

love of creatures and the love of God is that we ought to love God above all things" (121).

The last of the women philosophers in the book, Catherine Trotter Cockburn, is perhaps better known as a playwright than as a writer on philosophy. Most of Cockburn's writing on philosophy came in the early years of the eighteenth century, but Broad justifies Cockburn's inclusion in the book because "in style and content she might be considered the last of the seventeenth-century women philosophers," for Cockburn opposes "Cartesian dualism and the Cartesian theory of substance" (141, 142). Like Damaris Masham, Cockburn felt that human beings should act as "members of the same body" (149). Hence women, and especially wives and mothers, should be educated for the sake of society.

All in all, *Women Philosophers of the Seventeenth Century* is pleasant to read, because it is lucidly written, and highly informative.

Jennifer L. Morgan. *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004. xi + 279 pp. + 16 illus. \$55.00. Review by ELISA OH, BOSTON UNIVERSITY.

In *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery*, Jennifer L. Morgan explores how early modern English travelers and slaveowners constructed a gendered ideology of inheritable, racialized slavery that underpinned slave-owning societies in the Americas. Morgan argues that this system of beliefs about race was based on crucial definitions of the African woman's body and its potential to perform both agricultural labor and reproductive labor. Her overarching goal is to draw necessary attention to the presence of enslaved women in the archival record of early colonial life, particularly in Barbados and Carolina. Morgan goes on to assert that the English colonial understanding of race in the New World was fundamentally rooted in the gendered issue of reproduction. Her wide range of source material from the early sixteenth to mid-eighteenth centuries includes travel narratives, probate records, wills, inventories, letters, runaway advertisements,

court cases, and traders' records of transportation and sale. In this book she traces the development of distorting and contradictory, but powerful English constructions of African femininity and the way that these ideologies came to justify and naturalize the commodification of non-white peoples. From the opposite perspective, she also attempts to reconstruct African women's experience of colonial slavery as it was shaped by their reproductive realities in a society that exploited them.

Morgan begins her chronological study of the evolving English ideologies of race in the travel narratives and images of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. She shows how European explorers encoded assumptions about "civility, nationhood, citizenship, and manliness"(13) in physical appearance during their early encounters with other races. Rather than focus on one travel writer, Morgan excerpts depictions of the indigenous African or Native American female body from writers such as Columbus, Vespucci, Raleigh, Hakluyt, Ligon, and others to show the development of European ideas about reproduction and race. Ideological contradictions accumulate in these attempts to understand racial difference through women's bodies. The female African body was described as "both desirable and repulsive, available and untouchable, productive and reproductive, beautiful and black"(16). Furthermore, its reproductive aspects were used to establish a basic racial differentiation between white and black: descriptions and images of indigenous women with pendulous breasts mark them as monstrous savages and represent them performing reproductive labor by breastfeeding over the shoulder. Similarly, many travel narratives claim that African women experienced no pain during childbirth and that it barely interrupted their labor in the fields. This apparently mechanical ease in childbearing distinguished them from Christian European women, who, as daughters of Eve, experienced pain and lengthy recoveries. Morgan also draws attention to terminology used by European writers to construct Africans as less than fully human. For example, "[t]he metaphor of domesticated livestock introduced a notion that became a recurrent theme concerning indigenous and enslaved women's twofold

value to the European project of expansion and extraction”(19). Defining the African woman’s body as sexualized, beast-like, and fertile served to demarcate boundaries of racial difference and to “naturaliz[e] the subjugation of Africans and their descendants in the Americas”(49).

According to Morgan, this ideology of inherited slavery based on a racial hierarchy culminated in its codification in law during the 1630s and 1640s. For instance, legislation in both the West Indies and Virginia defined the difference between white women’s temporary, *nontaxable* indentured labor and black women’s perpetual, *taxable* enslaved labor. “The 1662 Virginia act that defined all children born of the bodies of black women as slaves, even if the fathers were free and white, simply cemented things further”(71). Chapters 3 and 4 examine the assumptions white slaveowners made about reproduction when they wrote inventories and distributed their property in wills. Morgan finds that from the very earliest examples of colonial slaveholding, owners exploited African women’s reproductive capacities and speculated on the economic gain that was made possible through their future “increase.” White slaveowners selectively acknowledged and violated familial relationships among the enslaved: on one hand they commonly maintained balanced sex ratios on each plantation in order to foster reproductive partnering; on the other hand, the slaveholders disregarded these emotional and physical relationships when it was convenient or profitable. In general, an enslaved woman was sold or gifted with her children along with any future “increase” she might produce, tacitly disregarding paternity. “Despite being occasionally listed alongside adult men, enslaved women’s familial identity, when acknowledged, was almost universally linked to their children”(110). For the profit and enrichment of their descendants’ properties, slaveowners also routinely bequeathed an enslaved man and woman together, regardless of their emotional connection to each other, as a “seed” couple to produce new generations of workers and wealth (84–7). Thus she refutes the argument that early plantation life, with its small-scale ownership and

close living and working environments, bred a kind of egalitarianism between owner and slave.

In addition to assessing the white ideologies of race, Morgan also aims to recreate the experience of slavery, focusing on the women's perspective and the way their lives were shaped by their reproductive realities. Unfortunately, the archival clues that survive were created by white slavetraders and owners, and Morgan attempts to translate their perspectives and demographic records into a description of lived experience. In Chapter 2, she reconstructs the women's social roles, work, and rituals in the West African societies of their origin. Traders' records provide statistics of numbers bought and captured, sex ratios, and, to some extent, the locations and ethnic groups from which the women came. Though English buyers constantly requested men, women and children together outnumbered the men transported throughout the entire period (59). Furthermore, Morgan gathers data on buying, selling, and gifting patterns established over time by the slaveowners in the New World. Facts such as slaveowners' ability to gift an enslaved woman to one person and all her future offspring to another demonstrate how the white ideologies of race and reproduction concretely affected an enslaved woman's life. In Chapter 4, Morgan describes the birth of enslaved children in the Americas as the literal embodiment, both physical and cultural, of creolization. Through mechanisms such as permission to visit, slaveowners exploited these familial bonds as "tools of control"(142). Morgan also devotes a chapter to the ubiquitous, heavy fieldwork that always accompanied enslaved women's reproductive labor. These enslaved women never attained the mobility and degree of freedom from fieldwork that men could through skilled labor, and only a tiny percentage of the women worked as house servants, whereas the majority did the agricultural labor that was thought unfit for white women. The final chapter considers the strong ties of a community network, both in rural and urban areas, and "explores enslaved women's urge to contest enslavement both inside and outside their identities as mothers"(167). Mid-eighteenth century

documents provide examples of mothers running away with their children, and participating in and revealing revolt conspiracies.

Morgan's dependence on demographic evidence throughout this study foregrounds the problem of what can be known and recreated about the enslaved women's experience through the data left by the white slaveowners. While the modern historian has little access to the perspective of non-literate enslaved people in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Morgan still walks a fine line between legitimate and excessive extrapolation from data to subjective experience. Though she claims that motherhood is a culturally individualized experience, Morgan risks essentializing childbearing potential as *the* defining aspect of enslaved women's experience to the exclusion of other factors such as the size and location of the plantation, the crop cultivated, or how many generations separated individuals from their origins in Africa. Finally, there is the problem of representing the agency of an enslaved person, especially in terms of choosing to pursue or avoid pregnancy, which undoubtedly was imposed on enslaved women in many cases. Morgan, however, avoids the issue of paternity almost as assiduously as the slaveowners' wills did, and though she mentions women's "vulnerability" to both black and white men, her prose tends to credit the women with the ability to make reproductive choices. Undoubtedly, the realities of rape and the lack of reliable birth control also shaped the experience of reproduction for enslaved women. Nevertheless, Morgan's book will be of use to those who study the slave trade in the Americas from its beginning to the mid-eighteenth century and to those who are interested in tracing the evolution of gendered ideologies of race from sixteenth century travel writings through its reification and practice in New World slavery.

Robert Tarule. *The Artisan of Ipswich: Craftsmanship and Community in Colonial New England*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004. xi + 155 pp. \$42.00. Review by WILLIAM J. SCHEICK, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN.