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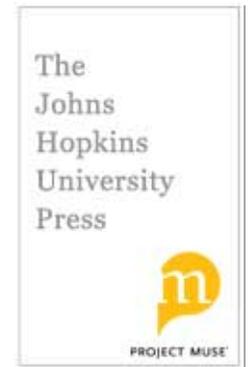
Race, Reproduction and Family Romance in Moreau de Saint-Mery's Description.
..de la partie française de l'isle Saint Domingue

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RACE, REPRODUCTION AND FAMILY
ROMANCE IN MOREAU DE SAINT-MÉRY'S
*DESCRIPTION . . . DE LA PARTIE FRANÇAISE
DE L'ISLE SAINT-DOMINGUE*

Doris Garraway

The publication in 1797 of the colonial jurist and historian Médéric-Louis-Élie Moreau de Saint-Méry's *Description topographique, physique, civile, politique et historique de la partie française de l'isle Saint-Domingue* represented a milestone in Enlightenment racial theory.¹ Within the first volume of the encyclopedic account of the colony on the eve of the Haitian Revolution, there appeared a systematic classification of human variety in the colonies, unprecedented in its scope and detail. Expanding on previous taxonomies of De Pauw and Hilliard d'Auberteuil, and borrowing from eighteenth-century innovations in algebra and statistics, Moreau devised an exhaustive tabular, arithmetic and narrative typology of "nuances of the skin" along a continuum between white and black.² Comprising nearly twenty pages, this attempt to delineate and classify human color variation in the colony of Saint-Domingue represented much more than an experiment in Enlightenment rationality or the science of amalgamation. By meticulously theorizing the genealogical progression between black and white, Moreau de Saint-Méry fixated on the one difference that carried political consequences in Saint-Domingue—that between white and non-white, or "*sang-mêlé*" (mixed-blood).

In the decades leading up to the Haitian Revolution, whites faced increasing challenges to their economic and political supremacy from the growing class of free people of color. As established slaveholders, planters, entrepreneurs, skilled laborers, artisans, and military leaders, they had acquired considerable wealth and property in land and slaves. As such, they aspired to the same political

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recognition and elite titles and offices held by whites. While mulatto activists such as Julien Raymond traveled to Paris to petition the royal government on behalf of free people of color, those at home sought to improve their position by building social networks, sending their children to be educated in France, adhering to French moral codes regarding marriage and legitimacy, and, in some cases, marrying their daughters to white men.³ The social ambitions of free people of color did little to quell the long-standing controversy over the prevalence of interracial sexual relationships in Saint-Domingue. In addition to engaging in sexual relations with slave women, elite white men frequently sought free women of color to serve as *ménagères*, their live-in housekeepers and lovers. In the late eighteenth century, colonial writers sensationalized mulatto women as icons of sensual pleasure and sexual excess, figures both loved and blamed for the luxury, indebtedness and moral laxity of the colony.⁴ Yet this stereotype concealed the fact that free women of color were among the most entrepreneurial and financially independent women in the colony, owing to their connections to white benefactors and their prevalence in urban marketing and commerce.⁵ While interracial marriage was never officially outlawed in the colony, the colonial leadership made many attempts to suppress the practice and in the end settled for a series of punitive measures against “misallied” white men.⁶ More difficult to control, however, was the massive increase in the population of free people of color in the last decades of French rule. In the two decades prior to the revolution, their numbers increased at nearly twice the rate of whites in the same period, such that by 1789 each population amounted to approximately 30,000 persons.⁷

Faced with the population increase, social ambition, wealth and political demands of free people of color, the white elite responded with an extraordinarily oppressive regime of racially exclusionary laws intended to halt their advancement. Free people of color were forbidden to wear luxurious clothing, take the name of a white person, carry arms, practice certain professions and hold public office.⁸ By 1785, Moreau de Saint-Méry had become a leading figure of colonial jurisprudence. Born in 1750 to the white Creole elite of Martinique, Moreau had risen through the ranks of the magistrature to become a counselor on the Superior Court in Cap-Français, Saint-Domingue, and premier historian of colonial law. He was also a prominent figure of the colonial Enlightenment, holding memberships in the colonial Chamber of Agriculture and the *Cercle des Philadelphes*, later named the Royal Society of Arts and Sciences. This organization made Cap-Français a center of scientific debate, comparable in its time to Philadelphia and Boston.⁹ Moreau’s rise in the colonies was concomitant with his growing notoriety on the French political and cultural scene. In the 1780s, he took a leading role in the pre-revolutionary assemblies in Paris as a spokesperson for the colonial elite, arguing polemically against mulatto rights and the proposals of the *Société des Amis des noirs*. His address of May 12, 1791 provoked Robespierre’s famous speech calling for the end of the colonies should they compromise revolutionary principles.¹⁰

During the radical phase of the Revolution, Moreau fled Paris and settled in Philadelphia where he finished publishing the results of his massive research projects on the history, administration and society of the old regime’s most opulent colony. The author’s publications reflect his extensive experience in matters

of colonial law and society, his access in the 1780s to public and private archives in the colony and in France, as well as contributions he solicited from the elite residents of the island. Appearing one year after a similar book on Spanish Santo-Domingo,¹¹ the *Description de la partie française de l'isle Saint-Domingue* was the belated accompaniment to Moreau's other important work, the six-volume *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises de l'Amérique sous le Vent (de 1550–1785)*, published from 1784 to 1790.¹² Ironically, however, the *Description* appeared at a time when the very society so meticulously described had been thoroughly overturned in the Haitian Revolution. In 1791, the slaves at Bois-Caïman took advantage of racial and political unrest in the colony to launch the most massive slave revolt in history. This revolt and the threat of foreign invasion forced the National Assembly formally to abolish slavery in 1794. By 1797, Toussaint Louverture had become the recognized leader of the ex-slaves, commander-in-chief of the French army and governor of Saint-Domingue.¹³

Though published after the beginning of the Haitian Revolution, Moreau's *Description* was never intended as a response to events in the colony. It was, rather, projected as part of a colonial encyclopedia, the publication of which was stalled due to the upheavals of the French Revolution, and in the end, never completed. In his "Discours préliminaire," Moreau refused even to comment on contemporary events, much less to admit the potential loss of the colony, insisting instead on the importance of his descriptive text to eventual efforts to restore Saint-Domingue to its former glory (5). In this respect, the extensive racial taxonomy stands as a precious record of the attitudes of the white elite in pre-revolutionary Saint-Domingue at a time when that minority was holding on to power through racially discriminatory legislation and unprecedented brutality towards slaves. Likewise, most scholars have interpreted Moreau's taxonomy in the context of racial segregationism. As Werner Sollors argues, it is an obsessive "calculus of color" which posited an "ultimate racial boundary supporting the notion of racial hierarchy" and discrimination in the public sphere.¹⁴ Joan Dayan has analyzed, in addition, the ways in which metaphors of animality, degeneration, and a fantasy of blood contagion contributed to what she calls the "epistemology of whiteness."¹⁵

Yet, in so far as racial thinking fixates on the issue of sexual unions between whites and blacks, theories of race represent, as Robert Young has argued, "covert theories of desire."¹⁶ As such, they are also theories of reproduction and filiation. In raising issues such as these, I wish to reconsider Moreau's racial taxonomy as a fantasy of white sexual and political power in the context of an increasingly fragile system of racial domination. While many scholars accept that slavery involved the sexual oppression of subjugated races, there has been little research into the practices of sexual domination and the reproductive ideologies underlying them, and which they in turn encouraged.¹⁷ Ideas about sexuality and reproduction were, I contend, central to colonial attitudes about the legitimacy and preservation of white colonial rule in Saint-Domingue. In reading Moreau's text, therefore, I evoke its "biopolitical" dimensions;¹⁸ that is, the ways in which it implicitly addresses the conflict between the interracial sexual libertinage of the ruling elite and the threat posed by a proliferating mixed-race population that contested white claims to superiority. I will show that Moreau's racial text con-

tains not only a theory of desire through the repeated presentation of interracial couplings, but, as importantly, a theory of reproduction that fantasizes a limit to the procreative effects of this desire. Essential to this representation is the famed mulatto woman, who encapsulated the essence of colonial libertinage in the colonial imagination. I argue that by revising Enlightenment ideas about hybridity, degeneration and fertility, Moreau portrays the mulatto woman as the imagined endpoint of reproduction, thus relegating interracial reproduction to the primary instance of *métissage* between white men and black women. In so doing, the author both justifies the exploitation of female slaves on the plantation, and installs a powerful logic of filiation according to which white men are the real and symbolic fathers of the subaltern races in the colony. I conclude by showing how this metaphor of filiation undergirded ideas about white political authority in the colonial imagination, thus constituting a “family romance” of racial slavery in Saint-Domingue.¹⁹

At its origin, Moreau’s classificatory system presupposes a fantasy: that of a white male coupling with a black female, whose offspring begins a chain of successive couplings, always with the same white male factor crossing with the mixed-race female product of his prior union, to the *n*th degree. Such is the incestuous logic of the first six categories of color between white and black, on which Moreau founds his racial organization of colonial humanity. He names these successive degrees of whiteness “*mulâtre*,” “*quarteron*,” “*métis*,” “*mamelouque*,” “*quarteronné*,” and finally, “*sang-mêlé*,” signaling the last identifiable class before the lineage fades imperceptibly into whiteness. Moreau’s chosen terminology considerably expands that of his predecessor, Hilliard d’Auberteuil. Hilliard had named, for the purposes of segregation, four degrees of racial difference, including “*mulâtre*” and “*quarteron*” on the side of whiteness, and “*griffe*” and “*marabou*” on the side of blackness.²⁰ Moreau extends the range between mulatto and white, recuperating the term, “*métif*,” from its previous usage referring to the first degree of mixture between Europeans and Indians, and applying it to a greater degree of whiteness.²¹ The word “*mamelouque*,” etymologically a variation of an Egyptian word meaning “one who is possessed, slave,” had been used in Brazil to denote the children of Portuguese men and Indian women.²² Moreau’s emphasis, and indeed his obsession, pertains to the white half of the archetypal blending of the races, for on the side of blackness Moreau adds but one new racial denominator to Hilliard’s “*griffe*” and “*marabou*”: “*sacatra*.” As Joan Dayan has shown, these terms referred to the animal world, a clear indicator of the degradation associated with a “descent” into blackness.²³ The foundational table of racial difference appears thus as “Combinations of the White:”

D’un Blanc et d’une	Négresse, vient..... un Mulâtre
“	Mulâtresse Quarteron
“	Quarteron Métis
“	Métive Mamelouque
“	Mamelouque Quarteronné
“	Quarteronnée Sang-mêlé
“	Sang-mêlée Sang-mêlé, qui s’approche continuellement du Blanc.
“	Marabou Quarteron
“	Griffonne Quarteron
“	Sacatra Quarteron (I, 86)

Whereas the first six instances of racial mixing yield varieties approaching whiteness, the last three deviate from this genealogy, involving rather the combination of the white male term with degrees of female blackness. The exercise of racial naming thus reveals eleven terms representing so many points on the racial spectrum from white to black. From these, Moreau displays the results of combinations of each term with the other ten, resulting in eleven tabular arrangements of theoretical couplings. Adding East Indians and West Indians as two final categories of race, Moreau identifies “thirteen distinct classes, as for the nuance of the skin, of individuals who form the population . . . of Saint-Domingue.”²⁴

What is immediately apparent from Moreau’s racial thinking is the deep anxiety it reveals about the empirical connection between generational alchemies of race worked out on paper and actual human variety in Saint-Domingue. The elaborate taxonomy is founded on a belief in the racial purity of the first two factors—black and white—and a confidence that skin color adequately reflects these and the degrees of mixture between them. Yet at every turn, the tabulations seem only to suggest the absurdity of dividing humanity by degrees of skin color, for even Moreau cannot quite decide to what extent heredity drives physical appearance. The initial succession of *métissage* tending towards white obeys what Jean-Luc Bonniol calls a “genealogical principle” of racial classification, whereby the categories ignore physical color to designate instead genealogically determined points on an axis between white and black poles. However, the fact that Moreau works with only a limited number of racial signifiers to denote what would be an infinite number of possible genealogies suggests that he prioritizes a phenotypic basis of classification.²⁵ Thus in the table above, the last two degrees of whiteness combined with white always yields “*sang-mêlé*,” and the mixture of white with three varieties of blackness produces a constant “*quarteron*.” A further problem arises when Moreau admits degrees of color within each category, stretching the limits of whiteness beyond the imagination. For each step on the way towards white, the author devises an inventive poetics with which to render the visible (or invisible) trace of race. Mulattoes, for example, can be two shades, described in the language of alchemy as that of “red copper” and “yellow copper” (90). The white skin of a “*quarteron*” is “tarnished by a nuance of a very faint yellow.”²⁶ *Métifs* are very white, but their whiteness is not at all “animated.” The color of the “*mamelouc*” is “a discolored, matte white containing something of a yellowish tint. This skin . . . lacks elasticity.”²⁷ The terminal category of “*sang-mêlé*” signals by its very name the passage from color to blood, as Moreau declares the trace of blackness to be barely detectable by the eye, requiring instead verification with genealogical records. Here, race becomes chimerical, Moreau himself seems to admit, a fantasy of the colonial imagination: “Colonial prejudice has adopted the maxim that however close [in color] the non-white woman may be to the white, their procreation would not produce a white.”²⁸

The author’s confidence in categories of color breaks down when he confesses that inconsistencies in actual color cause confusion within classes. Moreau admits, for example, that a person whose parents are of a light complexion may nonetheless be of even darker hue than a person from an “inferior” class (96). In this case, the tables are but a theory of color difference, a hypothetical onomastics of an idealized racial spectrum. Reconfiguring racial being in terms of the fractional composition of 128 genealogical parts, Moreau proposes a mathematical

coefficient as a surer way to delimit genetically determined color categories. Each category is given a fractional value corresponding to the proportion of black and white blood; for example, mulattoes range from 49–70 parts white, “*quaterons*” 71–100, etc. But this leads the author into ever more fantastic limits of whiteness, as he takes his fractions into the thousands to represent the hypothetical eighth generation of “*sang-mêlé*” at one part black to 8,191 parts white. At this point, the visible signifier of racial origins is believed to return in uncanny ways: “They say that . . . if the clue is not found in the color, it is in the assemblage of traits, in a flattened nose, in thick lips, that reveal all too well their origin.”²⁹

One of the most significant conclusions of Moreau’s racial taxonomy is his admission that an excess of racial paranoia threatens to consume whites themselves, foreshadowing the emergence of nineteenth-century racisms that would collapse phenotypic and national differences among Europeans. Moreau cautions the reader against the “eye of prejudice,” which, if it strolled across the European continent, would surely find “with this system, the means with which to develop a colored nomenclature, because who has not observed, when traveling in this part of the world, rather dark tints and traits that seem to belong to Africa?”³⁰ Already, the fact that the author figures East and West Indians within his taxonomy is suggestive of the totalizing reach of his racial thinking. Most threatening are questions about the purity of colonial whites who descend from grace, not by misalliance, but by physical degeneration, “in a climate where the skin of the European itself takes on a yellowish tone when exposed for long enough.”³¹

On several occasions, then, Moreau concludes that there is no sure correlation between genealogy and skin color, thus undermining the utility of both the tabular and fractional classification system. What remains is the process of racial identification itself; that is, the mathematical attempt to rationalize and map out the human evidence of *métissage* that imperiled white colonial rule. On one hand, Moreau’s system reveals the paranoia sweeping the class of masters in Saint-Domingue, insistent on claiming for themselves the right to rule based on their racial purity. The question of how white is White was contemporaneous with the increase in property ownership and prosperity among free people of color in the late eighteenth century. As early as the 1760s, conflicting opinions were voiced by those in power on the question of admitting “white” “*sangs-mêlés*” to the ruling elite. In 1766, the French Minister of the Marine, Duke of Praslin, reiterated the principle of race as an “indelible stain” imprinted by slavery: “As a consequence, those who descend from [slavery] may never enter into the class of whites. Because, if ever there was a time when they could be reputed to be white, they would enjoy all the privileges of whites, and could, like them, aspire to all offices and dignities, which would be absolutely contrary to the constitutions of the colonies.”³² Hilliard d’Auberteuil judged the sixth generation to be the cutoff point for the category of “white,” since he considered this degree of nuance to be imperceptible.³³ In 1776, the Chamber of Agriculture at Cap-Français recommended that legitimate quadroons born free be considered “white.”³⁴ By the time Moreau was writing, however, no compromise seemed possible given the force of “opinion,” which, “not admitting the possibility of the total disappearance of the trace of the mixture, consequently wishes that a line prolonged until infinity forever separate the white descendants from the others.”³⁵

As much as the racial calculus stigmatizes mixed-race persons as forever bound by their putative origins in slavery, however, it may also be read as a legitimating allegory of elite male sexual power on the island. The notion of an infinitely receding limit of whiteness can only be imagined by representing repeated *métissage* between white men and nonwhite women. In this respect, the taxonomy reveals what Young has called “an ambivalent driving desire at the heart of racialism: a compulsive libidinal attraction disavowed by an equal insistence on repulsion.”³⁶ In Foucauldian terms, discourse about interracial sex functions less to repress it than to name, define, and validate the very desires that it would seem to prohibit.³⁷ By conjuring the infinitesimal degrees of whiteness that still bear the trace of blackness, Moreau rehearses the taboo mixing of the races in a phantasm of interracial sex, with the white male term repeatedly crossing with the nonwhite female, never perfectly to reproduce itself. That the colored woman’s body mediates the interracial crossing is crucial. Moreau’s racial tables certainly allow for the possibility of white females giving birth to mixed-race babies. In the first phase of analysis, the taxonomic tables show a male term from one racial category coupling with females from the other ten categories, including “white.” In the next two phases of analysis, however, Moreau fixes the sex of the terms such that it is always the white or colored male who mates with the colored female.³⁸ This erasure of white womanhood from the final analysis of racial mixture points to the true taboo of colonial *métissage*. For if Moreau’s obsessive demonstration of interracial sex seems to ratify it as a colonial practice, it does so by repressing white women as partners. Moreau’s schema is thus selective in whose desires it normalizes. Dropping out of the allegory of the illegitimate interracial family, the white woman remains the protected domain of white colonial patriarchy.

Yet whereas Moreau manages to evade the frightening prospect of white women giving birth to colored children, and colored women giving birth to white children, his taxonomy cannot but conjure the threatening specter of white racial extinction via the colored woman’s body. Ironically, by pushing the boundary between “white” and “*sang-mêlé*” to the limits of mathematical reason, the author theorizes the very means by which pure whites would be vastly outnumbered by the products of their sexual encounters. In this sense, the taxonomy represents what whites could no longer ignore in colonial demographics, for the “bodily legacy of white colonial patriarchy” was the unbounded growth in the mixed-race population such that they equaled the number of whites in the island.³⁹ Yet, I would argue that in so doing, Moreau’s taxonomy actually resolves the conflict between colonial desires and the threat of unlimited *métissage* in a manner consistent with white aims for political and sexual hegemony. Indeed, it is possible to read Moreau’s racial science as an ideology of sexual power, racial supremacy and biopolitics, one that validates the libidinal freedom of the white elite while at the same time fantasizing a limit to its reproductive effects. Even as it seems to posit the eventual disappearance of the white ruling class, Moreau’s taxonomy authorizes and prescribes not only whose desires may be fulfilled, but also who has the power to reproduce.

We must return to the rhetoric of race and *métissage* in order to discover how, at the heart of his theory, Moreau invokes a discourse of degeneration that forecloses the threat of unlimited growth in the population of mixed race. Indeed,

Moreau's categories are more than simply degrees of color; they represent steps in a process of physical and moral transformation. The question of degeneration recalls the very origins of the term "mulatto," deriving from "mule" and implying the crossing of two species into a hybrid. When first describing mulattoes in the seventeenth century, Father Du Tertre wrote, "These poor children are engendered from a white male and a black female, just as the mule is the product of two animals of different species."⁴⁰ The analogy in Du Tertre exploded into a full-scale debate in the following century over race and species. In his natural historical treatise, *De l'homme*, Buffon elaborated the monogenetic view that all humanity belonged to the same species, defined as "a constant succession of similar individuals who reproduce themselves."⁴¹ For Buffon, differences in the color, physique, and character of the world's peoples merely proved the impact of environment, climate, and food on human beings, and did not preclude the joining of the races in fertile unions.⁴² Far from being an aberration of nature, the mulatto proved the unity of the human species in so far as he or she could reproduce. *Métissage* was central to Buffon's idea of natural variety within the species, as it contributed to the continuum of color around the globe.⁴³ Mulattoes were thus no more degenerate than any other group, since Buffon subjected *all* people to the possibility of degeneration due to the progressive dispersal of humanity through the ages from its putative origins in temperate climates. Yet, a slippage in the naturalist's use of the terms "race," "species," and "variety" allowed for ambiguity on the possible degeneration of one species into another, thus of humans into another species.⁴⁴ In this respect, Buffon unwittingly left an opening for Voltaire's polygenetic argument. Voltaire contested Buffon's theory of variation within the species, claiming that blacks and whites belonged to different species. In the introduction to his *Essai sur les mœurs*, he presented gory descriptions of blacks dissected by Dutch naturalists in order to argue that their color reaches their very core. Voltaire had no less disdain for mulattoes, referred to as "animals of their species," or "a bastard race."⁴⁵ Elsewhere the author obliquely rejected Buffon's inclusive notion of degeneration, which encompassed all races: "Never did a slightly educated man suggest that non-mixed species degenerated."⁴⁶

Nowhere does Moreau de Saint-Méry claim that whites and slaves constitute different species, and throughout the nearly twenty pages of analysis, the word "race" appears only once.⁴⁷ That the author uses terms such as "tint," "color," and "nuance" to refer to human variety, rather than "race" or "species," suggests his affinity with Buffon's monogenetic theories of natural variety.⁴⁸ In addition, the genealogical principle driving Moreau's taxonomy presupposes that the sexual union of whites and blacks forms a fertile population. Yet Moreau's animalized racial names and narrative description of each category belie this fact, revealing that he associates the alchemy of color with notable changes in physique, such that continued amalgamation leads to degeneration. What is more, the author supposes a degree of sterility in persons of mixed race as they approach white, following from both physiological and moral causes.

The mulatto type emerges, first and foremost, as the most advantageous blend of the author's stereotyped notions of black physicality and white delicacy and intelligence: "He has the strongest constitution, the most analogous to the climate of Saint-Domingue."⁴⁹ He exhibits the additional benefit of extended age

and attractiveness, and is naturalized as the quintessential man of the senses: "He is the man of this climate that burns, of this zone where man seems to be devoted to pleasure."⁵⁰ Further along in the lineage of racial whitening, however, physical abnormalities and weaknesses begin to appear, calling into question the very ability to reproduce. "*Quarterons*" display a marked lack of vigor and a greater vulnerability to climate than whites: "The climate of Saint-Domingue being less favorable to children whose color approaches white, *quaterons* thrive but little."⁵¹ "*Métis*" suffer an even more serious state of physical precariousness. Close to the white in appearance and intelligence, they are much weaker and more susceptible to climate. Most importantly, they are nearly sterile: "[The *métis*] barely reproduces himself, and they are already a rare thing."⁵² For "*mameloucs*," the reproductive prognosis grows ever more dire: "*Mameloucs* who are the product of the *mamelouc* with the *mamelouque*, are perhaps rare enough that one would not find four of them in all the colony, and this fact would not be surprising considering what I said about the degeneration of the people of color, after the *quarteron*."⁵³

Moreau de Saint-Méry was not the only one of his time to posit the declining fertility of mulattoes; he was preceded in this by a white planter from Jamaica, Edward Long, whose best known work, *History of Jamaica*, was published in 1774. Long maintained that whites and blacks constituted two distinct species, and that the fertility of mulattoes diminished if they joined with other mixed-race hybrids. His belief that their unions with *whites* continued to be fertile reflected his anxiety about an unlimited racial amalgamation capable of consuming the race of white Englishmen. Long's discourse of racial contamination is thus replete with metaphors of metallic impurity and infectious disease: "This alloy may spread so extensively, as even to reach the middle, and then the higher orders of people, till the whole nation resembles the Portuguese and the Moriscos in complexion of skin and baseness of mind. This is a venomous and dangerous ulcer, that threatens to disperse its malignancy far and wide, until every family catches infection from it."⁵⁴ Whereas Long here sounds a cautionary warning for those whites who persisted in their interracial sexual relations, thus inflating the population of color, Moreau actually denies such consequences. The crucial site of this denial is the colored woman's body. For while infertility characterizes the third and fourth generation of *métissage* ("*métis*" and "*mamelouque*") in Moreau's system, the infertility hypothesis is most crucial for women of color, since they are the repeated objects of white colonial desire who are shown to bear mixed-race children. What is fascinating is that, in order to call radically into question the fertility of women of color, Moreau relies not solely on genetic or physiological arguments, but on moral and social ones.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the mulatto woman had become the quintessential voluptuary in the colonial imagination, believed to devote herself entirely to the erotic arts. In his ethnographic narrative, Moreau presents this cult of seduction as her only power in a society which otherwise reviles her race: "The numerous class of women who are the fruit of the *mélange* of whites and slave women are occupied only by avenging themselves with weapons of pleasure for being condemned to abasement."⁵⁵ Claiming that most mulatto women lived either with whites or in their own apartments, which he characterizes as "schools

where knowledge is promptly acquired . . . at the expense of innocence,” Moreau marvels in her cult of *volupté*: “The entire being of a mulatto woman is given up to love, and the fire of this goddess burns in her heart, to be extinguished only with her life. There is nothing that the most inflamed imagination can conceive, that she has not foreseen, divined, accomplished. Captivating all the senses, surrendering them to the most delicious ecstasies, and suspending them by the most seductive raptures: this is her sole study.”⁵⁶

What Moreau’s taxonomy reveals is that the persistent celebration of luxury, lust and *volupté* in women of color was not merely a means of displacing white interracial desire, or denying the asymmetries of power characterizing such relationships. Stereotypes of mulatto women proved to be doubly functional in colonial racial ideology, as they allowed the white elite to disavow the threat that interracial sexuality posed to colonial demographics. By assigning to free women of color the role of sexual temptress bent on avenging colonial racism with “weapons of pleasure,” Moreau suppresses their maternal capacity, thus denying them any role in the biological reproduction of colonial society. His explanation for infertility in “*le sexe coloré*” thus joins social causes to claims of physiological degeneration:

Recall that I mentioned mulatto women [*mulâtresses*] as the most precocious Creoles. This quality, their natural disposition, the seductions of their fellow men, the effect of a reputation that attaches to the entire class, are so many causes that destine them, early on, for incontinence. You would be sorry to learn to what extent this disorder has increased, and that sometimes the period that separates childhood from puberty and that belongs, so to speak, equally to both, is hardly respected. From that follows all evils, of which the inability to reproduce is not the least, or the coming of offspring who are feeble and weak.⁵⁷

Moreau’s narrative reinscribes the specter of mulatto sterility by emphasizing the premature prostitution of women of color. Ironically, nature explains not the sterility itself, but the behaviors and “disposition” that lead to it. The author laments this state of things even as he conceals the role of white colonial desire. In Moreau’s fantasy, it is mulatto men who stand in place of the white libertine lover. The lack of issue from mulatto women’s relations with them is attributed to their premature bodily corruption and physical rapture by them; the lover may sterilize her even as he possesses her. Libertinage, we are told, bears no fruit: “After all, the corruption of morals that leads to all further vices, makes mulatto women fear maternity. Hence the means and perhaps the crimes that protect them from it.”⁵⁸

Roger Toumson has argued that the image of a de facto sterility in the mulatto woman acts to restore the supposed natural order of racial separation that was transgressed in producing her.⁵⁹ Yet in the opposite sense, the trope strongly enables the perpetual libidinal transgression of the color line, liberated from the unconscious fear of increase in the caste of mixed-bloods. Furthermore, Moreau’s figure of mulatta sterility recalls tropes in clandestine literature and medical discourse of the eighteenth century, specifically concerning the relationship between sex, pleasure and fertility. For Moreau, what precludes maternity in mulatto women

is the precocity of their sexual affairs, a theme recalling the licentious novel, *Le Rideau levé*, published in 1788 and attributed to Mirabeau.⁶⁰ In this story, the sexual awakening of the central character and first person narrator, Laure, is contrasted with that of her friend Rose, whose pre-pubescent entry into sexual activity leads to a disastrously obsessive sexual appetite, illness and premature death. In addition to making women languish in a weak, sickly state, precocious sex permanently threatens the reproductive organs.⁶¹ A related idea in early modern sexual ideology supposes that precocity, joined with excessive indulgence in pleasure, leads to degenerate offspring. Nicolas Venette's classic 1687 treatise on sex and marriage, *Tableau de l'amour conjugal*, maintained that while *jouissance* was a necessary condition of conception, overindulgence in it could debilitate both partners. Furthermore, the insatiable female who engaged in repeated intercourse would likely produce a girl child. The implication is that moderation leads to the more perfect male offspring, and that sexual excess diminishes the procreative function.⁶²

As Nancy K. Miller has argued, the fantasy of libertinism was to imagine that women could play the game as well as men, a fact which required either the denial or the artful evasion of the problem of pregnancy, or, "rule of consequence."⁶³ Yet, whereas libertine writers could simply ignore questions of fertility and reproduction, Moreau's particular ideological needs actually *demand*ed a theory of female sterility through libertinage. Indeed, the fiction of libertinage, degeneration and infertility in women of color allowed the white elite to deny their colored mistresses any role in the reproduction of colonial society, thereby repressing their anxieties about uncontrolled growth in the free population of color. Far from desiring the eventual extinction of the free people of color, however, Moreau actually delegates responsibility for their production to the primal instance of interracial coupling between the white male and black female. The author is emphatic about what he believes to be the true origins of the mulatto race: "It is the concubinage of whites with *négresses* that accounts for why the free mulattoes are so numerous."⁶⁴ So convinced is he of this filiation, that he predicts the quick disappearance of the free class without it: "There would thus be no error in maintaining that if the free mulattoes were not recruited from the children of whites and *négresses*, it would take this class much less time to disappear than was required for it to reach its current level."⁶⁵ Left to themselves, persons of mixed race would become extinct, owing, we may presume, both to their defective physiology and sexually profligate lifestyles. For Moreau, what is necessary to their survival, and by extension, the survival of the colony, is the continued consummation of the original desire of masters for their slaves, white men for black women.

Thus in Moreau's biopolitical fantasy, the libertine and sterile mulata represents the endpoint of a previous fertile liaison between white men and black slave women. The author's justification of sordid liaisons on the plantation relies on the supposition of their positive social effects and natural necessity: "It seems that [this illegitimate commerce] prevents greater vices: the weakness of masters for slaves causes slavery to be softened. One might go so far as to say that the heat of the climate that irritates desire, and the ease of satisfying it, will always render useless the legislative precautions that one will want to take against this abuse. The law remains quiet where nature speaks imperiously."⁶⁶ Moreau bases his

apology for the transracial desire of his class on both an *a priori* claim to the bodies of black women, and on the laws of nature which make illegitimate sexual relationships an inevitable function of climate and desire. Neutralizing the problem of vice by affirming the positive effects of sex on slavery as an institution, the author suggests that slave women benefit from the “softening” of their masters towards them. Especially remarkable is the language that allows Moreau to claim the fertility of relationships on the plantation. In a passage from the manuscript, Moreau makes clear his belief that offspring follow more naturally from the satisfaction of male sexual “need” than mere libertinage.⁶⁷ If such affairs bear fruit, it is because of the natural, instinctual desires that motivate them, in defiance of all social laws. The reference to the *Code noir*, which punished precisely those interracial sexual liaisons that produced illegitimate mulatto offspring, cannot be missed.⁶⁸ Challenging the prohibitive function of the law, Moreau opposes nature as the unassailable foundation of sexual urges and their procreative consequences, thus absolving the colonist from any social or moral wrongdoing.

Two critical implications follow from this stunning admission. On the one hand, Moreau’s ethnographic allegory suggests that the brutal logic of the colonial economy of reproduction of both enslaved and free people of color hinged on the slave woman’s body.⁶⁹ The perceived population needs of the colony become a means of rationalizing her continued subjection to the master’s desires. Furthermore, by affirming the primacy of the master-slave relation for colonial biopolitics, Moreau constructs a fantasy of white male paternity over the entire class of mulattoes, thus effectively denying them any significant role in the biological reproduction of colonial society. The ideological importance of such a move is unmistakable, for in affirming a paternal filiation with mulattoes, the author essentially defines free people of color as the masters’ bastards, to be dominated and controlled as such. What we have, then, is a representation of the whole of colonial society on the model of filiation comprised of white master, black female slave, and mulatto offspring. Moreau de Saint-Méry was not alone in invoking a notion of family as a means of consolidating political authority over non-whites. Colonial claims of white paternity reflect changing attitudes towards the class of mixed race, bound up in the desire of the white elite to both control and subjugate it. This was especially true after the 1760s when the numbers and wealth of free people of color increased dramatically, and whites tried to attract their support for an insurrection against the metropolitan administration. Hilliard d’Auberteuil argued for the importance of maintaining a viable mulatto class, distinct in its skin color and restricted civil rights. Like Moreau, he also believed in “producing” this class through sexual relationships between white men and slave women.⁷⁰ Émilien Petit, a member of the Superior Council at Port-au-Prince, and a direct predecessor of Moreau de Saint-Méry as codifier of colonial law, wished to capitalize further on the ideological uses of white paternity. In his two-volume treatise on colonial slave law, *Traité sur le gouvernement des esclaves*, Petit proposed that not only should all natural children of the master be freed, they should be recognized and financially supported by him. Petit believed that, in addition to imposing a sort of tax on concubinage, the payments would encourage mulatto political fidelity to the white “father” and, by extension, the entire class of whites.⁷¹

Ironically, Moreau's own language in the preceding passage on the origin of mulattoes points to the predominant means of exploiting the mulatto population for the maintenance of the colonial social order. By using the military term, "recruit," to signify the birth of persons of mixed race, Moreau alludes to the actual militarization of colored men throughout the eighteenth century in Saint-Domingue. As early as 1724, the government had conscripted free blacks into military service to chase fugitive slaves. While most of the century saw the passage of major restrictions on manumission, there were also intentional loopholes encouraging masters to free mulattoes by conscripting them into the militia for ten years of service.⁷² Military service became an easy way for masters to bail their illegitimate sons out of slavery without any bureaucratic or financial hassle. For the administration, free men of color represented an available workforce for policing and defending the colony. Moreau explains that the doubling of the *af-franchi*, or, "free" population between 1770 and 1780 was due mainly to filial solicitude and the need to "recruit" members of the *maréchaussée*, or rural police. On the more staggering growth of *gens de couleur* in the decade 1780 to 1790, Moreau cites, in addition to an increase in mixed marriages, the necessity to fortify the colony's defenses and infrastructure with revenue from manumission taxes and/or the physical service of the freedmen (85).⁷³ During this period, mulatto recruits were relegated to special units of the colonial militia and *maréchaussée* responsible for the pursuit of maroon slaves, vagabonds, and white bandits (holdovers from the days of buccaneering), as well as to a new expeditionary force, the *Chasseurs Royaux*. The white ruling class was almost entirely dependent on free coloreds for their safety, for, as the historian Stewart King has noted, "[Security] may have been the most important function of the class, from the point of view of the colony's leaders."⁷⁴ Still, the recruitment of mulattoes into the colonial armed forces did little to improve their social status. On the contrary, concomitant with the increasing reliance on mulattoes to defend the colony, elites in Saint-Domingue excluded military service as a basis of civic virtue.⁷⁵

Consistent with his justification of mulatto population growth in terms of the interests of the colonial elite, Moreau depicts the stereotyped mulatto man as a weak-willed, easily manipulable instrument of colonial power. He reconciles the image of military discipline with that of sloth, selfishness, and lust. Chronically adolescent, the mulatto is at the behest of his pathological craving for *volupté*, even when "made" into an "excellent soldier." Physically well-formed like the black, intelligent and capable of skill in the arts and shop crafts like poor whites, he is perpetually held back by "indolence and love of rest" (103). No mention is made of the entrepreneurial ambition that accounted for mulatto property acquisitions in urban and plantation real estate. Moreau only indirectly recognizes mulatto wealth by mockingly enumerating the fashionable mulatto's wardrobe—"the jacket, the fine-cloth pants, the smart hat, and the kerchiefs at head and neck are dear to him." Still, he is but a mimic whose love for European finery will not suppress the stain of blackness, the race that, for Moreau, reappears with a vengeance in old age, bringing about the yellowing of the whites of the eyes—a familiar trope in racial physiognomy—and the appearance of splotches he calls *Lotas*, which bring on "a change in the skin characterized by ugliness and deformity."⁷⁶ Moreau's stereotyped mulatto retains atavistic traits of the slave in his appearance as well as physique, traits to be exploited by the dominant class:

We make the mulatto into an excellent soldier. . . . [I]n the Torrid Zone, there could not be a more valuable warrior than he who lives on little: who is happy with roots and fruits that the climate produces; who does not fear the sun and who needs no clothes, so to speak; who climbs a mountain with agility; who knows how to get to the top of a tree and who is a sufficiently good hunter that he almost never misses a shot. . . . It is the mulattoes who commonly pursue fugitive slaves, and we judge from that their superiority over all other soldiers; especially since when they take off their shoes, they have the same advantages as the slave who uses his bare feet to climb up on rocks, or go down steep cliffs.⁷⁷

The emphasis here is on the *lack* of clothing, the naked foot, the animal-like dexterity, the ability to climb a tree, scale a mountain, and capture a runaway. The old climatic stereotype dies hard, and here retains elements of a Carib imaginary, since the mulatto is figured as the quintessential native, naturally able to scavenge off the land. Stepping out of his shoes, symbolic of the trappings of the culture he has illegitimately usurped, the mulatto is but a noble savage set to chase the object of colonial property. What allows for this representation is not merely the consummate racism of a slave society, but also the narrative of mulatto bastardy in which the illegitimate mulatto son's service to the master appears as a perpetual, yet ultimately futile process of expiation, redemption and self-sacrifice before the symbolic white father who refuses him recognition.

In this analysis, I have underscored the implicit allegory of reproduction in Moreau de Saint-Méry's racial discourse, which places white male colonials in a position of sexual and symbolic dominance in the racial hierarchy. Yet, Moreau's taxonomy must be understood in the context of an increasingly unstable slave regime in which white power was anything but secure. Not only did slaves outnumber whites in proportions exceeding ten to one, but the free people of color also presented an immediate demographic threat to white rule, matching them in numbers, education, political ambitions and in some cases, economic clout. In devising a mathematical, rational system for delimiting categories of color and class in Saint-Domingue, Moreau was thus attempting to impose a white supremacist order on a highly volatile social reality that had virtually vanished in his own lifetime. More importantly, his text shows to what extent whites' sense of power and authority was deeply bound up in a fantasy about their own sexual hegemony and their ability to control its reproductive consequences. What is striking about the racial taxonomy is that, unlike other forms of discourse, it allowed Moreau to repress the most significant threats to white supremacy—the rising population of free people of color and their economic independence and political ambitions. The trope of the infertile mulatto woman, whose libertine proclivities preclude her participation in the colonial economy of reproduction, is crucial to this narrative. If the free people of color could be attributed solely to sex between white men and the black women they “owned,” then whites could continue to indulge their sexual desire for both slaves and free women of color without the fear of an unlimited increase in persons of mixed race. At the same time, by placing white men in the role of progenitor and symbolic father of the subaltern races, this

narrative inscribed all free people of color as the masters' bastards, thus allowing whites to rationalize racial hierarchy and the continued repression of free people of color in public.

NOTES

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1. M.L.E. Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Description topographique, physique, civile, politique et historique de la partie française de l'Isle Saint-Domingue, Avec des observations générales sur sa population, sur le caractère et les moeurs de ses divers habitans; sur son climat, sa culture, ses productions, son administration, etc. . . .*, 3 vols. (Philadelphia: chez l'auteur, au coin de Front et de Callow-Hill streets, 1797). References will provide page numbers to the first volume of the modern edition, Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Description topographique, physique, civile, politique et historique de la partie française de l'isle Saint-Domingue*, ed. Blanche Maurel and Étienne Taillemite (Paris: Société de l'histoire des colonies françaises et librairie Larose, 1958), cited hereafter as *Description*. All translations of this work are mine.

2. Cornélius de Pauw, *Recherches philosophiques sur les Américains, ou, Mémoire intéressant pour servir à l'histoire de l'espèce humaine*, 3 vols. (1770; reprint, with an introduction by Michèle Duchet, 3 vols. in 2, Paris: Jean Michel Place, 1990); M. R. Hilliard d'Auberteuil, *Considérations sur l'état présent de la colonie française de Saint-Domingue* (Paris: chez Grangé, 1776), 2:82–83.

3. On the social status of mulattoes in eighteenth-century Saint-Domingue, see Stewart King, *Blue Coat or Powdered Wig: Free People of Color in Prerevolutionary Saint-Domingue* (Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 2001); Yvan Debbash, *Couleur ou liberté: le jeu de critère ethnique dans un ordre juridique esclavagiste* (Paris: Librairie Dalloz, 1967).

4. On sexual relations between masters and slave women in Saint-Domingue, see Arlette Gautier, *Les Soeurs de Solitude: La condition féminine dans l'esclavage aux Antilles du XVIIe au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Éditions Caribéennes, 1985); Bernard Moitt, *Women and Slavery in the French Antilles, 1635–1848* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 2001). On the colonial cult of the mulatto woman, see Joan Dayan, *Haiti, History and the Gods* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1995), 172–186. For contemporary accounts of colonial libertinage and the cult of the mulatto woman in late eighteenth-century Saint-Domingue, see Hilliard d'Auberteuil, *Considérations*; [Justin Girod de Chantrans], *Voyage d'un Suisse dans différentes colonies d'Amérique* (Neuchâtel: Imprimerie de la société typographique, 1785); Alexandre-Stanislas de Wimpffen, *Voyage à Saint-Domingue pendant les années 1788, 1789 et 1790* (Paris: chez Cochéris, 1797).

5. On the wealth and social position of independent free women of color in Saint-Domingue, see Stewart, *Blue Coat or Powdered Wig*, 186–199; David Geggus, "Slave and Free Colored Women in Saint-Domingue" and Susan Socolow, "Economic Roles of the Free Women of Color of Cap François," in *More Than Chattel: Black Women and Slavery in the Americas*, ed. David Gaspar and Darlene Clark Hine (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1996), 259–78, 279–97.

6. By 1733, the law forbid misallied whites to hold militia rank, public office and titles of nobility. "Lettre de M. le Général au Gouverneur du Cap, touchant les Sang mêlés et les Mésalliés. Du 7 Décembre 1733" in Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises de l'Amérique sous le vent . . .* (Paris: Chez l'auteur, 1787), 4:174. On colonial efforts to forbid interracial marriage, see Debbasch, *Couleur et liberté*, 44–54.

7. Stewart King, *Blue Coat or Powdered Wig*, xv–xvi; Charles Frostin, *Les Révoltes blanches à Saint-Domingue aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Paris: L'École, 1975), 304.

8. On the legal apparatus of apartheid in Saint-Domingue, see Yvan Debbasch, *Couleur et liberté*, 77–104; Léo Élisabeth, "The French Antilles" in *Neither Slave Nor Free*, ed. David W. Cohen and Jack P. Greene (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1972).

9. James E. McClellan III, *Colonialism and Science* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1992), 4–5.

10. For the biography of Moreau de Saint-Méry, see Étienne Taillemite, “Moreau de Saint-Méry” in Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Description . . . de Saint-Domingue*, ed. Blanche Maurel and Étienne Taillemite; Anthony Louis Elicona, *Un colonial sous la révolution en France et en Amérique: Moreau de Saint-Méry* (Paris: Jouve et Cie., 1934).

11. M.L.E. Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Description de la partie espagnole de l’Isle Saint-Domingue*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: chez l’auteur, 1796).

12. Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Loix et constitutions des colonies françaises de l’Amérique*, 6 vols. (Paris: Chez l’auteur, 1784–1790).

13. For a concise summary of the events of the Haitian Revolution, see David P. Geggus, *Haitian Revolutionary Studies* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 2002), 5–32; Doris Y. Kadish, “Introduction,” in *Slavery in the Francophone World*, ed. Kadish (Athens, Georgia: Univ. of Georgia Press, 2000), 1–13.

14. Werner Sollors, *Neither White Nor Black Yet Both* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1997), 115. For other readings of Moreau in the context of racial segregationism, see also Joan Dayan, *Haiti, History and the Gods*, 219–37; Jean-Luc Bonniol, *La couleur comme maléfice* (Paris: Editions Albin Michel, 1992), 64–72; Roger Toumson, *Mythologie du métissage* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1998), 100–16; Claudine Cohen, “Taxinomie et ségrégation sociale: ‘l’anthropologie’ de Moreau de Saint-Méry” in *La période révolutionnaire aux Antilles: images et résonances*, Actes du Colloque Internationale Pluridisciplinaire, ed. Roger Toumson and Charles Porset (Schoelcher: GREL-CA, Faculté des Lettres et des Sciences Humaines, Université des Antilles et de la Guyane, 1987).

15. Dayan, *Haiti, History and the Gods*, 231.

16. Robert Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 9.

17. Some preliminary considerations relating to the U.S. context were first offered in black feminist scholarship on women and slavery. See, for example, bell hooks, *Ain’t I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism* (Boston: South End Press, 1981), 15–49. More recently cultural historians and literary critics have studied the legal and cultural discourses of miscegenation in various contexts. See Kathleen Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1996); Young, *Colonial Desire*; Saidiya Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1997). The most extensive treatment of French narrative and legal sources relating to interracial sexual relations under slavery may be found in Gauthier, *Les soeurs de Solitude*.

18. I borrow the term “biopolitical” from Michel Foucault. Referring to the Enlightenment’s obsession with population dynamics, the public good and power over life, Foucault maintains that the will to knowledge about sex became closely linked to a concern with reproduction. Thus the era of “bio-power,” synonymous with the growth of capitalism, supposed the “controlled insertion of bodies into the machinery of production and the adjustment of the phenomena of population to economic processes.” Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, vol. 1, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Pantheon, 1987), 141.

19. Whereas Freud conceived the notion of “family romance” to name the child’s dream of replacing his/her real parents with imaginary ones having enhanced wealth or social status, historians and cultural critics have appropriated it to underscore, in the words of Lynn Hunt, “the centrality of narratives about the family to the constitution of all forms of authority.” Lynn Hunt, *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1992), xiii. See also Françoise Vergès, *Monsters and Revolutionaries: Colonial Family Romance and Métissage* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 1999), 8.

20. Hilliard d’Auberteuil, *Considérations*, 2:83.

21. The racial connotations of the word *métif/métis* originated in Spanish America, where the term referred to children born to an Indian and a Spaniard. This definition appeared in the first-edition *Dictionnaire de l’Académie française* (1694). The word *mulâtre* appeared in French to define

the racial cross between Europeans and Africans beginning in 1604. On the terminology of métissage, see Béatrice Didier, "Le métissage de l'Encyclopédie à la Révolution" in *Métissages*, vol. 1, *Littérature-Histoire*, ed. Jean-Claude Carpanin Marimoutou et Jean-Michel Racault (Paris: l'Harmattan, 1992), 11–24; and Roger Toumson, *Mythologie du métissage*, 90–91.

22. Michèle Duchet, "Esclavage et préjugé de couleur" in *Racisme et société*, ed. Patrice de Comarmond et Claude Duchet (Paris: Maspéro, 1969), 125.

23. Dayan, *Haiti, History and the Gods*, 232.

24. *Description*, 89. "treize classes distinctes, quant à la nuance de la peau, dans les individus qui forment la population . . . de Saint-Domingue."

25. Bonniol, *La couleur comme maléfice*, 66, 68.

26. *Description*, 91. "ternie par une nuance d'un jaune très affaibli."

27. *Description*, 92. "une blancheur matte, décolorée, et où l'on démêle quelque chose d'une teinte jaunâtre. Cette peau . . . manque d'élasticité."

28. *Description*, 89. "le préjugé colonial a adopté comme maxime que quelque rapproché que puisse être du Blanc, la femme non-blanche, il ne saurait provenir un Blanc de leur procréation."

29. *Description*, 100. "on dit que . . . si ce n'est pas dans la couleur que l'indice se rencontre, il est dans l'assemblage des traits, dans un nez épaté, dans des lèvres épaisses, qui ne montrent que trop l'origine."

30. *Description*, 100. "avec ce système, de quoi former aussi une nomenclature colorée; car qui n'a pas observé en voyageant dans cette partie du monde, des teints bien obscurs et des traits qui semblent appartenir à l'Afrique."

31. *Description*, 100. "dans un climat où la peau de l'Européen lui-même prend un ton jaunâtre, lorsqu'il en éprouve long-tems l'influence."

32. Quoted in Lucien Peytraud, *L'Esclavage aux Antilles Françaises avant 1789* (Paris: Hachette, 1897), 423. "par conséquent, ceux qui en descendent ne peuvent jamais entrer dans la classe des blancs. Car, s'il était un temps où ils pourraient être réputés blancs, ils jouiraient alors de tous les privilèges des blancs, et pourraient, comme eux, prétendre à toutes les places et dignités, ce qui serait absolument contraire aux constitutions des colonies."

33. Hilliard d'Auberteuil, *Considérations*, 2:82.

34. King, *Blue Coat or Powdered Wig*, 158 and 305, n. 3.

35. *Description*, 99. "n'admettant pas la possibilité de la disparition totale de la trace du mélange, veut par conséquent qu'une ligne prolongée jusqu'à l'infini, sépare toujours la descendance blanche de l'autre."

36. Young, *Colonial Desire*, 149.

37. Here, I follow Judith Butler's interpretation of Foucault's notion of desire in the first volume of Foucault's *History of Sexuality*. See Judith Butler, *Subjects of Desire* (New York: Columbia, 1987), 218.

38. Moreau claims that his choice to fix the gender variable reflects merely his desire to simplify matters, the important point being the demonstration of racial mixture: "The mulatto is produced in twelve ways; for in this case, as in all the others, I count as only one combination that of the mulatto with a white female and that of a white male with a mulâtresse, since only the sex changes" (90). While the author recognizes the possibility of white women being partners in métissage, I would argue that the representation of white and colored males in the role of progenitor corroborates Moreau's repeated defense of white male libertinage with non-white women, and the sense of sexual intimidation and rivalry between white and non-white men evident elsewhere in his text.

39. Young, *Colonial Desire*, 102.

40. Du Tertre, *Histoire générale des Antilles* (Paris: Th. Jolly, 1667–1671; reprint, 4 vols. in 3, Fort-de-France: Éditions des horizons caraïbes, 1973), 2:478. "ces pauvres enfans sont engendrez d'un blanc et d'une noire, comme le Mulet est le produit de deux animaux de différentes espèces."

41. Buffon, *Histoire naturelle*, ed. Jean Varloot (Paris: Gallimard, 1984), 196.
42. Buffon, *Histoire naturelle*, 198.
43. Didier, "Le métissage," 15.
44. Buffon's monogenetic notion of "race" presupposed a degree of degeneration from a common origin, whereby physical and moral traits would be altered by changes in climate, culture and environment. The singular origin presupposed by Buffon's monogenesis is the European situated in temperate climates, between the 40th and 50th degree of latitude. *De l'homme*, 319–320. On the overlap between Buffon's notions of species, race, and human variety, see Michèle Duchet, *Anthropologie et histoire au siècle des lumières* (Paris: François Maspero, 1971; Paris: Albin Michel, 1995), 229–280 and "Préface" to Buffon, *De l'homme*, ed. Michèle Duchet (Paris: François Maspero, 1971); Jean Varloot, "Préface" to Buffon, *Histoire naturelle*; Patrick Graille, "Portrait scientifique et littéraire de l'hybride au siècle des lumières," *Eighteenth-Century Life* 21, no. 2 (1997): 73–4.
45. Voltaire, *Essai sur les moeurs* (1775; reprint with introduction, bibliography and notes by René Pomeau, Paris: Garnier, 1963), 1:6. For a comparison of the views of Buffon and Voltaire on the question of race and species, see Duchet, *Anthropologie et histoire*, 294–302, and Didier, "Le métissage," 14–16.
46. From *La Russie sous Pierre le Grand*, quoted in Didier, "Le métissage," 15. "Jamais un homme un peu instruit n'a avancé que les espèces non mélangées dégénéraient."
47. Moreau makes one reference to "these racial crosses" (90).
48. On the meanings of the word "race" in the Enlightenment, see Nicholas Hudson, "From 'Nation' to 'Race': The Origin of Racial Classification in Eighteenth-Century Thought," *Eighteenth Century Studies* 29 (1996): 242–64; Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, ed., *Race and the Enlightenment* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1997).
49. *Description*, 90. "c'est lui qui retire la plus forte constitution, la plus analogue au climat de Saint-Domingue."
50. *Description*, 90. "c'est l'homme de ce climat qui brûle, de cette zone où l'homme semble être dévoué au plaisir."
51. *Description*, 107. "le climat de Saint-Domingue étant moins favorable aux enfants dont la nuance s'approche du Blanc, les Quarterons réussissent peu."
52. "[Le Métis] se reproduit à peine, et c'est même déjà une chose rare que des Métifs."
53. *Description*, 92. "Les Mameloucs qui sont le produit du Mamelouc avec la Mamelouque, sont peut-être assez rares pour qu'on n'en trouvât pas quatre dans toute la Colonie, et l'on ne sera pas surpris de ce fait, si l'on a bien remarqué ce que j'ai dit de la dégénération des Gens-de-Couleur, depuis le Quarteron."
54. Edward Long, *Candid Reflections Upon the Judgment Lately Awarded by the Court of King's Bench . . . On What is Commonly Called the Negro Cause, by a Planter* (London, 1772), quoted in Young, *Colonial Desire*, 150.
55. *Description*, 37. "la classe nombreuse des femmes qui sont le fruit du mélange des Blancs et des femmes esclaves, ne sont occupées que de se venger, avec les armes du plaisir, d'être condamnées à l'ավիսսեմեռտ." "
56. *Description*, 104. "L'être entier d'une mulâtresse est livré à la volupté, et le feu de cette Déesse brûle dans son coeur pour ne s'y éteindre qu'avec la vie. . . Il n'est rien que l'imagination la plus enflammée puisse concevoir, qu'elle n'ait pressenti, deviné, accompli. Charmer tous les sens, les livrer aux plus délicieuses extases, les suspendre par les plus séduisants ravissements: voilà son unique étude."
57. *Description*, 104–105. "On se rappelle que j'ai cité les Mulâtresses comme les Créoles les plus précoces. Cette particularité, leurs dispositions naturelles, les séductions de leurs semblables, l'effet d'une réputation qui appartient à toute la classe, sont autant de causes qui les vouent de bonne heure à l'incontinence. On serait affligé de voir jusqu'à quel point ce désordre s'est accru, et quelquefois le terme qui sépare l'enfance de la puberté et qui appartient, pour ainsi dire, également aux deux, est à

peine respecté. De là tous les maux dont le moindre n'est pas d'empêcher la reproduction, ou de n'en faire résulter que des êtres faibles et débiles."

58. *Description*, 107. "enfin la corruption des mœurs qui mène tous les vices à sa suite, fait craindre la maternité aux Mulâtresses. De là, les moyens et peut-être les crimes qui en garantissent."

59. Roger Toumson, *Mythologie du métissage*, 114–15.

60. The critic Alexandrian has disputed the authorship of the text, attributing it to the marquis de Sentyilly. Alexandrian, *Histoire de la littérature érotique* (Paris: Éditions Seghers, 1989), 182.

61. Mirabeau, *Le rideau levé in Oeuvres érotiques de Mirabeau*, L'enfer de la Bibliothèque nationale (Paris: Fayard, 1984), 338.

62. Nicolas Venette, *De la génération de l'homme, ou, Tableau de l'amour conjugal* (Cologne: Claude Joly, 1696). On Venette's views on fertility and pleasure, see Jean Mainil, *Dans les Règles du plaisir . . .* (Paris: Éditions Kimé, 1996), 119–40; Aram Vartanian, "La Mettrie, Diderot, and Sexology in the Enlightenment" in *Essays on the Age of Enlightenment in Honor of Ira O. Wade*, ed. Jean Macary (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1977), 347–67. Actual female sterility is rare in the libertine tradition, the two notable sterile female characters being Thérèse in Boyer d'Argen's *Thérèse Philosophe* (1748) and La Durand in Sade's *Juliette* (1797). See Anne Richardot, "Thérèse Philosophe: les charmes de l'impénétrable." *Eighteenth-Century Life* 21, no. 2 (1997): 89–99.

63. Nancy K. Miller, "Libertinage and Feminism," *Yale French Studies* 94 (1998): 17–28.

64. *Description*, 107. "C'est le concubinage des Blancs avec les négresses, qui est la cause que les Mulâtres affranchis sont aussi nombreux."

65. *Description*, 107–8. "Ce ne serait donc pas hasarder une erreur, que de soutenir que si les Mulâtres libres n'étaient pas recrutés par des enfans de Blancs et de négresses, cette classe mettrait bien moins de tems à disparaître, qu'il ne lui en a fallu pour arriver au terme où elle est parvenue."

66. *Description*, 107. "Il semble que [ce commerce illégitime] prévienne de plus grands vices : les faiblesses des maîtres pour les esclaves, sont cause que l'esclavage est adouci; On est même en quelque sorte autorisé à dire, que la chaleur du climat qui irrite les désirs, et la facilité de les satisfaire, rendront toujours inutiles les précautions législatives qu'on voudrait prendre contre cet abus, parce que la loi se tait où la nature parle impérieusement."

67. On the question of "the masters' weakness" Moreau adds, "the population benefits from it because it is less libertinage than need that governs these illicit unions" (107). "la population y gagne parce que c'est moins le libertinage que le besoin qui préside à ces unions illicites."

68. The *Code noir* (1685) is the set of laws and regulations issued by Louis XIV and Colbert, whereby the French state officially codified slavery in the French colonies. Article nine punished free men who had one or more children with their slave concubines. For the text of the article see Louis Sala-Molins, *Le Code noir ou le calvaire de Canaan* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1996), 108.

69. Black women were symbolically the mothers of all the races, since they were often used as wet nurses for white children. Likewise, Moreau credits Creole slave women with a remarkable propensity for motherhood: "Never have children, those feeble creatures, had more assiduous care; and that slave who finds the time to bathe her children each night and to give them white linens, is a respectable being" (60).

70. Hilliard d'Auberteuil, *Considérations sur l'état présent de Saint-Domingue*, 2:88–91.

71. In desiring to establish claims of white paternity through the payment of benefits, Petit's position clearly articulates what was a growing anxiety about the economic independence of free people of color, as well as the desire of white colonials to limit and control their resources. "The freedman who is supported by his master, or his patron will not easily have himself deprived of it. One would have found fewer guilty persons among the mulattoes if they had something to lose." Petit makes subtle reference to "the enterprises that one could have mulattoes to blame for," that is, the instances in which mulattoes protested their exclusion from the white elite, or allied with the *petits blancs*, the other sworn enemies of the white landowning and commercial elite. Émilien Petit, *Traité sur le gouvernement des esclaves* (Paris: chez Knapen, Imprimeur de la Cour des Aides, 1777), 2:75.

72. In 1740, the defense of the colony momentarily became a justification to increase the manumission of slaves. On the involvement of free blacks and *gens de couleur* in the colonial military, see Stewart R. King, *Blue Coat or Powdered Wig*, 52–77; Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, “Saint-Domingue” in *Neither Slave Nor Free*, ed. Cohen and Greene, 174–75; Charles Frostin, *Les révoltes blanches*, 304.

73. Moreau explains the pressure to manumit as “the force of the opinion that the white, father of a child of color, should look to procure his freedom” (85). “la force qu’avait acquit l’opinion que le Blanc, père d’un enfant de couleur, devait chercher à lui procurer la liberté.” The marriages envisioned by the author thus suppose the union of a white man and a slave woman. Revenue from the sale of manumissions supported repairs to the infrastructure. In his description of the capital, Cap-Français, Moreau refers to a fund called *la caisse des libertés*, used to pay for city landfills (312).

74. King, *Blue Coat or Powdered Wig*, xiii. Moreau credits the formation of a special corps, the Chasseurs Royaux, with an additional increase in the population of *affranchis* after 1779, noting the participation of this legion of soldiers in the siege of Savannah that same year (85).

75. During the Haitian and French revolutions, free people of color based demands for equal rights and citizenship on their steadfast military service to the *patrie*. Garrigus, “Sons of the Same Father,” in *Visions and Revisions of the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Christine Adams, Jack R. Censer and Lisa Jane Graham (Univ. Park: The Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 1997), 150–151; King, *Blue Coat or Powdered Wig*, 75–77.

76. *Description*, 104. “la veste, le pantalon de toile fine, le chapeau retapé, et les mouchoirs de tête et de cou lui sont chers;” “une altération cutanée dont les caractères sont la laideur et la difformité.”

77. *Description*, 103–104. “On fait du mulâtre un excellent soldat . . . [D]ans la Zône Torride, il ne peut pas exister un défenseur plus précieux que celui qui vit de peu: qui se contente des racines et des fruits que le climat produit; qui ne redoute pas le soleil et auquel il ne faut, pour ainsi dire, point de vêtements; qui gravit une montagne avec agilité; qui sait monter au haut d’un arbre et qui réussit assez à la chasse pour ne presque jamais perdre son coup. . . . Ce sont les Mulâtres qui communément poursuivent les esclaves fugitifs, et l’on juge alors de leur supériorité locale sur tout autre soldat; d’autant qu’en quittant leurs souliers, ils ont les mêmes avantages que l’esclave qui se sert de son pied nû pour monter jusques sur des rochers, ou pour descendre de rapides falaises.”