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# On Grinding Corn and Plaiting Hair: Placing Tejanas and Black Texan Women in the Progressive Era

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Lilia Raquel D. Rosas, "On Grinding Corn and Plaiting Hair: Placing Tejanas and Black Texan Women in the Progressive Era" (April 1, 2004). *National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies Annual Conference*. Paper 5.  
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## CHAPTER THREE

### On Grinding Corn and Plaiting Hair: Placing Tejanas and Black Texan Women in the Progressive Era

*Lilia Raquel D. Rosas, The University of Texas at Austin*

As they form corn dough,  
As they shape tortillas in their palms.  
Is theirs any history to collect?  
This is what I ask.  
But this much I already know:  
They stand up when they must. They speak  
Other truths—grinding corn.  
About real power  
—Teresa Palomo Acosta, “Grinding Corn”<sup>1</sup>

I remember mama teaching me to plait my hair  
one Saturday afternoon when chores were done

---

They sit quietly on the back porch steps,  
Melinda plaiting Carla's hair  
into a crooked braid

Older daughter  
you are learning what I am learning:  
to gather the strands together  
with strong fingers,  
to keep what we do  
from coming apart at the ends.

—Harryette Mullen, "Saturday Afternoon, When  
Chores Are Done"<sup>2</sup>

In these poems, Teresa Palomo Acosta and Harryette Mullen ask us to consider the sites of survival, struggle, and history-making in unlikely places. Their subtle and powerful poetry undercuts traditional notions of historical production and scholarship by stressing the importance of the stories, experiences, and realities of Tejanas and black Texan women.<sup>3</sup> Tejana poet Teresa Acosta, in particular, directly addresses how academic and dominant discourses selectively remember and record certain actors and deeds over the acts and words of other, often "marginal," "lesser," individuals. Mullen also, but more implicitly, suggests, that the sharing of stories and traditions, including histories, occurs in everyday actions and tasks. The underlying question, then, is whose history matters the most and why? Are Chicanas grinding corn and making tortillas worth remembering? Are the African American women and girls teaching each other to braid engaging in a historical event? Clearly, these writers would say yes, but I believe their poetry has larger implications for the construction, writing, and politics of history. Acosta and Mullen not only write Mexican American and African American women into history, they reframe and reject the methods, paradigms, and approaches that omit them.<sup>4</sup> Their writings are both local and global, intimate and public, verse and prose, which allow them to assert voices, positionalities within and beyond the narratives of the past.

This essay also seeks to re(un)cover the positionality of Tejanas and black Texan women, Chicanas and African American women, at large, in the history of the United States. Although, in a fashion that is neither as poetic nor sweeping as the work of Acosta and Mullen, I examine how we envision sexuality and race together, with the study of (post)colonial moments in the U.S. My overarching interest in the participation of African American and ethnic Mexican women in sex work along with the social movements against prostitution and white slavery in Texas during the progressive era has led me to consider how we theorize, historicize, and write about these matters. In this exploration, then, I will not simply review the appropriate literature or create a short interpretative narrative. Rather, I would like to provide a discussion that interweaves the theory, historiography, and history necessary for complicating our understanding of sexuality, race, and reform in the United States. Put another way my question is: how do we talk, write, and read for women of color in prostitution, reform, and empire?

For this reason, I divide this essay in three parts or scenes. The first scene, on language, surveys a number of relevant theoretical concepts by scholars engaged in cultural studies both within and outside the field of history. The second scene on writing looks at a couple of recent works that cast the examination of white slavery in “Greater America” in innovative and compelling ways. Last, the scene on reading uses the Immigration Inspector Frank R. Stone’s report of immigration violations to touch upon white slavery in Texas.

## **SCENE ONE: THE THEORY OR ON LANGUAGE**

It is interesting that Ann Laura Stoler, Emma Pérez, and Ann duCille echo the insights that Acosta and Mullen propose in their poetry about expanding the constraints of the methodology and epistemology that shapes the craft and telling of history. Whether they introduce, reclaim, or revise concepts such as the “tense and tender ties,” “decolonial imaginary,” and “othered matters,” they create places and spaces to complicate the writing and thinking of sexuality and race, among other factors, historically and historiographically.<sup>5</sup> These theorists put forth that we break

down dichotomies, recuperate the subaltern, and understand power institutionally and informally in order to articulate multilayered approaches and accounts.

Of course, historical scholars such as Darlene Hine Clark and Rayna Green set the groundwork that facilitates the kind of theoretical claims these other scholars later produce. The terms “Pocahontas perplex” and “culture of dissemblance” that Green and Clark respectively introduce provide important ways to reconceptualize old and new questions, concerns, and topics.<sup>6</sup> Whether or not they intended to write theory, they broaden our capacity to see how the gendered, sexualized, and racialized subjectivities of women of color intertwine in their historical accounts of Native American and African American women. In deconstructing representations of Indian women in dominant white American culture, Green reveals how Indian women have figured as the “The Mother of Us All” or “Pocahontas perplex” saving and protecting America for white men.<sup>7</sup> She continues that this image, in conjunction with the oversexualized “Squaw,” creates a role of Indian women as one-dimensional, passive, and voiceless in the popular narratives of the U.S. Only by going beyond the confines of hegemonic discourses and viewing Native American women on their own terms can we dismantle and carve a place where they are complex, multidimensional, active persons.<sup>8</sup>

In turn, Hine’s thought-provoking article focuses on that counterpoint that Rayna Green evocatively calls for in our investigations. Hine states that black women created a culture that both masked and protected “the truth of their inner lives and selves from their oppressors.”<sup>9</sup> Through this “culture of dissemblance,” African American women could survive the onslaught of gender, sexual, race, class, regional oppression and violence they experienced in their day-to-day lives. Yet, she contends that the purpose of black women historians (and I would add women of color historians overall) must be to write histories of black women holistically, not simply privileging those who were more visible, literate, or upwardly mobile, by creating paradigms that explain why black women adopted certain coping strategies and images to achieve agency in their lives.<sup>10</sup> It is evident these two scholars present the possibility of rectifying previous historical narratives and constructing new, oppositional, and autonomous

ways of understanding the multiplicity of the past that has strengthened the assessments of the next theorists.

Stoler's brilliant essay, "Tense and Tender Ties," challenges historians, critics, anthropologists, and other historical scholars to locate the power of empire in "intimate domains"—be they—"sex, sentiment, domestic arrangements, and child rearing."<sup>11</sup> Drawing from both (post)colonial studies and North American historiography, and to a lesser extent post-structuralism, Stoler pieces together a theory and framework that couples analyses of race and sexuality with empire-building and local state-formation. Her ultimate goal for us is to reflect upon the need to produce complex, comparative, and overlapping cultural histories of colonialism. Stoler invents a way to consider a transhistorical, transnational narration by interlinking the regions of North America, Asia, and Africa through comparative studies of race relations; theories from postcolonial, ethnic, feminist, and American studies; and histories that infuse their narratives with these aforementioned perspectives.<sup>12</sup>

Conversely, Emma Pérez and Ann duCille bring Stoler's sweeping assessments back to more focused and localized approaches. Neither Pérez nor duCille are explicitly interested in making linkages across empires, but they do draw from (post)colonial, postmodern frameworks. In presenting concepts such as the "decolonial imaginary" and "othered matters," Pérez and duCille invite us to reconfigure the ways of knowing that have erased, limited, or misinterpreted the positionality of Chicanas, for Pérez, and women of color at large, for duCille, from the historical records and inquiries.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, these scholars, like Stoler, present a language that builds upon our notions of "intimate matters" and empire-formation.<sup>14</sup>

Pérez astutely notes that only in the third or interstitial spaces can we write Chicanas as central and active subjects of our discourses. Her attention to the contradictions and complexities that inform this "decolonial imaginary" highlights the difficulty in constructing a Chicana/o history that does not reproduce dominant or normative patterns. In this decolonial space, we constantly navigate between being the oppressed or oppressor, colonized or colonialist. We are never just one of these identities, but, in fact, occupy all of them simultaneously. Academicians and writers must

write from that interstitial space where the actions and words of Chicanas, Mexicanas, Indias, and Mestizas exist even in the silences and omissions to (en)gender Chicano history. These women are “sexing the colonial imaginary,” as Pérez puts it, inscribing themselves in the landscape.<sup>15</sup> Unlike Stoler, then, Pérez is not simply interested in deconstructing the taxonomies of sexuality and race. She seeks to produce a methodology that creates understandings of Chicanas that are multivalent, *mestiza*.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, I would assert that, like Darlene Clark Hine, Pérez seeks to claim the agency of Chicanas by comprehending their comportment, actions, and words in unlikely, unexpected manners.

In her examination of Tejana participation in social and recreational organizations in Houston during the early twentieth century, Pérez shows that Mexican and Mexican American women developed different strategies to confront the institutionalized racism, sexism, classism, and other discrimination in Texas. One of these strategies or “interstitial moves for survival” was assimilation.<sup>17</sup> She further states the problem therein lies in using categories such as assimilation instead of viewing these women as diasporic since many had recently migrated from Mexico and still looked there for the organization and missions of their clubs and associations.<sup>18</sup> Obviously, her point is that we must interrogate even the most seemingly uneventful facets of Chicanas’ lives.

Of the three, Ann duCille is perhaps the most specific and least developed in her theoretical insights about sexuality and race since she uses the monograph, *Intimate Matters* as her starting point.<sup>19</sup> However, like Pérez and Stoler, her purpose is to push the boundaries of the typical Eurocentric methodologies that inform historiography. Although duCille never formally uses the term “‘othered’ matters,” it encapsulates her critiques on the limitations inherent in D’Emilio and Freedman’s pathbreaking book. The authors append the “other,” namely “non-Europeans, people of color, women, lesbians, gays” to the narrative, never truly infusing their examination with a counterhegemonic or nonhegemonic perspective. DuCille is especially concerned when this becomes the “gaze” for understanding sexuality.<sup>20</sup> And, undoubtedly, she indicates places where the interpretation in *Intimate Matters* could have benefited from different sources. Still, it is unclear how her opposing examples reveal any major paradigm shifts. In other words,

duCille does not fully sketch out what a nonhegemonic framework looks like.<sup>21</sup> Yet, like Stoler and Pérez, she points to a path that some historians have begun to adopt in their narratives.

## **SCENE TWO: WHITE SLAVERY AND BEYOND OR ON WRITING**

Historians Donna Guy and Eileen Suárez Findlay have written definitive works, which take the study of white slavery and other sexual and racial regulation in Argentina and Puerto Rico at the turn of the nineteenth century into provocative directions. Their painstaking attention to discourse as well as the material realities of these social worlds and phenomena discloses that familiar scenarios may not always have the usual outcomes.<sup>22</sup> Without a doubt, the regulation and meanings of sexuality and race differed from the United States, to Puerto Rico, to Argentina, but these texts demonstrate that these nations and colonies shared the impact of modernization, urbanization, and immigration in changing the norms, politics, and policies surrounding these taxonomies. Both critically situate sexuality within or alongside the contexts of citizenship, nation, empire, and race, reinforcing Stoler's call for making these connections salient.

Guy argues that fears about “white slavery” or the illegal trafficking of European women forced into prostitution reached the forefront of discussions in Argentina and nations in Europe only when it became a means for nations to contest each other's sovereignty. Latin American and European women's bodies became the literal site where these debates occurred. In fact, Guy details how the international image of Argentina shifted from a bastion of international prostitution and vice to one of progress and reform for married women's rights. She further notes that this tactic by Argentina was an intentional means to gain power and notice in this landscape.<sup>23</sup> Yet, more importantly, Guy showcases how the intimate results into a location of nation-state formation and transnational discourse. That is to say, debates about women's sexual conduct and oppression transformed into questions of citizenry, the rights of certain women in society, and the limits of imposing quasi-colonial governance.



In that same period, but from a different vantage point, Guy explores how and why the regulation of public health and prostitution intersect for socialists in the port of Buenos Aires. The linking of these issues allows us further to understand the effect of modernization and urbanization on Latin American women. After the legalization of prostitution in 1875, Guy explains, socialist politicians, physicians, and other members differed in their viewpoints on the most pressing issue of sex work—whether it was white slavery, eradicating legalization, or regulating this industry. After all, many of these social reformers were responding to the international outcry that Buenos Aires was a haven for white slavery.

Nevertheless, at the center of these debates was the desire by socialists to create a classless society based on gender equality. With the 1936 passage of the national Law of Social Profilaxis, which abolished licensed prostitution and established a “program of prenuptial exams” for men, some would contend that socialists had achieved some success.<sup>24</sup> As such, Guy’s investigation unveils how the presence of socialist reformers altered the public views surrounding sex work in ways that, perhaps, were only unique to Argentina. Certainly, her nuanced and precise approach also indicates how we need to contemplate the numerous layers that informed local, national, and international discussions of sex work if not necessarily sex workers. She reveals how disease, morality, and ideologies of racial purity took precedent over the specific gendered social conditions of poor and working-class women. Furthermore, Guy demonstrates that the positionality of these lower-class women was never truly the concern of the state. Guy emphasizes the condition of prostitutes and other women considered to be “dangerous” remained relatively unchanged since the focus of legislation privileged a male, upper-class subjectivity.<sup>25</sup> In the end, these women were not at the center of the discourse, but only relevant as it pertained to improving the position of men, a trend that continues in movements against prostitution in Puerto Rico.

Suárez Findlay states that the antiprostitution movements in Ponce and surrounding rural sugar producing areas gained momentum as universal male suffrage was granted regardless of race, namely, Africanness, at the end of the nineteenth century. Like Donna Guy, Suárez Findlay illuminates the predictable and unexpected links that the campaign against

prostitution brought together. Elite white Puerto Ricans joined with emergent laboring Afro-Puerto Rican intellectuals and activists to curtail the few rights of laboring Afro-Puerto Rican women. Under the guise of respectability and decency, these groups formed strategic alliances to control what they perceived to be inappropriate sexual and economic comportment and practices of the “alleged” prostitutes in the streets of Ponce. Simply put, rich liberal men, middle-class feminists, and “decent” working men and working women, envisioned the “disreputable” poor woman as prostitute, black, and diseased and used her as the opposition to their diverse cultural and political ideologies. The irony, of course, was that these various factions did not agree on a singular ideology, but they united about specific values regarding gender, sexuality, and morality. Moreover, this ideology served as means to erase racial difference between whites and mainly black Puerto Rican men in this new political space.<sup>26</sup>

In addition, Suárez Findlay delineates how this social, cultural, political climate with respect to sexual relations and views drastically changed with the U.S. conquest of Puerto Rico in 1898 and the nascent labor movement of the early twentieth century. Indeed, the new voices from the left were pivotal in defining a working woman’s sexuality that represented the goals for dismantling class, gender, sexual subjugation and the literal and figurative presence of the U.S. fueled this discourse.

Prostitution served as the centerpiece to articulating overlapping oppressions resulting from unchecked capitalism and gender inequity. But, Suárez Findlay comments that despite the fact that female and male anarchists and feminist activists engaged in these conversations, they did not always agree on what this sexuality would look like. In other words, leftist men still idealized domesticity as the site that would save laboring women from exploitation but also allowed them to retain the gender order of society. Conversely, a few radical women expressed a perspective that recognized the need to redress or undermine the institutions of gender and class oppression in order to form a nonhierarchical society. Still, neither addressed the issue of race directly. Both used race as the subtext to their understandings of sexuality and “womanhood” because they focused on race differences outside the working class, not race conflict within it.<sup>27</sup>

It is clear that Suárez Findlay underlines a number of important issues with her analysis of the shifting underpinnings that guided the regulation of prostitution and the meanings of sexuality and race. As Guy shows for Argentina, discourses and activities regarding the question of prostitution brought together divergent viewpoints and individuals. In the case of Puerto Rico, the study of prostitution sheds lights on some similar and few distinct axes. Suárez Findlay highlights that colonialism (or imperialism) was not simply a specter in early twentieth century Puerto Rico as it was perhaps in Argentina. Suárez Findlay, though, does not engage in a transnational examination of empire, but instead centers her investigation on deconstructing the tentacles of empire. By using prostitution as her starting point, she traces how debates about the sexuality of laboring (raced) women were tied to changing perceptions of masculinity. Apparently, masculinity allowed various male leaders and activists to ally across race in the 1890s and helped working-class radical men to unite against white elites, mostly wealthy men, in the 1900s and 1910s. However, Suárez Findlay is careful not to marginalize the stories of working-class, mostly black Puerto Rican, “prostitutes,” and other “deviant” women, even as she draws these linkages. Rather, she refuses to limit her narrative as solely an account of prostitution and seeks to problematize and expand our knowledge of the sex work as a repressive site embedded with other forms of subordination. And, like Pérez, Suárez Findlay reads against the grain to unmake and remake this social world. In the case of Texas, we will see that kind of analysis is also necessary.

### **SCENE THREE: STONE REPORT OR ON READING**

In 1909, Frank Stone pursued a lengthy investigation of the (inter)national trade of prostitutes to the state of Texas. Reporting to the Commissioner-General of Immigration in Washington, D.C., Stone revealed more than just instances of criminal activity. He commented on the social world of prostitutes, madams, pimps, macks, and other “girls” in the “White-slave traffic.”<sup>28</sup> In particular, he shed light on the lives of ethnic Mexican and African American women and their nebulous place in the moral reform movements of the progressive period. Yet, as Stone

reported in his assessment of Laredo, few Mexican “dueñas” and prostitutes were worth charging with immigration law violations since the proximity of the border and their substantial population circumvented these efforts.<sup>29</sup> To an even lesser extent, African American women figured as a subtext—be they domestic workers or laundresses—to his overall narration of the horridness of prostitution and the importance of his work.<sup>30</sup> In other words, he took note of black houses of prostitution but did not detail their living conditions.

At one level, the Stone Report is an opening to understanding U.S. hegemonic discourses on white slavery and illegal immigration. After all, as an official of the United States, Stone documented moments of transgression against the nation-state, along with deciding when these moments were worth regulating. He further represented Eurocentric, bourgeois beliefs toward a sexualized, racialized other. On another level, this report signifies a place where we must use the “decolonial imaginary,” “tense and tender ties” to begin reading for the subalterned subjectivities of ethnic Mexican and African American women. Moreover, as the inquiries of Guy and Suárez Findlay suggest, we must use the lens of prostitution to reveal other workings of society. How can we read those places in the Stone Report where the acts of women of color seem to indicate an uneventful moment? Why did he find that only a few Mexican women significant enough to indict? Why were black women only the counterpoint of his analysis?

The “web of criminality” that Stone did describe certainly emphasized the relevancy or irrelevancy of the state and transnational connections. In his subsequent remarks about Laredo, Stone depicted the local government to be useless. He wrote:

It might be interesting to the Bureau to know that almost the entire City and County government are Mexicans—the Mayor, the Sheriff, the District Attorney, County Judge; in fact almost the whole of them are Mexicans, and from the high handed manner in which they handle the State laws here they don't seem to have much respect for the Federal laws. The majority of them are, to say the least, dissolute, with little conception to the laws of morality.<sup>31</sup>

Here, Stone dubbed all “Mexicans” as the problematic element. It was not simply the Laredo prostitutes who were criminal and disreputable but, in fact, the state was so corrupt and immoral it rendered Stone’s work against “importing women” futile. The “Mexicans” could not be counted on for the campaign against “white slavery.” Furthermore, in Stone’s view, the transborder, transnational crossings of persons that occurred in the Laredo–Nuevo Laredo region were too numerous, continuous, and habitual to record any usual occurrences. Still, we must wonder if the “Mexican” officials’ “incompetence” toward state and federal laws also stemmed from their distrust of the U.S. government. After all, the U.S. takeover of the Southwest was fairly recent in the memories of many of these “newer” citizens. We must similarly contemplate if the ethnic Mexican women that Stone encountered shared that same disdain for U.S. (read white) government representatives of any form.

It is equally interesting how in evaluating the situation in Galveston, Stone charged two Latinas, possibly Puerto Rican women, and investigated two others for involvement in the trafficking of prostitutes. What path did Margarita Leos and Margarita Ugaldá take to end up in this port city? Did their journey end with this arrest?<sup>32</sup> One reading would show that these women were inconsequential, but I would suggest they were needed in the imagination of reformers, officials, and politicians to encourage the discussions around anti-white slavery since they represented an antithetical sexuality. In addition, I contend we must consider where these women of color were strategically masking their “inner lives and selves,” as Darlene Hine Clark says. My ultimate purpose is to interlink this report with other conversations in order to unravel the intimate matters codified in the “informal” colonialism of the South/west. After all, it is apparent that campaigns against sex work were part of larger transnational discourses.

## **CONCLUSION(S)**

As early as 1878, Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) leader, socialist, writer, and poet Tejana/black Texan Lucy González Parsons raised incisive critiques against the institution of capitalism. Specifically, in her poem, “A Parody,” González Parsons wrote:

No love was left:  
All earth, to the masses, was but one thought—and that was:—Work!  
Wages! Wages!  
The pangs of hunger fed upon their vitals.  
Men, in a land of plenty, died of want—absolute—<sup>33</sup>

It is evident that her words cannot be placed in the context of progressive debates surrounding prostitution and white slavery. Yet, her words do disclose a subjectivity of the poor, working-class that is relevant to understanding the various social forces that informed sex work since expanding capitalism, combined with the advent of modernity, critically transformed the social, cultural, and economic world of laboring Mexican American and African American women. In many ways, “A Parody” foreshadowed conditions and situations that only became worse in the early twentieth century. Perhaps, because this subjectivity she expressed was purposely male, and (un)raced, (de)sexualized, it is difficult to read for the women of color, but I believe those “masses” could include many. Her poem is also significant because it prefigured ways of knowing and expressing that activists, poets, and writers Harryette Mullen and Teresa Acosta later use. And, like these poets, González Parson did not compartmentalize her reality into one manner or experience.

In this essay, I have sought to interweave the different ways of understanding sexuality, race, and (post)colonialism in the United States and beyond so as to begin to deepen our histories of ethnic Mexican and African American women in the progressive period. Certainly, I propose that we must deconstruct the boundaries that separate theory, historiography, and history and use frameworks and histories that push our previous assumptions and knowledges of the past. The various scholars, writers, and theorists examined here demonstrate that this is no easy task. Yet, they do reaffirm that only by looking at the intimate, along with the institutional and structural forms, of power, can we conceptualize a space where other voices existed, where black and brown Texan women lived more fully and complexly.

## Endnotes

I would like to express my most sincere gratitude to friends and teachers whose expertise, insight, and wisdom enabled me to refine and complete this essay: Kimberly A. Alidio, who provided the initial impetus and early feedback; Isabela Seong-Leong Quintana and Rebecca Montes, who provided invaluable comments throughout presentations and conversations; my dissertation advisers—Juliet E.K. Walker and Emilio Zamora for their overall guidance; and Carol Ann Chavez for her unwavering support, patience, and wittiness.

1 Teresa Palomo Acosta, *Nile & Other Poems* (Austin: Red Salmon Press, 1999), p. 87.

2 Harryette Mullen, *Tree Tall Woman* (Galveston: Energy Earth Communications, 1981), cited in Ruthe Winegarten, ed., *Black Texas Women: A Sourcebook: Documents, Biographies, Timeline* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996), p. vii.

3 Acosta is a Tejana/Chicana poet, journalist, and historian; born in McGregor, Texas. See Acosta, *Nile & Other Poems*; Teresa Palomo Acosta and Ruthe Winegarten, *Las Tejanas: 300 Years of History* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003). Ruthe Winegarten identifies Mullen as an up-and-coming black Texas poet. See Winegarten, ed., *Black Texas Women: A Sourcebook*, p. 313.

4 See also Emma Pérez, *The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas into History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), pp. 4-5; Louis Gerard Mendoza, *Historia: The Literary Making of Chicana and Chicano History* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2001), pp. 12-15; Barbara Christian, "The Race for Theory," in *Making Face, Making Soul/Haciendo Caras: Creative and Critical Perspectives by Women of Color*, ed. Gloria Anzaldúa (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1990), p. 336.

5 Ann Laura Stoler, "Tense and Tender Ties: The Politics of Comparison in North American History and (Post) Colonial Studies," *Journal of American History* 88.3 (December 2001).

<http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/jah/88.3/stoler.html> (24 March 2003); Pérez, *The Decolonial Imaginary*; Ann duCille, "'Othered Matters': Reconceptualizing Dominance and Difference in the History of Sexuality in America," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 1.1 (July 1990): 102-107.

6 Rayna Green, "The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture," in *Unequal Sisters: A Multi-Cultural Reader in U.S. Women's History*, ed. Ellen DuBois and Vicki L. Ruiz (New York: Routledge, 1990), pp. 15-21; Darlene Clark Hine, "Rape and the Inner Lives of Black Women in the Middle West: Preliminary Thoughts on the Culture of Dissemblance," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 14.4 (Summer 1989): 912-20.

7 Green, "The Pocahontas Perplex," p. 17.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 21.

9 Hine, "Rape and the Inner Lives of Black Women in the Middle West," p. 912.

10 *Ibid.*, pp. 919-920.

11 Stoler, "Tense and Tender Ties," pars. 1-5.

12 A case in point is the section where Stoler draws parallels between the "colonial period(s)" in America and other colonies. Stoler points out how we can draw key

links between the ambivalent and tenuous positions of domestic workers in the households of the antebellum South and the nineteenth century colonies of Britain, France, or Netherlands, even though some were slaves while the others were “contract coolies.” The “nursemaids, cooks, and houseboys” were crucial in maintaining the racial and class stratification of particular cultural spaces of the ruling class despite being othered as “objects of both fear and desire” by the same class. Further, the domestic morality necessary for maintaining the “order of things” in the South was not unique to the United States, but, in fact, other regions such as the Dutch East Indies and South Africa which both followed it as an example. Stoler illustrates, then, how racial and sexual hierarchies and meanings converge and diverge in the solidification of empire. See Stoler, “Tense and Tender Ties,” pars. 5-6, 33-34.

13 Pérez, *The Decolonial Imaginary*, chap. 1; duCille, “Othered Matters,” pp. 102-105.

14 Stoler, and I, of course, are borrowing this term from historians John D’Emilio and Estelle Freedman. See *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988).

15 Pérez, *The Decolonial Imaginary*, pp. 5-7 (quote from p. 7).

16 *Ibid.*, pp. 25-27.

17 *Ibid.*, p. 81.

18 *Ibid.*, pp. 80-83.

19 D’Emilio and Freedman, *Intimate Matters*.

20 DuCille, “Othered Matters,” p. 103.

21 *Ibid.*, p. 109, n. 10. Also, see D’Emilio and Freedman, “Commentary: A Response to Ann duCille’s ‘Othered Matters,’” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 1.1 (July 1990): 128-30.

22 Donna J. Guy, *White Slavery and Mothers Alive and Dead: The Troubled Meeting of Sex, Gender, Public Health, and Progress in Latin America* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000); Eileen J. Suárez Findlay, *Imposing Decency: The Politics of Sexuality and Race in Puerto Rico, 1870-1920* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999).

23 Guy, “‘White Slavery,’ Citizenship, and Nationality in Argentina,” in *White Slavery and Mothers Alive and Dead*, pp. 72-73, 81, 84-85.

24 *Ibid.*, “White Slavery, Public Health, and Socialist Position on Legalized Prostitution in Argentina 1913-1936,” in *White Slavery and Mothers Alive and Dead*, pp. 155-58, 171-72.

25 *Ibid.*, pp. 171-72.

26 Suárez Findlay, *Imposing Decency*, pp. 77-81, 89, 108-109.

27 *Ibid.*, pp. 135-37, 153-59.

28 Frank R. Stone to Commissioner-General of Immigration, 25 June 1909, file 52484/8-A, p. 2, U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, Record Group 85, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. (hereinafter cited as Stone Report, INS RG 85).



- 29 Stone Report, 11 August 1909, file 52484/8-G, p. 5, INS RG 85.  
 30 Ibid., 29 May 1909, file 52484/8, p. 10, INS RG 85.  
 31 Ibid., 25 June 1909, file 52484/8-A, pp. 5-6.  
 32 Ibid., 22 July 1909, file 52484/8-B, p. 3.  
 33 Winegarten, ed., *Black Texas Women: A Sourcebook*, emphasis hers, p. 68.

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