



Gender, Mastery and Slavery: From European to Atlantic World Frontiers (Gender and History)

William Henry Foster

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Gender, family and sexual relations defined human slavery from its classical origins in Europe to the rise and fall of race-based slavery in the Americas. *Gender, Mastery and Slavery* is one of the first books to explore the importance of men and women to slaveholding across these eras.

Foster argues that at the heart of the successive European institutions of slavery at home and in the New World was the volatile question of women's ability to exert mastery. Facing the challenge to play the 'good mother' in public and private, free women from Rome to Muslim North Africa, to the indigenous tribes of North America, to the antebellum plantations of the southern United States found themselves having to economically manage slaves, servants and captives. At the same time, they had to protect their reputations from various forms of attack and themselves from vilification on a number of fronts.

With the recurrent cultural wars over the maternal role within slavery touching the worlds of politics, warfare, religion, and colonial and imperial rivalries, this lively comparative survey is essential reading for anyone studying, or simply interested in, this key topic in global and gender history.

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