



CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF LAW AND SOCIETY BERKELEY LAW

CSLS SPEAKER SERIES

Monday, October 8, 2018

HOLLY BREWER

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“Most agreeable to the monarchy under which we live’: Slavery, Power, and the Restoration”

It is a common historical contention that American slavery developed in each colony via the desires, wishes, and finally laws created mostly at the behest of local elites who responded to the demands of markets: in a nutshell, markets and (limited) democracy created slavery. This paper argues instead that slavery was “most agreeable,” in the words of South Carolina's Charter, not to democracy but to monarchy. It explores the crucial role the Stuart kings (Charles II & James II) played in promoting slavery across the empire between 1660 and 1688, and explains both why (crown revenue from customs on staple crops. a belief system that people should be born to a status) & how they did so. Stuart appointees & their policies across the empire -- policies enforced by powerful threats & rewards -- helped to incentivize slavery and make it legitimate, skewing choices of settlers. Force, threats, and promises helped to shape colonial slave codes during the 1660s and 1670s in Barbados, Jamaica, and Virginia. The force included troops on the ground and on the seas. The judicial punishments included imprisonment and forfeiture. The rewards included land, money, slaves, and power. At the same time, slavery was debated and challenged at many levels: by Jamaica's 1663 Assembly, by Africans and others who fought with Nathaniel Bacon in Virginia in 1676 and by many who led England's Glorious Revolution in 1688. While desires for wealth and power lured many colonists to cooperate, they were also part of complex moral debates that ran through each colony and the empire itself, in a hard-fought struggle over legitimacy. Local choices were sharply circumscribed by a powerful imperial state that promoted not just slavery, but hierarchy and “absolute lordship”-- that made such colonies, and such markets, anything but free.

PLACE Selznick Seminar Room, 2240 Piedmont Avenue
TIME **12:45 – 2:00pm.** Coffee and water provided. Bag lunches welcome.
INFO <https://www.law.berkeley.edu/centers/center-for-the-study-of-law-society/>
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