

modern trade and trading companies, and *Merchants* should be read by any scholars interested in the history of capitalism, globalization, and corporations.

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ANNA SURANYI. *Indentured Servitude: Unfree Labour and Citizenship in the British Colonies*. States, People, and the History of Social Change 4. Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2021. Pp. 288. \$37.95 (paper).  
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Although the title is coy about dates, Anna Suranyi's *Indentured Servitude: Unfree Labour and Citizenship in the British Colonies* is about the seventeenth century. Indicating this in the title would have been helpful, because indentured servitude continued in the 1800s and 1900s, when it came to be applied to people of color from British colonies such as China and India. Suranyi explores the early decades of indentured servitude, when it applied strictly to white English, Scottish, and Irish subjects. McGill-Queens is to be commended for publishing a book on early modern history, which is too often eclipsed by its more glamorous sister, modern history. The book is manageable in terms of length, affordable in its paperback form, and accessible in terms of its writing style. It makes for an engaging read.

A significant omission is a historiography section or an explicit effort to situate this study within the historiography in the field. Suranyi has read widely in the scholarship on early modern indentured servitude (as is evident in the endnotes), and she does articulate a compelling central argument about indentured servitude being predicated on rights that helped develop ideas of citizenship on both sides of the Atlantic. But it is not clear whether this is the book's original contribution to the field.

Indentured servants were unfree laborers bound by contract to serve, without pay, in the colonies for a duration of time ranging from four to seven years (longer in some cases). Some entered service voluntarily, some were coerced as punishment for vagrancy, criminal offenses, or political rebellion. At the end of their contract, servants could obtain their freedom and receive "freedom dues" (p. 7) in the form of land, tools, clothes, or commodities. Men, women, and children all became indentured servants, though men were the most desirable.

Suranyi is eager to correct the recent notion promoted by some scholars of Irish history that there was no significant difference between servitude and slavery. Like slaves, indentured servants were sold from the decks of ships. Slaves and servants often worked side by side under similar labor conditions. But there the similarity ended. When their contract was fulfilled, indentured servants would be set free and be given freedom dues. While in service, servants had a right to decent food and clothing, medical care, and recourse to the law if mistreated. While masters and mistresses were allowed to beat their servants, they were not allowed to whip them naked or cause permanent harm, kill, rape, or maim them. Slaves had no such protection. One of the most striking rights servants enjoyed was the right to appeal to court. It was understood servants had no money, so the court would remit their court fees and appoint an attorney for them. These court appointed attorneys took this work seriously and did a good job defending servants. Servants of both sexes brought cases to court, and there are many examples of servants winning cases.

Despite these rights, the life of a servant was quite hard. If the first half of the book explores how servants were citizens, the second half of the book bears witness to their suffering. Many of the stories Suranyi has collected here make for harrowing reading. This is especially the case

with servants who belonged to more vulnerable groups, like women and children, whose experiences are explored in chapters six and seven. Like men, women had the right to petition the court and even the right of some property. But unlike men, they were very vulnerable when it came to their sexual lives. Sexual assault was common, and women could do little to hold offenders accountable. Women, including pregnant mothers, could be whipped for fornication. Because pregnancy represented the loss of a woman's labor, women's indenture would be extended to compensate. In theory, women servants who wanted to get married could ask their master for permission, but permission was usually not granted. Women were expected to renounce their sexuality during their contract.

One of the most memorable sections in the book is the brief but powerful discussion of female convicts in chapter 7. The crime most common to women was theft. Convict women were defined as criminal in an unjust society but they were brave, strong, and extraordinary. Driven into a life of crime by poverty, they found a way to survive. They were jailed, executed, and transported as indentured servants. A number of them managed to evade punishment by "pleading the belly," a practice whereby if a woman was believed to be pregnant her sentence would be revoked. By claiming pregnancy, women used their gender to game the system. Some indentured women managed to return from transportation before their contracts ran out. The most noteworthy case of this kind was Elizabeth Longman, who was the leader of a criminal gang called "the brotherhood." Elizabeth's men bought out her indenture contract so she could return to England.

Children were another vulnerable group that suffered as indentured servants. Local governments often shipped poor children to the colonies to get rid of them. Children were easy targets for kidnapping, but their work had less value than that of adults. While kidnapping was illegal, the law was not strictly enforced. Ships' captains who had kidnapped children on board were not punished, and they were often able to extort payment from parents trying to rescue their child. Government transportation of indentured children ended in 1643, both because masters preferred adult servants and the practice was criticized for its cruelty. But individual recruiters could continue to force or manipulate children into servitude.

Those who want to learn about indentured servitude in the seventeenth century will find Suranyi's book useful. Her clear writing style together with the compelling personal stories that enliven her analysis make the book accessible for students and more experienced scholars alike. However, the difficulty of researching the historiography of indentured servitude and figuring out where Suranyi fits is a limitation potential readers should bear in mind.

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MICHAEL VAN DUSSEN, ed. *Richard Rolle: On Lamentations: A Critical Edition with Translation and Commentary*. Exeter Medieval Texts and Studies. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020. Pp. 215. \$130.00 (cloth).  
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Michael Van Dussen's *Richard Rolle: On Lamentations* is a welcome addition to the recent Exeter Medieval Texts and Studies series publications of several texts from medieval England, in Latin and Middle English. Together with recent editions (*Richard Rolle: Unprinted Latin Writings*, edited by Ralph Hanna, 2019) and translations (*Richard Rolle's "Melody of Love": A Study and Translation, with Manuscript and Musical Contexts*, trans. Andrew Albin, 2018), it contributes to an overhaul of scholars' perception of Richard Rolle's corpus by making another of his Latin texts available in a critical edition, with a facing English translation.