

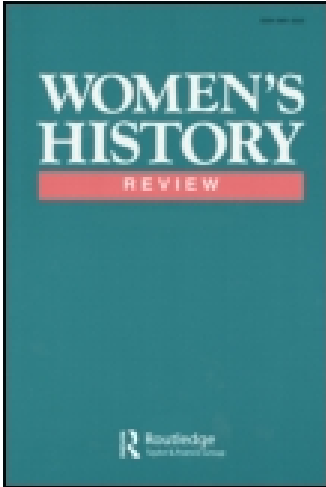


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Women's History Review

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rwhr20>

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Published online: 01 Oct 2007.

To cite this article: Sharron A. FitzGerald & Alicja Muszynski (2007) Negotiating Female Morality: place, ideology and agency in the Red River Colony, *Women's History Review*, 16:5, 661-680, DOI: [10.1080/09612020701447624](https://doi.org/10.1080/09612020701447624)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09612020701447624>

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Negotiating Female Morality: place, ideology and agency in the Red River Colony

Sharron A. FitzGerald and Alicja Muszynski

By 1850 British women had settled in the Red River colony, a British outpost in what became the province of Manitoba, Canada, and where the Hudson's Bay Company established fur trading posts. Through an analysis of documents concerning two unconnected lawsuits involving Countryborn women, it is possible to glean some understanding of how British women became agents of colonialism. Company authorities envisaged that White women would establish households predicated on Victorian patriarchal ideology that defined separate spheres for men and women. This article maps how White women stereotyped non-White women as 'Other,' manipulated their symbolic role as mothers of the English nation, and used rumour to maintain a segregated settlement. It also explores the agency of these White women as they sought to establish a place for themselves through their struggles with one another, with First Nations and Countryborn women, as well as with the White men who ruled the colony.

The establishment at which we encamped last night, may be considered the boundary between the Civilized and Savage Worlds, as beyond this point, the country is

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Dr Alicja Muszynski is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. In *Cheap Wage Labour: race and gender in the fisheries of British Columbia* (1996) she traced the historical development of the salmon canning industry in British Columbia, Canada, by means of the gendering and racialisation of labour groups into specific job categories within the canneries. Her current research interests include immigrant women settling in Waterloo Region and the occupational invisibility of farm women's work on Canadian family farms.

uninhabited by Whites, except where a Trading Post of the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company occasionally presents itself.¹

Introduction

In their pursuit of the fur trade, the English Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) and the Scottish North West Company (NWC), established posts in Rupert's Land. This territory corresponded to two-thirds of what, in 1867, would become the Dominion of Canada. European colonial policy allowed White men, but not White women, to settle in the territory.² As the fur trade diffused throughout the region, European men encountered First Nations women. Eventually, common-law partnerships or *marriage à la façon du pays*, became an important aspect of everyday life in the region. The NWC and the HBC had different policies concerning inter-ethnic partnerships. The HBC imposed celibacy to control its employees and forbade sexual partnerships between European men and indigenous women. Nevertheless, men of all ranks flaunted these rules. Conversely, the NWC encouraged these liaisons as part of its economic strategy for better relations with the First Nations in the region. The Scots viewed First Nations women as a vital link to profitable trading and access to traditional hunting grounds. Thus fur trade social relations in Rupert's Land demonstrated complex internal as well as external cultural forms and kinship networks. Because of these sexual liaisons, two new ethnic groups indigenous to the territory emerged: the Métis and the Countryborn.³

The Métis were the sons and daughters of First Nations women and French engagés employed by the NWC. They spoke French and belonged to the Roman Catholic faith. Fur traders referred to the English-speaking Protestant children of partnerships between First Nations women and British and Irish HBC employees as the Countryborn.⁴ By the end of the eighteenth century, a new generation of inter-ethnic women grew up in Rupert's Land. Many European fur traders and colonial administrators preferred to marry these women rather than finding wives amongst the First Nations. As the wives and daughters of Company men, inter-ethnic women fully participated in the social and cultural life of trading posts, befitting the rank and station into which they were born or married.⁵

At the close of the eighteenth century, competition from the NWC forced the HBC to expand its franchise further west into Rupert's Land where, in 1811, the HBC established its entrepot, the Red River colony (Winnipeg, Manitoba), located at the confluence of the Red and the Assiniboine rivers or 'The Forks' (as it was commonly called). The settlement became a 'contact zone' between several ethnic and European groups.⁶ In 1821, after years of competition between them, the HBC and the NWC amalgamated and business proceeded under the auspices of the HBC. By the 1830s, shifts in European middle-class notions of respectability and prescribed gender roles combined with increased concern among European powers about the perceived ill effects of miscegenation on the White 'race'. A new generation of HBC fur trade entrepreneurs, concerned with the image of frontier settlements as immoral, changed Company policy. White women, previously barred from emigrating, now emerged as the very agents who could 'civilise' the settlements in Rupert's Land.

Earlier scholarship on White women in the fur trade tended to construct them as 'helpmates' to White men. In these accounts, scholars discussed White women in relation to men and in terms of men's needs regarding pleasure, the provision of services, reproduction, and the domestication of Rupert's Land. They also suggested that the arrival of White women in Rupert's Land increased racial tensions.⁷ Drawing on Foucault's analysis of the proliferation of nineteenth-century discourses on sex and power relations, this article does not begin from the assumption that White women were responsible for increased racial tension in the Red River colony. To do so is to miss the 'political chronology in which racist practice arose'.⁸ White women arrived in the settlement at a time when nationalist struggles among the indigenous populations threatened British authority in the colony. White women brought with them metropolitan notions of female moral agency and domesticity that coincided with rather than created the reconfiguration of racial hierarchies in the territory. When British women immigrated to the various outposts of the British empire they established appropriate White domestic spaces. Domesticity became a meta-narrative for the translation of racialised gender and class organisation across colonised space. These gendered class dynamics enhanced the fundamental operation of the British imperial project. The household symbolised a 'space of racial purity that the colonial house-wife guarded against contamination from the outside'.⁹ White women, therefore, established the criteria of difference around the persona of 'lady' in order to create a 'zone of exclusion' between themselves and the 'Other' women with whom they came in contact.

The discussion that follows examines how British and Countryborn women used complicity, resistance and adaptation to construct their individual and ethnic identities. The central question posed here is: How did White women make use of the Victorian middle-class ideological separation of public and private spaces, and the construction of gender-prescribed behaviour appropriate in each sphere, to establish a unique female space of influence in the colony? This article uses discourse analysis of documents pertaining to two unrelated nineteenth-century legal cases to answer this question. Biographical information concerning the individuals involved in these cases is located in the endnotes. *Foss v. Pelly* (1850) concerned Countryborn Sarah Ballenden, the wife of the Chief Factor of the Red River colony. The action responded to slanderous accusations initiated by White women who claimed that Sarah Ballenden was having an adulterous affair with an Irish Company officer, Christopher Foss. The second case took place in 1863. *The Queen v. Corbett* was a criminal case initiated by a sixteen-year-old Countryborn domestic servant, Maria Thomas. Maria Thomas accused English Reverend Griffith Owen Corbett of repeatedly raping her. When he discovered she was pregnant, she charged that he forced her into several botched abortions. The ensuing trials brought the reputations of these Countryborn women and their White female detractors under severe public scrutiny.¹⁰

Contextualising *Foss v. Pelly* and *The Queen v. Corbett*

A number of scholars have studied *Foss v. Pelly* and *The Queen v. Corbett*. In *Many Tender Ties*, Van Kirk claimed that *Foss v. Pelly* provided insights into how the patriarchal fur

trade and the Victorian double standard 'pit women against one another'.¹¹ Pannekoek and Gallagher claimed that *Foss v. Pelly* was an example of 'simple colonial politics' concerned with categories of 'race and gender'.¹² Cavanaugh used *Foss v. Pelly* to demonstrate how Victorian Anglo-Canadian institutions used gender to construct categories of 'race' and to define place in the West. She questioned Van Kirk's interpretation of British middle-class women's behaviour, which she claimed 'reduced them to petty and vindictive individuals'.¹³

Scholars cited *The Queen v. Corbett* in their work on the social, cultural, political and religious changes that occurred in the Red River settlement between 1850 and 1860. Pannekoek concentrated on the tensions between the Catholic and the Protestant communities; in particular, Reverend Corbett's anti-Company stance. Pannekoek overlooked the possibility of women's agency in Red River social relations. Women in this analysis became one-dimensional victims of men jostling for power.¹⁴ Conversely, Smith used evidence found in *The Queen v. Corbett* to trace the Victorian 'binary oppositions' that placed British women in the position of 'angels in the house' while First Nations and Countryborn women became categorised as 'whores'.¹⁵ However, Smith failed to delineate the subtle ways that White women participated in Red River power relations.

Bumsted used *The Queen v. Corbett* to explore the operation of the law in the Red River colony. However, his interpretation of the *The Queen v. Corbett* is problematic. He made value judgements about Maria Thomas's character based on depositions taken at the trial that appeared in the Red River newspaper, *The Nor'-Wester*, in 1863.¹⁶ His interpretation helps to re-enforce the invisibility of women as historical subjects, or as Scott suggested, 'somehow depicted them as less central, less important than white men'.¹⁷ Drawing on the analyses of Stoler and McClintock, Bumsted's concentration on Maria's sexuality might reflect his refusal to engage directly with the questions of unequal race, ethnic and gender-based power relations embedded in Company law that facilitated and shaped White men's sexual access to indigenous women. The critical issue at stake here is the gendered system of representation Bumsted deployed to produce knowledge about women of colour in the Red River colony. Where mention of the status of Countryborn and British middle-class women occurred, it happened in relation to their sexual relationships with men, the rivalry between British middle-class women and women of colour, and their economic activities.

What is missing from studies of *Foss v. Pelly* and *The Queen v. Corbett* is an analysis of the ways that cultural forms established at the 'centre' of the British empire in London, England, provided White women with opportunities to define their own unique place in the colony. To begin to theorise White women's processes of identity formation and agency in the Red River colony, it is necessary to understand how they participated in place-making and in the power relations found there. A feminist analysis of the production of female subjectivity 'at home' and 'abroad', combined with Foucault's analysis of the proliferation of nineteenth-century discourses on sex and power relations, shape the two themes central to this article.

First, domesticity enabled rather than constrained the agency of British women. While this strategy may not have changed Red River politics, it allowed White women to invoke Victorian ideology in order to empower themselves. White women were able

to legitimate what they saw as their task in establishing the 'private sphere' of home and hearth based on British experience not available to Countryborn women. Second, British women invoked discourses of Victorian morality to perpetuate and thus also construct a social system that gave them the means to play a direct role in the geographies of inclusion and exclusion, thus defining who was 'in place' at the centres of White authority in the Red River colony. White women used the British custom of calling or social visits to deploy Victorian standards of behaviour appropriate for middle-class women in the private sphere, at the same time allowing them to expand their authority beyond the household.¹⁸

White Women, Power Relations and Place-Making

Foucault's work has generated debates on how discourses on power relations are negotiated through discourses relating to gender, sex and bodies.¹⁹ Rather than focusing on *who* possessed power and *who did not*, Foucault considered *how* groups or individuals modified power relations to suit their needs. He rejected the notion of a theory of power in favour of an 'analytic of power' based on a rejection of the 'repressive hypothesis'.²⁰ He argued that from the mid-eighteenth century onward, a proliferation, rather than a repression of bourgeois discourses on sex emerged. Sex and the concept of 'sexuality' became part of the wider concern with bourgeois morality 'used as an index of a country's strength, revealing its political energy and biological vigour'.²¹

Feminists drew on Foucault's theorisations to produce a significant body of work on how various groups understood and regulated the intersections of gender and racial relations in the nineteenth-century colonial world. 'Both men and women were colonisers, both in empire and at home. Their spheres of action were delineated, their gender and racialized selves always at play'.²² European nations articulated the 'superiority' of Whiteness by establishing specific racialised class and gender categories linked to characteristics such as 'Englishness'. These categories became the markers of social superiority and inferiority. Colonists used them to exert and to legitimate political control. They associated Whiteness with property and privilege. As European expansion into non-European territory advanced throughout the mid-nineteenth century, the conflation of body, temperament and race accelerated. The British elite created myths based on racialised class and gender stereotypes pertaining to Rupert's Land. These discourses supported images of courageous and determined White men and dependent, chaste and respectable White women. Colonists used similar representational narratives to describe First Nations men as wasteful and effeminate, and First Nations women as promiscuous. In short, these stereotypes provided the standard that British colonists could use to constitute their own superiority as well as a measure from which the 'Other' deviated.²³

Strategies of Regulation

Rumour

In her investigation of nineteenth-century sexual crime in Ontario, Canada, Dubinsky referred to Brownmiller's *Against Our Will* as beginning 'the feminist project of

transforming our understanding of sexual violence from a question of individual pathology to that of a highly political social structure'.²⁴ Foucault's analysis of sexuality and his discourse of gendered bodies as a site of power relations further opens analysis into other contested sites such as the racialisation of the bodies of men and women. For example, White women in the Red River colony used rumour as a form of surveillance to enforce accepted social and spatial behaviours. They also used rumour to construct a discourse about the sexualised 'Other' that they could then employ to assert their own moral and sexual purity as a form of power relation. In her analysis, Dubinsky further noted the underlying class dimension to sexual violence.²⁵

Marks, in her case studies of mid-nineteenth century religious communities in Upper Canada, also examined the use of gossip and rumour by both men and women to re-enforce religious community and belonging.²⁶ The three major denominations in Upper Canada (the Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians) made differential use of rumour and gossip to uphold a certain degree of conformity within their respective religious communities. The importance of Marks's work to the present study is in her problematising of the creation of a separate private sphere and its regulation.²⁷ Specifically, the research conducted by Dubinsky and Marks can be integrated with Foucault's theorisation to show how the state and the Church used sexuality to establish a particular moral order as Canada entered Confederation in 1867. That is, the moral discourse around sexuality served to define a certain class, ethnic and racial hierarchy that coincided with the formation of the Victorian middle-class concept of private and public spheres. In the Red River colony, White women established an appropriate moral, sexual and physical sphere for themselves that simultaneously distanced them from the Countryborn women they displaced.

Dubinsky's study offers another interesting insight pertinent to the analysis undertaken in this article. She argued that women who entered public spaces without escorts, and especially at night, invited unwanted sexual attention and even sexual aggression. In the testimony analysed below, White women used rumour to castigate First Nations and Countryborn women for their unregulated conduct and physical freedom of movement in public. To the extent that their behaviour was not morally confined to the domestic sphere of hearth and home, these women were judged by White women to invite the sexual aggression of White men as well as the censure of morally upstanding and virtuous White women who knew 'their place' to be confined to the home.

In summary, it is important to analyse gender in relation to class, ethnic and racial relations. British colonists called upon White women to reproduce the Victorian bourgeois domestic order in a new geographic, social, economic and political context. They used the existing relations they found in the Red River colony as well as their own status as wives, daughters and mothers to carve a female place of influence. Their relationships with women of colour could at best be described as ambiguous, especially since these women had established sexual relationships with the very men who had brought British women to the colony as wives. Before proceeding, it is useful now to provide the reader with a synopsis of *Foss v. Pelly* and *The Queen v. Corbett*.

Sites of Challenge and Resistance

Foss v. Pelly

Foss v. Pelly concerned Sarah Ballenden, the upper-middle-class Countryborn wife of the British Chief Factor of the Red River colony, John Ballenden.²⁸ In 1849, Anne Pelly, the Scottish wife of the English HBC accountant, Augustus Pelly, spread rumours implying that Sarah Ballenden and Christopher Foss, an Irish Company officer, were engaged in an illicit affair.²⁹ In 1850, Christopher Foss, in accordance with English law prohibiting women from commencing legal proceedings on their own behalf, initiated a civil suit against the Pellys as well as John Davidson, the cook at Upper Fort Garry, and his English wife, Margaret Davidson, 'to clear the reputation of a lady'.³⁰ The trial caused significant social and political cleavage both inside and outside the settlement.³¹ Eventually, the largely inter-ethnic jury ruled in favour of the prosecution and the English judge ordered the defendants to pay damages.

During the thirteen years between *Foss v. Pelly* and *The Queen v. Corbett*, the Red River colony underwent a series of changes. In the face of the Company's attempts to uphold its economic and political monopoly, the inter-ethnic populations in the territory shared a sense of frustration at the Company's practices. The 1850s marked a shift in Anglo-Canadian perceptions of the West. The British and Canadian governments, in the midst of their own industrial revolutions, demonstrated interest in Rupert's Land for the purposes of settlement, expansion and cheap resource extraction. Certain inhabitants of the Red River settlement took advantage of this interest and agitated for Crown colony status, which would bring the settlement under direct British rule.³² Thus, Rupert's Land and the Red River colony at the time of *Foss v. Pelly* and *The Queen v. Corbett* stood at the crossroads of several paths of development.

The Queen v. Corbett

The Queen v. Corbett involved Maria Thomas, the English Reverend Griffith Owen Corbett's fourteen-year-old Anglo-Cree domestic servant.³³ In 1863, Simon Thomas, the father of Maria Thomas, commenced criminal proceedings against Reverend Corbett. The prosecution claimed that Corbett subjected Maria Thomas to two attempted illegal abortions.³⁴ Maria Thomas testified that Reverend Corbett drugged her and raped her in her bed in the Corbett family's kitchen, as well as on other occasions. She stated that when she became pregnant, Reverend Corbett tried to terminate the pregnancy. Again, the ethnically mixed jury found in favour of the prosecution and the Scottish judge sentenced Reverend Corbett to six months' imprisonment with mercy. After the trial, a band of Reverend Corbett's Countryborn supporters stormed the jail at Upper Fort Garry and freed him. Company authorities, faced with the threat of insurrection from the increasingly hostile inter-ethnic populations, allowed him to remain free.³⁵

Accounts of the events surrounding these unrelated lawsuits revolve around three themes. First, for colonisers and colonised subjects alike, transgressive female sexuality symbolised both cultural essence and cultural difference at multiple centres of White

authority. Second, White women's attempt to maintain their moral authority by perpetuating segregation through rumour blurred the boundaries of public and private spaces, and represented an important aspect of their defensive strategies. Finally, White women's acts of surveillance forced White men to engage in public debate about British expectations of appropriate female behaviour in the Red River colony. This is not to suggest that these lawsuits are typical of White women's experiences in the settlement. However, as case studies they throw some light on the interpersonal and external processes at play, and open up another space for new interpretations and imaginings of women's lives.

Whiteness

Transgressing the Colour Bar

Understanding White women's experiences in the Red River colony in the service of empire requires that we examine colonial culture as a matrix of contradictions and complicities. In order to stabilise and unify their control, British colonists created a semblance of sameness that flattened out the differences among the colonisers, thus enabling them to fix the boundaries between themselves and the 'Other'. Stoler argued that these power relations 'controlled all British women's encounters with and representations of difference'.³⁶ She suggested that difference became the medium, through which colonists attempted to regulate their own identities 'premised on cultural purity and aimed at stabilizing the *status quo*'.³⁷ Yet colonial culture in the Red River colony, geographically separate from its point of reference, England, was neither a homogeneous White nor a unified entity, but rather a hybrid construct representing the ethnic, linguistic and cultural variations found in Britain. Social mobility within the fur trade exacerbated this problem. Brown documented the fact that members of the British working classes often rose quickly through the ranks, either as Company employees or as the wives of Company officials.³⁸ Their behaviour abroad mirrored Victorian class struggles taking shape at home. Capitalist development in Rupert's Land also created a Countryborn elite, who formed strong kinship ties within the fur trade. The Company classed them as 'insiders'. Therefore, White women could not call for increased segregation in Rupert's Land on racial grounds alone.

In the Red River colony, Métissage represented White men's transgression of the colour bar and the moral depravity of frontier settlements. For example, English Reverend William Cockran described the Red River Countryborn as the 'progeny of the adulterer and the whore'.³⁹ The discourses of these sexual, and by default, racial transgressions, provided White women with ready evidence that British colonies in Rupert's Land had to distinguish 'real' Whites from those assimilated into White culture. Characteristics of Britishness became the principal conduit for inclusion at the centres of power in the settlement. In this way, White women participated in the constantly negotiated and renegotiated power relations taking place there.

The events reported in *Foss v. Pelly* and *The Queen v. Corbett* allow for a glimpse into how nineteenth-century discourses on sexuality and the racialised 'Other' could be

used to redefine a new hegemonic order that helped lay the groundwork for both industrialisation and confederation. Evidence of the ways that British colonists scripted Victorian racialised class and gender discourses into discourses of Britishness in the Red River colony appear in the primary documents pertaining to *Foss v. Pelly* and *The Queen v. Corbett*. One example is a letter written by Scottish-born Letitia Hargrave, the wife of the Chief Factor of York Factory, to her mother in Edinburgh, Scotland. Drawing on information she received from a female friend who lived in the Red River colony at the time, Hargrave focused on Sarah Ballenden's difference by alluding to her alleged immorality. She wrote: 'Mrs. Christie has written ... Mrs. Ballenden's character would not bear trifling with and that she was at least very imprudent in flirting with Captain Foss'.⁴⁰ As a respectable member of the British elite, Letitia Hargrave was limited in the ways she could enter into a discussion of sexuality. Couched in the language of public moral interest, her account of Adam Thom's summation to the court included a number of critical racialised signifiers used by some White settlers to inform and justify Sarah Ballenden's exclusion from White spaces.

Thom who addressed the jury informing them that although Mrs. B. might not have as much starch in her face she had as much virtue in her heart as an *exotic* (meaning not half-breed) [*sic*] and that she was the choicest specimen of native modesty and grace.⁴¹

Thom's emphasis of Sarah Ballenden's virtue, and Letitia Hargrave's decision to include it in her letter, are important in understanding how colonists linked certain characteristics such as the body and temperament to nationality. Thom's description of Sarah Ballenden's character corresponds to Foucault's argument that the European bourgeois notion of morality provided the standard, upon which the European middle classes constructed visions of themselves and from which the 'Other' could be measured and judged.⁴² Adam Thom's words revealed the unstable nature of British claims to racial 'superiority' when he acknowledged that Countryborn women, rather than possessing pre-given traits such as insatiable sexuality or moral depravity, could and did emulate qualities that Victorian society encouraged and expected in British ladies.

Recorded in the Red River colony's newspaper, *The Nor'-Wester*, lawyers for the defence in *The Queen v. Corbett* also drew on racialised class and gender tropes, such as White female purity and morality, as a basis to stigmatise women of colour as 'lewd ... reckless ... and of a licentious disposition'.⁴³ Such stereotypes are apparent when the lawyer for the defence, Countryborn James Ross, addressed the court:

Gentlemen, this is no ordinary trial ... Will you assume the responsibility of ruining a fellow man upon the testimony of a lying girl, supported by a mother and a sister whose veracity is as questionable as Maria Thomas's virtue was easy?⁴⁴

This condemnation of Maria Thomas must be understood in the context of Victorian discourses on appropriate behaviour for women. Ross drew on these signifiers of respectable femininity to highlight Maria Thomas's 'Otherness'. That she allegedly wandered freely and was physically robust, in contrast to respectable middle-class White women who epitomised fragility and physical restraint, signified not only her

class difference but also her sexual deviance. Counsel for the defence argued that it would be impossible for:

A virgin of seventeen summers—with lively temperament and high flowing animal spirits—to have a man lie by her, uncover her nakedness, and do the husband's part with her without her knowledge—the thing is preposterous.⁴⁵

Instead of 'passively reclining on some couch', the defence argued that she went about the settlement 'pursuing her vocation of impure gossip and wretched scandal'.⁴⁶ Ross deduced that this sort of behaviour pointed to Maria Thomas's sexual depravity: 'Maria was only too happy to prostitute her services without reward'.⁴⁷

Addressing the all-male, but ethnically mixed jury, the defence also drew attention to Abigail Corbett's restrained behaviour and physical appearance to signify her Englishness.⁴⁸ Grewal states that Victorian conceptualisations of British womanhood used the face as an index of character.⁴⁹

I need not speak of Mrs. Corbett's character, or paint her noble, pure feelings. We see it in her very face, we note it in her conversation, in her manner, her every movement: she is a refined, honest, pure-hearted noble English woman.⁵⁰

Having established that Abigail Corbett was a pure and respectable helpmeet, the defence invoked similar imagery to describe her British female companions. For example, Mrs Stevenson was judged to be 'a most worthy person' and Mrs Taylor 'one of the most respectable women in the parish'.⁵¹ Within the purview of the domesticity assigned to them, these women performed their culturally scripted roles as comforters and purveyors of British standards of 'good taste and right feeling'.⁵²

What do these descriptions have in common? First, drawing on Victorian discourses of the body and temperament, British colonists used gendered symbols and notions of middle-class morality to make it appear 'natural' and 'inevitable' that Maria Thomas, Sarah Ballenden and Abigail Corbett would behave as they did. Second, in defining what was acceptable, namely, White asexual femininity, colonists also determined what had social value. Third, that James Ross defended Corbett is illuminating and cautions against theorising in racial terms alone. Colonialism intensified patriarchal relations, with women's bodies often becoming the sites for men on all sides of the colonial divide to attempt to assert their masculinity and power.

Sites of Surveillance

Restrained Respectability and Unregulated Sexuality

An analysis of British women's testimonies in the transcripts of *Foss v. Pelly* and *The Queen v. Corbett* requires attention to the restrictions on Victorian women's own speech and behaviour in public places. The HBC codified and modified English law to suit its needs in Rupert's Land. Similar to English jurisprudence, Victorian women who entered the English legal system as witnesses, plaintiffs, or defendants did so as dependants of their male kin. Women had to rely on gender-appropriate language to describe their position if they desired to retain their status as respectable women.⁵³

Conversely, Countryborn and Métis men could serve as recorders, lawyers and jurists as well as initiate legal proceedings. According to Blomley, law represented a system of belief guided by a series of cultural problematics that assumed the law to be 'an autonomous and objective entity separate from the intricacies of everyday life'.⁵⁴ However, law did not exist in a vacuum isolated from everyday life in the colony, but rather helped to perpetuate a patriarchal and Eurocentric legality that generated knowledge about 'others'. This knowledge excluded 'Other' cultural and political traditions and other forms of jurisprudence from both its proceedings and from its legal judgements.

The extent to which British women negotiated their prescribed identity and deployed rumour to participate in power relations in the settlement re-emerged in Letitia Hargrave's correspondence with her mother. 'Mrs. Christie told me confidentially that it was the general opinion in the Colony that the Captns attentions to Mrs. Ballantyne were of such a character as to entitle Mr. B. to a divorce.'⁵⁵ Letitia Hargrave described some of the ways that the colony's middle-class women controlled access to elite British spaces and shunned Sarah Ballenden's company:

Last May Mrs. Caldwell [and] Miss Anderson ... declined to hold intercourse with her [Sarah Ballenden], and Mrs. Pelly with drew from the Mess at which she & her husband had a seat as well as Foss & at which Mrs. B.[allenden] presided.⁵⁶

The allusions to sexuality found in *Foss v. Pelly* and *The Queen v. Corbett* correspond to what Foucault described as 'a dense transfer point for power relations'.⁵⁷ As a conduit that strategically bridged the public world of strangers and the private spaces of the home, British women used domesticity to acquire agency and to give themselves a collective voice.

In the testimony offered in *Foss v. Pelly*, White women shared information and helped to construct place and maintain segregation in the settlement. Countryborn Mrs Margaret Black deposed that Scottish Anne Pelly heard rumours to the effect that 'Mrs. Ballenden was often seen going to Captain Foss' quarters'.⁵⁸ Margaret Black stated, 'I have heard reports injurious to the character of Mrs. B. from others besides Mrs. Cockran, Mrs. Morris told me something she got from Mrs. Brown who had it from the G. Girl'.⁵⁹ Similar to cases discussed by Dubinsky and Marks in nineteenth-century Ontario, rumour became a strategy used by White middle-class women to solidify their identities, and to position certain Countryborn women as deviant and out of place. Rumour represented a form of collective community censure that attempted to move Sarah Ballenden to the margins of colonial society. For example, Margaret Black testified, 'I heard that Capt: Foss and Mrs. Ballenden were too intimate & that the last child Mrs. Ballenden had was Capt: Foss'.⁶⁰ She also deposed: 'I have heard Mrs. Logan state that Mrs. Ballenden was a woman that must always have a sweetheart as well as a husband'.⁶¹ The removal of Sarah Ballenden from the centres of White power relations in the colony was not merely symbolic. It also had a social and spatial reality. During the month of September 1850, the Ballenden family did indeed move out of the Red River settlement to Lower Fort Garry some eighteen kilometres distant. Thus, British women successfully managed to spatially separate themselves

from Sarah Ballenden, a signal warning to other Countryborn women who did not 'know their place'.

The Queen v. Corbett also provides examples of how British women used the home as a location where they could deploy rumour to access the larger public domain. Similar to evidence taken from *Foss v. Pelly*, British women used rumour as a strategy to deflect attention onto Maria Thomas's alleged sexual deviance as 'out of place' in respectable White society, to re-inscribe spatial differences between the British colonists and 'others', and to engage in what Foucault termed 'the affirmation of self'.⁶² Mrs John Forbister swore: 'She [Maria] was a bad girl, and it was a matter of general talk that she was so'.⁶³ Elizabeth Swain stated that once in conversation with a local man, Joseph Sayer, he said: 'That's the girl [Maria Thomas] for the men'. When asked why he said that he responded, 'he had lain with her and he could name several men who had done so'.⁶⁴ Scottish Matilda Atkinson for the defence also testified that she had witnessed Maria Thomas in a compromising position for a woman.

I left Headingley to come to my fathers. My stepson Geo. Atkinson and sister-in-law and brother Donald were with me ... we saw Corbett and his servant Maria Doggy [Maria Thomas] on the outer side of the road, witness was on the public road.⁶⁵

It is possible to draw a link between the work of Dubinsky and Marks on the regulation of female sexuality and mobility in nineteenth-century Ontario, and Matilda Atkinson's testimony where several competing spatialised codes of sexual conduct emerge. As a respectable White middle-class woman, Matilda Atkinson was careful to mention that she entered public space in a carriage and in the company of family, specifically male kin. Contrast this with her description of Maria Thomas's activities in public. Not only did Matilda Atkinson describe Maria Thomas as alone in a public space with a man to whom she was not related, she also implied that Maria Thomas's actions were questionable because, unlike Matilda Atkinson, who rode in a carriage on a public road, Maria Thomas walked unconstrained around the countryside with a married clergyman.

The absence of Abigail Corbett in the legal proceedings of *The Queen v. Corbett* is also interesting. She did not testify in court or publicly act to improve her situation or discredit her husband, which may have been a deliberate ploy by the defence to maintain her aura of virtuous British femininity. A closer examination of the evidence reveals Abigail Corbett as neither the passive nor the silent victim of history. The defence described Abigail Corbett as the dependant and 'the dear partner of his [Corbett's] bosom in continual tears'.⁶⁶ But by distancing herself from the public humiliation of her husband's circumstances and 'Othering' Countryborn Maria Thomas, Abigail Corbett participated in a broader set of power relations between British and Countryborn women by re-enforcing her own status as a proper White lady. Her attempts to preserve her social status as a clergyman's wife emerge in her ability to manipulate British discourses on gender, class, race and sexuality. Abigail Corbett, assisted by her community of British female contemporaries, activated codes of Victorian middle-class moral spatial behaviour to her advantage. For example, the night that the authorities came to arrest Reverend Corbett, some British women came to support Abigail Corbett.

[T]hose kind ladies [Mrs. Taylor, Mrs. Stevenson, Mrs. Gowler] had come to the parsonage to comfort and console his [Reverend Corbett] worthy partner; Mrs. Taylor is one of the most respectable women in the parish.⁶⁷

Analysis of the legal transcripts suggests that Abigail Corbett did not view her husband's sexual encounters with a fourteen-year-old as rape or sexual assault. Gatrell has argued that Victorian bourgeois women acquired their social status vicariously through their husbands.⁶⁸ Responding to perceived threats from Maria Thomas, British women negotiated a consensus amongst themselves and constructed their version of events. They testified that her inability to restrict her movement to appropriate activities and locations identified her as a sexually deviant and racialised 'Other,' inviting censure. 'Maria Thomas went-a visiting ... she was from home romping about the neighbourhood doubtlessly pursuing her vocation of impure gossip and wretched scandal'.⁶⁹ Thus Abigail Corbett activated a social group that supported her position to the point of perjury in a court of law, while Maria Thomas inhabited a space that made her vulnerable to accusations of immoral behaviour. Her inability to reproduce British standards of female respectability exposed her to frequent character assaults.

Calling

Policing White Spaces

English-born Ann Cockran's testimony during *Foss v. Pelly* demonstrates how, following Hansen's analysis, the household could represent a site of social engineering. Hansen wrote that White middle-class women used the home or their private rooms as a site to deploy community sanction, and to oversee the inscription of spatial differences through rounds of social visits, or what they referred to as 'calling'.⁷⁰ Calling provided these women with a privately based public space where they could police polite society in culturally sanctioned rituals of exclusion and social acceptance. Procida argued that domestic spaces permitted women to re-enforce their identities 'with that limited cadre of individuals who could be appropriately invited into the home'.⁷¹ Consequently, the domestic sphere evolved as an arena for political discussion and administrative action that ultimately helped shape the outside world, placing British women and the domestic domain at the heart of imperial and colonial power relations. Evidence of the importance of the home as the centre of social and political life is clear in the transcripts of *Foss v. Pelly* and *The Queen v. Corbett*.

Ann Cockran recounted one of her visits to the Ballenden home. She spoke about Sarah Ballenden's alleged inability to reproduce the correct British etiquette for receiving calls as indicative of her deviance and outsider status.⁷² Witnesses, such as English-born Ann Brown, testified that 'a wrong intimacy between Capt: Foss and Mrs. Ballenden existed ... when Mr. Ballenden was out Mrs. Ballenden and Capt: Foss were together'.⁷³ Mrs Cockran made very clear statements about the alleged impropriety of Mrs Ballenden's association with Captain Foss. She testified: 'I told my Eldest Daughter of the impropriety of conduct I had perceived and told her not to go to the fort'.⁷⁴ English-born Ann Brown provided similar testimony to support Anne Cockran's earlier

allegations. She deposed that Catherine Winegart told her that during Mrs Caldwell's visit to the Ballenden home, she also witnessed Sarah Ballenden's immorality in the front parlour.

The G. Girl [Catherine Winegart] told me that once Mrs. Caldwell went to see Mrs. Ballenden and when they came to the room, Mrs. Ballenden saw Capt: Foss and Mrs. Ballenden lying on the sofa.⁷⁵

Similarly, in *The Queen v. Corbett*, English-born Mrs Gowler testified that in her home she overheard Maria Thomas and Mrs Gowler's domestic servant, Betsey Beabe, discuss their sexual encounters with a variety of men from the settlement. 'I heard Maria and Betsy Beabe, my servant girl, converse about young men, with whom they had lain ... witness was in the next room with a board partition between us'.⁷⁶ Testimonies regarding Sarah Ballenden and Maria Thomas's alleged immoral behaviour drew on important signifiers of gender, class and race. These British women condemned both Countryborn women for their failure to act in a respectable and sexually and spatially restrained manner.

The form of Victorian morality in these depositions correlates to Dubinsky and Mark's conclusions that illustrate how place and sexually restrained behaviour re-enforced racialised class and gender identities. Yet women such as English-born Ann Cockran occupied a precarious position in Red River society. The Governor of Rupert's Land, Sir George Simpson, described her as a 'Dollymop who only shines when talking of elbow grease and the scouring of pots and pans'.⁷⁷ As a working-class woman, who entered the British middle classes through marriage and immigration to the colonies, her testimony against Sarah Ballenden may have reflected her desire to deflect public attention away from her own marginal class position and demonstrate her insider status to other British women in the settlement. This she achieved by publicly re-articulating her understanding of the importance of sexual restraint as an indicator of British class and racial difference. Inclusion in the dominant culture defused the threat of ostracism in geographically remote British outposts for socially vulnerable British women.

The evidence pertaining to *Foss v. Pelly* and *The Queen v. Corbett* implies that Sarah Ballenden and Maria Thomas experienced this form of ostracism in order to reinforce British women's monitoring function, and to solidify their unstable identities in respectable spaces. The privacy of the Victorian middle-class home, with its social mores, meant that only a few select individuals participated in social intercourse there. If bourgeois women agreed on a version of controversial events in camera, whether accurate or not, these conversations point to active female subjects who deployed Victorian morality and British discourses on sexuality to secure their social status, while relegating certain Countryborn women to an inferior social place.

Clothing

A Signifier of Difference

In testimonies submitted to *The Queen v. Corbett* British women frequently alluded to a new black merino dress Maria Thomas claimed Reverend Corbett gave her as a gift.

Merino wool is a high-quality Spanish lamb's wool, and in the Victorian Red River colony, it would have been an expensive emblem of bourgeois respectability. Research on dress as a form of communication differentiates between clothes as fashion and as a covering for the human body. An individual's attire indicates conformity or resistance to socially accepted norms. According to Dwyer, 'dress is a powerful and over determined marker of difference'.⁷⁸ White contends that when dress becomes a contested signifier among women 'the construction and contestation of their own identities often requires an engagement with the multiple meanings which are attached to dress'.⁷⁹ Clothing forms part of a discourse that conveys certain messages about the wearer. Nineteenth-century ideologues for the implementation of the ideology of the separate spheres such as Mrs Isabella Beeton wrote: 'a lady's dress should always be suited to her circumstances'.⁸⁰ In this way, the correct choice of clothing signified civility and a culturally legitimate form of nineteenth-century class representation. That clothing regulated 'even the most intimate spheres correlates to the reproduction of power relations'.⁸¹ Surveillance, through adherence to appropriate dress codes, 'also corresponds to another deployment of the female "gaze"'.⁸²

The fact that Maria Thomas owned an expensive item of clothing disturbed several British women who testified at the trial. The social and cultural map of *The Queen v. Corbett* revolved around at least two competing interpretations of why Maria Thomas owned such an expensive item of clothing. First, Maria Thomas's mother, Catherine Thomas, was a full-blood Cree. Reciprocity was important to the Cree since 'gift giving represented an important aspect of all personal, political, and economic partnerships'.⁸³ According to Cree custom, Maria and Catherine Thomas may have understood the black Merino dress to be nothing more than a gift. Second, White women used the expensive black Merino dress as a signifier of Maria Thomas's questionable character. English-born Anne Brown stated:

Maria Thomas spoke to me in my house about a black French Merino dress ... saw fine silk fringe with the dress ... Maria's character in the parish was that of a liar ... She was always blackguarding someone.⁸⁴

Mrs McCorrister testified: 'I know something of the black French Merino dress, Maria had it ... Maria was thought a lying girl in the parish'.⁸⁵ Catherine Forbister claimed: 'Maria spoke to me about a French Merino dress ... she was a bad girl and it was a matter of general talk that she was so'.⁸⁶ The defence suggested that as a poor Country-born young woman, Maria earned the price of such an item by 'prostituting herself in the settlement'.⁸⁷ Maria says that she received a French Merino dress from Mr Corbett in order not to tell what he had done.⁸⁸ Maria Thomas's testimony revealed that Corbett also understood how such a garment, worn by a Countryborn domestic servant, could be problematic. She stated: 'Mr. Corbett brought up the Merino dress and hid it in the hay stack'.⁸⁹ It is possible to speculate he did this to hide any evidence of his sexual relationship with Maria Thomas. For British women, the French Merino dress not only represented a symbolic transgression of White social and cultural space, it also subverted racialised class and gender roles. White middle-class women perceived Maria Thomas to have dressed 'above her station'. Most Countryborn women would

not have been in a position to own such an item of clothing. However, Countryborn women might have worn clothes that utilised First Nations styles of clothing combined with European tailoring.⁹⁰

Criticism of Sarah Ballenden's alleged transgression of codes of conduct between mistresses and their servants focused on clothing, providing British women with another site from which to project the female 'gaze' in order to highlight their difference from Sarah Ballenden. White middle-class women pointed to Sarah Ballenden's alleged tendency to use her servant's clothes to move incognito through public space at night to meet Foss in his private quarters. This they interpreted as a sign of her lack of respectability and her immoral spatial behaviour as an indication of her innate 'Otherness'. British Mrs Linklater deposed:

The G. Girl told me that Mrs. Ballenden was in the habit of going down to Capt. Foss' room disguised in her in the G. Girl's clothes and sometimes other ways. [sic]⁹¹

Mrs Brown testified: 'The G. Girl had told her a great deal about Capt: Foss and Mrs. Ballenden and about her [Sarah Ballenden] putting on her clothes'.⁹² Major Caldwell testified that Anne Pelly told him that in order for Sarah Ballenden to visit Christopher Foss she wore Catherine Winegart's green dress.⁹³

Dress provided British women with an interpretive authority and a platform from which to construct Maria Thomas's and Sarah Ballenden's behaviour as having transgressed racialised class and gender as well as moral boundaries. At the same time, British women's compliance with Victorian social and cultural mores placed them beyond reproach, and thereby strengthened their identities and validated their roles as the purveyors and moral guardians of British society in the Red River colony.

Conclusion

An interrogation of two well-documented Red River lawsuits involving Countryborn Maria Thomas and Sarah Ballenden facilitates an analysis of the ways in which British women deployed Victorian morality and discourses on sexuality to participate in colonial power relations, constitute respectable femininity, and stabilise and develop their own identity. Their ability to manipulate British patriarchal household power relations provides the basis for a critique of the ideology of the separate spheres. It challenges attempts to theorise Victorian spatial behaviours into discrete gender and class categories such as the male public and the female private spheres. Rather, what emerges from this interrogation of British women's location in Red River power relations is that places, and the behaviours in specific places, produced negotiated rather than fixed identities. British women's careful adherence to Victorian morality emerges as a defensive tactic that counteracts the idea that the ideology of the separate spheres limited the reach and scope of women's influence to the private domain. British women's implementation of the middle-class codes of appropriate spatial and sexual behaviour problematises the notion of a homogeneous female identity and the silent female 'Other'. It indicates the salience of difference among women, mediated through modalities such as social position, class, ethnicity and kinship. It is the indeterminacy

of colonial power relations that helped British women to articulate social roles in multiple locations in the Red River colony, and is crucial to understanding their often small but never-ending acts of agency and resistance.

Although British patriarchal social relations did not permit British women to join the fraternity of colonial administrators, the White matrons nevertheless learned how to activate it. British women deployed rumour and discourses of sexuality as an integral part of their defensive strategies. Rumour blurred the public and private divisions of space, and it represented an important aspect of British women's defensive strategies. It deflected public attention away from their attempts to misrepresent Sarah Ballenden and Maria Thomas, and focused it on the bodies and behaviours of women they categorised as 'Other'. This act of surveillance translated into female agency when British women negotiated artificial boundaries and transcended the restrictions of private places. Subjected themselves to routine and oppressive Victorian social mores, who better than British women to deploy an effective method to regulate and discredit Countryborn women, all the while remaining within their culturally sanctioned place as prescribed by Victorian morality?

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank the two anonymous referees for their insightful comments. Thanks also to Rolf Laber and the editorial staff at *Women's History Review*.

Notes

- [1] Hudson's Bay Company Archives (HBCA) D6/4, Frances Simpson's Journal, 5 May 1830. In 1830, Frances Ramsey Simpson was the eighteen-year-old English wife and first cousin of Sir George Simpson, the Governor of Rupert's Land.
- [2] Jennifer S. H. Brown (1980) *Strangers in Blood: fur trade company families in Indian country* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press); Sylvia Van Kirk (1980) *Many Tender Ties: women in fur trade society 1670–1870* (Winnipeg: Watson & Dwyer). The capitalisation of White signifies the continued need to theorise Whiteness as a racial category.
- [3] Donald Sprague (1988) *Canada and the Métis, 1869–1885* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press).
- [4] Gerard Ens (1996) *Homeland to Hinterland: the changing worlds of the Red River Métis in the nineteenth century* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press).
- [5] Ron Bourgeault (1989) Race, Class, and Gender: colonial domination of Indian Women, in Jesse Vorst *et al.* (Eds) *Race, Class, and Gender: bonds and barriers* (Winnipeg: Society for Socialist Studies), pp. 87–115.
- [6] Mary Louise Pratt (1992) *Imperial Eyes: travel writing and transculturation* (London: Routledge), p. 6.
- [7] Gerard Friesen (1984) *The Canadian Prairies. A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press); Marcel Giraud (1986) *The Métis in the Canadian West*. 2 vols. Translated by George Woodstock (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press).
- [8] Ann Laura Stoler (2002) *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: race and the intimate in colonial rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press), pp. 21–22; Michel Foucault (1980) *The History of Sexuality*, Volume One (New York: Pantheon), p. 94.
- [9] Jenny Sharpe (1993) *Allegories of Empire: the figure of women in the colonial text* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), pp. 92–96.

- [10] Provincial Archives of Manitoba (PAM) MG. 2. Records of the General Quarterly Court of Assiniboia 1835–1869. 16–18 July 1850 *Foss v. Pelly*. Book 1, pp. 183–221. Née McLeod, b. December 1818 in Rupert's Land, Sarah Ballenden was the daughter of Scotsman Alexander McLeod, an NWC fur trader, and his Countryborn wife, whose identity is unknown. Sarah married John Ballenden, an Orkadian, who worked as a clerk for the HBC. In 1849, the couple moved to the Red River colony where John assumed his role as Chief Factor of the settlement. 19–28 February 1860, *The Queen v. Corbett*, Book 2, pp. 245–272, Book 3, pp. 1–16. Maria Thomas was born in 1846, in Mapleton, Rupert's Land. Her parents were Englishman Simon Thomas and Catherine Thomas, a Cree. Maria became the mother of Anne Elizabeth, born in 1862, in Mapleton. Born *circa* 1823, in Minchinhampton, England, Griffith Owen Corbett immigrated to Rupert's Land with his wife in 1851. He was a missionary with the Colonial and Continental Church Society.
- [11] Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties*, p. 220.
- [12] Frits Pannekoek (1991) *A Snug Little Flock: the social origins of the Riel resistance of 1869–70* (Winnipeg: Watson & Dwyer), p. 126; Brian Gallagher (1988) A Re-examination of Race and Class in the Red River Colony, *Native Studies Review*, 4(1–2), p. 41.
- [13] Catherine Cavanaugh (1997) No Place for a Woman: engendering Western Canadian settlement, *Western Historical Quarterly*, 28, p. 494.
- [14] Pannekoek, *A Snug Little Flock*, pp. 143–168.
- [15] Erica Smith (1996) Gentlemen, This is No Ordinary Trial: sexual narratives in the trial of the Reverend Corbett, Red River, 1863, in Jennifer S. H. Brown & Elizabeth Vibert (Eds) *Reading Beyond Words* (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press), p. 366.
- [16] John Bumsted (1999) *Thomas Scott's Body: essays on early Manitoba history* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press), pp. 27–148; John Bumsted (2001) Scandal at Red River, *The Beaver*, Spring, pp. 24–38.
- [17] Joan Wallach Scott (1999) *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: New York University Press), p. 179.
- [18] Karen Dubinsky (1992) Improper Advances: rape and heterosexual conflict in Ontario, 1880–1929, in Jeff Weintraub & Krishan Kumar (Eds) *Public and Private in Thought and Practice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), p. 81.
- [19] Michel Foucault (1980) *Power/Knowledge: selected interviews and other writings* (New York: Pantheon), p. 193.
- [20] Foucault (1980) *The History of Sexuality*, Volume One, p. 95.
- [21] *Ibid.*, p. 140.
- [22] Catherine Hall (2002) *Civilizing Subjects: metropole and colony in the English imagination 1830–1867* (Chicago: Chicago University Press), p. 16.
- [23] Anne McClintock (1995) *Imperial Leather: race, gender and sexuality in the colonial context* (New York: Routledge), p. 20.
- [24] Dubinsky, *Improper Advances*. p. 81.
- [25] *Ibid.*
- [26] Lynne Marks (2000) Rattling, Tattling, and General Rumour: gossip, gender, and church regulation in Upper Canada, *Canadian Historical Review*, 81(3), pp. 380–402.
- [27] *Ibid.*
- [28] See note 10.
- [29] Née Clouston in Stromness, Orkney, Scotland, Anne was the daughter of an HBC agent on the island. Christopher Foss hailed from the present-day Republic of Ireland. In 1849, he arrived in the Red River colony as second-in-command to Major William Caldwell who was in charge of a regiment of the Chelsea Pensioners.
- [30] John Davidson was an English employee of the HBC. He worked as the 'mess steward' at Upper Fort Garry in the Red River settlement. Margaret Davidson was the English wife of John Davidson. She carried out household duties for the Ballenden family.
- [31] Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties*, pp. 152–173.

- [32] Doug Owrain, (1980) *The Promise of Eden: the Canadian expansionist-movement and the idea of the West, 1856–1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), pp. 59–78.
- [33] See note 10.
- [34] Smith, 'Gentlemen This is No Ordinary Trial', pp. 364–380.
- [35] Pannekoek, *A Snug Little Flock*, pp. 143–168.
- [36] Ann L. Stoler (1995) *Race, Education of Desire: Foucault's 'History of Sexuality' and the 'Order of Things'* (Durham: Duke University Press), p. 75.
- [37] Stoler, (2002) *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power*, p. 57.
- [38] Jennifer S. H. Brown (1976) Changing Views of Fur Trade Marriage and Domesticity: James Hargrave, his colleagues, and 'The Sex,' *Western Canadian Journal of Anthropology*, VI(3), pp. 92–105.
- [39] Church Missionary Society Archives (CMSA), A78, William Cockran to Secretary, 25 July 1833. English Reverend William Cockran was the HBC chaplain.
- [40] b. Edinburgh, Scotland in 1813, Letitia Hargrave married James Hargrave, the Scottish Chief Factor of York Factory, located on the shores of the Hudson Bay, Manitoba. Ann Christie, the Countryborn wife of Scotsman Alexander Christie and the mother of Margaret Black. Margaret McLeod (1969) *The Letters of Letitia Hargrave* (Toronto: The Champlain Society), p. 256.
- [41] McLeod, *The Letters of Letitia Hargrave*, p. 255. Born in Scotland in 1782, Adam Thom arrived in the Red River colony in 1839. He codified and modified English law for the HBC. Ann Christie was the Countryborn wife of the retired Governor of the Red River colony, Scottish Alexander Christie.
- [42] Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, Volume 1, p. 123.
- [43] *The Nor'-Wester*, 30 March 1863. Ross was born in 1835 in the Red River colony. He was the son of Scottish Chief Factor, Alexander Ross, and Sarah, the daughter of an Okanogan Chief. Ross established *The Nor'-Wester* which he used as a platform for his anti-Company stance and his pro-Crown colony sentiments.
- [44] *The Nor'-Wester*, 30 March 1863.
- [45] Ibid.
- [46] Ibid.
- [47] Ibid.
- [48] Born in England, Abigail Corbett accompanied her husband to the Red River colony in 1851.
- [49] Inderpal Grewal (1996) *Home and Harem: nation, gender, empire, and the cultures of travel* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), p. 27.
- [50] *The Nor'-Wester*, 30 March 1863.
- [51] Ibid., 13 April 1863. These British women lived in the Red River settlement.
- [52] Ibid.
- [53] Andrew J. King (1995) Constructing Gender: sexual slander in the nineteenth century, *Law and History Review*, 13(1), pp. 63–87.
- [54] Nicolas Blomley (1994) *Law, Space, and the Geographies of Power* (New York: The Guildford Press), p. 9.
- [55] McLeod, *The Letters of Letitia Hargrave*, p. 254. See note 40.
- [56] Ibid., p. 255. Mrs Caldwell, the English wife of William Caldwell, magistrate of Assiniboia. Miss Margaret Anderson, the unmarried sister of the Bishop of Assiniboia, was described as supercilious and strait-laced.
- [57] Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, Volume 1, p. 103.
- [58] *Foss v. Pelly*, p. 185. Born in the Red River Colony, Margaret Black was the Countryborn daughter of Scottish Chief Factor Alexander Christie and Countryborn Ann Christie. Margaret Christie was educated in England. On her return to the colony, she met and married Scotsman John Black, a Chief Trader in the HBC. See note 10.
- [59] Ibid. Ann Cockran was the English wife of the Presbyterian minister, William Cockran. No biographical information exists about Mrs Morris or Mrs Brown. The term G. Girl refers to Catherine Winegart, the Ballenden's German domestic servant.

- [60] *Foss v. Pelly*, p. 186. Sarah Logan, English wife of the English Chief Factor, Robert Logan. She came to the colony as a working-class companion-servant to Ms Mary Lowman, a former school mistress at the Red River Academy.
- [61] *Ibid*, p 185.
- [62] Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, Volume 1, p. 103.
- [63] *The Nor'-Wester*, 27 April 1863. Mrs Forbister, an English resident of Headingley.
- [64] *Ibid*. Elizabeth Swain was an English domestic servant and Joseph Sayer was a general labourer who lived in Headingley.
- [65] *The Nor'-Wester*, 17 March 1863. Scottish Matilda Atkinson was the sister of Donald Gunn.
- [66] *Ibid*, 30 March 1863.
- [67] *Ibid*, 13 April 1863. These were British women in the settlement.
- [68] Beverly Gattrell (1984) Colonial Wives: villains or victims, in Hillary Callan & Shirley Ardener (Eds) *The Incorporated Wife* (London: Croom Helm), p. 171.
- [69] *The Nor'-Wester*, 30 March 1863.
- [70] Karen V. Hansen (1997) Rediscovering the Social: visiting practices in antebellum New England and the limits of public/private dichotomy, in Jeff Weintraub & Krishan Kumar (Eds) *Public and Private Thought and Practice: perspectives on the grand dichotomy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), pp. 270–287. See Note 82.
- [71] Mary A. Procida, (2002) *Married to the Empire: gender, politics and imperialism in India, 1883–1847* (Manchester: Manchester University Press), p. 61.
- [72] See note 59.
- [73] *Foss v. Pelly*, p. 197.
- [74] *Ibid*. Ann Brown was the English wife of one of the Chelsea Pensioners.
- [75] *Foss v. Pelly*, p. 217. See note 59.
- [76] These were English women who lived in the settlement.
- [77] HBCA D.5/30 William MacTavish to George Simpson, 10 April 1831, p. 65.
- [78] Claire Dwyer (1999) Veiled Meanings: young Muslim women and the negotiation of differences, *Gender, Place and Culture* 6(1), p. 5.
- [79] Bruce M. White (1984) Give Us a Little Milk: the social and cultural meaning of gift giving in the Lake Superior fur trade, in Thomas C. Buckley (Ed.) *Rendezvous: selected papers of the Fourth North American Fur Trade Conference, 1981* (St Paul: University of Minnesota Press), p. 187.
- [80] Isabella Beeton (1859) *Mrs. Beeton's Book of Household Management* (London), p. 61.
- [81] Liz Bondi & Mona Domosh (1997) On The Contours of Public Spaces: A tale of three women, *Antipode* 30(3), p. 291.
- [82] Elizabeth Wilson (1995) The Invisible Flâneur, in Sophie Watson & Katherine Gibson (Eds) *Postmodern Cities and Spaces* (Oxford: Blackwell), p. 61.
- [83] *Ibid*.
- [84] *The Nor'-Wester*, 30 March 1863.
- [85] *Ibid.*, 27 April 1863. She was an Englishwoman who lived in the settlement.
- [86] *Ibid*. An English woman who lived in Headingley.
- [87] *Ibid*.
- [88] *Ibid.*, 17 March 1863.
- [89] *Ibid*.
- [90] Irene M. Spry (1985) The Métis and the Countryborn of Rupert's Land before 1870, in Jacqueline Peterson & Jennifer S. H. Brown (Eds) *Being and Becoming Métis in North America* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press), p. 108.
- [91] *The Queen v. Corbett*, p. 250. Countryborn wife of Magnus Linklater, HBC postmaster at Upper Fort Garry.
- [92] *Ibid*. See notes 10 and 59.
- [93] *Foss v. Pelly*, p. 193.
- [94] *Ibid*.



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