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Enterprising Women: Gender, Race and Power in the Revolutionary Atlantic

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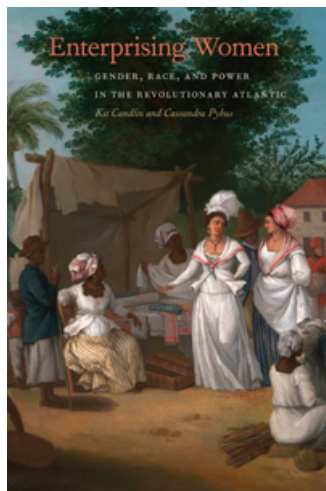
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Enterprising Women: Gender, Race, and Power In The Revolutionary Atlantic. Kit Candlin and Cassandra Pybus. Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2015. ISBN 978-0-8203-4455-3. \$49.95



Trying to ignore my lack of knowledge of the history or politics of the British Empire's occupation and control of islands in the Atlantic Ocean in the mid-1750s, I bravely forged ahead and I can say, I am delighted I did.

Reading the *Introduction* (p.1), I was immediately struck with the locations of the archival sites that opened up to Kit Candlin and Cassandra Pybus: (here I note only a few) the University of West Indies in Grenada, the University College London, the School of Philosophical and Historical Inquiry at the University of Sydney, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, the National Archives of Scotland, National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago, the British Library and St. George Church in Benenden. Candlin and Pybus revealed the grants they received from the Australian Research Council which allowed them to dedicate themselves to this amazingly rich archival research on women of color in islands in the Caribbean. (*Acknowledgements* p. 1-2)

To reveal their research, Candlin and Pybus focus upon a series of micro-biographies, life stories that allow the reader to see the unique British colonial Atlantic empire within a cultural perspective. Both say: "We believe micro-biographies provide insight into the connections between historical events and individual experience...each biography serves as a particular case study of the macro-history of the times." (p.13)

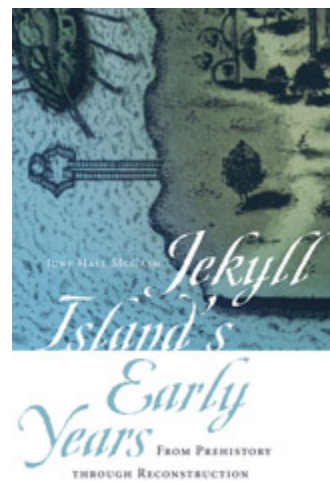
Balancing the focus on what appears to be biographies of wealthy free colored women in an emerging world, Candlin and Pybus write, "those who grew powerful enough to affect colonial justice, make demands of white men, possess many slaves and own hundreds, sometimes thousands, of acres of the most valuable farming land in the world need to be seen in contrast to those free colored women who rarely experienced life beyond the petty world of prostitutes, hucksters, and washerwomen, who would never own land or slaves." (p.8) Reading the biographies

brings the reader into the scenes of the lives of the women and their families and verifies the hope that the authors had for the reader experience.

In the Chapter on *Conclusion*, the authors say: "Micro biographies of a handful of free colored women cannot produce a new reading of the slave Caribbean, but they can demonstrate that the history of Caribbean slave society was more topsy-turvy than we had hitherto understood."(p.180) This rich archival collections produced a book that has of great value to many areas of research in slave history, Caribbean society, the Atlantic Empire, and women's studies. Inside there are 180 pages, plus extensive *Notes*, a *Bibliography* and an *Index*, giving a total of 280 pages. My recommendation is to consider this book a requirement for inclusion in today's history, social studies, policy studies, and women's studies courses at the college and university level.

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Jekyll Island's Early Years From PreHistory Through Reconstruction. June Hall McCash. Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2014. ISBN 978-0-8203-2447-0. \$31.95



June Hall McCash tells us that "Jekyll Island is the smallest of Georgia's Golden Isles...one of a chain of the barrier islands that stretches like a string of pearls along the Coast.... In prehistoric times, Jekyll was covered with vegetation and inhabited by prehistoric animals—mastodons and mammoths...land that lay many miles inland". (Introduction 1)

She paints a picture for us of the time Jekyll Island was born as she explains the eating away of land areas during the melting of glaciers so that sea levels began to rise. "Only nine miles long and two miles wide, it (Jekyll) lies at a latitude of 31 degrees north and a longitude of 81 degrees...west, separated from the mainland and