Cameo Parry

Title: “Women & the Atlantic Slave Trade”
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Cameo Parry is a General Studies major at IPFW, with a minor in History and OLS, where she has studied while working as a Community Development Specialist for the City of Fort Wayne. Cameo will graduate with highest honors, and was named an IPFW Top 50 student for her academic achievement and community involvement. She intends to enroll in graduate school and study public administration. She lives in Fort Wayne with her husband and three dogs.

Abstract

“Women and the Atlantic Slave Trade” explores the role of women during a variety of aspects of the Atlantic Slave Trade. This includes the undervalued role of slave women in Africa, the importance of captive women in slave culture in the West Indies, and women’s contributions in gaining and adapting to freedom during and after the abolition of slavery. The under-reported value of women in the Atlantic Slave Trade, whether in Africa or in the European Colonies in the Americas, is analyzed and existing research reviewed with the intent to find critical insight into the feminine role of slave culture. Through this analysis, a different context of slave cultures in the Atlantic World is explored in both the Caribbean and in Africa through the perspective of slave women. Further, the role of freed women after slavery is analyzed to show the pivotal role that women held in the transition of slaves to freed people.

Bibliographical Note

Using a mix of primary sources such as first-hand slave accounts, slave records, and artistic depictions of the slave trade as well as research by established scholars, this paper confronts the historical problem that women were often ignored by historians, both contemporaneously and in later attempts to understand the era of the Atlantic slave trade. The resulting research provides insight into women’s experience while undercutting previous silence or dismissal of captive women as important in the Atlantic Slave trade.