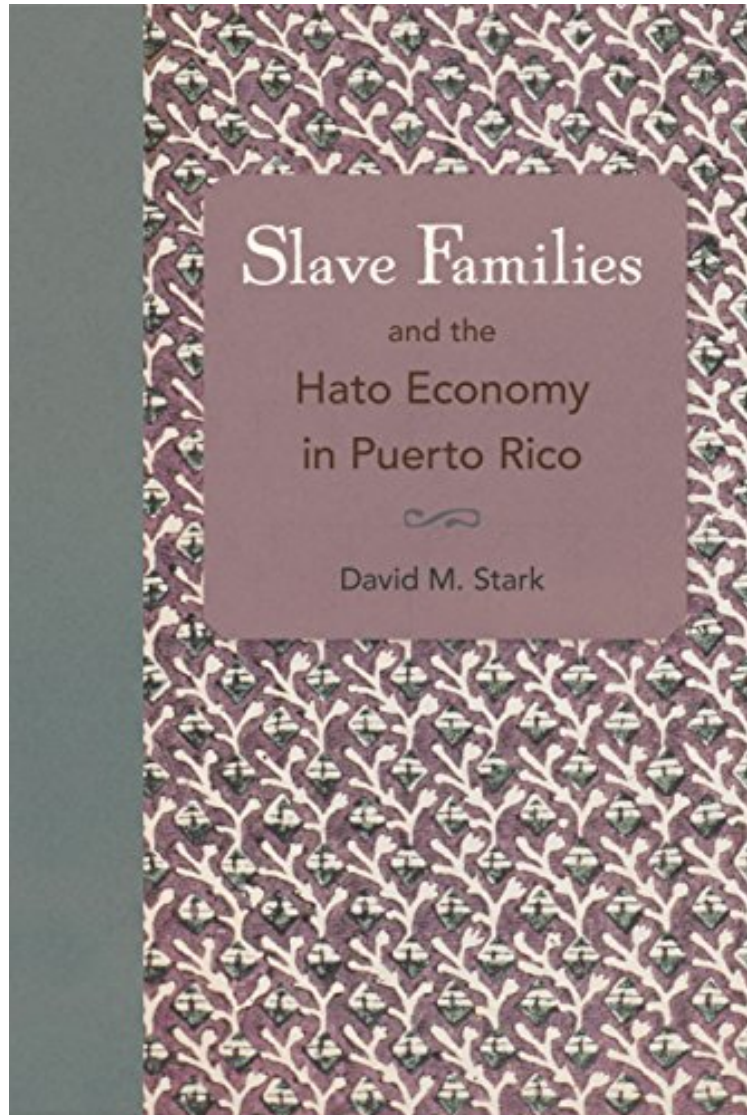


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# Slave Families and the Hato Economy in Puerto Rico

*David M. Stark*

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**David M. Stark : Slave Families and the Hato Economy in Puerto Rico** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Slave Families and the Hato Economy in Puerto Rico:

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in the history of ...By Martin NievesI highly recommend this book to anyone interested in the history of slavery in Puerto Rico or anyone who has slave ancestors and has had questions on their family life. The book incorporates history, parish records and detailed statistical analysis of those vital records to make very sound conclusions about slave family life in the Hatos of Puerto Rico.Most Puerto Rico history books I have read jump from early colonial period to about 1815.

This book focuses primarily on that overlooked period of 1660-1815. Hope all readers enjoy the book as much as I did.

Deftly uses the available parish registers to document the stages of the coming of African men and women to Puerto Rico in the eighteenth century and reveals patterns of family formation and bonds of solidarity among the African slaves and with the rest of society. Fernando Pico, author of *Puerto Rico Remembered* An exceptionally well researched, highly original, cogently argued and engagingly written work. Franklin W. Knight, coeditor of *Contemporary Caribbean Cultures and Societies in a Global Context* A welcome contribution to the history of eighteenth-century Puerto Rico and an important model for anyone using sacramental records to study slave life in colonial Latin America. David Wheat, Michigan State University Scholarship on slavery in the Caribbean frequently emphasizes sugar and tobacco production, but this unique work illustrates the importance of the regions hato economy a combination of livestock ranching, foodstuff cultivation, and timber harvesting on the living patterns among slave communities. David Stark makes use of extensive Catholic parish records to provide a comprehensive examination of slavery in Puerto Rico and across the Spanish Caribbean. He reconstructs slave families to examine incidences of marriage, as well as birth and death rates. The result are never-before-analyzed details on how many enslaved Africans came to Puerto Rico, where they came from, and how their populations grew through natural increase. Stark convincingly argues that when animal husbandry drove much of the islands economy, slavery was less harsh than in better-known plantation regimes geared toward crop cultivation. Slaves in the hato economy experienced more favorable conditions for family formation, relatively relaxed work regimes, higher fertility rates, and lower mortality rates.

"A welcome addition to the scholarship on slavery in the Americas, deepening our knowledge of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Puerto Rico and the Western Caribbean."--*American Historical Choice* "Stark use[s] new archival sources to enlarge understanding of the range of labor, family, and production systems in the colonial Caribbean."--*Choice* "Breaks new ground. . . . Compel[s] a revision of prevailing wisdom about slavery in the Caribbean. . . . A major contribution to the study of slave demography, slave families, and comparative slavery generally."--*Journal of Interdisciplinary History* "Focuses on the extent to which enslaved men and women married and established families in accordance with the Catholic Church prior to the reemergence of labor-intensive, commercial agriculture."--*The Americas* About the Author David M. Stark is professor of history at Grand Valley State University.