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Restoring Miranda: gender and the limits of European patriarchy in the early modern Atlantic world*

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Abstract

Atlantic history has become fashionable as a way of linking the histories of Europe and the Americas. However, much work in Atlantic history does little to challenge the national biases of traditional colonial and imperial history. This article argues that gender provides an important conceptual tool for a trans-imperial and comparative exploration, just as it provided important conceptual structures for all the peoples of the Atlantic world. An examination of the research on two gendered issues – work, and family and sexuality – demonstrates that while Europeans attempted to impose their ideas on the various societies that they encountered in Africa and the Americas, such attempts were rarely successful. Gender not only provides the basis for a trans-imperial analysis of the Atlantic world but also enables us to reorient our scholarly perspective in the Atlantic, highlighting the agency of non-European peoples and exposing the limits of European patriarchy.

In a forum in the *American Historical Review*, Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra invoked Shakespeare's *Tempest* to illustrate the entangled histories of Spanish and English colonization in the Atlantic world. Prospero, he argued, was modelled 'after the Spanish conquistadors, who were capable not only of setting their terrifying hounds loose on Caliban, but also of wielding awesome preternatural powers to calm or set off storms'. However, *The Tempest* is not just about imperialism; access to Miranda's sexuality is also central to the play. Caliban is enslaved because of his attempted rape of Miranda, and her promised marriage to Ferdinand resolves the conflicts between Prospero and King Alonso. Prospero stirs and then calms the storms to provide a husband for Miranda.[1] Like much of

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1   Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, 'Entangled histories: borderland historiographies in new clothes', *American Historical Review*, 112, 3, June 2007, pp. 787–99, esp. p. 799; Peter Hulme, *Colonial encounters: Europe*

Atlantic history, Cañizares-Esguerra's focus on national histories obscures gender by focusing on European men.

Recently, the Atlantic has become a major conceptual framework for the study of early modern history, particularly for historians of the Americas hoping to incorporate European perspectives.[2] While Atlantic history includes a wide range of specializations and the full range of imperial powers, the confusion about whether the Atlantic represents a 'field' or a 'framework' has limited its analytical power. If the Atlantic is 'a zone of exchange and interchange, circulation and transmission', then its history should be comparative and trans-imperial.[3] Yet much of what is called Atlantic history represents revised imperial or colonial narratives focused primarily on the Americas, rather than on broader comparisons. Even the most assertively Atlanticist scholars have found the linguistic, religious, legal, and cultural differences among the European empires, as well as the diversity of African and indigenous American societies, difficult to overcome. Although J. H. Elliott's exploration of the parallel developments of the Spanish and English empires and the history of New World slavery both reveal the utility of the paradigm,[4] for the most part, Atlantic historians have, to quote Ann Stoler, 'engaged less in comparison than in parallel play'.[5]

In this article, we will argue that gender is a particularly useful analytical category for transcending national and imperial frameworks. First, gender provided all circum-Atlantic peoples with conceptual and practical structures for organizing work, family, and society. Furthermore, because gender was organized in similar ways across Europe, it provides a compelling basis for trans-imperial analysis. Ideas about gender were then implicated in a broad array of interactions as Europeans came into contact with societies in Africa and

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and the native Caribbean, 1492–1797, London: Routledge, 1986, ch. 3; Peter Hulme and William H. Sherman, ed., The Tempest and its travels, Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000, part III; Kim Hall, Things of darkness: economies of race and gender in early modern England, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995, pp.141–58; Jonathan Goldberg, Tempest in the Caribbean, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2003.

2 Extensive bibliographies on the Atlantic world can be found in 'Entangled empires in the Atlantic world', American Historical Review, 112, 3, June 2007 and 112, 5, December 2007; and Jack P. Greene and Philip D. Morgan, eds., Atlantic history: a critical appraisal, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

3 Philip Morgan and Jack P. Greene, 'Introduction: the present state of Atlantic history', in Greene and Morgan, Atlantic history, p. 10; Alison Games, 'Atlantic history: definitions, challenges and opportunities', American Historical Review, 111, 3, 2006, p. 747.

4 J. H. Elliott, Empires of the Atlantic world: Britain and Spain in America, 1492–1830, London: Yale University Press, 2006. Paul Gilroy's Black Atlantic: modernity and double consciousness, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993, suggests that scholars understand the Atlantic as a 'single, complex unit of analysis … and use it to produce an explicitly transnational and intercultural analysis' (p. 15). Historians of slavery have successfully engaged in comparative and transnational studies, including John Thornton, Africa and Africans in the creation of the Atlantic world, 1400–1800, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992; David Eltis, The rise of African slavery in the Americas, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000; Stephanie Smallwood, Saltwater slavery: a middle passage from Africa to the American diaspora, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007. On integrating Africa into Atlantic history, see Kristin Mann, 'Shifting paradigms in the study of the African diaspora and of Atlantic history and culture', in Kristin Mann and Edna G. Bay, eds., Rethinking the African diaspora: the making of a black Atlantic world in the Bight of Benin and Brazil, London: Routledge, 2001, pp. 3–21; Gwyn Campbell, Suzanne Miers, and Joseph C. Miller, eds., Women and slavery, 2 vols., Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2007–08.

5 Ann Stoler, Carnal knowledge and imperial power: race and the intimate in colonial rule, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002, p. 209.

the Americas and formed new settler societies. Just as importantly, attention to gender also allows us to think about how Atlantic engagements transformed relationships within societies, not just between them. Finally, gendered analyses reorient our scholarly perspective in the Atlantic, highlighting the agency of non-European peoples and exposing the limits of European patriarchy.[6]

Many studies of Atlantic history privilege Europe as the subject and Africa and the Americas as the objects of European activity. We also begin our discussion with Europe, but for other reasons. First, the extensive scholarship on European gender expectations provides a fruitful starting point for trans-imperial analysis. Moreover, Europeans and their ideas supplied the initial, albeit not the only, source of connections among the societies of the Atlantic world. Finally, although Europeans experienced some changes in gender expectations over the course of the early modern period, those subtle and gradual changes were not primarily the result of interactions with non-Europeans, nor were they evident in the Atlantic exchanges.

In fact, ideas about gender differed surprisingly little across early modern Europe. According to the patriarchal ideal, men were expected to exercise political, social, and economic authority, and women were expected to submit to male authority in all aspects of life. Even the confessional differences that emerged after the Reformation had little impact on European gender norms. The natural superiority of men over women and the importance of female chastity were confirmed by both scripture and science. Protestant theologians denied the primacy of celibacy over marriage and the authority of the Virgin Mary, but they did not reconsider the fundamental nature of the gender hierarchy. Across confessional lines, the religious and prescriptive literature of the period was largely unanimous in its articulation of female weakness and the need for female subordination.[7]

From the beginning of the early modern Atlantic world, European men used such gendered ideas to define non-Europeans.[8] The Italian navigator Ca' da Mosto (1432–1488) described African men who washed and spun cotton as womanly.[9] Similarly, Gomes Eanes de Zurara, in the *Chronicle of the discovery and conquest of Guinea* (1453), associated domination with the masculine Portuguese and captivity and slavery with feminine African bodies.[10] However, that gendered discourse did not reflect the reality of their interactions. Time after time, despite their supposed effeminacy, African men successfully defended their

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6   On the limits of European authority in the Americas, see Amy Turner Bushnell, 'Indigenous America and the limits of the Atlantic world, 1493–1825', in Greene and Morgan, *Atlantic history*, pp. 191–221.

7   Merry Wiesner-Hanks, *Christianity and sexuality in the early modern world: regulating desire, reforming practice*, New York: Routledge, 2000, p. 62, emphasizes the similarities between Catholic and Protestant ideas of gender. On Aristotelian and Christian ideas of women, see Constance Jordan, *Renaissance feminism: literary texts and political models*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990.

8   Josiah Blackmore, *Moorings: Portuguese expansion and the writing of Africa*, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2008. On gender and early Portuguese exploration narratives, see René P. Garay, 'First encounter: epic, gender, and the Portuguese overseas venture', in Asela Rodrigues de Laguna, ed., *The global impact of the Portuguese language*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2001, pp. 77–94.

9   Gerald Roe Crone, ed., *The voyages of Cadamosto and other documents on western Africa in the second half of the fifteenth century*, Hakluyt Society second series no. 80, London: Hakluyt Society, 1937, p. 32.

10   Gomes Eannes de Azurara [*sic*], *Chronicle of the discovery and conquest of Guinea*, trans. Charles Beazley and Edgar Prestage, vol. 1, New York: B. Franklin, 1963, p. 43.

people and territory against Portuguese incursions and dictated the terms of trade with the European invaders.[11]

Europeans relied on similarly gendered notions to describe the native peoples of the Americas. Columbus's description of the hairless, seemingly androgynous bodies of Arawak men made for an effortless association of indigenous peoples with the feminine.[12] Later explorers, such as Sir Walter Raleigh, also portrayed both the lands and the peoples of the Americas as female and virginal, waiting to be possessed and dominated by Europeans.[13] This early feminization of indigenous peoples not only established the power hierarchy in the Americas in the minds of Europeans but also came to define European dominance over the globe.[14] Representations of masculine, muscular Europeans subduing submissive, feminine continents and non-European peoples were common in Spanish, Portuguese, and English cartographic and geographic imagery.[15]

Indeed, these gendered representations readily justified the conquest of the Americas. The Spanish cleric Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda asserted that the peoples of the Americas were 'in prudence, talent, and every kind of virtue and human sentiment … inferior to the Spaniards as children are to adults, or women to men, or the cruel and inhumane to the very gentle'. In battle, native peoples were 'so cowardly and timid that they can scarcely offer any resistance … and have fled like women'.[16] From the European perspective, only conquest could bring such peoples in line with the divine order.

When Europeans interacted with patriarchal and patrilineal peoples across the Americas, their expectations of the gender order were confirmed, but when they encountered peoples whose gender systems differed from their own, assumptions about normative patriarchy blinded them to the subtleties of indigenous gender structures. In Aztec culture, gender roles were reciprocal or complementary, while in Inca culture, parallel gender hierarchies distinguished men's activities from women's; however, the Spanish could not understand, and lacked vocabulary to describe such gender systems.[17] As Theda Perdue has noted of the

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11   Herman L. Bennett, '"Sons of Adam": text, context, and the early modern African subject', *Representations*, 92, 2005, pp. 30–31; Ivana Elbl, 'Cross-cultural trade and diplomacy: Portuguese relations with West Africa, 1441–1521', *Journal of World History*, 3, 1992, pp. 177–181.

12   Margarita Zamora, 'Abreast of Columbus: gender and discovery', 17, *Cultural Critique*, 1990–91, pp. 127–49, esp. p. 143. On hairlessness, androgyny, and effeminacy, see Laura Giannetti, *Lelia's kiss: imagining gender, sex, and marriage in Italian renaissance comedy*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009.

13   Louis Montrose, 'The work of gender in the discourse of discovery', *Representations*, 33, special issue: The New World, 1991, pp. 1–41.

14   According to Kim Hall, *Things of darkness*, p. 25, Europeans explained the 'cultural chaos' that they experienced 'primarily in terms of gender'. See also Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Indians and English: facing off in early America*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000, p. 39.

15   Valerie Traub, 'Mapping the global body', in Peter Erickson and Clark Hulse, eds., *Early modern visual culture: representation, race, and empire in renaissance England*, Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000, pp. 45–97; Anne McClintock, *Imperial leather: race, gender, and sexuality in the colonial contest*, New York: Routledge, 1995, ch. 1.

16   Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, 'Just war against barbarians', in Charles Gibson, ed., *The Spanish tradition in America*, New York: Harper & Row, 1968, pp. 113–20.

17   On gender complementarity, see Susan Schroeder, Stephanie Wood, and Robert Haskett, eds., *Indian women of early Mexico*, Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997. On gender parallelism, see Irene Silverblatt, *Moon, sun, and witches: gender ideologies and class in Inca and colonial Peru*, Princeton,

English interaction with the Cherokee, 'gender parity and sexual autonomy were concepts that they simply could not fathom'.[18] With each encounter, Europeans interpreted these incomprehensible gender structures as failures that only reinforced European superiority.[19]

Subsequent interactions between Europeans and native peoples created a series of 'gender frontiers', in which competing expectations clashed and were renegotiated.[20] As a result, the Americas became the stage for complex interactions among gender cultures with competing norms and standards, more informed by the realities of daily life and the gender expectations of non-European peoples than by European patriarchal ideals. Indeed, the research on women and gender presents a dynamic of personal and cultural interactions that transcends both imperial divisions and simplistic notions of European patriarchal domination.

Work

Work provides one important context for understanding the limits of European patriarchy in the Atlantic world. In Europe's household economies, although women worked, it was assumed that women and men did different work. In the words of the Englishman Richard Brathwait, 'In employments ech have distinct shares/Nor she to his, nor he to hers should goe.'[21] Most authors of prescriptive literature asserted that women's labour was to be limited to the home, as keeping women within the home was a critical symbol of male authority and was thought to protect female chastity. A male interlocutor in Alberti's *Libro della famiglia* (*c*.1432) explained that 'nature thus provided for our well-being, arranging for me to bring things home and for women to guard them. ... The man should guard the woman, the house, and his family and country, but not by sitting still.'[22]

Moreover, women's presence outside the home was, by nature, corrupting to both the women themselves and to society more broadly. The sixteenth-century humanist Juan Luis Vives asserted that a single woman should 'appear in public on occasion, but as rarely as possible', and worried about the 'occasions ... for corruption and misconduct' in public.[23]

NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987. On the complicated nature of these terms, see Nancy E. van Deusen, 'Recent studies on gender relations in colonial Native Andean history', in David Cahill and Blanca Tovías, eds., *New world, first nations: native peoples of MesoAmerica and the Andes under colonial rule*, Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2006, pp. 144–68.

18 Theda Perdue, *Cherokee women: gender and culture change, 1700–1835*, Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1998, p. 5. Natalie Zemon Davis, 'Iroquois women, European women', in Peter C. Mancall and James H. Merrell, eds., *American encounters: natives and newcomers from European contact to Indian removal, 1500–1850*, New York: Routledge, 2000, p. 96.

19 Gunlög Fur, *A nation of women: gender and colonial encounters among the Delaware Indians*, Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009, p. 19; Kathleen M. Brown, *Good wives, nasty wenches, and anxious patriarchs: gender, race, and power in colonial Virginia*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1996, p. 57; Karen Kupperman, *Indians and English*, p. 39, reminds us that European descriptions of hierarchical, patriarchal Indians were not always the product of European ethnocentricity.

20 Kathleen M. Brown, 'The Anglo-Algonquin gender frontier', in Nancy Shoemaker, ed., *Negotiators of change: historical perspectives on Native American women*, New York: Routledge, 1995, p. 27.

21 Richard Brathwait, *The good wife*, London, 1619, fol. B6v.

22 Leon Battista Alberti, *The family in Renaissance Florence*, book three, trans. Renée Neu Watkins, Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1994, pp. 77–8.

23 Juan Luis Vives, *The education of a Christian woman: a sixteenth-century manual*, ed. and trans. Charles Fantazzi, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000, pp. 125 and 254 ff.

Luther similarly emphasized the restriction of women's activities to the home, praising Sarah, the wife of Abraham, for being in the tent when God asked for her, and arguing that 'a woman should be a domestic … who stays in her home and looks after her own affairs'.[24] According to the English clergyman Matthew Griffith, 'The good Woman is called an House Wife because she commonly keepeth the house; … or if she go abroad, it is snaile-like, with her house upon her head, and it is about household considerations.'[25] To support this ideal, European societies developed a variety of means to control women's work that varied in form but not intent. In England, legal codes constrained some aspects of female inheritance, property ownership, and access to courts. In Spain and France, prohibitions on guild membership codified restraints on women's economic activity.[26]

Despite the enthusiasm with which these ideals were promoted, demographic and economic realities forced most Europeans to ignore constraints on women's labour. Both partible inheritance and male mortality regularly left households, from the poorest to the most powerful, in the hands of women.[27] Widows of all classes administered family estates and protected the economic interests of their children.[28] Across Europe, customs or legal norms allowed wives to run households in their husbands' absence, and women regularly exercised economic authority in place of feeble or incompetent men.

Moreover, most women, whether single, married, or widowed, engaged in productive work inside or outside the home to help support themselves and their families, participating in most occupations, either formally or informally as the wives and daughters of merchants and artisans. In addition to traditional women's work such as food retailing and cloth production, women provided credit, ran shops, and healed the sick.[29] The failure to conform

24 Susan C. Karant-Nunn and Merry Wiesner-Hanks, eds., *Luther on women: a sourcebook*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 64.

25 Matthew Griffith, *Bethel, or a Forme for Families*, London, 1633, p. 282.

26 On England, see Amy Louise Erickson, *Women and property in early modern England*, London: Routledge, 1993. On guild prohibitions, see James B. Collins, 'The economic role of women in seventeenth-century France', *French Historical Studies*, 16, 2, 1989, p. 458; Marta V. Vicente, 'Images and realities of work: women and guilds in early modern Barcelona', in Magdalena S. Sánchez and Alain Saint-Saens, eds., *Spanish women in the golden age: images and realities*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996, pp. 128–9; Darlene Abreu-Ferreira, 'From mere survival to near success: women's economic strategies in early modern Portugal', *Journal of Women's History*, 13, 2, 2001, pp. 68 ff.

27 Allyson M. Poska, *Women and authority in early modern Spain: the peasants of Galicia*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 38; Collins, 'Economic role of women', p. 465; Amy M. Froide, *Never married: single women in early modern England*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 19. On noblewomen, see Helen Nader, *Power and gender in renaissance Spain: eight women of the Mendoza family, 1450–1650*, Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2004; Barbara Stephenson, *The power and patronage of Marguerite of Navarre*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004; Barbara J. Harris, *English aristocratic women, 1450–1550: marriage and family, property and careers*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

28 Amy Louise Erickson, *Women and property*, p. 221, notes that, in England, 'there was virtually no serious complaint about widows' property rights voiced in the early modern period'. See also Grace Coolidge, '"Neither dumb, deaf, nor destitute of understanding": women as guardians in early modern Spain', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 36, 3, 2005, pp. 673–93; Sandra Cavallo and Lyndan Warner, eds., *Widowhood in medieval and early modern Europe*, New York: Longman, 1999; Nicole Pellegrin and Colette Winn, eds., *Veufs, veuves et veuvage dans la France d'ancien régime*, Paris: Champion, 2003.

29 On women and work, see Daryl M. Hafter, ed., *European women and preindustrial craft*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1995; Barbara A. Hanawalt, ed., *Women and work in preindustrial Europe*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1986; Margaret R. Hunt, *Women in eighteenth-century Europe*, Harlow: Longman, 2010. Marjorie Kenniston McIntosh, *Working women in English society, 1300–1620*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005; Marta Vicente Valentín, 'Mujeres artesanas en la Barcelona

to the ideal gendered division of labour was particularly visible at the bottom of the socioeconomic hierarchy, where female fieldworkers were so common that travellers across the European countryside rarely noticed their presence.[30]

Despite the fragility of the gendered division of labour at home, Europeans expected other circum-Atlantic cultures to organize their work around that same ideal. In parts of Mexico, as the arrival of the Spanish accompanied the intensification of agriculture, indigenous men took over fieldwork (traditionally women's work), while women were forced into herding.[31] European insistence that hunter-gatherers engage in sedentary agriculture altered both diets and gender hierarchies. Late in the colonial period, Native American women in California, who traditionally gathered acorns (the mainstay of their diets) lost status as the Missions established European-style farming. Sometimes, European influence on the gendered division of labour was less direct but no less severe, changing societies in ways not consonant with European patterns. For instance, in response to contact with Europeans, the Comanche relegated women to horse herding, meat curing, and other undesirable tasks.[32]

Yet, more often than not, Europeans failed to completely undo native ways. Native groups resisted change, and demographic realities accentuated the need for women's labour. Female agriculturalists persisted among the Cherokee and Iroquois into the nineteenth century. In the Texas borderlands, Spanish missionaries' desire to promote female domestic seclusion was superseded by the demands of agricultural life: men and women had to work together in order to provide for their families. Other Europeans did not even try. In the Great Lakes, where the French were more interested in the fur trade than in changing gender norms, agriculture remained women's work.[33]

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moderna', in Isabel Pérez Molia et al., eds., Las mujeres en el antiguo régimen: imagen y realidad s. XVI–XVIII, Barcelona: Icaria, 1994, pp. 59–90; Clare Haru Crowston, Fabricating women: the seamstresses of old regime France, 1675–1791, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001; Darlene Abreu-Ferreira, 'Fishmongers and shipowners: women in maritime communities of early modern Portugal', Sixteenth Century Journal, 31, 1, 2000, pp. 7–23; Amândio Jorge Morais Barros, 'Mulheres e comércio. linhas de intervenção da mulher portuense no negócio durante o século XVI', Portuguese Studies Review, 13, 1, 2005, pp. 229–68.

30 Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, Women in early modern England, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998, ch. 5; Patricia Seed, American pentimento: the invention of Indians and the pursuit of riches, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2001, p. 47, esp. n. 9; Deborah Simonton, A history of European women's work, 1700 to the present, London: Routledge, 1998, pp. 27–34 and ch. 6. On Spain, see Teófilo F. Ruiz, 'Women, work and daily life in late medieval Castile' and Mercedes Borrero Fernández, 'Peasant and aristocratic women: their role in the rural economy of Seville at the end of the Middle Ages', in Marilyn Stone and Carmen Benito-Vessels, eds., Women at work in Spain: from the middle ages to early modern times, New York: Peter Lang, 1998, pp. 101–20 and 11–31.

31 Brown, Good wives, p. 46; Perdue, Cherokee women, pp. 17 ff; Susan Sleeper-Smith, Indian women and French men: rethinking cultural encounter in the Western Great Lakes, Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001, p. 30; Nancy Shoemaker, 'The rise or fall of Iroquois women', Journal of Women's History, 2, 3, 1991, pp. 39–57; Susan M. Deeds, 'Double jeopardy: Indian women in Jesuit missions in Nueva Vizcaya', in Schroeder, Wood, and Haskett, Indian women, p. 259. Indigenous societies that already highly valued women's domestic work would not have undergone such a dramatic shift in norms: see the essays by Burkhart, Sousa, and Wood in ibid.

32 Virginia M. Bouvier, Women and the conquest of California, 1542–1840: codes of silence, Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2001, pp. 104–6; Pekka Hämäläinen, The Comanche empire, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008, pp. 248 ff. Horse herding was not common in Europe, but the care of horses was usually defined as men's work.

33 Juliana Barr, Peace came in the form of a woman: Indians and Spaniards in the Texas borderlands, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007, pp. 138–9, 142. Daniel Usner, Indians, settlers, and

Indigenous women often adapted traditional work to new economic circumstances. Women's market activities fell within both European and native gender expectations, allowing some indigenous women to participate in the expanded economies in ways that benefited their families and their communities. In the Great Lakes region, native women exploited their relationships with French traders;[34] Cherokee women incorporated the deerskin trade into traditional food redistribution practices.[35] Across the Americas, both European and indigenous communities often depended on the goods that women produced and marketed.[36] Indeed, the Spanish were no more or less able to transform native gendered divisions of labour than the Portuguese, the French, or the English. In the end, these interactions relied much more on the gender hierarchies and economic expectations of indigenous peoples than on the gendered assumptions of European imperial agents.

The gender frontier also highlighted competing notions of masculinity and work. Most of the Spanish conquistadors were not military men but artisans, merchants, and other professionals.[37] They measured their masculinity in terms of financial success, good credit, and sound household management.[38] However, in many of the native societies that they encountered, women were more central to markets and credit than men.[39] Conversely, the Englishmen who made up the majority of early settlers in North America were generally farmers, whose masculinity was closely connected to the acquisition and cultivation of land. They ridiculed as unmanly native men who refused to work in the fields, while native men disparaged English farmers for engaging in what they saw as women's work.[40]

On the other side of the Atlantic, European contacts with African peoples had a limited impact on traditional gendered divisions of labour.[41] However, where women had

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slaves in a frontier exchange economy: the Lower Mississippi Valley before 1783, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1992, pp. 171–2, similarly argues that 'Choctaws managed to control the impact of colonial relations upon village life'.

34 Sleeper-Smith, *Indian women*, ch. 3.

35 Perdue, *Cherokee women*, pp. 80–1.

36 Jane E. Mangan, *Trading roles: gender, ethnicity, and the urban economy in colonial Potosí*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005; Karen B. Graubart, *With our labor and sweat: indigenous women and the formation of colonial society in Peru, 1550 – 1700*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007; Usner, *Indians*, pp. 202 ff.

37 Matthew Restall, *Seven myths of the Spanish conquest*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003, pp. 36–7. James Lockhart, *Spanish Peru 1532–1560: a colonial society*, Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968, p. 240.

38 Ruth MacKay, *'Lazy, improvident people': myth and reality in the writing of Spanish history*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006, pp. 74 ff; Scott K. Taylor, *Honor and violence in golden age Spain*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008, ch. 4.

39 Inga Clendinnen, *The Aztecs: an interpretation*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp. 161–2; Mangan, *Trading roles*; Kimberly Gauderman, *Women's lives in colonial Quito: gender, law, and economy in Spanish America*, Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2003.

40 Ann M. Little, *Abraham in arms: war and gender in colonial New England*, Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007, pp. 14, 81; Brown, *Good wives*, p. 57. On English masculinity, see Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of manhood in early modern England*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. For the French, see Lewis Seifert, 'Pig or prince: Murat, d'Aulnoy, and the limits of civilized masculinity', in Kathleen P. Long, ed., *High anxiety: masculinity in crisis in early modern France*, Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2002, pp. 183–209, esp. pp. 183–5.

41 Toby Green, *The rise of the trans-Atlantic slave trade in Western Africa, 1300–1589*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, p. 206.

traditionally engaged in agriculture, such as in Central Africa and some parts of the Bight of Biafra, the growth of the slave trade and the consequent sexual imbalance led to women's 'near total domination of agricultural labor'. Among the Aja in the Bight of Benin, where women were less likely to farm, the slave trade pushed them into commercial activity.[42]

The expansion of economic activity between Africans and Europeans also provided new opportunities for some African women who exploited contacts with European men. As bicultural agents, Luso-African women often played important roles in the slave trade; their ability to interact with both Africans and Europeans made them both power-brokers and mediators between cultures.[43] Other women found new opportunities in transatlantic connections. Fenda Lawrence, a Gambian slave trader and widow of an Englishman, migrated to Georgia with her children and five slaves, possibly to escape the African patriarchal traditions that hindered her business interests. The English slave captain with whom she had worked in Gambia provided her with references when she settled in Savannah.[44] In such ways, African women creatively adapted existing expectations to engage the new reality of the Atlantic economy for their own economic security and that of their families.

African gender expectations also influenced European activity in the slave trade. In Africa, female slaves provided kinship networks and agricultural labour, and were valuable as wives in polygynous societies. Moreover, warfare and other demographic factors often decreased the number of male slaves available.[45] Thus, although the Royal Africa Company directed its agents to obtain two men for every woman, women regularly made up 40–50% of the slaves available. In turn, these sex ratios forced Europeans to reconsider their expectations about women and work.[46]

On plantations, the exigencies of commodity production superseded gender ideologies; slave owners regularly ignored both European and African gender expectations when it suited them, often assigning heavy work to women.[47] Each commodity made different

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42 Patrick Manning, *Slavery and African life: occidental, oriental, and African slave trades*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, p. 132.

43 Walter Hawthorne, *Planting rice and harvesting slaves: transformations along the Guinea-Bissau coast, 1400–1900*, Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2003, p. 127; Miles Ogborn, *Global lives: Britain and the world, 1550–1800*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp. 126–9.

44 Lillian Ashcraft-Easton, '"She voluntarily hath come": a Gambian woman trader in colonial Georgia in the eighteenth century', in Paul E. Lovejoy, ed., *Identity in the shadow of slavery*, London: Continuum, 2000, pp. 202–21.

45 Eltis, *Rise of African slavery*, pp. 102–4; Herbert S. Klein and Ben Vinson III, *African slavery in Latin American and the Caribbean*, 2nd edn, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 124–5; Jennifer L. Morgan, *Laboring women: reproduction and gender in New World slavery*, Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004, p. 60. Joseph Miller, 'Domiciled and dominated: slaving as a history of women', in Campbell, Miers, and Miller, *Women and slavery*, vol. 2, pp. 284–312, esp. pp. 300–2, demonstrates that the masculine bias of slavery in the Americas is anomalous in the history of slavery.

46 Paul E. Lovejoy, 'Internal markets or an Atlantic–Sahara divide? How women fit into the slave trade of West Africa', in Campbell, Miers, and Miller, *Women and slavery*, vol. 1, pp. 259–79, esp. pp. 260 and 267; Eltis, *Rise of African slavery*, pp. 100–1; Morgan, *Laboring women*, pp. 58–60, 84, 112. For some further analysis, see G. Ugo Nwokeji, 'African conceptions of gender and the slave traffic', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 53, 1, 2001, pp. 47–68. For Brazil, see Stuart B. Schwartz, *Sugar plantations in the formation of Brazilian society: Bahia, 1550–1835*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, pp. 57, 347–8.

47 Brown, *Good wives*, ch. 4, esp. p. 115; Susan Amussen, *Caribbean exchanges: slavery and the transformation of English society, 1640–1700*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007, p. 86;

demands, but masters typically assigned female slaves to 'unskilled' field labour alongside men. In sugar production, whether in Guadeloupe, Barbados, or Peru, women and men worked together in the gangs that planted, weeded, and cut sugarcane, and both tended the fires at the mill. Yet the skilled work of sugar production, especially the boiling process, was defined as the domain of male slaves who had specialized knowledge, and who thus gained status, as well as opportunities to earn additional wages.[48]

However, women's work was not limited to field work. Insofar as slave women were considered sexually available to their masters, and children born to them served those same masters, sexuality and reproduction were also forms of work. Although outside continental North America the slave workforce never reproduced itself, some masters saw reproduction as a value that slave women brought to plantations. As we will discuss below, sex and childbearing was a particularly fraught area of slave life, where gender and family expectations played out in complicated ways.[49]

Even enslaved women could employ traditional skills for their own benefit. Where slaves grew crops for personal consumption, enslaved women, like their counterparts in Africa (and indigenous women), dominated local markets.[50] Urban society allowed enslaved women to engage in traditional female domestic work, as cooks, washerwomen, seamstresses, and wet nurses. They could also be hired out as day labourers and pay a fixed amount to their owners.[51] In Spanish and Portuguese America, enslaved women

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    Mary Karasch, 'Slave women on the Brazilian frontier in the nineteenth century', in David Barry Gaspar and Darlene Clark Hine, eds., *More than chattel: black women and slavery in the Americas*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1996, pp. 79–96; Kathleen E. A. Monteith, 'The labour regimen on Jamaican coffee plantations during slavery', in Kathleen E. A. Monteith and Glen Richards, eds., *Jamaica in slavery and freedom: history, heritage, and culture*, Kingston, Jamaica: University of West Indies Press, 2002, pp. 259–73.

48   Morgan, *Laboring women*, ch. 5, esp. pp. 148–9; Richard S. Dunn, 'Sugar production and slave women in Jamaica', in Ira Berlin and Philip D. Morgan, eds., *Cultivation and culture: labor and the shaping of slave life in the Americas*, Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1993, pp. 49–72, esp. pp. 49, 61–2; Bernard Moitt, *Women and slavery in the French Antilles, 1635–1848*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2001, pp. 38–52; María Elena Díaz, *The virgin, the king, and the royal slaves of El Cobre: negotiating freedom in colonial Cuba, 1670–1780*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000, pp. 210–12; Hilary McD. Beckles, *Centering woman: gender discourses in Caribbean slave society*, Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle, 1999, p. 8

49   Morgan, *Laboring women*, esp. pp. 84–5 and ch. 5; Dunn, 'Sugar production'; Karasch, 'Slave women', pp. 79–96; Hilary McD. Beckles, *Natural rebels: a social history of enslaved women in Barbados*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1989, chs. 2–3; Brown, *Good wives*, ch. 4 *passim*; Bernard Moitt, 'Women, work, and resistance in the French Caribbean during slavery, 1700–1848', in V. Shepherd, S. B. Brereton, and B. Bailey, eds., *Engendering History: Caribbean women in historical perspective*, New York: St Martin's Press, 1995, pp. 155–75; Barbara Bush, *Slave women in Caribbean society, 1650–1838*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1990, pp. 33–45; Claire Robertson and Marsha Robinson, 'Re-modeling slavery as if women mattered', in Campbell, Miers, and Miller, *Women and slavery*, vol. 2, pp. 253–83, esp. pp. 264–5.

50   Usner, *Indians*, pp. 202 ff; Sidney Mintz, 'The origins of the Jamaican market system', in Gad Heumann and James Walvin, eds., *The slavery reader*, New York: Routledge, 2003, pp. 521–44; Beckles, *Centering woman*, pp. 140–55; Kathleen Higgins, *'Licentious liberty' in a Brazilian gold-mining region: slavery, gender, and social control in eighteenth-century Sabará, Minas Gerais*, University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 1999, pp. 197–9; Bush, *Slave women*, pp. 46–50.

51   Maria Odila Leite da Silva Dias, *Power and everyday life: the lives of working women in nineteenth-century Brazil*, trans. Ann Frost, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1995, pp. 78–9; Ira Berlin, *Many thousands gone: the first two centuries of slavery in North America*, Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 1998, pp. 157–8.

regularly worked for wages, and used the Spanish system of *coartación* (and a similar system in Brazil) to purchase their own freedom. Once freed, they often used their earnings to purchase their own slaves.[52]

At times, European masters invoked gendered expectations about work to punish uncooperative male slaves. In late seventeenth-century Guadeloupe, Père Labat, the French Dominican priest and writer, punished men for laziness by assigning them women's work, feeding cane to the mill.[53] Such punishments were not unique to European masters. The Natchez often assigned male slaves to women's work and the Mohawk ridiculed the Anglo-American adopted captive James Smith for working in the fields alongside women.[54] In the 1730s and 1740s, with the expansion of rice production in South Carolina, men who had previously herded cattle or cleared forests – work that paralleled African practices – were asked to do work in rice cultivation that women typically did in Africa.[55] This shift in the gendered division of labour was one source of the conflicts that culminated in the Stono Rebellion in 1739.[56]

Curiously, as Europeans settled in the Americas, they did not build their new creole societies around the ideal gendered division of labour as articulated by authorities on both sides of the ocean. English pamphleteers may have claimed that white women's work in the Americas was centred on 'domestique imployments and housewifery as in England', but that was rarely the case.[57] As much as European women in the Americas may have aspired to a life of domesticity and even leisure, and their husbands and male relatives may have struggled to make it happen, frontier life meant that, like their European counterparts, women from Boston to Buenos Aires were regularly engaged in economic activity. Wealthier women owned and managed properties, while the majority of rural women tended and harvested crops on small farms. Poor white women in the English West Indies cultivated land that large planters did not want, and sold produce alongside slave women. In towns, women were engaged in both local and Atlantic economies. In British North America, women participated in retailing, artisanal work, and service occupations; they ran boarding houses, sold local and imported goods, and extended credit. In French New Orleans, even upper-class women engaged in commerce. Spanish law allowed women of all races and classes

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52   On *coartación* and manumission, see Stuart B. Schwartz, 'The manumission of slaves in colonial Brazil: Bahia, 1684–1745', *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 55, 4, 1974, pp. 603–35; Frank 'Trey' Proctor III, 'Gender and the manumission of slaves in New Spain', *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 86, 2, 2006, pp. 309–36. For a former slave woman as slave owner, see Júnia Ferreira Furtado, *Chica da Silva: a Brazilian slave of the eighteenth century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

53   Moitt, *Women and slavery*, pp. 49–50.

54   Christina Snyder, *Slavery in Indian country: the changing face of captivity in early America*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, pp. 132 ff; Hämäläinen, *Comanche empire*, pp. 250 ff; Perdue, *Cherokee women*, p. 126.

55   Peter H. Wood, 'Black labor – white rice', in Heumann and Walvin, *Slavery reader*, pp. 224–44; Morgan, *Laboring women*, pp. 156–7; David Eltis, Philip Morgan, and David Richardson, 'Agency and diaspora in Atlantic history: reassessing the African contribution to rice cultivation in the Americas', *American Historical Review*, 112, 5, 2007, pp. 1329–58.

56   Edward Pearson, '"A countryside full of flames": a reconsideration of the Stono Rebellion and slave rebelliousness in the early eighteenth-century South Carolina Lowcountry', in Heumann and Walvin, *Slavery reader*, pp. 569–93, esp. 579.

57   Cited in Brown, *Good wives*, p. 85.

extensive legal authority, which they turned into economically productive activity across the colonies.[58]

Throughout the Americas, the strength of indigenous gender structures, the realities of subsistence farming, and the struggles of frontier life hindered any rapid, widespread adoption of the ideal European gendered division of labour. Instead, the interactions among circum-Atlantic societies created a world of contested gender adaptations in which the nationality of the imperial power mattered less than the local economy and the gender cultures of the various local populations.

Sexuality and the family

Attempts to control female sexuality were another manifestation of European patriarchal authority in the Atlantic world. Throughout the Middle Ages and early modern period, philosophers and theologians described women's bodies as naturally uncontrolled and dangerous. Thus, the regulation of prostitution, the end of municipal brothels, and laws against fornication were aimed specifically at the control of women's sexuality, clearly articulating the notion that patriarchal authority should govern both women's minds and their bodies.[59]

Nevertheless, conceptions of honour and sexual purity were readily and regularly circumvented by desire. Lust and unsanctioned love drove peasants and princes to pre-marital and extra-marital sex that led to the birth of children out of wedlock. Peasants cohabitated, sometimes to avoid marriage, sometimes out of poverty, while their noble counterparts tended mistresses and named illegitimate sons to positions of power.[60] Although the Catholic Church inveighed against non-marital sexuality, it allowed illegitimate children full rights as Christians; moreover, illegitimate children in Spain, Portugal, and many parts of France could inherit both moveable goods and real estate, so ecclesiastical admonishments had little practical impact. Europeans thus came to their interactions with other circum-Atlantic peoples with some ambivalence about sexual norms. Although sexual activity, especially for women, was ideally limited to marriage, they knew and even expected that men and women regularly engaged in a wide array of relationships outside marriage.

58   Lois Green Carr and Lorena Walsh, 'The planter's wife: the experience of women in seventeenth-century Maryland', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 34, 4, 1977, p. 547; Ellen Hartigan-O'Connor, *The ties that buy: women and commerce in revolutionary America*, Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009; Sophie White, '"A baser commerce": retailing, class, and gender in French colonial New Orleans', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 63, 3, 2006, pp. 517–50; Karin Wulf, *Not all wives: women of colonial Philadelphia*, Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000; Gauderman, *Women's lives*; Silvia Arrom, *The women of Mexico City, 1797–1857*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1985.

59   Perry, *Gender and disorder*; James R. Farr, *Authority and sexuality in early modern Burgundy, 1550–1730*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994; Ian Archer, *The pursuit of stability: social* relations *in Elizabethan London*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp. 211–15, 231–3, 249–54; Wiesner-Hanks, *Christianity and sexuality*, chs. 2 and 3.

60   Allyson M. Poska, 'Elusive virtue: rethinking the role of female chastity in early modern Spain', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 8, 1–2, 2004, pp. 135–46; Richard Adair, *Courtship, illegitimacy and marriage in early modern England*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996; Norberta Amorim, *Guimarães de 1580 a 1819: estudo demográfico*, Lisbon: Instituto Nacional de Investigação Científica, 1987; Cissie Fairchilds, 'Female sexual attitudes and the rise of illegitimacy: a case study', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 8, 4, 1978, pp. 627–67. On non-marital sexuality among elites, see Grace Coolidge, '"A vile and abject woman": noble mistresses, legal power, and the family in early modern Spain', *Journal of Family History*, 32, 3, 2007, pp. 195–214.

This ambivalence set the stage for a variety of interactions between European men and indigenous women. As a part of broader attempts to subjugate the peoples of the Americas, European men imposed their patriarchal ideals through the use of rape and forced concubinage,[61] employing mechanisms of dominance familiar to them. As John Lynn has pointed out, in European warfare, 'Women's bodies were also regarded as forms of plunder.'[62] However, in crossing the Atlantic, European assertions of sexual power were intensified by ethnic and cultural differences. Europeans often saw non-European practices of sex and marriage as savage, and used unfamiliar dress to define non-European women as naturally libidinous, thus allowing them to satisfy both their consciences and their physical desires.[63] On Columbus' second voyage, the Italian nobleman Michele de Cuneo vividly recounted his intense desire for a naked Carib woman and the violence that he used to overcome her resistance.[64] The connection between violence and sex with native women was not limited to Spaniards. Although the English often portrayed themselves as unwilling to engage in such behaviours, they too raped women as a part of conquest.[65]

However, in native communities, sexual violence had a complicated role as a tool of warfare. Some indigenous groups forbade the rape of enemy women, although female captives were common.[66] For instance, English accounts of native atrocities during King Philip's War include almost boilerplate accusations of savagery, but do not allege rape.[67] The English captive Mary Rowlandson acknowledged that 'not one of them ever offered the least abuse of unchastity to me in word or action'.[68] Often, native warriors integrated women and children captives into native society. When James and Susanna Johnson and their children were captured by Abenaki warriors in 1754, her Indian master was the son of New Englanders who had himself been captured as a child. In other native communities, sexual violence and sex with female captives were strategies in their engagements with Europeans.

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61 Stephanie Wood, 'Sexual violation in the conquest of the Americas', in Merrill D. Smith, ed.,
    Sex and sexuality in early America, New York: New York University Press, 1998, pp. 9–34; Sharon Block,
    Rape and sexual power in early America, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press,
    2006, pp. 82–3. On male–male sexual violence, see Richard C. Trexler, *Sex and conquest: gendered
    violence, political order, and the European conquest of the Americas*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University
    Press, 1995.

62 John A. Lynn II, *Women, armies, and warfare in early modern Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University
    Press, 2008, pp. 153–9.

63 Richard Godbeer, *Sexual revolution in early America*, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press,
    2002, p. 166; Wood, 'Sexual violation'; Gordon Sayre, 'Native American sexuality in the eyes of the
    beholders, 1535–1710', in Smith, *Sex and sexuality*, pp. 35–54; Fur, *A nation of women*, pp. 104–105;
    Zamora, 'Abreast of Columbus'.

64 Wood, 'Sexual violation', pp. 11–12.

65 Montrose, 'Work of gender', pp. 18–20; Block, *Rape and sexual power*, p. 82–3; Godbeer, *Sexual
    revolution*, p. 181; Snyder, *Slavery in Indian Country*, pp. 89–90.

66 Many native groups viewed warfare as a sacred activity that required sexual abstinence.
    See Wayne E. Lee, 'Peace chiefs and blood revenge: patterns of restraint in Native American warfare,
    1500–1800', *Journal of Military History*, 71, 3, 2007, p. 722; Snyder, *Slavery in Indian Country*,
    pp. 88–9.

67 Block, *Rape and sexual power*, pp. 210 and 221–2; Godbeer, *Sexual revolution*, pp. 168–9.

68 Mary Rowlandson, *A true history of the captivity and restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*, London,
    1682, p. 32; Godbeer, *Sexual revolution*, p. 168.

The Comanches raped female captives to pressure the Spanish to ransom them, and such violence was so common that some matrilineal Navajos even trace their lineages back to captured Spanish women.[69]

Native women often countered the violence of conquest by using their sexuality in ways that were meaningful to them and/or useful to their societies.[70] In Pueblo culture, women willingly gave themselves to men whom they considered holy, sometimes leading Franciscan friars away from their vows of chastity.[71] In Virginia, Indian women used sex as a 'weapon of war', luring Englishmen into situations in which they could be killed.[72] The famous scene in which Captain John Smith was 'rescued' by Pocahontas enacted a Powhatan ritual whereby Smith was adopted into their family.[73]

Sexual alliances between European men and native women could bring advantages to both partners. Indigenous peoples, like Europeans, were accustomed to marriage and sex as tools of diplomacy and commerce,[74] and sexual relations between Spanish men and Indian women often served as strategies of alliance formation familiar to all participants.[75] French traders who married Indian women 'à la façon du pays' ('according to local customs') became part of indigenous kin networks (not vice versa), improving both the woman's access to European goods (and therefore her status in her kin group) and the man's economic connections.[76]

The desperate reliance of many European men on indigenous women for survival belied any overarching imposition of female subordination. For instance, when provisions failed to arrive, French garrisons in Louisiana relied on local native groups for food, and formed relationships with native women in their own villages and under the supervision of their kin.[77] Indeed, the extensive literature on women who served as economic and cultural

69   Snyder, *Slavery in Indian Country*, pp. 143–5, 146 ff; James F. Brooks, *Captives and cousins: slavery, kinship, and community in the Southwest Borderlands*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2002, pp. 99–103; Linda Colley, *Captives: Britain, empire and the world, 1600–1850*, New York: Pantheon, 2002, pp. 145, 168–70; David J. Weber, *Bárbaros: Spaniards and their savages in the age of enlightenment*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005, pp. 227–8; Little, *Abraham in arms*, ch. 3; Juliana Barr, 'From captives to slaves: commodifying Indian women in the Borderlands', *Journal of American History*, 92, 1, 2005, pp. 2–23; Hämäläinen, *Comanche empire*, p. 45.

70   Kathleen Duval, *The native ground: Indians and colonists in the heart of the continent*, Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006, pp. 84 ff; Richard Godbeer, 'Eroticizing the middle ground: Anglo-Indian relations along the eighteenth-century frontier', in Martha Hodes, ed., *Sex, love, race: crossing boundaries in North American history*, New York: New York University Press, 1999, p. 1032; Jennifer M. Spear, 'Colonial intimacies: legislating sex in French Louisiana', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 60, l, 2003, p. 79.

71   Ramón A. Gutiérrez, *When Jesus came, the corn mothers went away: marriage, sexuality, and power in New Mexico, 1500–1846*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1991, p. 123.

72   Brown, *Good wives*, p. 67.

73   Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *The Jamestown project*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007, p. 228.

74   Godbeer, *Sexual revolution*, p. 177.

75   Pedro Carrasco, 'Indian–Spanish marriages in the first century of the colony', in Schroeder, Wood and Haskett, *Indian women*, pp. 87–103. Barr, *Peace*, ch. 2.

76   Sleeper-Smith, *Indian women*, p. 19; Jennifer M. Spear, *Race, sex, and social order in early New Orleans*, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009, p. 21.

77   Spear, *Race*, p. 22–3; Sleeper -Smith, *Indian women*, pp. 76–7.

mediators between indigenous groups and Europeans highlights the agency of women rather than their subjection in cross-cultural relations.[78]

Gender tensions are also evident in the interactions between European and native men. When indigenous men, particularly elite men, were defeated in warfare, they suffered a loss of manhood. Their status as warriors, rulers, and spiritual leaders was compromised, if not obliterated, by European conquest.[79] This diminished authority affected their place in families, lineages, and communities. European and indigenous men were fighting not only for territory and economic gain but also for their place in the gender hierarchy and their understanding of the natural order.

With the stakes so high and military victory always uncertain, both sides resorted to accusations of homosexuality and insults about the other's masculinity. The Spanish had long accused enemies of sodomy and femininity, and such charges became common topoi of Spanish descriptions of native men.[80] As early as 1494, Diego Alvarez Chanca accused the Caribs of emasculating boys and using them for sodomy, and only slightly later Las Casas admonished Spaniards for having 'defamed the Indians, having accused them of being infected with sodomy'.[81] The English viewed native men as 'lacking in manly ardor' and gentle with their wives to the point of effeminacy.[82] Native men also employed gendered insults as a way to demoralize their enemies, both European and indigenous.[83] The Pequots impugned English manhood by saying 'you dare not fight, you are all one like women'. Apache men shouted insults at Spaniards that referred to them as female genitalia, and Natchez men and women mocked French men for speaking the Natchez language with the feminine pronunciation.[84] Across the Americas, native men countered European domination with their own definitions of power and masculinity.

78   Clara Sue Kidwell, 'Indian women as cultural mediators', *Ethnohistory*, 39, 2, 1992, pp. 97–107; Alida Metcalf, *Go-betweens and the colonization of Brazil, 1500–1600*, Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2005.

79   Barr, *Peace*, pp. 12, 43, 144; Little, *Abraham in arms*, ch. 1; Brown, *Good wives*, pp. 57–8; Shannon Miller, *Invested with meaning: the Raleigh circle in the New World*, Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998, pp. 146 ff; Ann Marie Plane, *Colonial intimacies: Indian marriage in early New England*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000, p. 50; Kirsten Fischer, *Suspect relations: sex, race, and resistance in colonial North Carolina*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002, p. 67; Peter Sigal, *From moon goddesses to virgins: the colonization of Yucatecan Maya sexual desire*, Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2000, p. 44; James Krippner-Martínez, *Rereading the conquest: power, politics, and the history of early colonial Michoacán, Mexico, 1521–1565*, University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2001, pp. 63–67; Nathaniel Sheidley, 'Hunting and the politics of masculinity in Cherokee treaty-making, 1763–75', in Martin Daunton and Rick Halpern, eds., *Empire and others: British encounters with indigenous peoples, 1600–1850*, Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999, pp. 167–85.

80   Trexler, *Sex and conquest*, ch. 2; Sigal, *From moon goddesses*, pp. 42–4; Federico Garza Carvajal, *Butterflies will burn: prosecuting sodomites in early modern Spain and Mexico*, Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2003, pp. 136 ff.

81   Quoted in Garza Carvajal, *Butterflies will burn*, p. 154.

82   Fischer, *Suspect relations*, p. 67.

83   Trexler, *Sex and conquest*, p. 78; Sigal, *From moon goddess*, p. 45; Cecelia F. Klein, 'Fighting with femininity: gender and war in Aztec Mexico', in Richard C. Trexler, ed., *Gender rhetorics: postures of dominance and submission in history*, Binghamton, NY: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1994, pp. 107–46; Fur, *A nation of women*, p. 166. On the multiple meanings of these gendered terms, see Nancy Shoemaker, 'An alliance between men: gender metaphors in eighteenth-century American Indian diplomacy east of the Mississippi', *Ethnohistory*, 46, 1999, pp. 239–64; Fur, *A nation of women*, ch. 5.

84   Little, *Abraham in arms*, p.13; Barr, *Peace*, p. 171; Spear, *Race, sex, and social order*, p. 22. Sometimes Indians engaged in sexual violence against men as well: see Snyder, *Slavery in Indian country*, p. 145.

Native peoples' resistance to the European patriarchal household was equally strong. They proved reluctant if not completely unwilling to relinquish their complementary family roles and reliance on extended kin networks when they joined Spanish mission communities. Despite English opposition, the Seneca maintained tribal membership based on the matriline.[85] Both the French and the English encountered ongoing resistance to their attempts to end traditional marriage practices of polygyny and serial monogamy. The Jesuits in New France were constantly frustrated by their inability to alter native marriage traditions.[86] In other places, European contact had unintended effects on indigenous families. In the Comanche empire, for example, interactions with Europeans seem to have led to an increase in native polygyny.[87]

Intermarriages between European men and native women reveal the frustrations inherent in European attempts to assert their patriarchal authority. For Spanish elites, intermarriage was not just a mechanism for alliance creation; it was also a way to ensure Spanish heirs to lands and titles, Christianization, and Hispanization.[88] As a result, mixed-race children were often taken from their indigenous mothers and either placed in convents or sent back to Spain.[89] However, outside the elites, Spanish men preferred concubinage with non-European women to marriage, and admonitions from the authorities did little to change their minds. Such families bore a closer resemblance to many families on the Iberian peninsula, where consensual non-marital relationships were common, and male mobility more often led to female-headed households and serial monogamy than to the ideal patriarchal family.[90]

The Portuguese also initially encouraged interracial relationships, largely as a means to populate Brazil; however, with few secular or ecclesiastical structures to monitor behaviour, these relationships were not usually formalized and did not necessarily lead to Europeanization.[91] Similarly, French policy originally encouraged intermarriage to promote conversion and *francisation*, and to prevent French men from adopting native ways. Yet, because *coureurs de bois* ('woodsmen') became integrated into the tribes of their wives rather than the other way around, these marriages often frustrated French officials. Even as official opposition to intermarriage grew, marriages between *coureurs de bois* and native women continued, as neither group was willing to give up the economic benefits that such relationships provided.[92]

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85 Barr, *Peace*, p. 147; Shoemaker, 'Rise or fall', pp. 47–8.

86 Plane, *Colonial intimacies*, pp. 41–4, 50–2, 64–6; Leslie Tuttle, *Conceiving the Old Regime: pronatalism and the politics of reproduction in early modern France*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010, pp. 84 ff.

87 Hämäläinen, *Comanche empire*, pp. 246 ff.

88 Carrasco, 'Indian–Spanish marriages', pp. 89 and 91; John K. Chance, 'Marriage alliances among colonial Mixtec elites: the Villagómez caciques of Acatlan-Petlalcingo', *Ethnohistory*, 56, 2009, pp. 91–123.

89 Kathryn Burns, *Colonial habits: convents and the spiritual economy of Cuzco, Peru*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999, ch. 1; Jane E. Mangan, 'Indigenous women as mothers in conquest-era Peru', in Sarah E. Owens and Jane E. Mangan, eds., *Women of the Iberian Atlantic*, Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, forthcoming, 2012.

90 Richard Boyer, *Lives of the bigamists: marriage, family and community in colonial Mexico*, Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1995.

91 Metcalf, *Go-betweens*, pp. 85, 96.

92 Sleeper-Smith, *Indian women*, pp. 40 ff; Saliha Belmessous, 'Assimilation and racialism in seventeenth and eighteenth-century French colonial policy', *American Historical Review*, 110, 2, 2005, pp. 322–49;

In British America, early conflict with native peoples made interracial marriages in New England almost unthinkable, and some colonies even banned the practice.[93] However, such proscriptions did not prevent English men, often on the frontiers of settlement, from marrying Indian women in order to gain access to the goods and services of native society, as well as greater security, or from engaging in an array of marriage-like relationships with them.[94]

At times, differences in gender expectations mitigated the desirability of interracial marriages from the native woman's perspective. Although European men believed that they were the heads of their households, native women sometimes had other views of parental authority. For instance, matrilineal native cultures expected wives and their families to exert authority over children. Late in the eighteenth century, Benjamin Hawkins complained that Creek women 'were in the habit of assuming and exercising complete rule, such as it was, over their children, and not attending to the advice of their white husbands'.[95] In fact, European men's assumption of patriarchal power sometimes made them unattractive potential spouses to native women.[96] Similarly, European men came to prefer Indian women who had already been Europeanized.[97]

Over time, all the imperial powers came to agree that intermarriage was a hindrance to the imposition of European patriarchy, and that the migration of European women was the best way to establish European patriarchal families in the Americas. As early as Columbus' third voyage, the Spanish crown expressed its desire for women to accompany their husbands in the settlement of the Caribbean. Even before it understood the scope of its American involvement, the crown knew that women's reproductive abilities were central to the success of any colonization and that their presence would help tame new lands filled with unruly men, both European and indigenous.[98] The same was true in British North America, where the Virginia Company acknowledged the importance of families to a productive settlement as early as 1619.[99] Even so, European men in the Americas were not very good at forming strong patriarchal households. Not only were they not necessarily the norm in Europe, but weak ecclesiastical and political structures, reliance on native

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Gilles Havard, *Empire et métissage: Indiens et Français dans le Pays d'an Haut 1660–1715*, Sillery: Septentrion, 2003, pp. 647 ff.

93 Plane, *Colonial intimacies*, pp. 37–8; Fischer, *Suspect relations*, pp. 85–7.

94 Godbeer, *Sexual revolution*, p. 159. Jennifer S. H. Brown, *Strangers in blood: fur trade company families in Indian Country*, Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980, ch. 4.

95 Theda Perdue, 'Race and culture: writing the ethnohistory of the early South', *Ethnohistory*, 51, 4, 2004, p. 706. Marriages between natives and native converts to Christianity exacerbated tensions about the role of women from matrilineal cultures: see Fur, *A nation of women*, pp. 81, 105.

96 Perdue, 'Race and culture', p. 706.

97 Barr, 'From captives to slaves', p. 36.

98 Richard Konetzke, 'La emigración de mujeres españolas a America durante la época colonial', *Revista Internacional de Sociología*, 3, 1945, p. 124; Ida Altman, *Emigrants and society: Extremadura and America in the sixteenth century*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1989, pp. 178–9; Barr, *Peace*, p. 93.

99 Brown, *Good wives*, pp. 80 ff; Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Providence Island, 1630–1641*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 158; Alison Games, *Migration and the origins of the English Atlantic world*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, pp. 46–7. English migration ratios remained substantially more balanced than those of France and Spain: see Eltis, *Rise of African slavery*, p. 104; Kupperman, *Jamestown project*, pp. 287–8.

women for survival, and the mobility of European men all undermined their formation in the Americas.

It was not only European men and indigenous women who resisted forming patriarchal households. Female European migrants, mostly from the middle and lower classes, also often failed to acquiesce to the expectations of male authorities. At times, in fact, the gap between gender ideology and individual sexual behaviour was greater in European creole society in the Americas than it was in Europe. Although puritan morality kept premarital conceptions low in New England, rates were considerably higher in the Chesapeake and New Orleans, while, in the English West Indies, the shortage of Anglican clergy often led to concubinage.[100] In Spanish and Portuguese America, illegitimacy and concubinage were far more common than on the Iberian peninsula. At one point, in Mexico City, illegitimate births among white women reached 37%.[101]

In response, authorities attempted to enforce stricter sexual and gender expectations. The Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions regulated sexual activity by pursuing bigamists, fornicators, and men who had sex with other men.[102] They were also concerned with asserting control over women whose spiritual activities seemed to challenge patriarchal control, especially non-white women who practised witchcraft or engaged in mystical activities.[103] Protestant communities also attempted to enforce their ideas about sexuality and patriarchy.[104] However, such interventions were sporadic, and did little to constrain the sexual activities of white creole women.

The patriarchal household was further challenged by the male mobility and mortality that often left women in charge of households and estates. By the end of the colonial period,

100 For two different views of non-marital sexuality in New England, see Else Hambleton, *Daughters of Eve: pregnant brides and unwed mothers in seventeenth-century Massachusetts*, New York: Routledge, 2004, and Daniel Scott Smith and Michael Hindus, 'Premarital pregnancy in America, 1640–1971: an overview and interpretation', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 5, 1975, pp. 537–70. See also James Horn, *Adapting to a New World: English society in the seventeenth-century Chesapeake*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1994, pp. 204–16; Natalie A. Zacek, *Settler society in the English Leeward Islands, 1670–1776*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, pp. 174–6.

101 María Emma Mannarelli, *Pecados públicos: la ilegitimidad en Lima, siglo XVII*, Lima: Ediciones Flora Tristán, 1994; Carlos Mayo, '¿Amistades ilícitas? Las relaciones extramatrimoniales en la campaña bonaerense, 1750–1810', *Cuadernos de Historia Regional* (Buenos Aires), 1/2, 1985, pp. 3–9; Thomas Calvo, 'Concubinato y mestizaje en el medio urbano: el caso de Guadalajara en el siglo XVII', *Revista de Indias*, 44, 1984, pp. 203–12; Ann Twinam, *Public lives, private secrets: gender, honor, sexuality, and illegitimacy in colonial Spanish America*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999, esp. p. 12.

102 Boyer, *Lives of the bigamists*; Carvajal, *Butterflies will burn*; Pete Sigal, ed., *Infamous desire: male homosexuality in colonial Latin America*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003; Ligia Bellini, *A coisa obscura: mulher, sodomia, e Inquisição no Brasil colonial*, São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1987; Ronaldo Vainfas, *Trópico dos pecados: moral, sexualidade e Inquisição no Brasil*, Rio de Janeiro: Campus, 1997.

103 On colonial witchcraft, see Silverblatt, *Moon, sun, and witches*; Martha Few, *Women who live evil lives: gender, religion, and the politics of power in colonial Guatemala*, Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2002; Laura de Mello e Souza and Diane Grosklaus Whitty, *The devil and the land of the holy cross: witchcraft, slavery, and popular religion in colonial Brazil*, Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2003; María Emma Mannarelli, *Hechiceras, beatas y expósitas: mujeres y poder inquisitorial en Lima*, Lima: Ediciones del Congreso del Perú, 1999; Carol F. Karlsen, *The devil in the shape of a woman: witchcraft in colonial New England*, New York: WW Norton, 1987; Elizabeth Reis, *Damned women: sinners and witches in puritan New England*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997.

104 Mark E. Kann, *A republic of men: the American founders, gendered language, and patriarchal politics*, New York: New York University Press, 1998; Natalie A. Zacek, 'Sex, sexuality, and social control in the eighteenth-century Leeward Islands', in Smith, *Sex and sexuality*, pp. 190–214; Susan E. Klepp, *Revolutionary conceptions: women, fertility, and family limitation in America, 1760–1820*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2009, pp. 236–8.

in some parts of Spanish and Portuguese America, more than one-third of households were headed by women and, in many areas, white women were as likely to be heads of households as women of colour (or even more likely). Female-headed households were also common in English cities such as Philadelphia and Boston, and in French New Orleans.[105] Patriarchal households might have been the ideal, but they were not the norm anywhere in the Americas.

In West Africa, European patriarchy, like European power more generally, never gained much of a foothold. However, the slave trade did present gendered challenges to West African women and their families, since it created skewed sex ratios among those who remained. In response, women took on increased burdens, and polygyny may have increased.[106] In Guinea Bissau, women headed powerful matriclans in which they practised 'strategic engagement', using Portuguese and African alliances to advance their own interests and those of their families.[107] Often, African kinship structures shaped the opportunities open to mixed-race children: the matrilineal descent of the Akan, for example, meant that the children born to intermarried couples in Elmina could rely on maternal kin, while children born to women from patrilineal groups faced greater challenges.[108] On the Slave Coast, an 'Atlantic' community emerged as a result of marriages between Europeans, white Brazilians, and former Brazilian slaves on the one hand, and elite women from the Slave Coast ports on the other.[109] With the expansion of the slave trade, African women found mechanisms to engage their new social and economic circumstances that protected their families and their status in their communities.

African slavery in the Americas created a different series of conflicts over patriarchal authority. European and white creole men's relations with slave women may have reflected patriarchal authority, but they did not replicate European expectations about marriage and sexuality. As was the case with indigenous women, the rape of enslaved women by European

105 Guiomar Dueñas Vargas, *Los hijos del pecado: ilegitimidad y vida familiar en la Santafé de Bogotá colonial*, Bogotá: Editorial Universidad Nacional, 1997; Arrom, *Women of Mexico City*, pp. 130–40; Elizabeth Kuznesof, 'The role of the female-headed household in Brazilian modernization: São Paolo, 1765–1836', *Journal of Social History*, 13, 4, 1980, pp. 589–613; Alida Metcalf and Caroline B. Brettell, 'Family customs in Portugal and Brazil: transatlantic parallels', *Continuity and Change*, 8, 3, 1993, pp. 1–24; Carole Shammas, 'The female social structure of Philadelphia in 1775', *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 107, 1, 1983, pp. 69–83; Alfred F. Young, 'Women of Boston: "persons of consequence" in the making of the American revolution, 1765–1776', in Harriet B. Applewhite and Darline G. Levy, eds., *Women and politics in the age of the democratic revolution*, Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1990, p. 184.

106 John Thornton, 'Sexual demography: the impact of the slave trade on family structure', in Claire C. Robertson and Martin A. Klein, eds., *Women and slavery in Africa*, Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983, pp. 39–48; Thomas Benjamin, *The Atlantic world: Europeans, Africans, Indians and their shared history, 1400–1900*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009, pp. 338–9; Patrick Manning, 'The slave trade and the demographic evolution of Africa', in Doudou Diène, ed., *From chains to bonds: the slave trade revisited*, New York: Berghahn Books, 2001, p. 110.

107 Philip Havik, 'Mary and misogyny revisited: gendering the Afro-Atlantic connection', in Philip J. Havik and Malyn Newitt, eds., *Creole societies in the Portuguese colonial empire*, Bristol: University of Bristol, 2007, pp. 41–64.

108 Harvey M. Feinberg, *Africans and Europeans in West Africa: Dutchmen and Elminians on the Gold Coast during the eighteenth century*, Transactions of the American Philosophical Society new series, 79, 7, 1989, pp. 89–90.

109 Robin Law and Kristin Mann, 'West Africa in the Atlantic community: the case of the Slave Coast', in Heumann and Walvin, *Slavery reader*, pp. 739–63; Edna G. Bay, *Wives of the leopard: gender, politics, and culture in the Kingdom of Dahomey*, Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1998, ch. 5.

men – masters and others – enacted hierarchies of both gender and race. Evidence from throughout the Americas demonstrates that white men assumed the sexual availability of slave women.[110] The Jamaican Thomas Thistlewood's diary recorded 3,852 sexual encounters with 138 different women during the 37 years he was in Jamaica; he considered two of those women his wives, one for 33 years.[111] Neither his sexual exploitation nor his long-term slave concubines are unique. In 1736, the *South Carolina Gazette* suggested that bachelors were waiting for the next shipment of slaves because of the sexual stamina of African women.[112] European men's sexual access to African women signified the convergence of masculine privilege and racial power.

Although rape re-inscribed the power of men over women and masters over slaves, concubinage could be a source of individual power, wealth, and sometimes freedom for enslaved women or their children. Phibbah, Thistlewood's 'wife', acted as a mediator between him and his slaves, but also used her position to benefit her family. Thistlewood purchased her freedom at his death, and gave her two slaves and a plot of land. Slave women across the Americas similarly turned their relationships with white men to their advantage.[113] Enslaved women in Spanish America used the legal system to complain of rapes by masters and to press for their rights to marry.[114] The French *Code noir* provided for the manumission of women who bore children to free men, as well as freedom for their children.[115] Taking advantage of such opportunities did not mitigate the trauma of enslavement, but it gave some slave women agency in the creation and control of their families.

Male slaves often urged owners to bring more female slaves to plantations, as, without partners, African men could neither have relationships nor procreate, particularly emasculating those who came from polygynous societies.[116] Moreover, they could not exert the kind of authority over women that was expected in both European and African patriarchal traditions.[117]

110 Debra Blumenthal, *Enemies and familiars: slavery and mastery in fifteenth-century Valencia*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2010, p. 87. Karen Vieira Powers, *Women in the crucible of conquest: the gendered genesis of Spanish-American society, 1500–1600*, Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2005, p. 97. John Gabriel Stedman, *Stedman's Surinam: life in an eighteenth-century slave society*, ed. Richard Price and Sally Price, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992; Fischer, *Suspect relations*, pp. 161–6.

111 Trevor Burnard, *Mastery, tyranny, and desire: Thomas Thistlewood and his slaves in the Anglo Jamaican world*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004, pp. 156, 261–2; Beckles, *Centering Woman*, pp. 38–58.

112 Brown, *Good wives*, pp. 332–3; Godbeer, *Sexual revolution*, pp. 212–19.

113 Burnard, *Mastery*, pp. 228–40; Furtado, *Chica da Silva*; Beckles, *Centering woman*, pp. 38–58, esp. p. 46; Higgins, '*Licentious liberty*', pp. 112–18; Dunn, 'Sugar production', pp. 71–2; Spear, *Race, sex, and social order*, pp. 64–65, 112, 130, 151; Kathleen DuVal, 'Indian intermarriage and métissage in colonial Louisiana', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 65, 2, 2008, pp. 267–304.

114 Christine Hünefeldt, *Paying the price of freedom: family and labor among Lima's slaves, 1800–1854*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994, p. 21; Keila Grinberg, 'Manumission, gender, and the law in nineteenth-century Brazil', in Rosemary Brana-Shute and Randy J. Sparks, eds., *Paths to freedom: manumission in the Atlantic world*, Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2009, pp. 219–34.

115 Sue Peabody, '"A dangerous zeal": Catholic missions to slaves in the French Antilles, 1635–1800', *French Historical Studies*, 25, 1, 2002, p. 71.

116 James H. Sweet, *Recreating Africa: culture, kinship, and religion in the African–Portuguese world, 1441–1770*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2003, pp. 38–9.

117 Burnard, *Mastery*, pp. 203–4.

As early as 1650, male Barbadian slaves would not work effectively without wives, and on one Brazilian sugar plantation, the Benedictine owners purchased female slaves to accommodate the demands of their male slaves.[118] By the eighteenth century, sex ratios on plantations were increasingly balanced. In the French Caribbean, the number of women on plantations was often equal to that of men, and in some cases there were more adult slave women than men.[119] In colonial Latin America, female slaves outnumbered men in cities, and natural increase led to more balanced ratios in some areas.[120] By the early nineteenth century, women outnumbered men on Barbados, St Kitts, and Nevis, while in Jamaica and St Vincent the numbers were roughly equal. Only on Trinidad and Demerara, frontier colonies that had only recently begun sugar production, was there a skewed sex ratio in favour of men.[121]

Even with women present, the formation of European-style families was not necessarily a priority. Although Catholic sensibilities and Iberian law favoured the creation of slave families, the low cost of slaves gave planters no incentive to promote marriage.[122] Nor were all slaves eager for marriage. In Guadeloupe, one woman refused to marry because 'I am miserable enough as it is without having to bring children into this world to be more miserable.'[123] In most areas, legal marriages were relatively rare, and when stable family units were created, they might follow African rather than Christian models: Thomas Thistlewood's slave Lincoln's household consisted of his wife, Sukey, his partner, Abba, and her five children (three of whom were his); Lincoln also had a partner on a neighbouring estate who bore him a child.[124] Outside mainland North America, birth rates were low and, for the most part, slave populations did not reproduce themselves.[125] Thus, multiple factors connected to slavery mitigated against the formation of patriarchal families among slaves.

The Atlantic world also created relationships between Africans – enslaved and free – and Indians that circumvented European influence. In eighteenth-century Virginia, local officials complained about free blacks living among the Ginkaskin Indians, and worried about the corruption of pure Indian ancestry.[126] In Louisiana, Indian–African couples created networks that encouraged other slaves to run away.[127] In Spanish Florida, African–Native

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118 Amussen, *Caribbean exchanges*, p. 62; Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, p. 39.

119 Moitt, *Women and slavery*, pp. 29–32.

120 Higgins, *'Licentious liberty'*, pp. 75–6.

121 Stanley Engerman and B.W. Higman, 'The demographic structure of the Caribbean slave societies in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries', in Franklin W. Knight, ed., *The general history of the Caribbean*, vol. 3: *The slave societies of the Caribbean*, London: UNESCO, 1997, pp. 80–5.

122 Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, p. 39.

123 Moitt, *Women and slavery*, p. 81.

124 *Ibid*., ch. 5 *passim*, esp. pp. 81, 85, 87; Burnard, *Mastery*, pp. 186–90, 203–4.

125 Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, pp. 172–3; Katia M. De Queirós Mattoso, *To be a slave in Brazil*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1979, pp. 110–11; Díaz, *Virgin*, pp. 32–40; Kenneth Morgan, 'Slave women and reproduction in Jamaica, c. 1776–1834', in Campbell, Miers, and Miller, *Women and slavery*, vol. 2, pp. 27–53; Berlin, *Many thousands gone*, pp. 126–7; Dunn, 'Sugar production', p. 57; Moitt, *Women and slavery*, pp. 89–99. Miller, 'Domiciled and dominated', pp. 304–6, argues that the North American slave household was the ultimate contradiction of slavery.

126 Brown, *Good wives*, p. 243.

127 Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Africans in colonial Louisiana: the development of Afro-creole culture in the eighteenth century*, Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1992, p. 115.

American couples found ready homes both in indigenous communities and among other runaway slaves. In central Mexico, relationships between Africans and Indians created a multiracial society that constantly subverted Spanish attempts to distinguish between racial and ethnic groups.[128]

Conclusion

European assumptions about family and sexuality did not go uncontested in Europe, so it is not surprising that patriarchal expectations were ignored or thwarted elsewhere. The creation of the Atlantic world did not involve the imposition of European norms on non-Europeans, but rather the creation of a wide range of familial and sexual relationships that reflected the interplay of all of the circum-Atlantic gender cultures. Moreover, those relationships were the product not only of cross-cultural interactions but also of the priorities and tensions within each of the Atlantic societies. Thus, a focus on gender allows us to move away from a simplistic model of European dominance towards a more sophisticated and inclusive theoretical framework for Atlantic history.

Prospero, it turns out, could set off storms or calm the seas, but he could not control Miranda. Similarly, the early modern Atlantic was not merely a stage for contests among European empires. A trans-imperial analysis reminds us that the military, political, and mercantile success of Europeans in the Atlantic was not accompanied by cultural conquest. As Europeans came into contact with non-European peoples, they may have represented their interactions through the language of prescriptive codes, but those codes did not define behaviour; the family structures and gender norms of Native American and African peoples proved to be remarkably resilient. Amid the violence of the conquest and enslavement, interactions among people across the Atlantic created a dynamic of ideology and practice in which European expectations of gender and family were contested, negotiated, and ignored by Native Americans, Africans, and even European settlers. This dialectic ultimately limited the influence of European patriarchy and contributed to the creation of the rich cultural tapestry of the Atlantic world.

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128 See Jane Landers, 'Africans and Indians on the Spanish southeastern frontier' and Norma Angélica Castillo Palma and Susan Kellogg Chincilla, 'Conflict and cohabitation between Afro-Mexicans and Nahuas in central Mexico', in Matthew Restall, ed., *African–Native relations in colonial Latin America*, Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005, pp. 53–80 and 115–36.