Reading Log #4

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History 1120-01

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1. Both articles had notable facts on the women in New France. Leduc demonstrated her personal views and connection on the subject which brought an interesting perspective. Leduc is a war bride writing almost three centuries later about topics she can personally relate too, which makes the letter she had written “A Fille Du Roi’s Passage” very interesting. The Nagging wife had a lot of key points such as the argument to whether the women in the fur trade industry were a “push” or “pull” factor for men. Noel compared and contrasted the two perspectives but noted that women were a principal factor to the fluidity of the fur trade which made them hold a great importance to the economy in New France.
2. Filles du Roi were French women who accepted compensation in order to go to New France and marry a colonist. Leduc made some significant points on the role of Women in New France. Leduc put great emphasis on the fortitude the women had to leave their current life to travel overseas and marry a man whom they have never met. Furthermore, to endure the travel overseas with the brutal weather conditions. Many women died at sea, which made women reluctant to take the leap of faith and join the new colony of New France. Leduc illustrates how not only the journey itself was difficult, but also finding a compatible companion by saying, “And like your companions of the day, you must have expected love might come only after marriage[[1]](#footnote-1)”. Noel’s article has a different focus opposed to Leduc’s “A Fille du Roi’s Passage”. Noel writes in a more formal way discussing the roles and responsibilities of women in the colony. As an underdeveloped colony, New France had to have an equal balance of responsibility. They did not have to do all the manual labor, but women had to fulfill the responsibilities rendered upon them. Noel illustrates this by saying “Theorization of men as breadwinners and women as homemakers do not fit preindustrial regions[[2]](#footnote-2)”. This shows that as an underdeveloped colony, women in New France had to do more than they would have had to in a more developed country.
3. Women had to make the ultimate sacrifice in order for New France to survive as a colony. Thus, the women had a more important role than they would in Europe. Women became more independent upon arrival in New France, which also made a great difference in social norms. Which raises the question, did feel because of this new independence that they could fen for themselves without the reliance of a man? Did they still feel the need to marry the colonist with the promotion of their economic roles? Did the men feel a depletion of their roles? All questions are worthy of attention, which makes the subject more interesting and also makes the reader wonder whether there had been conflict between the two genders.

1. Adrienne Leduc, “A Filles du Roi’s Passage” Beaver, vol 81, (2001) pg. 20 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Jan Noel, “Nagging Wife, Revisited” French Colonial History, vol 7 (2006) pg. 45-60 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)