Women, Work, and Family in the Antebellum Mountain South

Wilma A. Dunaway breaks new ground to examine the race, class, and ethnic differences among antebellum Southern Appalachian women. Most women defied separate spheres of gender conventions to undertake agricultural and nonagricultural labors that were essential to family survival or community well-being. Unlike elite and middle-class females, Cherokee, black, and poor white women engaged in stigmatized labors and worked alongside males in cross-racial settings. To support their work portfolios, nonwhite and most poor white women constructed nonpatriarchal families that challenged cultural ideals of motherhood. Churches and courts inequitably regulated the sexual behaviors of these women and treated their households as aberrations that were not entitled to the legal privilege of family sanctity. Legal and religious officials sanctioned family breakups and the removal, indenturement, or enslavement of their children. Still, many women resisted patriarchal conventions through their work lives, family roles, and group activism.

For more than two decades, Wilma A. Dunaway worked in civil rights and public services organizations in the Appalachian region. At present, she is an associate professor in the School of Public and International Affairs at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Dunaway is a specialist in international slavery studies, Native American studies, Appalachian studies, and world-system analysis. Her dissertation about the incorporation of Southern Appalachia into the capitalist world economy was awarded a Wilson Fellowship and the Distinguished Dissertation Award from the American Sociological Association. She has won several awards for her previous three works on Appalachia and slavery, including two Weatherford Awards. Her interdisciplinary work has appeared in numerous history and social science journals.
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Dedicated to

Professor Donald Armour Clelland
My Beloved Soulmate
who constantly reminds me that there is still
so much to interrogate, to discover, and to remember
that many would prefer to dismiss, to conceal, and to forget
and to

Betty Dunaway Farmer
My Best Friend and Loving Sister
whose hard work, resilience, and commitment
to our extended family echo the persistence
of the women I describe in this book
The companion Web site for this book is located at
http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/faculty_archives/appalachian_women/index.htm
Contents

List of Maps, Tables, and Figures page viii
Acknowledgments xi
Archive Locator Codes xiii

Introduction 1

PART I  RACIAL, ETHNIC, AND CLASS DISJUNCTURES AMONG APPALACHIAN WOMEN 15
1 No Gendered Sisterhood: Ethnic and Religious Conflict among Euroamerican Women 17
2 Not a Shared Patriarchal Space: Imperialism, Racism, and the Cultural Persistence of Indigenous Appalachian Women 51
3 Not a Shared Sisterhood of Subordination: Racism, Slavery, and Resistance by Black Appalachian Females 78
4 Not Even Sisters among Their Own Kind: The Centrality of Class Divisions among Appalachian Women 100

PART II  STRUCTURAL AND SOCIAL CONTRADICTIONS BETWEEN WOMEN’S PRODUCTIVE AND REPRODUCTIVE LABORS 129
5 The Myth of Male Farming and Women’s Agricultural Labor 131
6 The Myth of Separate Spheres and Women’s Nonagricultural Labor 159
7 Family as Privilege: Public Regulation of Nonpatriarchal Households 196
8 Motherhood as Privilege: Patriarchal Interventions into Women’s Reproductive Labors 229

Bibliography 265

Index 295
Maps, Tables, and Figures

Maps

1. Where Is Southern Appalachia?  
2. Presbyterianism in Southern Appalachia  
3. German Sects in Southern Appalachia  
4. Anglican Heritage in Southern Appalachia  
5. Appalachian Religious Minorities That Were Persecuted after 1840  
6. Baptists and Methodists in Southern Appalachia, 1850  
7. Rivalry for the Appalachians during the Colonial Period  
8. The Southern Appalachian Settler Frontier in 1790  
9. The Southern Appalachian Settler Frontier in 1820  
10. The Gender Imbalance among Adult Free Black Appalachians, 1860

Tables

1. Race of Southern Appalachians, 1790–1860  
2. Baptist and Methodist Church Members Tried by Disciplining Committees, 1800–1850  
3. Wealth and Class Divisions among White Southern Appalachian Households, 1860  
4. Occupations of Appalachian Women, 1860  
5. Farm Women’s Outputs as a Percentage of Household Income, 1860  
6. Nineteenth-Century Agricultural Labors of Southern Appalachian Women
Maps, Tables, and Figures

7. Women's Household Outputs Compared to Manufacturing, 1840 189
8. Nineteenth-Century Nonagricultural Labors of Southern Appalachian Women 193
9. Structure of Enslaved and Free Black Appalachian Families 223
10. Nineteenth-Century Household Labors of Southern Appalachian Women: The Overlap of Productive and Reproductive Labors 227

Figures

1. Camp meetings were a threat to traditional denominations. 27
2. Visible religious rituals called public attention to religious minorities. 38
3. Public female religious roles excited critique from more traditional clergy. 47
4. Females were vulnerable to slave raids and war parties because they worked in fields distant from villages. 54
5. As trade dependency deepened, the labor time of Cherokee women was redirected to processing of deer skins for export. 56
6. A 1797 Cherokee village looked very much like houses of poor whites in the area. 67
7. Slaves participated illegally in nighttime religious services. 92
8. The export of black laborers and permanent disruption of slave families were the most extreme acts of racism in which Appalachians engaged. 97
9. Sharp class cleavages among women are made evident through this trade transaction. 116
10. A northern journalist depicted three class distinctions among western North Carolina females. 125
11. Women's maple sugar was an important economic resource. 154
12. In 1840, spinning wheels were owned by a higher percentage of Appalachian households than was typical of the rest of the country. 168
13. Household-based textiles production was widespread among nineteenth-century poor white, Cherokee, and African-American women. 171
14. This Greenbrier County, West Virginia, milliner marketed her hats to elite and middle-class women who visited the prestigious mineral spa at White Sulphur Springs. 173
15. Poor white and nonwhite females worked at many forms of nonagricultural labor that elite and middle-class commentators considered to be “men’s work.” 179
16. About one-fifth of all Appalachian slaves were employed in nonagricultural occupations that separated them from their families. 180

17. This free black woman operated a small inn on the Tennessee River. 182

18. Elite and middle-class whites interpreted as evidence of “degraded racial genes” the similar living conditions of Cherokees, slaves, and poor whites. 198

19. This Reconstruction sketch of an ethnically mixed family demonstrates the sexual exploitation of enslaved women by white males. 219

20. Through several forced labor migration strategies, Appalachian masters structured the absence of adult males from slave households. 222

21. To produce surplus laborers for export to the Lower South, Appalachian slaveholders engaged in reproductive exploitation in several forms. 240

22. By exhibiting public behaviors that demonstrated the poverty of his family, this young white peddler risked removal from his mother and indenturement to long-term service. 251

23. Free black women headed households from which children were frequently removed by courts and indentured to long-term service. 253

24. A majority of enslaved Appalachian females worked as caregivers to white children at some point in their lives. 258

25. As a result of attenuated breastfeeding, malnutrition, and inadequate child care, one-half of all Appalachian slave children died before age 10. 259

26. Until they were old enough for fieldwork, enslaved youngsters were put to work at all kinds of unskilled tasks on small plantations. 262
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Archive Locator Codes

Following each unpublished manuscript in the notes and parenthetical citations, one of the following locator codes has been added to indentify the archive in which it is located.

ABH American Baptist Historical Society
ADA Alabama Department of Archives and History
ALC Alice Lloyd College Library
ASU Appalachian State University
DU Duke University Library
EHU Emory and Henry University Library
FHC Family History Center, Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints
FUA Fisk University Library
GHC Georgia Historical Commission
GSA Georgia State Archives
HPL Handley Public Library
HUL Harvard University Library
IAT Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities, University of Virginia
IHA Indian Heritage Association
KDLA Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives
LJC Lees Junior College Library
LOC Library of Congress
MA Moravian Archives
MSA Maryland State Archives
NA National Archives
NCDAH North Carolina Department of Archives and History
NLC Newberry Library
TROY Troy State University
TSL Tennessee State Library and Archives
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