

## CHAPTER 23

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# PERFORMATIVE CITIZENSHIP

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## INTRODUCTION

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CITIZENSHIP as a legal institution governs who may and may not *act* as a subject of rights within any given polity.<sup>1</sup> Being 'a subject of rights' means having both

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<sup>1</sup> In this chapter I will use the generic concept 'polity' to indicate any organized society with a political arrangement, including nation-states as one specific type of polity.

the capacity and the authority to exercise rights *and* duties. Citizenship governs whether I may or may not travel to, work, or study in another country; how long I may stay there; to which country and how I pay my taxes; whether I serve as a soldier, I may drive, I may drink in public, I may vote, I receive health care or unemployment benefits, I may marry my same-sex partner, and when I may retire, and much else besides. Many such rights and duties associated with citizenship have developed especially since the eighteenth century. Today a combination of such rights and duties can be described as the regime of citizenship of any polity.<sup>2</sup> Yet, being a subject of these rights involves political struggle. I may or may not act to exercise my rights or claim other rights and rights for others or to refuse duties. I may ask questions about why I may not marry my partner. I may refuse to serve in the army, may refuse to vote in an election, may occupy public spaces as a protest. What citizens may or may not do involves political struggle because there will be disagreement not only about all these questions but also about who is a subject of these rights—citizens—and who does not enjoy them—non-citizens. In other words, because citizenship is *constitutive* of rights and because who can exercise and claim these rights is itself *contestable*, citizenship is practised not only by exercising these rights but also by claiming them. In this chapter I outline a perspective that broadens the conventional view of citizenship as a legal institution and expands on its performative aspects. I will argue that a performative perspective on citizenship as making rights claims across multiple social groups and polities reveals its creative and transformative possibilities. I have two main objectives. First, I want to focus our attention on the actions of actors, on how people creatively perform citizenship rather than following a script. This allows us to appreciate that how people perform citizenship plays an important role in contesting and constructing citizenship and attaching meanings to rights. Second, I hope to highlight that those engaged in the constitution of citizenship are not always citizens in the conventional sense of members of a nation-state, do not always act in the context of democratic or Euro-American polities, and may contest and constitute more than one understanding of citizenship at a time.

I shall use ‘performative citizenship’ in five distinct but overlapping senses, that: (a) citizenship involves political and social struggles over who may and may not act as a subject of rights; (b) these struggles feature not only citizens but also non-citizens as relational actors; (c) citizens and non-citizens include different social groups making rights claims; (d) people enact citizenship by exercising, claiming, and performing rights and duties, and; (e) when people enact citizenship they creatively transform its meanings and functions.<sup>3</sup> I will argue that all these senses are present when performative citizenship accomplishes its transformative

<sup>2</sup> On citizenship regimes see Vink in this volume.

<sup>3</sup> Rutvica Andrijasevic, ‘Acts of Citizenship as Methodology’, in Engin F. Isin and Michael Saward, eds., *Enacting European Citizenship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 47–65; Claudia

possibilities.<sup>4</sup> I will first expand on the five senses of performative citizenship I have just listed.<sup>5</sup> I will then illustrate performative citizenship in democratic and non-democratic polities. Then I will consider performative citizenship not only across social groups but also across polities. The concluding section discusses the emerging research on performative citizenship and highlights four research problems discussed in the literature.

## THE SENSES OF PERFORMATIVE CITIZENSHIP

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The first sense in which citizenship is performative concerns the issue of struggle. Although citizenship is often considered a more or less stable membership of a state, a performative perspective considers citizenship as anything but stable. Who may and may not act as a subject of rights is determined by ongoing political and social struggles over not only the content of rights but also who are or are not entitled to them. If performative citizenship is a struggle over the subjects of rights, this struggle creates a scene in which social groups contest their similarities and differences. This argument is predicated on a sociological proposition that in any given polity there is often a social group whose *particular* characteristics dominate as seemingly *universal* characteristics.<sup>6</sup> If we recognize that since the eighteenth century first in Euro-America and then across the world the nation-state became

Aradau and Jef Huysmans, 'Critical Methods in International Relations: The Politics of Techniques, Devices and Acts', *European Journal of International Relations* 20, no. 3 (2014): pp. 596–619.

<sup>4</sup> To approach citizenship as performative acts draws inspiration from ordinary language philosophy, performance studies, and symbolic interactionism. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss these sources. The word 'performative' was used by philosopher J.L. Austin in *How to Do Things with Words* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962). He distinguished performative from constative utterances to emphasize how we perform acts *in* and *by* using language as opposed to describing a state of affairs. Since Austin, performativity became a particular approach in social sciences and humanities to study how people perform their subjectivity. For an overview see James Loxley, *Performativity* (London: Routledge, 2007). For performativity in performances studies see Tracy C. Davis, *The Cambridge Companion to Performance Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008). See also Andrew Parker and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Performativity and Performance* (London: Routledge, 1995). For performativity in sociology of symbolic interactionism see Erving Goffman, *Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face-to-Face Behaviour* (New York: Doubleday, 1967); *Encounters: Two Studies in the Sociology of Interaction* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1961).

<sup>5</sup> See Bosniak in this volume.

<sup>6</sup> Iris Marion Young, 'Polity and Group Difference: A Critique of the Ideal of Universal Citizenship', *Ethics* 99, no. 2 (1989): pp. 250–274.

the dominant polity, we must acknowledge those who were *disqualified* as citizens. To put it conversely, the particular characteristics of a narrow social group, such as being perceived as propertied, adult, male, rational, white, Christian, heterosexual, and able-bodied became the dominant universal characteristics in the modern state. These characteristics created various other social groups as subjects without rights: the poor, young, women, irrational, black, non-Christian (Muslim, Indigenous, Jewish), ethnic minorities, queers (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, intersex), and disabled people were deemed not capable of fulfilling the duties of citizenship and hence acting as citizens.

It was only in the twentieth century that the struggles of women, blacks, and queers started to significantly challenge this domination. These social struggles began unravelling the dominant characteristics of citizenship. This unravelling is still under way. We belong to an age when the dominant citizen-subject and *his* (only much later *their*) characteristics are challenged yet where the subject positions of its contestants remain as precarious and subaltern as ever. Youth, children, disabled, Muslims, the poor, blacks, women, queers—in any combination of these—make rights claims to the characteristics of citizenship so that they might cross from their precarious positions to at least more liveable positions.<sup>7</sup>

The second sense in which citizenship is performative concerns how social groups struggling for rights bring into play both citizens and non-citizens. The social groups I have mentioned above do not struggle to become subjects of rights from identical positions. They occupy different subject positions ranging from citizens (insiders) to strangers, outsiders, and aliens.<sup>8</sup> We have already suggested that citizens are those subjects whose entitlements or privileges are instituted as civil, political, and social rights. Often *strangers* are those subjects who, while accepted into citizenship, are still considered strangers in the sense that they have not yet fulfilled requirements to act as citizens. Modern examples are women (in nineteenth-century Britain) and blacks (in twentieth-century America) as both social groups that were deemed strangers of citizenship because dominant social groups considered them as lacking capacities. Yet both women and later blacks were also understood as indispensable parts of the polity that fulfilled functions for it (reproduction for women as mothers, labour for blacks as slaves first and then as workers).<sup>9</sup> By contrast, those social groups who are deemed *outsiders* to citizenship may find

<sup>7</sup> See Donaldson and Kymlicka in this volume (focusing on how capacity to make rights claims is denied to certain categories of subjects: small children, mentally handicapped, and domestic animals. Their argument raises a challenge for any theory that presupposes cognitive capacities for performing citizenship).

<sup>8</sup> See Engin F. Isin, *Being Political: Genealogies of Citizenship* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002); Elizabeth F. Cohen, *Semi-Citizenship in Democratic Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Linda Bosniak, *The Citizen and the Alien* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

<sup>9</sup> See Smith in this volume.

themselves as migrants and refugees struggling for the right to be present in a polity. The difference between strangers and outsiders is often contingent on disposability or deportability: strangers are sometimes accepted as indispensable yet corrigible (i.e., subject of/to discipline) whereas outsiders may sometimes become indispensable *yet* incorrigible (i.e., subject of/to punishment). Yet criminalization and imprisonment can also sometimes play on young black men, for example, such that they can straddle the positions of stranger and outsider. In fact, straddling between these subject positions provides the dynamics of citizenship as play rather than a static institution. Those deemed as *aliens* of a polity typically face total rejection of compatibility with or even respectability for acquiring or accessing citizenship. Categories of people such as enemy combatants or terrorists correspond to such irredeemable or rejected subjects.<sup>10</sup>

The subject positions of citizens, strangers, outsiders, and aliens are neither static nor impermeable. There is a huge variety of social groups that move through or across these positions. The boundaries between citizens, strangers, outsiders, and aliens are dynamic and permeable precisely because they *are* objects of social struggles. As we have already mentioned, people actually identify with or are ascribed to various social groups and constantly traverse subject positions from citizens to non-citizens. Moving across these positions or breaking down the boundaries between them involves struggles over rights.<sup>11</sup> Governing ourselves as political subjects means exercising rights that we may have (e.g., the right to vote) and claiming rights that we may not have (e.g., the right to same-sex marriage). It also means making claims for or against rights others do not have as members of multiple social groups. Through citizenship we sort out or negotiate these differences and settle on certain conventions by traversing these subject positions and their boundaries.

So far I have discussed performative citizenship as though each polity develops its own distinct and independent conventions of citizenship. Yet, many social groups, even those defined as nations, stretch across not only these social boundaries but also borders of polities. The ways in which people act out performative citizenship traverse not only social groups within polities but also across polities.<sup>12</sup> This gives rise to numerous performative contradictions in citizenship. These partly arise from the fact that, just as in relations between citizens and non-citizens, there

<sup>10</sup> About these forms of otherness in non-democratic polities, see Lori in this volume.

<sup>11</sup> Luin Goldring and Patricia Landolt, eds., *Producing and Negotiating Non-Citizenship: Precarious Legal Status in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013); David Weissbrodt, *The Human Rights of Non-Citizens* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

<sup>12</sup> Rainer Bauböck recognizes this condition as 'citizenship constellations' where individuals simultaneously belong to several different polities (See Rainer Bauböck, 'Studying Citizenship Constellations', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36 (2010): pp. 847–859). Of these belongings 'external citizenship' is performed by people who live in one country but have a citizenship of another (see Rainer Bauböck, 'The Rights and Duties of External Citizenship', *Citizenship Studies* 13, no. 5 (2009): pp. 475–499).

are asymmetric power relations amongst polities. If indeed the sovereign state is the dominant polity of the modern age, it became dominant through a particular history involving Euro-American settler colonialism, colonialism, imperialism, and nationalism. Euro-American empires, such as Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, French, British, American, and German, have left indelible marks on places they colonized through various governing strategies and technologies and imposed various citizenship arrangements on colonies. It is these arrangements that erased or displaced already existing ones between and amongst various social groups and replaced them with forms of imperial citizenship. These indelible marks of colonialism have not only inscribed names—such as the Americas, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East—but also citizenship arrangements whose legacies remain today. Euro-American empires subjected the peoples of these continents to various forms of asymmetric rule and justified this asymmetry by categorizing practices according to the presence or absence of the characteristics of the dominant social groups in imperial metropolises. So the citizen and non-citizen arrangements that obtained in each polity were disseminated across the metropole and the colony, creating both temporal and spatial arrangements of otherness. The colonial subjects were described for their fissiparous tribalism and were seen to have never understood or developed the characteristics of citizenship and its unifying powers.<sup>13</sup> If indeed colonial subjects were deemed to have understood citizenship, it was because it was ‘borrowed’ in postcolonial sovereign states. This makes studying citizenship in colonial and postcolonial states a vexed activity. Is the description ‘what citizens and non-citizens perform in making rights claims’ adequate to study citizenship in colonial and postcolonial states? It is important to emphasize here that approaching performative citizenship is partly inspired by this question and a direct response to it. A performative perspective on citizenship enables researchers to study various acts of making rights claims in societies and states before, during, and after colonization without making prior assumptions about the presence or absence of that which might be called citizenship.<sup>14</sup>

The third sense in which citizenship is performative is that it is enacted through ‘making rights claims’. I have already used this phrase above to indicate both the content of struggles over rights and what people are doing when they perform citizenship.<sup>15</sup> It is a concept that citizenship studies inherits from social movement

<sup>13</sup> Jack Harrington, ‘Orientalism, Political Subjectivity and the Birth of Citizenship between 1780 and 1830’, *Citizenship Studies* 16, no. 5–6 (2012): pp. 573–586.

<sup>14</sup> Engin F. Isin, ed., *Citizenship after Orientalism: Transforming Political Theory* (London: Palgrave, 2015).

<sup>15</sup> Engin F. Isin, ‘Claiming European Citizenship’, in Engin F. Isin and Michael Saward, eds., *Enacting European Citizenship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013) pp. 19–46; Karen Zivi, *Making Rights Claims: A Practice of Democratic Citizenship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Horacio N. Roque Ramirez, ‘Claiming Queer Cultural Citizenship: Gay Latino (Im)Migrant Acts In San Francisco’, in P. Noguera, A. Hurtado, and E. Fergus, eds., *Invisible No More: Understanding the*

studies which have drawn attention to how movements for civil rights, gender struggles, environmental justice, global justice, and minority recognition have often articulated their 'claims' as rights.<sup>16</sup> The key lesson is that social movements use the language of rights to articulate the injustices people suffer and show that people resist the ascribing of duties to them and the denial of rights to them and others. Performative citizenship signifies both a struggle (making rights claims) and what that struggle performatively brings into being (the right to claim rights).

There is a difference between claiming to be a subject of rights and making particular rights claims. This is a crucial distinction and it is essential for understanding performative citizenship.<sup>17</sup> It enables researchers to study how people stage creative and transformative resistances and articulate claims against domination (e.g. oppression, repression, discrimination, inequality) and the injustices it precipitates.<sup>18</sup> Their focus is not only on the exercise of rights and duties as they exist but also on claiming rights and duties yet to come as a result of social struggles. As Karen Zivi writes, if we consider citizenship as making rights claims, it intrinsically enacts the right to claims rights: 'we make rights claims to criticize practices we find objectionable, to shed light on injustice, to limit the power of government, and to demand state accountability and intervention.'<sup>19</sup> We often focus on the content of these rights rather than on making rights claims. As Zivi writes, however, 'to approach rights and rights claiming from the perspective of performativity means, then, asking questions not simply about what a right is but also about what it is we do when we make rights claims.'<sup>20</sup> This distinction emphasizes that, when performing the right to claim rights, there is a putative condition of equality between citizens and non-citizens. This putative condition of equality means that citizens and non-citizens are both performing the *universal* right to claim rights but the condition of difference means that the rights that they claim are *particular*.

When making rights claims, people are effectively saying 'I, we, they have a right to' and enact performative tensions inherent in citizenship. This is the fourth sense in which citizenship is performative. Both universal and particular rights

*Disenfranchisement of Latino Men and Boys* (New York: Routledge, 2012), pp. 180–203. Karen Zivi has given the most thorough account of the concept 'making rights claims'.

<sup>16</sup> Charles Tilly, *Contentious Performances* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

<sup>17</sup> The phrase 'the right to claim rights' is a variation on Hannah Arendt's well-known phrase 'the right to have rights' by which she meant the right to belong to a political community where one is judged by one's actions and ideas. See Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 2nd edition (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973) [1951], pp. 296–297.

<sup>18</sup> Or, as Judith Butler writes, 'the force of the performative is thus not inherited from prior usage, but issues forth precisely from its break with any and all prior usage. That break, that force of rupture, is the force of the performative' (See Judith Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), p. 148).

<sup>19</sup> Zivi (n 15), p. 3.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

that I have mentioned above come into being and become effective through acts (e.g., declarations, proclamations, protests, demonstrations, occupations, resistance, strikes, withdrawals) and conventions (e.g., rituals, customs, practices, traditions, laws, institutions, technologies, and protocols). Often, performing acts of citizenship invokes or breaks conventions. When we make rights claims we both reference and cite these conventions and yet the performative force of our claims often exceeds or breaks them.<sup>21</sup> As Judith Butler puts it, performativity often involves the ‘moment in which a subject—a person, a collective—asserts a right or entitlement to a liveable life when no such prior authorization exists, when no clearly enabling convention is in place.’<sup>22</sup> Yet, when there are clearly enabling conventions, making rights claims may still exceed those conventions. As Zivi writes, ‘analyzing [citizenship] from a performative perspective means, then, appreciating the extent to which our claims both reference and reiterate social conventions, and yet have forces and effects that exceed them.’<sup>23</sup> There is a constitutive tension between the right to claim rights as a universal right and making claims for particular rights. When we perform acts of citizenship we play out these two tensions.<sup>24</sup> This is what Butler describes as a performative contradiction which arises when a person or a group is ‘excluded from the universal, and yet belongs to it nevertheless, speaks from a split situation of being at once authorized and de-authorized.’<sup>25</sup> This is an important reason why the object of analysis in researching performative citizenship is acts and how they transform conventions.

The fifth sense in which citizenship is performative is when through struggling for their rights, the rights of others, and the rights to come, under certain conditions, people constitute themselves as citizens. Crucially, what makes citizenship performative in this sense is not only that it involves iterating or exceeding conventions about what people may and may not do but also that people often resist these conventions and transform them by applying principles such as equality, justice, liberty, emancipation, and solidarity. These principles enable or motivate people to struggle over rights by traversing the boundaries of social groups and borders of polities. By so doing citizens and non-citizens, with or without rights, assume responsibilities towards each other, across boundaries and borders, transform

<sup>21</sup> Herman Robert van Gunsteren, *A Theory of Citizenship: Organizing Plurality in Contemporary Democracies* (Boulder: Westview, 1998) (advocating a theory of citizenship as dissent rather than consent, which resonates with my view of performative citizenship). See also Holloway Sparks, ‘Dissident Citizenship: Democratic Theory, Political Courage, and Activist Women’, *Hypatia* 12, no. 4 (1997): pp. 74–110.

<sup>22</sup> Judith Butler, *Undoing Gender* (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 224.

<sup>23</sup> Zivi (n 15), p. 19.

<sup>24</sup> James Tully, *On Global Citizenship: James Tully in Dialogue* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), pp. 44–47.

<sup>25</sup> Judith Butler, ‘Sovereign Performatives in the Contemporary Scene of Utterance’, *Critical Inquiry* 23, no. 2 (1997): pp. 350–377, p. 368.

themselves and others, the rights under which they make claims, and the rights to which they make claims.

## PERFORMATIVE CITIZENSHIP IN DEMOCRATIC POLITIES

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We have already seen that there are limitations on the rights of citizens in democratic polities. We can, for example, examine how these limitations generate subject positions of strangers, outsiders, and aliens with respect to specific citizenship rights. The right to vote as a right of political citizenship in some Euro-American polities already excludes various social groups such as prisoners, children, and mentally disabled.<sup>26</sup> We can also explore how migrants and refugees experience various limits on their rights as non-citizens.<sup>27</sup> We can explore how citizens are juxtaposed against aliens.<sup>28</sup> We can explore minorities such as Muslims in non-Muslim democratic states and how they perform their citizenship.<sup>29</sup> Although we can expand this list and examine how both citizens and non-citizens enact various forms of otherness as strangers, outsiders, and aliens, the broader point here is that these positions are inherent in performative citizenship in all societies. These positions are not contingent but necessary elements of citizenship. They are important reminders that citizenship is inherently a differentiating institution and that citizens and non-citizens are relational positions.<sup>30</sup> The obverse of these limits imposed on the rights of democracy's others is the rights that non-citizens can claim by invoking other legal orders. There has been a significant debate over the human rights of non-citizens in democratic polities. Some of these people are stateless and are able to perform some human rights.<sup>31</sup> Some are citizens of other polities and are able to make rights claims through international law as well as in relation to their

<sup>26</sup> Ludvig Beckman, *The Frontiers of Democracy: The Right to Vote and Its Limits* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

<sup>27</sup> David Owen, 'Citizenship and the Marginalities of Migrants', in Philip Cook and Jonathan Seglow, eds., *The Margins of Citizenship* (London: Routledge, 2014), pp. 8–25.

<sup>28</sup> Bosniak (n 8).

<sup>29</sup> Anisa Mustafa, 'Active Citizenship, Dissent and Civic Consciousness: Young Muslims Redefining Citizenship on their Own Terms', *Identities* (2015): pp. 1–16, pp. 3–4.

<sup>30</sup> Cohen (n 8), p. 14.

<sup>31</sup> Weissbrodt (n 11).

countries of origin.<sup>32</sup> I want to illustrate this point with two social struggles in Euro-American societies over citizenship that have had far-reaching consequences for transforming the conception of the right to claim rights and of making rights claims: the struggles of indigenous peoples and the struggles of undocumented migrants.

Indigenous peoples in democratic postcolonial polities such as Canada and Australia raise particularly vexed questions about the rights of citizens.<sup>33</sup> As James Tully has argued, the colonization of indigenous peoples proceeded with appropriation and usurpation of territories without consent or recognition of their resistance to colonization.<sup>34</sup> For these postcolonial states the status of indigenous peoples has straddled across being aliens, outsiders, strangers, and even citizens and yet they still remain as oppressed peoples. Although there is a rich and provocative history of indigenous resistance to this oppression, a more recent struggle in Canada, the Idle No More movement, is now considered to have been a turning point.<sup>35</sup> The movement began in November 2012 as a political response to a Canadian federal government bill that severely eroded indigenous sovereignty and environmental protections.<sup>36</sup> The movement continued to grow not only by using the Internet for organizing itself as a resistance movement but also through hundreds of rallies, teach-ins, and protests for articulating alternatives to neo-colonialism.<sup>37</sup> Arguably, the Idle No More movement staged a performative citizenship which interrogated its relationship to and status within a Canadian citizenship regime. Some would object to this statement because, it could be argued, indigenous claims are not about citizenship but about sovereign self-determination. This would appear to be appropriate if we interpreted citizenship first and foremost as membership of the nation-state. However, performative citizenship helps us to recognize different subject positions as the claiming or acting out of citizenship. Idle No More is certainly *not* about being accepted into Canadian citizenship in the sense of status. But if we understand citizenship as performative acts of the right to claim rights and making rights claims, Idle No More must be seen as not only enacting its expressive demands but also performing dissident citizenship in its most evocative and poignant form.

<sup>32</sup> Yasemin Nuhoğlu Soysal, *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

<sup>33</sup> See Gover in this volume.

<sup>34</sup> James Tully, *Public Philosophy in a New Key: Democracy and Civic Freedom*, volume 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 259.

<sup>35</sup> Dina Gilio-Whitaker, 'Idle No More and Fourth World Social Movements in the New Millennium', *South Atlantic Quarterly* 114, no. 4 (October 2015): pp. 866–877.

<sup>36</sup> Selena Couture, 'Performativity of Time, Movement and Voice in Idle No More', *Performance Research* 19, no. 6 (2014): pp. 118–120.

<sup>37</sup> Lesley J. Wood, 'Idle No More, Facebook and Diffusion', *Social Movement Studies* 14, no. 5 (3 September 2015): pp. 615–621.

What performative acts of Idle No More inscribe in our imaginary is that the ways in which indigenous peoples have been subjected to internal colonization should not be read as a side story of citizenship. The narrative here is not that there were indigenous peoples and that their rights were fought for within constitutional orders of colonial and then federal governments. Rather, indigenous rights and their democratic citizenship practices were subjected to strategies and technologies governments deployed to extinguish, assimilate, incorporate, and accommodate the rights of indigenous peoples to govern themselves. The claims articulated by Idle No More are not about inclusion or recognition within Canadian citizenship but about demonstrating how Canadian citizenship constitutes indigenous peoples as its strangers, outsiders, and sometimes aliens. The movement therefore not only interrogates, once again, how this oppression remains a central aspect of Canadian citizenship but, perhaps more poignantly, how the Canadian citizenship regime perpetuates this internal colonization. Whether the claims it enacted are for citizenship or not, the performative acts of Idle No More, beginning with its very naming, have moved the question of indigenous people into the centre of the politics of citizenship itself.

A similar point can also be made for another movement that has marked an important shift in citizenship politics: No One is Illegal.<sup>38</sup> The struggles of undocumented migrants over the last three decades have been as consequential for the politics of citizenship as the resistance of indigenous people against citizenship regimes in which they are caught.<sup>39</sup> What began as undocumented migrants destroying their identity documents to enable them to make rights claims as refugees, the *sans-papiers* (without documents) movement in countries such as Canada, France, and Spain eventually mobilized a solidarity movement between citizens and non-citizens and thus troubled the boundaries that separate them.<sup>40</sup> As scholars such as Iker Barbero, Anne McNevin, Mary McThomas, Peter Nyers, Kim Rygiel, and Maurice Stierl have shown, the struggles of *sans-papiers* have interrogated the non-citizen in Euro-American democracies and raised fundamental questions about the boundaries and borders that separate it from the citizen.<sup>41</sup> The key issue has been to recognize the political agency of undocumented migrants. But this requires, as McThomas writes, flipping round our 'understanding of political obligation and ask[ing] what the state owes to those who perform the role of citizen,

<sup>38</sup> See e.g. Iker Barbero, 'Expanding Acts of Citizenship: The Struggles of Sinpapeles Migrants', *Social & Legal Studies* 21, no. 4 (December 2012): pp. 529–547; Kathleen Coll, 'Citizenship Acts and Immigrant Voting Rights Movements in the U.S.', *Citizenship Studies* 15, no. 8 (2011): pp. 993–1009; Aoileann Ni Mhurchu, 'Unfamiliar Acts of Citizenship: Enacting Citizenship in Vernacular Music and Language From the Space of Marginalised Intergenerational Migration', *Citizenship Studies* 20, no. 2 (2016): pp. 156–172.

<sup>39</sup> Federico Oliveri, 'Migrants as Activist Citizens in Italy: Understanding the New Cycle of Struggles', *Citizenship Studies* 16, no. 5–6 (2012): pp. 793–806, pp. 794–795.

<sup>40</sup> Catherine Raissiguier, 'Troubling Borders: Sans-Papiers in France', in H. Schwenken and S. Ruß-Sattar, eds., *New Border and Citizenship Politics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2014), pp. 156–170.

<sup>41</sup> Peter Nyers, 'No One is Illegal between City and Nation', *Studies in Social Justice* 4 (2011): pp. 127–143; Anne McNevin, 'Undocumented Citizens? Shifting Grounds of Citizenship in Los Angeles', in Peter Nyers

regardless of their documented status.<sup>42</sup> By drawing our attention to the dissonance between paper citizenship and performed citizenship McThomas argues that ‘instead of using a top-down approach in which we owe duties to the state because it protects us, we should use a bottom-up approach in which the performance of citizen-like duties trigger[s] the state’s protections.’<sup>43</sup> For Butler, however, flipping between paper citizenship and performed citizenship elides the performative force of claiming rights. For her ‘... when undocumented workers gather in the city of Los Angeles to claim their rights of assembly and of citizenship without being citizens, without having any legal right to do so, [by] acting like citizens, they make a [performative] ... claim to citizenship ...’<sup>44</sup> I would argue that from a performative citizenship perspective undocumented migrants are not only performing civic duties as currently understood but also resignifying these duties and transforming them.<sup>45</sup>

What makes both indigenous resistance struggles and sans-papiers solidarity struggles instances of performative citizenship? Both struggles involve performative citizenship in all five senses that we have identified above: (a) contest who is the subject of rights; (b) question citizens and non-citizens distinction as absolute subject positions; (c) act across these positions through making rights claims; (d) enact the right to claim rights of those who are not subjects of at least citizenship rights by performing acts to draw attention to these struggles; and (e) transform conventions by enacting provocative acts such as No One is Illegal and Idle No More.

## PERFORMATIVE CITIZENSHIP IN NON-DEMOCRATIC POLITIES

We have seen that the performative acts of indigenous people and undocumented migrants disrupt the conventional narratives between citizens and non-citizens. We

and Kim Rygiel, eds., *Citizenship, Migrant Activism and the Politics of Movement* (London: Routledge, 2012), pp. 165–183; Maurice Stierl, ‘“No One Is Illegal!” Resistance and the Politics of Discomfort’, *Globalizations* 9, no. 3 (2012) pp. 425–438; Mary McThomas, *Performing Citizenship: Undocumented Migrants in the United States* (London: Routledge, 2016); Anne McNevin, ‘Political Belonging in a Neoliberal Era: The Struggle of the Sans-Papiers’, *Citizenship Studies* 10 (2006): pp. 135–151.

<sup>42</sup> McThomas (n 41), p. 37.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>44</sup> Judith Butler, *Notes toward a Performative Theory of Assembly* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015), p. 79.

<sup>45</sup> Kathryn R. Abrams, ‘Performative Citizenship in the Civil Rights and Immigrant Rights Movements’, UC Berkeley Public Law Research Paper no. 2409971, 17 September 2014, online <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2409971> (arguing that performative citizenship enacted by undocumented migrants ‘... demonstrates that the conceptual and tactical vocabulary developed to claim the full measure of citizenship can also be deployed by those who lack even its formal guarantees’ (p. 24)).

observe performative struggles over rights claims enabling outsiders or even aliens to constitute themselves as political subjects—as citizens—not in the way in which it is already understood but as a transformed conception. This perspective sheds light on the struggles of many social groups who find themselves ‘outside’ political arrangements or are defined as strangers, outsiders, and even aliens such as women, blacks, slaves, queers, prisoners, and others who always remain subjects outside citizenship and yet somehow constitute themselves as citizens. To put it differently, for these social groups, or more precisely for those persons belonging to or identifying with one or more of these social groups, performing Euro-American citizenship is much more precarious and subaltern than for those who belong to dominant social groups. There is an obverse narrative, to which we now want to turn, whereby people constitute themselves as citizens in polities where democracy is not the explicit arrangement, or at least if it is the arrangement, it is not guaranteeing the equality that performative citizenship requires.

This is where we turn our attention away from Euro-American polities to post-colonial or decolonizing societies. For reasons discussed earlier, the ways in which citizenship is performed in Euro-American polities is historically and presently implicated in the ways in which it is performed in postcolonial or decolonizing polities. We may argue for example, that Chinese citizens ostensibly lack certain democratic rights such as civil and political freedoms but this neither means that Chinese history is bereft of performative rights claiming nor that contemporary China is alien to such performative acts. As Dorothy Solinger and Merle Goldman have demonstrated in both urban and rural China citizens perform citizenship in various ways through local or factory assemblies, protests, and demonstrations.<sup>46</sup> So although we would not describe China as a democratic polity we cannot overlook the fact that its citizens perform democratic citizenship through neighbourhood assemblies and associations.<sup>47</sup> Similarly, Shirin Saeidi illustrates how the wives and daughters of soldiers killed during the Iran-Iraq War (1980–1988) radically intervened in the flourishing of democratic citizenship practices in the Republic of Iran that were otherwise suppressed during the war. She argues that ‘as martyrs became supreme architects of a revolutionary state at war through self-sacrifice, relatives—particularly mothers, wives and daughters—were nationally bequeathed a noble citizenry status and responsibility to sculpt the state that their loved ones were dying to create.’<sup>48</sup> By assembling neighbourhood associations, organizing solidarity networks, reaching out to other wives and daughters, and enacting various form

<sup>46</sup> Dorothy J. Solinger, *Contesting Citizenship in Urban China: Peasant Migrants, the State, and the Logic of the Market* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Merle Goldman, *From Comrade to Citizen: Struggle for Political Rights in China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005).

<sup>47</sup> Zhonghua Guo and Sujian Guo, eds., *Theorizing Chinese Citizenship* (New York: Lexington Books, 2015).

<sup>48</sup> Shirin Saeidi, ‘Creating the Islamic Republic of Iran: Wives and Daughters of Martyrs, and Acts of Citizenship’, *Citizenship Studies* 14, no. 2 (2010): pp. 113–126, p. 115.

of rights claims, wives and daughters of martyrs eventually overcame the negative reactions to their subject position, mostly created by the state, and transformed it into an affirmative and activist image through acts of citizenship.<sup>49</sup> This has parallels with the inclusion of women in citizenship in Europe and America where often war efforts mobilized a female labour force by attributing heroic qualities to women.<sup>50</sup> Maya Mikdashi illustrates how deeply the Lebanese state regulates sexuality by means of regulating religion. Its eighteen officially recognized sects and fifteen personal status laws regulate marriage, divorce, inheritance, and adoption and taken together, deeply divide the rights of women and men and of adults and minors. She argues that ‘the most far-reaching legal discrimination is citizenship law itself, which prohibits female citizens from transferring their legal status to spouses and children. Thus there are almost thirty articulations of structural sex-based differentiated citizenship in operation.’<sup>51</sup> Mikdashi, however, documents how strategic conversions from one sect to another and from one sex to another challenge the gendered constitution of Lebanese citizenship law as performative acts.<sup>52</sup> This is a poignant illustration of crossing borders of ascriptive social categories to make rights claims.<sup>53</sup>

These performative acts became even more poignant during the so-called Arab Spring of 2011 where millions of people performed citizenship by making rights claims including to constitutional change and democratic freedoms such as association and assembly rights. There were numerous performative acts across the Middle East as demonstrations of people assembled conventional and critical practices to articulate such rights claims.<sup>54</sup> We will discuss here only one significant episode in Morocco because it involves much less visible and ordinary acts. Morocco became a postcolonial state in 1956 after gaining its independence from France and Spain which had colonized it since 1912. Like many other postcolonial states Morocco embarked on building a national state with ownership of communications and transportation infrastructure. Ostensibly a constitutional democracy for much of this period but operating as a state dominated by a social group called *makhzen* composed of royalty, civil and security service personnel, military, and landowning groups originally groomed by French and Spanish imperial

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., pp. 123–124.

<sup>50</sup> Renate Bridenthal, Susan Mosher Stuard, and Merry E. Wiesner, *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, 3rd edition (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1998).

<sup>51</sup> Maya Mikdashi, ‘Queering Citizenship, Queering Middle East Studies’, *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 45, no. 2 (2013): pp. 350–352, p. 351.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., pp. 351–352.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 352.

<sup>54</sup> Zachary Lockman, *Contending Visions of the Middle East: The History and Politics of Orientalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Steve Hess, ‘From the Arab Spring to the Chinese Winter: The Institutional Sources of Authoritarian Vulnerability and Resilience in Egypt, Tunisia, and China’, *International Political Science Review* 34, no. 3 (June 2013): pp. 254–272; Elizabeth Thompson, *Justice Interrupted: The Struggle for Constitutional Government in the Middle East* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013).

authorities, Morocco until the twenty-first century provided only a modicum of equality for its citizens.<sup>55</sup>

Up to the early years of the twenty-first century, the *makhzenian* state managed, at times brutally, to mitigate the potentially destabilizing effects of dissident citizenship. Since 2011 the Internet and the spreading waves of dissidence across the region empowered many social groups, especially the youth, where Morocco acquired the highest penetration of Internet users recorded anywhere in Africa.<sup>56</sup> As El Marzouki says, ‘the old passive television spectators now have the tools to become producers of their own programming and thus challenge elitist and statist narratives of cultural identity and citizenship.’<sup>57</sup> The emergence of satire as an expression of performative citizenship was spectacular. Morocco, of course, had rich traditions of story-telling, play, and drama before colonization, yet a sharp, courageous, and insightful satire through the Internet surprised everyone not least the dominant social groups in Moroccan society. The two YouTube satire programmes produced by young Moroccan activists using a dialect called *darija* brought performative democratic citizenship face to face with the *makhzen* regime.<sup>58</sup> The first show BM or ‘black mousiba’ destabilizes the *makhzen’s* dour and dull representation of itself as the guardian of modern life in Morocco. The second show, *Skizofren*, specifically focuses on figures or agents of the *makhzen* by catching them in their duplicity. As El Marzouki illustrates, neither show is itself free from contradictions, inconsistencies, and essentialism, combining elements of cosmopolitanism, nationalism, Islamism, and conservatism in turns. Yet, both illustrate that with a combination of drawing on historical traditions and engaging critically with images of modern life projected upon them by dominant social groups and subversively ridiculing these images, young people in Morocco and beyond also began producing imaginaries that are neither traditional nor modern.

What these performative acts from non-democratic polities demonstrate is that when we assume that democratic citizenship can only be found in legal and political institutions, we may overlook how people perform citizenship in different contexts by assembling traditions. In contrast, by studying performative citizenship in postcolonial or decolonizing societies, not only can we unearth performative acts of making rights claims in traditions but also understand how these traditions have been transformed by the right to claims rights. Moreover, studying performative acts enables us to engage in comparative research in a different key without making prior assumptions about the absence or presence of Euro-American institutions as

<sup>55</sup> Lawrence Rosen, *Two Arabs, a Berber, and a Jew: Entangled Lives in Morocco* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).

<sup>56</sup> Mohamed El Marzouki, ‘Satire as Counter-Discourse: Dissent, Cultural Citizenship, and Youth Culture in Morocco’, *International Communication Gazette* 77, no. 3 (2015): pp. 282–296, pp. 283–284.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 284.      <sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 286–287.

master signifiers but also without neglecting imperial and colonial histories within which comparative elements are implicated.

## PERFORMATIVE CITIZENSHIP ACROSS POLITIES

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As mentioned above, the right to claim rights and the making of rights claims across polities as performative acts complicate who is the subject of rights. A mention of Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, the former US intelligence agent Edward Snowden, or British artist Banksy may immediately bring these complexities into sharp focus. When, for example, Ai Weiwei lies on the beach and invokes the image of Aylan Kurdi whose body was found on that beach after attempting to cross the border with his family, is Ai Weiwei performing an act of citizenship?<sup>59</sup> Is it a protest for the rights that Kurdish migrants did not have? Is it a protest against the rights that European citizens have but do not perform? When Edward Snowden revealed information about mass surveillance by the US and UK governments, whose rights did he think he was protecting?<sup>60</sup> When Banksy paints graffiti in Gaza whose rights is he making claims for?<sup>61</sup> I have argued in the opening of this chapter that *because* citizenship is *constitutive* of rights and who can claim these rights is itself *contested*, citizenship is defined not just by having these rights, but also by *claiming* them. The right to claim rights and making rights claims across borders raises complex questions of performative citizenship as citizenship itself increasingly assumes a transnational character.<sup>62</sup>

To explore some of these questions we will briefly discuss performative acts across borders that concern the rights of refugees. The rights of refugees have been a fundamental aspect of international and human rights especially since the beginning of the twentieth century, but over the last few years increasingly, performative acts for the rights of refugees to have safe passages and settlement in Euro-American

<sup>59</sup> Monica Tan, 'Ai Weiwei Poses as Drowned Syrian Infant Refugee in "Haunting" Photo', *The Guardian*, 1 February 2016, online <https://goo.gl/v5KKGn>.

<sup>60</sup> William E. Scheuerman, 'Whistleblowing as Civil Disobedience: The Case of Edward Snowden', *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 40, no. 7 (September 2014): pp. 609–628.

<sup>61</sup> Raziye Akkoç, 'Banksy in Gaza: Street artist goes undercover in the Strip', *The Telegraph*, 26 February 2015, online <http://goo.gl/QojKOP>.

<sup>62</sup> Étienne Balibar, *We, the People of Europe?: Reflections on Transnational Citizenship* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); Rainer Bauböck, *Transnational Citizenship: Membership*

polities have enacted new forms of international citizenship.<sup>63</sup> These acts have taken many forms but perhaps the most poignant have been those that exposed borders or rather border regimes for their punitive and unjust effects on migrants and refugees. Take, for example, Boats4People. In 2012 a number of freedom of movement activists moved to the border zone between Italy and Northern Africa to draw attention to the deadly consequences of the European border regime. They formed Boats4People as an international coalition with the aim 'to end the dying along maritime borders and to defend the rights of migrants at sea'.<sup>64</sup> Originally intending to intervene at the border to force rescue operations, the coalition increasingly turned towards commemorative rituals bearing witness to the suffering of the migrant at sea.<sup>65</sup> As Maurice Stierl says 'these emotionally charged commemorative [acts] had performative effects on those participating but also on those passing by'.<sup>66</sup> By bringing collective grieving to European citizens, Boats4People performed a kind of European citizenship that called on people to show solidarity with migrants and refugees. But as Pierre Monforte argues these performative acts can also transform borders into zones of contention about European citizenship not only by calling into question its limits but also its force.<sup>67</sup> By these commemorative and disruptive acts Boats4People not only brought attention to the EU border regime but also literally re-enacted its sites where European border regime authorities would rather remain invisible such as the central areas of European cities during the Christmas shopping season.<sup>68</sup>

## CONCLUSION

We have first signified citizenship as performative when people act as political subjects whether they are authorized or not (a). Then we resignified it by saying that citizenship is performative not only in that it enables people to act as political subjects but also as it provokes people to act across subject positions to which

*and Rights in International Migration* (Aldershot Brookfield: E. Elgar, 1994); Aihwa Ong, *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999).

<sup>63</sup> Engin F. Isin, 'Enacting International Citizenship', in Tugba Basaran, et al., eds., *International Political Sociology: Transversal Lines* (London: Routledge, 2017), pp. 185–204.

<sup>64</sup> Maurice Stierl, 'Contestations in Death: The Role of Grief in Migration Struggles', *Citizenship Studies* 20, no. 2 (2016): pp. 173–191, p. 175.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 176.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 177.

<sup>67</sup> Pierre Monforte, 'The Border as a Space of Contention: The Spatial Strategies of Protest against Border Controls in Europe', *Citizenship Studies* 20, no. 3–4 (2015): pp. 411–426, p. 420.

<sup>68</sup> Stierl (n 64), p. 177.

they are ascribed as citizens or non-citizens (b). Then we resignified it again by reiterating that it also stimulates people to act across the borders of polities for solidarity, affiliation, and association (c). Then we have stressed that performative citizenship requires performing acts through which people become citizens in exercising or claiming rights and duties (d). We finally argued that when people act as citizens they are not only actively or passively following rules but are also creatively transforming them (e). We have given examples to illustrate each sense that collectively define performative citizenship, from *Idle No More* (Canada), *No One is Illegal* (Canada, France, and Spain), *BM and Skizofren* (Morocco), and *Boats4People* (Europe). These illustrate how, as multiply positioned subjects (members of multiple social groups, belonging to intersecting subject positions), people find themselves in situations where a combination of various affiliations and identifications define their possibilities and potentialities and how these play out in performative citizenship. If a person is an artist, a Canadian, a woman, black, queer, and/or refugee, playing out this combination as a subject involves negotiating these positions by enacting the right to make claims and making rights claims in and by speaking against injustices, oppressions, prejudices, discriminations, and otherness.

There are two conclusions we reach from this perspective on studying citizenship. First, performative citizenship involves exercising a right: this can be a particular or universal right, but the performance itself does not affect the content and scope of the right, and it may confirm rather than contest that right. Second, performing citizenship involves claiming a right: this necessarily involves struggle, but such struggle is not necessarily transformative. Claiming a right can take various forms. There are cases where rights may be claimed towards institutions that recognize these rights and have the power to determine the content of rights (legislatures) and to settle disputes over them (courts). These types of struggle are not inherently transformative and may uphold an established system of rights. There are also cases where claimed rights are not recognized but contested and the performativity of claiming a right is that the claimant puts herself thereby forward as a subject of rights that she is not. Finally, there are also cases where the claimant herself is not recognized as having a right to claim rights (a non-citizen) and the performativity of claiming a right involves also a claim for the right to have rights.

These variations are inherent in performative citizenship and give rise to multiple tensions. We have seen that these tensions partly arise from how we have come to conventionally understand citizens and subjects as diametrically opposed actors and democratic and non-democratic polities as discrete and sovereign polities. We have called both these understandings into question and developed a critical perspective on dichotomies of subject-citizen and democratic-non-democratic. Approaching citizenship as performative acts enables us to question an enduring narrative that contrasts citizens with subjects and considers

democratic and non-democratic states as discrete and enclosed regimes.<sup>69</sup> This narrative often considers citizens as those with rights (civil, political, and social) and subjects as those who (must) lack these rights. It considers citizens as belonging to democratic states and subjects to non-democratic states. It assumes that only citizens enjoy democratic rights (free speech, universal suffrage, the rule of law) and can perform civic duties. This conventional narrative portrays a historical progression from subjects to citizens and from non-democratic to democratic states as well downplaying the importance of acting with dissent, resistance, or even disobedience as citizens.<sup>70</sup>

It is this conventional narrative that becomes the object of critical interrogation from the perspective of performative citizenship that this chapter outlined. As some of the examples we have discussed illustrate, there is now a literature that uses performative citizenship or acts of citizenship as a perspective for studying citizenship. This is an emerging literature and features many studies on performative acts with a focus on specific performances or enactments of citizenship with identifiable scenes, stages, actors, and rights.<sup>71</sup> If indeed we see acts, as Charles Tilly illustrated, like repertoires of action that develop through time and from which actors draw when performing, we open up the possibility for comparative research to investigate how similar repertoires generate different effects when performed in different stages within or across polities.<sup>72</sup> An assembly, for example, to protest or dissent can have widely different consequences in squares and streets of Aleppo, Beijing, Cairo, Jerusalem, Madrid, or Seattle that requires different approaches to its enactment.

By way of closing the chapter I would like to discuss four research problems that remain contentious in the literature. The first issue concerns whether performative acts are spectacular or everyday acts. Often, examples of performative acts feature spectacular acts that appear heroic, original, and individual as the examples of Snowden and Weiwei imply. But as Catherine Neveu has argued, acts of citizenship can also involve, and perhaps even more effectively, quotidian enactments that lack the visibility of certain performative acts but nevertheless can be rather consequential.<sup>73</sup> Similarly, Jonathan Darling and Vicki Squire have demonstrated how

<sup>69</sup> Barbara Cruikshank, *The Will to Empower: Democratic Citizens and Other Subjects* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999).

<sup>70</sup> Pierre Boyer, Linda Cardinal, and David John Headon, *From Subjects to Citizens: A Hundred Years of Citizenship in Australia and Canada* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2004); Alastair Davidson, *From Subject to Citizen: Australian Citizenship in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

<sup>71</sup> McThomas, (n 41). <sup>72</sup> Tilly (n 16), pp. 41–45.

<sup>73</sup> Catherine Neveu, 'Of Ordinarity and Citizenship Processes', *Citizenship Studies* 19, no. 2 (2015); Catherine Neveu, 'Sites of Citizenship, Politics of Scales', in Willem Maas, ed., *Multilevel Citizenship* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), pp. 203–212. See also John Clarke et al., *Disputing Citizenship* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2014).

refugee politics is enacted through everyday performative acts with considerable transformative effects.<sup>74</sup>

The second research problem concerns whether performative acts produce ruptures when breaking conventions or incremental changes to these conventions.<sup>75</sup> To indicate breaks from conventions sometimes we use the term ‘rupture’ and this can be interpreted as a revolution, regime change, or revolt. It may well include these changes but the term rupture, following the first issue above, can also be quotidian and ordinary. The essential point is that a rupture that a performative act introduces draws people out of themselves to take notice of the taken for granted nature of a given state of affairs and turn critical attentiveness toward it.

The third problem concerns whether all performative acts are progressive or even democratic. It is clear that nationalist, racist, nativist, misogynist, and homophobic acts also exercise rights to assembly, speech, protest, and demonstrate in order to claim rights to enact a particular understanding of citizenship. As Holloway Sparks illustrates, by performatively playing into anger conservative activists have enacted a particular version of American patriotism that conceals its nativism and racism.<sup>76</sup> The examples that I have provided in this chapter of social groups struggling over rights are what I consider to be subaltern or oppressed or dispossessed social groups whose oppression is based on historical injustices. There is a clear orientation in performative research towards revealing subjugated social groups and their dispossession. But this does not mean that performative citizenship is inherently progressive or emancipatory. Moreover, it requires researchers making their normative decisions explicit and explain why they interpret certain acts as acts of citizenship.

The fourth problem concerns whether rights, especially the performative exercising and claiming of rights are the exclusive domain of citizenship. Amy Brandzel has expressed this problem most clearly by arguing against what she calls sweeping all dissident and resistance acts into citizenship.<sup>77</sup> Although she recognizes that those acts that are regarded as acts of citizenship may have transformative effects, she warns against realigning all resistant and dissident behaviours, practices, and bodies under the name of citizenship. This is an important warning for anyone approaching citizenship from a performative perspective with a view to recognizing

<sup>74</sup> Jonathan Darling, ‘Asylum and the Post-Political: Domopolitics, Depoliticisation and Acts of Citizenship’, *Antipode* 46, no. 1 (2014): pp. 72–91; Jonathan Darling and Vicki Squire, ‘Everyday Enactments of Sanctuary: The UK City of Sanctuary Movement’, in Randy K. Lippert and Sean Rehaag, eds., *Sanctuary Practices in International Perspectives: Migration, Citizenship and Social Movements* (London: Routledge, 2013) pp. 191–204.

<sup>75</sup> Leah Bassel and Catherine Lloyd, ‘Rupture or Reproduction? “New” Citizenship in France’, *French Politics* 9 (2011): pp. 21–49.

<sup>76</sup> Holloway Sparks, ‘Mama Grizzlies and Guardians of the Republic: The Democratic and Intersectional Politics of Anger in the Tea Party Movement’, *New Political Science* 37, no. 1 (2014): pp. 25–47, pp. 27–28.

<sup>77</sup> Amy L. Brandzel, *Against Citizenship: The Violence of the Normative* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2016), p. 8.

multiple, contradictory, and conflicting ways in which citizens and non-citizens challenge the meanings of citizenship and stretch its functions. This raises the question whether we can study politics without its subjects, citizens, and their relational others, strangers, outsiders, and aliens.

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