

*Social Justice in the Age of Identity Politics:
Redistribution, Recognition,
and Participation*

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In today's world, claims for social justice seem increasingly to divide into two types. First, and most familiar, are redistributive claims, which seek a more just distribution of resources and goods. Examples include claims for redistribution from the North to the South, from the rich to the poor, and from owners to workers. To be sure, the recent resurgence of free-market thinking has put proponents of redistribution on the defensive. Nevertheless, egalitarian redistributive claims have supplied the paradigm case for most theorizing about social justice for the past 150 years.

Today, however, we increasingly encounter a second type of social-justice claim in the "politics of recognition." Here the goal, in its most plausible form, is a difference-friendly world, where assimilation to majority or dominant cultural norms is no longer the price of equal respect. Examples include claims for the recognition of the distinctive perspectives of ethnic, "racial," and sexual minorities, as well as of gender difference. This type of claim has recently attracted the interest of political philosophers, moreover, some of whom are seeking to develop a new paradigm of justice that puts recognition at its center.

In general, then, we are confronted with a new constellation. The discourse of social justice, once centered on distribution, is

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now increasingly divided between claims for redistribution, on the one hand, and claims for recognition, on the other. Increasingly, too, recognition claims tend to predominate. The demise of communism, the surge of free-market ideology, the rise of “identity politics” in both its fundamentalist and progressive forms — all these developments have conspired to decenter, if not to extinguish, claims for egalitarian redistribution.

In this new constellation, the two kinds of justice claims are typically dissociated from one another — both practically and intellectually. Within social movements such as feminism, for example, activist tendencies that look to redistribution as the remedy for male domination are increasingly dissociated from tendencies that look instead to the recognition of gender difference. And the same is true of their counterparts in the U.S. academy, where feminist social theorizing and feminist cultural theorizing maintain an uneasy arms-length coexistence. The feminist case exemplifies a more general tendency in the United States (and elsewhere) to decouple the cultural politics of difference from the social politics of equality.

In some cases, moreover, the dissociation has become a polarization. Some proponents of redistribution reject the politics of recognition outright; citing the worldwide increase in inequality recently documented by the United Nations,¹ they see claims for the recognition of difference as “false consciousness,” a hindrance to the pursuit of social justice. Conversely, some proponents of recognition applaud the relative eclipse of the politics of redistribution; citing the failure of difference-blind economic egalitarianism to assure justice for minorities and women, they see distributive politics as part and parcel of an outmoded materialism that can neither articulate nor challenge key experiences of injustice. In such cases, we are effectively presented with what is con-

¹ United Nations Development Program, *Human Development Report 1996* (Oxford University Press, 1996). Highlights of the findings are reported by Barbara Crossette, “UN Survey Finds World Rich-Poor Gap Widening,” *New York Times*, July 15, 1996, p. A4.

structured as an either/or choice: redistribution or recognition? class politics or identity politics? multiculturalism or social equality?

These, I maintain, are false antitheses. It is my general thesis that justice today requires *both* redistribution *and* recognition, as neither alone is sufficient. As soon as one embraces this thesis, however, the question of how to combine them becomes paramount. I shall argue that the emancipatory aspects of the two problematics should be integrated in a single, comprehensive framework. Theoretically, the task is to devise a “bivalent” conception of justice that can accommodate both defensible claims for social equality and defensible claims for the recognition of difference. Practically, the task is to devise a programmatic political orientation that integrates the best of the politics of redistribution with the best of the politics of recognition.

My discussion divides into three parts. In part I, I argue that neither redistribution alone nor recognition alone can suffice to remedy injustice today, hence that they need to be pursued in tandem. In part II, I consider some conceptual questions that arise when we contemplate integrating redistribution and recognition in a single comprehensive account of social justice. In part III, finally, I address some practical problems that arise when we seek to apply such an integrated perspective to real-world cases of social injustice.

I. REDISTRIBUTION OR RECOGNITION? A CRITIQUE OF JUSTICE TRUNCATED

I begin with a terminological point. The politics of redistribution, as I shall understand it here, encompasses not only class-centered orientations, such as New Deal liberalism, social democracy, and socialism,² but also those forms of feminism and anti-

² I do not include now defunct Eastern bloc communism, because it failed to combine its social egalitarian goals with commitments to extensive civil liberties and political rights. Throughout this lecture I assume (but do not argue) that no program for achieving social and/or cultural justice that fails to ensure such liberties and rights is defensible.

racism that look to socioeconomic transformation or reform as the remedy for gender and racial-ethnic injustice. Thus, it is broader than class politics in the conventional sense. The politics of recognition, likewise, encompasses not only movements aiming to re-value unjustly devalued identities, such as cultural feminism, black cultural nationalism, and gay identity politics,³ but also deconstructive tendencies, such as queer politics, critical “race” politics, and deconstructive feminism, which reject the “essentialism” of traditional identity politics. Thus, it is broader than identity politics in the conventional sense.

With these definitions, I mean to contest one widespread misunderstanding of these matters. It is often assumed that the politics of redistribution is exclusively concerned with injustices of class, whereas the politics of recognition, reductively equated with “identity politics,” is exclusively concerned with injustices of gender, sexuality, and “race.” This view is erroneous and misleading. It treats recognition-oriented currents within the feminist, anti-heterosexist, and antiracist movements as the whole story, rendering invisible alternative currents dedicated to righting gender-specific, “race”-specific, and sex-specific forms of economic injustice that traditional class movements ignored. The definitions proposed here, in contrast, take account of such currents by treating redistribution and recognition as *dimensions of justice that can cut across all social movements*.

ANATOMY OF A FALSE ANTITHESIS

Thus understood, the politics of redistribution and the politics of recognition can be contrasted in four key respects. First, the two orientations assume different conceptions of injustice. The politics of redistribution focuses on injustices it defines as socioeconomic and presumes to be rooted in the economic structure of society.

³ I do not include here movements for national recognition, as they raise issues beyond the scope of my discussion.

Examples include exploitation (having the fruits of one's labor appropriated for the benefit of others) ; economic marginalization (being confined to undesirable or poorly paid work or being denied access to income-generating labor altogether) ; and deprivation (being denied an adequate material standard of living). The politics of recognition, in contrast, targets injustices it understands as cultural, which it presumes to be rooted in social patterns of representation, interpretation, and communication. Examples include cultural domination (being subjected to patterns of interpretation and communication that are associated with another culture and are alien and/or hostile to one's own) ; nonrecognition (being rendered invisible via the authoritative representational, communicative, and interpretative practices of one's culture) ; and disrespect (being routinely maligned or disparaged in stereotypic public cultural representations and/or in everyday life interactions).

Second, the two orientations propose different sorts of remedies for injustice. For the politics of redistribution, the remedy for injustice is economic restructuring of some sort. This might involve redistributing income, reorganizing the division of labor, democratizing the procedures by which investment decisions are made, or transforming other basic economic structures. Although these various remedies differ importantly from one another, I mean to refer to the whole group of them by the generic term "redistribution."⁴ For the politics of recognition, in contrast, the remedy for injustice is cultural or symbolic change. This could involve upwardly revaluing disrespected identities and the cultural products of maligned groups. It could also involve recognizing and positively valorizing cultural diversity. More radically still, it could involve the wholesale transformation of societal patterns of representation, interpretation, and communication in ways that would change everybody's sense of identity. Although these remedies,

⁴ In fact, these remedies stand in some tension with one another, a problem I explore in a subsequent section of the present lecture.

too, differ importantly from one another, I refer once again to the whole group of them by the generic term “recognition.”⁵

Third, the two orientations assume different conceptions of the collectivities who suffer injustice. For the politics of redistribution, the collective subjects of injustice are classes or classlike collectivities, which are defined economically by a distinctive relation to the market or the means of production.⁶ The classic case in the Marxian paradigm is the exploited working class, whose members must sell their labor power in order to receive the means of subsistence.⁷ But the conception can cover other cases as well. Also included are racialized groups that can be economically defined: for example, marginalized members of a racialized underclass, who are largely excluded from regular waged work, deemed “superfluous” and unworthy of exploitation. When the notion of the economy is broadened to encompass unwaged labor, moreover, gendered groups belong here as well; thus women constitute another collective subject of economic injustice, as the gender burdened with the lion’s share of unwaged carework and consequently disadvantaged in employment and disempowered in relations with men. Also included, finally, are the complexly defined groupings that result when we theorize the political economy in terms of the intersection of class, “race,” and gender.

For the politics of recognition, in contrast, the victims of injustice are more like Weberian status groups than Marxian (or Weberian) classes. Defined not by the relations of production, but

⁵ Once again, these remedies stand in some tension with one another. It is one thing to accord recognition to existing identities that are currently undervalued; it is another to transform symbolic structures and thereby alter people’s identities. I explore the tensions among these remedies in a subsequent section.

⁶ This formulation skirts the issue of the proper theoretical definition of class. It leaves open whether class is to be understood in the traditional Marxian sense of relation to the means of production or in the Weberian sense of relation to the market. In what follows, however, I assume the Marxian definition for the purpose of simplifying the argument.

⁷ For the Marxian view of class, see, for example, Karl Marx, “Wage Labor and Capital,” in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert C. Tucker (Norton, 1978).

rather by the relations of recognition, they are distinguished by the lesser esteem, honor, and prestige they enjoy relative to other groups in society. The classic case in the Weberian paradigm is the low-status ethnic group, whom dominant cultural patterns of interpretation and valuation mark as different and less worthy, to the detriment of group members' social standing and their chances of winning social esteem.⁸ But the conception can cover other cases as well. In today's politics of recognition, it has been extended to gays and lesbians, whose sexuality is interpreted as deviant and devalued in the dominant culture; to racialized groups, who are marked as different and lesser; and to women, who are trivialized, sexually objectified, and disrespected in myriad ways. It is also being extended, finally, to encompass the complexly defined groupings that result when we theorize the relations of recognition in terms of "race," gender, and sexuality simultaneously as intersecting cultural codes. From this perspective, as opposed to the previous one, "race" and gender are not economically defined classes, but culturally defined statuses.

It follows, and this is the fourth point, that the two political orientations assume different understandings of group differences. The politics of redistribution treats such differences as unjust differentials. Far from being intrinsic properties of groups, they are the socially constructed results of an unjust political economy. The point of this politics, accordingly, is to abolish, not to recognize, difference. The politics of recognition, in contrast, treats differences in either of two ways. In one version, group differences are pre-existing, benign cultural variations that an unjust interpretive schema has maliciously transformed into a value hierarchy. In another version, group differences do not preexist their hierarchical transvaluation but are created contemporaneously with it through a discursive framework of binary oppositions. Depending on the

⁸ For the Weberian definition of class, see Max Weber, "Class, Status, Party," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. Hans H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (Oxford University Press, 1958).

version in question, the politics of recognition assumes either of two aims: in the first case, it seeks to celebrate, not eliminate, group differences; in the second case, it aims to deconstruct the very terms in which such differences are currently elaborated.

Increasingly, as I noted at the outset, the politics of redistribution and the politics of recognition are posed as mutually exclusive alternatives. Proponents of the former, such as Todd Gitlin and Richard Rorty, insist that identity politics is a counterproductive diversion from the real economic issues, one that balkanizes groups and rejects universalist moral norms.⁹ They claim, in effect, that “it’s the economy, stupid.” Conversely, proponents of the politics of recognition, such as Charles Taylor, insist that a difference-blind politics of redistribution can reinforce injustice by falsely universalizing dominant group norms, requiring subordinate groups to assimilate to them, and misrecognizing the latter’s distinctiveness.” They claim, in effect, that “it’s the culture, stupid.”

These charges and countercharges seem to present us with an either/or choice between two mutually exclusive alternatives. Which of these two politics should one embrace? A politics of redistribution that seeks to redress economic injustices by abolishing class (and classlike) differential? Or a politics of recognition that seeks to redress cultural injustices precisely by celebrating cultural variations or deconstructing binary oppositions?

This, I argue next, is a false antithesis.

EXPLOITED CLASSES, DESPISED SEXUALITIES, AND BIVALENT COLLECTIVITIES

Imagine a conceptual spectrum of different kinds of social collectivities. At one extreme are modes of collectivity that fit the

⁹ Todd Gitlin, *The Twilight of Common Dreams: Why America Is Wracked by Culture Wars* (Metropolitan Books, 1995); Richard Rorty, “The Eclipse of the Reformist Left” and “A Cultural Left,” lectures II and III of his “American National Pride: Whitman and Dewey” (unpublished typescript).

¹⁰ Charles Taylor, “The Politics of Recognition,” in his *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed. Amy Gutmann (Princeton University Press, 1994).

politics of redistribution. At the other extreme are modes of collectivity that fit the politics of recognition. In between are cases that prove difficult because they fit both political paradigms simultaneously.”

Consider, first, the redistribution end of the spectrum. At this end let us posit an ideal-typical mode of collectivity whose existence is rooted wholly in the political economy. It will be differentiated as a collectivity, in other words, by virtue of the economic structure, as opposed to the status order, of society. Thus, any structural injustices its members suffer will be traceable ultimately to the political economy. The core of the injustice, as well as its root, will be maldistribution, while any attendant cultural injustices will derive ultimately from that root. At bottom, therefore, the remedy required to redress the injustice will be economic redistribution, as opposed to cultural recognition.

Now consider an example that appears to approximate the ideal type: the exploited working class, as understood in orthodox, economic Marxism. (And let us bracket for the time being the question of whether this view of class fits the actual historical collectivities that have struggled for justice in the real world in the name of the working class.)¹² In this conception, class is a mode of social differentiation that is rooted in the political-economic structure of society. Thus, the Marxian working class is the body of persons in a capitalist society who must sell their labor power

¹¹ The following discussion revises a subsection of my essay “From Redistribution to Recognition? Dilemmas of Justice in a ‘Postsocialist’ Age,” *New Left Review*, 212 (July/August 1995): 68–93; reprinted in Nancy Fraser, *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the “Postsocialist” Condition* (Routledge, 1997).

¹² For the sake of argument, I begin by conceiving class in an orthodox, economic way in order to sharpen the contrast to the other ideal-typical kinds of collectivity discussed below. Thus, I treat class as rooted wholly in the political economy, as opposed to in the status order. This, of course, is hardly the only interpretation of the Marxian conception of class. At a later step in the argument, I introduce a less economic interpretation, one that gives more weight to the cultural, historical, and discursive dimensions of class emphasized by such writers as E. P. Thompson and Joan Wallach Scott. See Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (Random House, 1963); and Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (Columbia University Press, 1988).

under arrangements that authorize the capitalist class to appropriate surplus productivity for its private benefit. The injustice of these arrangements, moreover, is quintessentially a matter of distribution, as the proletariat's share of the benefits is unjustly small and its share of the burdens is unjustly large. To be sure, its members also suffer serious cultural injustices, the "hidden (and not so hidden) injuries of class."¹³ But far from being rooted directly in an independently unjust status order, these derive from the economic structure, as ideologies of class inferiority proliferate to justify exploitation. The remedy for the injustice, consequently, is redistribution, not recognition. Overcoming class exploitation requires restructuring the political economy so as to alter the class distribution of social burdens and social benefits. In the Marxian view, such restructuring takes the radical form of abolishing the class structure as such. The task of the proletariat, therefore, is not simply to cut itself a better deal, but "to abolish itself as a class." The last thing it needs is recognition of its difference. On the contrary, the only way to remedy the injustice is to put the proletariat out of business as a distinctive group.¹⁴

Now consider the other end of the conceptual spectrum. At this end let us posit an ideal-typical mode of collectivity that fits the politics of recognition. A collectivity of this type is rooted wholly in the status order, as opposed to the economic structure, of society. What differentiates it as a collectivity are institutionalized cultural patterns of interpretation and evaluation. Thus, any structural injustices its members suffer will be traceable ultimately to the status order. The core of the injustice, as well as its root, will be misrecognition, while any attendant economic injustices will derive ultimately from that root. The remedy required to

¹³ Richard Sennett and Jonathan Cobb, *The Hidden Injuries of Class* (Knopf, 1973).

¹⁴ One might object that the result would not be the proletariat's abolition but only its universalization. Even in that case, however, the proletariat's group distinctiveness would disappear.

redress the injustice will be cultural recognition, as opposed to economic redistribution.

Consider an example that appears to approximate the ideal type: a despised sexuality, understood in terms of the Weberian conception of status. (And once again, let us bracket for the time being the question of whether this view of sexuality fits the actual historical homosexual collectivities that are struggling for justice in the real world.)¹⁵ In this conception, sexuality is a mode of social differentiation whose roots do not lie in the political economy, as homosexuals are distributed throughout the entire class structure of capitalist society, occupy no distinctive position in the division of labor, and do not constitute an exploited class. Rather, their mode of collectivity is rooted in the status order of society, and the injustice they suffer is quintessentially a matter of recognition. Gays and lesbians suffer from heterosexism: the authoritative construction of norms that naturalize heterosexuality and stigmatize homosexuality. These heterosexist norms do not operate only at the level of cultural attitudes, moreover. Rather, they are institutionalized, both formally and informally. Heterosexist norms skew entitlements and delimit understandings of personhood in, for example, marital, divorce, and custody law; the practice of medicine and psychotherapy; legal constructions of privacy, autonomy, and equal opportunity; immigration, naturalization, and asylum policy; popular culture representations; and everyday social practices and patterns of interaction. As a result, gays and lesbians suffer sexually specific status injuries. Denied the full rights and protections of citizenship, they endure shaming and assault; exclusion from the rights and privileges of marriage and parenthood; curbs on their rights of expression and association; the absence of

¹⁵Once again, for the sake of argument, I begin by conceiving sexuality in a highly stylized way in order to sharpen the contrast to the other ideal-typical kinds of collectivity discussed here. Thus, I treat sexual differentiation as rooted wholly in the status order, as opposed to in the political economy. Of course, this is not the only interpretation of sexuality. At a later step in the argument, I introduce an alternative interpretation, which gives more weight to political economy.

sexual autonomy; demeaning stereotypical depictions in the media; harassment and disparagement in everyday life; and exclusion or marginalization in public spheres and deliberative bodies. These harms are injustices of recognition.

To be sure, gays and lesbians also suffer serious economic injustices: they can be summarily dismissed from civilian employment and military service, are denied family-based social-welfare benefits, and are disadvantaged in tax and inheritance law. But far from being rooted directly in the economic structure, these injustices derive instead from the status order, as the institutionalization of heterosexist cultural norms produces a class of devalued persons who suffer economic liabilities as a byproduct. The remedy for the injustice, consequently, is recognition, not redistribution. Change the relations of recognition, that is, and the maldistribution will disappear. Overcoming homophobia and heterosexism requires changing institutionalized cultural norms, and thus their institutionalized practical consequences, that privilege heterosexuality, deny equal respect to gays and lesbians, and refuse to recognize homosexuality as a legitimate way of being sexual. It is to decenter heterosexist norms and to revalue a despised sexuality — whether by according positive recognition to gay and lesbian sexual distinctiveness or by deconstructing the binary opposition between heterosexuality and homosexuality.¹⁶

Matters are thus fairly straightforward at the two extremes of our conceptual spectrum. When we deal with collectivities that approach the ideal type of the exploited working class, we face distributive injustices requiring redistributive remedies. What is needed is the politics of redistribution. When we deal with collectivities that approach the ideal type of the despised sexuality, in contrast, we face injustices of misrecognition requiring remedies of recognition. What is needed *here* is the politics of recognition.

¹⁶ In the first case, the logic of the remedy is to put the group out of business as a group. In the second case, in contrast, it could be to valorize the group's "groupness" by recognizing its distinctiveness. I return to this point in a subsequent section.

Matters become murkier, however, once we move away from these extremes. When we posit a type of collectivity located in the middle of the conceptual spectrum, we encounter a hybrid form that combines features of the exploited class with features of the despised sexuality. I call such a collectivity “bivalent.” What differentiates it as a collectivity is both the economic structure and the status order of society. When oppressed or subordinated, therefore, it will suffer injustices that are traceable to both political economy and culture simultaneously. Bivalent collectivities, in sum, may suffer both socioeconomic maldistribution and cultural misrecognition *in forms where neither of these injustices is an indirect effect of the other, but where both are primary and co-original*. In their case, neither the politics of redistribution alone nor the politics of recognition alone will suffice. Bivalent collectivities need both.

Gender, I contend, is a bivalent collectivity. It encompasses both political-economic dimensions and cultural-valuational dimensions. Understanding and redressing gender injustice requires attending to both distribution and recognition.

From the distributive perspective, gender is currently a basic organizing principle of the economic structure of capitalist society. On the one hand, it structures the fundamental division between paid “productive” labor and unpaid “reproductive” and domestic labor, assigning women primary responsibility for the latter. On the other hand, gender also structures the division within paid labor between high-paid, male-dominated manufacturing and professional occupations and lower-paid, female-dominated “pink collar” and domestic service occupations. The result is an economic structure that generates gender-specific forms of distributive injustice, including exploitation, economic marginalization, and deprivation.

Here gender appears as an economic differentiation endowed with certain classlike characteristics. When viewed under this aspect, gender injustice appears as a species of distributive injustice

that cries out for redistributive redress. Much like class, gender justice requires transforming the political economy so as to eliminate its gender structuring. Eliminating gender-specific exploitation and deprivation requires abolishing the gender division of labor —both the gendered division between paid and unpaid labor and the gender division within paid labor. The logic of the remedy is akin to the logic with respect to class: it is to put gender out of business as such. If gender were nothing but an economic differentiation, in sum, justice would require its abolition.

That, however, is only half the story. In fact, gender is not only an economic differentiation, but a status differentiation as well. As such, it also encompasses elements that are more like sexuality than class and that bring it squarely within the problematic of recognition. Gender codes pervasive cultural patterns of interpretation and evaluation, which are central to the status order as a whole. As a result, not just women, but all low-status groups, risk being feminized, and thereby demeaned.

Thus, a major feature of gender injustice is androcentrism: the authoritative construction of norms that privilege traits associated with masculinity and the pervasive devaluation and disparagement of things coded as “feminine,” paradigmatically —but not only — women. These androcentric norms do not operate only at the level of cultural attitudes, moreover. Rather, they are institutionalized, both formally and informally. Androcentric norms skew entitlements and delimit understandings of personhood in, for example, marital, divorce, and custody law; the practice of medicine and psychotherapy; reproductive policy; legal constructions of rape, battery, and self-defense; immigration, naturalization, and asylum policy; popular culture representations; and everyday social practices and patterns of interaction. As a result, women suffer gender-specific status injuries. Denied the full rights and protections of citizenship, they endure sexual assault and domestic violence; the absence of reproductive autonomy; trivializing, objectifying, and demeaning stereotypical depictions in the media; harassment and

disparagement in everyday life; and exclusion or marginalization in public spheres and deliberative bodies. These harms are injustices of recognition. They are relatively independent of political economy and are not merely “superstructural.” Thus, they cannot be remedied by redistribution alone but require additional independent remedies of recognition.

Here gender appears as a status differentiation endowed with sexuality like characteristics. When viewed under this aspect, gender injustice appears as a species of misrecognition that cries out for redress via recognition. Much like heterosexism, overcoming androcentrism and sexism requires changing the institutionalized cultural norms, and thus their institutionalized practical consequences, that privilege masculinity and deny equal respect to women. The logic of the remedy is akin to the logic with respect to sexuality: it is to decenter androcentric norms and to revalue a devalued gender — whether by according positive recognition to a devalued group distinctiveness or by deconstructing the binary opposition between masculinity and femininity.¹⁷

Gender, in sum, is a bivalent mode of collectivity. It contains both an economic face that brings it within the ambit of redistribution and a cultural face that brings it simultaneously within the ambit of recognition. It is an open question whether the two faces are of equal weight. But redressing gender injustice, in any case, requires changing both the economic structure and the status order of contemporary capitalist society.

The bivalent character of gender wreaks havoc on our previous construction of an either/or choice between the politics of redistribution and the politics of recognition. That construction assumed that the collective subjects of injustice are either classes or status groups, but not both; that the injustice they suffer is either maldistribution or misrecognition, but not both; that the group differ-

¹⁷ In the first case, once again, the logic of the remedy is to put the group out of business as a group. In the second case, in contrast, it could be to valorize the group’s “groupness” by recognizing its distinctiveness. I return to this point, too, in a subsequent section.

ences at issue are either unjust differentials or unjustly devalued cultural variations, but not both; that the remedy for injustice is either redistribution or recognition, but not both.

Gender, we can now see, explodes this whole series of false antitheses. Here we have a collective subject that is a compound of both status and class, that suffers injustices of both maldistribution and misrecognition, whose distinctiveness is compounded of both economic differentials and culturally constructed distinctions. Gender injustice can only be remedied, therefore, by a practical orientation that encompasses both a politics of redistribution and a politics of recognition.

BIVALENCE : EXCEPTION OR NORM ?

How unusual is gender in this regard? Are we dealing here with a unique or rare case of bivalency in an otherwise largely univalent world? Or is bivalency, rather, the norm?

“Race,” it is clear, is also a bivalent mode of collectivity, a compound of status and class. Rooted simultaneously in the economic structure and the status order of capitalist society, racism’s injustices include both maldistribution and misrecognition. In the economy, “race” organizes structural divisions between menial and nonmenial paid jobs, on the one hand, and between exploitable and “superfluous” labor power, on the other. As a result, the economic structure generates racially specific forms of maldistribution. Members of racialized groups suffer disproportionately high rates of unemployment and poverty and overrepresentation in low-paying menial work. These distributive injustices can be remedied only by a politics of redistribution.

In the status order, meanwhile, the entrenchment of racist and Eurocentric norms privileges traits associated with “whiteness,” while stigmatizing everything coded as “black,” “brown,” and “yellow,” paradigmatically—but not only—people of color. Pervasively institutionalized, these racist and Eurocentric norms generate racially specific status injuries. Denied the full rights and

protections of citizenship, members of racialized groups endure, for example, police assault; discrimination in housing, employment, and health care; media stereotyping; the devaluation of their cultural production; harassment and disparagement in everyday life; and exclusion or marginalization in public spheres. Quintessential harms of misrecognition, these injustices can be remedied only by a politics of recognition.

Neither dimension of racism is wholly an indirect effect of the other, moreover. To be sure, the economic and cultural dimensions interact with one another. But racist maldistribution is not simply a byproduct of the racist status hierarchy; nor is racist misrecognition wholly a byproduct of the racist economic structure. Rather, each dimension has some relative independence from the other. Neither can be redressed indirectly, therefore, through remedies addressed exclusively to the other. Overcoming the injustices of racism, in sum, requires both redistribution and recognition. Neither alone will suffice.

Class, too, is probably best understood as bivalent, in spite of my earlier discussion. The economic ideal-type I invoked for heuristic purposes occludes the real-world complexities of class. To be sure, the ultimate cause of class injustice is the economic structure of capitalist society.¹⁸ But the resulting harms include misrecognition as well as maldistribution. Moreover, cultural harms that originated as byproducts of economic structure may have developed a life of their own. Today the misrecognition dimensions of class may be sufficiently autonomous in their operation to require independent remedies of recognition. Left unattended, moreover, class misrecognition may impede the capacity to mobilize against maldistribution. To build broad support for economic transformation today may require first challenging cultural atti-

¹⁸ It is true that preexisting status distinctions, for example, between lords and commoners, or men and women, shaped the emergence of the capitalist system. Nevertheless, it was only the creation of a differentiated economic order with a relatively autonomous life of its own that gave rise to the distinction between capitalists and workers.

tudes that demean poor and working people: for example, “culture-of-poverty” ideologies that suggest that the poor deserve what they get. Likewise, poor and working people may need a counter-“identity politics” to support their struggles for economic justice; they may need, that is, to build class communities and cultures in order to neutralize the hidden injuries of class and forge the confidence to stand up for themselves. Thus, a politics of class recognition may be needed both in itself and to get a politics of redistribution off the ground.¹⁹

Thus, even such an apparently univalent economic category as class has a status component. To be sure, this component is subordinate, less weighty than the economic component. Nevertheless, overcoming class injustice may well require joining a politics of recognition to a politics of redistribution.²⁰ At the very least, it will be necessary to attend carefully to the recognition dynamics of class struggles in order to prevent these from generating injustices of misrecognition in the process of seeking to remedy injustices of maldistribution.

¹⁹ I am grateful to Erik Olin Wright (personal communication, 1997) for several of the formulations in this paragraph.

²⁰ In fact, as historians such as E. P. Thompson have famously shown, actual historical class struggles have always encompassed a recognition dimension, as working people fought not only to mitigate or abolish exploitation, but also to defend their class cultures and to establish the dignity of labor. In the process, they elaborated class identities, often in forms that privileged cultural constructions of masculinity, heterosexuality, “whiteness,” and/or majority nationality, thus in forms problematic for women and/or members of sexual, “racial,” and national minorities. In such cases, the recognition dimension of class struggle was not an unalloyed force for social justice. On the contrary, it incorporated and exacerbated, if it did not itself performatively create, gender, sexual, “racial,” and/or national misrecognition. But of course the same is true for recognition struggles focused on gender, “race,” and sexuality, which have typically proceeded in forms that privileged elites and middle-class people, as well as other advantaged strata, including “whites,” men, and/or heterosexuals, within the group. For the recognition dimension of class struggle, see Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*. For the misrecognition dimension, see David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (Verso 1991); and Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History*. For the misrecognition dimension of feminist and anti-racist struggles, see, for example, Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, “African American Women’s History and the Metalanguage of Race,” *Signs* 17, no. 2 (1992): 251–74; and Elizabeth Spelman, *Inessential Woman* (Beacon Press, 1988).

What, then, of sexuality? Is it also a bivalent category? Here, too, the ideal-type I sketched earlier for heuristic purposes is inadequate to the real-world complexities. To be sure, the ultimate cause of heterosexist injustice is the status order, not the economic structure of capitalist society.²¹ But the resulting harms include maldistribution as well as misrecognition. And economic harms that originate as byproducts of the status order have an undeniable weight of their own. Left unattended, moreover, they may impede the capacity to mobilize against misrecognition. To build broad support for the revaluation of homosexuality today requires resources, as well as individuals empowered to fight. But insofar as coming out poses economic risks for gays and lesbians, their capacity to fight misrecognition is diminished. So, too, is the capacity of their heterosexual allies, who must likewise fear the economic consequences of being (mis) identified as gay if they openly defend homosexual rights. In addition, economic maldistribution may be the “weak link” in the chain of heterosexist oppression. In the current climate, it may be easier to challenge the distributive inequities faced by gays and lesbians than to confront head on the deep-seated status anxieties that fuel homophobia.²² In sum, building support for transforming the sexual status order may require fighting for economic equity. Thus, a politics of sexual redistribu-

²¹ In capitalist society, the regulation of sexuality is relatively decoupled from the economic structure, which comprises an order of economic relations that is differentiated from kinship and oriented to the expansion of surplus value. In the current “post-fordist” phase of capitalism, moreover, sexuality increasingly finds its locus in the relatively new, late-modern sphere of “personal life,” where intimate relations that can no longer be identified with the family are lived as disconnected from the imperatives of production and reproduction. Today, accordingly, the heteronormative regulation of sexuality is increasingly removed from, and not necessarily functional for, the capitalist economic order. As a result, the economic harms of heterosexism do not derive in any straightforward way from the economic structure. They are rooted, rather, in the heterosexist status order, which is increasingly out of phase with the economy. For a fuller argument, see Nancy Fraser, “Heterosexism, Misrecognition, and Capitalism: A Response to Judith Butler,” *Social Text* 53/54 (Winter/Spring 1998). For the counterargument, see Judith Butler, “Merely Cultural,” *Social Text* 53/54 (Winter/Spring 1998).

²² I owe the “weak link” point to Erik Olin Wright (personal communication, 1997).

tion may be needed both in itself and to get a politics of recognition off the ground.

Thus, even such an apparently univalent status category as sexuality has an economic component. To be sure, this component is subordinate, less weighty than the status component. Nevertheless, overcoming sexual injustice may well require joining a politics of redistribution to a politics of recognition. At the very least, it will be necessary to attend carefully to the distributive dynamics of sexual struggles in the process of seeking to remedy injustices of misrecognition.

For practical purposes, then, virtually all real-world oppressed collectivities are bivalent. Virtually all suffer both maldistribution and misrecognition in forms where each of those injustices has some independent weight, whatever its ultimate roots. To be sure, not all oppressed collectivities are bivalent in the same way, nor to the same degree. Some axes of oppression, such as class, tilt more heavily toward the distribution end of the spectrum; others, such as sexuality, incline more to the recognition end; while still others, such as gender and "race," cluster closer to the center. The precise proportion of economic disadvantage and status injury must be determined empirically in every case. Nevertheless, in virtually every case, the harms at issue comprise both maldistribution and misrecognition in forms where neither of those injustices can be redressed entirely indirectly but where each requires some practical attention. As a practical matter, therefore, overcoming injustice in virtually every case requires both redistribution and recognition.

Thus, not only gender, but virtually every major axis of injustice requires both a politics of redistribution and a politics of recognition. The need for this sort of two-pronged approach becomes more pressing, moreover, as soon as one ceases to consider such axes of injustice singly and begins instead to consider them together as mutually intersecting. After all, gender, "race," sexuality, and class are not neatly cordoned off from one another. Rather, all these axes of injustice intersect one another in ways that affect

everyone's interests and identities. No one is a member of only one such collectivity. And people who are subordinated along one axis of social division may well be dominant along another. Viewed in this light, the need for a two-pronged politics of redistribution and recognition does not only arise endogenously, as it were, within a single bivalent collectivity. It also arises exogenously, so to speak, across intersecting collectivities. For example, anyone who is both gay and working-class will need both redistribution and recognition, regardless of what one makes of those two categories taken singly. Seen this way, moreover, nearly every individual who suffers injustice needs to integrate those two kinds of claims. And so, furthermore, will all people who care about social justice, regardless of their own personal social location.

In general, then, one should roundly reject the construction of redistribution and recognition as mutually exclusive alternatives. The goal should be, rather, to develop a two-pronged approach that can address the twofold need for both.

II. *BOTH* REDISTRIBUTION *AND* RECOGNITION: TOWARD A CONCEPTUAL INTEGRATION

How, then, can one develop such a two-pronged approach? How can one integrate redistribution and recognition in a single framework so as to overcome their current dissociation?

Three sets of issues are implicated here: normative-philosophical issues, which concern the relation between recognition and distributive justice; social-theoretical issues, which concern the relation between economy and culture; and practical-political issues, which concern the tensions that arise when one seeks to promote redistribution and recognition simultaneously. In part III, I consider the practical-political issues. Here I discuss the normative-philosophical and social-theoretical issues.

NORMATIVE-PHILOSOPHICAL ISSUES:
JUSTICE OR SELF-REALIZATION ?

The project of integrating redistribution and recognition in a single framework impinges on ongoing debates over four normative philosophical questions. First, is recognition really a matter of justice, or is it a matter of self-realization? Second, do distributive justice and recognition constitute two distinct, *sui generis*, normative paradigms, or can either of them be subsumed within the other? Third, does justice require the recognition of what is distinctive about individuals or groups, or is recognition of our common humanity sufficient? And fourth, how can we distinguish those recognition claims that are justified from those that are not?

On the first question, two major theorists, Charles Taylor and Axel Honneth, understand recognition as a matter of self-realization. Unlike them, however, I propose to treat it as an issue of justice. Thus, one should not answer the question, "What's wrong with misrecognition?" by reference to a thick theory of the good, as Taylor does.²³ Nor should one follow Honneth and appeal to a "formal conception of ethical life" premised on an account of the "intersubjective conditions" for an "undistorted practical relation-to-self."²⁴ One should say, rather, that it is unjust that some individuals and groups are denied the status of full partners in social interaction simply as a consequence of institutionalized patterns of interpretation and evaluation in whose construction they have not equally participated and that disparage their distinctive characteristics or the distinctive characteristics assigned to them.

This account offers several major advantages. First, it permits one to justify claims for recognition as morally binding under

²³ See Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition"; and *Sources of the Self* (Harvard University Press, 1989).

²⁴ See Axel Honneth, *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts*, tr. Joel Anderson (Polity Press, 1995); and "Integrity and Disrespect: Principles of a Conception of Morality Based on the Theory of Recognition," *Political Theory* 20, no. 2 (May 1992).

modern conditions of value pluralism.²⁵ Under these conditions, there is no single conception of self-realization or the good that is universally shared, nor any that can be established as authoritative. Thus, any attempt to justify claims for recognition that appeals to an account of self-realization or the good must necessarily be sectarian. No approach that is teleological in this way can establish such claims as normatively binding on those who do not share the theorist's conception of ethical value. Thus, approaches of this sort do not meet modern standards of moral justification: they do not justify claims to recognition in terms that can be accepted by all whom those claims purport to bind.

Unlike such approaches, the account proposed here is deontological and nonsectarian. Embracing the spirit of "subjective freedom" that is the hallmark of modernity, it accepts that it is up to individuals and groups to define for themselves what counts as a good life and to devise for themselves an approach to pursuing it, within limits that ensure a like liberty for others. Thus, the account proposed here does not appeal to a conception of self-realization or the good. It appeals, rather, to a conception of justice that can be accepted by those with divergent conceptions of the good. What makes misrecognition morally wrong, on this view, is that it denies some individuals and groups the possibility of participating on a par with others in social interaction. The norm of *participatory parity* invoked here is nonsectarian in the required sense. It can justify claims for recognition as normatively binding on all who agree to abide by fair terms of interaction under conditions of value pluralism.

Treating recognition as a matter of justice has a second advantage as well. It conceives misrecognition as a *status injury* whose locus is social relations, not individual psychology. To be misrecognized, on this view, is not simply to be thought ill of, looked down on, or devalued in others' conscious attitudes or mental beliefs. It is rather to be denied the status of a full partner

²⁵ I am grateful to Rainer Forst for help in formulating this point.

in social interaction and prevented from participating as a peer in social life as a consequence of institutionalized patterns of interpretation and evaluation that constitute one as comparatively unworthy of respect or esteem. When such patterns of disrespect and disesteem are institutionalized, for example, in law, social welfare, medicine, public education, and/or the social practices and group mores that structure everyday interaction, they impede parity of participation, just as surely as do distributive inequities.

Eschewing psychologization, then, the justice approach escapes difficulties that plague rival approaches. When misrecognition is identified with internal distortions in the structure of self-consciousness of the oppressed, it is but a short step to blaming the victim, as one seems to add insult to injury. Conversely, when misrecognition is equated with prejudice in the minds of the oppressors, overcoming it seems to require policing their beliefs, an approach that is authoritarian. On the justice view, in contrast, misrecognition is a matter of externally manifest and publicly verifiable impediments to some people's standing as full members of society. Overcoming misrecognition, accordingly, requires changing institutions and social practices. More specifically, it requires changing institutionalized interpretations and norms that create classes of devalued persons who are impeded from participatory parity.

Moreover, decoupling recognition from psychology strengthens its normative force. When claims for recognition are premised on a psychological theory of the intersubjective conditions for undistorted identity formation, they are made vulnerable to the vicissitudes of that theory. Their moral bindingness evaporates in case the theory turns out to be false. Treating recognition as a matter of justice, in contrast, avoids mortgaging normative claims to matters of psychological fact. One can show that a society whose institutionalized norms impede parity of participation is morally indefensible *whether or not it distorts the subjectivity of the oppressed*.

Finally, the justice account of recognition avoids the view that everyone has an equal right to social esteem. That view is patently

untenable, of course, because it renders meaningless the notion of esteem. Yet it seems to follow from at least one influential account of recognition in terms of self-realization. On Honneth's account, social esteem is among the "intersubjective conditions for undistorted identity formation," which morality is supposed to protect. It follows that everyone is morally entitled to social esteem. The account of recognition proposed here, in contrast, entails no such *reductio ad absurdum*. What it *does* entail is that everyone has an equal right to pursue social esteem under fair conditions of equal opportunity. And such conditions do not obtain when, for example, institutionalized patterns of interpretation pervasively downgrade femininity, "nonwhiteness," homosexuality, and everything culturally associated with them. When that is the case, women and/or people of color and/or gays and lesbians face obstacles in the quest for esteem that are not encountered by others. And everyone, including straight white men, faces further obstacles when opting to pursue projects and cultivate traits that are culturally coded as feminine, homosexual, or "nonwhite."

For all these reasons, recognition is better viewed as a matter of justice than as a matter of self-realization. But what follows for the theory of justice?

JUSTICE AS PARTICIPATORY PARITY : A BIVALENT CONCEPTION

Does it follow, turning now to the second question, that distribution and recognition constitute two distinct, *sui generis* conceptions of justice? Or can either of them be reduced to the other?

The question of reduction must be considered from two different sides. From one side, the issue is whether standard theories of distributive justice can adequately subsume problems of recognition. In my view, the answer is no. To be sure, many distributive theorists appreciate the importance of status over and above material well-being and seek to accommodate it in their accounts.²⁶

²⁶ John Rawls, for example, at times conceives "primary goods" such as income and jobs as "social bases of self-respect," while also speaking of self-respect itself as

But the results are not wholly satisfactory. Most such theorists assume a reductive economistic-cum-legalistic view of status, supposing that a just distribution of resources and rights is sufficient to preclude misrecognition. In fact, however, as we saw, not all misrecognition is a byproduct of maldistribution, nor of maldistribution plus legal discrimination. Witness the case of the African-American Wall Street banker who cannot get a taxi to pick him up. To handle such cases, a theory of justice must reach beyond the distribution of rights and goods to examine patterns of cultural value. It must consider whether institutionalized cultural patterns of interpretation and valuation impede parity of participation in social life.²⁷

What, then, of the other side of the question? Can existing theories of recognition adequately subsume problems of distribution? Here, too, I contend the answer is no. To be sure, some theorists of recognition appreciate the importance of economic

an especially important primary good whose distribution is a matter of justice. Ronald Dworkin, likewise, defends the idea of "equality of resources" as the distributive expression of the "equal moral worth of persons." Amartya Sen, finally, considers both a "sense of self" and the capacity "to appear in public without shame" as relevant to the "capability to function," hence as falling within the scope of an account of justice that enjoins the equal distribution of basic capabilities. See John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Harvard University Press, 1971), §67 and §82; and *Political Liberalism* (Columbia University Press, 1993), pp. 82, 181, and 318ff.; Ronald Dworkin, "What Is Equality? Part 2: Equality of Resources," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 10, no. 4 (Fall 1981): 283–345; and Amartya Sen, *Commodities and Capabilities* (North-Holland, 1985).

²⁷ The outstanding exception of a theorist who has sought to encompass issues of culture within a distributive framework is Will Kymlicka. Kymlicka proposes to treat access to an "intact cultural structure" as a primary good to be fairly distributed. This approach was tailored for multinational politics, such as Canada, as opposed to polyethnic polities, such as the United States. Thus, it is not applicable to cases where mobilized claimants for recognition do not divide neatly (or even not so neatly) into groups with distinct and relatively bounded cultures. Nor for cases where claims for recognition do not take the form of demands for (some level of) sovereignty but aim rather at parity of participation within a polity that is crosscut by multiple intersecting lines of difference and inequality. For the argument that an intact cultural structure is a primary good, see Will Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community and Culture* (Oxford University Press, 1989). For the distinction between multinational and polyethnic politics, see Will Kymlicka, "Three Forms of Group-Differentiated Citizenship in Canada," in *Democracy and Difference*, ed. Seyla Benhabib (Princeton University Press, 1996).

equality and seek to accommodate it in their accounts. But once again the results are not wholly satisfactory. Some theorists, such as Axel Honneth, assume a reductive culturalist view of distribution. Supposing that economic inequalities are rooted in a cultural order that privileges some kinds of labor over others, Honneth assumes that changing that cultural order is sufficient to preclude maldistribution.²⁸ In fact, however, as we saw, not all maldistribution is a byproduct of misrecognition. Witness the case of the skilled white male industrial worker who becomes unemployed due to a factory closing resulting from a speculative corporate merger. In that case, the injustice of maldistribution has little to do with misrecognition. It is rather a consequence of imperatives intrinsic to an order of specialized economic relations whose *raison d'être* is the accumulation of profits. To handle such cases, a theory of justice must reach beyond cultural value patterns to examine the structure of capitalism. It must consider whether economic mechanisms that are relatively decoupled from cultural value patterns and that operate in a relatively impersonal way can impede parity of participation in social life.

In general, then, neither distributive theorists nor recognition theorists have so far succeeded in adequately subsuming the concerns of the other.²⁹ Absent a working reduction, moreover, purely verbal subsumptions are of little use. There is little to be gained by insisting as a point of semantics that, for example, recognition, too, is a good to be distributed. Nor, conversely, by maintaining

²⁸ Honneth, *The Struggle for Recognition*.

²⁹ To be sure, this could conceivably change. Nothing I have said rules out *a priori* that someone could successfully extend the distributive paradigm to encompass issues of culture. Nor that someone could successfully extend the recognition paradigm to encompass the structure of capitalism, although that seems more unlikely to me. In either case, it will be necessary to meet several essential requirements simultaneously: first, one must avoid hypostatizing culture and cultural differences; second, one must respect the need for nonsectarian, deontological moral justification under modern conditions of value pluralism; third, one must allow for the differentiated character of capitalist society, in which status and class can diverge; fourth, one must avoid overly unitarian or Durkheimian views of cultural integration that posit a single pattern of cultural values that is shared by all and that pervades all institutions and social practices.

as a matter of definition that every distributive pattern expresses an underlying matrix of recognition. In both cases, the result is a tautology. The first makes all recognition distribution by definition, while the second merely asserts the reverse. In neither case has tangible progress been made in solving the problems noted above. On the contrary, the misleading appearance of resolution could even impede such progress. With distribution and recognition apparently reconciled by definitional fiat, it may be difficult to see, let alone address, possible tensions and conflicts between them.³⁰

Given the hollowness of a purely verbal reduction and the present unavailability of a substantive reduction, what normative approach remains for those who seek to integrate distribution and recognition? For the present, I contend, one should refrain from endorsing either one of those paradigms of justice to the exclusion of the other. Instead, one should adopt what I shall call a “bivalent” conception of justice. A bivalent conception of justice encompasses both distribution and recognition *without reducing either one of them to the other*. Thus, it does not treat recognition as a good to be distributed, nor distribution as an expression of recognition. Rather, a bivalent conception treats distribution and recognition as distinct perspectives on, and dimensions of, justice, while at the same time encompassing both of them within a broader, overarching framework.

The normative core of my conception, which I have mentioned several times, is the notion of *parity of participation*. According to this norm, justice requires social arrangements that permit all (adult) members of society to interact with one another as peers. For participatory parity to be possible, I claim, it is necessary but not sufficient to establish standard forms of formal legal equality. Over and above that requirement, at least two additional conditions must be satisfied.³¹ First, the distribution of material re-

³⁰ I examine such tensions and conflicts in a subsequent section.

³¹ I say “*at least* two additional conditions must be satisfied” in order to allow for the possibility of more than two. I have in mind specifically a possible third

sources must be such as to ensure participants' independence and "voice." This I call the "objective" precondition of participatory parity. It precludes forms and levels of material inequality and economic dependence that impede parity of participation. Precluded, therefore, are social arrangements that institutionalize deprivation, exploitation, and gross disparities in wealth, income, and leisure time, thereby denying some people the means and opportunities to interact with others as peers.³²

In contrast, the second additional condition for participatory parity I call "intersubjective." It requires that institutionalized cultural patterns of interpretation and evaluation express equal respect for all participants and ensure equal opportunity for achieving social esteem. This condition precludes cultural patterns that systematically depreciate some categories of people and the qualities associated with them. Precluded, therefore, are institutionalized value schemata that deny some people the status of full partners in interaction —whether by burdening them with excessive ascribed "difference" from others or by failing to acknowledge their distinctiveness.

Both the objective precondition and the intersubjective precondition are necessary for participatory parity. Neither alone is sufficient. The objective condition brings into focus concerns tradi-

class of obstacles to participatory parity that could be called "political," as opposed to economic or cultural. Such obstacles would include decision-making procedures that systematically marginalize some people even in the absence of maldistribution and misrecognition (for example, single-district winner-take-all electoral rules that deny voice to quasipermanent minorities; for an insightful account of this example, see Lani Guinier, *The Tyranny of the Majority* [Free Press 1994]). The possibility of a third class of "political" obstacles to participatory parity adds a further Weberian twist to my use of the class/status distinction. Weber's own distinction was tripartite not bipartite: "class, status, and party." This third, "political" kind of obstacle to participatory parity might be called "marginalization" or "exclusion." I do not develop it here, however. Here I confine myself to maldistribution and misrecognition, while leaving the analysis of "political" obstacles to participatory parity character for another occasion.

³² It is an open question how much economic inequality is consistent with parity of participation. Some such inequality is inevitable and unobjectionable. But there is a threshold at which resource disparities become so gross as to impede participatory parity. Where exactly that threshold lies is a matter for further investigation.

tionally associated with the theory of distributive justice, especially concerns pertaining to the economic structure of society and to economically defined class differentials. The intersubjective precondition brings into focus concerns recently highlighted in the philosophy of recognition, especially concerns pertaining to the status order of society and to culturally defined hierarchies of status. Where the objective condition is not met, the remedy is redistribution. Where the intersubjective condition is not met, the remedy is recognition. Thus, a bivalent conception of justice oriented to the norm of participatory parity encompasses both redistribution and recognition, without reducing either one to the other.

RECOGNIZING DISTINCTIVENESS? A PRAGMATIC APPROACH

This brings us to the third question: Does justice require the recognition of what is distinctive about individuals or groups, over and above the recognition of our common humanity? Here it is important to note that participatory parity is a universalist norm in two senses. First, it encompasses all (adult) partners to interaction. And second, it presupposes the equal moral worth of human beings. But moral universalism in these senses still leaves open the question whether recognition of individual or group distinctiveness could be required by justice as one element among others of the intersubjective condition for participatory parity.

How should one answer this question? Most theorists appeal to an *a priori* philosophical argument. Some seek to show that justice can never require recognizing difference, others that it must always do so. Unlike both camps, however, I propose to approach the issue in the spirit of pragmatism. Thus, one should not answer the question Does justice require the recognition of distinctiveness? by an *a priori* account of what sort of recognition is always and everywhere required. One should say, rather, that the form(s) of recognition justice requires in any given case depend(s) on the

form(s) of *misrecognition* to be redressed. In cases where misrecognition involves denying the common humanity of some participants, the remedy is universalist recognition. Where, in contrast, misrecognition involves denying some participants' distinctiveness, the remedy *could* be recognition of difference.³³ In every case, the remedy should be tailored to the harm. The focus should be on what sort of recognition is needed to overcome specific, existing obstacles to participatory parity.³⁴

This pragmatic approach has several important advantages. First, it avoids the aprioristic view, held by many distributive theorists, that recognition is *per se* universalist. Such theorists equate recognition with the equal respect that all persons are owed in virtue of their "equal moral worth." What is recognized, on this view, is what all persons share: usually capacities for autonomy and rationality. There is no place, in contrast, for recognition of what distinguishes people from one another. On the contrary, equal respect is often held to preclude any public recognition of distinctiveness. As a result, it becomes impossible to consider whether recognition of distinctiveness might in some cases be required by justice in order to overcome obstacles to participatory parity.³⁵ A pragmatic approach, in contrast, allows for the the con-

³³ I say the remedy *could* be recognition of difference, not that it must be. As I explain in a subsequent section, there are other possible recognition remedies for the sort of misrecognition that involves denying distinctiveness.

³⁴ This pragmatic approach assumes that denial of distinctiveness *can* be unjust when it impedes parity of participation. Consider the example of electoral participation. It is widely accepted that parity is impeded when some are denied recognition of shared humanity, as in black disfranchisement under apartheid. But parity may also be impeded by failure to recognize difference when universal suffrage is formally in place, as when an election in a majority-Christian country is scheduled on a Jewish holiday. In the first case, the remedy is the extension of voting rights, an expression of universalist recognition. In the second, it is revising the voting schedule, a means of recognizing difference. Thus, a pragmatic approach allows that justice *could* in principle require recognizing distinctiveness — when the withholding of such recognition impedes parity of participation in social life and when alternative remedies prove insufficient.

³⁵ Thus, this approach is unsatisfactory because question-begging. Assuming *a priori* that all misrecognition consists in the denial of equal respect, it rules out of court any consideration of impediments to participatory parity that arise from the

trast, allows for the consideration of such cases. Tailoring recognition remedies to fit misrecognition harms, it can address a range of different obstacles to participatory parity.

The pragmatic approach has a second advantage as well. It avoids the philosophical-anthropological claim, made by some recognition theorists, that recognition of distinctiveness is a universal human need in modern societies. For example, Taylor and Honneth hold that such recognition, along with equal respect, is inherently necessary for the self-realization of moderns.³⁶ Thus, they posit (at least) two forms of recognition as needed by, and owed to, everyone: universalist equal respect and differentialist social esteem.³⁷ While this improves on the one-sided universalism of many distributive theorists, it goes too far in the opposite direction. Treating the recognition of distinctiveness as an abstract universal human need, these theorists fail to appreciate that the recognition needs of subordinate groups differ from those of dominant groups. Effectively erasing the question of power, they cannot explain why dominant groups, such as men and heterosexuals, usually shun recognition of their (gender and sexual) distinctiveness, claiming not specificity but universality. Likewise, they cannot explain why social movements of subordinated groups, such as women and African Americans, have claimed recognition of their own distinctiveness only at those historical moments when it seemed otherwise impossible to gain full parity of participation, nor why their claims have more often taken the form of outing the specificity of *dominant* groups, which had been falsely parading as universality.³⁸ The pragmatic approach proposed here, in contrast, situates claims for

failure to recognize distinctiveness. But such impediments can and do exist. Witness the case of the electoral schedule cited above.

³⁶ Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition"; Honneth, *The Struggle for Recognition*.

³⁷ Axel Honneth also theorizes a third level of recognition, the love or care that arises from intimate primary relationships. See *The Struggle for Recognition*.

³⁸ I am indebted to Linda Nicholson for this argument. For a more extensive discussion, see her essay "To Be or Not to Be: Charles Taylor and the Politics of Recognition," *Constellations* 3, no. 1 (April 1996).

the recognition of difference squarely in the context of social power. As a result, it appreciates that many such claims are contextual and self-liquidating. Invoked as transitional remedies, as opposed to as ends in themselves, they lose their *raison d'être* once specific impediments to participatory parity are overcome.

In general, then, the question Does justice require the recognition of difference? should not be answered aprioristically or anthropologically. It needs rather to be approached in the spirit of pragmatism as informed by the insights of critical social theory. Everything depends on precisely what currently unrecognized people need in order to be able to participate as peers in social life. And there is no reason to assume that all of them need the same thing in every context. In some cases, they may need to be unburdened of excessive ascribed or constructed distinctiveness. In other cases, they may need to have hitherto underacknowledged distinctiveness taken into account. In still other cases, they may need to shift the focus onto dominant or advantaged groups, outing the latter's distinctiveness, which has been falsely parading as universality. Alternatively, they may need to deconstruct the very terms in which attributed differences are currently elaborated. Finally, they may need all of the above, or several of the above, in combination with one another and in combination with redistribution. Which people need which kind(s) of recognition in which contexts depends on the nature of the obstacles they face with regard to participatory parity. That, I repeat, cannot be determined by abstract philosophical argument. It can be determined only with the aid of a critical social theory, a theory that is normatively oriented, empirically informed, and guided by the practical intent of overcoming injustice.

JUSTIFYING CLAIMS FOR RECOGNITION

Once we accept that justice *could*, under certain circumstances, require recognition of distinctiveness, then the question of justification becomes pressing. Now we must take up the fourth and final

normative-philosophical question : How can one distinguish those recognition claims that are justified from those that are not? Clearly, not every claim for recognition is warranted, just as not every claim for redistribution is. In both cases, one needs an account of criteria and/or procedures for distinguishing warranted from unwarranted claims. Theorists of distributive justice have long sought to provide such accounts, whether by appealing to objectivistic criteria, such as utility maximization, or to procedural norms, such as those of discourse ethics. Theorists of recognition, in contrast, have yet to develop analogous accounts of justification. How should they proceed with this task?

The approach proposed here invokes the norm of participatory parity. As we saw, this norm overarches both dimensions of justice, distribution and recognition. Thus, for both dimensions the same general criterion serves to distinguish warranted from unwarranted claims. Whether the issue is distribution or recognition, claimants must show that institutionalized arrangements unjustly prevent them from participating on a par with others in social life. Redistribution claimants must show that social arrangements unjustly deny them resources and opportunities that are necessary objective conditions for participatory parity. Recognition claimants, in contrast, must show that institutionalized patterns of interpretation and evaluation unjustly deny them the equal respect and/or equal opportunity for achieving social esteem that are necessary intersubjective conditions for participatory parity. In both cases, therefore, the norm of participatory parity is the general standard for warranting claims.

The norm requires further specification, however, in that not all disparities are unjust. Theorists of distributive justice have long appreciated this with regard to economic inequalities. Some have sought to distinguish inequalities that arise as a result of individuals' choices, on the one hand, from inequalities that arise as a result of circumstances beyond individuals' control, on the other, arguing that only the second, and not the first, are unjust.

Theorists of recognition need to consider analogous issues. They should consider how one can distinguish those value hierarchies and identity devaluations that are truly matters of injustice from those that are not.

Clearly, not all value hierarchies are unjust. It is not unjust to devalue racist beliefs and identities, for example, even though the effect may be to impede racists from participatory parity in some contexts. The reason, I presume, is that the unjust devaluation of others is intrinsic to racist identities, as is the rejection of the very idea of participatory parity. Likewise, it is not unjust to disesteem creationist beliefs, even though the effect may be to impede the equal participation of creationists *in specific social practices*, such as deliberations concerning the allocation of scientific research funds or the establishment of scientific educational curricula, where their beliefs contravene the meaning of the practice; but it *is* unjust, in contrast, to institutionalize such disesteem in other contexts, such as access to health care. The reason, I presume, is that parity for identities premised on creationist beliefs violates the meaning of scientific participation and would undermine its very practice; yet it carries no such devastating implications for the receipt of health care. Finally, it is unjust to institutionalize the devaluation of homosexuality and thus to deny parity of participation to gays and lesbians. The reason is that homosexual identities neither inherently devalue heterosexuals nor reject the norm of participatory parity nor undermine the possibility of sexual intimacy.

What these examples show is that justifying recognition claims requires identifying *unjust* value hierarchies. Thus, an account of justification requires an account of how such identifications can be made and warranted. Such an account should articulate principles of judgment that systematize one's best intuitions about the sorts of cases sketched above.³⁹

³⁹ Whether it should take the form of a decision procedure, as opposed to that of a set of heuristics guiding judgment in public-sphere processes of deliberation, is a question I shall defer to another occasion. My tendency, however, is to prefer the

Let me conclude this discussion of normative philosophical issues by recapping the main claims argued here. First, recognition should be considered a matter of justice, not self-realization. Second, theorists of justice should reject the idea of an either/or choice between the distributive paradigm and the recognition paradigm; instead, they should adopt a bivalent conception of justice premised on the norm of participatory parity. Third, justice *could in principle* require recognizing distinctiveness, over above common humanity; but whether in any given case it does so in fact can be determined pragmatically only in light of the obstacles to participatory parity specific to the case. Fourth and finally, to justify claims for recognition claimants must show that institutionalized patterns of cultural value unjustly deny them the intersubjective conditions of participatory parity.

SOCIAL-THEORETICAL ISSUES : AN ARGUMENT
FOR “PERSPECTIVAL DUALISM”

This brings us to the social-theoretical issues that arise when we try to encompass redistribution and recognition in a single framework. As we saw, the current commonsense concerning the politics of redistribution and the politics of recognition presupposes the bifurcation of the political economy and the status order. Thus, the principal question for a critical social theory is How are

deliberative alternative. It is in deliberative processes, after all, that the principles are applied and the real work of judgment goes on. And it is in deliberative processes, moreover, that justification ultimately resides. Thus, an adequate account of the justification of recognition claims needs to incorporate a procedural dimension. After systematizing the principles that should guide judgment, one should articulate the procedures and conditions that are needed to ensure fair democratic deliberation. This brings us full circle, to be sure. Fair democratic deliberation requires parity of participation for all actual and possible deliberators. That in turn requires just distribution and just relations of recognition. Thus, there is an unavoidable circularity in this account: claims for recognition can be justified only under conditions of participatory parity, which conditions include reciprocal recognition. The circularity is not vicious, however. The appearance of paradox disappears once we distinguish levels of participation. The key distinction is between first-order participation in existing social practices, on the one hand, and metaparticipation in the critical evaluation of such practices, on the other, but this, too, is a subject for another occasion.

we to understand the relation between economy and culture in a critical way that does not reinforce their dissociation?

We can quickly dispense with two patently inadequate approaches. The first is economism, the view that culture is reducible to political economy and thus status is reducible to class. Economism is the counterpart in social theory to the political claim, discussed earlier, that “it’s the economy, stupid.” The mirror-opposite view is culturalism, which holds that political economy is reducible to culture and thus class is reducible to status. Culturalism is the social-theoretical counterpart to “it’s the culture, stupid.” Whatever their merits as accounts of other kinds of societies, neither economism nor culturalism provides a tenable account of contemporary capitalist societies. In these societies, class hierarchy and status hierarchy do not map isomorphically onto one another; rather, they interact causally. Likewise, neither political economy nor culture is reducible to the other; rather, they interpenetrate.

If neither economism nor culturalism provides a tenable account of the relation between class and status, what other alternative accounts are possible? How, once again, are we to understand the relation between economy and culture in a critical way that does not reinforce their dissociation?

The roots of the difficulty are historical. Through a long, complex process, capitalism created specialized economic institutions, paradigmatically markets, which together constituted a privately ordered zone of economic interaction; this zone was set apart from, yet dependent on, the complex of background life-forms that Karl Polanyi called simply “society.”⁴⁰ As a result, the generation of meaning and value, in such forms as art, music, literature, and religion, and their circulation, through such means as education and public-sphere discussion, appeared to be located in a nexus of specialized cultural institutions. The consequence is a social formation that appears to separate economy from culture, material re-

⁴⁰ Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation* (Beacon, 1957)

production from symbolic reproduction, assigning each to its own separate sphere.⁴¹

The appearance is misleading, however. Culture and economy are thoroughly imbricated with one another, respecting no institutional boundaries. Even our core economic practices have a constitutive, irreducible cultural dimension; shot through to the core with significations and norms, they affect not only the material well-being of social actors, but their identities and status as well. Conversely, even our core cultural practices have a constitutive, irreducible economic dimension; permeated all the way through by an instrumental logic associated with the commodity form, they affect not only the status and identities of social actors, but also their material well-being.⁴²

What sort of approach can do justice to both sides of this picture? How can one conceive redistribution and recognition in such a way as to accommodate both the apparent separation of economy and culture and also their interpenetration? Two possibilities present themselves. The first is substantive dualism, which treats redistribution and recognition as pertaining to two different societal domains. The second is perspectival dualism, which treats them as two different analytical perspectives that can be applied to any social domain. Let us consider these two possibilities in turn.

Substantive dualism is the view that distribution and recognition constitute two different “spheres of justice.”⁴³ The former pertains to the economic domain of society, the relations of production. The latter pertains to the cultural domain, the relations of recognition. When we consider economic matters, such as the

⁴¹ The formulations in this paragraph were inspired by Eli Zaretsky. In *Capitalism, the Family, and Personal Life* (Harper and Row, 1983), Zaretsky provides an analogous account of the apparent separation and interpenetration of the economy and the family (the “public” and the “private”) in modern capitalist societies.

⁴² Nancy Fraser, “What’s Critical about Critical Theory? The Case of Habermas and Gender,” in Fraser, *Unruly Practices: Power, Discourse, and Gender in Contemporary Social Theory* (University of Minnesota Press, 1989).

⁴³ I borrow this expression from Michael Walzer; see his *Spheres of Justice: A Defense of Pluralism and Equality* (Basic Books, 1983).

structure of labor markets, we should assume the standpoint of distributive justice; we should assess the justice of such institutional arrangements in terms of their impact on the relative economic position and material well-being of participants. When, in contrast, we consider cultural matters, such as the representation of female sexuality on MTV, we should assume the standpoint of recognition; we should assess the justice of patterns of interpretation and evaluation in terms of their impact on the culturally defined status and relative standing of participants.

Substantive dualism may be preferable to both economism and culturalism, but it is nevertheless inadequate —both conceptually and politically. Conceptually, it erects a dichotomy that opposes economy to culture and treats them as two separate spheres. In fact, however, as I have just argued, what presents itself as “the economy” is always already permeated with cultural interpretations and norms. Conversely, what presents itself as “the cultural sphere” is thoroughly permeated by economic imperatives and differentials. In neither case, therefore, are we dealing with separate spheres.

Practically, moreover, substantive dualism fails to challenge the current dissociation of cultural politics from social politics. On the contrary, it reinforces that dissociation. Casting the economy and the culture as two separate spheres, it assigns the politics of redistribution to the former and the politics of recognition to the latter. The result is effectively to constitute two separate political tasks requiring two separate political struggles. Decoupling cultural injustices from economic injustices, cultural struggles from social struggles, it reproduces the very dissociation we are seeking to overcome. Substantive dualism is not a solution to, but a symptom of, our problem. It reflects, but does not critically interrogate, the institutional differentiations of modern capitalism.

A genuinely critical perspective, in contrast, cannot take the appearance of separate spheres at face value. Rather, it must probe beneath appearances to reveal the hidden connections between dis-

tribution and recognition. It must make visible, and *criticizable*, both the cultural subtexts of apparently economic processes and the economic subtexts of apparently cultural practices. Treating *every* practice as simultaneously economic and cultural, it must assess all of them from two different perspectives, that of distribution and that of recognition, without, however, reducing either one of these perspectives to the other.

Such an approach I call “perspectival dualism.” Here redistribution and recognition do not correspond to two substantive societal domains, economy and culture. Rather, they constitute two analytical perspectives that can be assumed with respect to any domain. These perspectives can be deployed critically, moreover, against the ideological grain. We can use the recognition perspective to identify the cultural dimensions of what are usually considered as economic arrangements. By focusing on the production and circulation of interpretations and norms in welfare programs, for example, we can assess the effects of institutionalized maldistribution on the identities and social status of single mothers.⁴⁴ Conversely, we can use the redistribution perspective to bring into focus the economic dimensions of what are usually considered simply as cultural matters. By focusing on the high “transaction costs” of living in the closet, for example, we can assess the effects of heterosexist misrecognition on the material well-being of gays and lesbians.⁴⁵ With perspectival dualism, then, we can assess the justice of any social practice, regardless of where it is institutionally located, from either or both of two analytically distinct normative vantage points, asking: Does the practice in question

⁴⁴ See Nancy Fraser, “Women, Welfare, and the Politics of Need Interpretation” and “Struggle over Needs,” both in Fraser, *Unruly Practices*. Also, Nancy Fraser and Linda Gordon, “A Genealogy of ‘Dependency’: Tracing A Keyword of the U.S. Welfare State,” *Signs* 19, no. 2 (Winter 1994): 309–36; reprinted in Fraser, *Justice Interruptus*.

⁴⁵ Jeffrey Escoffier has discussed these issues insightfully in “The Political Economy of the Closet,” lecture delivered at the New School for Social Research, New York, September 1996.

work to undermine or to ensure both the objective and intersubjective conditions of participatory parity?

The advantages of this approach should be clear. Unlike economism and culturalism, perspectival dualism permits us to consider both distribution and recognition, without reducing either one of them to the other. Unlike substantive dualism, however, it does not reinforce their dissociation. Because it does not dichotomize economy and culture, material well-being and social standing, it allows us to grasp their mutual imbrication. And because, likewise, it does not reduce economically defined classes to culturally defined statuses or vice versa, it permits us to examine the relations between them. Understood perspectivally, then, the distinction between redistribution and recognition does not simply reproduce the ideological dissociations of our time. Rather, it provides an indispensable conceptual tool for interrogating, working through, and eventually overcoming those dissociations.

Perspectival dualism offers another advantage as well. Of all the social-theoretical approaches considered here, it alone allows us to conceptualize the possibility of practical tensions between redistribution and recognition. Neither economism nor culturalism can conceptualize such tensions. For economism, cultural injustice, if acknowledged at all, is treated as a superstructural effect of economic justice to be remedied indirectly via a pure politics of redistribution, with no explicit politics of recognition. Thus, every possible conflict between the two has been ruled out of court in advance. For culturalism, conversely, economic injustice, if acknowledged at all, is treated as a superstructural effect of cultural justice to be remedied indirectly via a pure politics of recognition, with no explicit politics of redistribution. Once again, *a fortiori* no conflict between the two can emerge. Clearly, then, neither culturalism nor economism can address the possibility of practical tensions between redistribution and recognition.

What may be less obvious is that such tensions also burst the confines of substantive dualism. In that framework, one is sup-

posed to pursue a politics of redistribution in the economy and a politics of recognition in the culture, conceived as two separate domains. With each of the two politics thus contained within its own proper sphere, never the twain would meet. And never the twain conflict. Thus, substantive dualism, too, is unable to formulate, let alone help us to resolve, the possibility of practical tensions between redistribution and recognition.

By contrast, perspectival dualism appreciates that not all injustices of recognition can be remedied indirectly through redistribution. Nor can all injustices of redistribution be remedied indirectly through recognition. More importantly, perspectival dualism appreciates that neither the politics of redistribution nor the politics of recognition can be contained within a separate sphere. The reason is that the economic and the cultural interpenetrate. It is precisely because they interpenetrate, I argue next, that redistribution and recognition can conflict.

III. PRACTICAL TENSIONS: THE INTERPENETRATION OF REDISTRIBUTION AND RECOGNITION

This brings us to the practical-political issues that arise when we try to encompass redistribution and recognition in a single framework. The principal questions here are: Can claims for redistribution be coherently integrated with claims for recognition, or do they, rather, pull against one another? What sorts of mutual interferences can arise when claims of both sorts are pursued simultaneously, and how are such tensions best defused?

At first sight, claims for redistribution appear to conflict head on with claims for recognition. Consider, once again, the case of bivalent collectivities, such as gender. Here a single social differentiation is at once an axis of economic injustice and an axis of cultural injustice. Yet neither the economic injustice nor the cul-

tural injustice is a mere indirect consequence of the other. Thus, the economic disadvantage cannot be remedied indirectly as a by-product of the struggle for recognition; nor, conversely, can the status devaluation be remedied indirectly as a superstructural effect of the struggle for redistribution. Rather, people who seek to remedy bivalent injustices apparently need to make two kinds of claims. On the one hand, they need to make claims for redistribution, which would eliminate, or at least mitigate, the divisions between economically defined classes. But at the same time, and on the other hand, they also need to make claims for recognition, which would eliminate, or at least mitigate, invidious hierarchies of culturally defined statuses. Yet the two kinds of claims may conflict. The thrust of the redistribution claim is apparently to undermine group differences, that is, to dedifferentiate social groups, for example, by abolishing the gender division of labor. The thrust of the recognition claim, in contrast, could be precisely to enhance group differentiation, for example, by revaluing femininity and recognizing gender distinctiveness. Thus, the two claims can pull in opposite directions; they can interfere with, or work against, one another. Practically, then, we encounter a contradiction when we try to integrate redistribution and recognition in a comprehensive political project.⁴⁶

On closer inspection, however, the problem is more complex. In fact, not all redistributive claims work to dedifferentiate social groups. An important exception is the group of reforms that I have called *affirmative redistribution*. These reforms, such as means-tested welfare and affirmative action, seek to redress maldistribution by altering end-state patterns of allocation, without disturbing the underlying mechanisms that generate them. Yet because they leave intact the deep political-economic structures that generate injustice, affirmative redistribution reforms must make

⁴⁶ In my earlier discussion in "From Redistribution to Recognition?" I called this conflict "the redistribution/recognition dilemma." Here, however, I avoid this terminology, which I now consider misleading. What I previously presented as a single conflict is here presented as a multiplicity of practical tensions.

surface reallocations again and again. The result is often to mark the beneficiaries as “different” and lesser, hence to underline group divisions. Thus, affirmative redistribution can promote, rather than undermine, the differentiation of social groups. It is usefully contrasted with what I have called *transformative redistribution*. That approach seeks to redress end-state injustices precisely by altering the underlying framework that generates them. By restructuring the relations of production, transformative redistribution would change the social division of labor, reducing social inequality without creating stigmatized classes of vulnerable people perceived as beneficiaries of special largesse. Thus, unlike affirmative redistribution, which tends to differentiate social groups, transformative redistribution tends to *dedifferentiate* them.⁴⁷

Likewise, not all claims for recognition work to promote social group differentiation. Here, too, we should distinguish several distinct kinds of claims. One kind of recognition claim aims to redress “othering,” the sort of misrecognition that burdens group members with excessive ascribed or constructed distinctiveness. This type of claim is *universalist*; demanding recognition of group members *as persons*, it tends to dedifferentiate social groups. A second kind of claim aims to redress what has been called “saming,” the sort of misrecognition that fails to acknowledge group members’ distinctiveness.⁴⁸ This type of claim is *differentialist*; seeking recognition of group specificity, it tends to enhance group differentiation. Yet a third kind of recognition claim shifts the focus onto dominant or advantaged groups, outing the latter’s distinctiveness, which has been falsely parading as universality. This type of claim, too, is *differentialist* and tends to enhance group differentiation. A fourth kind of claim seeks to deconstruct the

⁴⁷ For a fuller discussion of the contrast between affirmative redistribution and transformative redistribution, see Fraser, “From Redistribution to Recognition?”

⁴⁸ I take the term “saming” from Naomi Schor, “This Essentialism Which Is Not One,” *differences* 1, no. 2 (Summer 1989). There Schor contrasts Simone de Beauvoir’s critique of the “othering” of women in a sexist society with Luce Irigaray’s diagnosis of the “saming” of women in a phallogocentric symbolic order.

very terms in which attributed differences are currently elaborated. This type of claim is *deconstructive* and tends to promote the de-differentiation of existing social groups, although without necessarily seeking homogeneity.

These distinctions belie the postulate of a single head-on conflict between a politics of recognition, which promotes group differentiation, and a politics of redistribution, which undermines it. They suggest, on the contrary, a multiplicity of tensions among a variety of different claims. Equally important, moreover, logical contradictions between claims are *not* the source of the political difficulties. Practical problems are rooted, instead, in the imbrication of economy and culture.

Consider, first, that redistribution impinges on recognition. Virtually any politics of redistribution, be it affirmative or transformative, will have some recognition effects, whether intended or unintended, explicit or implicit, overt or subliminal. Proposals to redistribute income through social welfare, for example, have an irreducible expressive dimension;⁴⁹ they convey interpretations of the meaning and value of different activities (for example, “child-rearing” versus “wage-earning”), while also categorizing and evaluating persons (for example, “welfare mothers” versus “tax-payers”).⁵⁰ Thus, redistributive proposals inevitably affect the status and social identities of everyone concerned, especially those who are cast as the beneficiaries.

These effects must be thematized and scrutinized. They do not follow a base-superstructure logic, wherein improvements in economic position automatically translate into enhancements of status: witness the case of the black middle class amid the current backlash against affirmative action. In general, the recognition effects of redistributive policies pass through a second, cultural logic that

⁴⁹ This formulation was suggested to me by Elizabeth Anderson’s comments on this lecture at Stanford University.

⁵⁰ See Nancy Fraser, “Clintonism, Welfare, and the Antisocial Wage: The Emergence of a Neoliberal Political Imaginary,” *Rethinking Marxism* 6, no. 1 (1993): 9-23.

is connected to, but not reducible to, the economic. It is necessary in every case to trace the interpenetration of the two logics. Failure to attend to the recognition effects of redistributive policies can result in unintended consequences. One can end up fueling misrecognition in the course of remedying maldistribution.

The classic example of this is “welfare.” It has long been understood that means-tested benefits aimed specifically at the poor are the most directly redistributive form of social welfare. Yet most social democrats and egalitarians seek to minimize them. They appreciate that such benefits tend to stigmatize recipients, casting them as deviants and scroungers and invidiously distinguishing them from “wage-earners” and “taxpayers” who “pay their own way.” Welfare programs of this type “target” the poor —not only for material aid but also for public hostility. Even as the programs provide needed economic support, they create strongly cathected, antagonistic group differentiations. The end result is often to add the insult of misrecognition to the injury of deprivation. Such effects recently became intense in the United States with respect to Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC).⁵¹ They shifted the meaning of “welfare reform” from abolishing poverty to abolishing entitlement, an interpretation recently enacted into law.

What follows from this analysis? No proposal for welfare reform, in particular, or for redistribution, in general, should be evaluated on distributive grounds alone. All must also be assessed from the standpoint of recognition. One should oppose reforms that create stigmatized classes of needy people who are perceived as beneficiaries of special treatment. Instead one should seek approaches that provide material help in forms that maintain or

⁵¹ Here a very modest degree of redistribution carried very severe effects of misrecognition. AFDC claimants have been routinely vilified as uniquely “dependent,” sexually irresponsible young women, simultaneously “children having children” “out of wedlock” and adults who should be “working.” This overtly misogynist stereotyping has an unmistakable racist subtext. The result is to harm the social standing of beneficiaries. Publicly vilified and marginalized from mainstream social life, they are impeded from participating on a par with others in social interaction.

enhance the standing of claimants as full partners and participants in social interaction.

The key is to pay attention to the imbrication of economy and culture. Redistributive policies have misrecognition effects when background cultural patterns of interpretation and evaluation skew the meaning of economic reform, when, for example, a pervasive cultural devaluation of female caregiving inflects AFDC as “getting something for nothing.” In this context, welfare reform cannot succeed unless it is joined with struggles for cultural change aimed at revaluing caregiving and the feminine associations that code it.⁵² In short, no redistribution without recognition.

Consider, next, the converse dynamic, whereby recognition impinges on distribution. Virtually any politics of recognition, be it differentialist or universalist, will have some distributive effects, whether intended or unintended, explicit or implicit, overt or subliminal. Proposals to redress androcentric evaluative patterns, for example, have unavoidable economic implications, which sometimes work to the detriment of the intended beneficiaries. For example, campaigns to suppress prostitution and pornography for the sake of enhancing women’s status may have negative effects on the material well-being of sex workers, while no-fault divorce reforms, which appeared to dovetail with feminist efforts to enhance women’s status by unburdening them of excess ascribed femininity, may have had at least short-term negative effects on the economic position of some divorced women, although their extent has apparently been exaggerated and is currently in dispute.⁵³ Thus, recognition proposals inevitably affect economic position and material well-being, above and beyond their effects on status.

⁵² This formulation was suggested to me by Elizabeth Anderson’s comments on this lecture at Stanford University. Anderson noted that it challenges liberal commitments to state neutrality vis-à-vis different conceptions of the good. She is right, I think, that such commitments can conflict with the demands of justice. When they do, justice should prevail, in my view, but it is an open question whether state policies or social movements are the best vehicles for changing culture.

⁵³ See Lenore Weitzman, *The Divorce Revolution: The Unexpected Social Consequences for Women and Children in America* (Free Press, 1985).

These effects, too, must be thematized and scrutinized. They do not follow a base-superstructure logic, wherein enhancements in status automatically translate into improvements in economic position, as we know from the “cult of true womanhood.” In general, the distributive effects of recognition policies pass through a second, economic logic that is connected to, but not reducible to, that of status. It is necessary here, as before, to trace the interpenetration of the two logics. Failure to attend to the distributive consequences of recognition policies can result in unintended effects. One can end up fueling maldistribution in the course of trying to remedy misrecognition.

Here, moreover, we should recall that recognition claims can assume different forms. As we saw, universalist claims seek to unburden misrecognized people of ascribed characteristics that are held to distinguish them from others and that constitute them as less than full partners in interaction. Differentialist claims seek, in contrast, recognition of previously underacknowledged forms of distinctiveness, the neglect of which has also impeded full participation. In the case of gender, universalist claims aim to combat “overfeminization” by demanding recognition of women *as persons*. Differentialist claims, in contrast, aim to combat “underfeminization” by demanding recognition of women *as women*.⁵⁴ Both overfeminization and underfeminization constitute serious impediments to women’s full participation. Where both exist, therefore, both universalist recognition and differentialist recognition are needed to ensure the intersubjective conditions of gender parity.

Yet the two kinds of claims stand in tension with one another. Whereas the thrust of universalist recognition is to undermine gender differentiation, the thrust of the differentialist recognition is precisely to enhance it. The first approach appears to conform to the dedifferentiating thrust of transformative redistribution.

⁵⁴ I take the terms “underfeminization” and “overfeminization” from Denise Riley, *“Am I That Name?” Feminism and the Category of “Women” in History* (University of Minnesota Press, 1988).

The second, in contrast, appears to contradict it. When examined more closely, however, both approaches to recognition can have negative effects on attempts to redress economic injustice via redistribution.

Consider, as an example, the historic splits among feminists over protective legislation. Opponents of such legislation wanted legal recognition of women's autonomy as a remedy for overfeminization and economic marginalization. Proponents, in contrast, wanted gender-specific protections as a remedy for underfeminization and exploitation. Thus, the two sides differed over what sort of recognition women required. Proponents of protective legislation wanted differentialist recognition of women *as women*, while opponents wanted universalist recognition of women *as persons and citizens*. Both forms of recognition turned out to be problematic with respect to distribution. On the one hand, protective legislation limiting women's employment had the unintended consequence of harming some women economically by excluding them from higher-paying jobs; thus a claim for the recognition of difference impacted negatively on distribution. Yet, on the other hand, the dismantling of coverture's protections also harmed some women economically by depriving them of traditional grounds for claiming support from husbands and fathers in a context where such support was still needed by most women; thus, a claim for universalist recognition also had some negative effects on distribution. Moreover, each of the two approaches also had unintended negative effects internal to recognition. Protectionist claims for the recognition of gender difference ended up exacerbating harms of overfeminization even as they sought to remedy harms of underfeminization. Conversely, antiprotectionist claims for universalist recognition ended up exacerbating harms of underfeminization even as they sought to remedy harms of overfeminization.

The problem is still with us today. Analogous splits among feminists have recently surfaced over (unpaid) pregnancy leave from paid work. In this case, one side supports a special pregnancy

leave policy while the other side supports the inclusion of pregnancy in general disability-leave policy. The proponents of a special pregnancy leave hold that women need to be recognized *as women*; rejecting the assimilation of pregnancy to a “disability,” they demand recognition of women’s distinctive *ability* to bear children. In contrast, feminists opposed to such a special pregnancy leave argue that women need to be recognized *as workers and citizens*. Thus, one side seeks differentialist recognition in order to remedy harms of underfeminization, while the other side seeks universalist recognition in order to remedy harms of overfeminization. Both sides argue, moreover, that the other’s position would harm women economically. Pregnancy-leave advocates claim that their opponents’ stance exposes women wage-workers to risks of job loss that are not faced by men. Pregnancy-leave opponents claim that the advocates’ stance gives employers a disincentive to hire women of childbearing age. Both sides, unfortunately, are right. In both cases, policies aimed at remedying injustices of misrecognition risk exacerbating injustices of maldistribution. And policies aimed at remedying one kind of misrecognition risk exacerbating another.

What follows from this analysis? No proposals for recognition should be evaluated on recognition grounds alone. All should also be assessed from the standpoint of redistribution. The goal, in general, should be to avoid two different kinds of tradeoffs. First, one should oppose reforms that, however unintentionally, confer recognition in forms that exact high material costs. In their place, one should seek approaches that confer recognition in forms that maintain or enhance the economic well-being of claimants, thereby doubly supporting their capacity to function as full partners in social interaction. Second, one should oppose reforms that combat one form of misrecognition in ways that exacerbate another. In their place, one should seek approaches that confer recognition in forms that redress both (or more) forms of misrecognition simultaneously.

The key, once again, is the imbrication of economy and culture. In some cases, as we saw, recognition policies can exacerbate maldistribution. Even failing that, moreover, they are liable to the charge of being “merely symbolic.”⁵⁵ When pursued in contexts marked by gross disparities in material well-being, reforms aimed at recognizing distinctiveness tend to devolve into empty gestures; like the sort of recognition that would put women on a pedestal, they mock, rather than redress, serious harms. In such contexts, recognition reforms cannot succeed unless they are joined with struggles for redistribution. In short, no recognition without redistribution.

The need, in all cases, is to think integratively. As an example of such integrative thinking, consider the policy of comparable worth. Here an effort to redistribute income between men and women is expressly integrated with an effort to restructure gender-coded cultural patterns of interpretation and valuation. The underlying premise is that gender injustices of distribution and recognition are so complexly intertwined that neither can be redressed independently of the other. Efforts to reduce the gender wage gap simply by outlawing discrimination cannot fully succeed, as they do not attack the more pervasive and consequential structure of occupational segregation by gender, which concentrates the mass of female wage-earners in low-paying service employment. Likewise, efforts to revalue female-coded traits such as interpersonal sensitivity and nurturance cannot succeed if they remain solely on the cultural plane, as they do not attack the structural economic constraints that connect those traits with dependency and powerlessness. Only an approach that redresses the cultural devaluation of the “feminine” precisely *within* the economy can deliver serious redistribution and genuine recognition.

Such an approach, moreover, is necessarily transformative, as opposed to affirmative. Revaluing the feminine within the economy cannot be achieved by surface reallocations of “primary

⁵⁵ I am grateful to Steven Lukes for insisting on this point in conversation.

goods.” Rather, it requires transforming the underlying structures that generate end-state maldistribution, especially the gender division between breadwinning and unpaid caregiving. As we shall see, moreover, this entails a deconstructive politics of recognition, in which differentialist recognition and universalist recognition are combined in support of a transformative end.

Having surveyed the practical tensions, let us return to our central question: Is it possible to develop a comprehensive programmatic framework capable of integrating redistribution and recognition so as to ensure the necessary conditions for participatory parity?

Recall that participatory parity has both objective and intersubjective preconditions. On the objective side, people cannot participate as peers in social life in the absence of certain material prerequisites. First, they must enjoy freedom from deprivation and from the sort of dependency that renders one susceptible to exploitation; absent such freedom, they lack independent standing and thus “voice.” Second, they must live in a society that does not institutionalize great disparities in wealth and income; although some such disparities are inevitable and unobjectionable, they must not be so great as to constitute “two nations,” undermine equal standing, and create second-class citizens. Finally, the society must not institutionalize great disparities in leisure time. When some people, but not others, must work a double shift, for example, the former lack equal opportunities to participate in social life.

Participatory parity also has intersubjective conditions. People cannot interact as peers in the absence of certain cultural prerequisites. In general, the institutionalized cultural patterns of interpretation and evaluation must express equal respect for all participants and ensure equal opportunity for achieving social esteem. This requires the absence of institutionalized value schemata that systematically depreciate some categories of people and the qualities and activities associated with them. Precluded here are institutionalized patterns of signification that disadvantage some people

either by burdening them with excess ascribed “difference” or by failing to acknowledge their distinctiveness. Only when the status order is free of such pervasive biases can social actors interact as peers.

THE WELFARE STATE AS A NEXUS OF DISTRIBUTION
AND RECOGNITION : A CRITIQUE
OF CURRENT U. S. ARRANGEMENTS

How, then, might one institutionalize these conditions? Returning to our paradigm case of gender, let us consider what is involved in integrating redistribution and recognition in a welfare state. The welfare state is fundamental for institutionalizing the conditions for participatory parity. It is already widely understood to have a major role to play in ensuring just distribution by eliminating poverty, exploitable dependency, and gross disparities in income and leisure time. But the welfare state should also be understood as having a major role to play in promoting reciprocal recognition by institutionalizing bias-free norms that express equal respect for all citizens. In fact, the welfare state is a central nexus of interpenetration of economy and culture. Welfare states distribute material benefits, to be sure, but in doing so, they also institutionalize cultural norms of entitlement and desert; and they construct various distinct (and often unequally valued) subject positions or identities for their claimants and beneficiaries.⁵⁶ Thus, the welfare state is a key point of imbrication of economy and culture, redistribution and recognition.

The welfare state, moreover, is crucial for gender relations. Welfare states regulate interactions between labor markets and families, which are central to the constitution of gender, and which affect both distribution and recognition. On the one hand, welfare states help to shape the gender division of labor, especially the division between paid employment and the unpaid work of care-

⁵⁶ Fraser, “Women, Welfare, and the Politics of Need Interpretation” and “Struggle over Needs.”

giving. Consequently, they shape the gender distribution of deprivation, dependency, income, and leisure time. Meanwhile, from the perspective of recognition, welfare states institutionalize value-laden interpretations of sexuality, gender roles, the causes of poverty, the nature of citizenship, the sources of entitlement, and what counts as work and as a contribution to society. In so doing, they help to shape the social meanings of femininity and masculinity, the gender relations of recognition, and hence the modes in which women are (mis)recognized.

Existing welfare states, in the United States and elsewhere, are unjust to women of all races and classes. They fail to ensure the necessary objective and intersubjective conditions for participation. Historically organized around the family wage, the very structure of existing welfare states is androcentric. The fundamental class-based division between social insurance, on the one hand, and public assistance, on the other, has a gender subtext. Originally designed for relatively privileged (white male) breadwinners, social insurance still institutionalizes androcentric norms today. Treating life patterns associated with masculinity as normative, its retirement pensions and other benefits are conditioned on primary labor-market employment; they privilege people who continue uninterrupted in full-time employment from the time they leave school until the time they retire or die. The result is not only to disadvantage women economically, but also to convey the cultural message that “feminine” life-patterns are second class, even as these patterns become more widespread for both genders in an era of deindustrialization and downsizing.

Meanwhile, the public assistance side of existing welfare states institutionalizes both economic disadvantage and hierarchies of status. In the United States, public assistance programs for poor single mothers and their children are separated from social insurance programs geared to “workers,” thus implying that women’s unpaid caregiving is not “work.” With benefit levels insufficient to prevent poverty, moreover, the former programs are notoriously

punitive, stigmatizing, and encumbered with strings that violate claimants' autonomy. Denied secure entitlements and "targeted" for public hostility, "welfare mothers" are portrayed as privileged scroungers who enjoy a soft life of leisure, unearned luxuries, and unconstrained sex at the expense of the hardworking taxpayers. The fear of ending up a "welfare mother" helps keep many other women dependent upon, and potentially exploitable by, male partners and bosses and supervisors, restricting their exit options and thus their "voice." Viewed as a whole, then, the existing U.S. welfare state institutionalizes gender-specific forms of maldistribution and misrecognition. It fails to ensure either the objective or the intersubjective conditions for gender-based parity of participation.⁵⁷

For all these reasons, the reform of the welfare state constitutes a good test case for the project of integrating redistribution and recognition in a comprehensive framework.

ENSURING PARTICIPATORY PARITY: UNIVERSAL BREADWINNER OR CAREGIVER PARITY?

Accordingly, I propose to use the example of restructuring the welfare state to illustrate the value of the conceptions I have proposed in this lecture. Applying the notions of participatory parity, perspectival dualism, and the interpenetration of redistribution and recognition, as well as the distinctions between affirmative and transformative redistribution, on the one hand, and universalist and differentialist recognition, on the other, I seek to show why two initially promising approaches to welfare-state reform must fail in the end to remedy gender injustice.

Both of these approaches are feminist. Both seek to restructure the relation between breadwinning and caregiving so as to redress gender maldistribution and misrecognition. But they differ importantly from one another. The first approach I call Universal Breadwinner. Universal Breadwinner is the vision of the welfare state implicit in the current political practice of most U.S. feminists

⁵⁷ Ibid.

and liberals. (It was also assumed in the former state-socialist countries!) It aims to foster gender parity by promoting women's employment, especially via state provision of employment-enabling services such as day care. The second approach I call Caregiver Parity. Caregiver Parity is the vision of the welfare state implicit in the current political practice of most Western European feminists and social democrats. It aims to promote gender parity chiefly by supporting informal carework, especially via state provision of caregiver allowance.⁵⁸

Both approaches seek to combine redistribution and recognition so as to ensure gender parity of participation. But they pursue different conceptions of recognition. Universal Breadwinner aims to promote economic equality and equal respect by organizing social arrangements so that women's lives can become more like men's are supposed to be now. Caregiver Parity, in contrast, aims to promote economic equality and equal respect by revaluing "feminine" life-patterns so as to "make (gender) difference costless."⁵⁹ Thus, Universal Breadwinner seeks to achieve redistribution in combination with universalist recognition aimed at combating "overfeminization." Caregiver Parity, in contrast, seeks to achieve redistribution in combination with differentialist recognition aimed at combating "underfeminization."

Both approaches are initially promising. Yet, as we shall see, neither can fully succeed in ensuring gender-based participatory parity. Although both seek to integrate redistribution and recognition, neither appreciates the full extent of the interpenetration of economy and culture. As a result, both approaches unwittingly set in motion crosscurrents that undermine their aims. In one case, a

⁵⁸ The following discussion of Universal Breadwinner and Caregiver Parity draws on my essay "After the Family Wage: A Postindustrial Thought in Experiment" in Fraser, *Justice Interruptus*. Here, however, the discussion is recast in terms of redistribution and recognition.

⁵⁹ I take the phrase "making difference costless" from Christine A. Littleton, "Reconstructing Sexual Equality," in *Feminist Legal Theory: Readings in Law and Gender*, ed. Katharine T. Bartlett and Rosanne Kennedy (Westview Press, 1991).

strategy for redistribution generates effects of misrecognition, which in turn promote maldistribution, thereby further subverting recognition. In the other case, a proposal for recognition impacts negatively on distribution in ways that rebound to exacerbate misrecognition, which in turn intensifies maldistribution. Both Universal Breadwinner and Caregiver Parity, in sum, generate vicious circles of unintended effects due to the interpenetration of economy and culture.

Consider, first, Universal Breadwinner. This scenario focuses on freeing women from unpaid responsibilities so they can take full-time employment on terms comparable to men. Casework is to be shifted from the family to social services (for example, day care and elder care) so that women can be breadwinners like men. Assuming the availability of sufficient high-paying breadwinner jobs, would this scenario work? Would Universal Breadwinner succeed in remedying gender-specific maldistribution and misrecognition so as to promote participatory parity for women? The answer, unfortunately, is no.

To be sure, Universal Breadwinner initially looks good from the standpoint of distribution. By assuring women's access to high-paying breadwinner jobs, it would prevent much gender-specific deprivation and exploitation. At first sight, moreover, it appears to promote gender equality in income and leisure time. But the implications for women's status are problematic. As we saw, Universal Breadwinner assumes a universalist orientation in which women are to be recognized as citizen-workers. Far from redressing gender biases in institutionalized patterns of interpretation and valuation, however, this approach reinforces androcentrism. Universal Breadwinner valorizes men's traditional sphere —employment —and tries to help women fit in. Traditionally female carework, in contrast, is treated instrumentally; it is what must be sloughed off in order to become a breadwinner, not something valuable in itself. The ideal-typical citizen here is the breadwinner, now nominally gender-neutral. But the content of the status is

implicitly masculine; it is the male half of the old breadwinner/homemaker couple.

This androcentric “workerist” view of recognition also has negative consequences for distribution. Universal Breadwinner assumes that virtually all of women’s current domestic and care-work responsibilities can be shifted to social services. This is patently false, however, as we know from the Communist experience. Some things, such as childbearing, attending to family emergencies, and much parenting work cannot be shifted, short of universal surrogacy and other presumably undesirable arrangements. Even those tasks that are shifted, moreover, do not disappear without a trace, but give rise to burdensome new tasks of coordination. Women’s chances for participatory parity depend, then, on whether men can be induced to do their fair share of this work. On this, however, Universal Breadwinner does not inspire confidence. Not only does it offer no disincentives to free-riding, but in valorizing paid work, it implicitly denigrates unpaid work, thereby fueling the motivation to shirk. The likely outcome is that women will still be burdened with the lion’s share of unpaid carework.

This, in turn, will have negative consequences for women’s status. With caregiving still feminized, women’s association with reproduction and domesticity will persist at the symbolic level, and they will appear as breadwinners manqué. That, in turn, will fuel gender discrimination in employment and androcentrism in the wage scale. Failing to ensure reciprocal recognition, then, Universal Breadwinner will fail to ensure just distribution as well. In general, even under ideal conditions, this approach cannot establish the conditions for gender-based parity of participation.⁶⁰

Consider, then, the Caregiver Parity alternative. This scenario aims to promote parity of participation by revaluing caregiving in both distribution and recognition. Unlike Universal Breadwinner, it would keep most carework in the household and support it with

⁶⁰ For a more detailed account of the merits and demerits of Universal Breadwinner, see Fraser, “After the Family Wage.”

caregiver allowances. Many women would continue the current “feminine” practice of alternating between employment and care-work, while welfare programs would facilitate the transitions so as to render this life-pattern costless. Assuming the availability of sufficient tax revenues to fund generous caregiver allowances, would this scenario work? Would Caregiver Parity succeed in remedying gender-specific maldistribution and misrecognition so as to ensure participatory parity for women? The answer, once again, is no.

To be sure, Caregiver Parity initially looks promising from the standpoint of recognition. It treats caregiving as intrinsically valuable, not as a mere obstacle to employment, thus challenging the view that only men’s traditional activities are fully human. It also accommodates “feminine” life-patterns, instead of insisting that women assimilate to men’s. But the implications for distribution are problematic. Although caregiver allowances would help to equalize leisure time and to prevent gender-specific deprivation and exploitation, they would also entrench gender disparities in income, as we know from the Nordic experience. Caregiver Parity would institute a “mommy track” in employment —a market in flexible, noncontinuous full- and/or part-time jobs. Most of these jobs would pay considerably less even at the full-time rate than comparable breadwinner-track jobs. Two-partner families would have an economic incentive to keep one partner on the breadwinner track rather than to share spells of carework between them. Given current labor markets, making the breadwinner the man would be most advantageous for heterosexual couples. Given current culture and socialization, moreover, men would be unlikely to choose the mommy track in the same proportions as women. So the two employment tracks would carry traditional gender associations. Those associations would be likely in turn to produce discrimination against women in the breadwinner track. Caregiver Parity might make difference cost less, then, but it would not make difference costless.

This in turn will have negative consequences for women's status. Although citizen-workers and citizen-caregivers are supposed to be statuses of equivalent dignity, the former would remain associated with masculinity and the latter with femininity. Given those traditional gender associations, plus the economic differential between the two life-patterns, caregiving would not attain true parity with breadwinning. Failing to ensure just distribution, then, Caregiver Parity would fail to redress androcentrism as well. In general, even under the ideal conditions assumed here, this approach, too, cannot establish the conditions for gender-based parity of participation.⁶¹

What should we conclude from this discussion? Both Universal Breadwinner and Caregiver Parity are highly ambitious visions of a feminist welfare state. Yet neither can ensure gender justice. Because neither fully comprehends the interpenetration of economy and culture, neither can succeed in integrating redistribution and recognition. Rather, both give rise to unintended effects that subvert the effort to ensure participatory parity for women. We can understand both failures more precisely by recalling the affirmative/transformative and universalist/differentialist distinctions.

From the standpoint of distribution, the problem is that neither Universal Breadwinner nor Caregiver Parity is sufficiently transformative. Both approaches rely primarily on affirmative remedies to redress maldistribution, especially surface reallocations of end-state primary goods. For Universal Breadwinner, the goods in question are breadwinner jobs; for Caregiver Parity, they are income transfers. In neither case does the remedy transform the underlying structure that generates the injustice. Neither transforms the gender differentiation of breadwinning and caregiving.

From the standpoint of recognition, the problem is that neither approach is sufficiently deconstructive. Both are too one-sided to remedy overfeminization and underfeminization simultaneously.

⁶¹ For a more detailed account of the merits and demerits of Caregiver Parity, see *ibid.*

Universal Breadwinner offers an abstract universalism, which neglects the weight of women's past and present association with caregiving. Holding women to the same androcentric standard as men, it entrenches institutional arrangements that prevent them from attaining full parity; thus, it exacerbates underfeminization in the process of trying to remedy overfeminization. Caregiver Parity, in contrast, offers an abstract version of differentialist recognition, which reifies women's association with caregiving. Establishing a double standard to accommodate gender difference, it entrenches arrangements that fail to ensure equal respect and equal rewards for "feminine" activities and life-patterns; thus, it exacerbates overfeminization in the process of trying to remedy underfeminization. Because neither approach transcends the abstract opposition between universalism and differentialism, in sum, neither succeeds in redressing overfeminization and underfeminization simultaneously.

In general, then, neither Universal Breadwinner nor Caregiver Parity establishes the conditions for gender parity of participation. Suppose, therefore, we try to develop a third alternative. To devise an approach that successfully integrates redistribution and recognition, we should be guided by the lessons of the previous discussion. First, a viable approach must attend to the interpretation of economy and culture in order to avoid unintended effects. Second, such an approach must incorporate a transformative politics of redistribution; instead of contenting itself with end-state reallocations of primary goods, it must restructure the organization of work. Third, a viable approach must also incorporate a deconstructive politics of recognition; eschewing both abstract universalism and abstract differentialism, it must create a new synthesis by universalizing a suppressed difference.

To apply these lessons, let's return to the root of the problem, which is the institutionalized differentiation of breadwinning and caregiving. Just as capitalism differentiated economy from culture, so it also differentiated the masculine-coded social role of "bread-

winning” from the feminine-coded social role of “caregiving,” associating each with a distinctive set of gendered meanings and values and assigning each to a separate sphere. Today, of course, the overwhelming majority of women of all “races” and most classes combine caregiving with paid employment. Yet both the differentiation of the two roles and their gender coding persist, generating gender-specific forms of maldistribution and misrecognition. Any attempt to reform the welfare state today must transform this deep structural differentiation.

The key, then, is to deconstruct the gender-based differentiation of breadwinning and caregiving. This cannot be done in the manner of Universal Breadwinner, however, by trying to make women more like men are now. Nor can it be done, following Caregiver Parity, by trying to make women’s difference costless. Rather, it requires that we try to make men more like most women are now — viz., people who do primary carework. This means envisioning a society in which women’s current life-patterns are the norm for everyone. Women today often combine breadwinning and caregiving, albeit with great difficulty and strain. A society committed to participatory parity must ensure that men do the same, while redesigning institutions so as to eliminate the difficulty and strain.⁶²

Such a society would promote participatory parity by effectively dismantling the gendered opposition between breadwinning and

⁶² Here we encounter the limits of the liberal commitment to state neutrality vis-à-vis different conceptions of the good. In order to achieve just distribution and reciprocal recognition, it is necessary to devise policies that challenge conservative views of family and gender relations. (I am grateful to Elizabeth Anderson for clarifying this point in her response to the present lecture.) This conclusion is unavoidable, given my account of participatory parity. The view that justice requires social arrangements that permit all (adult) members of society to interact with one another as peers is itself not neutral between feminist and fundamental views of gender relations. And the inclusion within its purview of recognition in addition to distribution brings to a head the potential conflict between justice and state neutrality. For an extended and, to my mind, persuasive argument for the priority of gender justice over state neutrality, see John Exdell, “Feminism, Fundamentalism, and Liberal Legitimacy,” *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 24, no. 3 (September 1994): 441-64.

caregiving. It would integrate activities that are currently separated from one another, eliminate their gender-coding, and encourage men to perform them too. This, however, is tantamount to a wholesale restructuring of the institution of gender. The construction of breadwinning and caregiving as separate roles, coded masculine and feminine respectively, is a principal undergirding of the current gender order. To dismantle those roles and their cultural coding is in effect to overturn that order. It means subverting the existing gender division of labor and reducing the salience of gender as a structural principle of social organization.⁶³ At the limit, it suggests deconstructing gender.⁶⁴

If this represents a plausible scenario for integrating redistribution and recognition, it is worth understanding precisely why. This third approach incorporates a more deconstructive politics of recognition than Universal Breadwinner and Caregiver Parity. Neither abstractly universalist nor simply differentialist, it creates a new synthesis by universalizing (and thereby degendering) the previously devalued “difference” of caregiving. Likewise, the third approach entails a more transformative politics of redistribution than Universal Breadwinner and Caregiver Parity. Instead of focusing on end-state reallocations of primary goods, it restructures the underlying division of labor and transforms the underlying organization of work. The overall result is to establish the basis for participatory parity.

To be sure, this approach is utopian. Nevertheless, one might apply the lessons learned from considering it to devise transitional reforms that can point to transformative ends.

CONCLUSION

Let me conclude this lecture by recapitulating my overall argument. I have argued that to pose an either/or choice between the

⁶³ Susan Moller Okin, *Justice, Gender, and the Family* (Basic Books, 1989).

⁶⁴ Joan Williams, “Deconstructing Gender,” in *Feminist Legal Theory*, ed. Katharine T. Bartlett and Rosanne Kennedy.

politics of redistribution and the politics of recognition is to posit a false antithesis. On the contrary, justice today requires both redistribution and recognition. The need for a two-pronged approach is especially clear, given bivalent differentiations such as gender, which entrench both economic and cultural injustices. But it applies far more broadly than that. Thus, I have argued for a comprehensive political framework that encompasses both redistribution and recognition so as to challenge injustice on both fronts.

I then examined several kinds of issues that arise when we contemplate devising such a framework. On the normative philosophical level, I proposed a single, bivalent conception of justice that encompasses both redistribution and recognition, without reducing either one of them to the other. And I proposed the notion of *parity of participation* as its normative core. Parity of participation is impossible, I claimed, in the absence of the “objective condition” of just distribution and the “intersubjective condition” of reciprocal recognition. Justice could require recognition of group distinctiveness, moreover, where the failure to acknowledge the latter impedes full participation in social life.

Then, on the social-theoretical level, I argued for a *perspectival dualism* of redistribution and recognition. Unlike economism and culturalism, this approach does not reduce either one of those concepts to the other. Unlike substantive dualism, however, it does not view redistribution and recognition as pertaining to two different societal domains, economy and culture. Rather, perspectival dualism treats them as analytical perspectives that can be trained upon any domain. This approach alone, I contended, can do justice both to the apparent institutional separation of economy and culture in capitalist society and to their interpenetration. It alone can conceptualize the possibility of practical tensions between claims for redistribution and claims for recognition.

Moving next to the practical-political level, I surveyed the tensions that can arise when we contemplate integrating redistribution and recognition in a single political framework. Rejecting the view

that the politics of redistribution necessarily conflicts with the politics of recognition, I distinguished affirmative redistribution from transformative redistribution, on the one hand, and universalist recognition from differentialist recognition, on the other. With these distinctions, I identified several different kinds of practical tensions and traced their roots to the interpenetration of economy and culture. The key to defusing such tensions, I argued, is to attend the inevitable effects of distribution on recognition and vice versa. Only in this way can one avoid exacerbating misrecognition in the course of trying to remedy maldistribution and vice versa. Only in this way, likewise, can one avoid exacerbating one kind of misrecognition in the course of remedying another. The need, I suggested, is to think integratively —by seeking out transformative approaches to redistribution and deconstructive approaches to recognition.

Finally, my discussion of gender parity and the welfare state served to exemplify how one might go about answering the general question I have posed in this lecture: how can one integrate the best of the social politics of redistribution with the best of the cultural politics of recognition? If we fail to ask this question, if we cling instead to false antitheses and misleading either/or dichotomies, we will miss the chance to envision social arrangements that can redress both economic and cultural injustices. Only by looking to integrative approaches that unite redistribution and recognition in the service of participatory parity can we meet the requirements of justice for all.

