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Women and Families in Early (North) America and the Wider (Atlantic) World

Karin Wulf*
College of William and Mary

Abstract

This article is part of a *History Compass* cluster on 'Rethinking Gender, Family and Sexuality in the Early Modern Atlantic World'.

The cluster is made up of the following articles:

'On Currents and Comparisons: Gender and the Atlantic 'Turn' in Spanish America', Bianca Premo, *History Compass* 8.3 (2010): 223–237, doi: 10.1111/j.1478-0542.2009.00658.x

'Women and Families in Early (North) America and the Wider (Atlantic) World', Karin Wulf, *History Compass* 8.3 (2010): 238–247, doi: 10.1111/j.1478-0542.2009.00659.x

'Family Matters: The Early Modern Atlantic from the European Side', Julie Hardwick, *History Compass* 8.3 (2010): 248–257, doi: 10.1111/j.1478-0542.2009.00660.x

The following essay originated as one of these three contributions to a roundtable discussion held at the 14th Berkshire Conference on the History of Women, June 2008. The roundtable, 'Rethinking Gender, Family, and Sexuality in the Early Modern Atlantic World', was meant to be as much invitation as inventory and was astonishingly well attended at 08:00 in the morning, with standing room only for a thoughtful, lively audience whose comments, questions and suggestions are reflected here (although in no way fully represented). As historians of gender and family in the North Atlantic, European and Iberian worlds, we had hoped to encourage more central and systematic attention to gender within the Atlantic World paradigm by cataloging some recent works in their fields and pointing the way for future studies. Yet, a funny thing happened on the way to the conference. Independently, each of us began to engage with the challenges of simply inserting family and gender into 'the Atlantic' as both as conceptual place and a historical practice. The essays that emerged, therefore, departed from conventional historiographies that survey the state of the field. Rather, these are theoretical and methodological reflections on the implications of de-centering national and colonial narratives about the history of gender. At a time when transnational historical scholarship on early modern women promises to explode, these essays aim to inspire debate about the conceptual utility of the Atlantic as a paradigm for understanding issues of gender, family, and sexuality, as well as its ramifications for feminist scholarship everywhere.

Early Americanists studying gender, family, and sexuality need to assess the potential and the limitations of thinking Atlantically for advancing work in these fields, and we ought to be thinking in parallel fashion about how considerations of gender, family, and sexuality can, and cannot, add to our comprehension of the Atlantic World.[1] If nothing else the increasing attention paid to the Atlantic – scholarship measured in pounds of paper and prestige measured in new programs and seminars – suggests the importance of asking exactly what kinds of challenges and opportunities this framework affords. Thus far there seem to be far more challenges than opportunities for scholars of Early America interested in an Atlantic history of gender, family, and sexuality, but this may be changing as more creatively interdisciplinary studies of the Atlantic have emerged, and as longstanding

historiographical connections with early modern Europe give way to a wider (often, but not necessarily Atlantic) world of scholarly inspiration and correlation.

As Bianca Premo has carefully laid out for the Spanish American case, and Julie Hardwick for early modern Europe, the Atlantic is not just an ocean. The 'Atlantic World' is a fascinating phenomenon, unrecognizable as a unit to its early modern contemporaries; in a review essay some years ago assaying its significance, Ian Steele quipped, 'No one ever worked, prayed, fought, or died for an early modern … Atlantic'.[2] It would be hard to argue that the ocean is not itself a tangible entity, but the Atlantic became an important scholarly apparatus only in the late 20th century. Having been a barrier separating old and new worlds, the ocean emerged in the 15th century as a meaningful human-occupied space, a connecting space among Europe, the west coast of Africa, the eastern coasts of North and South America, and Atlantic islands (including most prominently the Caribbean). Exploring these connections has provoked new considerations of how and why and at what price people, goods, ideas, animals, plants, and pathogens circulated. The contact among empires, and the negotiations of people in and around those empires, has been elucidated in new ways. But as numerous scholars have now pointed out, 'the Atlantic world' may mask as much as it reveals. Sometimes there seems to be as much literature trying to wring definitional blood from this stone, or critiquing the scope of this 'world' (too narrow by some accounts, too broad by others), as there is scholarship actually making use of it.[3] And one might well conclude that an overweening interest in politics and economics has made Atlantic history quite traditional.

For early Americanists, the Atlantic World framework is also complicated by its largely Anglo, or at least very Northerly, emphasis. Scholars once assumed that 'early America' corresponded to the British colonies of North America, and the young republic that was formed in the wake of the American Revolution. There is a related, long tradition in early American history of tracing out intellectual, political, and economic connections between England and the English colonies. More recent criticism emphasizes that privileging the connection between 'colonial America' and England creates a teleological early history of the United States. But this is just one of many reasons why in the last decades more scholars have sought a more expansive and inclusive approach to early North America.[4] Looking continentally, for example, not only offers comparative perspectives on other empires, but it can de-center the narrative of discovery and conquest by diminishing the significance of imperial border claims entirely, and instead centering the intricate, often violent interactions of Native Americans, Europeans, and ultimately Africans, too.

Among other attractions, continental or hemispheric approaches to the study of early America may make the best use of the innovations and perspectives of the history of gender, family, and sexuality. For all the activity around Atlantic rim in the 15th through 18th centuries, and for all the energy of the Atlantic World as a body of scholarship today, this work has yet either to fully profit from gender studies or to offer many of them.[5] It is rather easier to think of how influential gender was in shaping what scholars now call the Atlantic world – European ideas about contact and Native Americas, the 'gender frontiers' Kathleen Brown discussed some years ago, rape as an instrument of empire, just to name a very few – than it is to find scholarship actually demonstrating this point per se.[6] The literature on these subjects is abundant, but has not been integrated into the Atlantic World model either by seeing the Atlantic as the compelling framework for exploring them, or by engaging Atlantic historiography.

But we have long used 'the Atlantic' less as a conceptual tool than as a kind of extended exercise in comparative history – if only from secondary background.

Recognizing fundamental similarities and the interrelatedness of experience among early modern European women in Europe and in colonial contexts, historians have had a compelling reason to highlight the Atlantic World because of the circulation of scholarly ideas, theories, and methods of approach. Certainly that has been true of scholars of early British America, who have benefitted particularly from the work of early modern Europeanists – I am thinking, for example, of work on gender and religion, and on community and the law; for the last decade or more this is also true of the stimulating work on colonial Latin America and the Caribbean.[7] Those of us who work on British American topics look to sister studies of such Atlantic sites as London, Nantes, Seville, Lima, and MesoAmerica. We still have too few resources for places like Accra, or elsewhere on the West African coast so intimately tied to the Atlantic. As Bianca Premo notes, the potential for comparative work on women and families in colonial contexts is rich. And it is clear that the ongoing search to locate sites of what Judith Bennett calls 'patriarchal equilibrium', the ability for older patterns of hierarchy to retrench in new circumstances, will continue.[8]

Beyond the comparisons offered through secondary literature, there are some other Atlantic studies that have been attentive to gender. For the British American case, material culture studies and the politics of sensibility are two strands of an Atlantic cultural history which is somewhat more attuned to these issues, and to which scholars of women and gender are making critical contributions. Early modern people developed, marketed, sold and creatively used goods in new ways because of the commercial potential of the Atlantic, and commodity studies emphasizing the movement of both goods and the meanings associated with them have provided some important opportunities for understanding the gendered inflections of culture and consumption. This approach remains promising. Earlier studies of the rhetoric of consumer behavior in early America, for example, focused on (male) politicians' critiques of female tea drinking, tea parties, and fashion. And we have a good grasp of the gendered sociability inherent in both the tea-drinking salon and the coffeehouse. But little work explicitly links the commodity (tea) with the cultural practices (of tea) or the gendered representations (of tea).[9] Material culture may offer a way to make use of the existing literature on commodities, and the broader claims it offers about empire and authority, and to situate the power of gender for making meaning on the ground.

Zara Anishanslin's dissertation, 'Portrait of a Woman in a Silk Dress', is a recent, stunning example of the ways material culture studies can show ideas about gender creating a demand for certain kinds of Atlantic connections, and capitalizing on other pre-existing ones. Anishanslin studied a portrait of Philadelphia matriarch Anne Shippen Willing painted by Robert Feke in 1746; in it, Willing wears an arresting gown in a rich floral-patterned Spitalfields silk designed by celebrated Londoner Anna Maria Garthwaite. Splicing visual cues about nature, empire, and femininity embedded within the particular floral fabric with the portrait's capacity for conveying the prominence of its subject's mercantile family, Anishanslin also discusses the resonance of the labor conflicts among the Spitalfields silk weavers that aroused sympathy in the pre-revolutionary colonies. Through carefully scrutinizing the layers of paint, cloth, artist, and sitter, she decodes the signs and symbols plain to contemporary viewers of Willing's portrait, and illustrates just how knitted together by goods and meaning were Atlantic places – and just how critical ideas and expressions of gender were to those connections. Anishanslin's work is singular in its focus on the Atlanticity of the meanings within a single object – the Feke portrait of Willing – but she builds upon other scholarship that makes a similar case for gender and material culture as connective tissue to the commodified culture of the Atlantic, and to women as consumers and purveyors of both the goods and their meanings – political, economic, and aesthetic.[10]

Of course material culture, like other topics, may overrun the Atlantic. What is it that puts a subject in need of Atlantic moorings, rather than another, even global, positioning? We see time and again that 'the Atlantic' can breach the shores of the continents it borders and that ideas, goods, and people sailed from one ocean to the next. Fine studies of the circulation of commodities and the transformation of their meaning in new locales, such as Marcy Norton's work on chocolate, however, reinforce Julie Hardwick's emphasis on the opportunities for attention to more local circumstances. This works to the favor of a British Atlantic, at least in the case of material culture. Although goods move easily, material *culture* is more local. And in the case of an Anglo-Atlantic material culture, as exemplified in Anishanslin's work, some resonances are common, whereas others are not. In the fabric pattern of the dress in the portrait, colonial flora produced in the metropole could signify imperial claims and exoticism in one environment, and colonial importance and contributions in another. But that dialectic makes for a truly Atlantic production of meaning in that it is precisely the movement across the ocean and back that gives it form and substance. As in many other iterations of culture, gender is foundational. So for material culture studies, an Atlantic framework can make good sense, and gender can be a critical axis of analysis.

Another significant – and related – trend in Anglo-Atlantic studies has been powered by the mutual interest of historians and literary scholars in the development and the implications of sensibility, an idea and an ideal of the capacity to feel and perceive that was measured in communication and behavior. Sensibility's prominence as an Atlantic (most prominently Anglo-Atlantic) phenomenon is underscored by the central role of transatlantic print culture in the elaboration and circulation of its associated ideas and practices. Like material culture, oceanic and cultural currents pulled sensibility from colonies to England and back again in printed form, accumulating inflections in each place that could resonate in the other. Authors, publishers, printers, booksellers, and of course readers expanded 18th-century print culture, in the form of novels, essays, and other genres, and thus extended sensibility's reach. Because it was so connected to an increasingly muscular transatlantic print culture, the growing authority of sensibility over the 18th century as a manner of expression and representation as well as a fashion for estimating character first caught the attention of literary scholars but has now emerged as a topic of enormous interest to historians, too. And it is not surprising that historians of gender have been particularly attentive to the subtleties of sensibility; when 18th-century English men and women discussed and performed sensibility, it was in a gendered register. In fact transatlantic print culture, the same stuff that provides such rich evidence for the literary and historical archeology of sensibility, has long informed studies of gender and reading in British America, beginning most importantly with Cathy Davidson's *Revolution and the Word*.[11]

A prime example of recent scholarship that pursues these connections is Sarah Knott's book, *Sensibility and the American Revolution,* which offers 'a cultural history of American Revolution' and sensibility as a means for historicizing the late 18th-century self. Here we see women as actors and gender as a critical site for sensibility's articulation – as well as a strong argument for the importance of sensibility as a way of thinking, acting, and being in the 18th-century world. As Knott notes, men's domination of public print culture, as opposed to women's circulation of manuscripts within mostly private audiences, greatly enhanced the masculine quality of sensibility and/or an impression of the masculine purview over defining sensibility's meaning and import.[12]

The examples of material culture and sensibility (and print culture generally) demonstrate that gender has crept into Atlantic scholarship, although clearly not in the dominant

narratives about migration, economy, empire, and diplomacy (see Julie Hardwick's essay for a discussion of the recent summations of Atlantic history and for citations). It is also clear that while we may find gender lurking around the margins of the (Anglo) Atlantic, a critical consideration of women and family as subjects and agents is sorely lacking. In other words, the Atlantic seems to be fraught with gendered meaning, but Atlantic scholarship is not necessarily overflowing with women or families. Why is this? Some of the dominant topics of interest in Atlantic studies may be at the root of this. As Julie Hardwick notes, for example, the theme of 'fluidity' and the movement, of people, ideas, and things that has made the Atlantic so beguiling (once one looks at a place of transit one finds … movement) may be distracting us from the ways that stasis was a dominant experience and mode for women. All around the Atlantic, mobility (both voluntary and coerced) was male-dominated. Can we imagine a female Equiano? Linda Colley suggests that Jamaican-born Elizabeth Marsh is his closest analog. Marsh neither published nor was political in her lifetime. Her opportunities for mobility, not to detract from her energy or vision for her own life, came from her association with men.[13] There are other themes that lend themselves to Atlantic treatment, and may even be attentive to gender, but not to any particular engagement with women or families. As in the case of material culture, where gender is significant, and women are important actors, whereas commodity studies still tend to emphasize the men who moved the goods.[14]

For early Americanists some of the appeal of Atlantic studies is akin to the transnationalist impulse that has encouraged scholars to reject the political boundaries claimed by empires and nations and to study instead the locations that people marked by the way they lived and died – on the ground. That spirit of attention to more grounded studies has been more obviously attentive to women and families in part because of a fellow-traveling consideration: a post-colonial perspective. As Ann Laura Stoler wrote in introducing her edited volume, *Haunted by Empire*, which encouraged conversation between postcolonial studies and United States history, 'postcolonial scholarship has sought to understand how the macrodynamics of colonial rule worked through interventions in the microenvironments of both subjugated and colonizing populations and through the distinctions of privilege and opportunity made and managed between them'.[15] Imperial authorities and colonized people worked out relationships in, to use Stoler's phrasing, intimate arrangements. Domestic life, now the focus of a lot of scholarly attention for what it can reveal about how empires operate in the most important but sometimes the least seen fashion, puts women and families front and center. When empire proceeded by regulating the nature of family – and by extension how families reproduced through sex either legitimated or banned by authorities – it was principally women's choices and women's bodies that were at stake.

One vast realm of the ideological relationship between colonies and empires, central to the period and to any discussion about colonial family and sexuality, is, of course, race. I think British Americanists – as well as historians of other places inspired by this work – all rightly consider the significance of Kathy Brown's book *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs*, now just a dozen years old, when we consider the intentional entwining of race, gender, and privileges of power. Tracking the pacing of Virginia's slave laws, Brown argued that 'race' was built on the ideological foundation of early modern constructions of gender. And 'race' was precisely the product of regulating and vigorously policing the sexuality of white and black, free and enslaved, women. Enslaved women's children would perpetuate the economic and political system that oppressed their mothers and, in the cases of too many, never know the freedom that their white fathers enjoyed.

Since Brown's book, work by scholars including Jennifer Spear, Jennifer Morgan, and Ann Marie Plane, to name but a few, has expanded our understanding of just how race and gender operated and were manipulated to signify colonial power relations in North America. Native American men and women, African and African American men and women faced particularly difficult situations as the power of the imperial – and then the national Unites States – state increased its reach. In Spear's analysis of sexuality in colonial Louisiana, for example, she argues that

> In their continuing attempts to regulate and legislate who could have sex with whom and, more important, whose marriages and whose children would be deemed legitimate, [French] colonial authorities articulated a sexual politics that could achieve two apparently contradictory goals: constructing boundaries between colonized and colonizer, and using métissage as the ultimate tool of assimilation.[16]

Studies such as Spear's help put the kind of British American practice Brown detailed into continental, multi-imperial perspective.

Closer attention to the work of empires in the colonies can bring us back across the Atlantic. Even as Spears and others show us how imperial authorities worked out their ambitions in the most intimate of colonial places, we also know just how profoundly those imperial centers were being challenged by colonialism. The kinds of racial practices that they championed, in this case the French transition from a promotion of metissage alliances to a prohibition on the same, were being shaped in dynamic tension with the realities of race in the metropole. Laurent Dubois, for example, argues for the critical role of St Domingue's *gens de cuoleuri,* in shaping French racial policies. When these free people of African and French descent demanded rights and privileges including the franchise and political representation, laws regulating race within France itself began to shift.[17] Atlantic distances turned out to be crucial – although not always in the ways that people on either side of it fully considered.

Of particular interest to me for the potential to pay more sustained attention to women and families is the emerging density of literature on sex, blood, and lineage, an example of which is Maria-Elena Martinez's very recent book on the ways that Spanish ideas about blood purity and ancestry adapted to colonial practices of racial categorization.[18] We can see a pattern around the colonial Atlantic of regulating sex and family with an eye not just to fixing race but also to securing status over the longer term. Imperial authorities and colonists on the ground executed astonishingly similar programs, which focused first on making alliances with native peoples through marriages and sexual relationships between European men and native women, then on marking distinctions among peoples (European, Native, African, creole, metis, and so on) based on racial categories. The French code noir, the Spanish caste system, and various British efforts to manipulate marital law and secure the power of whites over people of color are all of a piece.[19] Those British efforts, however, look less coherent by comparison with either the Spanish or French cases and in some ways the British practice of racializing has received less critical attention – certainly less than is due. This is certainly related to the less centralized role of the English government in colonization until relatively late in the game as it were, leaving colonists to create patchwork, thought no less insidious, racial policies.

Let me briefly turn to my own work as an example of how engaging comparative literatures has necessitated the evolution of that project out toward broader comparative frameworks and then back in again to a sharper focus on those more elusive British American practices. My current book project was begun as a study of the cultural practices of making and claiming cultural capital from family lineages over the long 18th

century (in other words, beyond the American Revolution). I've spent a long time – too long – in archives all over British America working with what I call 'intimate' genealogies – family record keeping at the most local level. In small stitched notebooks, in prose accounts, in simple bequests of property from one generation to the next, even in arrangements of dead bodies there is abundant evidence of families' desire to connect ancestors and descendants. This kind of material had a specific cultural foundation in British America – the legal system, for example, which was forged in the principle of property's passage by lineal succession to male heirs.

Only in comparative context, it seems to me, can we fully appreciate the tango of personal interests and imperial interests in documenting family connections. And only in comparative context can we see how intimate genealogical work had important analogs in what I might call political genealogical work – the kinds of genealogical information collected and deployed in the service of the law and of government, as in regulating race and slavery, and in regulating property and inheritance. Intimate and political genealogical practices were conceptually related and mutually constitutive. Like species with the same ancestral root, family records and the state's gathering and instrumental use of genealogical information proceeded from the common belief that descent was deeply, profoundly important. Descent always signified, although what and how it signified was dependent on context and necessity. Certainly some acts of family genealogy were directly connected to, or undertaken in immediate proximity to, genealogies put to coercive use. Looking at the broader context makes plain the transmission of early modern European political obsessions with lineage to imperial racial discipline to early American national privileging of 'legitimately' white men. Stoler has written so compellingly about what she terms 'genealogies of the intimate,' aiming to uncover the 'affective grid of colonial politics'.[20] In the early modern colonial context, a genealogy of those politics returns smartly to genealogical practice itself.

It would be lovely to conclude this brief essay with a ringing endorsement of one approach or another – Atlantic, continental, comparative, or post-colonial, or some combination. The increasing benefits of comparison for historians of Early American gender, family, and sexuality are clear, I think. And the potential for other approaches is suggested in some recent scholarship cited above. It would be equally terrific to offer a prescription for how gender, family, and sexuality might be better incorporated into the Atlantic, or another geographically based framework of analysis. More important, I think, is to continue to ask what any of these frameworks offer, and what they can not offer. As more attention is paid to thinking 'beyond the Atlantic' (the title of two journal forums in the last two years), we might also think about why such frameworks emerge when they do, and how they tend to emphasize particular subjects and historical actors over others.[21]

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Short Biography

Karin Wulf earned her PhD from Johns Hopkins in 1993. She is currently associate professor of History and American Studies as well as Book Review Editor of *The*

William and Mary Quarterly. Before coming to William and Mary, she taught for 10 years at the American University. Wulf has produced two collaborative editions, *Milcah Martha Moore's Book: A Commonplace Book from Revolutionary America* (with Catherine Blecki, published by Penn State in 1997) and *The Diary of Hannah Callender, 1758–1788* (with Susan Klepp, forthcoming). Her book, *Not All Wives: Women of Colonial Philadelphia* was published by Cornell University Press in 2000, and issued in paper by the University of Pennsylvania Press in 2005. She is currently at work on a study of the relationship between genealogical practices and political culture: 'Lineage: The Politics and Poetics of Genealogy in British America, 1680–1820'

Notes

* Correspondence: Department of History, College of William & Mary, PO Box 8795, Williamsburg, VA 23187-8795, USA. Email: kawulf@wm.edu.

[1] Several years ago Sarah Pearsall made this point: 'Both the history of gender and the history of the Atlantic world have blossomed as fields of inquiry in the last 30 years, but the relationship between these two subjects remains unclear', Sarah M. S. Pearsall, 'Gender', in David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick, *The British Atlantic World, 1500–1800* (London, 2002), 113–32. As Sarah Knott observed at the 2008 Berks roundtable, we (still) need a good, holistic, feminist critique of the Atlantic. Allyson Poska and Susan Amussen are working on just such an essay, and I thank them for an advance look at 'Restoring Miranda: Towards a Gendered Early Modern Atlantic World'.

[2] Ian Steele, 'Exploding Colonial American History', *Reviews in American History*, 26/1 (1998): 48. In this early analysis of new rubrics for early America, Steel found much promise in the Atlantic paradigm. Ultimately the Atlantic may be most important, and most apparent, in the study of the slave trade, although there, too the focus on the Atlantic transportation of slaves from Africa has distracted some attention from other arenas of slave trading. Still, the extraordinary outpouring of scholarship, and particularly the statistical grasp of the trade's nature and volume arising from the work of David Eltis and others, has offered an important example of the Atlantic as a logical, not merely useful, category.

[3] Which also makes any essay on the subject vulnerable to having missed something! See Alison Games' incisive critique of the Atlantic paradigm, 'Definitions, Challenges, and Opportunities', *American Historical Review*, 111 (June 2006): 741–57; Authors participating in the 'Beyond the Atlantic' forum in the *William and Mary Quarterly*, 63/4 (October 2006) – Games, Paul Mapp, Philip Stern, and Peter Coclanis – raised issues about other geographical perspectives from which to see British empire, other global perspectives on commodities (a major feature of Atlantic scholarship), and the significance of the North American continent itself as a more trenchant unit of analysis.

[4] These developments, as well as the extensive debates about the Atlantic World, are addressed in Christopher Grasso and Karin Wulf, ' ''Nothing Says Democracy like a Visit from the Queen'': Empire and Nation in Early American Histories', *Journal of American History*, 95/3 (December 2008).

[5] This is analogous to the position of gender studies vis-a-vis the study of empire. Although that subject is dominated by concerns about the modern empires of the 19th and 20th centuries, it is also true that the dense work on gender has yet to be incorporated into the study of empire more broadly. For a review and a modest prescription, see Durba Ghosh, 'Gender and Colonialism: Expansion or Marginalization?', *The Historical Journal*, 47/3 (2004): 737–55.

[6] Kathleen Brown, 'Brave New Worlds: Gender and Women's History', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 50/2 (April 1993): 311–28. See also Pearsall's very good summary, again from secondary literature that does not address the Atlantic, of the ways that gender affected the creation and operation of the Anglo-Atlantic in 'Gender'. Jennifer Spear summarizes 'The Distant Past of North American Women's History', in *Journal of Women's History*, 16/4 (2004): 41–9.

[7] See Julie Hardwick's essay for other citations, but two examples of mutually informing work on community and the law across North American and European Atlantic sites are Cornelia Hughes Dayton, *Women Before the Bar: Gender, Law and Society in Connectitcut, 1639–1789* (UNC Press, 1995) and Julie Hardwick, *The Practice of Patriarchy: Gender and the Politics of Household Authority in Early Modern France* (Penn State Press, 1998). Students of the British colonies in North America long looked to works on early modern European subjects by scholars such as Natalie Davis, Cissie Fairchilds, Merry Weisner Hanks, Phyllis Mack, and Lyndal Roper, to name but a very few. The list of colonial Latin American gender scholarship on which British Americanists regularly draw is also long, but from my unscientific and very anecdotal survey of course syllabi, we draw regularly on such works as Irene Silverblatt's *Sun, Moon and Witches: Gender Ideolgies and Class in Inca and Colonial Peru* (Princeton University Press, 1987), and Ann Twinam's *Public Lives, Private Secrets: Gender, Honor, Sexuality, and Illegitimacy in Colonial Spanish America* (Stanford University Press, 1999).

[8] Judith Bennett, *History Matters: Patriarchy and the Challenge of Feminism* (Philadelphia, 2007).

[9] Jane Merritt has begun a more expansive study of tea that does mention some of the gendered significance of tea in the context of both political and economic repercussions of tea; see her 'Tea Trade, Consumption, and the Republican Paradox', *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 128/2 (April 2004): 117–48. David Shields' work on tea drinking and the gendered performances inherent in heterosociability is still key to the understanding of masculine and feminine social spaces. Shields, *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters in British America* (UNC Press, 1997).

[10] Zara Anishanslin, 'Portrait of a Woman in a Silk Dress: The Hidden Histories of Aesthetic Commodities in the Eighteenth-Century British Atlantic World', PhD dissertation, University of Delaware, 2009. For other studies of material culture seeking Atlantic connections and insights, see, for example, Ann Smart Martin, 'Ribbons of Desire: Gendered Stories in the World of Goods', in John Styles and Amanda Vickery (eds.), *Gender, Taste, and Material Culture in Britain and North America, 1700–1830* (Yale University Press, 2006), 179–200 and Sophie White, 'A Baser Commerce: Retailing, Class and Gender in French Colonial New Orleans', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 63/3 (July 2006): 517–50.

[11] Davidson, *Revolution and the Word: The Rise of the Novel in America* (New York, 1986), which focused on American novels but with extensive reference (how could one not?) to English publications. Other works focused on transatlantic print culture with an emphasis on family and gender included Jay Fliegelman's *Prodigals and Pilgrims: The American Revolution against Patriarchal Authority* (New York, 1985), which advanced the path-breaking thesis that American readership of English novels lent heft to changes both in colonial political and familial structure.

[12] Sarah Knott, *Sensibility and the American Revolution* (UNC Press, 2008). In a related vein, Nicole Eustace's exploration of the tenor and import of emotion – and its deployment in political moments – looks to gender as one arc of public emotional articulation. Eustace, *Power is the Gale: Emotion, Power, and the Coming of the American Revolution* (UNC Press, 2008).

[13] There are clearly exceptions to the gender-limited Atlantic. Natalie Zemon Davis' *Women on the Margins: Three Seventeenth Century Lives* (Belknap, 1997) introduced a genre of writing about women whose lives were framed by the circulatory patterns of the Atlantic (but also the global nature of trade and travel). This would include Colley's *The Ordeal of Elizabeth Marsh: A Woman in World History* (Pantheon, 2007).

[14] An important recent exception is Ellen Hartigan-O'Connor, *The Ties that Buy: Women and Commerce in Revolutionary America* (Philadelphia, 2009), although the Atlantic here too is a shadowy presence in that most women of commerce were retailers – very few were merchants or wholesalers and their connection to the Atlantic economy was very real but attenuated.

[15] Stoler, *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History* (Durham, 2006), 2.

[16] Jennifer Spear, 'Colonial Intimacies: Legislating Sex in French Louisiana', *WMQ*, 60/1 (January 2003), 98; Kathleen Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race and Power in Colonial Virginia* (UNC, 1996); Jennifer Morgan, *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery* (University of Pennsylvania, 2004); Ann Marie Plane, *Colonial Intimacies: Indian Marriage in Early New England* (Cornell University Press, 2000).

[17] Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution* (Harvard University Press, 2004).

[18] Maria-Elena Martinez, *Genealogical Fictions: Limpieza de Sangre, Religion, and Gender in Colonial Mexico* (Stanford, 2008).

[19] A very useful book which highlights the racializing work of the law in this different imperial contexts is Sue Peabody and Keila Grinberg, *Slavery, Freedom and the Law in the Atlantic World: A Brief History with Documents* (Bedford, 2007).

[20] Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power* (University of California Press, 2002), ch. 1, 'Genealogies of the Intimate'.

[21] For a summary of a 2009 roundtable on the history of women in Early America, see Ann Little's blog entry: http://www.historiann.com/2009/06/30/what-about-women-in-early-american-history-in-which-historiann-and-friends-get-up-on-their-high-horses-and-rope-em-up-good/

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