



A Historical Study of Women in Jamaica, 1655-1844 (Caribbean History)

Lucille Mathurin Mair

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In 1974 Lucille Mathurin Mair defended her dissertation, which has since become a classic work in Caribbean historiography and influenced generations of scholars. Through extensive archival work with estate records, legal records, family papers and private correspondence, she sought out the women of Jamaica's past during slavery, women of all classes, all colours, black, brown and white. The work stands as a convincing exposure of women as agents of history - a path-breaking achievement at a time when Caribbean historiography ignored women. From her meticulous research emerged a powerful statement that has shaped subsequent understandings of gendered and cultural relations in Jamaican society: the white woman consumed, the coloured woman served and the black woman laboured. Over three decades Mair's dissertation became the most sought after unpublished work among students and scholars of Caribbean history and culture. Now available as a published monograph, the work will be more widely available to a new generation of scholars concerned with Atlantic history, slavery, culture and gender. The editors have provided a useful and informative introduction and a bibliography, containing the original bibliography in the dissertation now supplemented by bibliographies detailing Mathurin Mair's subsequent publications, subsequent UWI theses on women or gender, and books, articles and papers on Caribbean gender issues since 1974. Co-published with the Centre for Gender and Development Studies, University of the West Indies, Jamaica.

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