2007). If patrician-feminist abolitionists 'cash out' emotional energy to do ethos work, prophetic-feminist abolitionists pay with credit. They borrow emotional energy from a religiously framed future, inspired by inverted status imaginaries that oppose the profane status hierarchies of the world. By invoking these immaterial imaginaries, abolitionist women are energized to speak and condemn.

As qualified above, these distinctions are ideal–typical. The relationship between prior social standing and the prophetic-feminist ethos is not one-to-one, but can vary. An interesting case of this would be when patrician-feminists feel threatened by the risky circumstances surrounding a specific speaking occasion and in response to it either retreat or undergo radicalization. Ethos work is shaped by context and can shift between the two styles of feminist-abolitionism based on antecedent events. For example, while Angelina Grimké has clear tendencies toward patrician-feminist ethos work, as analyzed above, it is clear that she was also capable of the more prophetic genre of public speaking as seen in the opening vignette of Chap. 3.

Conclusion

This chapter showed how various linkages between abolitionism and feminism were forged through the rhetorical performance of ethos. Ethos was the site of a social struggle over gender status within the abolitionist rhetoric of slavery. Radical abolitionism's fluctuating support or at least tolerance for women public speakers was partly enabling of the feminist project, qua a sort of small-scale opportunity structure for early feminists who then appropriated the rhetorical domain of public communication as an important means in the struggle for women's status.[9]

This chapter interrogated how and why women's antislavery activities required a higher reflexivity about and greater orientation upon ethos relative to men's privileging of both 'pathos' and 'logos' in slavery addresses (as will see in the following chapters). Thus total, three types of abolitionist women's feminist ethos work can be distinguished by levels of emotional energy, which, in turn, was often but not always determined by the individual's prior social standing. By comparing two specific styles of feminist ethos work among abolitionist women, the patrician-feminist and the prophetic-feminist, I constructed a theory of *status summoning*

that advances beyond Collins's notion of activating stored emotional energy and Kemper's status-power theory of rhetorical eloquence to take into account culturally autonomous sources of emotional energy. Status summoning in the feminist-prophetic ethos generates the emotional energy needed to overcome public speaking gender binds through self-divinization, distant reference groups, alternative status imaginaries, and religious promissory notes.

Ethos work is an important initial phase in social-movement rhetoric for many women movement participants. Ultimately, though, if the goal of ethos work is persuasion, patrician-feminist abolitionists were more successful than the prophetic-feminists. Patrician-feminists spoke with local elites in mind, displaying good will toward them. Prophets are not as gentle and 'serene.' Nonetheless, this study shows that multiple possibilities of ethos work exist that can increase the rhetorical power and social-movement agency of status-subordinated groups. Both the *respectability* of the patricians and the *radicalism* of the prophets can be important strategies in overcoming status binds. The theory of status summoning is important for recognizing the performative agency and persistence of marginalized actors in protest.

Notes

1. The secondary literature on gender and the public sphere in the nineteenth century is a true macro-level phenomenon (for a recent overview of literature on women abolitionists, see Kellow 2013).
2. Most historians continue to draw a close relationship between women's abolitionism and the earliest organized social movement for women's rights. Women's abolitionism was the forerunner of first-wave feminism, though some skeptics usefully point out that many antislavery women did not come to endorse 'women's rights' rhetoric. Summing up a complicated relationship, historian Nancy Hewitt writes, "Although it is clear now that not all abolitionists became women's rights advocates, it is still acknowledged that nearly all pioneer woman's rights advocates embraced abolitionism" (Hewitt 2002:127). Teasing out some of the social processes behind why and how abolition was fused with women's rights for some female abolitionists, but not others, is one area this chapter will shed some light upon.
3. This chapter uses the word 'ethos' in its technical rhetorical sense while developing a sociological approach to the study of it. Ethos refers to semiotic qualities of speaking that reflect favorably upon the character of the

speaker. I analyze ethos in more depth in the following section of the chapter.

4. All abolitionist speeches can be analyzed as a 'co-articulation' of race and gender. Women's abolitionist rhetoric, especially by white women, was entangled in popular racialized imaginaries saturated with various figurations of the 'relational pairing' of white women and black men (see Roth 2014).
5. There are however important differences among generations of abolitionist women orators. For instance, Of Aristotle's three components of ethos—goodness, good sense, and goodwill—O'Connor demonstrates that the earliest generation of women reformers in 1830s focused on performing moral goodness to the almost complete exclusion of other 'ethical proofs.'
6. This raises the relevant question of how biased by masculinist assumptions the Western rhetorical tradition is (see Buchanan and Ryan 2010).
7. I am using the sociological phrase 'ideal-type' in a looser sense than in the Parsonian reading of Weber. I make no claim that this typology exhausts all logical possibilities.
8. I am using the language of cultural autonomy (Alexander 2003) and ex nihilo imaginaries (Castoriadis 1987) not to try to dis-embed religion from social inequalities but to oppose a certain reductionism in the sociology of emotion that tends to harness all emotional energy to material sources. Thanks to Amy Wilkins for helping me clarify this.
9. In clear commemorative language, Elizabeth Cady Stanton expresses and reflects upon the unfolding of this opportunity structure within abolitionism, for instance: "Yes, this is the only organization on God's footstool where the humanity of woman is recognized, and these are the only men who have every echoed back her cries for justice and equality...No the mission of this Radical Anti-Slavery Movement is not to the African slave alone, but to the slaves of custom, creed and sex, as well, and most faithfully has it done its work" (1860 speech, quoted in Ceplair 1989:2).

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CHAPTER 6

Systemic Racism and the Rhetoric of Recognition

Antislavery abolitionism has attracted the attention of scores of historians but far fewer sociologists—surprisingly so given American sociology's deep knowledge interests in social movements, citizenship, and the history of racial domination in the USA. One reason for this lopsidedness is surely the tremendous quality (and quantity) of historical scholarship on the topic already in existence. Still strong in operation, the cottage industry of slavery and abolition studies includes decades of complex historiographical debate looming over any sociologist who ventures into the area of slavery and 'race' relations before the Civil War. Recent writings in abolitionist history reveal another entire history of racial domination in itself, the intense knowledge politics of the twentieth-century scholarship preceding and following the Civil Rights movements, with passionate protest struggles having been waged here too.

Many sociology readers will find the historiographical debates about race and racism in abolitionism to be unsettling to say the least. It will sound either odd or obvious to say, but abolitionism was racially progressive relative to its social context. It fostered greater amounts of interracial contact and higher levels of racial egalitarianism than anywhere else in American society during the antebellum nineteenth century. Some white abolitionists proudly attended black churches, resisted segregation on trains and steamboats, and welcomingly invited black colleagues into their home. Some black abolitionists linked arms, formed friendships, and engaged in business and correspondence with their white colleagues. And

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yet, the social movement could not help but do its work while constrained by the racial regime of antebellum America. Participants simultaneously reinforced stereotypes in their protest rhetoric as well as perpetuated racial status inequalities through numerous mechanisms and interactional patterns *internal* to the movement.

One group of historians celebrates the radical inclusivity and intermixing of the abolitionists, praising them as ahead of their time and an inspiration to our own (Darsey 1997; Davis 1984, 2014; Goodman 1998; Sinha 2006, 2012; Stauffer 2002). Another group gives a more pessimistic portrait of the abolitionists as largely perpetuating the racializing discourse and interactional inequalities of their time period (Fredrickson 1987; McFeely 1991; Mintz 1995; Pease and Pease 1974; Roth 2014; Sanchez-Eppler 1992). Neither group though pays attention to major theoretical developments in the sociology of race and racism that can show how both positions are true at the same time. The current moment in abolitionist history is excessively multicultural in the worse sense of the term, that is, biased toward voluntaristic accounts narrowly focused on episodic transcendences of interpersonal racism. Perhaps we can chalk it up to the passing Civil War Sesquicentennial anniversary of mass emancipation. Nevertheless, the lack of conceptions of systemic racism and/or multilevel practices of racial inequality is immediately apparent and easy for sociologists to spot.

However, the discipline of sociology is not without its own distinctive drawbacks when it comes to analyzing abolitionism. The stumbling block for most sociological readers is what to do with real racial slavery when it is less of an originary signifier for the discipline and instead the lived reality of terror hanging over all black Americans, enslaved or not. To understand this context, some theoretical developments in the sociology of race are less transhistorically applicable than others, and this is an important lesson in itself. I wager that sociological readers will eventually come to recognize that many current theories in the sociology of race and racism were forged in a different historical context, marked by both continuities and discontinuities with the age of slavery. On the one hand, notions of 'colorblind racism' or 'microaggressions' would clearly be anachronistic if applied to the abolitionists many of whom were unapologetic, not mere implicit, racists. On the other hand, other relevant concepts from contemporary sociology (including but not limited to racialization, segregation, discriminatory mechanisms, status inequality and backlash, etc.) retain their explanatory power better across this span of time.

On the historical sociology front, another problem immediately presents itself in the meager literature contributing to the study of the US antislavery movement (Ellingson 1995; Piven 2006; Whooley 2004; Young 2001, 2006). Previous sociologies of the movement have not done justice to developments in the sociology of race and ethnicity, especially in the growth of multilevel models of racial inequality and systemic racism. Indeed, compared to recent historians of abolitionism, the few existing sociological studies are overwhelmingly white/male-centric. To be fair, prior sociologists have approached the movement with very different theoretical and historical purposes, and judged by their stated aims, have produced excellent and successful scholarship, for examples, Piven's broad overview of forms of disruptive power (Piven 2006) or Young's landmark cultural sociology of the role of religious schemas (Young 2006; cf. Stamatov 2011). I do not intend to criticize any of the above studies individually, but rather to merely notice the problematic bias in the emergent pattern overall. The point is that scattered sociologies of the movement have not yet caught up to the immense and widespread reappraisal of the abolitionists now prevailing among historians about the precedence and centrality of black protest to the entire formation of the abolitionist discourse (for merely the tip of the iceberg of this vast and growing scholarship, see Aptheker 1989; Davis 2014; McCarthy and Stauffer 2006; Newman 2002; Sinha 2006, 2012; Stewart 2008). Hence, this is a remaining gap that this chapter takes one small step toward addressing it by analyzing black oratory and patterns of protest as well as the racial status inequalities internal to the social movement.

The main argument of this chapter is that black abolitionist discourse is structured by a meta-level argument against the racial status-power inequalities maintained within white abolitionist organizations. The present chapter initiates a re-reading of black antislavery oratory as the semiotic and affective expression of a social struggle for recognition. Recognition was the ultimate motivating reform *telos* for most black abolitionists. It meant being citizens and compatriots of the American national community. It entailed social interactions as equal subjects of humanity. Every 'inch' of interracial recognition, as Frederick Douglass declared, was 'sternly disputed' in antebellum America (Douglass in Blassingame 1982 [1853]:424). After all, the most prestigious antislavery organization of the time was the ACS. Its highly regarded members were well known for proposing to ship manumitted slaves and expel free blacks from the country. The efforts of black abolitionists to resist social exclusion and

such programs for national expulsion gave their rhetorical performances a unique structure of feeling. Their speeches made an *indexical turn* within and away from the three problem frames analyzed in Chap. 4.

I noted previously that emotional frame selection intersected with gendered and racial processes of status stratification. Black abolitionists, for instance, were more ambivalent toward sentimental frames of slavery and less equivocal about republican frames. Republican discourse was perceived to be more compatible than sentimentalism with the struggle for full racial equality and not mere interracial romanticism and sympathy. This chapter continues this mode of interrogation by concentrating on how the racial status inequalities internal to the abolitionist movement impacted the rhetoric of slavery. To be fully understood, black abolitionist discourse must be interpreted as a sometimes explicit, sometimes implicit, reaction to the racial biases of white abolitionism. Black abolitionists encountered, criticized, and surmounted racial status-beliefs in a variety of ways, especially, as I will argue, through ethos-oriented testimony and through logos-oriented arguments about the nature of prejudice, what I shall refer to as the rhetoric of recognition. They also experienced obstacles and 'binds' in public speaking that white abolitionists did not have to worry about as much.

Racism or 'color prejudice,' black abolitionists argued, was worse in the North than in the South. *Prima facie* statements like these are puzzling given the immense violence and systemic brutality buttressing southern slavery. In his first recorded speech, Frederick Douglass declared, 'Prejudice against color is stronger north than south; it hangs around my neck like a heavy weight. It presses me out from among my fellow men, and...I have met it at every step the three years I have been out of southern slavery' (Douglass [1841] in Blassingame 1979:5).[1] Similarly, Theodore S. Wright[2] earnestly complained that white northerners were 'doing more violence to them [black Americans] by your prejudice, than [slaveholders] are to our slaves by [their] treatment' (Wright [1837] in Foner and Branham 1998:173). Resolving this puzzle will be addressed by examining elements of the northern racial regime as interpreted by black abolitionists many of whom were former slaves themselves.

First, partly to aid abolitionism studies in overcoming its current celebratory multicultural moment, I present a much needed overview analysis of types of systemic racism permeating the abolitionist social movement, including: (1) *racialization* through macrocultural frames and civil-society binaries; (2) *social–structural mechanisms* reproducing racial inequality,

including segregation, discrimination, and unequal remuneration; and (3) *status inequalities* in interactional practices and patterns structured by both implicit and explicit racism. As in the previous two chapters, I focus on several prominent antislavery leaders and their oratory. This chapter centers upon Douglass, one of the very top names in the history of American public address. He was a prolific abolitionist speaker and antislavery newspaper editor who wrote three highly successful autobiographies over the course of his life. His personal experience born and raised a slave on the Eastern Shore of Maryland gave his protest rhetoric a distinctive existential style. We will add to his oratory the voices of Sojourner Truth, Reverend Theodore S. Wright, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, James McCune Smith, and several others. In addition to trying to persuade unsympathetic northern audiences to the antislavery cause, black abolitionist leaders also subtly crafted their public addresses as vehicles for the criticism of the racial status inequalities internal to white abolitionism. Reflecting the social situation of systemic racism, their speeches featured higher levels of indexicality and a *rhetoric of recognition*.

Two Abolitionisms

Since the 1970s, many historians have highlighted the neglect of black abolitionists in the scholarly literature as an inexcusable example of continued racial bias (Pease and Pease 1974; Quarles 1969). Many historians now claim that there were in fact 'two abolitionisms' split asunder by numerous organizational and ideological divides between white and black activists. 'By the 1840 two distinct abolitionisms existed. Whites approached slavery and freedom on an abstract, ideological plane; blacks defined slavery and freedom in more concrete, experiential terms. White abolitionism drew largely upon evangelical theology and theories of universal reform; black abolitionism was grounded in political philosophy and shaped by daily experiences in a racist society' (Ripley 1991:24). Prior mid-century studies erred in generalizing their observations of white abolitionists with the whole movement, ignoring, or subsuming black abolitionists into white-centric studies. Past scholars also ignored the central role black activists played in keeping antislavery alive during the interstitial years between gradualist and immediatist abolitionism (Newman 2002).

Black abolitionism differed from white abolitionism in several regards. It was more integrated with the urgent practical issues facing black northern communities. For northern black abolitionists, 'bondage, prejudice

and discrimination were only varied manifestations of the same problem, so interrelated that to neglect one was to endanger all' (Pease and Pease 1974:8). Black abolitionism prioritized concrete ways to improve the social status of black communities in the north. Education, family stability, literacy, moral conduct, and finances were seen as part and parcel of the antislavery cause. The parlance of 'elevation' and 'uplift' saturated the hortatory oratory of black abolitionists to northern black communities. The 'belief that the elevation of the race and the fight against slavery were inseparable battles—ultimately distinguished white abolitionist ideology from black abolitionism...despite black abolitionists' insistence that the issues were inseparable, white abolitionists tended to view the northern black campaign for civil rights as a secondary concern' (Ball 2012:139). Some white abolitionists in fact scolded black abolitionists for self-serving behaviors, viewing as unrepublican what was really the uphill struggle of an entire community for socioeconomic improvement (Pease and Pease 1974:14). Technically speaking, the term 'black abolitionism' is a somewhat artificial historical construct that does not adequately capture the unity of antislavery grievances with everyday struggles for recognition among northern blacks (see Ripley 1991; in this chapter, I use the term black abolitionism inclusively to recognize these multifaceted modes of protest and social conflict).

Black abolitionists were as devoted to eradicating northern racism as they were to abolishing southern slavery. They valued racial social equality as much as the abolition of slavery, often in contrast to white abolitionism's privileging of the latter sometimes to the exclusion of the former. The two were intrinsically connected in black abolitionist discourse. In positing the *unity of slavery and prejudice*, black abolitionists grappled with the national logic of racialization. In their eyes, it was race itself and racial status inequality that bound them permanently with the fate of the slave, though they more commonly spoke of this relationship as a spiritual one. In their protest rhetoric, slavery and prejudice were inseparably bound together by a 'spirit of slavery' or a 'cord of caste' in the theological opining of Reverend Wright who declared that, 'prejudice must be killed or slavery will never be abolished. Abolitionists must annihilate in their own bosoms the cord of caste. We must be consistent—recognize the colored man in every respect as a man and brother' (Wright [1837] in Foner and Branham 1998:170). In this fashion, black abolitionism fought for social recognition through the available nineteenth-century religious and spiritual schemas.

Another major difference between the two abolitionisms is indicated by the frustration of black abolitionists toward the reform eclecticism of Garrison and his colleagues who sometimes featured reforms other than antislavery in their speeches. White abolitionism seemed easily distracted by irrelevant ideological debates and far too divisible by sectarian quibbles. As evident with the Evangelical Protestant frame, 'white abolitionists often put the condition of their own souls first' (Pease and Pease 1974:11). In other words, antislavery activism was a way for many whites to perform their own salvation by showing the new 'Christian benevolence' to the most 'afflicted and outcast.' For Garrisonians, the quest for postmillennial moral perfectionism sprouted in wildly different directions in a way that could be very frustrating. Frederick Douglass and Charles Remond split from Garrisonian John A. Collins when he decided to address socialism and property reform in a speech rather than abolition (McFeely 1991:104–105). The rift between the AASS and black abolitionism grew ever larger in the 1840s and 1850s. In the 1840s, black abolitionists renewed the more autonomous tradition of holding separate National Colored Conventions (Bell 1957). Historian James Stewart (1998) uses the phrase 'racial modernity' to label the increasingly separatist, essentialist tendencies of both white and black abolitionism in the decades before the Civil War.

White abolitionism's racial bias supported and extended multilevel practices of racial inequality. These included overt segregation, pay inequity, explicit interpersonal disrespect, and implicit representational biases. As an instance of the latter of these, the Sentimental frame was deeply entangled with the wider racializing civil-society binaries. Sentimentalism contributed to the social construction of race through notions of nature, childhood, and innocence. Historian George Fredrickson (1987) has labeled this paradigm 'romantic racialism.' It constituted race as a status inequality through notions of warmth, submissiveness, and comedy—the very same sentimentalist binaries constitutive of gender-status beliefs in the same time period.

Harriet Beecher Stowe was the most famous exemplar of romantic racialism given her profuse literary sentimentalization of the slave. Uncle Tom, Eliza, and other African characters in Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* are simpleminded yet morally virtuous. The African race is naturalized as docile, comedic, and kindhearted (see Roth 2014 for an excellent overview of Stowe's racialized sentimentalism). The racial biases of sentimentalism were also evident in the bias of limiting black orators at antislavery meetings to experiential testimony. Black speakers were instructed by

white abolitionists to portray the barbarity of the slaveholders who would take advantage of the more primitive but innocent African race. One Garrisonian advised Douglass to avoid sounding too intelligent or else his audiences would never 'believe you were ever a slave' (McFeely 1991:95). Sentimental culture motivated white abolitionist efforts to control black rhetoric, limiting it to a descriptive function while letting white abolitionists provide the philosophical principles.

The sentimentalization of the slave is a specific instance of what sociologists of race now call *racialization*, the cultural construction of specific fictitious concepts of racial difference (Brekhus et al. 2010). This is the most basic level of white abolitionism's complicity with racial inequality, the level of stereotype formation. On this plane, abolitionist frames and discourse were complicit in constructing race as a status difference. Romantic racialism—along with other contemporaneous racial formations, such as early scientific racism—ensured that northern free blacks would see the mutual constitution of slavery and prejudice in *race-conceptions.* They would always be aware of how that racial logic extended across both sides of the Mason Dixon line, connecting their fate to that of the slave (even if there were not more immediate family ties as there often were).

Other levels of complicity included the participation of white abolitionists in mechanisms of segregation, discrimination, and social control (cf. the mechanismic account of segregation in Anderson 2010). These are social–structural processes within abolitionism reproducing racial inequalities through rules, institutions, and spatial logics of action. Black antislavery agents were paid about half of the wage of their white counterparts. They also had more difficulties in securing building venues for their speeches (Stauffer 2009:16, 18). Additional examples of racial discrimination include the unequal distribution of offices in antislavery organizations. The largest of these, the AASS, run by Boston-based Garrisonians, never assigned higher offices to black members. Administrative leaders of the society, like Maria Chapman, patronized the society's black field agents, not trusting them with society funds and suspecting them of causing unnecessary conflicts (McFeely 1991:108, 165). Eventually, the AASS more or less excommunicated Douglass for starting an independent newspaper and for deviating too far from the official doctrine.[3] Chapman considered Douglass 'ungrateful' and Garrison called him an 'apostate' (ibid:178). Such anecdotes are but illustrations of a larger pattern in white abolitionism, in which mechanisms of segregation, discrimination, and social control perpetuated racial status inequalities.

Racialization through stereotypes and racial mechanisms like segregation also rendered interracial interpersonal interactions tense, to say the least, within antislavery events and meetings. Many white abolitionists continued to avoid mixed-race appearances in public. When separating the races proved difficult for antislavery colleagues on the road, white abolitionists sometimes expressed their instinctive discomfort. Despite his public protests against segregation, Wendell Phillips in a private letter confessed of feeling ill at ease when sharing a room (McFeely 1991:94). Other white abolitionists were hardly as covert and polite about race relations as Phillips tried to be. 'To make [northern public] people comfortable, some antislavery speakers, such as Edmund Quincy, unattractively and unsuccessfully tried for the common touch by making jokes about black people' (McFeely 1991:84). Quincy was an AASS officer and editor for Garrison's *The Liberator*. He once even rebuked Douglass as an 'unconscionable nigger' (quoted in Stauffer 2009:18). Such nonchalant racism prevailed even at antislavery meetings though frowned upon by prominent leaders like Garrison and Phillips. Before a mostly white audience at the New York Anti-Slavery Society meeting in 1837, Reverend Wright argued radically for limiting antislavery society membership to people genuinely committed to eliminating 'prejudice' in addition to slavery:

> Every man who comes into this society ought to be catechized. It should be ascertained whether he looks upon man as man, all of one blood and one family. A healthful atmosphere must be created in which the slave may live when rescued from the horrors of slavery. I am sensible, I am detaining you, but I feel that this is an important point. I am alarmed sometimes when I look at the constitutions of our societies. I am afraid that brethren sometimes endeavor so to form the constitutions of societies that they will be popular. I have seen constitutions of abolition societies, where nothing was said about the improvement of the man of color! They have overlooked the giant sin of prejudice. They have passed by this foul monster, which is at once the parent and offspring of slavery (Wright [1837] in Foner and Branham 1998:169–170).

Abolitionists should have to undergo a 'catechism,' Wright proposes, in the removal of racial prejudice. Today it would be called *antiracist training*. The tropes of 'one blood' and 'one family' are biblical spiritual phrases he employs to criticize the anti-black stereotypes still ubiquitous in antislavery societies. Wright senses that many whites participated in the associations for reasons other than concern for the slave or for the 'improvement

of the man of color'—the urgent concern of northern black communities. Abolitionism, for Wright, should be about working to eliminate the segregationist logic of society. Throughout northern states before the Civil War, public 'amalgamation' of the races was not only condemned but also could be dangerous. It triggered anti-abolitionist riots and violent status backlash—both Wright and Douglass were physically assaulted for their public speaking against slavery.

Many northern audiences would not take black public speakers seriously if they were not legitimated by a white colleague who verified and vouched for their testimony. This was the case as well for most of the 50 or so slave narratives published before the Civil War, including *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass.* Slave testimony was expected to be authenticated by reputable whites, as Garrison and Phillips did in introducing Douglass's *Narrative* to the world. Slave narratives have been criticized as 'black messages' with 'white envelopes' for this reason (Sekora 1987). Eventually Douglass grew 'tired of all the conjectures about his not having truly been a slave, and not being able to write his own speeches. He could damned well read and write; he had been a slave, but slavery had not left him a beast to be displayed; he was not a black dummy manipulated by a white ventriloquist' (McFeely 1991:113).

Douglass, who in his first recorded speech declared that 'prejudice against color is stronger north than south,' later elaborated, 'Everywhere we are treated as a degraded people. If we go to the church, we are despised there, and made to take an obscure place, though the preacher talks of all men being made of one blood' ([1849] Blassingame 1982:168). Cataloguing here the many racial inequalities internal to abolitionism is not to downplay the relative progress made. White abolitionism made some significant advances over the virulent racism of southern and northern states. However, black activists were chronically disappointed by the persistent multilevel racism of white abolitionist organizations. Taken together, the specific forms of racialization, discriminatory mechanisms, and interactional status inequalities outlined above constituted a 'racial regime' (Alexander 2012). Prejudice may have seemed less severe on southern estates to Douglass because there interracial interactions and interminglings were more regular in some respects (cf. Alexander 2012:27; precisely because the social death of the enslaved was more complete, Patterson 1982). The racial regime of the antebellum North was in many respects social-structurally similar to postbellum Jim Crow. Antebellum North and South were two specific racial regimes each pro-

ducing their own particular configuration of interracial relationships, violence, disrespect, and despair. And abolitionist protest rhetoric too was inevitably shaped by the systemic racism of its context.

A Theory of Black Status Binds

Occupying a position of racial status disadvantage within abolitionism constrained black public speaking opportunities. Black orators faced a set of structural and social–psychological *status binds* that beset them with certain difficulties and distractions that white abolitionist were relatively unburdened by. A few like Douglass and McCune Smith were able to transcend these status binds in their antislavery writing and speaking. Others were too dispossessed and structurally blocked to ever experience the relative freedoms that later Douglass eventually achieved in his rhetoric. The present chapter adds to our understanding of how status inequalities internal to movements constrain the microdynamic social psychology of protest rhetoric and its emotional energy with implications for movement persistence and the lack thereof.

A branch of social psychology in particular known as *expectation states theory* is useful in uncovering the motives and frustrations of black protest rhetoric. Proponent of this view, sociologist Cecilia Ridgeway subdivides theories of status inequality into two parts (Ridgeway 2001, 2006, 2011; Ridgeway and Bourg 2004). The two are inversions of each other but also complementary in explaining the emergence and persistence of status inequalities: (1) *status construction theory* attempts to explain the origins of status-beliefs through repeated material resource disadvantages; (2) *expectation states theory* examines how status-ranked behavioral hierarchies are reproduced through interpersonal interactions that draw upon self-fulfilling status-beliefs or expectations states—the latter one being more relevant to the black public speaking status binds I look at below.[4]

Ridgeway defines status structures as 'the standing [individuals] attain in the behavioral hierarchies of influence, status, and perceived suitability for leadership that commonly develop in interpersonal contexts' (Ridgeway and Kricheli-Katz 2013:297). Status inequalities are partly constituted by status-beliefs in the form of cultural stereotypes about race, class, and gender among other socio-cognitive categories of person construal. These beliefs are somewhat self-fulfilling in interactional settings through interpersonal typifications and expectations. For example, using socio-emotional softeners is a common rhetorical trait among the status-

subordinated (Ridgeway 2011). A few key status-beliefs, such as race and gender in the US context, operate so rapidly and automatically in our cognitions that Ridgeway calls them 'primary frames' (Ridgeway 2011). They are the unconscious cultural categories of person perception heavily relied upon in the course of social interactions. Through the mutual interplay of primary frames and interaction, status has its own dynamics, its own relatively autonomous self-reproducing systems of inequality. Ridgeway argues that race and class also have an irreducible status dimension as does gender. Race in the USA, like gender, is a primary frame of person construal, in fact, to a large extent, *secondary* class connotations are nested within the *primary* category of race. Emerging from the interplay of cultural status-beliefs and expectation-imbued interactions, gender and race conceptualizations are primarily status inequalities.

Status-disadvantaged situations tend to produce double standards and certain deprivations of freedom that Ridgeway calls *status binds*. A status bind refers to the lack of any meaningful non-derogatory means for acquiring influence or higher prestige. It is the deprivation of possible individual freedoms due to social pressures placed on the individual to conform to their primary status identities. For black Americans in the contemporary USA, Ridgeway notes, the status binds are similar to gender but often shaped by distinctive stereotypical content derived from 'their historical origins in the violence of slavery' (Ridgeway and Kricheli-Katz 2013:303). Before elaborating further the idea of black status binds, how they existed in the actual time of slavery, it is worthwhile to note the direct parallel between gender and racial status-beliefs in antebellum abolitionism. The primary frames that constitute status inequalities typically code the subordinate status position as one of emotion (versus rationality) and relationally 'submissive' and 'cooperative' (versus independent). The presence of such perennial symbolic binaries, emotion/rationality, or independence/warmth is a sure indicator that a status dimension is operative.

Black status binds in public speaking resulted from racial status-beliefs about emotion, intelligence, and physical violence—and other stereotypes produced by late sentimentalism's racialization of blackness (Roth 2014). The status binds that black abolitionists faced stemmed from the social juvenilization of blacks through the binaries of the nineteenth-century civil-society discourse (Davis 2014). Black speakers were no doubt aware of how audiences automatically framed them through these stereotypes, which could make public speaking trickier. Douglass was ever aware of the persistence of prejudice even at antislavery meetings and how racial status

inequalities were reinforced, as in the blatant bias in what topic Douglass had been asked to speak upon. Although speaking before an audience of abolitionists at the New England Anti-Slavery Society meeting in Boston's Faneuil Hall, Douglass's words are pleading and distrustful:

> I beg of you, then, to hear me calmly—without prejudice or opposition. You, it must be remembered, have in your hands all power in this land. I stand here not only in minority, but identified with a class whom every body can insult with impunity. Surely, the ambition for superiority must be great indeed in honorable men to induce them to insult a poor black man, whom the basest fellow in the street can insult with impunity (Douglass [1849] in Blassingame 1982:204).

Not unusual, for Douglass, there is some satiric prodding of men's honor here, yet the request for recognition seems quite earnest. The prejudice he refers to here includes his sometimes-hostile reception by unsympathetic audiences who deem his philosophizing and rational argumentation arrogant. The final line above, that even 'the basest fellow in the street' can insult a black man with 'impunity,' expresses the daily status degradations characteristic of the northern racial regime. Disrespect toward the self by others is assumed and expected when in public spaces. It is the lack of prejudice that is the surprise.

This section of the speech illustrates what W.E.B. Du Bois terms 'double consciousness,' the feeling of being at war within one's self between two incompatible self-conceptions, one partly self-made and partly aided by the nurture of one's spiritual community, in conflict with another self-image degraded and internalized through the stereotypes a minority encounters in the attitudes of a majority (Du Bois 1994:2). Douglass experiences double consciousness in the feeling of tension between partial recognition and generalized disrespect. Black status binds are like the experience of double consciousness while performing in mixed-race settings. We could theorize further, status binds are the practical, interactional implications of double consciousness and its basis in relations between a minority and a dominant racial–ethnic majority group. A status bind is present for a black orator if they are constrained from acting in certain ways or from saying certain things that their white colleagues are relatively free to do or say because of race-related stereotypes and social expectations.

One black status bind in abolitionist rhetoric resulted from civil-society binaries valuing rationality and denigrating emotion. Romantic racialism's

coding of blacks as more emotional than rational created a double bind revolving around feeling rules and displays of affect.[5] The social setup put black orators in a unique *affect-suppresion bind*. Speakers could conform to primary race frames, but not be taken seriously. Or, in an attempt to have more influence, speakers could choose to privilege rational argumentation over emotion, but risk upsetting audiences who expected an entertaining display of emotion. Black speakers who chose the latter course of performing rationality and respectability risked being seen as arrogant and pretentious by white audiences who possessed a variety of means of sanctioning frame offenders. Mild forms of reprimand included hissing, interrupting, leaving, or making a causal rebuke after the lecture—actions sometimes recorded by a newspaper transcriber or later narrated by the speaker. Speaking in mixed-raced settings could be dangerous as status backlash was not implausible. Douglass, for instance, was almost murdered during a mob reaction to his antislavery speech in Indiana (to say nothing of the later fistfights he was drawn into). Other northern blacks were brutally beaten for their mere attendance at a mixed-race antislavery meeting. Thus, one main black status bind stemmed directly from the racialization of the emotion/rationality binary, disabling any meaningfully non-derogatory option for many black abolitionists. Many black abolitionists responded to this affect bind by suppressing intense emotion altogether through a politics of respectability. This is also true of certain black women abolitionists like Sarah Douglas and Frances Ellen Watkins Harper. (However, we will see in following sections of this chapter that these suppressed emotions still found occasional expression in moments of intense despair and anger, disclosing kinds of indexical connections to slavery that 'humanitarian' white abolitionists often lacked.)

Some indication of the psychological experience of these status binds can be found in the recorded speeches of Douglass, though Douglass was perhaps exceptional in his ability to remake himself and transcend the limitations that white abolitionist societies and audiences placed on black speakers (perhaps all the more reason to test the theory of status binds on Douglass since he would be among black abolitionists the least affected). Indeed there is biographical and stenographic evidence for thinking that Douglass was aware of racial status binds, and found them constraining especially in the first decade of his speaking career, but was increasingly less bound by them with his growing celebrity and independence from white antislavery societies. Early on, he rudely discovered that white abolitionists expected him to deliver the emotional bang of the meeting and

not deal in the more rational, philosophical arguments against slavery. He was encouraged to talk more like a slave and to stick to personal stories of cruel masters that moved the sympathies of the audiences.

Implicit racial bias within white abolitionism forced early Douglass into a variety of public speaking status binds, including the affect-suppression bind sketched above. To be a success with white audiences, he felt that he had to be emotionally entertaining, but if he were too emotionally entertaining, audiences would not take his antislavery message seriously. Occasionally, Douglass was so hilarious in his mimicry of southerners that he offended the more Victorian members of his audience who walked out on him.[6] There is something inimitable about the way Douglass made sense of and dealt with the status binds of a black orator: early Douglass managed a precarious balancing act between comedy and tragedy, almost managing to reconcile the situation's contradictory obligations. Later Douglass resolutely repudiated occupying the racialized lower status polarity of the rationality-emotion binary. In 1850s, he defies racial expectation states by writing out eloquent, scientific, rationalistic speeches—his embrace of a more logocentric rhetoric of recognition. Still consciously reacting to racial status inequality, Douglass increasingly tries to resolve the status binds by performing rationality and respectability.

A common characteristic of status-disadvantaged positions is being judged by double standards, for instance, in having to meet a higher bar in the demonstration of competence and in being judged adversely even for behaving in an identical way to superordinate others who are not so judged. The double standards that black abolitionists felt compelled by often had to do with intelligence and eloquence. Douglass realized that black orators were taken as representative of their 'race,' held in comparison to the best white exemplars of eloquence. Every speech was potentially taken as a proof of the intelligence of the entire race in a way quite foreign to how white abolitionist orators were received and judged. Although Douglass could hold his ground against an Everett or a Webster, he criticized such race-based comparisons for how they were used to legitimate the denial of social recognition:

> ...this folly is seen in the arguments directed against the humanity of the negro. His faculties and powers, uneducated and unimproved, have been contrasted with those of the highest cultivation; and the world has then been called upon to behold the immense and amazing difference between the man admitted, and the man disputed (Douglass [1854] in Blassingame 1982:502).

Black orators ('the man disputed') were judged as less intelligent and therefore less human by being compared to the highest trained rhetoricians of the land, so that white audiences could confirm their primary race frames. Average white abolitionists ('the man admitted') were not similarly held to such high standards. Given the high social pressures of being made a token representative of the collective and of being taken as a measure of that entire collective's capabilities, black abolitionists found public speaking occasions to be freighted with heavy significance. A sort of status bind is present here as well since rhetorical performances of high intelligence could still be demeaned in a variety of ways, for example, by auditors who thought Douglass lied about being raised as a slave because no slave could possibly be so eloquent. Douglass responded to public speaking status binds in different ways throughout his career, from suppressing his philosophical inclination, to astounding audiences with more eloquence than they had ever seen, to in the above case, addressing the racial double standards head on through the rhetoric of recognition, pointing out the unfairness of racial status structures directly to his audiences.

On some speaking occasions, Douglass seems unsure about what tactic to adopt in addressing status claims. He speaks of feeling like he is ever 'on trial,' and asked to do the impossible, as when proving the humanity of the slave in argument with proslavery ideology:

> the [*Richmond*] *Examiner* boldly asserts that the negro has no such right——BECAUSE HE IS NOT A MAN! There are three ways to answer this denial. One is by ridicule; a second is by denunciation; and a third is by argument. I hardly know under which of these modes my answer to-day will fall. I feel myself somewhat on trial; and that this is just the point where there is hesitation, if not serious doubt. I cannot, however, argue; I must assert (Douglass [1854] in Blassingame 1982:501).

During this speech, Douglass self-observes a sensation of hesitance. Elsewhere he calls it 'diffidence,' the feeling of a lack of confidence in speaking. Douglass's temporary diffidence or doubt in himself (as the dictionary defines 'diffidence') could have arisen from repeated experiences of disrespect, being constantly challenged, or from the high stakes game of managing contradictory expectations. It also had to do with his audience in this case. The context of this speech was the invitation of Western Reserve College to Douglass to give a prestigious academic address at the college's summer commencement ceremonies in 1854. It

was an unprecedented occasion, the first for any black American, and a very controversial decision among the faculty and student body. For the occasion, Douglass wrote out his most scientific oration yet consisting of logical arguments against the scientific racism of reputable ethnologists of the day. And yet Douglass qualifies himself as offering mere assertions, not arguments.

In some of his speeches, Douglass expresses the feeling of holding himself back and not being able to state how he truly feels. He seems to be stuck in an affect-suppression bind of wanting to condemn slavery more intensely than he allows himself to:

> Sir, this is strong language. For the sake of my people, I would to God it were extravagantly strong. But, Sir, I fear our fault here to-day will not be that we have pleaded the cause of the slave too vehemently, but too tamely; that we have not contemplated his wrongs with too much excitement, but with unnatural calmness and composure. For my part, I cannot speak as I feel on this subject. My language, though never so bitter, is less bitter than my experience. At best, my poor speech, is to the facts in the case, but as the shadow to the substance (Douglass [1853] in Blassingame 1982:426).

Douglass finds the social norms of language to be insufficient for the moral outrage of slavery and his own experiences of injustice. These linguistic difficulties partly emerge from the same rationality-emotion binaries discussed above. White abolitionists like Garrison and Phillips could be outraged and caustic without being judged negatively for it because rationality was their default status or primary frame. Since rationality was in dispute for black speakers, they were more likely to suppress emotional intensities of hatred. Phillips's style of the 'eloquence of abuse' was a kind of antebellum white privilege not afforded to black speakers for the most part. By disciplining one's speech with a stricter set of feeling rules, black abolitionists 'worked the binaries' to perform status equality (Alexander 2010). In this way, black orators affectively navigated a variety of public speaking status binds by suppressing their existential outrage and hatred, instead monitoring their speech to fit the civic values of their context.

Such self-censorship is a reason why public speaking could be trickier for black abolitionists. It is common for the upwardly aspiring to feel a lack of synchronicity between their socialized language mannerisms and the linguistic norms and rules expected of high class others. In his field theory of linguistic capital and linguistic habitus, Pierre Bourdieu (1991) highlights

the discomfort of speaking felt by members of lower social classes when in the presence of higher social classes. The discomfort arises from implicit awareness of one's lack of linguistic capital in certain social settings. It can produce a variety of symptoms in speech, including nervousness, 'diffidence,' and hesitation due to self-censorship. In the previous quote, one indication of a linguistic habitus is Douglass's deferential 'sir' language. Sir diction is quite frequent in Douglass's speeches before predominantly white audiences (sometimes being used two or three times per paragraph in the 1853 AFASS speech). It is a part of Douglass's general self-effacing remarks that start at least half of his antebellum speeches (at least, half of his speeches before white audiences). The sir diction could have indexical origins in Douglass's linguistic socialization in the South from experiences of being raised and disciplined as a slave. Partly though it is a means Douglass uses to gratify his auditor's desire for the prestige. Given Douglass's eloquence and wit though, it is often startling to see chronic self-effacing gestures by Douglass even in the 1850s (of course, some of this is standard introductory accouterments of ethos and humility, but it is present to a far higher degree in Douglass than in white abolitionists).

The disjunction between linguistic habitus and social field—Bourdieu calls it *hysteresis*—was most severe for the early speeches of Douglass having recently escaped from slavery in Maryland. Describing his new home in New Bedford, Massachusetts, he notes the frequent feeling of awkwardness he had when he was first trying to adjust to northern society:

> When I first came here, I felt the greatest possible *diffidence* to sitting with whites. I used to come up from the ship-yard where I worked, with my hands hardened with toil, rough and uncomely, and my movements *awkward*, (for I was unacquainted with the rules of politeness), I would shrink back, and would not have taken my meals with the whites, had they not pressed me to do so (Douglass [1849] in Blassingame 1982:213; *emphasis mine*).

Douglass's first abolitionist speeches were characterized by extreme nervousness and, some present say, total confusion (McFeely 1991:88). In mixed-race settings, as Ridgeway would put it, racial status-beliefs become salient. Speaking in front of predominantly white audiences at first contradicted Douglass's social-linguistic habitus formed as it was under southern enslavement. As for the social conditions of his later self-transcendence of status binds, Douglass did have an extraordinary childhood for a slave in many respects, serving as the play companion for a wealthy white child and

experiencing the relative freedoms of Baltimore port-life (Preston 1980). No doubt, his 'southern' linguistic habitus looked very different from the linguistic habitus of even his brothers and sisters who were enslaved as field hands. Douglass seems to have mostly reinvented his linguistic habitus by the mid-1850s or so (Stauffer 2009). Yet, even then, I suspect remnants of it remained in his sir-diction and out-of-proportion self-effacing introductions—these being partly a product of the double consciousness predicated upon racial status inequalities and partly a performance of status rhetoric.

Douglass is one of the greatest orators in the history of American public address, but as we have seen, this did not make him immune to black status binds in public speaking. He, like other black abolitionists before white audiences, had to do extra performative labors in order to overcome the default dis-identification primary frames used by white auditors to perceive and judge black orators differently than white orators. Douglass suggests a common psychological experience of double consciousness among black public speakers, stemming from awareness of status-beliefs or 'prejudice':

> Sir, I am a colored man, and this is a white audience. No colored man, with any nervous sensibility, can stand before an American audience without an intense and painful sense of the immense disadvantage under which he labors. He feels little borne up by the brotherly sympathy and generous enthusiasm which give wings to the eloquence and strength to the hearts of abler men engaged in other and more popular causes. The ground which a colored man occupies in this country is every inch of it sternly disputed. Not by argument or any just appeal to the understanding; but by a cold, flinty-hearted, unreasoning and unreasonable prejudice against him as a man and a member of the human family (Douglass [1853] in Blassingame 1982:424).

Ever aware of the stereotypes surrounding him, Douglass's entreating displays the oft-higher Dubois-ian social reflexivity characteristic of racial inside-outsiders. He perceives himself through the eyes of dominant society that racializes him and aggregates him as part of a lower social class. As I have shown in this section, the apprehension of the likely prejudices of audiences makes public speaking a more burdensome task for black orators. It made it rife with status binds. Public speaking opportunities were approached by black orators as potential performative proofs that racial equality is desirable and possible. Such a task was an 'immense disadvantage,' making the affective management and rhetorical risks of public speaking eloquence even more precarious.

The Rhetoric of Recognition

Black protest rhetoric in the abolitionist movement is shaped by a metalinguistic struggle by northern free blacks for social status. Black abolitionist discourse argues for recognition, membership, and status. It argues against the denial of recognition, membership, and status by predominantly white groups. Grieving the lack of interracial recognition, Douglass observes, 'we have, in this country, no adequate idea of humanity yet; the nation does not feel that these are men, it cannot see, through the dark skin and curly hair of the black man, anything like humanity, or that has claims to human rights' (Blassingame 1982:119). His eloquent arguments exemplify what I shall call the *rhetoric of recognition*. By this phrase, I mean to refer to how black abolitionist discourse came to understand and articulate the nature of race in America through the nineteenth-century cultural–religious schemas. It is what processes of 'racial conceptualization' look like when articulated from positions of racial status-subordination (to borrow a phrase from Morning 2011). In other words, it is a philosophical anthropology that black abolitionists constructed to make sense of all the racial inequalities outlined above. It has both descriptive and normative components, emerging from contexts of racial domination.

Social movements oriented upon recognition today are often called 'identity politics' and considered a 'postmodern' or 'post-socialist' form of collective action. Critical theorist Nancy Fraser (1997) distinguishes between *recognition* and *redistribution* as two analytically distinct dimensions of justice. Disrespect or misrecognition is a deprivation of *cultural justice*, whereas redistribution is oriented upon *economic justice*. The two forms of injustice are mutually entwined empirically, but their deprivations have differing remedies. 'The remedy for cultural injustice…is some sort of cultural or symbolic change. This could involve upwardly revaluing disrespected identities and the cultural products of maligned groups. It could also involve recognizing and positively valorizing cultural diversity. More radically still, it could involve the wholesale transformation of societal patterns of representation, interpretation, and communication in ways that would change *everybody's* sense of self' (Fraser 1997:15). In making these distinctions, Fraser suggestively offers three potential 'remedies' for the cultural injustice of disrespect: (1) re-evaluations (upward) of a group's value in civil society; (2) reappraisals of cultural diversity in general in civil society; and (3) radical displacements over who can speak, and how to communicate, or what it means to participate in civil society. Among these

three, the second is conspicuously absent from black abolitionist rhetoric suggesting that the 'multicultural' remedy is a more recent product of developments in American culture. The first remedy Fraser mentions though, the effort to bring about a cultural re-evaluation of a minority in public attitudes, is ubiquitous in black abolitionist rhetoric.[7]

Black abolitionist discourse emphasizes the many positive contributions that blacks made to the national community. Blacks fought in the War for Independence, sacrificing their lives beside white militiamen. Douglass frequently cited the claim that the first American to shed blood in the Revolution was black. Black Americans were also the 'pioneers of civilization' in the early republic, according to Douglass, toiling on its fields and driving its great economic expansion West. 'They cultivated it with their toil and watered it with their tears; their labor had earned it' ([1854] in Blassingame 1982:478). Douglass also called attention to the religious contributions blacks made to American Christianity. Through their long hard struggle with adversity, blacks discovered and exemplified genuine Christianity in the new nation.

Ultimately, however, Fraser's three 'remedies' for misrecognition are too presentist to interpret black abolitionist discourse. Her model of cultural recognition and its remedies assumes that ethnic differentiation is largely what activists pursuing recognition desire. But this is not why social recognition was so important to black abolitionists. The sort of deprivations they referred to, of being 'shut out of human regards' in Douglass's words, were paramount *social* injustices, not merely the 'cultural' injustices of identity politics ([1848] Blassingame 1982:144). Recognition qua social justice is the perception that others perceive the self as a legitimate bearer of worth, that is, a potential claimer of status. It is the fundamental social state of being included in 'human regards' both institutionally and interactively.

Recognition is a special kind of status. It is the most elementary kind of status accord constitutive of citizenship that credits an individual as a legitimate member of society who is entitled to their own relationships and property. Such social recognition is a prerequisite of making status claims and being accorded status, which is to say, of being a normal 'living' member of society. It is the opposite of Patterson's notion of *social death* in which an individual is 'alienated' from all natal claims and relationships (Patterson 1982). In black abolitionist discourse, slavery as social death was the negative screen that threw the importance of recognition into relief as a necessary ingredient of viable life from belonging to a human

community. By treating people as instruments of one's personal will, slavery denies enslaved persons this basic form of status.

Recognition thus refers to the constitutive, interactional processes through which an individual acquires a social self via adjusting one's responses based upon how others see you. In other words, being a subject of some social worth depends upon the willingness of others to accord recognition qua the minimal amount of status. When social status is completely withheld through a system of racial slavery, humans lose a sense of self and become animalized (on the dynamics of 'animalization' in slavery, see Davis 2014). The basic interactional processes of status accord, so foundational to being human, are mostly absent in slavery and utterly distorted in regimes of racial segregation. Race in the South was a semiotics of social death: the absence of social recognition is nearly total, though it can be occasionally glimpsed through cracks in the contradictory logics of slavery (Davis 2014; Douglass himself makes a similar argument about the paradoxes of slavery).

Race in the North still marks one as separate, but the position is potentially ambiguous, situating personhood liminal-ly between social death and social normalcy in the sense of being recognized as a possible interactional partner and competitor for status (with more ambiguity than social death). In this un-dead state of existence were Douglass and other inside-outsiders, included in social rituals and yet represented as other and not belonging, as early Douglass found to be the case within abolitionism. Douglass felt his self being split between partial recognition as a member of society and the absence of full recognition or its intermittent withdrawal. This is stratification by status through the symbolic violence of racialization. There is present a meager minimum of social recognition, but it is clouded out by an abundance of misrecognition through stereotypes. From within this liminal social position of being inside-outsiders, Douglass crafted careful arguments for why he and other people of color deserved full social recognition.

By *rhetoric of recognition* then I refer to all the ways in which black abolitionist discourse was conditioned by the social struggle of a stigmatized minority for the minimal status accord expected between members of a community (recognition). In it, the abolition of slavery was inherently connected to personal local struggles for equality and citizenship. Black abolitionists perceived the deprivation and distortion of social recognition as the essential unity of slavery and prejudice. Given the continuities of misrecognition or disrespect in slavery and prejudice, the implicatures

of black antislavery orations were claims for that status accord minimally expected of *human social* interactions. 'We cry for help to humanity, a common humanity, and here too we are repulsed' (Douglass [1853] in Blassingame 1982:425). Black protest rhetoric was a creative response to the daily denials of their humanity, from being not *recognized* by white neighbors, employers, strangers and, as I have shown above, by their abolitionist colleagues.

In a speech in 1853 before the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society (AFASS) in New York City, Douglass shifts attention from slavery to the shared plight of all black Americans:

> But I do not propose to confine your attention to the details of Slavery...I rather wish to speak of the condition of the colored people of the United States generally. This people, free and slave, are rapidly filling up the number of four millions. They are becoming a nation, in the midst of a nation which disowns them, and for weal or for woe this nation is united. The distinction between the slave and the free is not great, and their destiny seems one and the same. The black man is linked to his brother by indissoluble ties. The one cannot be truly free while the other is a slave. The free colored man is reminded by the ten thousand petty annoyances with which he meets every day, of his identity with an enslaved people—and that with them he is destined to fall or flourish. We are one nation then, if not one in immediate condition at least one in prospects (Douglass [1853] in Blassingame 1982:427).

Douglass argues that all blacks whether free or enslaved face a common social situation in the USA because of the attitudes of dominant society toward people of color. Whether racial identification is voluntarily desired or not, blacks are bound together through the deprivation of full recognition that accompanies racial ascription. White racism and disrespect brings together 'a nation in the midst of a nation which disowns them' in the lines above. Therefore, southern slavery and northern acts of harassment, the everyday 'ten thousand petty annoyances,' disclose an essential unity through 'colorphobia.'[8] This is Douglass's answer to a background question, hypothetically posed or perhaps a question that Douglass frequently asks himself, 'why should free blacks care about what happens to the slaves?' The answer for him above involves some set of 'indissoluble ties' between slave and free, perhaps including familial connections but also suggesting the common bondage of race. Douglass claims in a prior speech that his acknowledgement of these ties kept him from permanently settling down abroad instead of becoming a social reformer.

Re-reading this passage closely, why is it that enslaved and free blacks in the USA share one 'destiny'? The answer seems immediately apparent to Douglass, because of shared racial status. He consistently uses the language of 'color' and 'prejudice' though over racial status inequality and discrimination. Prejudice for Douglass refers to degrading social interactions toward persons of color as a socially unwanted people. Until prejudice or racial status inequality (in my more 'etic' terms) is leveled—needing its own kind of abolition—no black person can 'be truly free while the other is a slave.' Interracial recognition, and the lack of it, is posited as the unity of slavery and prejudice that binds free blacks indefinitely with the enslaved.

How does one argue for recognition? What means of probable demonstration can be used to persuade others of one's humanity? How does one prove that the principles of liberty and equality in the Declaration are in fact self-evident and self-evidently applicable to blacks as well as whites? Whither a rhetoric of recognition? These are disturbing but pertinent moral questions that black abolitionists were compelled to address. Trying to answer them led to various difficulties. For instance, black abolitionist discourse framed slavery as a paradoxical institution that simultaneously withholds and concedes human recognition to the slave. Douglass asks,

> Must I undertake to prove that the slave is a man? That point is conceded already. Nobody doubts it. The slaveholders themselves acknowledge it when they punish disobedience on the part of the slave...What is this but the acknowledgement that the slave is a moral, intellectual and responsible being? The manhood of the slave is conceded (Douglass [1852] in Blassingame 1982:369).

Slavery dehumanizes slaves by treating them as thing-like or animal-like instruments. However, human recognition can never be fully suppressed; it is 'conceded' through the interpersonal cracks in the institutional edifice of slavery. Douglass offers examples of interstitial recognition by referring to southern laws that forbid teaching slaves to read or write. What are such laws but an implicit recognition of the slave's humanity? Developing his own philosophical anthropology, Douglas surveys the range of activities performed by black Americans, from the slave employment of mechanical tools to the entrepreneurial professions of free blacks, arguing that only humans are capable of such creative, intelligent actions. In the rhetoric of recognition, the humanity of the excluded other can only be pointed to, it is always already there.[9]

Existential (Anti)Frames

The vastly different social situations of white and black abolitionists influenced their respective antislavery rhetorics. White abolitionists in well-funded churches and prestigious philanthropic organizations were motivated by Christian benevolence, civil virtue, and the humanitarian sensibility of late sentimentalism. Black abolitionists had more immediate and practical motivations behind their protests arising from their marginalized position in a racist society. Many had family members still enslaved in the South. Some were fugitives who obtained their freedom illegally and, remaining in the USA, risked being arrested back into slavery by slave catchers with the full support of the federal government. Most continued to encounter forms of racist violence and harassment that they associated with slavery. Such exigencies made reform activism more pressing for black communities in the midst of adversity than for whites. Northern blacks' practical struggle for legal, political, and social recognition conditioned the rhetorical pattern of their public appeals, giving black abolitionist public speaking a unique structure of feeling. A more *existential* attitude and *indexical* style of speaking emerged from their pursuit of social recognition.[10]

The existential style of black abolitionist rhetoric takes the form of an 'I' crying out for recognition. Again: 'We cry for help to humanity, a common humanity, and here too we are repulsed' (Douglass [1853] in Blassingame 1982:425). It is an intense first-person mode whether it pleas for help or warns of retribution. It includes more storytelling in which orators give personal examples of hardship and dehumanization. The existential style is also apparent in several recurrent rhetorical motifs of black abolitionism: (1) claims that all slaves have an inborn desire for freedom and a willingness to fight to the death, (2) moral lifestyle exhortations to other free blacks to be respectable so as to obtain social recognition by whites, and (3) confessedly paradoxical arguments for recognition based on the 'manhood' of black Americans. Overall the pathos evoked by the existential attitude is moral outrage but at a level exceeding sentimentalism's more bourgeois shock-value. Black abolitionist rhetoric sometimes plummets into feelings of despair and hopelessness.

Existential framing (or better yet, 'anti-framing,' as I propose below) emerges out of pressing concerns to survive, resist, and overcome anti-black multilevel racism. Existential black protest rhetoric was an implicit meta-argument—drawing upon themes of family, respectability, desire

for liberty, death, and despair—for social recognition and status equality within the broader abolitionist movement. One of Douglass's speeches in 1848, over the tenth-year anniversary of West Indian emancipation in Rochester, starts off like a typical abolitionist address heavily relying upon sentimental framing. Half way through the following section, it abruptly takes an existential turn beyond the normal tropes of sympathy:

> Truly we are a great nation! At this moment, three million slaves clank their galling fetters and drag their heavy chains on American soil. Three million from whom all rights are robbed. Three millions, a population equal to that of all Scotland, who in this land of liberty and light, are denied the right to learn to read the name of God. They toil under a broiling sun and a driver's lash; they are sold like cattle in the market and are shut out from human regards—thought of and spoken of as property—sanctioned as property by cruel laws, and sanctified as such by the Church and Clergy of the country. *While I am addressing you, four of my own dear sisters and one brother are enduring the frightful horrors of American slavery. In what part of the Union, they may be, I do not know; two of them, Sarah and Catharine, were sold from Maryland before I escaped from there. I am cut off from all communication with—I cannot hear from them, nor can they hear from me—we are sundered forever. My case, is the case of thousands; and the case of my sisters, is the case of Millions* (Douglass [1848] in Blassingame 1982:144, *emphasis mine*).

The themes of onerous toil, violence, and family separation are common in abolitionist discourse. But they become more than humanitarian representations from-a-distance in Douglass's oratory as was often the case in white abolitionism's sentimental framing of slavery. Douglass makes the slave less anonymous by personally revealing his familial attachments to real people still enslaved. The existential turn makes the standard sentimental tropes more poignant and despairing. The symbolic constructs implode and instead take on properties of *indexicality* stemming from the biographical experiences and traumas experienced by blacks living in the antebellum USA.

The existential style of black protest rhetoric transforms abolitionist discourse from a symbolic mode of linguistic operation, in the representation and social construction of the slave, to an *indexical* mode of functioning. It is the social-movement substantiation of Peirce's distinction between symbolic and indexical kinds of semiotic modalities (Peirce 1955:275). In fact, indexical language is 'semiotic' much in the same way as emotions are—the blush not only signifies embarrassment but also is a

directly mechanical yet meaningful effect. Unlike the arbitrariness of the symbol, the index has a physical connection to the reality it indicates, like a wind index to the weather. Analogously, black abolitionists were indexical subject–objects of speech. They held real autobiographical, familial, and social–economic connections to slavery. They felt the 'indissoluble ties' of 'race' to the enslaved. Their protest rhetoric as a result was not as 'symbolic' or as from-a-distance as white abolitionist figures of speech. Disclosing the 'behind,' 'around,' and 'outside' of the frame, the existential style de-selects what a frame had selected. It punctures, so to speak, the subjective reality of frames with a touch of the real.

It is tempting to label this distinctive rhetorical pattern in black abolitionist discourse the Existential problem frame to be symmetrical with the three problem frames examined in a previous chapter. Black abolitionists argued that slavery was a problem for how it destroyed the lives of human beings and filled all black Americans with fear and despair—claims expressed in a first-person mode. However, I would venture, black abolitionist existentialism has several dynamics that make it incongruent with the 'frame' category of culture. It has a tense antagonistic relationship with the constitutive deflections of frames—each frame after all being a Burkean 'terministic screen.' The existential style pierces through the symbolic selectivity of frames through complex first-person accounts. It reinvents the presentation of problem frames through a more indexical testimonial ethos. It is thus more accurate to speak of the presence of an Existential *anti-frame* here instead of a fourth symbolic problem frame per se.[11]

Another of Douglass's public address develops existential–indexical features when he entreats his antipathetic audience on behalf of his family members in the face of the audience's increasing loss of interest. This time, during a speech for the AASS meeting in New York city, Douglass's satiric mimicking offended the audience members, half of whom got up to leave, leading Douglass to issue this incredible impromptu:

> Suppose you yourselves were black, and that your sisters and brothers were in slavery, subject to the brutality and the lash of the atrocious tyrant who knew no mercy—Suppose, I say, that you were free, and that your dearest and nearest relatives were in the condition that the Southern slaves are, and that the Church sanctioned such infamy, would you not feel as I do? There is no use in being offended with me, I have a *right* to address you. There is no difference, except of colour, between us. As I said four years ago, I say

> now, I am your brother—[Cheers and laughter]—yes I am, and (although) you may pass me by as you will and cut me and despise me, I'll tell every one I meet that I am your brother. [Cheers and laughter] (Douglass [1848] in Blassingame 1982:129).

Note that Douglass likely alludes here to the famous iconography of the kneeling slave who asks, 'Am I Not A Man and A Brother?' Also in this moment, Douglass is talking to the backs of many upset people. He rebukes them, inviting them to see things from his vantage point as a free black man with family still in bondage. The scene recorded above is a rare moment in Douglass's oratory when he actually seems to lose control over the attentions of his audience and has difficulty letting them go. The Existential Anti-Frame above plays into his distinctive, mesmerizing eloquence that historians and critics uniformly hail. Elsewhere, he tells stories about his own experiences of bearing the cruelty of his masters. Occasionally, he would bare his own back to show audiences his scars from 'the lash' (Stauffer 2009:17). If the existential style were a 'problem frame,' it could be parsed as slavery is a problem because of how it nearly destroyed my life and the lives of others close to me.

Existential Anti-framing uses experiential testimony to portray the horrors of slavery, though its reflections upon those experiences can be quite abstract. The abuses and evils of slavery acquire a more realistic feel. Sometimes the oratorical experience of this realism is jarring. It can, almost accidentally, produce misanthropic sentiments and the pathos of despair. This speech moves from observing the same personal connections black have with the enslaved into calls of damnation and feelings of despair:

> I have no doubt, that there are hundreds here to-day, that have parents, children, sisters and brothers, who are now in slavery. Oh! how deep is the damnation of America—under what a load of crime does she stagger from day to day! What a hell of wickedness is there coiled up in her bosom, and what awful judgment awaits her impenitence! My friends, words cannot express my feelings. My soul is sick of this picture of an awful reality. The wails of bondmen are on my ear, and their heavy sorrows weigh down my heart (Douglass [1848] in Blassingame 1982:144).

These words gave auditors (and readers) a glimpse of the personal pain Douglass feels toward slavery. The feelings of outrage and despair are, for him, inexpressible. After the capture of a fugitive slave in 1851, he mourns, 'The return of Henry Long to all the horrors of a life of endless slavery has

shrouded my spirit in gloom.' 'The moral horizon is dark and gloomy—not merely portentous of fierce and wrathful storms, but of a long and dreary winter of oppression and cruelty' (Blassingame 1982:279, 294). It is hard to imagine that white abolitionists on stage feeling the depth of Douglass's despair having not experienced slavery themselves. It is *not* hard to imagine that many blacks felt the same sense of hopelessness toward the American system of racism and slavery that Douglass expresses here.

Similar expressions of despair can be seen in two speeches delivered by Reverend Wright before predominantly white audiences:

> Oh, it is impossible for you to tell how the heart of the colored man yearns toward those who plead in his cause. You have never felt the oppression of the slave. You have never known what it is to have a master, or to see your parents and children in slavery (Wright [1835] in Foner and Branham 1998:165).

> The spirit [of slavery] is withering all our hopes, and ofttimes causes the colored parent as he looks upon his child, to wish he had never been born. Often is the heart of the colored mother, as she presses her child to her bosom, filled with sorrow to think that, by reason of this prejudice, it is cut off from all hopes of usefulness in this land.' '...this prejudice follows the colored man everywhere, and depresses his spirits (Wright [1837] in Foner and Branham 1998:171–2).

The diction here that Douglass and Wright choose to use is not unlike the prophetic rhetoric of Garrison who also condemns the iniquities of America and confounds its Constitution as an 'agreement with hell.' But the mood is drastically different. Garrison's moral condemnations being inspired by his postmillennial optimism never feel this dark.

Two more elements of the Existential Anti-Frame emerged as a response to the nineteenth-century discursive debates over race and slavery. Proslavery ideology was increasingly part of the public conversation about slavery in the 1830s through 1850s. Many antislavery audiences were familiar with popular biblical arguments for slavery. In the theological cosmos of white supremacy, the African race was created to be subservient to other more civilized races. Slavery was a divinely ordained institution for Africans, and most blacks had no desire for freedom. They preferred the paternal care of their masters who looked after them and provided for all of their needs. Proslavery proponents argued that blacks were incapable of 'independence' and 'manliness,' two powerful moral gender binaries in the nineteenth-century civil-society discourse (Rotundo 1993).

On the defensive against such accusations, black abolitionists refuted proslavery claims by pointing to the actions of fugitives, insurrections, and the willingness of some slaves to die rather than live in bondage. Examples of these acts were not hard to find, they were the headlines of the day. With characteristic wit, Douglass exclaimed, 'Give a slave a knowledge of geography, and he will give you a lesson in locomotion' (Blassingame 1982:456). Actions of resistance proved that blacks shared the innate human drive for liberty and independence. Drawing upon republican frames, Douglass told heroic stories of doomed plots to overthrow masters and failed flights to freedom (ibid:199 for one). The uprising of Nat Turner that shook the nerves of the entire South in 1831, and led many southerners to mistakenly blame the fledgling abolitionists for inciting insurrection (cf. Chap. 8), was praised by Douglass as an example of black manliness comparable in virtue to George Washington. In one speech, Douglass tells of past social encounters with northern whites who have naively asked him, why do slaves tolerate the condition of slavery, the question itself blaming the slave for his or her oppression. In the speech, Douglass re-directs the blame back onto northern whites, stressing their complicity with the national system of slavery:

> but for your readiness to stand by them [Constitutional compromises], the slave might instantly assert and maintain his rights. The contest now would be wonderfully unequal. Seventeen millions of armed, disciplined, and intelligent people, against three millions of unarmed and uninformed. Sir, we are often taunted with the inquiry from Northern white men— 'Why do your people submit to slavery? and does not that submission prove them an inferior race? Why have they not shown a desire for freedom?' Such language is as disgraceful to the insolent men who use it, as it is tantalising and insulting to us. It is mean and cowardly for any white man to use such language toward us. My language to all such, is, Give us fair play and if we do not gain our freedom, it will be time to taunt us thus (Douglass [1848] in Blassingame 1982:145).

Douglass repudiates the question for its faulty premises. One cannot assume that slaves do not desire freedom from the lack of a general insurrection in the South, nor that perpetual bondage in any way suggests the contentedness of the slave. Such assumptions are 'disgraceful' and 'insulting' to all black Americans for implying blacks are less republican and less human than whites according to those self-evident Declaration principles. Instead, Douglass points to the structural power

inequalities that deprive most slaves of any other option but subjugation. If the situation were more equal in power between whites and blacks, Douglass assures his audience, self-emancipation by any means necessary would soon follow.

In general, Douglass and other radical abolitionists like editor James McCune Smith did not disavow violent slave insurrections, at least not to the extent that the nonresistant Garrisonians did. Early on, Douglass claimed he was a 'peace man,' but he soon broke with the Garrisonian doctrine of pacifism. Both Douglass and McCune Smith hailed Toussaint L'overture and the Haitian revolution in which slaves seized their freedom through force. They embraced romantic tropes signaling self-assertion and self-transcendence (on the romanticism of radical abolitionism, see Stauffer 2002). In an 1847 speech, Douglass quotes Lord Byron's famous line from *Child Harold's Pilgrimage*, '"Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow"' (Blassingame 1982:89). If given the opportunity, most slaves would indeed 'strike the blow' against their masters. These two existential motifs, desiring liberty and willingness to fight, are inseparable in the radicalization of Douglass's thought in the 1850s as well as in the rise of early black nationalist thought in other abolitionists like Martin Delaney and Henry Garnet.

The Sojourner Truth Way

If black abolitionist men faced significant difficulties in their public speaking endeavors, the status binds facing black women speakers were even more onerous. Historian Shirely Yee writes, 'Violence on the lecture tours, was an even greater threat for black women than for black men and white abolitionists. Physical and verbal attacks against black women activists could originate at any time or place from crowds motivated by three sources of hostility: anti-black feelings, anti-abolitionist sentiments, and hatred of "public" women' (Yee 1992:113–4). Black women abolitionists challenged the status quo in multiple respects corresponding to their stratified subordination by multiple status inequalities. Yet their eloquence defied racist stereotypes of ignorance and incivility. They defied social expectations about women's proper role in society by speaking out in public settings to 'promiscuous' audiences. Furthermore, they faced a unique set or 'intersection' of primary status frames in the social cognitions of northern audiences. Then and now, race and gender stereotypes were 'co-articulated' as sociologists of gender and sexuality would say.

As Ridgeway would predict, the antebellum 'primary frame' construals of black women were conditioned by the dominant standpoint of white men. Black women were seen as more masculine than white women due to racial othering by white men. Thus, they were typified as lacking feminine dignity and viewed as sexually impure. Many scholars of race and gender have observed that stereotypes for black women ranged from the physically powerful Mammy to the sexual Jezebel temptress. Another dominant social expectation was that black women largely do menial, unintelligent, domestic service for others. At an annual antislavery meeting in New York City, Sarah Douglass reported being questioned on the street about the housecleaning whereabouts. 'Washer woman' was the prototypical class connotation nested in the primary status frames of black women. Most free black women needing to earn wages for subsistence were in fact funneled into this highly exploited low-wage segment of the labor market, working as laundresses, seamstresses, servants, bakers, boardinghouse keepers, etc. Only well-educated members of wealthier families escaped the expectations of domestic service (and even then they were not invulnerable especially after deaths in the families and legal–financial troubles).

Black women seeking to promote abolition were compelled to spend much more of their speeches doing ethos work to justify their very presence in civil society (according with the findings of the previous chapter). If they persisted in the public path of rhetorical risk-taking, they often did so empowered by evangelical religion as was the case for abolitionists Maria Stewart and Sojourner Truth (see my discussion of Prophetic Feminism in Chap. 5). Some Quaker women like Sarah Douglas and Charlotte Forten also found a precedent for public address in the open-inspiration setting of the Meeting of Friends. In general, black women abolitionists were less ambivalent toward organized religion, at least when compared to Douglass and other come-outer abolitionists. They also more enthusiastically drew upon the Sentimental frame, as did white women abolitionists, to emphasize the potential moral influence of women and the natural role of women in sympathizing with the slave. Black women abolitionists tended to subscribe to the ideals of true womanhood, popular among the white middle-classes, as a way of performing respectability through practicing the feminine values of piety, purity, submissiveness, tenderness, and domesticity (see Yee 1992). Performing true womanhood, including submission or deference to black men in public, was part of a wider strategy for racial recognition. If black women conformed to traditional idealized femininity in their relationships with black men, it could constitute another

potential proof of racial equality with white people. In this relational gendered performance of worth and respectability, racial and gender identity were inherently co-articulated.

However, this method of pursuing racial recognition through respectability and true femininity produced contradictory role-obligations for black women activists who simultaneously felt compelled to demonstrate the intelligence of the race as well as the submission of black women to black men. Black women abolitionist thus faced a distinctive *double bind* between the improvement of the 'race' and asserting their rights as black women. One rhetorical translation of the double bind was an exceedingly formal display of polite ethos in their orations (though I will discuss exceptions below like Sojourner Truth). One journalist after witnessing a speech by Frances Ellen Watkins Harper wrote, 'She...speaks without notes, with gestures few and fitting. Her manning is marked by dignity and composure. She is never assuming, never theatrical' (quoted in Logan 1995:31). Black women also strived for this demure deferential ethos to subvert negative stereotypes of black womanhood. I have found interpreting their abolitionist discourse to be a more difficult task because of the level of formality pursued in the attempt to negotiate the race–gender double bind. This section can only take some preliminary steps toward incorporating a comparative rhetorical analysis of abolitionist discourse across race and gender into the overall book themes. The task may be always incomplete though given the fragmentary historical evidence and records.

Less historical record exists of the abolitionist speeches delivered by black women relative to the archive in black men's abolitionist oratory. Some of the most notable speeches were poorly transcribed, heavily edited, or rewritten altogether from later memories of the event. Even more were never recorded altogether and are lost to history. Most journalists did not even think the extemporaneous speeches of Sojourner Truth were even worth recording (Painter 1996; even Frederick Douglass dismissed her as uncultured). The most prominent black women abolitionists, then and now, were speeches by Sojourner Truth, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, and Mary Ann Cady Shadd. These three individuals attained some degree of fame in local or national press, though their fame for many was more of a despised notoriety rather than celebrity. Several more orators have been re-discovered and anthologized, enabling the addition of Maria W. Stewart, Sarah Parker Remond, Lucy Stanton, Sarah Douglass, and several others to our list.

Several previous historians have identified several rhetorical patterns in black women's abolitionist discourse (Peterson 1995; Tate 2003; Yee 1992). In addition to a compulsion toward 'ladylike' formality, they frequently stressed the severity of slavery upon women in particular. Exhorting the women in their audiences, they promoted feelings of sympathy toward slave mothers and their enslaved 'sisters.' Black women members of antislavery societies were also more likely than white women members to focus on holistic issues of community improvement for northern blacks. Initially, the all-black Salem Female Anti-Slavery Society of Massachusetts did not even list the abolition of slavery as one of its resolutions. Instead, they focused on criticizing colonization proposals and managing local communal concerns. Only after the group integrated with white women did it start to employ 'abstract Garrisonian ideas of the sinfulness of slavery, as reflected in its new constitution' (Yee 1992:89).

Black women abolitionists saw black civil rights and women's rights as inseparable issues. Abolishing slavery and achieving women's suffrage were united in their black-feminist call for equal rights for all. A common motif across many of the speeches is an emphasis on education and empowerment through the cultivation of mind. Black women embraced elevation exhortations along with black men. Some of the speech fragments are entirely dedicated to this theme (e.g., the speeches by Elizabeth Jennings and Sarah Woodson).

With the exception of Sojourner Truth, most black women with some public antislavery address recorded were not formerly enslaved (Ellen Craft would be another exception, but her speaking career was in England). Rather they 'had all been born into free black families in which they enjoyed some measure of economic privilege and formal education. Their background of education, relative economic comfort, and family activism set them apart from both slaves and the majority of free blacks' (Yee 1992:113). Many free black women were so overburdened with low-wage work and family domestic expectations that they did not have time to associate with antislavery societies. Black women who did acquire the necessary degree of leisure, confidence, and courage from well-established families that often maintained a long inheritance of antislavery sentiments and protest. For some, moral–emotional sensitization toward the suffering of the enslaved was not unlike the conversion experience of white reformers who came to the cause out of a humanitarian sensibility or some other sense of social responsibility perennially afflicting the wealthy. Like white women abolitionists, black women public speakers relied heavily upon the

Sentimental frame. Given the affective associations of true femininity, they were more unequivocal toward sentimentalism than their black male colleagues. Slavery is framed as being especially cruel to enslaved women for separating mothers from their children and for inflicting violence upon women. Sarah Parker Remond declared, 'Women are the worst victims of the Slave Power' ([1859] Foner and Branham 1998:330). A speech by Lucy Stanton illustrates black women's Sentimental framing of the enslaved woman's sufferings:

> Woman, I turn to thee. Is it not thy mission to visit the poor? to shed the tear of sympathy? to relieve the wants of the suffering? Where wilt thou find objects more needing sympathy than among the slaves...Now thou canst feel for the slave-mother who has bent with the same interest over her child, whose heart is entwined around it even more firmly than thine own around thine, for to her it is the only ray of joy in a dreary world...Mother, sister, by thy own deep sorrow of heart; by the sympathy of thy woman's nature, plead for the downtrodden of thy own, of every land. Instill the principles of love, of common brotherhood, in the nursery, in the social circle. Let these be the prayer of thy life (Stanton [1850] in Foner and Branham 1998:222–3).

Stanton here calls for sisterly solidarity, a common interracial identification among women with each other, made possible by women's natural tendencies toward the tender emotions. The bonds of womanhood extend across slavery's borders and across the color line in Stanton's address. Every mother should be able to understand the despair of losing a child. All women have a duty to 'shed the tear of sympathy' and to 'instill the principles of love.' This discourse of 'female influence' was highly praised by eminent male abolitionists like Garrison and Douglass.

The frequency of the Sentimental frame in antislavery speeches by black women led me to ponder the symbolic and/or indexical modalities of representation in their discourse relative to black men. Like Lucretia Mott and other white women abolitionists, they employed similar sentimental frames and familiar stories about slavery not necessarily stemming from personal experience. Their motivations to activism often seemed to be the same compassion from a distance, supplemented with feelings of identification on the basis of 'sisterhood.' This line of thought opened up a set of productive questions to ask in interpreting black women's protest rhetoric revolving around what I shall call *indexical awakenings* to get at sudden shifts between symbolic and indexical modalities.

Indexical awakenings, for example, include black women's experiences of antislavery radicalization insofar as such deepening commitment was triggered by specific biographical events that revealed the irrevocable impact of systemic racism upon their personal lives. In principle, the concept refers more generally to any microsociological experience of being *checked* in the Piercean sense by macrostructural forces that curtail one's range of identities and freedoms. For example, poet and novelist Frances Ellen Watkins Harper did not join the antislavery lecture circuit until new anti-black laws in Maryland against mobility prevented her indefinitely from being able to visit friends and relatives in her home city of Baltimore. It simply became too dangerous for her given the risks the trafficking in slavery posed to free blacks everywhere. The Maryland law in fact criminalized any travel into the state by free blacks by penalty of enslavement. When a free man within state boundaries was arrested and abducted to a Georgia plantation, Watkins Harper pledged herself to the abolitionist movement (Foster 1990:10). She had experienced an indexical awakening, a self-discovery of proneness to threatening liabilities and limitations—the strings attached to her and others' occupation of the subordinate position in the racial status hierarchy.

Indexical awakenings are a form of the creativity of action, consisting of impulses toward greater reflexivity and problem solving (roughly equivalent to Kahneman's 'slow thinking' concept). Mediated by the affective experience of *frustration*, they compel problem-solving creativity to the status binds that one suddenly finds oneself within (while actually having been there all along). These moments of realization and conversion can be quite productive of protest rhetoric as was the case for Watkins Harpers and other black middle-class women who were then moved to join abolitionism. Indexical awakenings are like when the 'sociological imagination' comes and shakes you by the feet without requiring much by way of imagination. They are especially likely to occur after one is *involuntarily status-ized* in a new way because of a pregiven primary frame that had already been a characteristic of one's biographical experiences.

Two decades earlier, Sarah Douglas underwent a similar conversion experience. Douglas was a Quaker schoolteacher for black children and an original member of the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society. In a speech delivered sometime in June 1832, she recounts how she came to espouse abolitionism:

> One short year ago, how different were my feelings on the subject of slavery! It is true, the wail of the captive sometimes came to my ear in the midst of my happiness, and caused my heart to bleed for his wrongs; but alas! the impression was as evanescent as the early cloud and morning dew. *I had formed a little world of my own, and cared not to move beyond its precincts. But how was the scene changed when I beheld the oppressor lurking on the border of my own peaceful home! I saw his iron hand stretched forth to seize me as his prey, and the cause of the slave became my own.* I started up, and with one mighty effort threw from me the lethargy which had covered me as a mantle for years; and determined, by the help of the Almighty, to use every exertion in my power to elevate the character of my wronged and neglected race (Douglas [1832] in Foner and Branham 1998:122–3, *emphasis mine*).

As for Watkins Harper, the increasingly precarious social position of free black woman in antebellum society, given the dangers of racism and slave trafficking, compelled Douglas to become an abolitionist. The important role of threat as a kind of negative 'opportunity structure' generating frustration and outrage has been observed by previous social movement theorists (see Tarrow 2011:32). In my analysis, heightened perceptions of the liabilities of one's status position can lead to mobilizatory indexical awakenings. The corruption and threat of slave abduction, for instance, made 'distant' slavery feel more 'close' to free blacks. The resultant reflexivity punctures the symbolic mode of abolitionist discourse with the hitherto unfocused indexical connections to status structures.

Sojourner Truth did not require an awakening to the looming threat of slavery. She was born a slave in New York State, being among the last generation of legally enslaved black New Yorkers. Because of the state's gradual emancipation laws, she only officially was freed from bondage in 1828 (Painter 1996). Not coincidentally, her style of protest rhetoric, insofar as historians can reassemble given fragmentary records, is thoroughly indexical and existential in the sense of displaying those more first-person anti-framing tendencies described above.[12] For my purposes, some rhetorical analysis of Sojourner Truth's abolitionist discourse is necessary to appreciate the multimodal differences among black women reformers. Yee writes, 'While some free black women struggled to meet middle-class standards of respectable womanhood in their daily lives and in their activism, others, such as Truth, Harriet Tubman, and Mary Ann Shadd Cary, essentially did what they pleased, abandoning any kind of sexual stereotypes and ignoring prevailing expectations of lady-

like behavior' (Yee 1992:156). Sojourner Truth did not try to perform respectability and 'true womanhood' like most black women abolitionists did. Instead, she spoke from the actual experiences of being a mother whose children were sold into slavery of the Deep South as well as from the experiences common to most poor black women in the north who, slave or free, were expected to do menial domestic work for others. In her 1851 speech, she was recalled to have stated, 'I have borne thirteen children and seen them almost all sold off into slavery, and when I cried out with a mother's grief, none but Jesus heard' ([1851 speech] in Logan 1995:26). She also described the oppressive socioeconomic situation facing most free black women in the northern USA. In a later speech at a Women's Rights Convention, she expounded the distinctive stereotypes and burdens they faced:

> There is a great stir about colored men getting their rights, but not a word about the colored women; and if colored men get their rights, and not colored women get theirs, you see the colored men will be masters over the women, and it will be just as bad as it was before. So I am for keeping the thing going while things are stirring; because if we wait till it is still, it will take a great while to get it going again. White women are a great deal smarter, and know more than colored women, while colored women do not know scarcely anything. They go out washing, which is about as high as a colored woman gets, and their men go about idle, strutting up and down; and when the women come home, they ask for their money and take it all, and then scold because there is no food (Truth [1867] in Logan 1995:28).

Black civil rights and women's rights can only ever be falsely separated in Sojourner Truth's feminist–abolitionist vision. She envisions a fuller meaning to the phrase 'equal rights for all' and guards against the incessant invisibilization of black women in republican discourse. She here points to some of the distinctive forms of oppression facing black women in particular due to the *intersection* of race and gender. Intersectionality in this instance refers to how black women experience gender expectations differently given racial status inequality and simultaneously experience race differently given gender status inequality (i.e., that the experience of oppression is multiplicative or 'interactive,' and not merely additive of two separate types of burdens, see Crenshaw 1991). One intersectional motif that appears in both the 1851 and 1867 speech fragments is how Sojourner Truth rebuts stereotypes of black women's unintelligence. First,

she points to the general lack of educational opportunity, suggesting social not natural factors. Second, she argues that levels of intelligence always vary across individuals, but so what? Differences in cognitive abilities should not determine democratic citizenship; the protection of basic legal rights should not depend upon personal levels of 'culturedness.'

Sojourner Truth's frank depiction of the constraints and conflicts of black women's everyday lives, historians would suggest, is closer to the actual experiences of most black women residing in Free States in this time period. Breaking with the overly formal discourse of middle-class black women reformers, she raises attention about the 'binds' black women faced between the social necessities of work, the discrimination of educational and economic institutions, and a double-bind relationship with black men. Most black women did not have the leisure time to perform 'true womanhood,' the strategy of respectability preferred by Douglas and Watkins Harper. The demanding schedule of cheap wage work and domestic unpaid labor prevented many black women from being able to participate in civil-society activities, including antislavery organizations.

Conclusion

The indexicalizing Existential Anti-frame of black abolitionism transforms abolitionist discourse, including its Sentimental, Republican, and Evangelical tropes. It does not abandon those frames, but rather enlivens them with experiential qualities. It also adds an original set of topoi: the desire for liberty and willingness to die, the despair, and hopelessness of American racism. These are some of the original contributions black orators made to abolitionist discourse.

In black abolitionist discourse, the symbolic violence of prejudice was one with slavery's denial of humanity. When Douglass claimed prejudice to be worse North than South, the remark must be interpreted through the status dimension of race, including its fundamental form of recognition. The common thread interweaving slavery and prejudice was the relatively autonomous status dimension of racialization and racism foreclosing possibilities of interracial citizenship and binding northern free blacks to the southern slave through dominant status imaginaries and prototypes, even when more concrete ties were lacking. Black abolitionists invented the rhetoric of recognition and performed the existential style to problematize slavery and prejudice in one blow.

Notes

1. All Douglass quotes in this chapter unless otherwise noted are from transcribed notes or drafts of his public speeches, as collected and republished in *The Frederick Douglass Papers*: *Series One*: *Speeches*, *Debates*, *and Interviews*, *Volumes 1–3*, under the editorship of John W. Blassingame. I try to give the year date of when the speech was originally delivered as part of the in text citation to all Douglass quotes.
2. Less well known than Douglass, Reverend Theodore S. Wright was a Presbyterian minister, educated at Princeton Theological Seminary, and a co-founding member of the AASS in 1833.
3. The break was ideologically expressed as a matter of different interpretations of the Constitution and possibilities for political antislavery.
4. Many of the social psychological theories I associate with Ridgeway in this section have a longer, more complex theoretical lineage. While some of the theories named here may not be original to Ridgeway, I have found her recent reformulations of them to be the most comprehensive and systematic and thus convenient for my own historical inquiry.
5. 'It has been said, that the variety of the human family, to which I belong, excels less in the intellectual, than in the emotional characteristics of men' (Douglass in Blassingame 1985:16).
6. One contemporaneous journalist noted: "Those who have never heard Frederick Douglass's sarcastic tones, and seen his expressive countenance, can have but a poor idea of the humor of this part of his speech, or of its overwhelming effect upon the audience" (Blassingame 1982:132).
7. It is less clear how to measure the third remedy empirically, but there is indeed some evidence for such a large-scale transformation of the nineteenth-century civil society in terms of its constitutive institutional logics. The public sphere was slowly being democratized from the elite deferential 'republic of letters' to more contentious and multiple publics (Schudson 1999). Fraser's third remedy thus points to an important condition of the possibility of black public oratory in the early nineteenth century.
8. Douglass actually uses this neologism in the *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* (e.g., Blassingame 1982:214). I have come across its usage a few times among other abolitionists as well.
9. Though Douglass is notorious for condemning American churches, his speeches are still saturated with God-talk, Bible Politics, and other religious elements (his own 'genuine Christianity' as he calls it). More applicable to the rhetoric of recognition, he argues that prejudice is a violation of the image of God.
10. I use the term 'existential' with some wariness. I do not mean to characterize black abolitionist rhetoric as more emotional or embodied than supposedly more rational, more abstract rhetoric of white abolitionists. As discussed

above, these racialized, racializing binaries were part and parcel of the civil-society discourse conditioning the northern racial regime. The existential style is not more or less philosophical, but more like a paradigm shift in the mode of philosophizing not unlike the other 'existential turn' of the nineteenth-century philosophy from abstract theories of consciousness to reflections upon practical life and death. Except here the existential turn describes a shift in the mode of abolitionist discourse from humanitarian 'at a distance' representations to speech reflecting the practical issues and emergencies of northern free blacks.

11. Of course, this is not an absolute distinction. Both semiotic modalities were present to some extent in both white and black abolitionist discourse. But inclusions of indexical connections to slavery and the enslaved were much more common in black protest rhetoric. Among many possible forms of indexicality, I would also point to the Grimké sisters when they refer to their own biographical encounters with the brutality of slavery.
12. I make the disclaimer because Sojourner Truth continues to be exoticized as the primitive, physically domineering racial other, and has been at least since Harriet Beecher Stowe dubbed her the "Libyan Sibyl" of antislavery. Poor and illiterate, Sojourner Truth found herself even then being represented hyperbolically (and she was quite aware of this, Logan 1995:20). Her most famous speech of 1851, "Aren't I A Woman?" was not actually transcribed during its delivery, but only reconstructed from the memories of an auditor some 20 years later. Some contemporary feminists reject any possibility of credibly interpreting her discourse, arguing that whatever discourse 'recorded' in her name are imaginary products of racist fantasy (Haraway, for instance, see Logan 1995 for a discussion). Other historians recommend proceeding with the utmost caution.

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PART III

Affect Matters

CHAPTER 7

How Charisma and Pathos Move Audiences

The important role of status claimsmaking in social movement processes is quite clearly implied in Charles Tilly's late conception of contentious performances, in particular, his notion of the WUNC display (Tilly 2004, 2008; on Tilly's belated, and rather surprising, interactionist turn, see Collins 2010). Modern social movements frequently dramatize their claimsmaking through public performances. A usual feature of such public demonstrations is also the performance of the *worthiness*, *unity*, popularity (the *numbers* of participants), and *commitment* of the protestors—hence the acronym 'WUNC' (Tilly 2004:4). These simultaneously symbolic and embodied representations make the most sense within the context of democratic political regimes, in which assumptions of popular sovereignty increase the legitimacy of public claimsmaking (Rudbeck 2012; Tarrow 2011). I would suggest though that the concept of the WUNC display is too narrow and overly formal a way of talking about status in protest rhetoric. Nor does it adequately cover the socioemotional dynamics occurring at the sites of and through the symbolic actions of contentious performances. The WUNC component of public demonstrations is merely one subset of the wider drama of status in protest rhetoric.

The WUNC concept is in fact an example of the pervasive tendency to avoid an explicit analysis of status while referring to status by another name.[1] It is a small step toward a rehabilitation of rhetoric and status in

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social movements though these connections remain underspecified so far. In other words, the interactive dynamics and emotional energy of concrete contentious performances in social movements needs to be explored in ways Tilly either was not interested in or died before being able to examine them (Collins 2010). How is 'worthiness' successfully performed by charismatic public speakers? What are the social and emotional conditions of charisma? How do various audiences actually experience the status claimsmaking of WUNC displays? Do they accept the invitation to accord status, form new references groups, or do they feel hostile to people who would challenge the status quo status order?

Thanks to the nineteenth-century practices of public lecturing and stenographic skills in reporting, emotional responses to protest rhetoric can be observed in situ through eyewitness reports and references to the audience actions interrupting an oration (e.g., applause lines, interruptions, hissing, heckling, cheering, etc.). Drawing upon an affective-hermeneutic approach previously taken in the sociology of emotion (Scheff 1997), my below analysis of this trove of data attempts to explicate the relational and emotional 'inner worlds' of the rhetorical occasion, in this case, the antislavery speeches of the prominent abolitionist and celebrity-activist, Wendell Phillips. Sociologist of emotion Thomas Scheff elaborates upon his part/whole hermeneutic methodology as follows: 'Using transcripts or verbatim texts as data, one interprets the meaning of the smallest parts (words and gestures) of expressions within the ever greater wholes within which they occur' (1997:16; see Methodological Appendix). A Scheff-ian microanalysis of transcripts of protest rhetoric and audience reactions will demonstrate the dramaturgical negotiations of status as a socioemotional resource.

Famous abolitionist orator Wendell Phillips so excelled at the art of degrading abolitionism's opponents that his contemporaries birthed a nickname for his style of speaking, the *eloquence of abuse*. 'Eloquence of abuse' was originally a phrase pulled from Coleridge's *Specimens of Table Talk*. Later, the politician Robert C. Winthrop in his memoir seems to have been the first to use it to describe the speaking styles of Phillips, Charles Sumner, and several others. Historian Irving Bartlett (1961) re-uses the phrase paradigmatically in book titles and chapter headings in his biographies of Phillips. Bartlett gives us a sense of the severity of Phillips's rhetoric: he introduces Phillips as 'the most eloquent man of his time, *the golden-voiced orator who made the abuse of popular heroes his stock in trade and got away with it*. He could publicly

label Lincoln a "slave-hound," Edward Everett a "whining spaniel" and Senator Robert C. Winthrop a "bastard," with the matter-of-fact finality of a man reading from the Scriptures or calling out the time' (Bartlett 1961:1, *emphasis mine*).[2]

The audience action of applause is similarly the object of investigation in John Heritage and David Greatbatch's 1986 article, 'Generating Applause' (cf. Clayman 1993 on booing). Analyzing political speeches by British parliamentarians, they offered a sophisticated inquiry into conditions of the production of applause lines, but their main concern is the emotional effects of seven different aesthetically pleasing formats, rhetorical contrasts, three-part lists, and so on. Interestingly though, the concept of status irrepressibly surfaces in their article when they observe that 81 % of all applause lines follow one or a combination of: (1) external attacks, (2) statements of approval of own party, (3) internal attacks on party faction, (4) policy recommendation, and (5) commendations of particular individuals or groups (1986:119–120).

Records of audience approbation and disapprobation are also a useful empirical proxy for the affective experience of charismatic leadership in social movements. They enable an interrogation of the implicit interconnections between status, rhetoric, and emotion in contentious performances. The correlations then observed between rhetorical status claimsmaking and audience emotional energy, I theorize, are in fact more than mere correlations much as Kemper's status-power theory of emotions would predict (Kemper 1990, 2006, 2011). This chapter thus examines the emotional effects of status-imbued protest rhetoric upon onlookers and audiences, building upon a recent growth of interest in them as specific sites and force fields of contentious politics (Benski 2005; Blee and McDowell 2012; Collins 2001; McAdam and Boudet 2012). For this purpose, I turn toward Phillips as a prominent movement leader to show that a fair share of his stage charisma derived from status claimsmaking. As discussed in Chap. 3, the symbolic politics of status are a go-to method for increasing both the internal solidarity of the movement and the external dissensus of movement audiences (on the polarizing effects of radical abolitionism, see Darsey 1997; Piven 2006). In other words, the emotional charged status dimension of protest rhetoric was often put to the service of both persuasion and provocation. Below I will focus on the impact of the latter, the production of 'violent emotion' or pathos as seen in the emotional expressions of audiences.

The Reception Fields of Protest Rhetoric

Rhetoric has meant many things since antiquity not least of all oratory as a creative art (on changing conceptions of rhetoric in American history, see Cmiel, 1990:165–6, 176–84). While rhetoric has some affinities with the frame analysis of frame alignment processes (as discussed in Chap. 4), the concept of rhetoric directs our attention more to the creative invention of compelling arguments in response to some set of situational exigencies that seem to call forth a collective response (on the 'rhetorical situation,' see Bitzer 1968). Whereas a frame mostly describes the conceptual content of powerful cultural metaphors, rhetoric describes the performative intentions, implicatures, and effects of cultural action (Jasper 2010). Rhetorical leaders speak in response to contingent events and they are motivated by an intentional urge to remake the social world (Carrithers 2009, pp. ix-x). Expanding upon the classical view, the following analysis also incorporates contemporary rhetorical theories that highlight the constitutive, normative, and affective dimensions of rhetoric (Charland 1987; Grossberg 2010; Hariman and Lucaites 2007). The sociology of rhetoric cannot do away with these elements by making rhetoric a value-neutral term—there is an inevitable bias in rhetorical criticism toward evaluating good, efficacious rhetoric.

Sociological inquiry contextualizes rhetorical performances by teasing out some of the social conditions—status elevation, degradation, *inter alia*—and social implicatures of effective rhetoric.[3] Rhetoricians often leave these relational status-power processes implicit in Aristotle's tripartite ethos–pathos–logos distinction. Indeed each one of Aristotle's three 'means of persuasion' is status-dependent in some way.[4] *Ethos* refers to the production of positive sentiments toward the character of the speaker. *Pathos* refers here to passionate emotions of the audience in response to the rhetor's status constructions or status provocations. Cicero closely associated pathos with the more 'violent emotion' of auditors. The present chapter follows the production of pathos defined in this way through several of Phillips's speeches.

Status hierarchies precede, condition, and motivate rhetorical performances. Doxic status beliefs often determine an audience's judgments and sensibilities toward protest rhetoric. On the other hand, status is also a currency and emotional resource internal to rhetoric via performances of ethos–pathos–logos. Creative rhetoric can alter how the game for symbolic capital is played or shake up what counts as symbolic capital. To

borrow Bourdieu's terms, protest rhetoric rearticulates the *symbolic principles of vision and division* in the immediate reception field. Rhetorical performances of alternative status imaginaries can thus disrupt the taken-for-granted interactional status order, produce new affective attachments and reference groups, or trigger angry frustrations and furies. Protest rhetoric involves performative challenges to the reigning doxic distribution of symbolic capital—how rhetorical challengers make novel status claims and attempt to reconstitute mundane status dynamics through the creation and performance of heterodoxic status imaginaries. In records of abolitionist oratory, there is evidence of both the production of positive speaker- and group-oriented affects (ethos) and violently negative emotions of the non-persuasive sort (pathos), such as audience dismay, disgust, and backlash. Many audiences were especially enraged by the abolitionist performance of alternative racial status imaginaries.

As suggested in a previous chapter, efforts to recover status theory must navigate between two major mistakes made in past theories of collective behavior: the voluntaristic overemphasis on affective manipulation by charismatic leaders and the deterministic conflation of status with large reified social structures. Here I will use the term *reception field* to refer to the relational, fluid status dynamics between movement leaders and audiences during a contentious performance through which charisma emerges. Status-differentiations and rhetorical agencies mutually condition each other in reception fields. In other words, status significations and imaginaries are being appealed to, performed, and renegotiated through discourse. This is an ongoing and highly emotional process structured by perceived niches in the interactional 'status-power matrix' (and more fluid than Bourdieu's 'field' concept; Kemper 2011).

The concept of reception fields offers a social–psychological redescription of the affective relationships between movement leaders and audiences. Here I defer to Emirbayer and Goldberg's innovative relational reconceptualization of affective attachments within social movements. Reception fields are the somewhat autonomous 'affective mappings' of 'transpersonal emotional investments' to use their phraseology (Emirbayer and Goldberg 2005:470, 508). Their recommendation is to move beyond simplistic understandings of the charismatic leader as an aloof manipulator of audience affects—charisma does not exist in a vacuum—as well as to abandon reductive deterministic models of how social structure shapes the social psychology of protest (the latter would include the older version of status theory). Collins similarly writes, 'Charisma is one of the

most obvious cases where individual characteristics are part of a group phenomenon, where the individual is most patently constructed by social conditions' (2007:258). Movement activists are neither dupes of macro-structures nor are they cynical manipulators of the moral emotions. They are part of the reception field, receiving, giving, and exchanging status with audiences. Metaphorically speaking, reception fields are a force field of emotional energy between members and/or contenders—animated, mapped, transformed, and adjusted by status claimsmaking processes.[5]

The drama of status varies across different types of reception fields, as I will observe below in the audiences at antislavery meetings. When audiences are primarily composed of movement members and supporters—or 'conscience constituencies'—status claimsmaking is oriented upon the status enhancement of the reference group. When audiences are more heterogeneous with dissenters or counter-mobilizers present, status claimsmaking can become more embattled and 'abusive' through dramaturgical competitions over status between supporters and opponents trying to disrupt and compete for the assembly's attention. Such heated confrontations between movement supporters and detractors, as Collins (2001) notes, are often quite beneficial to the movement overall in accruing higher publicity, emotional energy, and conscience sympathizers.

Wendell Phillips and the Eloquence of Abuse

Antebellum society was a time of great political, religious, and cultural flux involving major symbolic disruptions to Old World status imaginaries. Republican and egalitarian ideologies of the Revolution were challenging the basis of gentry distinction in ways unintended by the revolutionary elite (Bouton 2007; Howe 2007; Wood 1993). Middling merchant classes increasingly appropriated practices and significations of the refined, including education, grammatical speech, dress, manners, and so on. Historian Kenneth Cmiel writes, 'The diffusion of refined ways of life made genteel language a less effective elite social marker. If you understood "taste" as a moral as well as aesthetic category, and if you judged taste by its outward manifestations, it was simply becoming harder and harder to tell who was who' (Cmiel 1990:176). 'Ladies and gentleman,' for instance, was being expanded to include all during this time period. Mass education, democracy, and printing technology were developing in more inclusive directions. The result was a pervasive middling style of politics, religion, and rhetoric, a blend of civilizing pressures of refinement with required

familiarity toward the vernacular, the colloquial, and the slang (e.g., political oratory of log cabins and hard cider, Cmiel 1990:63). Public audiences reacted with derision when orators acted too 'aristocratic,' and preachers and politicians took note.

Historians agree that some of the most charismatic abolitionist speeches were delivered by Wendell Phillips, an orator frequently ranked among the top in the history of American public address (Brigance 1960; Hofstadter 1989; Oliver 1965).[6] Proud proponent of the immediatist abolitionism associated with the Boston-based Garrisonians, he acquired national fame for his derisive eloquence of abuse. The *American National Biography* states, 'In the 1850s no public speaker more completely dominated the debate over the problem of slavery and the growing crisis between North and South than did Phillips.'[7] He was a public figurehead of social reform, a very wealthy philanthropist and a self-professed 'agitator' for black equality. He helped to lead the Vigilance Committee of Boston, a group committed to disobedience and resistance in the service of protecting fugitive slaves from former masters and officials (as seen in the anecdote beginning Chap. 2). His antislavery message was widely reprinted and disseminated.[8]

Many of the speeches of Wendell Phillips are preserved in print form though edited (Phillips 1863; Phillips 1864). Beyond the textual content of these revised speeches, two other types of data give glimpses of his rhetorical style and its immediate reception. First, there exist numerous eyewitness accounts written by spectators of his public speaking. Second are stenographic records of audience actions, expressions, and interruptions occurring during his speeches. The publishers of Phillips's two-part series *Speeches, Lectures, and Letters* made the fortunate call of preserving these circumstantial notes for historical interest over and against Phillips's wishes of erasing them.[9] They allude to a variety of audience interruptions including applause, uproar, unease, hissing, hecklers, laughter, questions, and other verbal shouts. They were included in speech transcriptions by stenographers who were present and skilled at shorthand—in many cases by friend of the family, J.M.W. Yerrinton—and reproduced in printed form in local newspapers. Before micro-analyzing selections from his protest rhetoric, I describe a bit of the misé-en-scene through several eyewitness reports.

Eyewitness Reports

In a eulogy by a rhetorician from Andover Theological Seminary recalled and commented on Phillip's oratory. His 'musical register was a baritone,

used in the upper series of the chest notes. With its absolute purity, and its density of vibratory resonance, his voiced possessed a carrying power that penetrated to every part of any large audience-room. The *character* of the voice—the man in it—had the effect of "finding" its auditor. It had an *intimate* tone, as if it were speaking to each one as an unknown friend' (quoted in Yeager 1960:358–9). Contemporary and close friend Thomas Wentworth Higginson likewise once tried to explain the great attraction people felt when Phillips was speaking. He suggests it was the plain colloquial style of Phillips despite his lofty ideas:

> The keynote to the oratory of Wendell Phillips lay in this: that it was essentially conversational—the conversational raised to its highest power. Perhaps no orator ever spoke with so little apparent effort or began so entirely on the plane of his average hearers. It was as if he simply repeated, in a little louder tone, what he had just been saying to some familiar friend at his elbow. The effect was absolutely disarming...he held them by his very quietness; it did not seem to have occurred to him to doubt his power to hold them...Then, as the argument went on, the voice grew deeper, the action more animated, and the sentences came in a long, sonorous swell, still easy and graceful, but powerful as the soft stretching of a tiger's paw (Higginson, quoted in Filler 1965:xiii–xiv).

Part of the novelty lie in his break from the formal construction and stifling deliverance he was taught at Harvard for instead a more ordinary conversational style. Phillips combined an oppositional message, immediate abolition, or any of the other radical issues he also took up such as women's rights and labor, with a highly consensual informal attitude. By talking to the audience colloquially, Phillips seems to have temporarily suspended and leveled the mundane status order in which he himself as a wealthy gentleman was quite distinguished from commoners. Phillips's oratory performed and produced the appearance of status de-differentiation, reconstituting the status dynamics of his immediate reception field to feel more egalitarian. In turn, this performative leveling of status heightened the intimacy and emotional energy of the gathering, ensuring new affective attachments to Phillips himself, and subsequently, the antislavery campaign as well. Audiences were elevated, and elated, by fraternal communion with such a charming enlightened gentleman.

In Higginson's quote above, Phillips uses a common technique of good public speakers, lowering his voice, rather than raising it, to get the attention and respect of the audience—'he held them by his quietness.'

The same oratorical strategy of asserting status is also seen in Lydia Maria Child's account of a rambunctious antislavery meeting Phillips lost control of due to disrupters and hecklers in the audience. Child's eyewitness account vividly portrays the emotional volatility and violent backlash many abolitionists faced:

> The meeting opened well. The antislavery sentiment was there in strong force; but soon the mob began to yell from the galleries...Mr. Phillips stood on the front of the platform for a full hour, trying to be heard whenever the storm lulled a little. They cried, 'Throw him out! 'Throw a brick-bat at him!' 'Your house is a-fire: don't you know your house is a-fire?'...I should think there were four of five hundred of them. At one time they all rose up, many of them clattered down-stairs, and there was a surging forward toward the platform. My heart beat so fast I could hear it; for I did not then know how Mr. Phillips's armed friends were stationed at every door, and in the middle of every aisle. They formed a firm wall which the mob could not pass. At last it was announced that the police were coming. I saw and heard nothing of them, but there was a lull. Mr. Phillips tried to speak, but his voice was again drowned. Then, by a clever stroke of management, he stooped forward, and addressed his speech to the reporters directly below him. This tantalized the mob; and they began to call out, 'Speak louder! we want to hear what you're saying'; whereupon he raised his voice, and for half an hour he seemed to hold them in the hollow of his hand. But, as soon as he sat down, they began to yell and sing again, to prevent any more speaking (Child, 1883:147).

Child's 'clever stroke of management' is an apt phrased for Phillips's intuition of status-power dynamics. By lowering his voice and speaking to those in the front row, he does several things. First, he continues to show his elevated preference for the voluntary compliance awarded to status rather than the involuntary contest of force. He does not crudely abandon the status game for an exchange of power like the crowd does by taunting and shouting over Phillips, and this in itself is a sort of status claim. His bid for status, not power, is successful momentarily because of how he excludes the anti-abolitionists by speaking only to his closer audience. Being excluded from a conversation when present to it is a kind of status degradation, here frustrating the anti-abolitionists, leading them to resume paying attention to Phillips (status accord) rather than endure the feelings of exclusion. On his ability to think on his feet though, others corroborate Child's report. Phillips was unusually capable of handling

anti-abolitionist hecklers, using their defensiveness toward their own status against them.

The role of successful status bids can also be seen in another disrupted speech on May 12, 1859. Here Phillips enhanced the status position of abolitionists and the enslaved, while attacking the status of a boisterous racist in the audience:

> A Voice—'Have we a right to hang negroes?'
> [Phillips:] I will tell you just the difference between the man who asked that question and the negro who was sold yesterday in the Carolinas. The man in the Carolinas is black outside; the questioner is black inside. [Laughter and applause.] The man in the Carolinas has a black face; the questioner has a black heart. [Applause and cries of 'Good, good.'] The man in the Carolinas takes a box six feet by three and is nailed up within it, and, at the risk of his life, rides four hundred miles on the railway to a free state, because he values liberty like a man; and the questioner, if he had been born a slave, would have cowered like a spaniel and rotted to death like a dog, [tumultuous applause]; because, in fine, the slave of the Carolinas is a man, and the being that would insult a depressed and hated race, in a community like ours, is a brute. [Renewed applause.] (Yeager 1960:346, *all brackets in original*).

As evident in this exchange, Phillips was matchless in the art of the zinger. The above selection exemplifies Phillips's notorious and relentless eloquence of abuse. Phillips displays wit and emotional energy on his feet, producing great laughter and applause. Yet, what is Phillips doing precisely that makes his ad lib such a rhetorical success? A dramaturgical theory of status-rhetoric offers a compelling interpretation. Phillips is seeking, defending, advocating, and denigrating status on several levels. In the first place, he shuns the disruptive person whose offensive interjection was an affront. Interrupting a speaker is a potential status loss that Phillips must deal with before continuing on in his argument. Audience members identifying with the antislavery position cheer his verbal sanctioning of the heckler. The heckler's exclusion from their reference groups is solidified; his opinions do not matter (status loss).

On another level, the applause lines as recorded above follow certain rhetorical sequences whereby Phillips simultaneously enhances the status of the fugitive slave. The African American who fought for his liberty is more a 'man' (status accord) than the questioner. Fugitive runaway slaves were one of the central antislavery figures of abolitionist rhetoric,

frequently appearing in Phillips's speeches as the object of status-enhancing efforts. Re-evaluating their rights to dignity caused both visceral approbation, from those identifying with the abolitionist reference group, and disapprobation from individuals more inclined to the anti-abolitionist countermovement.

Audience Actions in Speech Transcriptions

In perhaps Phillips's most famous antislavery speech, 'Philosophy of the Abolition Movement,' status claimsmaking accounts for the overwhelming majority of applause lines. In the written transcription of the speech there were 36 audience actions total in the speech. All of these but two were *positive* emotional expressions, a fact having to due with the context and composition of this particular reception field. Specifically the range of transcribed notes referring to auditor responses include 'Loud cheers,' 'Shouts and laughter,' 'Enthusiastic applause,' 'Hear! hear!,' and 'Sensation' or variations of these words. One of the more ambiguous references to 'sensation,' of which there are two, likely refers to expressions of dismay and unease following Phillips's complaint over the injustice of abolitionists not receiving the recognition they deserve by society.

Approximately 32 of the 36 applause lines accompany rhetorical productions of status, two are more oriented on power, and the last two are expressions of laughter ostensibly pleased purely with Phillips's clever verbal play (here following Kemper's distinction between status and power, Kemper 2011). The 32 status-oriented applause lines involve either status enhancement of the abolitionist reference group or status loss for opponents of abolitionism, compromising politicians being the most common target (10 of the latter kind of degrading status-rhetoric). Of the antislavery status-enhancing comments, nine of them in some way praise the 'humble printer boy,' William Lloyd Garrison, who was present at the meeting and once 'pointed to' directly by Phillips (1863:149). Six status claims deal with the historical agency and efficacy of the self-described radical abolitionists, for example, Phillips's eagerness to take credit for preparing the ground for the remarkable success of Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the rising publicity of key antislavery politicians. This is part of Phillips's overall argument that the method of 'agitation' first started by Garrison had been tremendously effective in national politics. Finally, two of the applause lines are more tied to the rhetorical performance of power, not status, one by hailing northern resistance to the Fugitive Slave

Law (threatening noncompliance with authority), and the other by implying eventual destruction of slavery and its supporters (i.e., loss of other's power).

A few more examples from this speech can illustrate these points:

> 1. There are far more dead hearts to be quickened, than confused intellects to be cleared up,—more dumb dogs to be made to speak, than doubting consciences to be enlightened. [Loud cheers.] We have use, then, sometimes, for something beside argument (Phillips 1863:107).

Leading up to this moment of loud cheers, Phillips justifies the abolitionist method of aggressive agitation. He argues that the method of rational argumentation is not very effective because of the depth of sin and selfishness in a slavery-supporting person. These persons are not merely doubters or 'confused intellects' with whom the informed abolitionist can present facts and research. They are incapable of reason and therefore, can only be shamed by radical exhortation and condemnation. The 'dumb dogs' put down is a status degradation of that majority of the public indifferent to the suffering slave and to the exigency of abolition. The corresponding implication is that the occupation of the agitator or social reformer is validated and made more respectable (status gain).

> 2. The deference which every gentleman owes to the proprieties of social life, that self-respect and regard to consistency which is every man's duty,—these, if no deeper feelings, will ever prevent us from giving such proofs of this newly-invented Christian courtesy. [Great cheering.] (Phillips 1863:113).

Before this complex line Phillips argues against honoring any dead politician, no matter how great in worldly reputation, who has compromised with and contributed to anti-black legal discrimination. The eloquence of abuse in unleashed upon various political targets. He mocks the idea of building a public monument to Henry Clay or even having a funeral parade for Daniel Webster. 'If that be the test of charity and courtesy, we cannot give it to the world. [Loud cheers.]' (Phillips 1863:113). Phillips guides his reference group of abolitionists to embrace an antislavery status imaginary as an alternative to the worldly status imaginaries supporting racial slavery and segregation. True deference is incompatible with the routine of giving 'evil men' the courtesy and accolades civil society claims they deserve (1863:114). Phillips exhorts his audience to refrain from this form

of amoral status accord so popular in the secular world (the 'world' being the negative pole of *Christian* civil society discourse). Thus, abolitionists can justly withdraw participation from what the world defines as worthy and estimable, being true to their higher moral duty and uncompromising integrity instead. When two reference groups potentially conflict, as in the impulse to honor morally repugnant men, a status re-evaluation enables the symbolic victory of one's reference group over another's. Self-status enhancement and other-status denigration are occurring simultaneously in this rhetorical performance.

> 3. How shall a feeble minority, without weight or influence in the country, with no jury of millions to appeals to,—denounced, vilified, and contemned,—how shall we make way against the overwhelming weight of some colossal reputation, if we do not turn from the idolatrous present, and appeal to the human race, saying to your idols of to-day, 'Here we are defeated; but we will write our judgment with the iron pen of a century to some, and it shall never be forgotten, if we can help it, that you were false in your generation to the claims of the slave!' [Loud cheers.] (Phillips 1863:114).

While overlapping with many of the motifs from the previous examples, Phillips's rhetorical strategy here is more oriented toward power. The implicit problematic is what to do when status claimsmaking fails. When agitation is unable to obtain voluntary compliance (via status rhetoric) here and now, at least we can be assured of ultimate victory by historical forces. Phillips threatens anyone opposed to abolition with being on the wrong side of history. Of course, power and status claims are blurry here: being on the side of Providence is status worthy in itself. Perhaps given the militant turn of abolitionist rhetoric in the 1850s, Phillips is repressing the desire to take up more forceful means of power. Elsewhere the thematic of power is signified as the coming of God's judgment or the threat of violent slave insurrection if immediate emancipation is not undertaken.

Status Backlash

The emotional energy associated with charisma and eloquence varies significantly with the level of reference-group heterogeneity in the reception field. I have found that the affective experience of audiences differs radically across two types of reception fields. In the first type, the reception field is relatively homogeneous. Members share a common symbolic iden-

tity and reference group (the antislavery cause). They feel pleasure when group values and norms are confirmed by status rhetoric. This homogenous reception field was the backdrop to the self-congratulatory tone and mood of Phillips's 'Philosophy of Abolition' speech of 1853.

In a second type of reception field, the orator produces negative emotional energy, a clash of reference groups and status backlash by defenders of the doxic status order. Phillips could be experienced as haughty and alienating to many especially among the white working classes. After all he was imagining a radically different world, economically and politically, from the one the American public was used to, a world without slavery (and without the worsening racialization of blacks that white working classes were building and benefitting from). In a public meeting at Faneuil Hall in Boston on October 30, 1842, a group of anti-abolitionists interrupted black abolitionist Charles L. Remond, drowning him out by shouting racial insults and being so loud he could not speak. Phillips angrily took the pulpit after this crude affront to his colleague and condemned the crowd:

> *You* are the guilty ones. The swarming thousands before me, the creators of public sentiment, bolt and bar that poor man's dungeon tonight. [Great uproar.] I know I am addressing the white slaves of the North. [Hisses and shouts.] Yes, you dare to hiss me, of course. But you dare not break the chain which binds you to the car of slavery. [Uproar.] Shake your chains; you have not the courage to break them. This old hall cannot rock, as it used to, with the spirit of liberty. It is chained down by the iron links of the United States Constitution. [Great noise, hisses, and uproar.] (Yeager 1960:340).

Interestingly, the whites who would not even let Remond speak still paid attention enough to Phillips to get the gist. In this interaction, it appears they raged the most at him though when he dared to insult the US Constitution, a sacred doxic cornerstone of white nationalist reference groups of the time. Phillips infuriatingly compared the northern white citizenry to the status of the slave. Renegotiating the status imaginaries of his reception field, he flipped the pervasive freedom–slavery binary. Since threats to status and status losses are typically experienced as anger toward the precipitator of that fall (or toward surrogates), this explains the ferocious status backlash Phillips and other abolitionists often encountered as seen in the above passage. Even in these more hostile reception fields,

there is still a close relationship between Phillips's performative operations on the status imaginaries at stake and the affective intensities of his immediate reception field.

Phillips received different audience responses and provoked different affective experiences relative to the composition of his reception field, who showed up, with what groups physically and with what groups in mind—the virtual communities of status and value comprising an auditor's reference groups. Reception fields are affectively diverse but partly constituted by rhetoric itself. In other words, reference groups and their status-power valuations are in flux during a rhetorical performance. Reference groups are 'at play,' conflicting and competing, and to some extent being transformed altogether within malleable reception fields. Like a force field, the emotional energy of rhetoric often moves unevenly across diverse reception fields, just as rhetorical action attempts to operate upon the transpersonal emotional investments interweaving rhetors and auditors. Contentious performances are animated by this mutual conditioning of rhetoric and status. Abolitionist oratory traded in processes of status competition viscerally felt and experienced by audiences as expressed by approbation or disapprobation. Studying these status claimsmaking processes helps to explain what made Phillips such an 'eloquent' and 'charismatic' speaker.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have extended upon the late 'interactionist turn' of Tilly, at least his theory of the WUNC components of contentious performances, by examining the emotional effects of protest audiences upon movement audiences. Re-orienting contentious performances more thoroughly upon cultural and rhetorical processes of status claimsmaking is not as reductive as the classical model of status anxiety and tension proved to be. Dramaturgically conceived, status rhetoric is an affectively powerful resource as well as a main mechanism of charisma that social movement actors use to persuade and provoke. Not unlike the general notion of symbolic capital, status is a transposable currency that can be creatively exchanged through the rhetorical performances occurring at contentious gatherings in more ways than Tilly's WUNC concept captured.

While quite common among the social implicatures of protest rhetoric, status is certainly not the only currency though in the affective economy of reception fields. There are a host of other relevant factors here that

can contribute to eloquent rhetoric such as aesthetic format, intellectual vision, vocal texture, nonverbal body language, setup and appearance, a sense for rhythm, talents at improvisation, and so on. It is my view that these additional rhetorical factors of eloquence are skillfully interwoven with status claimsmaking by public speakers who may or may not fully recognize the tacit microsociological elements of their practice.[10]

Notes

1. Alexander (2010, 2006) does the same thing to some extent: working the binaries *is a status process* with cultural and affective dimensions. Here though I am actually affirming the wider insight of Alexander (2003) and cultural sociology that even 'social structures' are culturally and performatively constituted.
2. Peter Simonson deserves credit here for uncovering the Coleridge and Winthrop connection.
3. For instance, Kemper (2011) has applied the status-power theory of emotion to analyze rhetorical situations of formal oratory and the production of charisma and/or eloquence. In this setting, the 'emotional energy' of an audience is most shaped by the speaker's symbolic maneuvers in the status-power game. The phenomena of charisma are dependent upon pre-existing reference groups. An orator has high charisma if they can heighten the status-power prospects of a present shared reference group. Kemper writes, "To interest and excite the crowd, the speaker focuses on the common status-power issues. Knowledge of the crowd's status-power interests is a sine qua non. Oratorical technique, rhetorical flourishes, turns of phrase that succinctly, boldly, assertively cast the crowd's status-power concerns into flashy talk—thereby accenting those concerns—exaggerations and innuendos that reach for hidden, maybe greedy, vengeful or other low and shameful motives, but legitimated through being enunciated and endorsed by a public figure—all these cater to the crowd's deepest status-power interests and concerns" (2011:168). In this account of formal oratory, the semiotics of status, based on shared reference group affiliations, are the key factor of charisma and emotional experience more generally.
4. Even *logos* requires some deference to the status of the audience's shared doxic beliefs. In this fashion, reference group attachments and status claimsmaking penetrate the internal ethos–pathos–logos structure of rhetoric.
5. Collins would view the rhetorical occasion as a formal type of interaction ritual. Protest rhetoric, for instance, usually occurs within ritual assemblies of movement participants. Rhetoric is successful if it heightens group soli-

darity and generates emotional energy in the ritual practitioners. Such emotional energy is generated through several ritual ingredients, including the elements that Kemper downplays like joint attention, exclusion of outsiders, rhythmic entrainment, common moods, and other short-term emotions (Collins 2004). Formal features of rhetoric are highlighted for their entrainment effects. Unfortunately, neither Collins nor Kemper take cultural sociology seriously enough, though sacred symbols once ritually constructed by group solidarity come to serve an attentional and emotional function for Collins.

6. In *The American Political Tradition*, Richard Hofstadter writes, "Phillips was the most valuable acquisition of the New England abolitionists. He brought to the movement a good name, an ingratiating personality, a great talent for handling mobs and hecklers, and, above all, his voice. He was probably the most effective speaker of his time. Chauncey Depew, when over 90, declared that he could recall hearing all the leading speakers from Clay and Webster to Woodrow Wilson, and that Phillips was the greatest" (1989:183).
7. James Brewer Stewart. 2000. "Phillips, Wendell." *American National Biography Online*; http://www.anb.org/articles/15/15-00548.html; Access Date: Fri Jul 05 2013.
8. On the life of Wendell Phillips, see Stewart (1986) and Bartlett (1961).
9. "The only liberty the Publisher has taken with these materials has been to reinsert the expressions of approbation and disapprobation on the part of the audience, which Mr. Phillips had erased...This was done because they were deemed a part of the antislavery history of the times, and interesting, therefore, to every one who shall read this book..." (Publisher's note in Phillips, 1863:iv). Public address scholar Willard Hayes Yeager (1960) notes that Phillips did take advantage of the chance to revise the text of the speeches before their final published form in his two-volume anthology. This could introduce some historical inaccuracy if one wanted to know exactly what he said and how he put it. For the purposes of analyzing the indications of audience approbation or disapprobation, which Phillips tried to delete, the potential distortion is less.
10. Collins's critique of Kemper's status-power theory brings to issue to a head (in Collins 1990). In Kemper's efforts to de-mythologize ritual theory, he also mechanizes it. He takes what Collins usefully calls *first-order emotionality* out of the dramaturgical triad. It is worth remembering that for Kemper emotions are 'sociologically uninteresting' in themselves. This could not be further from the truth for Collins who laminates the two together into one temporal–spatial medium of the social. Humans are naturally desirous of emotional energy and the solidarity that rituals give (cf. Turner 2007). Emotions bring people together in (rhetorical) rituals,

which produce new emotions. Emotional energy is one of three primary resources that are being constantly exchanged through everyday interaction rituals (with cultural capital and social reputation being the other two, see Collins 1987). Emotions are not merely an epiphenomenal physiological reward for successful 'status-power' bids. Rather it is the motivational microfoundation from which power and domination dynamics emerge. In particular, Kemper's *reference groups* cannot be assumed to be pregiven. They are in fact secondary outcomes of socioemotional microprocesses. Therefore, status cannot always be the theoretical prime mover, that is, in explaining away affective experiences and rhetorical eloquence, contra the position that status receives in Kemper's writings.

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CHAPTER 8

Looking Back Ahead: When Status Conflicts Explode

Unlike other colonial territories and empires swept away by the Age of Emancipation, the abolition of slavery in the USA was incredibly violent. The emancipation of four million slaves by federal force was a revolutionary event like no other in American history—politically, economically, culturally, and intellectually (Menand 2001). There are other nineteenth-century instances of slavery being abolished without the gross costs of war including, we should note, the casualties of slaves freed by fiat during the war who joined Union troops and died in battle. A question for future historical sociologists of American abolition is, why was this violence necessary or what configurational sequence made it so? In this chapter, I briefly outline how my approach could contribute to addressing this question. The terminal account of American slavery I develop here flows from the previous chapters in how I again utilize theories of culture, emotion, gender, race, status, and moral panic to understand several escalatory dynamics in the conflict over slavery.

Historians today emphasize the immense economic profitability of American slavery especially in the decades following the cotton revolution. Historians stress the political power of southern slaveholding elites over the national state apparatus, a power they were not willing to abdicate voluntarily. More and more historians also appreciate the depth and tenacity of white supremacy in early American nationalism to which changes in the racial status order were deeply disturbing. What all of these accounts

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have in common is only a minor indirect role for the abolitionists and their tactics of national agitation (pace Piven 2006 and my own account). Recent quite reputable historians have speculated, counterfactually, that without coercive intervention by Union armies, American slavery would have lasted well into the twentieth century (e.g., Davis 2014 for one). Given the capitalist profitability of southern slavery vis-à-vis wage-labor regimes, and given the rising vehemence of proslavery ideology, it begs the question whether any northern 'rhetoric' of slavery could do any good. If persuasion is out of the picture, do men and women abolitionists become irrelevant as well as their status claimsmaking and emotional energy?

I think not. In this conclusion, I return to the temporal sequence of abolitionism and emancipation in the USA, this time turning my attention to the American rhetoric of violence. The competing rhetorics of slavery did not so much 'devolve' into chaos and bloodshed as much as they actively called for a reckoning by violence, unleashing civil war upon the land (Varon 2008). What role did the rhetorical status conflicts of fiercely divided national publics play in bringing about a set of sociopolitical conditions in which there seemed to be no other way out other than war? (on perceptions of 'no way out' and the turn toward violence, see Goodwin 2001). Future sociologists, as suggested already by historians of the matter, will surely come to trace complex conjunctures of causes and excavate complex overdeterminations of meaning in any fuller social explanation of violent abolition. I can only scratch the surface here by examining the larger macroscopic and temporal effects of several intersecting dimensions of the rhetoric of slavery, mainly the relationship between gender and racial status in the national community and collective perceptions of the inevitability of civic disrepair and thus violence. Closely following the rhetorical analysis of previous chapters, I shall make a few observations that add to the recent interest of historians (Varon 2008; Whites 1992, 2005) in investigating the centrality of gender and racial status to the antebellum sequence.

By fomenting moral panics, the abolitionist protest struggle exerted a formative influence upon southern perceptions of the inevitability of violence. Thus, reexamining the intersectional gender, racial and religious dimension of the 'sectional conflict' discloses new light on the old question of 'civil war causation.' I carry out the argument below with respect to gender and racial status by comparing three different patterns of appealing to white feminine purity and masculine honor. Below I term them rhetorical tactics of marshaling the sacred, in this case, how idealized

femininity was used provocatively by both men and women as a peculiar resource for challenging, threatening, and insulting the honor (qua status) of opponents. Concerning the escalation of the 'sectional conflict,' my status-rhetoric account thus re-describes the Wyatt-Brown thesis of southern honor cultures, while generalizing it through status theory to all stakeholders involved in the conflict over slavery and not just southerners (Wyatt-Brown 1985, 1986).

Recent political scientists have similarly re-assessed and elevated status conflicts—the role of collective honor and reputation—among the causal factors of warfare (Dafoe et al. 2014; cf. Appiah 2010). I shall likewise suggest some causal relationship between specific American cultural absolutisms (e.g., religious nationalism, humanitarianism, and certain racializing gender ideologies) and an increased inability to handle political conflicts peacefully through the deliberative mode of rhetoric. Additionally, the proposed sociological account integrates many of the cultural–emotional phenomena discussed in previous chapters, including social problems construction, charisma, moral panics, and status-power rhetorics and their emotional energy. The resultant picture connects cultural processes of sacralization, gender and racial status, and violence in ways that continue to apply well to instances of American humanitarian warfare today (Kronsell and Svedberg 2012). The affective and sacred dynamics of competing rhetorics of slavery absolutized and accelerated the conflict over slavery as did the new humanitarian discourse divide opponents along the symbolic boundaries of in-humanity (Abruzzo 2011).

Sacralization in American Culture: The Case of Gender

The transatlantic nineteenth century saw the rise of new gender-essentialist cultures. The increasingly exclusive sentimentalization of femininity was one of these. Colonial generations prized the public emotional sentiments and sociability of men, but by the 1830s these tender feelings were mostly privatized and localized in women's bodies and the domestic sphere (Burstein 1999). Across newspapers, novels, sermons, and ladies magazines, women's inclination toward sympathy and sensibility was naturalized. Women were framed as possessing religious innocence, fragile 'nerves,' and a greater moral sensitivity to suffering of others. Occurring at the same time, historian Rosemarie Zagarri (2007) observes, was a

dispossession of women's (already quite limited) political agency in the early 1800s after the turmoil of Revolution.

The secondary literature on the topic of gender and the politics of slavery is justly humungous (for a recent overview, see Kellow 2013). Many historians have acknowledged the importance of hundreds of thousands of northern women enacting benevolent femininity in producing mass antislavery petitions (Zaeske 2003), fundraising, boycotting, and/or sheltering fugitives (Faulkner 2011; Horton 2013; Jeffrey 1998). Women writers and speakers appealed to 'domestic feminism' to portray slavery as a violation of the sacred-moral American family (Ashworth 1992; Roth 2014). Previous studies have examined differences in northern and southern conceptions of masculinity, often focusing on the role of honorific cultures of the south and how they distorted perceptions of the antislavery threat (Wyatt-Brown 1986). One historian has memorably argued that the civil war was a 'crisis in gender' (Whites 1992). The crisis included divergences in gender ideologies between Democratic proslavery patriarchy—the prerogative right to patriarchy that free yeomen shared with slaveholders—versus moderate Republican steps toward feminism and 'restrained masculinity' (Pierson 2003). In her recent work on the rhetorical origins of the civil war, historian Elizabeth Varon (2008) emphasizes the role of anxieties over femininity and gender disorder in influencing attitudes toward national disunion.

Rhetorical analysis indeed reveals that sentimental 'true' femininity was used as a potent cultural resource for status claimsmaking and even as an effective means of reputational conflict between men, for instance, in the public debate over slavery. In addition to the respectability politics of benevolent reform women, both antislavery and proslavery men also drew upon tropes of feminine idealization to perform status claims. Due to the all-or-nothing status implicatures, rhetorical strategies that drew upon these tropes intensified rhetorical conflicts between both women and men. Clearly such public and political performances of gender status were not confined to the individual expression of gender identity (as contemporary sociologists of gender are well aware). Instead we are encountering gender here as a larger cultural and institutional logic—an affective mapping that shaped, animated, and permeated the social organization of society (Benjamin 1988).

Feminine idealization in antebellum society was a powerful cultural construct, another sacralizing civil-society binary that both women and men drew upon albeit in very different ways. Reform women directed the

energies of moral idealization toward enhancing the prestige of voluntary associations, many of which were encouraged and praised as natural expressions of true femininity. As discussed in Chaps. 5 and 6, women also appealed to the moral logic of their sentimentalization to promote their own agency and status in the public sphere (Ginzberg 1990; Ryan 1990, 1997, among many others). Interestingly though, various men activists also appealed to true femininity, finding that the rhetoric of feminine idealization could amplify and legitimate their own public position-takings. Antislavery and proslavery men especially competed to monopolize symbolic ownership over these potent gendered significations of virtue, purity, and truth.

The idealization of women in antebellum American culture was heavily religious and superlatively strange in some respects (for remarkable, counterintuitive extensions of redemptive womanhood, see Cutter 2003). A cursory comparison with postrevolutionary France suggests that women were not as morally idealized there as they were in the USA around the same time (as discussed in Landes 1988). We can triangulate this hypothesis with some extracts from the famous travel literature of the 1830s, including several poignant observations about American attitudes toward women by Harriet Martineau from England and by Alexis de Tocqueville from France. In *Society in America*, Martineau writes:

> The American woman 'is told that her lot is cast in the paradise of women: and there is no country in the world where there is so much boasting of the "chivalrous" treatment she enjoys. That is to say,—she has the best place in stage-coaches: when there are not chairs enough for everybody, the gentlemen stand: she hears oratorical flourishes on public occasions about wives and home, and apostrophes to woman: her husband's hair stands on end at the idea of her working, and he toils to indulge her with money: she has the liberty to get her brain turned by religious excitements…and, especially, her morals are guarded by the strictest observance of propriety in her presence. In short, indulgence is given her as a substitute for justice. Her case differs from that of the slave, as to the principle, just so far as this: that the indulgence is large and universal, instead of petty and capricious' (Martineau 1981 [1837]:156).

So to Martineau, the excessiveness of feminine idealization seemed somewhat distinctive of the USA. No country 'boasts' as much about its women, her innocence, and respect. She perceptively discerns that performances of masculine status, or chivalry, are really behind the boasting. Martineau thus both observes the high religious–moral connotations of American

femininity and sees through it. She rightly notes that feminine idealization and status subordination are two sides of the same coin.

Now, de Tocqueville's turn:

> In no country has such constant care been taken as in America to trace two clearly distinct lines of action for the two sexes and to make them keep pace one with the other, but in two pathways that are always different (de Tocqueville 1840:212)… There are people in Europe who, confounding together the different characteristics of the sexes, would make man and woman into beings not only equal but alike…It is not thus that the Americans understand that species of democratic equality which may be established between the sexes. They admit that as nature has appointed such wide differences between the physical and moral constitution of man and woman, her manifest design was to give a distinct employment to their various faculties; and they hold that improvement does not consist in making beings so dissimilar do pretty nearly the same things, but in causing each of them to fulfill their respective tasks in the best possible manner (de Tocqueville 1840:211).

> In the United States men seldom compliment women, but they daily show how much they esteem them…It is true that the Americans rarely lavish upon women those eager attentions which are commonly paid them in Europe, but their conduct to women always implies that they suppose them to be virtuous and refined; and such is the respect entertained for the moral freedom of the sex that in the presence of a woman the most guarded language is used lest her ear should be offended by an expression... the Americans can conceive nothing more precious than a woman's honor (de Tocqueville 1840:213)

In the same section, Tocqueville expresses his surprise at the tenacity with which Americans assert the 'equality of the sexes' through a defense of women's moral superiority, while at the same time, they alleviate not her social inferiority. Both Martineau and Tocqueville observe the culturally specific religious inflection of femininity in American society though neither do so with much admiration. Tocqueville's line, *Americans conceive nothing more precious than a woman's honor*, suggests the extent to which sentimental femininity was made a cultural sacred with symbolic and emotional attachments similar to that of a religious god or value. It may also hint to us, the violence with which Americans would be willing to stake upon the protection of feminine purity as a sacred totem.

In summary, two international travelers of the 1830s usefully illustrate and confirm the presence of a distinctive and excessive kind of gender essentialism in the USA, characterized by sentimentalist conceptions of sexual difference and feminine idealization. Their accounts also witness to how antebellum femininity was religiously co-articulated or sacralized in an absolute way alongside the 'separate-spheres' family. Such gender practices were embedded in a highly religious Protestant civil society following the Second Great Awakening such that performances of femininity were simultaneously co-articulated performances of religion given the sentimental construction of women's innate spiritual and moral impulses (Braude 2001). This religiously articulated femininity was part of a culturally specific system of gender essentialism—it was a highly relational and partly regressive postrevolutionary interpretation of sexual difference in the USA that for the rest of this chapter I will call *gender absolutism*.

Modern American gender status was constructed upon rather spiritualistic nineteenth-century landscapes of meaning as we saw for racial conceptualizations and racial status-beliefs in Chap. 6. Religious cultural traditions helped to construct femininity as having sacred properties (Braude 2001). Despite disenfranchisement and the deprivation of citizenship, women's civic presence and symbolism was sought out by political parties seeking to capitalize by association with women as symbol-bearers of truth, virtue, and disinterested care for the nation (Pierson 2003; Waldstreicher 1997). As women were sentimentalized as pious pure and proud symbols of the republic, men to the contrary were constructed as more self-interested, powerful and to some extent, less morally restrained given participation in markets and parties that were coded less Christian and less civic-republican (Ashworth 1992). In this way, antebellum sentimentalism maximized the relational affective asymmetries of gender essentialism.

Sociologically, we can further dissect this unusual cultural phenomenon by utilizing the innovations of gender-status theory (Ridgeway 2011; also status-power theory, Kemper 2011) while adding this time the insights of affect control theory to the mix (Heise 1979, 2007; Rogers et al. 2013). Gender absolutism is a type of gender essentialism characterized by the cultural–religious–affective *maximization* of sexual difference. Antebellum feminine idealization absolutized the logic of gender essentialism by heightening the asymmetrical distribution of the affective-meanings that are constitutive of status-beliefs (see below). Thus, gender absolutism was a historically specific modern type of gender essentialism

based upon the moral sentimentalization of women with strong religious overtones in the American case.

In Ridgeway's framework, feminine idealization is a primary framing device that codes women as possessing high relational–emotional properties, but low in competence and rationality. Further, feminine idealization seemed to be *especially volatile* in rhetorical status conflicts for a variety of reasons. Like the religious imaginaries analyzed in Chap. 5, it was a culturally autonomous source of mobilizatory emotional energy. Because of its affective power, male claimsmakers in the public sphere were highly concerned with policing, controlling, and projecting the meanings of femininity for their own ends. Citing feminine idealization served multiple functions simultaneously. It was a patriarchal legitimating vehicle of gender status-subordination in the new republic of brothers, in which citizenship assumed masculinity. And it was a highly effective source of adversarial status claims between men (and women) in public. Predictably relational and heteronormative, the rhetoric of femininity was thoroughly entangled with masculine status: projections of polluted femininities were perceived as personal threats to men's honor. Essentialist conceptions of gender, and their *absolutist* conceptions of masculinity and femininity, played an integral role in constructing threats, in generating sympathy for the antislavery or proslavery cause, in mobilizing votes and petition signatures, and in provoking anti-abolitionist backlash, moral panic, and overreaction.

To understand the distinctiveness of gender absolutism, affect-control theories of intergroup stereotyping are useful (Heise 2007; Rogers et al. 2013). Affect-control theory dissects and measures the belief-components of stereotypes through three different semantic registers of 'affective meaning': evaluation (goodness), potency (power), and activity (activity/passivity). As a maximization of sexual difference, gender absolutism multiplies the asymmetrical distribution of affective-meanings almost to the logical limit. In other words, all qualities of an affective-cognitive register are all distributed to men or all distributed to women. To put this more concretely, in American feminine idealization, gender stereotyping assigns close to 100 % of evaluation-meanings to women, but close to zero percent of potency and activity meanings. Femininity's associations with religious purity and moral goodness (high evaluation) were maximized. In inverse proportion, men's monopoly over the semantic registers of potency and activity grew. And as women's high evaluative connotations increased, the evaluative rankings of predominantly male occupations and identities declined. Lastly, the affective-meanings of potency and activity were minimized

for women. In it women's status acquired a near null value in public rationality, political power, and instrumental competence. Remnants of this affective-cognitive patterning of gender status are of course still with us. Today we recognize this evaluation/potency disparity as partly constitutive of persistent status dynamics (Ridgeway 2011).[1] Thus, the notion of gender absolutism can be a useful heuristic for thinking contextually about differences in levels and kinds of gender essentialism.

Marshaling the Feminine

An oddity in American gender absolutism is that a vehicle of gender status-subordination, feminine idealization, also functioned as a general instrument of status claimsmaking. When predominant in a society, gender absolutism conditions all fields and institutions in that society, generating a strange species of symbolic capital. Various groups and individuals then struggle through public rhetorics to stand next to, in support of, and tapping into the evaluative aura of femininity. *Vice versa* groups tried to degrade the status of the other by projecting a polluted femininity upon opponents of said reference group. Such projections served simultaneously as acts of social control and gender policing.

A further oddity is that this gendered means of status claimsmaking destroyed the conditions of its own existence by propelling the politics of slavery from status games to battles over power. Within the heteronormative matrix of gender-absolutist societies, summoning the sacred feminine and/or projecting the stigmatized unfeminine is deeply threatening to masculine status. Appropriating and expropriating feminine idealization constrains communicative action and reduces the options for deliberative political conflict. To show how this process works, I analytically distinguish three mechanisms through which feminine idealization escalated status conflicts toward violence. To stress the relational entanglements of feminine and masculine status in the discourse surrounding slavery, I refer to these three mechanisms as *marshaling the feminine*. Each refers to the mediating, rhetorical influence feminine idealization had upon the male-dominated public politics of slavery:

1. *Policing polluted femininity* refers to collective disturbances arising from women's gender deviance and the unintentional consequences of gender status backlash. Moral panics over deviance and subsequent policing and claimsmaking are central concepts here.

2. *Calibrating the sacred feminine* refers to how both men and women shape, invoke, and activate the significations and sentiments attached to femininity constructs for political purposes. This concept develops a cultural-sociology explanation of how appeals to the sacred feminine heighten status conflicts.
3. *Victimizing the feminine other*, lastly, refers to adversarial claimsmaking again open to men and women that involves accusations of moral femininity being violated. The concept is not about the accuracy of the victimization model per se, but about how, given entanglements of feminine purity and masculine honor, the antislavery rhetoric of sexual victimization was especially explosive.

Policing Polluted Femininity

Moral panics over perceptions of gender deviance are likely in societies with a history of gender absolutism. With the exception of Varon (2008), historians have underestimated the role of gendered collective anxieties and moral-panic emotions at key turning points before the Civil War. Elements typically associated with the phenomena of 'moral panic' are clearly present in conflicts over slavery. Notably, actual riots and mobs erupted over charges of abolitionist 'promiscuity' and 'amalgamationism' in the 1830s and on after revolutions in the technologies of mass communication. In my view of them, moral-panic phenomena are characterized by violations of cultural scripts and how those acts of deviance produce the 'excitement of violent emotions' (what Cicero calls *pathos*). Hostile, angry, and resentful emotions triggered anti-abolitionist reactions to interracial assemblies as well as the backlash against women abolitionist orators who violated those Pauline injunctions to keep silent. Moral-panic wise, abolitionist women were demonized as 'folk devils' disturbing the social order. Angelina Grimké was especially incendiary as a southern woman who came to disavow her wealthy plantation heritage. As mentioned in a previous chapter, in fact she was actually nicknamed 'Devil-ina' by unreceptive northerners and southerners.

In *Moral Panics*, *Sex Panics*, Gilbert Herdt (2009) observes 'an endless series of sexualized moral panics in American culture,' a series we can trace even further back into the nineteenth century and no doubt before. Moral panics over gender deviance can be more or less 'sexualized,' as we will see below.[2] Why are there so many 'sexualized moral panics' in US civil society and politics? In my view, the answer partly has to do with the American

history of gender absolutism making social panics over gender and gender-specific sexual deviance more likely and more intense. Societies with a high value on female purity devote greater resources to protecting feminine-idealized sexual purity. Following the work of anthropologist Mary Douglas, we can expect perceptions of sex–gender deviance to produce all the collective anxieties associated with boundary violations. Similar emotions seem present in status backlash against status-subordinates who overstep their bounds. Herdt (2009) also acknowledges the real danger and violence caused by moral sexualized gender panics: lives are literally at (the) stake.

Another common trait of moral-panic phenomena is an exaggeration of the actual danger posed by a social threat (e.g., fears of social decline or imminent collapse). Moral panics consist in overreactions to perceived threats. All of these elements of a moral panic, boundary violations, collective disturbance, and exaggerated threat, can be seen over and over again in antebellum politics and civil society. Historians have documented all the ways in which Southern politicians reacted counterproductively to abolitionist threats that they interpreted much worse than they actually were. When translated into proslavery policy and law, these overreactions by the Slave Power alienated large swaths of northerners. The south-controlled House passed offensive, unrepublican 'gag rules' to shelve all antislavery petitions. Notably, an estimated 70 % of antislavery petition signers were women. Southerners were also personally outraged by the idea (and fact) of northern men and women aiding fugitive slaves in direct disobedience of federal law (despite relatively minor overall costs). The draconian new fugitive laws imposed in response were ultimately extremely counterproductive in inspiring northern animosity and resistance (see Davis 2014 for a synthesis of these points).

Panicky demonization ran both north and south. Southerners pointed to feminist-abolitionist 'monsters' to brush all northern antislavery with the taint of gender deviance. Problematizing and policing polluted femininity by such claimsmaking was discrediting of other position-takings. Southerners were likewise accused of gender impropriety. Abolitionists framed slavery as a violation of sentimental femininity. Slavery brought coercive tyranny and market corruption into the sacred sphere of the family (Ashworth 1992). Thus, casting aspersions of polluted femininity was a major rhetorical tactic in the politics of slavery. Accusations of gender deviance framed and amplified the debate and implicitly put masculine status in doubt. Of course, attacks on polluted femininity were also form of

status backlash against women, a way of reinforcing and policing women's conformity with gender norms. The women who knowingly broke these social norms provoked some of the most violent emotions (pathos) escalating the conflict.

In reality, most of the historical efficacy of the abolitionist movement, including the many courageous petition-signing and speech-making women, probably came from being an unintentional catalyst in this sequence of moral panics, perceived threat and demonization. In violating codes of true femininity, abolitionist women drove this sequence forward. In addressing the question into *who* abolished slavery, referring to grand men in congress is not enough. The question instead becomes how did powerful men respond in violence-inducing ways to the polluted agency of gender-deviant women? Women's agency and resultant gender-related panics must be acknowledged as important turning points in the sequence of conflict escalation.

Calibrating the Sacred Feminine

The second type of marshaling I call calibrating the sacred feminine. Like other sacred objects, sentimental femininity produced collective emotional energy, specifically, group pride, nostalgia, loyalty, and selflessness or a sense of disinterest. And like other cultural gods, the feminine sacred signaled the legitimacy of one's reference group, which through feminine tokenism was stamped with the aura of righteousness or rightness. We should note immediately that men capitalized on the high evaluative rankings of womanhood without abrogating the masculine monopoly over power.

In contrast to the policing of polluted femininities, here men and women closely identify with and perform gender conformity. Claims to high status are made implicitly by placing oneself in proximity to the evaluating rankings of femininity, being extremely high as discussed.[3] This form of status claimsmaking prizes the good woman's conformity with feminine scripts and symbols. It is a 'tokenization' in the anthropological and sociological meanings of the word. In cultures of feminine idealization, public claims to masculine status can also be articulated through feminized images and frames. Indeed, claiming group respectability through demonstrations of proper submissive femininity was a common strategy among even status-subordinated groups as well (Yee 1992). Such citations always involve a performative adaptation of true womanhood, a situational calibration of feminine standards according to the status-power

goals of the claimsmakers, including making adjustments of femininity more appealing to certain constituents. Gender status-beliefs and general status-subordination is reproduced and reiterated through such public demonstrations of femininity.

Antebellum men in politics, religion, and the press capitalized upon the positive affective-meanings of feminine idealization. Various political parties including the Whigs and Free-Soilers invited women to the stage to demonstrate true womanhood and moral motherhood. Historian Michael Pierson (2003) examines how antislavery politicians stylized the rhetoric of feminine idealization to cater to various audiences. They drew upon gender and family ideologies as a resource for generating positive political affects, those group-oriented feelings of pride, loyalty, disinterest, and righteousness. The emerging Republican Party committed itself to a vision of 'female morality, male restraint, and sentimental marriage.' But, as Pierson notes, parties simultaneously and contradictorily disavowed apolitical connotations of sentimental femininity (its null potency rankings and medium activity ratings). Labeling this 'gender bifurcation,' Pierson shows how such contradictory (dis)identifications appealed to more radical voters without losing the support of moderates. Male claimsmakers tried to control the interpretations of the sacred feminine (qua high evaluation affective-meanings) but without sacrificing masculine status (qua high potency and activity affective-meanings).

In this way, distinctive processes of feminine idealization influenced American political culture during the transition toward mass popularized politics. A related gendered 'perfectionist' family-oriented political style still seems present in contemporary political campaigns, in which politicians try just as eagerly to benefit from the aura of sentimental femininity (as well as the sentimentalization of children and pets). American religious constructs of femininity became a source of status summoning and its production of mobilizatory emotional energy.

The affective dynamics of feminine idealization heightened political conflicts in a way perhaps similar to how religion and politics sometimes mix in volatile ways (Juergensmeyer 2003). Claiming the sacred, in our case, the gender-absolute had radicalizing effects upon men and women. A part of this was how men's status was so closely entangled with the presentation and 'protection' of women's gender conformity. Competing calibrations of the sacred feminine were personally threatening to antebellum male politicians. For instance, the Free-Soil's framing of sacred femininity as romantic and 'free' was a direct challenge to the Democratic

Party's patriarchal defense of all yeoman rights to self-sovereignty, including both black subordination and female submission (Pierson 2003; cf. Whites 2005). Losing control over interpretations of the sacred feminine was collectively felt as disturbing and threatening to many Americans, making a 'game switch' from public deliberation (status games) to contentious enforcement (power games) seem more reasonable. Hence, calibrating the sacred feminine was another provocative marshaling of the feminine in the rhetoric of slavery.

Victimizing the Feminine Other

The final form of marshaling the feminine is victimization. I am referring to the rhetoric not the reality of victimization, the problematization of women's degrading treatment by various claimsmakers and how such depictions further called into question the status claims of other men—their *ethos* to be precise in the sense of sincerity and credibility discussed in Chap. 5. Victimizing the feminine other refers to incendiary accusations of how women are treated by opponents of a reference group. By portraying the feminine other as a victim of cruelty and corruption, adversaries degraded, demonized, and discredited status claims by the other. Rather than a policing of gender deviance or a calibration of the sacred feminine, this is a problematization of violations of sacred/sentimental femininity. If Tocqueville was correct in the above quote, that antebellum Americans could imagine nothing as sacred as woman's honor, victimizing the feminine other called that honor into question and thus demoted the status of the other.

Both sides in the antebellum politics of slavery used narratives and depictions of feminine victimization to repudiate the opposition and their opinions. Southerners claimed the factory wage-labor of many northern women to be foul, unfeminine, and even more degrading than slavery. From the other side, northerner charges of immoral wickedness on the slave plantation stuck worse. As antislavery rhetoric radicalized in the debate with proslavery ideology it called for more public attention to widespread sexual violence occurring in slave huts and fields. Radical men and women abolitionist writers violated the southern code of silence on this matter. Always concerned with credibility and supportive evidence, abolitionists used the simple logic of mulatto birth rates to indict southern monstrosity in how slave women were treated (Clark 1995; Lasser 2008; Walters 1973; cf. Abruzzo's 2011 discussion of Weld's *American Slavery*

As It Is). Several prominent antislavery politicians also called attention to the violence of rape and the shame of adultery plaguing the system of slavery. By discussing victimization as a rhetorical means of marshaling the feminine, I mean to echo Abruzzo's statement that 'The very real wrongs suffered by enslaved African Americans stood in the shadow of debates about the character and reputations of white Americans and their localities, as well as the anxieties of whites about their civility and refinement' (2011:78–79). The honor of the South was at stake in these depictions. Claims made by southern nationalists and paternalistic proslavery were being discredited.

Not surprisingly, accused reference groups reacted adversely to references to a violated sacred femininity. An implied loss of women's honor (i.e., moral purity) in one's reference group was a threat to men's honor as well (i.e., independence, self-mastery, and paternal chivalry). Masculine status was dependent upon policing women's status because perceptions of gender deviance could be *ad hominem* fodder in the struggle for credibility. White men's reputations were inevitably entangled with women's honor, including perceptions of the purity of both white and black women. Awareness of black women's sexual victimization held damaging implications for southern honor. And perhaps more than the other types of marshaling the feminine, accusations of feminine victimization hyperbolic or not produced immediate violent backlash.

One last observation to make here is about the relationship between feminine idealization and violence. The sentimentalization of femininity overlapped quite a bit with new the humanitarian discourse problematizing the deliberate infliction of physical pain. Not only antislavery but also proslavery writers felt obligated by it and participated in this modern discourse when they defended slavery paternalistically. While the role of gender in the rise of humanitarian discourse has not been traced, as far as I know, the two were bound together by the affective logic of late sentimentalism. Sympathy was naturalized as feminine at the same time that sympathy toward the physical pain of others was becoming a sign of moral humanness in general. One implication of these cultural developments is that victimizing the feminine other was tantamount to a dehumanization of the enemy. In antislavery rhetoric, slaveholders who willingly inflicted pain and committed violence (including sexual violence) against their slaves were spiritually dead, morally wicked and, importantly, inhumane.

Margaret Abruzzo observes, 'instead of settling the debate, humanitarianism, and claims of cruelty and benevolence, only escalated it and

created a war of competing narratives aims at establishing the true nature of slavery' (2011:160). The same can be said of feminine idealization and its mirror opposite, feminine victimization. Attacks on the sacred feminine escalated the rhetoric of slavery to a breaking point. That is to say, charges of violating sacred femininity were felt to be incompatible with the language-game of status. They were fighting words, honor codes revoked, which tore the voluntary status-abiding social fabric apart. By increasing perceptions of disorder and by posing threats to masculine status, the emotional energy of feminine idealization accelerates conflict sequences toward violence. The pathos of femininity, its production of violent emotions, amplified and ultimately imploded the rhetoric of slavery.

The relationship presumed here between gender, humanitarianism, and warfare should not be surprising to contemporary intellectuals (for contemporary analysis, see Kronsell and Svedberg 2012). Motifs of female victimization are common in the run ups to humanitarian warfare still today. They continue to provide a compelling, often supplementary moral justification for military intervention even today when violence is rationalized to save women from violence.

Conclusion

This terminal sketch of abolitionism's outcomes deepened the status-power redescription of the antebellum conflict over slavery. Generalizing the Wyatt-Brown thesis, I developed an initial account of the socioemotional effects of gendered and racial processes of sacralization in inclining the US politics of slavery toward extrapolitical violence. In highly religious gender-absolutist societies, the emotional energy of masculinity/femininity is volatile. It finds both 'redemptive' and violent outlets. The chapter thus highlighted the relevance of gendered/racial/religious absolutisms and moral panics in understanding civic disrepair and the failure of deliberative politics. Analytically, I decomposed the mediating influence of feminine idealization upon the conflict over slavery into three modes of marshaling the feminine: policing polluted femininity, calibrating the sacred feminine, and victimizing the feminine other.

Feminine idealization, among other cultural absolutes, is ironically a potent affective resource in public discourse and conflicts. It is simultaneously a legitimating vehicle of gender status-subordination and a means of making adversarial emotionally intense status claims between mixed-gender publics. The logic of gender absolutism that organized, motivated,

and constrained antebellum men and women, in politics, religion, and the press, helps to account for why violence was necessary to abolish slavery in the USA, thus filling a gap in prior macrohistorical political–economic explanations. By posing threats to ethos, citizenship, and honor, the emotional energy contained in cultural absolutisms escalates conflict.

Notes

1. There continue to be many gender-absolutist archetypes reappearing in American popular culture, including masculinity constructs of the dark hero (low evaluation, high potency and activity)
2. In this paragraph, I am putting the 'sex panic' label in scare quotes to emphasize that gender and sexuality are analytically separable dimensions of power. The two axes of power often intersect and influence each other, for instance, in the rhetoric of feminine victimization, rape, and sexual coercion were part of the sexual-scandal elements of the public debate. Here then gender-deviance dynamics overlapped with sexual-scandal dynamics. Thus, we have something like a sexualized moral panic over gender deviance. Thanks to Amy Wilkins for pressing me to clarify this.
3. I am willing to venture, in societies as strongly heterosexual and gender-essentialist as the antebellum USA, femininity is a routine medium of men's status exchange (Levi-Strauss and Lacan were on to something here). Perhaps there is also a correlation here between the degree of feminine idealization (moralization) and the urgency or anxiety men feel to control, manage, and police those significations.

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CHAPTER 9

Conclusion

The previous chapters have approached the moral changes and challenges of American slavery's problematization concretely through social movements, culture, and interactional emotion processes. Webs and elements of culture can exist and be inherited without their combinations automatically being influential. We saw this to be the case with unoriginal discursive binaries of slavery and freedom, of sin and salvation, and even of sense and sensibility. In a different light, I have examined the creative rhetorical labors, not of *invention* per se, but of *arrangement*. Or perhaps we should say, of amplification, the affective maximization of meaning as a condition of cultural power. In this light, abolitionist frames were context-specific recombinations that acquired affective 'umph' through socioemotional implicatures and the moral–emotional sensitivities of audiences to them. By redescribing abolitionism as the (anti-)rhetoric of slavery, I theorized social movements as the collective-emotional work of making discourse stick. We should note that the creative communicative and affective labors of protest are not non-discursive. Rather I have envisioned their affective dynamics here as extensions and intensifications of meaning, as semiotic modalities, not meaningless mechanisms. Thus it is entirely possible, as my account suggests, that discourse can be relatively static while drastic cultural change yet occurs through ongoing communicative interactions. Culture is both constraining and carried along by the continually flowing and swirling socioemotional streams of history.

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Popular and scholarly wisdom are in general agreement that feelings are not very deep. In popular wisdom, it is best not to have strong feelings or, if you do, to keep them to yourself. Feelings are thought of as personal private mental states not really having much of a predictable pattern nor much of an effect on the social world. Shelves of pop psychology provide prosaic instructions on how to alter your mood by merely interpreting things differently. Why let negative feelings get you down when they are optional and adjustable? Worse, in scholarly wisdom, the attribution of states of feeling to individuals is a common tactic of discrediting their actions and beliefs. Saying someone is upset or frustrated is all too often translated as don't take them too seriously. To be asked about your feelings in academic forums is like being slapped in the face. Given the reason–emotion dualisms, it is taken as an insult to one's intelligence for implying that one *feels* something instead of *thinks* something. The implicit view of feelings in such attributions is that feelings are not real and of a different register than the 'hard' facts. They are temporary subjective departures that get in the way of routine communication and deliberation.

In contrast, I have shown how human feeling capabilities mattered historically for the moment-by-moment successes of abolitionism, as well as how they made a difference in the longer-term sequence of the movement's ultimate success, the actual abolition of slavery. Specifically, I have shown how *status-oriented moral emotions* such as unfairness, anger, contempt, and reciprocity motivated both the abolitionists and their countermovement mobilizers. Dramaturgical status implicatures enlivened protest rhetoric with moral–emotional experiences. To be truly compelling and alarming, antislavery problematizations required enormous affective labors on multiple rhetorical fronts. Diverse ethos–pathos orientations of abolitionist performances all contributed to making the social constructions of slavery finally stick, reference group by reference group, and/or get stuck like a bone in the throat.

Abolitionism studies thus needs to move beyond past and present preponderances of cultural history approaches in the field. In Chap. 4, I showed that what made abolitionist frames particularly effective was their pathos not their logos. Scholars of social movements should take interest in how I theorized frames as the packaging of unoriginal ideas so as to maximize their affective 'umph.' Abolitionist frames were how the rhetoric of slavery constructed slavery as a social problem, not just cognitively, but emotionally so in people's affective attitudes toward slavery, slaveholders, and the enslaved. Part of the moral–emotional intensity of movement

frames comes from the specific status implicatures sown into the package. Republican frames labeled proslavery opponents as tyrants corrupted by power—an external status degradation of the protest target. This civic framing also threatened northerners with a loss of status should they let the republic fall short of its founding memories of liberty. Hence the conversation between abolitionism studies and social movement theory can progress forward by highlighting the thorough *human emotionality* of processes of the social construction of slavery.

In Chaps. 5 and 6, we saw how protest rhetoric was shaped by racial and gender status binds emerging from social contexts of stratification. Attunement to the situational status dynamics of reception fields led black and women abolitionists to perform virtue and character, no doubt tokenistically on behalf of the categorically subordinated populations they *stood* for, literally and metaphorically, whether for black men or women or white women. Black abolitionists did ethos work by stressing their heroic contributions to the republic and the slave's innate desires for liberty. Abolitionist women did ethos work by stressing their credentials, their sentimental womanhood, and in the case of the prophetic feminists, by seizing divine authorization. Thus the social–psychological theory of status binds was drawn upon to make historical inferences about the affective experiences of some of abolitionism's most important prominent leaders. This explication will be of particular interest to historians of abolitionism who may be wary about past social–psychological caricatures that have rightfully been abandoned.

I should be clear that performances of ethos were no less important to movement persistence than productions of pathos. Both were important forms of charisma, each having their peculiar potential for eloquence and each being conditioned by different kinds of status claimsmaking as judged situationally necessary. We now have a better view of how exactly 'charisma makes social movements, and social movements make charisma' (as noted in the Introduction). We can see that the socioemotional microdynamics of charisma operate differently according to the social context, the status binds, and the resultant creative performances of ethos and pathos. There is no doubt a blurry continuum here between performances primarily oriented on ethos and performances primarily concerned with pathos (and even ostensibly pure logos oriented speeches). Marginalized abolitionists were more compelled to do ethos work, and yet their very embodiment of ethos on stage could be quite provocative by itself for many audiences (i.e., productive of the violent emotions of backlash). Sometimes then it

would make sense to treat ethos work as a subspecies of pathos qua any emotionally intense rhetoric.

The clumsy term 'microdynamics' is merely technical shorthand for referring to how people negotiate and renegotiate the social–cultural order through their moral-embodied dispositions and their rhetorical performances. A major objective of the present work has been to show how affect made a difference, not only in the biographies of individual public speakers, but also in the social and cultural history of a nation (and surely, of world society too). Currently, the focus on framing in social movement theory is limited by its cognitive bias (Jasper 1997). Whereas I incorporated pathos in Chap. 4 to reduce this bias, the subsequent chapters examined another limitation of frame analysis with respect to the affective experiences of social movement participants. In Part II we observed the interest that status-subordinated actors had in busting the dominant frames, speaking from personal experiences and with closer indexical connections to the violence of slavery. In black abolitionist discourse, each of the three pathos-oriented frames acquired a different quality or 'feel.' My argument was that systemic racism in the northern racial regime indexicalized black abolitionist discourse, producing a unique existential structure of feeling that can be observed not just in the symbols but also in the *voice* of their protests. The ethos work of existential anti-framing when considered together with the pathetic problematizations of the previous chapter may suggest the need for moving beyond the post-Goffman terminology of 'frame' altogether. We are still in need of a better theoretical language to capture the umphs, cries, pangs, and punches in the *delivery and reception* of protest rhetoric at contentious gatherings. Until that language is invented though, it must be acknowledged that moral emotion is the critical ingredient in 'frame' formation with respect to collective action.

Sociologists of race and ethnicity will also be interested to see how nineteenth-century black abolitionists developed an idiosyncratic *racial conceptualization* to resist the hegemonic racializations of antebellum civil society. Antebellum black protest defies many of the default presuppositions and categories held by contemporary sociologists. For example, black abolitionists drew upon spiritualistic and personalistic schemas to theorize 'race' as the unity of prejudice and slavery. Religious experience and religious emotions were a source of both personal and collective empowerment for many free blacks. While appealing to heterodoxic status imaginaries may have been a potent form of agitating proslavery sym-

pathizers, it was also an unpredictable emotional resource for otherwise dispossessed protesters. Thus, scholars of race and racism need to be careful not to dismiss all spiritualistic/personalistic language in protest as 'conservative' and/or 'systemic.' To do so is to belittle the rhetorical creativity and contributions of protestors racially subordinated within the abolitionist social movement. Black abolitionist efforts at elevation and exhortation were revalued through the proposed theory of status claims-making. Further, we noted instances where these religious-moral projects were productive of 'indexical awakenings' among diverse abolitionists who came to realize their own vulnerability to the racial regimes (of either the proto-Jim-Crow segregationist north or the social-death regime of southern slavery).

In Chap. 7, I developed an original theory of the status dynamics occurring at the contentious gatherings of social movements. Reception fields refer to the situational socioemotional relationships between salient leaders and their less salient audiences. The theory presented there opened a new vista from which to view the emergence of charisma in social movements. Building upon a growing interest in movement audiences, the theory of reception fields incorporates the affective experiences of protest onlookers and/or antagonists. Thus, my account of protest rhetoric hooks up with political process theory by examining how perceived relationships between challengers, opponents, and onlookers manifest themselves concretely at the sites of protest. The relational nexus of threats and opportunities implied by political process theory is constituted by status-oriented rhetorical performances of ethos and pathos.

Further, we could catalog ideal-typically the many collective-action functions that varying ethos–pathos orientations served as seen in my previous explications of abolitionist discourse. How did different types of status claimsmaking operate to encourage stamina, solidarity, and/or scandal? It seems that ethos and pathos could at times serve both intension and extension functions within the emotional dynamics of social movements. Ethos work, the production of positive affects in the presentation of the self, was not only directed toward spectators for purposes of persuasion and expanding an altruistic conscience constituency. It also could be self-empowering and build up the stamina of subordinated movement actors. Likewise, pathos-oriented rhetoric excelled at agitation and provoking dissensus, but it also encouraged internal group solidarity and recommitment to the embattled cause.

Finally, as we observed in Chap. 8, incendiary emotional rhetorics also made a difference in propelling forward the antebellum conflict between competing rhetorics of slavery. The heterodoxic reconstitutions of racial and gender status suggested, encouraged, or implied by various abolitionist rhetorics were especially explosive, or as I have put it, productive of pathos. Instigating moral panic and overreactionary countermobilization, abolitionist protest rhetoric consisted largely of status claimsmaking about race, gender, region, and of course, the status of the enslaved, the formerly enslaved, and the slave's 'sensible' northern advocates. Thus, we learned how deviant performances of gendered and racial status imaginaries in the rhetoric of slavery precipitated, mediated, and amplified the conflict over slavery.

About one last hornet's nest before we end—the confounding question of moral progress—my account of the collective-action functions of status-oriented emotion should resonate most with recent trends in ethics that concretize moral progress as the work of ever expanding our localistic group-based socioemotional instincts—a fragile nonlinear project it would seem.[1] The suggestion always strikes many as counterintuitive because we tend to associate progressive social change with 'our better angels,' the naturally sociable, disinterested, and altruistic sides of human nature. Reversing the terms, this book proves that our so-called 'baser selves' are just as crucial in stimulating and energizing social change even of a progressive sort. The arousal of our socioemotional instincts can be just as potent and vital in sustaining contentious politics. Indeed the emotional brain of humans is structured by these group-oriented socioemotional capabilities and sensitivities, but they are highly adaptable and vulnerable to rhetoric within the charismatic movement whatever the cause may be, progressive or not. After all, it is all too easy to think of examples of anti-democratic movements harnessing the same moral–emotional sensitivities as pro-democratic ones. The very same affective mechanisms of persuasion and provocation can be utilized for political programs diametrically opposed to each other. A difficult but unavoidable conclusion is that the moral emotions—the complex affective apparatus behind human social psychology—flow as easily against moral progress as toward it, in contrast any naïve sentimentalist scheme.

Humans do not have naturally empathetic emotions toward marginalized groups—however much we wish they did! Nor is progressive social change merely an expression of some set of universal moral–emotional dispositions. Moral emotions in themselves tend to be a 'conservative'

force, desirous of social order both vertically and horizontally and hostile to social deviance. Our socioemotional instincts for empathy or 'fellow feeling' are strongly biased toward homophily and localism as even Adam Smith was well aware. Considered in the abstract, our psychophysiological moral-emotionality is ethically blind. Unfortunately then, the moral emotions by themselves do not make a good basis for critical theory nor an ethical naturalism except perhaps in the 'thin' sense (e.g., Gorski 2013). Instead, ethics involves the institutionalization of traditioned democratic imaginaries. To the extent that moral–emotional episodes resist that institutionalization, they are downright unethical. But once more egalitarian imaginaries are institutionalized by society, thankfully they tend to endure *in spite* of the volatile energies of our moral–emotional capacities.

The takeaway here is to disrupt our incessant moralistic dichotomizing of human nature and to transpose ethical critique into the higher political language of social justice instead. Moral emotions theory is appealing because the 'moral' at stake refers to the banal normativity of everyday social life and not ethical critique per se nor democratic reasoning about justice. Suffice it here to say that the moral emotions thoroughly upset our conventional dichotomies between different types of affective experience, positive or negative, progressive or conservative, and altruistic or egocentric. The many moral emotions can be expressed, realized, and fulfilled ethically in both 'higher' and 'baser' courses of social interaction. Perhaps it would be best then to locate the realm of ethics properly in politics and political culture instead of microsociology and social psychology. Otherwise, we risk personalizing what only well-designed social institutions can make human nature do.

Note

1. This will also be counterintuitive to those who embrace some academic theory of virtue ethics or folk moral psychology of character. The vision here is instead *anti-ascetic* and *non-perfectionist*, somewhat ironically given the perfectionist commitments among immediate abolitionists like Garrison. Fortunately, the argument is strengthened if it holds even for the selfless moral crusaders for abolition. My suggestions here have affinity with Appiah (2010) and Keane (2016) among recent social theorists of ethics (cf. Flam 2009; Sayer 2011).

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Methodological Appendix: Emotion and Rhetoric in Historical Sociology

Public rhetoric is a prime location for studying how collective emotion functions in social movements, and the historical example of US abolitionism in particular is suggestive for social movement theory more generally. Because oratory before co-present audiences was more important as a means of communication in the nineteenth century than it is today (Baskerville 1979; Reynolds 1995; Scott 1980), I found a focus on public speaking to be suitable for the inquiry into how affect matters in social struggles for change. As I began collecting, reading, and outlining hundreds of antislavery speeches, the sociologist in me started asking, myself and others, *what I had a case of in all these eloquent speeches?* The antebellum period of US politics is notoriously dripping with passion. Encountering the tremendous passions of the abolitionists quickly propelled me deeper into rhetorical theory and the social movements literature.

An immediate problem though concerned method in historical sociology. How can affect, multifaceted and not always linguistic, be empirically studied let alone observed historically? Although quite psychologically plastic, humans are born with an affective architecture of dependence, attachment, and reciprocity. It is well established for instance that humans have emotional needs for social recognition, worth, and care (Bowlby 1982; Turner 2007; for human life to be 'viable,' Butler 2004). Our socioemotional desires and dispositions—dare I say 'instincts'—are not irrelevant to broad discursive moral change as is usually assumed, given

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that emotions are intelligible responses to and embodied preparations for events in the social order of things (Gould 2009).

As for the relations between microdynamic emotion and macrodynamic social change, an important theoretical precedent here that has yet to be incorporated into social movement theory—with a caveat below—is the work of Jonathan H. Turner (2000, 2007, 2012) who convincingly draws upon affective neuroscience to improve the theory of social action. One major payoff is the perspective provided on the 'human nature' of the moral emotions, situated as they are somewhere between culture and biology. A common weakness across micro- and cultural sociologies is their vagueness on anthropological questions about the sources of human emotionality itself. Why is it that humans are 'emotional junkies' to use Turner's phrase? What range of socioemotional instinct has actually been selected by evolution? Exploring these difficult questions enables Turner to adjudicate the main sociological accounts of social exchange in action (i.e., the exchange of status among other social resources through communicative implicatures) for a general theory of the 'transactional needs' of humans that are only met through social interactions (Turner 2007, 2012). His evolutionary sociology helps account for the innate interconnections between status and emotion in human experience.[1]

For aid in historical sociology, we can initially follow Turner in assuming that language and affect are always entangled in utterances while also recognizing affect's immense nonverbal potential for communication. This implies that an affective dimension can be observed in historical records of language use even in records of discourse not explicitly about the emotions (cf. Katriel 2015). For the historical sociologist in particular, affects leave their meaningful mark—their *semiotic*—upon texts as well as upon the body. Affective meanings are certainly not transparent though nor can they be fully reconstructed. Rather, the partial reconstruction of emotion *in situ* requires a careful affective hermeneutics—and here we must part ways from Turner's more positivist approach at least when we investigate historical texts. In principle, doing affective hermeneutics is not that different from doing cultural hermeneutics through contextual investigations that disclose both surface and deep meanings of a text (see Reed and Lamb-Books 2011 for an overview of the hermeneutic tradition in sociology).

In approaching rhetoric, that is historical records of rhetoric, I drew more upon the hermeneutic methods of 'microanalysis' as it is known in the sociology of emotion (though I continued to keep Turner's general

theory of human emotions on the interpretive horizon—perhaps we could say as a resource for making abductive inferences). Defender of microanalytic methods, Scheff (1988, 1990, 1997) aligns the sociology of emotion more with hermeneutics and the humanities than with the 'hard' sciences. His approach to past episodes of collective emotion is both interpretive and naturalistic—he does not push constructivism when it comes to the analysis of shame among other social emotions. At the same time, he criticizes the 'bias toward outer worlds' across the social sciences that results in the neglect of affective experience in social life.[2]

For Scheff every micro-level situation, person, or group is as inexhaustibly complex as the macro-level structure in terms of complex relationships and multimodalities. Social action flows contextually from meaningful experiences, needs, feelings, desires, intentions, and motivations. Scheff then seeks to interpret the *inner worlds* of social action, the cognitive–affective subjectivity of discursive action and/or its textual records. The inner-world dimension of human speech and texts includes, for instance, unstated social desires and implicatures oriented upon respect and deference. Ferreting them out calls for an affective hermeneutics that can read in between the lines of a text for the social implicatures that condition the inner worlds of affective experience. Thus, in a more holistic key, Scheff's sociology of emotion comprises a dialectical hermeneutics—it teases out the meaningful, organic, relational interconnections between inner and outer worlds. It connects up subtle, and sometimes suppressed, emotional experiences to the wider social fabric of events and happenings.

The many meaningful interconnections Scheff traces between inner and outer worlds are no less causal among social processes for being interpretive in nature (Scheff 1997; cf. Reed 2011 on interpretive explanations). He shares microsociology's focus on the situational encounter but grounds his social explanations upon inherently interpretive socioemotional processes. In contrast to some of the scientistic and economistic tendencies of Turner (and Collins), the purpose of social analysis is not the suspension of subjectivity but the revelation of inner worlds through *part/whole analysis,* Scheff's preferred term for his conceptual methodology (Scheff 1997). This is a necessary mereology that non-exhaustively teases out the many multifaceted reciprocities between inner psychological and outer sociological worlds. Or we could say that Scheff's proposed part/whole analysis stumbles here upon the *rhetorical* dimension of culture without calling it out as such—rhetoric after all refers to those same motives, drives, and intentions that power symbolic action.

In his interpretive and integrative microsociology, Scheff inherits what I call Goffman's *dramaturgical triad*, featuring a three-way nexus of rhetoric–status–emotion. The dramaturgical triad is a general model of social action in which status is constantly and emotionally being communicated through language use. We can see it originally in the writings of Erving Goffman, which displayed a fine-toothed appreciation of the status dynamics of everyday rhetoric, as is especially clear in his passage: 'Evidence of social worth and of mutual evaluations will be conveyed by very minor things, and these things will be witnessed, as will the fact that they have been witnessed. An unguarded glance, a momentary change in tone of voice, an ecological position taken or not taken, can drench a talk with judgmental significance' (Goffman 1967:33). Hence Goffman redescribed face-to-face encounters between people as theatrical-like *interaction rituals* involving mutual deference and impression management. In dramaturgical theory, feelings of embarrassment serve to motivate performances and adjustments of status claimsmaking within ongoing conversational exchanges. In conversations, as Scheff comments, 'all interactants are exquisitely sensitive to the exact amount of deference they are being awarded' (Scheff 1997:173). There is a constant and ongoing signaling of social worth in the mundane semiotics of communication. Goffman called social interactions rituals for how they displayed and prized the main sacred thing in modern societies, the individual self.

Since the founding of dramaturgy, several trajectories of microsociological theory have emerged that more or less follow in his footsteps (e.g., interaction ritual theory, status-power theory, expectation-states theory, affect control theory, etc.). Many of them elaborate upon Goffman's triadic model of status, rhetoric, and emotion—thus they can be analytically parsed, compared, and contrasted by examining the 'dramaturgical triad' posited. For example, the dramaturgical triad would take the following form in Scheff's writings. Rhetoric is where the communication system of social action intersects with the emotion–deference system. Rhetoric is saturated with unstated social implicatures of status that spring from as well as shape the social–psychological dynamics of affective experience. In comparison, Kemper's status-power theory discloses a more unilinear relationship between status and emotion, in which emotion is a subsequent outcome of manipulations of status and/or power whether mediated by rhetoric or not (Kemper 2011). I prefer Scheff's iteration of the dramaturgical triad because it emphasizes communication and it suggests a more dynamic two-way relationship between status and emotion through rhetoric.

The three sides of the dramaturgical triad are central to the microsociological theory of social movement momentum presented in this book: Rhetoric. Emotion. Status. I have frequently addressed the question of their inseparability and mutual constitution: how affect *impels* rhetoric, and how rhetoric *impacts* affect; how status *structures* rhetoric, and how rhetoric *performs* status; how affect *drives* status structures, and how status *distributes* affect. There is a constant three-way mutual dialectic between them and undoubtedly even more complex compounded and recursive effects between all three. Through a microanalysis of abolitionist protest rhetoric, I investigated the mutually constitutive interrelations of emotion and status inequality, how status inequality *feels* as well as how unequal emotional distributions constrain variable practices of coping with, resisting, and/or reconstituting status structures. The focus on public speaking in my historical reconstruction of abolitionist performances enabled fine-grained examinations of these variable three-way interconnections. For instance, my interpretation of Wendell Phillips and William Lloyd Garrison highlights their charismatic production of emotional energy (qua pathos) through status-oriented rhetoric (Chap. 7). Conversely, a major argument throughout this work is that pre-existing status positions, shaped by race, class, and gender status structures, both constrained and privileged different individuals in terms of public speaking opportunities. Frederick Douglass and other black abolitionists were compelled by the context of systemic racism to spend more time than Phillips on the slower, careful cultivation of ethos and logos. Likewise, I show how the unequal distribution of affect by status structures influenced the ability to take rhetorical risks among abolitionist women. Angelina Grimké displayed her elite southern credentials to break proscriptions against women's public speaking. Remarkably, Maria Stewart and Sojourner Truth in contrast forged an alternative pathway through the three-way dialectic, summoning status *ex nihilo* from eloquent religious rhetoric and its emotional energy. This discovery in turn helped me re-read abolitionist protest rhetoric altogether as oriented upon efforts to reconstitute status imaginaries through subtle ethos–pathos–logos performances.

In my collection of abolitionist oratory, I had a record of the communicative actions of speakers and sometimes their interactions with audiences. Unfortunately, some of the abolitionist speeches I assembled were edited before their publication in the newspapers. Naturally no one had the microsociological method of the videotape recorder back then. Despite their many biases and flaws as historical documents, newspaper

transcriptions and other stenographic reports on antislavery meetings are the closest we can get to abolitionist protest rhetoric as it unfolded before various civil-society publics. The published speeches were indeed one further step removed from von Ranke's *wie es eigentlich gewesen*, one more step away from 'that noble dream' of historians: *reality as it really happened* (Novick 1988). It is not always possible to tell how large the editorial 'step' of revision was. In some cases, the published accounts *were* quite accurate in being transcribed by journalists skeptical of abolitionist ideas or by amused onlookers of protest events for their entertainment value (and public addresses back then served a major entertainment function). Regardless though, some editorial finessing post hoc does not invalidate my main findings on the common social implicatures and affective mechanisms of abolitionist protest rhetoric. This is because my findings were based more upon their gist or implicatures, and, if available, audience reactions to them. Perhaps my findings *would* be invalidated if I had attempted a Collinesque analysis of formal-ritual aspects of the rhetorical delivery and prosody, but this was not what I did.

Microanalysis requires a three-way explication of the reciprocities between social contexts, texts, and unstated intentions or implicatures (for a similar hermeneutic model, see Rambo and Chan 1990). It approaches verbatim texts through a *part/whole* hermeneutics that constantly and dialectically relates 'inner' and 'outer' worlds. Elaborating upon the mereological hermeneutics of microanalytic methods, Scheff writes: 'Using transcripts or verbatim texts as data, one interprets the meaning of the smallest parts (words and gestures) of expressions within the ever greater wholes within which they occur' (1997:16). Again, by the phrase 'inner world' Scheff refers to the intentions, motives, beliefs, and feelings that animate discursive expressions. The empirical analysis of this book has largely confirmed the utility of the dramaturgical triad in analyzing the power of protest rhetoric. Further, I have given it explanatory value by linking it to specific social movement processes of momentum and persistence. I have mapped the 'inner worlds' of protest rhetoric as shaped by the contours of status claimsmaking and subsequent moral–emotional arousal.

Throughout the previous chapters, I have highlighted certain events and individuals because they manifest and crystallize the deeper structures, meanings, and affects of their context particularly well. Abolitionist oratory is a productive site for viewing multiple part/whole relationships (Scheff's case-specific axis) and for theorizing social movement processes more generally (Scheff's comparison axis). I began the book with

Phillips's reaction to the capture of Sims with similar motives. Many of the urgencies, difficulties, potentials, and limits of the abolitionist movement as a whole can be read in between the lines of this speech fragment. This should not be surprising given the above introduction to microanalysis. Again my approach is indebted to Scheff: 'By carefully examining the smallest parts, the words and gestures as they occur in utterances, the analyst can make systematic inferences about the thoughts and feelings of the participants, and the kind of relationship that develops between them. This study suggests that any segment of human discourse, no matter how brief, is a microcosm which contains many elements of the entire relationship between the participants, their relations with others, and indeed all human relationships' (Scheff 1997:149). From one historical event we acquire a sense of the abolitionist socioemotional universe and of those temporally changing relationships between enslaved claimants, activist challengers, legal opponents, and public onlookers.

Methodologically, the cultural sociology of abolitionism I have developed relies heavily upon dialectical logical forms of inquiry with reference to what hermeneutic philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer calls the 'speculative' structure of language. For Gadamer in *Truth and Method*, all interpreted texts have a *speculative* structure that needs to be uncovered to enable understanding. This dimension is the horizon of meanings (or world) that the text *reflects* to some extent like a *mirror*. Texts are always partial finite expressions of larger horizontal meanings. Gadamer suggests that the interpreter treat texts as *answers* to some set of *questions* implicitly posed by its context and to which the texts are dialectically related. Gadamer writes, 'Thus every word, as the event of a moment, carries with it the unsaid, to which it is related by responding and summoning' (Gadamer [1960] 2004:454). Thus, speculative hermeneutics surely involves the same sort mereology inspiring Scheff's microanalysis of the uninstated implicatures of inner worlds. When contrasted to inductive/deductive analytical methods, dialectical/abductive thinking is more open to seeing some particular part in the light of the social whole and seeing the whole in the part. Dialectical theorists insist that social totalities really exist and have effects even if they cannot be observed in their fullness. They are nevertheless refracted within the logic and contradictions immanent to the cultural object. The object is conditioned by and participates in wider systems of structure and meanings that are irreducible to it.

Among a variety of preserved abolitionist documents—slave narratives, correspondence, diaries, newspaper editorials, novels, tracts, poems,

pictures, and other forms of protest culture (see McCarthy and Stauffer 2006)—I found abolitionist oratory to be a fecund source of data in exploring the dramaturgical triad of rhetoric, status, and emotions in contentious performances. This is partly because of the importance of oratory within abolitionism—public speeches occurred at the gathering sites that served the social movement's crescive functions of recruitment, identification, and persistence—and partly because of the marvelous multimodal nature of oratory as a situationally dynamic form of discourse. Much more than in written novels and slave narratives, dynamics of status and affect could be observed *in situ*. Thanks to those detailed newspaper records and other eyewitness accounts, the antislavery podium was the most convenient place to observe both ethos and pathos. The data spoke well to how orators charismatically and dramaturgically negotiated the status imaginaries of their context.

A potential weakness resulting from my data collection was a bias toward abolitionist celebrities (again, whose lectures were for many audiences a form of entertainment as well as education). *In re* more silent participants of antislavery organizations existed than public speakers, it being much harder to reconstruct their less-linguistic modes of antislavery rhetoric. Second, among those who did venture to put forth opinions from the pulpit, many of them have also been forgotten either due to a shortage of stenographers or the historical tragedy of neglect and fire. In twentieth-century anthologies and databases, there is inevitably a bias toward the well-known abolitionists and feminist activists.

In response to some of the resultant methodological concerns with reliability and validity, first of all, I can say that my study does not mean to be a representative sample of the actual-historical population of all extant abolitionist speakers. It is impossible to known how representative my selection of speeches is to this unknown sum of individuals. I thus instead embraced the qualitative features of microanalysis rather than the quantitative advantages of numbers given the lack of historical evidence. This does mean that my data analysis cannot be generalized to all abolitionists, but as I have shown in the previous chapters, given the immense internal diversity of the abolitionist movement that would be a very difficult task by any measure. Second, considering my research questions about movement persistence, emotion, and charisma, the historical bias toward prominent abolitionist orators is not necessarily problematic as to the theoretical validity of my findings. Part of the wider rationale behind this decision is that a focus on prominent leaders of the movement is useful and jus-

tifiable for substantive theoretical reasons appreciated by other historical sociologists. During unsettled time periods, individuals constantly look to align their behavior with groups so as to avoid a loss of status (Ermakoff 2008). Ermakoff's notion of 'collective alignment' consists concretely of waiting around and watching what course of conduct others take. The public decisions of prominent leaders are crucial to coordination processes because other individuals view their rhetoric as clues, rightly or wrongly, to the future direction of the group. The rhetoric of leaders is potentially performative in constituting group identifications and influencing group decisions, including counterintuitive decisions to collectively abdicate in Ermakoff's work or to collectively persist in Summers Effler's. Within abolitionism as another case of a high risk chronically failing movement (Summers Effler 2010), speeches by prominent public rhetors had the most impact. Their stance-takings were cited and their arguments recycled by other movement actors. For example, while the rejection of colonization was not original, Garrison's very visible declamation against the American Colonization Society in *The Liberator* gained national attention and led the abolitionist movement as a whole to take a new 'immediatist' direction (though Garrison was by no means the first immediatist).

Through line-by-line outlines of anti-slavery speeches, I came to appreciate these and additional social–psychological mechanisms of the protest rhetoric that moves movements. Wendell Phillips was one of the first orators I examined and not coincidentally bookends the entire manuscript. His 'eloquence of abuse' first drew me to ponder the social implicatures of protest rhetoric and its relation to his intense charisma and talents at provoking pathos. I eventually came to recognize a widespread pattern of social movement leaders, even less 'abusive' ones, appealing to moral emotions through status claimsmaking. But I also came to see status claimsmaking, though often the central social implicature in my analysis, as one of multiple means of min(d)ing the moral emotions. The list of these moral–emotional methods expanded to include pathos-oriented problematizations, experiential testimony, and the more logocentric rhetoric of recognition, and so on. All them, however, seem to overlap with status claimsmaking even if their explicit mode of persuasion is not status-based per se.

Another major conceptual difficulty we have already encountered was the temporal, multimodal scope of abolitionism as a 'social movement' (discussed in Chap. 3). Partly, the trouble arises from the inherent limitations of the surviving historical documents *vis-à-vis* a necessary compre-

hension of the social movement as a whole so as to be able to do part/whole affective hermeneutics. A common convention among historians is to operationalize abolitionist membership through some specific empirical record, signing an antislavery petition, joining a society organization or event, or giving a public speech against slavery. But historical records do not speak to what Sims was feeling, nor how the various public onlookers to Phillips's plea responded. Yet we can still theoretically appreciate and make inferences about the multimodalities of affective practices churning behind, through, and around the texts of protest. Some abolitionists like Phillips signed petitions and gave formal speeches on the *philosophy* of abolitionism, but there was also an *abolitionism of the streets*. We will always have more data about the former than the latter. Harriet Tubman for instance was illiterate (Horton 2013). Though I focus on abolitionist public address, I do not wish to foreclose from theoretical consideration the wider variety of unrecorded rhetorics that also went into, say, the construction of 'fugitive slave' events or other less-linguistic affective practices sustaining the broader movement. There were just as importantly part of the overall antislavery rhetoric. Thus reducing abolitionism itself to activities referenced by the textual record misunderstands the nature of operationalization. The historian's other noble dream of counting can prevent a fuller movement-wide comprehension of American abolitionism, which depends upon some willingness to make some critical-realist theoretical inferences. From the Foucauldian perspective, an abolitionist is anyone who resisted the power of slavery. Some did so by joining antislavery societies with well-recorded minutes and others did quite practically but less textually with their hands and feet.

Related definitional problems stem as well from the interracial, intercaste nature of the movement. Arbitrarily setting some empirically operationalized bar tends to exclude the less-textual multimodal contributions of many of the most important participants from the abolitionist heading. The conceptualization I offered in Chap. 3 depends minimally upon some open-mindedness to a critical–realist mode of thinking.[3] Simply put, there was a wide-ranging emergent movement of people to delegitimize, subvert, and eradicate slavery. Being part of that moved moving movement is ultimately the only valid threshold of inclusion. This has the virtue of sidestepping the issue of drawing precise boundaries along ideological lines, such as explicit subscription to the 'immediate emancipation' slogan, which as historians have noted, was not as obviously self-evident in meaning as one might suppose (Davis 1962; Loveland 1966). The boundaries

of abolitionism cannot be resolved ideologically, but only rhetorically or movementally. *Prima facie* this may seem tautological—but the tautology only arises from thinking of social movements as pre-existing group identities, rather than as real rhetorical processes of feeling, identifying, and resisting.

Likewise I invited us to think of antislavery abolitionism as a spatial-temporal whole in order to better understand the implicatures and inner worlds of individual protestors (between inner and outer worlds as described by Scheff). The dialectical approach, for example, enabled my account of Angelina Grimké's prophetic radicalization in Pennsylvania Hall, of Frederick Douglass's surmounting of racial status-binds on stage, and of Wendell Phillips's provoking pathos through the eloquence of abuse. In narrating these occasions, I aimed to refract a bit of the complexity of the whole movement within the pivotal parts. Dialectically speaking, these rhetorical leaders manifested, impacted, and altered the character of the abolitionist movement. Grimké performed the courage and rhetorical risk-taking she wished modeled. Garrison burned the constitution and advised against complicity with political corruption through voting for antislavery political parties. Frederick Douglass resisted racialization by white abolitionism and creatively overcame a variety of status-binds hampering protest eloquence. Here again we see the role of the public signals and communications of prominent leaders in arranging and aligning extraordinary collective behavior.

Lastly, in addition to newspaper records and their published speeches, secondary historical sources have been invaluable in themselves as a wealth of knowledge and in contextualizing specific speech events. Even when historians address large theoretical questions, the forest is usually lost in the trees. No historian of abolitionism is asking questions about the relationship between rhetoric, status, and emotion in social movements, for instance, despite the importance of status-related emotions to abolitionist mobilization and outcomes. Yet the secondary sources produced by historians can play a more vital role in historical sociology, cultural sociology, and contemporary sociological theory. For this book, secondary sources have served at least three invaluable functions. First, sometimes I have been able to 'triangulate' the transcribed speech with historical commentary about a specific speech event. Biographies were actually the most useful for this. Secondary sources helped me situate and contextualize a specific rhetorical performance, for example, Garrison's 1829 Park Street Church address is covered in exacting detail in Henry Mayer's *All*

on Fire: William Lloyd Garrison and the Abolition of Slavery (Mayer 1998). They can aid a more holistic comprehension of a speech including motivations behind and receptions of it. This was not possible for many of the speeches, but it was for many. Blassingame and colleagues preface every Douglass speech reprint with some commentary on its immediate context. Where possible, this *secondary mediation* of primary texts helped bring them to life, helping me uncover the status dynamics at play in rhetorical performances and their reception fields.

Second, the informative if idiosyncratic narratives presented in historical scholarship can be re-analyzed through a sociological lens. The sociologist can point out to the historian crucial, unobservable social forces, and/or intervening variables that better make sense of the narrative's sequence of actions and reactions. A historian may describe the unruly hostile reactions of a crowd toward an abolitionist, but not dive into social explanations of crowd emotional hostility as a form of social–psychological status backlash. In colligating the events of a narrative, historians often miss the key explanatory factors and mechanisms driving forward the sequence of actions. This is often the case for instance with status. Status backlash against rhetorical challenges to the antebellum white-supremacist racial order explains most fully why anti-abolitionists burned down Pennsylvania Hall (as examined in Chap. 3). In most historical accounts, certainly not all, the key explanatory mechanism, status threat and backlash, is conceptually absent. Hence, the need for redescription of histories by sociological theory or, in this case, social–psychological theory.[4]

The present book has thus interwoven secondary data analysis with the rhetorical criticism of primary texts, namely, antislavery addresses. The dependence of sociologists upon the historians is not only productive but, especially in the field of slavery and abolition studies, inevitable. Since the 1990s, abolitionist history has been experiencing a renaissance as other historians have observed (e.g., Stewart 2008). If I had known beforehand just how enormous the literature had become, I might have switched projects. Pathbreaking work in this field is published every year. Historians are undoubtedly chasing subjects here that strike to the core of American culture, morality, and modernity. I predict that more sociologists will increasingly take note, that the sociological study of slavery and abolition will experience a similar rebirth—how could it not? This is the event in American history where power, emotion, civil society, empire, race, gender, religion, war, and social movements all collide together in

one monumental conjuncture. Abolitionism itself is a burning microcosm of American modernity at large.

Notes

1. While true that evolutionary theory has been used in the past to justify conservatism in social thought, appealing to the 'limits of human nature,' this relationship is not necessary (for criticism, see Buchanan and Powell 2015).
2. Scheff argues against social science's 'tendency to assign a dubious status to inner experience' (1990:53). He stands opposed to the idea of a detached science of emotional energy without some hermeneutic description of the inward quality of affective experience.
3. Inquiry into any given social object or configurational set of objects should in principle reveal novel information about the whole. Critical-realist approaches, Bhaskar writes, need the category of totality qua the interrelations of structures of positioned practices (1979:55). Epistemologically, the investigator engages in what he terms 'totalization,' that is, coming to analyze the significance of a part by its positioning within the social structure.
4. Some sociologists have recently experimented with secondary data analysis in a productive way. Kemper (2011) convincingly re-interprets historical accounts of Australian aboriginal religious events through status-power theory. Michael Mann's four (to be five) volume historical sociology of human civilizations and modernity is essentially a gigantic secondary data analysis.

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