WHEN CITIES GET MARRIED
Constructing Urban Space through Gender, Sexuality, and Municipal Consolidation

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In this article, we examine the processes by which urban space became sexually coded through municipal consolidation in the nineteenth century. Our analysis covers the union of Van Vorst Township to Jersey City in 1851 and the absorption of the City of Brooklyn to "Greater New York" in 1898. In both cases, urban space was gendered and sexualized through courtship and marriage metaphors used by local newspapers. We argue that consolidation is represented in gendered and sexualized terms so that the question of municipal expansion became insulated from moral, racialized, and environmental concerns about the "threats" of the big city. Our analysis has contemporary relevance because it suggests the sexist and heterosexist norms that may be embedded in the noblesse oblige of contemporary municipal consolidation. It also suggests a way of looking at contemporary municipal boundary changes through a normative lens that takes us beyond economic notions of self-interest.

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Because cities are often seen as offering relative freedom to those who "deviate" from the norm, they are also frequently portrayed as a threat to those norms and traditions. This combination of urban freedom and threat is seen sharply in contemporary debates over same-sex marriage in the United States. In the furor over San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom's decision in

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February 2004 to change his city's marriage forms and documents to allow for same-sex marriage, "the city" has been portrayed as both a site of moral decay and the space of cosmopolitan progress. The show of support for Newsom from other big-city mayors, combined with the resistance and opposition of state and federal officials, all reflect the fact that homosexuality is still conceived of by many as deviant, threatening, and *uniquely urban* (cf. D'Emilio 1983, 10-13; Chauncey 1994, 131-15; Craddock 2000).

Numerous authors have pointed to the ways in which cities have been identified with marginalized populations such as women, queer people, immigrants, and people of color. They have also increasingly highlighted the need to interrogate and historicize the often unexamined terms—White, male, European, Western, heterosexual—against which these "others" are articulated (Bonnett and Nayak 2003, 300). Cultural geographers, in particular, have pressed us to understand how these "subjectivities are performed, resisted, disciplined and oppressed not simply in but *through* space" (Brown and Knopp 2003, 322). As Kay Anderson (1994) reminds us, it is thus important to historicize both the symbolic *and* material processes that construct and transform localities.

In this article, we examine the discursive and material processes by which urban space became sexually coded through municipal consolidation, which, as Kenneth Jackson (1985, 140-41) notes, was "the dominant method of population growth in every American city of consequence. If annexation . . . or consolidation . . . had not taken place, there would now be no great cities in the United States in the political sense of the term" (pp. 140-41).[1] We argue that connecting the gendered, raced, and heterosexualized arguments for municipal consolidation to the broader relations of power that they evoke reveals that representations of Whiteness, masculinity, and heterosexuality have fundamentally shaped our definition of *city* in ways that may continue to determine how power flows through and in urban spaces (as the recent controversy over gay marriage indicates). Although economic changes also clearly contributed to the trend toward municipal consolidation, in this article we argue that symbolic or discursive processes played a vital role in the construction of urban space through consolidation as well.[2]

Our analysis covers two very different cases of municipal consolidation: the union of Van Vorst Township to Jersey City in 1851, and the absorption of the City of Brooklyn to "Greater New York" in 1898. The Jersey City–Van Vorst consolidation was a union between two municipalities. The Brooklyn–New York consolidation was only part of a larger consolidation that united numerous municipalities in Kings, Queens, Richmond, New York, and Westchester Counties. Prior to the creation of Greater New York, no American cities the size of Brooklyn and New York had ever joined

together to form a single city.[3] In contrast, both Jersey City and Van Vorst were geographically minuscule municipalities whose respective populations ranked them alongside such places as Gardiner, Maine, and Peoria, Illinois (U.S. Census 1862, 242-44).

Despite their differences, the extent to which courtship and marriage metaphors were used by local newspapers to describe and explain the Jersey City–Van Vorst and Brooklyn–New York consolidations suggests that urban space was being gendered and sexualized in both situations. Approximately seven months before Jersey City and Van Vorst residents were to vote on the proposed consolidation, a local Jersey City paper, the *Daily Telegraph*, published the following description of the two municipalities:

> On the one side of the way lives a bachelor. . . . He enjoys a comfortable degree of health—has an abundance of this world's goods—his servants are well fed and consequently are attentive to his wants; and if ever a poor bachelor was happily situated for enjoying the luxuries of life, it would really seem that our friend was the very man. But man is so constituted that he sighs for a companion who shall share his sorrows and participate in his enjoyments. Now it so happens, that in the immediate vicinity of his mansion there dwells a maiden of comely countenance and fair proportions. ("The New Charter Once More" 1851)

The "bachelor" was Jersey City, and the "maiden" was Van Vorst. As the debate over consolidation progressed, these metaphors were elaborated repeatedly in the local press.

In the case of the Brooklyn–New York consolidation, courtship and marriage metaphors were not developed in as much detail but were nonetheless notable. In the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, for instance, references to marriage were frequently present—headlines before a referendum on Greater New York in 1894 asked, "Will the Cities Marry?" and "Shall the Cities Wed?" (September 2 and 13, 1894). Interestingly, the use of these metaphors was more ambiguous in the case of Brooklyn–New York. Instead of the uniform assignment of opposite genders to the two municipalities (as with Jersey City and Van Vorst), the two cities were gendered both male and female at different moments. These differences reflect different local situations but perhaps also the difference in period. The Jersey City–Van Vorst consolidation took place in 1851, whereas the Brooklyn–New York consolidation was not debated until 1894; we thus look briefly to the Brooklyn–New York example to explore changes in the impact and meaning of the marriage metaphor by the 1890s.

We contend that the use of metaphors of courtship and marriage in response to the Jersey City–Van Vorst and Brooklyn–New York consolida-

tions reveals two important dynamics in the creation and imagining of urban space. First, we argue that the metaphor of marriage had enormous affective and representational force in these debates. Instead of simply responding to arguments against municipal consolidation with economic or political counterarguments, the use of metaphors demonstrate how advocates for consolidation used the image of marriage to evoke connections to family, community, respectability, stability, productivity, and moral purity. By representing consolidation as a marriage, advocates appealed to the image of men and women taking up their "proper" places in society and creating wealth through productivity/procreation. These images thus took the consolidation debate beyond questions of economic costs or municipal governance (which were fraught with uncertainty—see, for instance, Hammack 1982, 187; Dilworth 2004, 24) and pointed instead to the goal of consolidation as one of imagining and creating an "ideal" community free from unwholesome perversion or contamination.

We maintain that the association of municipal consolidation with marriage was thus part of what Heidi Nast (1998) refers to as the "unconscious" mapping and disciplining of sociospatial relations. She argues that representations of spaces are both "*unconsciously* negotiated . . . imaginings made natural through systematically uninterrogated representational practices" and "*conscious* practices and disciplinary regimes that work to inform everyday socio-spacialities with hetero*sexualized* racism," where "normalization occurs through written laws, regulations and moral codes—repressionary forces which shore up and inform our imaginaries and our symbolic repertoires" (Nast 1998, 196). In this article, we interrogate some of the ways in which references to heterosexual marriage in these two cases of municipal consolidation reinforce gendered, raced, and heterosexed notions of intact and pure spaces. We argue that the use of the marriage metaphor is an example of an unconscious and uninterrogated "representational practice," although we, like Nast, see these unconscious modes of disciplining people and space as crucially connected to conscious practices such as laws restricting voting, marriage, and work. And although in this article we focus more extensively on the gendered implications of the marriage metaphor, we, like Nast, see gender, race, and sexuality as interlocking dynamics.

Our discussion begins with an examination of intersecting concerns about the "evils" of big cities in the mid-nineteenth century and the way these concerns were translated into attempts to both represent and police urban space. We maintain that many of these anxieties were based in masculinist, heterosexist, and racist conceptualizations of sexuality, family, and community. We then examine the local historical context and issues that were relevant to the Jersey City–Van Vorst consolidation, and analyze how the marriage meta-

phor was used during the consolidation debates. After considering how this metaphor reflects broader imperatives surrounding conceptions of sexuality, family, and community, we examine the similarities and differences between the Jersey City–Van Vorst and Brooklyn–New York consolidations, placing the latter in the context of the late-nineteenth-century women's movement. We pursue this comparison to demonstrate how the metaphor gets shaped by changing perceptions of male and female roles. We conclude by considering the contemporary importance of understanding how spatial relations of power are shaped and reiterated by gendered, raced, and heterosexed representations.

URBAN ANXIETIES: MARGINALIZED POPULATIONS AND THE BIG CITY

By the time of the Jersey City–Van Vorst consolidation in 1851, industrialization, increased immigration, and the consequent growth of cities were perceived to be threatening some of the fundamental principles and strengths of American society. The declining status and influence of the farm and country relative to the city ran counter to the traditional Republican valorization of rural and agricultural life, leading to a renewed spirit of antiurbanism that asserted itself in the mid-nineteenth century. Compared to the moral and ordered world of rural life, city life was portrayed by authors such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Amory D. Mayo, Joseph Tuckerman, William Ellery Channing, and Alexis de Tocqueville as amoral, unnatural, unchristian, decadent, dangerous, and antidemocratic. As Tocqueville ([1835] 1966, 278) warned,

> The size of some American cities and especially the nature of their inhabitants [is] . . . a real danger threatening the future of the democratic republics of the New World, and I should not hesitate to predict that it is through them that they will perish.

A related set of concerns was that cities were unhealthy and diseased. The cholera epidemics of 1832 and 1849 took their largest toll in the cities, and an etiology that attributed diseases to "moral, climatic, and environmental factors" supported the belief that cities created an unhealthy environment. Medical, literary, and political authors all joined in connecting disease to the more general corruption of cities. This concern was focused with particular intensity on women, "paupers," and immigrants, all populations that were portrayed as particularly susceptible to moral and physical decay (Rosenberg

1987; Craddock 2000). Nast (1998) examines these anxieties in the contemporary context, where

> we have all kinds of contemporary, "unconsciously" registered anxieties over the heterosexualized pure and solidly bordered body of the nation being penetrated, threatened, overcome, and/or dissolved by a plethora of frightening forcing microbes and dangers; all transgressors are denigratorily racialized through constructions of associational (eg. metonymic and metaphoric) links with disease, death, floods and filth. (p. 195)

As Nast's comments highlight, the portrait of cities as unhealthy can be read as being tightly linked to anxieties about the White, masculine, and heterosexual space of the city being "invaded" or contaminated by difference.

As places in which diverse populations shared and used spaces, cities not only contained people excluded from the norm of "American citizen" (women, racialized minorities, homosexuals, the poor, indigenous peoples, and so on) but also included hybrid spaces and communities where these populations might mix together. This hybridity contradicted conscious attempts to segregate and regulate difference through spatial restrictions. Prosperity and industrialization, for example, meant that White middle-class women were increasingly restricted by ideals of "womanliness" and "women's proper place." Whereas women of color and poor and working-class women continued to enter into the working world, White middle-class women were discouraged from entering the fields of education, work, and politics through the ideology of the separation of spheres. By the 1840s, "ladies' magazines" had reached mass circulation, and in them women were told that "piety, purity, and domesticity were the foundations on which to build feminine happiness. The heroine of fiction practiced all of these virtues and found contentment in woman's only proper sphere, the home" (Lerner 1971, 32).

In the Victorian United States, White middle-class women's sphere of activity was thus seen as the home, and this role provided the ostensible basis for society as a whole. In accord with the life of cities, the male sphere of "politics and business" was "governed by the pursuit of power and profit; here individuals engaged in ruthless conflict" (Lerner 1971, 31). In contrast to city life, the female sphere of the home "represented a refuge from this arena of incessant conflict; it was the domain where morality, concern for others, sensibility, and feelings were allowed to exist" (Lerner 1971, 31; see also Nicholson 1986, 43-44). White, middle-class women in the private sphere were expected to provide an anchor for men's public sphere life—they were exhorted to "secure" the private realm of morality, compassion, harmony, and family against the change and upheaval present in the public

domain. A focus on the proper sphere for men and women thus created a geography of patriarchal power, one that depended on pure and bounded city spaces.

If urbanization generated the need for separate male and female spheres, hybrid spaces complicated and threatened these boundaries. As Deutsch (1994) has argued, for example, working-class women and women of color responded to restrictions on women's movement and behavior by choosing factory work over more restrictive domestic service and by organizing communal housing opportunities for women. Examining the impact of settlement houses in Boston in the late 1800s, Deutsch comments on the threat posed by White middle-class women who did philanthropic work in these settlement houses. Although middle-class men were expected to cross into working-class neighborhoods, women were not, because "middle-class women were the repository of domestic and civic purity. . . . [T]heir contamination threatened the larger social, economic, and political structure" (p. 207).

Women who crossed boundaries or who failed to exemplify the Victorian ideal of womanliness threatened the prevailing gender ideology and came to exemplify the dangers of the city. As Wilson (1991, 6) has argued, "Woman is present in cities as temptress, as whore, as fallen woman, as lesbian, but also as virtuous womanhood in danger, as heroic womanhood who triumphs over temptation and tribulation." Concerns about factory workers and the immoral effects of women working outside the home, as well as racist representations of women of color and immigrant populations, also contributed to nineteenth-century images of dangerous women and corrupt cities. Central to these pictures of vice and corruption in large cities was the image of the "fallen" and dangerous city prostitute, who posed a threat to both morality and public health. In "the mid-Victorian decades, the threat of disease from unsanitary urban conditions . . . merges with the threat of disease and degeneration from exposure to infected female sexuality" (Nord 1995, 83). The image of the hardened streetwalker seducing innocent and virtuous men was paired with representations of the "innocent country girl" who comes to the city from the country and gets seduced or killed (Walkowitz 1980; Stansell 1987, ch. 9; Rosen 1987; Hobson 1987). As we will argue below, the double image of White women as both the repository for moral virtue and as dangerously susceptible to immoral activity provides part of the context for the deployment of the marriage metaphor.

As the example of contradictions between the hybrid spaces of cities and the attempts to regulate women's role and movements demonstrates, representations or "unconscious" imaginings of spaces relate directly to how those spaces are policed and regulated. As McDowell and Sharp (1997, 3) explain it, "Spatial relations act to socialize people into the acceptance of gendered

power relations—they reinforce power, privileges and oppression and literally keep women in their place." By gendering municipalities, the ideology of separate male and female spheres was made palpable in urban space. Following Nast's work (1998), however, we see that the gendering of spaces is inseparable from a matrix of representation and power that includes race and sexuality. As we will see in the case of the Jersey City–Van Vorst consolidation, the image of the moral, White, heterosexual woman is used *both* to build support locally for municipal consolidation *and* to articulate and reinforce notions of pure or ideal spaces based on racist and heterosexualized norms.

JERSEY CITY–VAN VORST: THE CONTEXT FOR CONSOLIDATION

The area that would become Jersey City was originally known to Europeans as Paulus Hook. It was described as a "series of sand hills, jutting out into the [Hudson] river" (Grundy 1976, 27) and was owned by the Van Vorst family since 1698. In 1804, several prominent Federalists from New York City purchased the Van Vorsts's land "for a perpetual annuity of six thousand Spanish milled dollars" that was "secured by an irredeemable mortgage" (McLean 1895, 22-24). The New Yorkers were granted a corporate charter as the Associates of the Jersey Company (known simply as "the Associates"), organized for the purposes of developing Paulus Hook as a city (Van Winkle 1924, 100-1, 238-39).

The growth and development of Jersey City were disappointingly slow. Out of 1,344 lots offered for sale by the Associates, 7 were sold at the first auction in New York City. More than 15 years after the first auction of lots, "The streets were ungraded, the sidewalks unpaved and the buildings few and inconsequential" (Van Winkle 1924, 80-81). Two primary factors impeded the early sale of property on Paulus Hook. First, the Associates stipulated that each lot owner had to pay an "annual rent" that would cover the mortgage payments due to the Van Vorsts. These "peculiar deeds . . . made purchasers feel that their lots might be taken from them by the default of the trustees under the mortgage" (McLean 1895, 27-28). Second, the City of New York claimed ownership to the Hudson River up to the low-water mark of the western shore, and thus challenged the right of the Associates to build docks or operate a ferry service beyond that point.

The Associates themselves also contributed to the slow growth of their city, because their concern for the exchange value of land embodied a contradiction between development and low expenditures. As McLean (1895) notes, "The Associates were anxious to see the city grow, because its growth

would add to the value of their shares, but they were also unwilling to allow any form of government which would confer power on anyone to levy assessments on their property" (p. 39). The Associates' influence in the state legislature combined with their refusal to cede control of their territory meant that new city charters enacted in 1820 and 1829 created largely powerless and ineffectual governing bodies (McLean 1895, 36-39).

By the 1830s, however, Jersey City was ready to redeem itself in the race for urban greatness. In 1830, the mortgage on Paulus Hook was transferred to the Associates, thus removing the possibility that residents' properties might revert back to the Van Vorsts through a default. In 1834, pursuant to a treaty agreement between the two states, New York abandoned its claim to ownership of the New Jersey side of the Hudson River. And in 1836, the New Jersey Rail Road and Transportation Company established rail service between Jersey City and New Brunswick, and the Morris Canal was extended through Jersey City (McLean 1895, 34-36; Van Winkle 1924, 104). Between 1829 and 1834, the population on Paulus Hook increased by approximately 40%, from 1,025 to 1,439—a rate of growth exceeding that of neighboring cities such as Newark (Dilworth 2004, 114). In 1835, the *Jersey City Gazette* reported that lots in the city were being sold for practically three times the amount they would have brought two years earlier ("Real Estate" 1835).

Economic growth in the fledgling city coincided with the growth of local government. The state legislature granted Jersey City a new charter in 1838 that expanded the power of the city government, increasing the number of aldermen elected from 7 to 10, creating the elective office of mayor, and granting the common council new and significant powers over the development of the city. As part of a broader expansionist effort, the state legislature later granted a new city charter in 1851, which, contingent on its approval by voters in both municipalities, would bring together Jersey City and neighboring Van Vorst Township into one municipality, an expanded Jersey City (McLean 1895, 40). At the end of March 1851, voters in both municipalities approved the new charter by overwhelming majorities—489 to 3 in Jersey City and 426 to 49 in Van Vorst—thus nearly doubling the city's population overnight from approximately 6,900 to 12,000 ("Official" 1851; "The New Charter Accepted" 1851).

'TIL DEATH DO US PART: MARRIAGE AND THE CONSOLIDATION DEBATES

Despite the large majorities in favor of the 1851 charter, there was initial opposition to the consolidation plan in both municipalities. Debates over the

charter took place in at least two Jersey City newspapers, the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Sentinel and Advertiser*, both of which were Whig but politically opposed over several local issues. The debate in both papers initially focused on the distribution of local power and the economic costs and benefits of consolidation. As resistance to the consolidation charter was articulated, however, proponents of consolidation began using metaphors of courtship and marriage to describe the union. We argue that these metaphors respond to the economic arguments against consolidation by evoking images of community, strength, productivity, and virtue. Instead of simply arguing that there *would* be economic benefit to both communities (a dubious claim—see Dilworth 2004, 24), supporters of consolidation created a new language that would both defeat a narrowly self-interested conception of the issues and relieve anxiety about the dangers of big cities.

The first issue caught up in the consolidation debate related to the power of the Associates and their resistance to the charter. Since founding the city, the Associates' corporate charter had provided them with quasi-governmental control over street improvements and, most importantly, the city's waterfront. The charter that would unite Jersey City and Van Vorst was in part designed to circumvent the Associates' dominion over the waterfront and, more generally, weaken their power in the city. In response, the Associates used their influence in the state legislature to have a proviso included in the charter stating explicitly that "the Common Council or corporate authorities of Jersey City" could not infringe on the rights of any private parties "as riparian owners, or any franchise or authority as shore owners" (Platt 1976, 146-51).

Because it involved the waterfront rights of the Associates, the 1851 city charter became an issue between the city's anti- and pro-Associates factions. The pro-Associates faction was represented by the *Sentinel and Advertiser*, and the anti-Associates faction was represented by the *Daily Telegraph*. The first people to oppose the charter were thus the Associates and their allies, who feared that it would disrupt their hold on power. Anti-Associates forces favored the charter despite the pro-Associates waterfront proviso, apparently because they believed that expanding the territory of the city would still weaken the power of the Associates. The *Daily Telegraph* argued that consolidation would be "a final death-blow to the domination of a corrupt dynasty within the limits of Hudson County" ("The New Charter" 1851a). The *Daily Telegraph* thus framed the issue as a moral struggle between corruption and virtue instead of debate about the economic costs of benefits. And as a moral question, consolidation shared an affinity to marriage. The *Daily Telegraph* made that connection clear:

> Our love towards each other is strong enough. We beseech the liberal citizens of our sister Township not to be so blind to their interests and our own as to allow any difficulties in the terms of the marriage settlement to interfere with the wholesome enjoyment of the married state. There are post-nuptial as well as ante-nuptial agreements. Let us join hands, finger the ring, and then we can fight the common foe with new vigor. . . . We are able to trace much of the opposition to the Hunker-Associate-Monopoly Party. ("The New Charter" 1851a)

In the above passage, the use of the marriage metaphor focuses the debate on kinship and community, and away from the "terms of the marriage settlement." Instead of arguing over economic benefits and details of the charter, the author is asking people to instead focus on the "wholesome" moral strength that will come from the communities working together against the "Hunker-Associate-Monopoly Party." Later in the same article, the author again appeals to community feeling by arguing that the charter will enable "us to prevent a future sacrifice of our old men and maidens, young men and children" ("The New Charter" 1851a). It is interesting here to note that the "us" the author is talking about would include all of the voting-age men in the two communities. Even though Van Vorst is presented as the "bride" in the metaphor, the role of the groom best fits the White, enfranchised men in the community who are to assume paternal and husbandly care over all other people—young and old, maidens and children. The metaphor of marriage and the model of the heterosexual family thus evoke the need for protection of the community. Only through the care and devotion of family and community bonds will the populations of Jersey City and Van Vorst be able to unite and throw off the "corrupt dynasty" of the "old Hunkers."

The second concern relating to consolidation centered on the perceived inequality of benefits from union that would be enjoyed by the two communities. In fact, Jersey City was typical of nineteenth-century cities in that there was a preference for geographic expansion that could not necessarily be justified on economic grounds (Dilworth 2004, 119). For instance, one letter to the editor of the *Sentinel and Advertiser* from "Jersey" suggested that Van Vorst would unfairly benefit from the merger because it could then spread the cost for local repairs over a larger population:

> I would call the attention of the Mayor of Harsimus [the old name of Van Vorst] to the condition of Rail Road avenue, and many of their streets. It is hardly fair to wait till they are married before they do anything towards repairing their streets. Come in with us even, we are in good repair here, and dont [sic] want to do your work for you. (*Sentinel and Advertiser*, March 10, 1851)

The following day, another letter to the editor of the *Sentinel and Advertiser* from "Harsimus" responded to "Jersey" by pointing to the repairs needed in Jersey City and asserting that Van Vorst had a "mind of her own":

> Your respondent of yesterday, signed "Jersey," had better kept his thunder back a little longer. Miss Harsimus is rather coy, and may put on airs, if such reflections are made previous to the tie of "the knot matrimonial," lest it mar the pleasures of the honey-moon, and destroy the happiness that ought to follow the union. And before she allows the embrace, begs leave to say, that she has a mind of her own, and will not consent that the Spouse wear more than one pair of breeches at a time—and requests you to sure your own sores, "which are many and corrupt," before you meddle with hers. (*Sentinel and Advertiser*, March 11, 1851)

The exchange between "Harsimus" and "Jersey" reflects some of the standard themes of both municipal consolidation and marriage. Van Vorst, as the smaller, suburban, "bridal" community, was to benefit from the services provided by Jersey City. The benefits of absorbing outlying land were less clear for the central city and have often been attributed to a competitive "booster spirit" (Jackson 1985, 144). Although Jersey City worried most about the expense of extending services to Van Vorst, Van Vorst was concerned with the dangers of being subsumed by the larger community.

In elaborating on the benefits of consolidation, a *Daily Telegraph* article demonstrates how references to marriage pushed the discussion beyond merely economic calculations. The author writes that

> it strikes us the advantages gained by *annexation*, or the union of the two Towns under one form of Government, are incalculable. It will add *respectability* to both places . . . let us, under one general title of Jersey City, number 12,000, or as will soon be the case, 20,000 inhabitants, and the stranger will find no difficulty in locating our place or residence, or if he does, the number of our inhabitants at once disarms him of criticism. ("The New Charter" 1851b)

It is the benefits of respectability and status that the marriage metaphor best responds to because marriage, like municipal consolidation, promises to establish a couple's place in society and raise them from youth and dependency to adulthood and independence. Through giving up "her name," Van Vorst will become part of a stronger and more *respectable* unit.

This theme of respectability was again raised the next day in the *Daily Telegraph*, where the author contends that the charter will

> bring to Jersey City and Van Vorst township a liberal and wholesome government—will increase their character and respectability—will improve

> the value of their property—will produce harmony and sentiment and feeling between citizens who are separated only by an imaginary line—will enable those, now deprived of the requisite authority, to establish a Police, to sewer their property, and generally to erect a liberal system of internal improvements whereby their health may be preserved and their comfort promoted. But it will do even more than this. It will bring together, into one family, individuals who were intended by nature for each other. ("The New Charter Once More" 1851)

In this second article, consolidation is linked to respectability, wholesome government, and strong moral character, concepts that are then also connected to health and comfort. Opponents to the charter are labeled as narrow-minded "Hunkers," old-fashioned and corrupt. In contrast, the bride and groom (like the changes presented by consolidation) are fresh, virtuous, productive, and forward thinking. By forming a heterosexual couple, the couple is also pursuing the most "natural" course of male-female relations—they will marry and then procreate. After the marriage, only time is needed before the population grows from 12,000 to 20,000—a natural result of "the pleasures of the honey-moon." By appealing to the paternalistic mode of power involved in a marriage, proponents of the charter have thus set up a different model of municipal power from that of the self-interested, corrupt, and old-fashioned "Hunker Associates." Instead, the model of heterosexual marriage created by the articles overflows with promises of fertility, respectability, good governance, and increased comfort—all benefits that supposedly flow into the community when men and women take up their proper roles.

IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH: GETTING OVER COLD FEET

In addition to expanding the terms of the debate beyond economic cost, gendering and heterosexualizing the municipalities also reflect the need to convince the population that urban growth and consolidation would increase, and not endanger, their moral purity, health, and safety. Given the rapid growth of the New York metropolitan region in the mid-nineteenth century and the outbreak of cholera in New York in 1849, it certainly seems likely that concerns discussed above about the unnatural, immoral, exploitative, and unhealthy nature of cities were salient in Jersey City and Van Vorst in 1851. References to "health and comfort" in the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Sentinel and Advertiser* point to the importance of reassuring anxious citizens. In a passage quoted earlier, Jersey City is touted as being both "healthy and convenient," and later consolidation is promised to "erect a liberal system of internal improvement whereby their [residents of Van Vorst] health may be

preserved and their comfort promoted" ("The New Charter Once More" 1851). If municipal boosters were promoting growth within an atmosphere of fear and distrust of big cities, their use of marriage metaphors can be seen as a strategic mobilization of heterosexual marriage to reassure and stabilize urban politics. Here, we argue, the affective and "unconscious" power of the linkage among stable gender roles, procreation, and "pure" White spaces functions as a reassurance to voters facing change. This reassurance responds to three main fears: the moral dangers (often seen in gendered, sexualized, and racialized terms) of large cities, the threat of disease, and the dangers created by women challenging or rejecting their "proper sphere."

By linking the natural and pastoral world of Van Vorst's bride with the industrious groom of Jersey City, proponents of consolidation were linking nature and city in harmony. Instead of the larger city being cut off from the morally superior natural world and thus in danger of producing artificial, effeminate, racialized, or corrupt individuals, nature is tied to the urban space through images of women and the *natural* process of heterosexual reproduction. A passage describing Van Vorst (the bride) in the *Daily Telegraph* illustrates the connections that were made between the city and the moral virtues of the country:

> On the one side of the way lives a bachelor. . . . Now it so happens, that in the immediate vicinity of his mansion there dwells a maiden of comely countenance and fair proportions. . . . Her lands are valuable, and with proper attention will yield an abundant harvest. . . . The wedding feast is soon over, and the newly married couple have ever since enjoyed the wholesome fruits of wedlock; and now instead of briers and thistles, the ample grounds of the quondam maiden are all covered with verdure and beauty, Wealth has followed in the train of combination and enterprise, industry and exertion, and what was once a barren waste is now a garden.
>
> Let us give a word of advice to the old bachelor Jersey City and the beautiful young lady Van Vorst. It is this—"Go ye and do likewise." ("The New Charter Once More" 1851)

In this passage, many of the anxieties attendant with the growth of cities are resolved through the image of naturally complementary qualities. In the joining of the bride and the groom, nature and industry are joined in the harmony of procreation. The productivity and the industry of the groom are needed to cultivate the once-wasted fields, and the "city man," who cannot enjoy the luxuries of modern life by himself, is linked to both "manly vigor" *and* a cultivated "city" mind. In this way, the separation between the Jeffersonian vision of virtuous rural life and a corrupted city life is resolved when the industry of the city is brought into the country. The end of the passage

responds directly to this issue and reassures the reader that after the union, "Wealth has followed in the train of combination and enterprise, industry and exertion, and what was once a barren waste is now a garden." The groom needs the influence of the youthful and modest maiden to make his home happy, and in return he will provide the industry and regulation that will render nature profitable.

Although responding to and overcoming concerns about the hybrid threats found in large cities, the metaphor of marriage also links good health and virtue to the creation of the new city. In an article written after the charter was approved, the *Sentinel and Advertiser* reports that the "blushing bride" (Van Vorst) looks "more beautiful than ever" and that "her husband is a fine specimen of all that is good and noble" ("The New Charter Accepted" 1851). In the passage above, the groom is similarly portrayed as judicious, well regulated, honorable, and neat. The maiden is lovely, modest, kind, and virginal. Together, they are the perfect picture of robust Christian virtue and have none of the characteristics or diseases of corrupted city dwellers—thus responding to fears of the unhealthy environment created by cities.

The description of the bride and groom above also points to the ways that, as Nast suggests, gender, heterosexuality, and Whiteness are interlinked in the attempt to create "pure" spaces. Throughout the articles, the authors make reference to the "fair" and "comely" countenance of the bride, references that, in the context of nineteenth-century America, evoke Whiteness. As Bonnett and Nayak (2003, 305) argue, similar references to rosy cheeks and healthy complexions in Victorian British writing combined to create a nostalgic image of rural Whiteness that created a "direct contrast between the valued purity of the rural past and the racially degraded urban present." Combined with representations of manly "exertion" and feminine passivity (her fields need *proper* attention), the married couple becomes an idealized map for the consolidation and growth of new cities: cities that contain White, heterosexual men and women who understand their proper roles. Within the boundaries of this "wholesome" space, away from the racial, sexual, and spatial mixings of existing cities, people can expect wealth, abundance, and beauty—capitalist success coming close on the heels of expelling any perverse or disruptive "city" influences.

If we follow the insights of geographers who connect representations of spaces with conscious or unconscious societal norms and systems of regulation/oppression, it also seems that references to marriage in these consolidation debates could correspond with concerns that the growing women's movement (especially prominent in the northeastern United States) was challenging the separation of private and public spheres along gendered lines. The Jersey City–Van Vorst consolidation followed only three years after the

famous woman's rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York, and one year after similar meetings in Salem, Ohio, and Worcester, Massachusetts. By the 1850s, the New Jersey legislature was also receiving petitions in favor of women's suffrage.[4] In response, the use of the marriage metaphor entrenches and rearticulates a model of womanhood that is strictly constrained and based in the domestic sphere.

Representations of marriage in the Jersey City–Van Vorst consolidation debates further reinforce existing gender roles by portraying heterosexual marriage as absolutely essential for women's happiness and financial security. In a passage describing the situation of Jersey City (bachelor) and Van Vorst (maiden), an author from the *Daily Telegraph* implies that independent women are incapable of managing their affairs:

> She looks from her window upon a spacious farm; but alas! The greater part of it has run to waste. She is possessed of a progressive mind, and she sighs to see her extensive fields cultivated and glowing with the golden harvests, ready for the sickle. But from year to year her hopes and wishes are frustrated, and with all her broad acres she finds a gradually increasing debt crushing all her energies. As for servants, she has few or none; and she is compelled to tax all her ingenuity to sustain herself from year to year. She has often gazed upon the improvements across the way; and, youthful and modest though she be, she is compelled to confess, while in her secret chamber, that the manly vigor and cultivated mind of that self-same bachelor have not left her heart unimpressed. ("The New Charter Once More" 1851)

A woman without a husband is not only wasting her reproductive capacity (her fields are uncultivated, and her hopes are frustrated), but she is also forced to work without servants and to sustain crushing debt. In this passage, women are both warned that without a husband they will suffer financial ruin and encouraged to see marriage and domesticity as the brightest path to their comfort and happiness. Marriage also ensures that manly vigor will be contained within a heterosexual frame: no city will have problems with wandering sickles with all of those fields needing cultivation.

Using the metaphor of marriage to describe municipal consolidation thus not only responds to anxieties local voters might have had about urban consolidation but also functions to discipline and regulate difference. Portrayed as a White heterosexual couple, the metaphor defines and codes the ideal form for the two communities: White heterosexual citizens governed by patriarchal and racist norms and laws. Seen in this light, these articles exist within and contribute to a broader matrix of representation and power governing both the motives and processes driving municipal consolidation.

BROOKLYN–NEW YORK: A NEW COUPLE

As was previously noted, the Brooklyn–New York consolidation at first glance appears to have little in common with Jersey City–Van Vorst except for a notable use of the language of marriage by the local press. Closer inspection, however, reveals several striking similarities that further elaborate the coding of municipal space as gendered and heterosexed. Brooklyn was in some respects an amalgamation of Jersey City and Van Vorst. Like Van Vorst, Brooklyn was in large part a suburb of a larger neighboring city to which it would ultimately be annexed. Like Jersey City, however, Brooklyn also had status as a major city in its own right. Brooklyn had pursued expansionist policies during the 1850s, establishing itself as the third-largest city in the United States (Syrett 1944, 12).[5] Despite Brooklyn's estimable size, however, its role as a commuter suburb clearly indicated its subsidiary role to New York City.

In conjunction with their suburban status, Brooklynites claimed higher virtue and moral standing than New Yorkers. Syrett (1944, 19-20) has noted, for instance, that

> the conviction that the life of the average New Yorker was essentially immoral, coupled with the New Yorker's insistence that Brooklyn was merely an ambitious, but none the less ludicrous, country cousin meant that the two cities would at least lead independent social existences.

As the vehemently anticonsolidationist *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* put the case for Brooklyn,

> Here the rich and the poor meet together and the Lord is the maker of them all. New York is the city of palaces and of unimproved tenements. There the rich and the poor keep separate, growling at one another, and the devil is to pay. . . . [I]n New York the condition of earnest and happy living is dependent upon the exploitation of Brooklyn qualities. ("Greater New York Is Brooklyn" 1894)

Certainly, the image of Brooklyn as New York's virtuous, more bucolic partner is similar to the traits attributed to Van Vorst in 1851. Like Van Vorst, Brooklyn's virtue also meant that it was associated with femininity. As one article in the *New York Herald* in February 1894 noted, "It has often been claimed that Brooklyn is, after all, essentially a woman's town" ("Political Equality" 1894).

Despite these similarities, the Brooklyn–New York union introduced new themes into the gendered language of municipal consolidation. As the previ-

ous quote from the *Daily Eagle* suggests, the marriage of Brooklyn and New York City was discussed explicitly in terms of domination and exploitation. In March 1894, approximately nine months before residents in both New York and Brooklyn were to vote on Greater New York, "Certain of the New-York papers" were regaling readers with cartoons of "a marriage between New York and Brooklyn," to which one Brooklyn resident (in a March 7 letter to the editor of the *Daily Eagle*) responded that

> they are a little premature. The marriage has not taken place. The parties are not so much as engaged. . . . Miss Brooklyn has not expressed any opinion on the subject as yet. Under the terms of the consolidation bill just recently passed she will most likely decline the honor offered. If the newspapers will pause to remember Mr. Knickerbocker used all his influence to have the bill for the union passed through the legislature in a way that would bind him in no . . definite sense to the support of Miss Brooklyn they will see that cartooning the subject as a wedding is a mistake. They should cartoon it as a conquest, or as the lion and the lamb lying down together; the lamb inside the lion. (Walsh 1894, 2)

This passage is interesting not only because it points to concerns over Brooklyn being exploited by New York (Mr. Knickerbocker) but also because it seeks to separate pure domination (conquest) from marriage. Although the author of the letter makes use of the marriage metaphor, he explicitly rejects it as applying properly in the case of the Brooklyn–New York consolidation. Instead, as in the case of Jersey City–Van Vorst, it is the dominating, "male" city paper that uses the marriage metaphor to reinforce its metropolitan status.

At the same time as the author discounts the marriage metaphor, however, he also suggests its appropriateness by indicating that marriage entails the financial support of the otherwise helpless wife. By 1894, Brooklyn was in fact in a dire financial state. Even sympathetic authors were compelled to note as early as 1870 that "Brooklyn has not been made beautiful without heavy expense to her citizens, as . . . seen by . . . her present indebtedness, the interest upon which adds largely to the burden of taxes" (*City of Brooklyn* 1871, 26). According to local state senator William H. Reynolds, Brooklyn was by 1894 "the highest taxed city in the Union" ("Senator Reynolds on Consolidation" 1894, 9).

The problem of high debt and taxes was a central issue in the consolidation referendum in Brooklyn. Advocates for Greater New York argued that consolidation would equalize taxes between New York and Brooklyn, thus lowering Brooklyn's tax rate. Senator Reynolds's proposed amendment to the Greater New York bill, providing for "equal and uniform taxation throughout the new municipality," had, however, been rejected in the Legislature—thus

the claim that Mr. Knickerbocker had contrived to marry Miss Brooklyn without being bound to her support. Indeed, opponents of consolidation in Brooklyn argued further that because of Manhattan's larger population, officials representing the old New York City would have majority control over Greater New York and would have little interest in equalizing tax rates for the benefit of Brooklynites ("Met with Slight Favor" 1894; see also "The Greater New York" 1894; "Consolidation or Not?" 1894).

Although the *New York Times* agreed that equal taxation rates would come with consolidation, it used the opportunity to note Brooklyn's inability to manage "her" own affairs:

> It is unlikely that New York, which has conferred the boon of equal taxation on such outlying principalities and powers as she has heretofore annexed to herself, will at her time of life change her practice and afflict annexed Brooklyn with the inequality of rates her improvidence deserves. (*New York Times*, March 15, 1894, 4)

In the same way that the *Daily Telegraph* had seduced the male voters of Jersey City with images of Van Vorst as a helpless maiden who needed to be rescued from a crushing debt, so did the *New York Times* evoke images of New York City as the savior of the profligate Miss Brooklyn.

The image of Brooklyn as an unmarried woman unable to manage her own affairs is qualified by the fact that New York City is also characterized as a woman in the *New York Times* article. In fact, even in newspaper articles that made explicit use of the marriage metaphor to explain the consolidation of Brooklyn and New York, both cities are simultaneously referred to as women. For instance, the author of the previously quoted letter to the editor of the *Daily Eagle*, after making explicit use of Mr. Knickerbocker and Miss Brooklyn noted, "It is of vast importance to New York city that *she* remain the foremost center of population in the United States. *She* needs the addition of Brooklyn in order to continue to hold that position" (Walsh 1894, italics added). Expansionist policies of municipal consolidation that seemed so appropriate to the male central city in the case of Jersey City–Van Vorst are in the case of Brooklyn–New York attributed to men and women alike. Here, the traditional use of the pronoun *she* to describe places or things (boats, for example) came into contact with the explicit gendering of the marriage metaphor.

The blurred gender identifications of New York City and Brooklyn might reflect a more general blurring of the distinction between separate male and female spheres by the late nineteenth century. The image of New York as a female city engaged in the traditionally male activity of annexing outlying

territory could reflect women's increasing success in expanding their sphere of activities into what had previously been considered exclusively male domains. If Brooklyn was the "woman's town" that the *New York Herald* claimed it to be, it was at least in part because Brooklyn women were at the vanguard of forcefully demanding what had previously been considered exclusively male rights, such as voting. It was, in fact, just at the time of the 1894 referendum on Greater New York that the women's suffrage movement was gaining a critical mass in Brooklyn. Although there had been a Brooklyn Woman's Suffrage Association—"a band of nearly one hundred, with some of the most notable names of the city on its rolls"—since 1868, it was not until the 1890s that the woman's suffrage movement began "sweeping in a flood tide over the whole of New York State," with Brooklyn women apparently taking the lead ("Political Equality" 1894).

In fact, one letter to the editor of the *Daily Eagle* made a direct connection between New York City's exploitation of Brooklyn and the exploitation of women who paid taxes yet were denied the right to vote:

> The immense army of women who own property and pay taxes here have not been allowed an expression of their views. Fewer than 40% of the voters and apparently a still lower proportion of the combined voters and women owning property have approved the scheme which is to fatten the new litter of Tammany cubs. (Sears 1894, 2)

Undoubtedly, many Brooklynites believed that, had women been allowed to vote, they would have defeated the consolidation referendum. Without the women's vote, Greater New York received majority support in Brooklyn by a margin of 277 out of 129,211 votes, or fewer than 1%. It was the affluent wards of Brooklyn that showed the most resistance to Greater New York and that also had the greatest support for women's suffrage.[6] It thus seems reasonable to assume that, had women been allowed to vote, they would have provided the additional support needed to show a majority against consolidation. Thus, the image of Miss Brooklyn (as Mrs. Knickerbocker) nourishing a brood of "Tammany cubs"—the undesired, immoral outcome of a forced marriage—pointed out both the exploitation of Brooklyn by New York and the exploitation of women by men.

The image of Miss Brooklyn with her suckling Tammany cubs also indicates that the gendered language of municipal consolidation was used to reinforce the role of women as the morally upright caretakers of home and family. It is Miss Brooklyn's maternal qualities that are being exploited by New York. The image of the Brooklyn–New York consolidation as a marriage thus

sought to attribute virtue to the traditional role of women. As many feminist historians have noted, although women increasingly expanded their public activities throughout the nineteenth century, they often did so by justifying their public roles in terms of their traditional, home-based activities. Instead of directly challenging the male prerogative to public activities, the first wave of the women's movement was "bringing domesticity outward" (Nicholson 1986, 52-54; see also Spain 2001, ch. 3). In a speech delivered to the Brooklyn Ladies' Health Protective Association in April 1894, for example, "Mrs. Mary E. Mumford of Philadelphia" argued for a role for women in city government by arguing that they had special qualities not possessed by men:

> What is a city but a large house in which we all live together? Good city government is good housekeeping. . . . The Street-Cleaning Department ought to have an ally in every housekeeper. Every district ought to have a woman Supervisor, who should see that the streets are not littered with paper and fruit skins. I am well aware that this is the function of policemen, but as they are men they have no special fitness for the work. ("Women in Municipal Affairs" 1894)

The argument that women had a role in public life because of their "special fitness" for housekeeping existed in clear tension with feminist arguments for gender equality and women's rationality. Here again, the complex network of images and identities evoked by the marriage metaphor upholds a primarily domestic and *social* role for women—just as Brooklyn needs the financial support of a good husband, cities need good "housekeepers" to oversee issues like litter or the proper education of the poor. The image of White middle-class women "cleaning up" some of the problems of big cities and encouraging moral and physical hygiene among the poor, working, and immigrant populations does not go far toward promoting a vision of either liberal gender equality or radical transformation. Instead, it points to the strategically and politically difficult context in which women tried to assert their rights—often mobilizing racist or classist arguments to justify rights for White middle-class women.

Because of the later date in the Brooklyn–New York consolidation, and because the women's movement was especially prominent in Brooklyn, it comes as little surprise that the gendered language surrounding municipal consolidation would be more ambiguous than when used in the Jersey City–Van Vorst example. In the later case, gendered language highlighted the theme of municipal exploitation rather than being used simply to promote consolidation. Whereas the marriage between Van Vorst and Jersey City seemed to be much more of a marketing strategy that reflected fears about

the growth of cities, the Brooklyn example points to the way in which women's groups were successfully identifying issues of unfair use of power and representation.

UNTYING THE KNOT MATRIMONIAL

The discussion of how the marriage metaphor maps and regulates urban space in nineteenth-century America exposes what Kay Anderson (1994, 85) calls the "interlocking semiotic *and* material processes" that are "embedded within the making of localities." Importantly, this example highlights the ways in which images of heterosexual marriage and reproduction come to represent the material processes of urban growth and consolidation more generally, thus making these developments both safer and more exclusionary. Through this example, we see not only the work needed to prop up and purify identities and categories such as *White*, *male*, and *heterosexual*, but also the ways in which these identities get mapped onto the processes of municipal consolidation themselves.

Denaturalizing and historicizing the connections between "good" spaces and Whiteness/masculinity/heterosexuality are crucial because of the chain of unrecognized sexist, racist, and heterosexist associations that is often created when urban spaces are imagined and reimagined. The dynamics at work in representing these two municipal "unions" as married couples provide the historical context for many of the same assumptions and associations at work in urban imaginaries today. Women, for example, are still linked to the suburban spaces of home and domesticity, and terrorized into staying out of urban cores. Saegert (1980, S97) explains, for instance, that "urban life and men tend to be thought of as more aggressive, assertive, definers of important world events, intellectual, powerful, active, and sometimes dangerous. Women and suburbs share domesticity, repose, closeness to nature, lack of seriousness, mindlessness, and safety." Similarly, racialized spaces are automatically assumed to be dangerous, and queer sexuality is portrayed as an urban threat to the procreative and moral economy of a community, as suggested most recently by the case of same-sex marriages in San Francisco mentioned earlier in this article.

If the marriage metaphors discussed in this article reveal a historical trajectory that leads us to contemporary gendered, sexualized, and racialized urban spaces, they might also tell us something about contemporary municipal consolidations. Much has changed with regard to consolidations throughout the past century: they occur more often in the South than in the Northeast and Midwest, they now tend to involve smaller urban areas, and all the evi-

dence suggests that they are not debated with reference to marriage. Yet if much has changed, much about municipal consolidation remains the same. Just as in the nineteenth century, the economic benefits of consolidation are questionable. As Lyons and Scheb (1998, 95) point out, "Consolidation typically involves fairly radical change in the local political system; the potential for unexpected consequences is thus quite high. The perceived radicalism of change understandably frightens away many voters." And as the destabilizing threat of urbanization in the nineteenth century was at least in part warded off by invoking such traditional bastions as the matrimonial state, we might imagine that tradition is similarly invoked against the radical threat of consolidation today. Indeed, "The motivations of metro [consolidation] supporters have been characterized as *noblesse oblige*, 'a feeling of responsibility for the well-being of the community rather than the prospect of personal gain'" (Lyons and Scheb 1998, 93).

If we read the gendered and sexualized nature of nineteenth-century municipal consolidation as a formative stage in the development of a collective defense mechanism that seeks to inoculate consolidation from urbanization through tradition, we might also understand the aforementioned noblesse oblige—reflected as well in the writings of such regionalist scholars as Rusk (2001, 1995) and Orfield (2002, 1997) —as the invocation of traditional upper- and upper-middle-class values against the threat of urbanization. The nature of this threat, and thus the underlying purpose of the consolidationist noblesse oblige, is suggested by the debate over same-sex marriage that casts big cities in the role of bastions of sexual deviance attempting to dismantle a sacred institution. In short, taking a historical, developmental perspective, as our analysis invites us to do, suggests the sexist and heterosexist norms that may be embedded in the noblesse oblige of contemporary municipal consolidation. At the very least, we have suggested a way of looking at contemporary municipal boundary changes through a normative lens that takes us beyond strictly economic notions of "self-interest" reflected in explanations that rely on cost-benefit, growth machines, and entrepreneurial local officials (e.g., Feiock and Carr 2001; Fleischmann 1986).

NOTES

1. Although the terms were used interchangeably in the nineteenth century, contemporary scholars distinguish between *consolidation* (the merger of two previously incorporated municipalities, or of a city and a county) and *annexation* (the expansion of municipal boundaries to include previously unincorporated land) (Feiock and Carr 2001, 384; Jackson 1985). To make our discussion relevant to contemporary scholarship, we limit our discussion to consolidation,

which is clearly the best definition of the boundary changes that occurred in both of our case studies.

2. A number of authors have, of course, examined municipal consolidation, but never in terms of gender. The literature on nineteenth-century annexation includes Teaford (1979, chs. 1-2), Jackson (1985, ch. 8), and Keating (1988, ch. 6). For discussions of nineteenth-century municipal annexations that deal specifically with the New York metropolitan region, see Hammack (1982, ch. 7), Burrows and Wallace (1999, ch. 69), and Dilworth (2004). The literature on contemporary municipal annexations includes Carr and Feiock (2001), Feiock and Carr (2001), Lyons and Scheb (1998), and Fleischmann (1986).

Similarly, although there have been a number of books and several special journal editions devoted to the relationship between gender and urbanism, none of them has dealt with municipal annexations. See, for instance, two recent edited volumes: Darke et al. (2000) and Miranne and Young (2000). See also the special edition of *Journal of Urban History* (1997); the special edition of *Differences* (1993); the special collection of articles on "Women, the City, and the Importance of Place" in *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* (1992); and the special edition of *Signs* on "Women and the American City" (1980).

3. The population of Brooklyn in 1890 was 806,343, and the population of New York in 1900, after the 1898 consolidation, was 3,437,202 (U.S. Census 1913, Table 57).

4. In 1854, a committee of the New Jersey House of Assembly reported on a "women's rights" petition that it had received, and recommended that "women be denied the vote." In 1857, a petition "on behalf of female suffrage" was filed with the Assembly (Steiner-Scott and Wagle 1978, 114).

5. After Chicago increased its population by annexing outlying territory in 1889, Brooklyn dropped to being the fourth-largest city in the country (U.S. Census Office 1896, 34-37).

6. The *New York Herald* noted that the women's movement in Brooklyn had its greatest strength on the "Heights" at the Eastern edge of the city, along the East River ("Political Equality" 1894). It was also the Eastern wards of Brooklyn that voted strongest against Greater New York (Hammack 1982, 206).

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