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Shifting the Frame: Trans-imperial Approaches to Gender in the Atlantic World[1]

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How does the emergence of an increasingly integrated Atlantic world shape both concepts and experiences of gender? In a recent article, "Restoring Miranda: Gender and the Limits of European Patriarchy in the Early Modern Atlantic World," we examined the gender expectations that came with Europeans as they moved around the Atlantic world, the differences between those expectations and the gendered realities, and the failures and successes of those expectations in interactions with indigenous peoples through the lenses of the gendered division of labor and sexual interactions and relationships. We came to three key conclusions: first, gender is an especially useful category of analysis for understanding the early modern Atlantic world because it transcends imperial, religious, and cultural boundaries; second, gender analysis avoids traditional imperial paradigms, thus allowing indigenous peoples and women (both European and indigenous) considerable agency; finally, we argued that gendered analysis demonstrates the limits of the European impact on the Atlantic world. In Africa and the Americas, some peoples were changed in gendered

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[1] This essay was originally delivered as the plenary address of the Society for the Study of Early Modern Women, at the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico, October 2013. We are grateful both for the invitation to deliver it, and for the comments and suggestions we received from the audience at that time.

terms, and some were not. Around the Atlantic, even white women were not particularly limited by European patriarchal norms.[2]

However, in that article, we used Europe as a fixed point, following most other scholarship, which assumes that the Atlantic is "not Europe." In this essay we want to turn that around, making Europe the focus for a discussion of the Atlantic world and exploring the central question that we did not address in the previous piece: how did Atlantic encounters influence, shape, or change European gender norms and realities? Here we argue that Atlantic interactions altered European women's lives in five critical ways. We found that gendered patterns of migration, trade, and consumption are particularly easy to explore. Cultural changes are more difficult to measure, but we suggest the broad gendered impact of Europe's engagement with the Atlantic in terms of the potential for repositioning by female writers and artists and the impact of Atlantic contacts on bourgeois ideals of women and work.[3] Although scholars rarely conceptualize it in this way, the Atlantic transformed the lives of millions of European women.

The Gendered Impact of Migration

Without a doubt, the most important (and most easily measured) impact of the formation of the Atlantic world on European women was the degree to which their lives were changed by the tide of large-scale, long-distance male migration that resulted from European overseas exploration and

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[2] Susan D. Amussen and Allyson M. Poska, "Restoring Miranda: Gender and the Limits of European Patriarchy in the Early Modern Atlantic World," *Journal of Global History* 7: 3 (November 2012): 342–63.

[3] A central assumption of our work, based on more than a quarter century of research, is that the prescribed European gender system in which women were expected to be chaste, silent, and obedient was not normative. Rather, acquiescence to rigid gender roles properly describes at best a relatively elite group of women, although many more women might have aspired to perform different aspects of these roles. Moreover, women's work was not limited to domestic activity; it was wide-ranging and largely unregulated, and included a broad array of occupations from agricultural work to credit and investment. Finally, studies of European women reveal few indications of subordination in their sexual expression. For a general overview of this research, see Merry Wiesner-Hanks, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

settlement. Transatlantic migration left hundreds of thousands of women, from the wives of colonial administrators to the wives of ordinary men, in charge of households and family estates, and also limited fertility. Many of these transatlantic Bertrande de Rols were left to fend for themselves or became dependent on friends and family, living in social limbo often for much of their lives. So difficult were their circumstances that in north-western Spain and Portugal, these women were given the tragic moniker, "widows of the living."[4] Even when single men migrated as soldiers, sailors, and traders, their communities at home were changed. Marriage pools contracted and rates of permanent female singleness rose as the result of skewed sex ratios, a fact which may have affected the large numbers of women entering domestic service during the period.[5]

Faced with changed circumstances, some European women also used the opportunity to leave Europe. Although women were not on Columbus's first voyage across the Atlantic, an unknown number travelled to the Caribbean with his second voyage in 1493.[6] Indeed, women made up a much larger proportion of transatlantic migrants during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries than is usually noted. They constituted approximately one-third of migrants to Spanish America, and a quarter to a third of migrants to most English colonies, with the exception of New England, where the focus on family migration made the proportion of women higher.[7] In fact, family migration led to the departure of large numbers of European women to new homes. In the seventeenth

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[4] Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984); Allyson M. Poska, *Women and Authority in Early Modern Spain: The Peasants of Galicia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 139–41.

[5] On rising rates of female singleness, see Judith M. Bennett and Amy M. Froide, eds. *Singlewomen in the European Past, 1250–1800* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998).

[6] On women in the early Caribbean, see Ida Altman, "Spanish Women in the Caribbean, 1493–1540," *Women of the Iberian Atlantic*, ed. Sarah E. Owens and Jane E. Mangan (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 2012), 57–81.

[7] "Campesinas transatlánticas: Las mujeres y la migración en el imperio español al fin del siglo XVIII." *Nuevo Mundo, Mundos Nuevos*, Debates, 2012, 19 June 2012 http://nuevomundo.revues.org/63354. Nicholas Canny, ed., *The Origins of Empire*, vol. 1, *The Oxford History of the British Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 182,

century, the Huguenot diaspora brought thousands of Calvinist women to the Americas and other parts of the Atlantic basin. As early as 1687, the Dutch East India Company resettled a group of French Huguenots to the Cape of Good Hope.[8] The Portuguese also moved peninsular families around its empire, sending some to Mozambique, and moving others from the Azores to Brazil. In a remarkable feat, the Portuguese transported the entire town of Mazagão from West Africa to the Amazon in 1770. That transatlantic move included more than 300 Portuguese families and fifty-one widows, who had travelled first from Portugal to Africa and then from Africa to Brazil.[9] These female migrants were agents of empire, meant to bring their reproductive and productive capacity, as well as their ability to transmit European culture, to far-flung settlements around the Atlantic.[10] However, by the eighteenth century, the loss of women's reproductive potential also prompted anxiety about population decline at home.[11]

Many single women sought adventure and new opportunities (both financial and romantic) on the other side of the Atlantic. The English

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391; Alison Games, "Migration," *The British Atlantic World, 1500–1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), 41.

[8] Kerry Ward, *Networks of Empire: Forced Migration in the Dutch East India Company* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 38.

[9] Júnia Ferreira Furtado, "Lives on the Seas: Women's Trajectories in Port Cities of the Portuguese Overseas Empire," *Women in Port: Gendering Communities, Economies, and Social Networks in Atlantic Port Cities, 1500–1800*, ed. Douglas Catterall and Jodi Campbell (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 251–86.

[10] On women as agents of empire, see Antonia Castañeda, "Engendering the History of Alta California, 1769–1848: Gender, Sexuality, and the Family," *California History*, 76: 2/3, special issue "Contested Eden: California before the Gold Rush" (Summer–Fall, 1997): 230–59; Miroslava Chávez-García, *Negotiating Conquest: Gender and Power in California, 1770s–1880s* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2004); Virginia M. Bouvier, *Women and the Conquest of California, 1542–1840: Codes of Silence* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2001); Barbara L. Voss, *The Archaeology of Ethnogenesis: Race and Sexuality in Colonial San Francisco* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

[11] Carol Blum, *Strength in Numbers: Population, Reproduction, and Power in Eighteenth-Century France* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002). Leslie Tuttle, *Conceiving the Old Regime: Pronatalism and the Politics of Reproduction in Early Modern France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

encouraged female servants to go to Providence Island, Barbados, and Virginia, where their presence would not only provide opportunities for marriage, but would also discourage English men from marrying indigenous women and engaging in concubinage.[12] Some women, like Catalina de Erauso, used transatlantic migration as an opportunity for refashioning and gender-bending.[13] Who knows how many others successfully hid their transition to maleness upon arrival in the Americas?

Of course, not all women left voluntarily. Some women were forced to leave their homes for distant places around the Atlantic world. Female orphans and the single women from the house of reclusion in Lisbon who were sent by the Portuguese crown to Angola, Brazil, and Mozambique had no choice. Equally, female vagrants and petty criminals transported by the English crown did not choose to leave home. Yet their departure helped reshape the European landscape.[14]

However, the Americas also provided new physical and spiritual challenges that energized early modern women across the spectrum of confessions. Marie de L'Incarnation was one of many women who crossed the Atlantic in the hopes of spreading her faith. Sarah Owens has translated the writings of Spanish Capuchin nuns who travelled to Peru to establish a new convent. Quaker women preachers travelled from the British Isles to the American colonies and back to bring the message of truth and female illumination. *Beatas* from Spain travelled to New Spain to model female piety for their colonial counterparts.[15] Sephardic Jews created complex networks around the Atlantic world and established dowry societies to allow

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[12] Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Providence Island, 1630–1641: The Other Puritan Colony* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 159.

[13] Catalina de Erauso, *Lieutenant Nun: Memoir of a Basque Transvestite in the New World*, ed. and trans. Michele Stepto and Gabriel Stepto (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996). For a more historically accurate recounting of her life, see José Ignacio Tellechea Idígoras, *Doña Cataliña de Erauso–La Monja Alférez* (San Sebastián: Gráficas ESET, 1992).

[14] See, for instance, Timothy J. Coates, *Convicts and Orphans: Forced and State-Sponsored Colonizers in the Portuguese Empire, 1550–1755* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).

[15] Jacqueline Holler, *Escogidas Plantas: Nuns and Beatas in Mexico City, 1531–1601.* Electronic book (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

girls from around the Atlantic to marry.[16] Taking transatlantic travel to a whole new level, María de Ágreda experienced bilocation from her convent in Spain to the Jumano Indians of New Mexico in the 1620s.[17]

Of course, migration went in multiple directions around the Atlantic basin. The migration (both free and forced) of non-white peoples from around the Atlantic into Europe also affected European women in gendered ways. Indigenous Americans were always a rarity in Europe; however, Christianized and acculturated celebrities like Rebecca Rolfe (Pocahontas), who travelled to England dressed in European clothing, eased European men's and women's anxieties about the naturalness of European expectations of female behavior and the ability to make Indian women more like themselves.[18] On the Iberian peninsula, African men and women were familiar sights. Many of them were slaves, often owned by women, but cities like Seville and Lisbon also had significant free Black populations and interracial relationships were not unheard of among the lower classes.[19] In Portugal, Black women became renowned for their

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[16] Miriam Bodian, *Hebrews of the Portuguese Nation: Conversos and Community in Early Modern Amsterdam* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997); Wim Klooster, "Communities of Port Jews and Their Contacts in the Dutch Atlantic World," *Jewish History* 20. 2, special issue on Port Jews of the Atlantic (2006): 129–45.

[17] Natalie Zemon Davis, *Women on the Margins: Three Seventeenth-Century Lives* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995); Madre María Rosa, *Journey of Five Capuchin Nuns,* ed. and trans. Sarah E. Owens, "The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe" (Toronto: Iter/Centre for Renaissance and Reformation Studies, 2009); Rebecca Larsen, *Daughters of Light: Quaker Women Preaching and Prophesying in the Colonies and Abroad, 1700–1775* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Katie MacLean, "María de Ágreda, Spanish Mysticism and the Work of Spiritual Conquest," *Colonial Latin American Review* 17.1 (June 2008): 29–48.

[18] Alden T. Vaughan, *Transatlantic Encounters: American Indians in Britain, 1500–1776* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Nancy van Deusen, "Seeing *Indios* in Sixteenth-Century Castile," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 69.2 (April 2012): 211–40.

[19] Ruth Pike, *Aristocrats and Traders: Sevillian Society in the Sixteenth Century* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972), 170–92. T. F. Earle and K. J. P. Lowe, eds. *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). Dienke Hondius, "Black Africans in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam," *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme* 31.2 (Spring 2008): 89–108.

remedies, as white women believed that they had healing knowledge that white doctors and healers did not. By the eighteenth century, the presence of Black men in England and France challenged Enlightenment notions of masculine freedom and equality, and increasingly provoked anxiety about Black male sexuality.[20]

To ensure that their illegitimate children were raised as European Christians, many European men took their mixed-race children from their indigenous mothers and sent them to Europe to be raised. Mestizo children from Peru were raised in Spain, while Scottish men brought their mixed-race children from Jamaica to live in the British Isles and a similar exchange of family members took place between Saint Domingue and metropolitan France.[21] Each of these migrations had gendered impact in Europe. Most importantly, European women became the stepmothers and caretakers of mixed-race children, thus subverting the stereotypical colonial image of women of color caring for white children.

Thus, it is easy to see how the migration of peoples to and from Europe, both forced and free, changed the lives of European women. However, it remains difficult to measure the impact of the many Europeans who spent time in Africa or the Americas — as sailors, merchants, servants, or settlers — and then returned to Europe with experiences of, and sometimes wealth and connections to, a wider world. However, those women and men

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[20] Sue Peabody, *There are no Slaves in France: The Political Culture of Race and Slavery in the Ancien Régime* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996). Kathleen Wilson, "Citizenship, Empire, and Modernity in the English Provinces, c. 1720–1790," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 29.1 (1996), 69–96, esp. 81–82; Felicity A. Nussbaum, "Being a Man: Olaudah Equiano and Ignatius Sancho," *Genius in Bondage: Literature of the Early Black Atlantic*, ed. Vincent Carreta and Phillip Gould (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2001), 63.

[21] Jane Mangan, "Indigenous Women as Mothers in Conquest-era Peru," *Women in the Iberian Atlantic*, 82–100; Daniel Livesay, "Extended Families: Mixed-Race Children and Scottish Experience, 1770–1820," *International Journal of Scottish Literature* 4 (Spring/Summer 2008) http://www.ijsl.stir.ac.uk/issue4/livesay.pdf, accessed 2/28/14; R. Darrell Meadows, "Migration, Family, and the Imperatives of Commodity Production: The Planters of Saint-Domingue as Transatlantic Families," paper presented at *Centering Families in Atlantic Worlds, 1500–1800* at the Institute for Historical Studies, University of Texas (28 February 2011).

and their experiences must have changed them and their communities in ways that we have yet to explore.

Women's Work and the Atlantic Trade

Just as migration offered possibilities (and challenges) for European women, the Atlantic world opened up a whole new world of financially attractive options for them. The European empires contributed to a dramatic expansion of the European economy between 1500 and 1750, which allowed for more opportunities within existing occupational frameworks and greatly expanded the number of women involved. From the beginning, women played critical roles as exporters in the transatlantic trade, as well as creditors and investors. It has been estimated that for northern Europe, between five and ten percent of all merchants and entrepreneurs were women, a figure that does not include their engagement in household enterprises owned along with their husbands.[22] Iberian Jewish and *converso* women living in France favored the Atlantic cloth trade for investments as both widows and single women. Gayle Brunelle has shown that these emigrants engaged in long distance commerce on a scale similar to that of their male counterparts and often ran businesses related to the Atlantic trade on their own.[23] Much of that trade was small scale and occasional; in 1686, women trading on their own in London constituted eleven percent of those importing goods worth less than £10, and only three percent of those importing between £10 and £99. In addition, marriage was a significant business strategy for the wealthiest colonial traders in London.[24] English women were also significant investors in both Bank of England stock and the East India Company.[25] Around Europe, women frequently

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[22] Pamela Sharpe, "Gender in the Economy: Female Merchants and Family Businesses in the British Isles, 1600–1850," *Social History/Histoire Sociale* 34 (2001): 283–306.

[23] Gayle Brunelle, "The Price of Assimilation: Spanish and Portuguese Women in French Cities, 1500–1650," *Women in Port*, 155–83.

[24] Nuala Zahedieh, *The Capital and the Colonies: London and the Atlantic Economy, 1660–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 59, 91–93.

[25] Sharpe, "Gender in the Economy."

acted in their absent husbands' names, making contracts at home while their husbands ran the business on the other side of the Atlantic. As Basque, Catalan, and Galician families expanded their transatlantic businesses, they increasingly relied on female relatives on the peninsula to not only maintain family estates, but also manage the peninsular side of the business.[26] Widows often took over their husbands' trades, with a skill that indicates their engagement while their husbands were still living. Lower in the class hierarchy, wives of sailors had powers of attorney that allowed them to collect wages, debts, and act on their husbands' behalf.[27]

Women also engaged in a variety of businesses related to the Atlantic trade. They owned ships or parts of ships, and owned or ran lodging houses for the very transient populations of port cities. They imported and sold colonial commodities. In London, Pamela Sharpe has shown, women owned warehouses and docks used for colonial trade, they sold items needed for ships and shipyards, and they provided provisions for long journeys. Women, both alone and with their husbands, often owned shares in ships that traded both goods and slaves in Africa and the Americas. Finally, women not only survived but sometimes became wealthy from the remittances sent by their husbands on the other side of the Atlantic.[28]

Women played a key role in Europe as producers and retailers of exports to and from the Americas. Scottish women supported themselves by carding and spinning wool, much of which was meant for export to the Americas by the Dutch.[29] Marta Vicente has shown that in Spain and

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[26] For an overview of this literature, see Marcela Aguirrezabala, "Mujeres casadas en los negocios y el comercio ultramarino entre el Río de la Plata y la Península a fines del siglo XVIII," *Anuario de Estudios Americanos* Tomo 58: 1 (2001): 113.

[27] In Spain, see Poska, *Women and Authority*, 147–48; in England, see Margaret R. Hunt, "Women and the Fiscal-Military State in the Late Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries," *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity and Modernity in Britain and the Empire 1660–1840*, ed. Kathleen Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 29–47.

[28] Sharpe, "Gender in the Economy." Alexandra Parma Cook, "The Women of Early Modern Triana: Life, Death, and Survival Strategies in Seville's Maritime District," *Women in Port*, 41–68.

[29] Gordon Desbrisay, "Aberdeen and Dutch Atlantic: Women and Woolens in the Seventeenth Century," *Women in Port*, 69–102.

Spanish America, women's fashion choices led to the transatlantic expansion of calico production and trade.[30] The vast expansion of consumer goods made possible in part by colonial trade provided employment for women that may seem less directly shaped by the Atlantic; one reason, for instance, that women in England may have been less obviously involved in Atlantic trade than women elsewhere is the differentiation of segments of the trade — manufacturing, wholesale, and retail trades — were separate in England, while in Scotland or Germany the three activities were still integrated. English women were more likely to be involved in the retail trades.[31]

Much of the work women did in relation to the Atlantic world was not new: women had always worked provisioning ports and the tradition of women investing in trading ventures is long. However, the Atlantic world greatly expanded the opportunities for such work. Furthermore, the material goods traded across the Atlantic world made a significant difference in the lives of all European women, not just those who worked directly in the Atlantic or in ancillary trades.

Gendered Patterns of Consumption

In addition to expanding women's opportunities to work, the growth of the Atlantic trade led to the increased consumption of commodities, including tobacco, chocolate, and sugar. These imported goods had gendered implications for at least some European women, becoming associated with particular gendered behaviors and altering European women's relationship with slave labor.

The relationship between tobacco and femininity was complex. In Iberia, from the sixteenth century, tobacco consumption appears to have been common among both women and men; however in much of Europe, it was used almost exclusively by men until snuff became popular in the eighteenth century.[32] Tobacco, like other addictive products of the Atlantic

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    [30] Marta V. Vicente, *Clothing the Spanish Empire: Families and the Calico Trade in the Early Modern Atlantic World* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2006).

    [31] Sharpe, "Gender in the Economy."

    [32] Marcy Norton, *Sacred Gifts, Profane Pleasures: A History of Tobacco and Chocolate in the Atlantic World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008), 183; Carole

world, was often gendered female, and connected with sinfulness and likened to seduction, luring men away from their work and family responsibilities.[33] In the seventeenth century, tobacco's association with women became more direct. For 120 lbs of tobacco, the Virginia Company would provide an English wife to a settler.[34] By the eighteenth century, Europeans became increasingly uncomfortable with the association between tobacco and women's labor. As Catherine Molineux has shown, eighteenth-century English advertisements for tobacco effaced the labor of African women (and men) by envisioning the tobacco trade as a regal exchange with an African prince.[35]

Sugar had long been a luxury good in Europe, but the expansion of production first on Spain's Atlantic islands, and later on American plantations, led to a dramatic drop in price that enabled it to become an ordinary consumer good. In that role, it quickly became associated with the feminine, making women "the patronesses of fair sugar."[36] Without a doubt, women from Antwerp to Cádiz enthusiastically adopted sugar,

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Shammas, "Changes in English and Anglo-American Consumption from 1550 to 1800," *Consumption and the World of Goods*, ed. John Brewer and Roy Porter (New York: Routledge, 1993), 177–205, esp. 180–81.

[33] Norton, *Sacred Gifts*, 183. Catherine Molineux, "Pleasures of the Smoke: 'Black Virginians' in Georgian London's Tobacco Shops," *The William & Mary Quarterly* 64.2 (2007): 373.

[34] Kathleen M. Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 81.

[35] Molineux, "Pleasures of the Smoke," 329

[36] Kim F. Hall, "Culinary Spaces, Colonial Spaces: the Gendering of Sugar in the Seventeenth Century," *Feminist Readings of Early Modern Culture: Emerging Subjects*, ed. Valerie Traub, M. Lindsay Kaplan, and Dymphna Callaghan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 168–90; Eddy Stols, "The Expansion of the Sugar Market in Western Europe," *Tropical Babylons: Sugar and the Making of the Atlantic World, 1450–1680*, ed. Stuart B. Schwartz (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 240. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, female abolitionists made the connection between slave labor and consumption explicit in their boycotts of sugar. Claire Midgley, *Women against Slavery: The British Campaigns, 1780–1870* (London: Routledge, 1992). Sidney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Places of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Penguin, 198), 106.

particularly as a preservative for fruit. Elite women used the preserves to show off the products of their lavish gardens and orchards, while women of more modest means sold preserves to supplement their incomes. By 1644, at least 200 women sold their jams in Lisbon's markets. Access to sugar not only changed European women's palates and work opportunities, but also linked their tastes and finances directly to slavery and Black women's labor.[37]

Sugar was also the critical — and uniquely European — contribution to the drinks of empire: coffee, tea, and chocolate. Only chocolate came by way of the Atlantic trade, but the consumption of all of them depended on the sugar produced in the Americas and as their popularity grew, sugar and the drinks that they sweetened came to play an important and gendered role in both the economy and social practice of Europeans. Who drank what and where was profoundly gendered. Coffee was most often gendered male, and tea and chocolate came to be gendered as female drinks.[38] In Britain, coffeehouses became identified as masculine spaces, although women regularly patronized them.[39] Only in Germany, apparently, were women more likely to be coffee drinkers, in both private and public. German women participated in coffee circles, or *Kaffeekränzchen*, described as "a daily or weekly meeting of several women acquaintances, hosted in turn, during which they divert themselves by drinking coffee

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[37]   Stols, "The Expansion of the Sugar Market," 241; in a later period, boycotts of sugar were part of the abolitionist movement in Britain: Charlotte Sussman, "Women and the Politics of Sugar" in *Consuming Anxieties: Consumer Protest, Gender, and British Slavery* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000),110–29.

[38]   Brian Cowan, "What was Masculine about the Public Sphere? Gender and the Coffeehouse Milieu in Post-Restoration England," *History Workshop Journal* 51 (2001): 127–57; Ross W. Jamieson, "The Essence of Commodification: Caffeine Dependencies in the Early Modern World," *Journal of Social History*, 35.2 (Winter 2001): 269–94; Woodruff D. Smith, *Consumption and the Making of Respectability*, 1600–1800 (New York: Routledge, 2002), chap. 5 and 6.

[39]   See for instance, Hester Pinney who used coffeehouses as a site for her commercial transactions. Pamela Sharpe, "Dealing with Love: The Ambiguous Independence of the Single Woman in Early Modern England," *Gender and History* 11.2 (July 1999): 222. Thanks to Amy Froide for her insight on this issue.

and playing at l'ombre."[40] Coffee's sensuality, and its connection to sugar, was vividly presented in Bach's Coffee Cantata in which the daughter sings of "sweet coffee" and will only give it up in exchange for a lover.[41] Like a woman, coffee could also weaken men. In the 1674 pamphlet, "Women's Petition against Coffee," the authors blamed the drink for making men impotent.[42]

Sugar also fueled the popularity of tea, which came to England from Holland, but became popular only after the arrival of Charles II's wife, Catherine of Braganza. By the end of the seventeenth century, consumption of tea was strongly feminized; in 1694, Congreve could refer to women "retiring to tea and scandal, as is their ancient custom."[43] In 1706, Thomas Twining pioneered the tea house, a place where ladies and gentlemen could come to purchase tea; however, tea consumption was largely domestic and the tea table, with its fine feminine cups, came to be seen as the center of the home. By the 1730s, tea had supplanted coffee as the most popular beverage in England as the importation of large quantities by the East India Company made it fairly affordable. Tea also provided an alternative to ale for elite women, and gradually changed attitudes about gender and class-appropriate beverages. While tea consumption by middle- and upper-class women was a sign of refinement and gentility, tea drinking by lower-class women was less so; according to some, servants were

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[40] Robert Liberles, *Jews Welcome Coffee: Tradition and Innovation in Early Modern Germany* (Boston: Brandeis University Press, 2012), 14–15; Robert Liberles, "Jews, Women, and Coffee in Early Modern Germany," *Gender and Jewish History*, ed. Marion A. Kaplan and Deborah Dash Moore (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 47–48.

[41] Bethany Wiggin, "The Geography of Fashionability: Drinking Coffee in Eighteenth-Century Leipzig," *Seminar: A Journal of German Studies* 46:4 (November 2010): 315–29. Thanks to Marcel Rotter for reminding us of the Cantata.

[42] Well-willer, "The women's petition against coffee. Representing to publick consideration the grand inconveniences accruing to their sex from the excessive use of that drying, enfeebling liquor," (London, 1674) available at http://luna.folger.edu/luna/servlet/detail/FOLGERCM1~6~6~60824~104608:The-women-s-petition-against-coffee.

[43] Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace, *Consuming Subjects: Women, Shopping, and Business in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 23.

corrupted by partaking in a drink meant for their social betters. By 1760, it was common for employers to give their workers — whether servants in a household, or apprentices in a workshop — a break twice a day for tea. The eventual appropriation of teatime by the English masses altered meal times, which pushed women's meal preparation to later in the evening, thus extending women's workdays.[44]

Chocolate — the one drink with its origin in the Americas — had close ties to women in its role as both as a medicinal that supposedly cured a variety of "female" ailments (as many of us know), and as an indicator of female excess.[45] Its racial connotations made it even more dangerous. In 1671, Mme de Sévigné warned her daughter not to drink too much chocolate while pregnant, as the Marquise de Coëtlogon consumed so much she had given birth to a child "as black as the Devil," who subsequently died.[46] Elite women increasingly socialized around drinking chocolate, although chocolate also became associated with libidinousness.[47] Spanish women were accused of being addicted to it by the early sixteenth century and critics charged that it led to indolence and religious lapses since it was a drink that could be used to circumvent fasts during Lent and Advent.[48] Though early English consumption was first centered in coffee houses that also served chocolate, by the 1670s, distinct chocolate houses emerged,

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[44] Jane Pettigrew, *A Social History of Tea* (London: National Trust, 2001), esp. 26–31, 38–39, 52–54; Gertrude Z. Thomas, *Richer than Spices: How a Royal Bride's Dowry Introduced Cane, Lacquer, Cottons, Tea, and Porcelain to England, . . .* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1965), 93–115.

[45] Yolanda Gamboa, "Consuming the Other, Creating the Self: The Cultural Implications of the Aztec's Chocolate from Tirso de Molina to Agustín Moreto and Pedro Lanini y Sagredo," *Crosscurrents: Transatlantic Perspectives on Early Modern Hispanic Drama*, ed. Mindy Badía and Bonnie L. Gasior (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2006), 25–39.

[46] Andrew Dalby, *Dangerous Tastes: The Story of Spices* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 147.

[47] Norton, *Sacred Gifts*, 179.

[48] Ibid., 234.

which were open to women and were seen as places of gossip and sexual promiscuity.[49]

The accessibility of these products from the Americas had a broad range of gendered implications. As they integrated them into daily life, Europeans imposed different gendered notions on Atlantic commodities, frequently using them as markers of appropriate female and male behavior. Moreover, as the consumption of Atlantic goods increased, European women's tastes and habits were linked directly to slavery. As a result, Europeans often associated these products with the same feminine seductiveness with which they described the slave women whose labor had produced them.

Cultural Frameworks: Imagination and Work

Migration, economic engagement, and consumption are concrete activities, and even when we have sparse evidence, developments are easily visible. But the Atlantic also had an impact on ideas and attitudes that is more elusive. Atlantic connections allowed female intellectuals and artists to reimagine their place in the world. Even if they never left their European homes, the contacts with the Americas and Africa created new ideas about otherness, savagery, and hierarchy that either implicitly or explicitly influenced their works. In the early sixteenth century, María de Santo Domingo, a Spanish *beata*, pondered whether "the word of the Lord had been revealed before now on the islands which Columbus recently discovered."[50] Teresa of Ávila wept after hearing that thousands of souls in the Indies were perishing

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[49] Juan A. Prieto-Pablos, "Coffee-Houses and Restoration Drama," *Theatre and Culture in Early Modern England, 1650–1737: From Leviathan to Licensing Act*, ed. Catie Gill (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2010), 68.

[50] Thanks to Jodi Bilinkoff for this citation. *The Book of Prayer of Sor Maria of Santo Domingo*, ed. and trans. Mary E. Giles (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), 177–78. For more on this text, see Jodi Bilinkoff, "Establishing Authority: A Peasant Visionary and Her Audience in Early Sixteenth-Century Spain," *Studia Mystica* 13 (1997): 36–59, esp. 43–45.

without Christian instruction and envied the missionaries who toiled to convert them.[51]

However, from a sisterhood perspective, the result was not usually pretty. Portrayals of Black women as ugly, immoral, and lustful positioned white women as inherently superior and descriptions of corrupt, sinful Creole women reinforced the authority of the virtuous European woman. Portraits of European noblewomen with Black attendants translated the power relationships created by slavery into the European setting and promoted racialized ideas about beauty and hierarchy.[52] Even female intellectuals who travelled to other parts of the Atlantic were not necessarily transformed by the experience. In contrast to Natalie Zemon Davis's assertion that experience in the Americas led to the emergence of empathy towards non-whites, Tomomi Kinukawa has recently argued that Maria Sibylla Merian, along with other naturalists, used her artistic enterprises to reinforce racial boundaries between themselves as marginalized whites and the non-whites with whom they interacted.[53]

Yet some women wrote in ways that suggest the beginnings of a critique of existing systems of power. Aphra Behn used the transatlantic setting to engage in debates about contemporary politics and provide a

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[51] *The Book of Foundations*, chap. 1, para. 7, *The Collected Works of Teresa of Avila*, vol. 3: *The Book of Her Foundations*, ed. Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodríguez (Washington D.C.: ICS Publications, 1985). Thanks to Alison Weber for this reference. For more on the transatlantic exchange of knowledge among women in the Iberian Atlantic, see Lisa Vollendorf, "Transatlantic Ties: Women's Writings in Iberia and the Americas," *Women, Religion, and the Atlantic World (1600–1800)*, ed. Daniella Kostroun and Lisa Vollendorf (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2009): 79–112 and Mónica Díaz and Stephanie Kirk, "Theorizing Transatlantic Women's Writing: Imperial Crossings and the Production of Knowledge," *Early Modern Women: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 8 (2013): 53–84.

[52] For a discussion of the racial issues, see Amussen, *Caribbean Exchanges*, 191–225; Gretchen Gerzina, *Black England: Life before Emancipation* (London: Allison & Busby, 1999), chap. 3; Kim Hall, *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), chap. 5.

[53] Tomomi Kinukawa, "Science and Whiteness as Property in the Dutch Atlantic World: Maria Sibylla Merian's *Metamorphosis Insectorum Surinamensium* (1705)," *Journal of Women's History* 24.3 (2012): 91–116.

critique of slavery, although within clear limits. In *Oroonoko* she features the noble slaves Oroonoko and Imoinda, because for Behn, a critique of the evils of slavery depended on retaining European structures of class hierarchy.[54] It is well known that Behn had spent time in Surinam, so the imperial setting for her work is not surprising. However, it was not just women like her or Merian, who had actually travelled to the colonies, whose thinking was shaped by the Atlantic world. For instance, Margaret Cavendish appropriated the conventions of the travel narrative, a familiar source of information about colonial societies, for her utopian/speculative "The Blazing World" in which her heroine travels across the sea to find alternative worlds. While she does not frame these places in terms of colonial possessions, the narrative structure reflects existing generic frameworks. Sujata Iyengar has argued that the fictional "blazing world" is deeply engaged with issues of race, even though in Cavendish's vision, as in Behn's, rank superseded all other categories — race, gender, or religion.[55] However, elsewhere, Cavendish compared herself to an explorer, because natural philosophers, like explorers, searched for new worlds; she even wrote a poem describing Sir Francis Drake as an interstellar explorer. More generally, Jacqueline Pearson has argued that women writers of the English Restoration turned to stories of ethnic otherness because they provided useful tropes for exploring gender difference.[56]

   Another, more elusive cultural change related to the Atlantic world is the transformation of European notions of women and work. During the early modern period, household management was considered work; however, by the nineteenth century, it was viewed as "not work" as bourgeois men and women spoke increasingly about being "just a housewife." A reader of the Paston or Lisle letters of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries

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[54] Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko* (London, 1688); Margaret Ferguson, "Juggling the Categories of Race, Class and Gender: Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*," *Women, "Race," and Writing in the Early Modern Period*, ed. Margo Hendricks and Patricia Parker (London: Routledge, 1994), 209–24.

[55] Sujata Iyengar, *Shades of Difference: Mythologies of Skin Color in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), chap. 9.

[56] Jacqueline Pearson, *Women´s Reading in Britain, 1750–1835: A Dangerous Recreation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 177–79.

would not doubt that even elite women saw what they did as work, a vital contribution to the success of the family, but by the nineteenth century, representations of middle-class homes emphasized the separation of domestic and work spaces. The 1841 census in England and Wales described women as not working when they were not "carrying on the occupations of their husbands." Women who wanted to "work" defined it as activity that was not domestic. We want to suggest that the expansion of slavery in Europe's overseas empires contributed to this change.[57]

Mary Beth Norton has placed the emergence of what she has called the "feminine private" in the early eighteenth century. The private, which had heretofore not been gendered and referred to either something hidden or a person not acting in an official capacity, came to refer to the domestic or household exclusively and thus became associated with the feminine. According to Norton's transatlantic analysis, sometime in the early eighteenth century, at least in the Anglo-American Atlantic world, the idea emerged that domestic or household activity was entirely separate from the (public) world of economy and politics. In this process, colonial newspapers seem to have been more adamant about the exclusion of women from the public sphere than English ones, but those ideas clearly crossed the Atlantic.[58]

How might we explain this evolution? One of the major changes wrought by settlement in the Americas (and the European colonial enterprise more broadly) is that work became both racialized and gendered. Status was claimed for European or European Creole women by the work

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[57] For aristocratic women's careers in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, including the Pastons and Lisles, see Barbara J. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women, 1450–1550* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780–1850* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 359–60, 364–69; Catherine Hall, "Strains in the 'Firm of Wife, Children, and Friends': middle-class women and employment in early-nineteenth-century England," *White, Male and Middle Class: Explorations of Feminism and History,* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 172–202, quotation on 176; Amussen, *Caribbean Exchanges*, 231–32.

[58] Mary Beth Norton, *Separated by their Sex: Women in Public and Private in the Colonial Atlantic World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), 90–91, 99–103, 146–53.

they did *not* do as much as the work they did do. There were some types of work that only slave women did, for instance; on large sugar plantations in particular, after an early period of more fluid work structure, only slave women worked in the fields, and there were few white women employed. (European women almost certainly did field work on smaller plantations.) Furthermore, the value of sugar on the international market emphasized the distinction of work connected to the production of income and other activities (including household management) that did not directly create income: this was the sphere of white women. Thus Europeans constructed a world in which "work" was what slaves did. Letters from the sugar colonies in particular lament the laziness of white women, particularly Creole white women.[59] As careful readers we should always consider such complaints with skepticism, but they do suggest that a different attitude towards women's work had emerged in the colonies. Of course, many white women, European and Creole, did work in the Americas, and many, particularly in urban areas, competed for work with enslaved women, indigenous women, and free women of color. Bourgeois ideas of women's work did not correspond to practice. Instead they focused on aspiration; even when they did the same kind of household management that women had done for centuries, it began to be seen as separate from work, which produced income. We need to consider how this cultural idea might have originated on the other side of the Atlantic.

An Agenda for Research on Gender and the Atlantic World

Without a doubt, parts of the analysis that we have presented are more concrete than others. The evidence for the social and economic impact of the Atlantic on women is quite clear, but we know far less about the cultural impact of the Atlantic world on Europe. It clearly behooves all of us, therefore, to consider more clearly the impact of Atlantic encounters and exchanges on European gender ideologies and experiences and to

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[59] For images of Creole women, see Sarah Yeh, "'A Sink of All Filthiness': Gender, Family and Identity in the British Atlantic, 1688–1763," *The Historian* 68:1 (2006) 66–88.

engage more critically some of these (and other) issues from a gendered perspective. For instance, we had a difficult time finding any research on how empire reconfigured gendered power dynamics in Europe. How did Atlantic contacts alter gendered religious activities and belief structures? How did Atlantic contacts affect European sexual ideals and realities?

Moreover, in recent years, there has been a dramatic expansion in the range of scholarship focused on issues of race in early modern Europe in both literature and art. While the emergent discourse about race is one key result of European imperial processes, it is by no means the only one. We have been particularly struck by how little work there is that considers the impact of settlement in the Americas on women's imaginations: how did the Americas, or the existence of settlements in the Americas, shape the worlds that early modern women could imagine? Aphra Behn's *The Widow Ranter* imagines a Virginia where men and women can re-invent themselves, and women in particular take on economic and sexual leadership; but is Behn unique? Was Margaret Cavendish only thinking about science as she wrote *The Blazing World?*[60] How might have early modern conceptualizations of the Atlantic opened up possibilities in life-writing or art? We have research on images directly focused on the Americas, but how are women artists reshaping their vision of Europe in light of America?[61]

There is no doubt in our minds that there is a gendered impact in Europe that remains to be fully uncovered, and that it will significantly revise and refine our understandings of economy, society, and culture in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. While eighteenth-century scholars

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[60] Aphra Behn, *The Widow Ranter* in *Five Plays*, selected and introduced by Maureen Duffy (Methuen, 1990); for a recent study that provides an overview of the scholarly discussion of the play, see Robin Ruia, "'The Breeches Are My Own, Henceforth I'le Rant': *The Widdow Ranter* and Cross-Dressed Politics," *Restoration and 18th Century Theatre Research* (26:1/2, Summer–Winter 2011): 5–21,125. For the connections of Cavendish to science see the essays by Holmesland, Iyengar, Goldberg, and Siegfried in *Ashgate Critical Essays on Women Writers in England, 1550–1700*, Vol. 7: *Margaret Cavendish*, ed. Sara H. Mendelson (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2008), Part IV, "*The Blazing World:* New Trends in Cavendish Scholarship," 207–92.

[61] See especially Kay Dian Kriz, *Slavery, Sugar, and the Culture of Refinement: Picturing the British West Indies, 1700–1840* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008).

have thought long and hard about how empire defined European culture, sixteenth- and seventeenth-century scholars — of European art, literature, and history — have been largely silent. Although economic historians have routinely integrated the impact of the Atlantic in their understanding of patterns of trade and consumption, they have less often thought about gender; social and cultural scholars need to do a better job of seeing Europe's role in the Atlantic as one part of the society they are studying. The many ramifications of the Atlantic world in European life are not always labeled "Atlantic," but we need to see them as such, particularly when it comes to women and gender. Transatlantic studies have opened up a whole new world of understanding the early modern period. We need to ensure that women and gender are always a part of the conversation and we should always consider how our work shifts in the framework of European expansion in the Atlantic world, and indeed the Indian and Pacific Ocean worlds.[62]

Interdisciplinary and collaborative work is critical to this process. Neither one of us could have written "Restoring Miranda," or indeed this article, without the other. It is time to take seriously the feminist principles of collaboration as we look towards understanding complex problems of cultural and social change, and the transmission of ideas and cultural practices. Such collaborations will be important both to making links between, for instance, social practice, literature, and visual art, but also for working to see Europe not as a set of separate nations, but a closely connected continent, with a shared set of values and culture.

This type of research is by nature a feminist endeavor. It requires the integration of different knowledge sets and a willingness to push one's work beyond the national and linguistic boundaries with which we have become so comfortable. It also pushes us to take our specialized work into the world of big ideas and theory, a transition that will keep research on women at the forefront of scholarly disciplines. There are many more Mirandas to restore.

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[62] Carmen Nocentelli, *Empires of Love: Europe, Asia, and the Making of Early Modern Identity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).