

WOMANISM, WORK AND WEALTH: (RE)FRAMING THE BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION CONTRIBUTIONS OF MARIE THÉRÈSE  
“COINCOIN” MÉTOYER AND HENRIETTE DELILLE

A DISSERTATION  
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BY

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## DEDICATION

To the Spirit-filled faithful who boldly lead in the face of adversity.

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## ABSTRACT

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WOMANISM, WORK, AND WEALTH:(RE)FRAMING THE BUSINESS  
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*Womanism, Work, and Wealth: (Re)Framing the Business Administration*

*Contributions of Marie Thérèse “Coincoin” Métoyer and Henriette Delille* analyzes the business administration contributions of Métoyer and Delille through a womanist lens. Métoyer and Delille were free during a time in the history of the Americas when women of African descent were generally identified as enslaved laborers. As women-of-color business professionals, their ability to control their own labor and identities (as free women of African descent) offers an alternative perspective on women of color’s experience in leadership and capitalism in the Americas.

In this dissertation, I put Métoyer and Delille’s business contributions into conversation with Layli Maparyan’s strand of womanist theory to demonstrate the ways a womanist approach to business administration can enrich the practices of contemporary leaders. In so doing, I underscore the importance of Métoyer and Delille as active and vital business administration contributors in the Americas and offer lessons for both Business Administration and Women’s and Gender Studies scholars to consider.

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## CHAPTER I

### CREATING ROOM FOR (WO)MANEUVER:

#### ANALYZING THE BUSINESS EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN OF COLORS

From the dawn of white patriarchal capitalism<sup>1</sup> in the Americas to today's fast-paced and innovative marketplace, women have played significant roles in the world of business. Names such as Florence Nightingale (Foundress of the Nursing Profession), Elizabeth Cady Stanton (Quaker Minister/Seneca Falls Convention), Clara Barton (American Red Cross), and Margaret Sanger (Planned Parenthood) are embedded in the annals of Women and Gender Studies business history. So too, as they should be, are the names of Ruth Handler (Mattel, Inc./Barbie), Martha Stewart (Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia), and Susan Wojcicki (Google/YouTube). As successful contemporary women in business, their achievements will also live on in the hallowed halls of global wealth building and Women's and Gender Studies business history. While these women who are racially identified as "white" are lauded for their contributions to business and culture, the influences of women of colors have been relatively ignored by both Women's

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<sup>1</sup> In this study, I am defining white patriarchal capitalism as the oppressive interlocking ideological system of entrepreneurship, leadership, and business administration practices that produce commercial gain and economic value by any means for the profit of the "most privileged" members of society—heterosexual, able-bodied, white men. The United States was founded upon and still adheres to an ideology of white patriarchal capitalism. This ideology permeates how we see ourselves, our neighbors, our country, and the world. For more on white patriarchal capitalism see Harry M. Benshoff and Sean Griffin's *America on Film. Representing Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality at the Movies*, 2009; Boots Riley's "How Capitalism Needed Racism to Operate." *YouTube*, 29 February 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JmyWvjszBOW>.

and Gender Studies and history of capitalism scholars (Kein xiii).<sup>2</sup> Both the ideology and hegemonic structures of oppression that live inside white patriarchal capitalism naturalize ideas around who deserves social and economic privilege, including scholarly attention, at the expense of those who have historically been excluded. In *Encyclopedia of African American Business History*, Juliet E. K. Walker notes that “black business history has remained peripheral in the scholarly study of the African American experience” (xiii).

The lack of attention towards women of colors contributions in business history is not limited to just the realms of business administration; the field of women’s studies has also neglected to address this crucial element of female enterprise. The last decade has seen the emergence of many peer-reviewed publications/journals on women’s history (for example, *Journal of Women’s History*, *Women’s History Network*), women’s health (for example, *National Women’s Health Network Activist Newsletter*, *Journal of Women’s Health*, *Women’s Health Issues*, *Women’s Health*) and women’s empowerment (for example, *International Journal on Women Empowerment*). Still, considering the growing interest in Women’s and Gender Studies, research devoted to women of colors has not reached the level of research dedicated to “white” racialized women. Even more importantly, the interplay between women of colors and womanist-infused business administration principles remains underexplored, especially amidst the political and cultural birth of white patriarchal capitalism and “Black” enslaved suffering.<sup>3</sup> As Darlene

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<sup>2</sup> I use scare quotes for “white” to emphasize the inherent racism in racial categories. I use the term women of colors to emphasize the diversity of those who identify with the group today. I use the term free women of color when discussing women who were legally free before Abraham Lincoln signed the “Emancipation Proclamation” on January 1, 1863.

<sup>3</sup> According to *Webster’s II New Riverside Dictionary*, the word *subjugate* is borrowed from Latin *subjugare*, literally “to bring under the yoke.” In accordance with an ancient Latin custom, survivors of a

Clark Hine asserts in *Black Women in American History*, “[M]uch remains to be done.”

The physical, psychological, and economic survival strategies employed by women of colors to confront intersecting dimensions of oppression are visible yet overlooked. These principles for resisting white patriarchal capitalism denote a specific womanist-infused vehicle for understanding how race and gender operates within a business context.

Similarly, much of the contemporary feminist scholarship and research strives to bring forth what has been ignored, hidden, and erased. Patricia Hill Collins makes a similar assertion about this epistemological standpoint in *Black Feminist Thought*, when she asserts, “The strategies employed by many African American women within labor organizations reinforces this theme” (219). In simple terms, the business achievements of women of colors remain underexplored in the scholarly study of the women of colors experience in the Americas. Therefore, this dissertation addresses that breach.

Notably absent from feminist business history are analyses of the contributions of women-of-colors leaders and entrepreneurs. Madame Marie Thérèse “Coincoin” Métoyer (August 22, 1742-c.1816) was a remarkable tobacco planter, pharmaceutical manufacturer, hunter/trapper, and rancher who lived in the rural colonial outpost of Natchitoches, Louisiana.<sup>4</sup> (See Table 1 for a complete list of Madame Métoyer’s business transactions covered in this dissertation.) Mother Henriette Delille (c.1812-November 16,

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defeated army were forced to pass under a symbolic yoke made of two upright spears, with a third used as a crossbar. The Romans regarded subjugation as the worst possible humiliation. I use this word to further emphasize the socially constructed economic policies and systems between 1650 and 1860 that forcefully transported 10-15 million enslaved people from western Africa to the Americas. These economic policies and systems still impact the lives of people of African descent today.

<sup>4</sup> Throughout this dissertation I intentionally refer to Marie Thérèse “Coincoin” as Madame with the surname Métoyer as an act of respect. I am quite aware that the written records as well as scholars refer to her as “Coincoin” Marie Thérèse, *libre négresse* or *mulâtre libre* without a surname.

1862) founded the religious order the Sisters of the Holy Family in the urban antebellum city of New Orleans, Louisiana. As a foundress, Mother Delille established a hospital, nursing home, orphanage/asylum, school, and an array of social service ministries to support people regardless of race or social (free or enslaved) status.<sup>5</sup> (See Table 2 for a complete list of Mother Delille's business transactions covered in this dissertation.)

Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's business contributions provide a stark alternative to white patriarchal capitalism, one that I describe in the following pages as infused with womanist principles. In so doing, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille offer new perspectives on what it means to be women of colors and leaders/business professionals.<sup>6</sup> This invisibility/exclusion of women of colors like Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille from the business history of the Americas distorts the knowledge base.

Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's business contributions and the lessons their life experiences convey are big stories worth telling. Their stories matter now more than ever because the nature through which women of colors work and build wealth continues to change in ways we have yet to fully grasp or respond. As we tell their stories, we call out the normative whiteness of business administrative history in the Americas, and in the process, envision another (more inclusively respectful) way of doing business. This inclusionary vision points us towards what a womanist-infused business

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<sup>5</sup> Throughout this dissertation, I intentionally refer to Henriette Delille as Mother Delille as an act of respect. The Sisters of the Holy Family continue to provide nursing care, operate schools, and provide social service ministries throughout the world.

<sup>6</sup> This dissertation relies heavily upon the works of scholars Gary B. Mills, Elizabeth Shown Mills, Sister Mary Bernard Deggs, and Father Cyprian Davis. Their scholarly work provides a context for Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's lives. However, none of their works focus on the business administration contributions of Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille.

administration could look like when the chaos of white patriarchal capitalism collapses. In telling these women's stories, we begin to acknowledge the rapacity characterized by globalization and changing power dynamics in the Americas, including our own racist, sexist, ableist, and elitist tendencies as business professionals.

Considering the ways that white patriarchal capitalism shapes our most fundamental understandings of who we are, what we purchase, how we respond to our environment, and who can contribute to the field of business, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's business activities deserve to be brought to the scholarly front. Despite the oppressive history that obscures their names, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille established innovative business practices, crafted profitable intergenerational investment schemes, and organized community improvement strategies imbued with womanist principles. In the next chapter, I provide a more in-depth biographical sketch of Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's lives and legacies.

Although we are not living in a post-white patriarchal capitalism era, this dissertation demonstrates the potential impact of womanist-based speculative theorizing on the discipline of business administration. In so doing, my goal is to draw attention to Audre Lorde's admonition (what I see as her womanist cry) that "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house" (112). By utilizing a womanist framework, I offer a colonial and antebellum blueprint for coping with a hyper-changing marketplace and growing economic risks from the perspective of two *femme de couleur libre*. This is important because women of colors continue to work, build wealth, and engage in business while bearing the brunt of deepening inequality. So with that in mind, I offer

what a womanist administration theory might look like for contemporary business professionals who are navigating seismic changes in the work/marketplace. Throughout this dissertation, I refer to these business professionals as *intrepreneurs* and not managers or entrepreneurs. As explained below, I borrow the word “intrepeneur” from Janice Bryant Howroyd. *Intrepreneurs* are business professionals who bring distinct values which are informed by their life experiences, to the work/marketplace.

Conventionally, an administrator is defined as a type of manager and an entrepreneur is defined as a manager who assumes the risk(s) of bringing a “new” business idea/invention to the marketplace. Under these limited definitions, only managers who create and launch a new product or service into the marketplace are considered entrepreneurs and only those who manage the functionality of said product or service are considered administrators. These limited definitions consider neither the purposes and risks associated with building a business/industry nor the human (intellectual property, Divine inspiration, human resource hours) and nonhuman (materials of the Earth, technology, financing) resources needed to launch a “new” business idea/invention. As Howroyd, the founder of the largest privately owned workforce solutions company, notes, entrepreneur should be defined much more broadly; anyone can be an entrepreneur even if they are classified as an employee, a term she calls an *intrepeneur*. For Bryant Howroyd, if you bring revenue and/or value, you are an *intrepeneur* (*Acting Up* 37). As I consider the past, present, and future contributions of women of colors to the global labor force, I agree with Bryant Howroyd’s definition. I use Bryant Howroyd’s definition of *intrepeneur* throughout this dissertation because I

believe her definition more closely aligns with Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's business contributions and provides a definition for contemporary business leaders to see themselves. Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille were *intrepreneurs* because they did not create any "new" business products/services. Instead, they understood their purpose on this planet, took risks, and strategically engaged resources to generate revenue and increase value and in so doing empowered communities.

Using high-impact ideas and actions, *intrepreneurs* understand their own inherent value and see the value in people, places, thoughts, and things. *Intrepreneurs* see the threads of interconnection between earning and spending money, building viable businesses, and creating security for their families and for the communities to which they belong. They look beyond the horizon of possibilities to deepen their connection(s) to the past, contribute to the present, and share a sense of responsibility to something bigger than themselves: raising up the next generation, accomplishing a business goal, building stronger communities, thriving instead of just surviving against the odds, or creating a more just world by helping to right past wrongs. As a woman of colors and a scholar of the history of capitalism, I have had opportunities to interact with *intrepreneurs* throughout the world. I have seen *intrepreneurs* from behind the scenes, upfront, and everywhere in between, and this dissertation contributes to advancing the conversation around women of colors *intrepreneurs*.

### **The Various Strands of Womanist Theories**

As an MBA student at a minority-serving institution, even my own business school experience did not include any conversations around the balance of power in the



workplace or, although women make up 50.04% of the United States workforce and 40% of the global workforce (Law 1), provide an alternative to white patriarchal capitalism. Nor do I recall learning about any founders of business administrative theories who were not “white” males or any role in the business discipline of administration outside of white patriarchal capitalism. Considering the contributions of women’s labor and the imprint of white patriarchal capitalism on my life and the lives of my ancestors, not to mention the impact on the planet,<sup>7</sup> these omissions made for a very limited business school education. It was not until I started my master’s degree in Women’s Studies at the same minority-serving institution that I was introduced to women-of-colors as entrepreneurs, leaders, and theorists. Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille were among the women-of-colors entrepreneurs and leaders I studied. Moreover, their business contributions reflect principles that align with womanism and womanist theory.

Womanism and womanist theory takes a variety of forms and can be considered to have three birth mothers: Alice Walker, Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi, and Clenora Hudson-Weems. Social theorist, activist, and novelist Alice Walker first coined the term “womanist” in her 1979 short story “Coming Apart.” Walker used the term again in 1981 in *Gifts of Power: The Writings of Rebecca Jackson* to describe Jackson, a Shaker preacher of African descent, as a “whole,” “wholly,” or “holy” woman. Finally, in 1983, in *In Search of Our Mothers’ Gardens: Womanist Prose*, Walker provides her most comprehensive definition. She writes that the term “womanist” comes from the Southern

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<sup>7</sup> For more information on white patriarchal capitalisms impact on the planet, see Raj Patel and Jason W. Moore’s *A History of the World in Seven Cheap Things: A Guide to Capitalism, Nature, and the Future of the Planet*.

African American cultural term “womanish.” “Womanish” and “manish” are terms used to describe youth who are perceived as exhibiting adult behavior.<sup>8</sup> Walker’s definition of womanist is concerned with the well-being of humanity as connected to the woman of colors experience. As such, Walker’s human-centered definition beckons us to (re)awaken and (re)claim the creativity, resilience, and wonder that comes with being a part of a culture/community/tribe.

In 1985, Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi developed the term independently of Walker to describe literature produced by women of African descent in Africa, the Americas, and Europe. In “Womanism: The Dynamics of the Contemporary Black Female Novel in English,” Ogunyemi asserts, “Just as Baldwin rejects integration into the burning house of the United States, the black woman instinctively recoils from mere equality because. . . she has to aim much higher than that and knit the *world’s* black family together to achieve black, not just female, transcendence” (25-28, emphasis added). Ogunyemi goes on to describe womanist theory/womanism as a philosophy abounding in hope and wholeness. More importantly, womanist theory/womanism celebrates Black cultural history as well as Black womanhood.

Clenora Hudson-Weems notes that she coined and defined the term “Africana womanism” in 1987. She describes Africana womanism as a family-centered approach of working in partnership with men, women, and children to make decisions that promote/create the best environment for universal health and well-being. Hudson-

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<sup>8</sup> For research on adultification bias, see Rebecca Epstein, Jamilia J. Blake, and Thalia González’s *Girlhood Interrupted: The Erasure of Girls’ Childhood*, Center on Poverty and Inequality Georgetown Law 2017. This study confirms what our mothers internalized when correcting, sometimes harshly, perceived adult behavior. The white Western world sees girls of African descent as less innocent than other races.

Weems' womanism prioritizes the intersectionality of race, class, and gender in the decision-making process. In "Cultural and Agenda Conflicts in Academia: Critical Issues for Africana Women's Studies (1989)," Hudson-Weems locates the concept of womanism in Sojourner Truth's speech, "Ain't I A Woman." Hudson-Weems contends that "[d]uring the abolitionist movement, white women learned from Africana women techniques on how to organize, hold public meetings, and conduct petition campaigns" (39). As such, Hudson-Weems theorizes that Black women are the birth mothers of social justice and community engagement movements in the United States. In her 1993 analysis "Africana Womanism," Hudson-Weems concludes that Africana women do not see Black men as enemies but rather as allies, in contrast to white feminism foregrounding of the patriarchy as the dominant oppressive dynamic. For Hudson-Weems, white patriarchal capitalism oppresses and seeks to "subjugate black men, women, and children." Therefore, white patriarchal capitalism is the adversary to social progress, equity, and community growth that needs to be uprooted (48). To illustrate her point further, Hudson-Weems asserts:

There is the oppression of the South African woman who must serve as maid and nurse to the White household with minimum wage earnings, the Caribbean woman in London who is the ignored secretary, and the Senegalese or African worker in France who is despised and unwanted. There is the Nigerian subsistence farmer, such as the Ibo women in Enugu and Nsukka, who farms every day for minimum wages, and the female Brazilian factory worker who is the lowest on the totem pole. Clearly, the problems of these women are not

inflicted upon them solely because they are women. They are victimized first and foremost because they are Black; they are further victimized because they are women living in a male-dominated society. (52-53)

It is important to consider all of these definitions because worldwide, Black women are essential to building a healthy work/marketplace. Hudson-Weems suggests that Africana womanism is focused on ensuring that Black women, regardless of where they happen to live, have guaranteed social protections from the intersectionally harmful (i.e., racist, sexist, classist) policies and economic systems that affect their lives. By reimagining the labor and social policies based on Black women's labor, we can make sure that all work is valued and all workers are protected from victimization.

According to Hudson-Weems, Africana women have traditionally been financial leaders and co-decision makers in their communities. Hudson-Weems unapologetically sees the real enemy as the lack of business/work/economic opportunity that comes with white patriarchal capitalism. Moreover, she maintains that Africana men and women working together is the only answer for the survival of the race. This analysis from Hudson-Weems supports the assertion that despite being marginalized in white patriarchal discussions of capitalism and business administration, Black women have had an enduring and historical place within the economic life of their communities. The concept of womanist theory/womanism as posited by Walker, Ogunyemi, and Hudson-Weems, is not new; women of colors have been operating within a womanist framework for millennia. However, the term as we have come to know it continues to be developed by theorists globally.

One such theorist is Layli (Phillips) Maparyan, and she describes womanist theory as a perspective of practical social change for problem-solving based on every-day lived experiences. Maparyan's problem-solving is focused on "ending all forms of oppression for all people, restoring the balance between people and the environment/nature, and reconciling human life with the spiritual dimension" (Phillips xx). She explains that although womanist theory has various strands, these strands manifest five traits: "(1) [i]t is antioppressionist, (2) it is vernacular, (3) it is nonideological, (4) it is communitarian, and (5) it is spiritualized" (Phillips xxiv). In her subsequent book, *The Womanist Idea*, Maparyan identifies eight intersecting methods utilized by womanist theorizers. Those methods are (1) harmonizing and coordinating, (2) dialogue, (3) arbitration and mediation, (4) spiritual activities, (5) hospitality, (6) mutual aid and self-help, (7) motherhood, and (8) physical healing (Maparyan 52).<sup>9</sup> These cultural signifiers and acts of community bolster economic life for the well-being of all livingkind.

As I consider these various strands of womanist theory/womanism, particularly in their application to the field of business administration, I am drawn to the strands that offer a social and economic change perspective based on the everyday lived experiences of women of colors. These theories appeal to me within the context of business administration because they indicate a deeper understanding of free and private enterprise. As such, I include in my definition of womanism the spiritualized ways women of colors have resisted the exploitation (social, political, economic) of white

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<sup>9</sup> Layli Maparyan has previously published under the name Layli Phillips. I use her current name, Layli Maparyan throughout this dissertation.

patriarchal capitalism in order to: (1) produce shared knowledge(s) that aides in our ability to survive, (2) generate clean (just) rather than dirty (unjust) wealth, and (3) bring about systemic change for the benefit of all livingkind. In the following pages, I analyze Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's business contributions to build on three of Maparyan's characteristics of womanist perspectives: (1) vernacular, (2) communitarian/commonweal, and (3) spiritualized. Additionally, in crafting my argument I utilize three of Maparyan's intersecting methods of managing: (1) harmonizing and coordinating, (2) mutual aid and self-help, and (3) motherhood. In so doing, my goal is to outline a womanist administrative theory as an alternative to white patriarchal capitalism to be offered as a possible course in future business school programs.

## **Literature Review**

As more women of colors join the ranks of managers and leaders, questions regarding identity formation continue to influence the processes that measure success. Unfortunately, historical assumptions about male leadership traits inform much of the research on administrative theories. Because until recently Western societies, have traditionally hired more men than women, conclusions drawn in previous research studies may be skewed. Existing scholarship relies too much on broad, sweeping claims about socially constructed behaviors associated with "men" and "women." This "white" male-dominated way of thinking concerns the ways both women and men approach power and authority. Examples of this thinking include the notion that women approach power and authority through fairness while men approach power and authority through God-given

rights associated with paternalism, domination, and control. As a result, the language used to describe factors of power and authority relies on ideologies regarding fairness and morality for women and rules and rights for men (Wan et al. 17). Such assumptions are problematic because not all women fit neatly in the fairness and morality box; neither do all men fit in the rules and rights box. This lack of depth offers no solution to the dilemmas experienced by women *intrepreneurs* who deal with the dehumanization of workers, accounting scandals, globalization, bankruptcies, or corporate bailouts.

Understanding the role of gender in leadership requires recognition of gender inequality in leadership positions. The variances in perceptions of male and female *intrepreneurs* stem from many different circumstances. Since the introduction of the Equal Rights Amendment on December 1923, United States women have fought to move from the private space of domesticity to an economically equal role in the workplace. In 2010, the Bureau of Labor Statistics confirmed that the number of women in the workforce has steadily increased, surpassing the number of men. In 2012, the Bureau of Labor Statistics confirmed that at 57%, women are earning more college degrees than ever before, surpassing their male counterparts who earn 44.4% of college degrees. Despite these modest advances however, women occupy only 4% of all top organizational positions (Bell and Nkomo 15).

One explanation for this discrepancy is that women of colors face patriarchal barriers in the form of social roles and expectations tied to concepts of white patriarchal capitalism. In a study of the perceptions of leaders, Stephen Peters, Penelope Kinsey, and Thomas Malloy found that even when verbal participation is equal there was a propensity

to rate men more favorably than women. Gender bias was evident in perceptions of leadership even when behavior and participation levels were similar. For instance, in organizations where women and men participate almost equally on projects, male employees were viewed as presenting behaviors more typical of leaders/*int*repreneurs.

There were more similarities among women's perceptions of men's leadership abilities than there were for men's perceptions of women's leadership abilities. Peters, Kinsey, and Malloy found agreement between perceivers of certain aspects of leadership traits such as comfort in a situation, amount of speaking, leadership during a task, quality of ideas, calmness, and smiling. More differentiation in leadership abilities was noted for males than females. Also, more attention was paid to men while the discussion occurred. This concurs with the previous argument that women would be considered more similar than male counterparts. Lastly, the study presented information about the degree to which men agreed with how women perceived them and how they felt women would rate them. Men were better able to judge how other men saw them since they felt more competitive with men than with women.

Historical assumptions about male leadership traits inform much of the research on many of the administrative theories used in the studies. However, many studies comparing women to men, such as the one above, employ standards constructed by men steeped in white patriarchal capitalism. Thus, the administrative and leadership styles of "white" men participating in white patriarchal capitalism are often considered "best practices," when, in fact, they may not be (Moss-Kanter 101). According to a 2009 study by Heather Boushey, "Millions of workers now have a female boss, and the more



collaborative management styles that many women bring to the workplace are improving the bottom line” (32). The explanation gets even more complicated when looking at differences in gender as they intersect with race or class. Peters, Kinsey, and Malloy discuss the differences in social roles for men and women in leadership positions as they relate to African Americans. The authors looked at the perception consensus of males and females towards judging the leadership traits of women and men. This study intended to show that perceptions of leaders are constrained by the status of the perceiver, such that people of higher status positions use more stereotypes when perceiving their employees for ease of control purposes. This creates a psychological barrier for those in leadership positions, thus decreasing the differentiation between individuals and employees.

In addition, many of the studies continue to explore gender stereotypes or attempt to reveal wholly female leadership traits and behaviors. It is impossible to respect and admire great leadership skills if research questions begin with biases and stereotypes based on wholly female leadership traits and behaviors (Katila and Eriksson 73). Since women’s roles in leadership transpire in a multitude of settings and contexts, new research must encompass perspectives that interrogate white patriarchal capitalism. Therefore, while addressing weaknesses, I build on the strengths of previous scholarship by calling upon womanist theory to understand the business administration contributions of Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille. By integrating womanist perspectives into business administration practices, I simultaneously look back and forward from a vernacular (sociological), communitarian (political), and spiritualized (economical intercession) point of view. In so doing, I offer a womanist framework that can help

identify the social transformation characteristics that ensure the success of women-of-colors *intrepreneurs*. In what follows, I analyze the strengths of Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's business contributions in order to present an alternative to the white patriarchal capitalism that continues globally to underdevelop and undervalue the lives of people of color. Moreover, in considering clean wealth as opportunity-driven versus oppression-driven and as a practice optimistically-based on opportunities for collective well-being in every business venture, I offer a womanist administrative theory that shows how we can engage in clean wealth-generating business practices for the benefit of all livingkind.

### **Research Questions**

By examining business exchanges and transactions which include an array of notary records, land grant petitions, court records, and official correspondence, *Womanism, Work, and Wealth: (Re)Framing the Business Administration Contributions of Marie Thérèse "Coincoin" Métoyer and Henriette Delille* analyzes the womanist-infused business administration principles employed by Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille as they navigated the dawn of white patriarchal capitalism in the Americas. Since white patriarchal capitalism continues to serve as a source of inequality and a catalyst for conflict, the research questions that this study seeks to answer are: (1) Why should we consider the business knowledge employed by Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille as an alternative to white patriarchal capitalism? (2) How do we apply Layli Maparyan's womanist theory to the business endeavors of Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille? (3) How do we evaluate the impact of Madame

Métoyer and Mother Delille's *int*repreneurship and leadership on the upliftment of their families and communities? These three questions guide this dissertation.

### **Significance of the Study**

During the twentieth century, circa the 1970s, a feminist consciousness based on the lived experiences of those who had been historically excluded arose in public discourse. Women of colors scholars like Gloria Anzaldúa, Toni Cade Bambara, Chrystos, Audre Lorde, Cherrie Moraga, Barbara Smith, and Luisah Teish began to tell their lived experiences as well as the omitted experiences of women of colors more generally. This awareness empowered and equipped more leaders/*int*repreneurs, expanded mainstream feminism, and ushered in what is now sometimes known as third-wave feminism. Over the next decades, scholars, activists, leaders, and *int*repreneurs produced intellectual property. They established for-profit and charitable organizations that provided spaces for the critique of white patriarchal capitalism, racism, and sexism. Business entities like Third World Women's Alliance, Kitchen Table Press, National Black Feminist Organization, and the Combahee River Collective began deploying laser-focused scholarship designed to address critical and complex problems affecting the minds of emerging women leaders/*int*repreneurs. For instance, the Combahee River Collective wrote in their 1977 Statement:

Although our economic position is still at the very bottom of the American capitalistic economy, a handful of us have been able to gain certain tools as a result of tokenism in education and employment which potentially enable us to more effectively fight our oppression. A combined anti-racist and anti-sexist

position drew us together initially, and as we developed politically we addressed ourselves to heterosexism and economic oppression under capitalism. (3)

Forced to rely on each other, women of colors continued to resist economic exploitation and limited opportunities to build viable knowledge-producing businesses despite the high cost of distribution and the lack of opportunities from predominately “white” institutions. Women of colors continue to play essential roles in efforts to carve out possibilities within the system of white patriarchal capitalism. As Nikki Giovanni puts it, “[T]he purpose of any leadership is to build more leadership” (135). As women of colors created, maintained, and used their intellects, financial resources, and networks, they forged their own definitions of clean wealth generation and opportunity. Those definitions refuted stereotypes about women of colors ability to contribute to the work/marketplace.

Prior to twentieth century feminist activism and fueled by a persistent need to empower subjugated people, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille drew on what I would describe as future principles of womanist theory to carve out a unique administrative workspace that alternately deconstructed discourses about who can contribute to business. As free women of colors, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille were multicultural—merging African, French, Spanish, and Indigenous cultures—before the term existed and astute business administrators before there was a field of administrative science or Women’s and Gender Studies. Their business administration practices communicate sociological, political, and economical intercession perspectives for

reshaping how we interpret their business contributions and serve as a model for what is possible.

Throughout this dissertation, I demonstrate how Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille were vital in empowering and uplifting the communities they served and that their leadership and business contributions are a rich source of Women's and Gender Studies and Business Administration theory and praxis. This dissertation attempts to trace the business exchanges and transactions where Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's fingerprints can be seen and their footsteps heard.

This study focuses on two free women of colors who established businesses and actively participated in those businesses during the colonial and antebellum periods in the colony of Louisiana. Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille were not the only free women of colors who participated in business, nor did they solely construct womanist-infused business administration principles. However, I posit that these human/living-centered business contributions offer a potent recipe for an alternative to white patriarchal capitalism. For this research study, it is also necessary to note that Mother Delille's cause for canonization, the process whereby the Catholic Church declares a person to be a saint, has been officially opened by the Catholic Church, and many of her unpublished papers are currently sealed at the Vatican. Therefore, this study is limited to analyzing the published work regarding Mother Delille.

### **Origins of Research Interest**

Relying on strategies of survival, racial uplift, economic self-help, clean wealth generation, and spiritualized politics, women of colors have always been vital to the

global workforce. However, women of colors have not received recognition for their contributions—contributions that cannot be understood apart from the imperatives of uplift, self-help, and spiritual activism.<sup>10</sup> As a member of this group and the progeny of free, quasi-free, and enslaved women of colors, I am in awe of the achievements of women of colors as entrepreneurs, leaders, managers, and workers.

Whether managing households, classrooms, small businesses, multinational corporations, institutions, governments, or social change work, women of colors as leaders/*int*repreneurs have consistently proved to be assets to their families and communities despite the opposition and domination embedded within white patriarchal capitalism. More importantly, recovering the histories of my foremothers, I can better understand how white patriarchal capitalism—economic practices and concepts—continues to trigger my own generational trauma. The spirit of their collective contributions—past, present, and future—guides this study.

## **Chapters**

In Chapter One, “Creating Room for (Wo)Maneuver: Analyzing the Business Experiences of Women of Colors,” I analyze, review key terms, and introduce an alternative view of how Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille engaged in colonial and antebellum business enterprises. I discuss the evolution of white patriarchal capitalism and womanist theory and review the current literature on women business

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<sup>10</sup> I am defining spiritual activism as 1) the ability to formulate a transformational vision of harmony, equality, and well-being; 2) aligning that transformational vision to that which connects us all; and 3) applying that transformational vision into the time-bound material world. For more on spiritual activism see *Gloria Anzaldúa Interviews/Entrevistas*, Gloria Anzaldúa’s “now let us shift. . . the path of *conocimiento*. . . inner work, public acts” in *this bridge we call home* and *Light in the Dark*.

leaders/*intrepreneurs*. In Chapter Two, “Black Female Bodies/Black Spiritual Souls: The Shadow Work Of Resistance,” I provide a biographical sketch of Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille. In Chapter Three, “Administrative Agency: Making and Using Money,” I review the political regimes that informed Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille’s business practices. I use Layli Maparyan’s womanist traits to investigate lessons we can learn from Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille’s business transactions. I examine the ways Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille were able to transgress white patriarchal capitalism and offer an alternative experience for women of colors in the Americas. In Chapter Four, “A Womanist Business Politic: Building Viable Businesses,” I present a womanist framework of business administration principles based on Maparyan’s methods. This framework is relevant for contemporary business leaders. And finally in Chapter Five, “Womanist Administration: Creating Security for Families and Communities,” I provide an alternative to white patriarchal capitalism by offering a commitment to social change-producing work and wealth-creation for the upliftment of ourselves, each other, and the planet.

## **Conclusion**

This dissertation shows how Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille responded to challenges and opportunities by enacting wealth-building strategies around gendered economic practices that valued their intellect and financial autonomy—items traditionally constructed as markers of “white” male privilege and rights. These practices shed light on the ways Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille transcended stereotypes by making and

using money, building viable businesses, and creating security for their families and communities.

Let me (re)introduce you to Madame Marie Thérèse “Coincoin” Métoyer and Mother Henriette Delille.



CHAPTER II  
BLACK FEMALE BODIES/BLACK SPIRITUAL SOULS:  
THE SHADOW WORK OF RESISTANCE

**Madame Marie Thérèse “Coincoin” Métoyer**

In 1714, four years before the establishment of New Orleans, French-Canadian Commandant Louis Antoine Juchereau de St. Denis (September 17, 1676 – June 11, 1744) established the rural town of Natchitoches on Caddo lands along the frontier of Louisiana and Texas.<sup>11</sup> On the edge of New France and New Spain colonized lands, Natchitoches was an integral part of the Atlantic and Gulf Coast economic world because of its peaceful involvement with Indigenous groups in the trading of furs for European export and the legal and illegal import of enslaved Africans. On December 26, 1735, Pierre Vitry, a priest of the Company of Jesus, baptized an illegally procured bondman in Commandant St. Denis’ household. The bondman was given the Christian name Françoise. In order to flourish, Commandant St. Denis’ young settlement desperately needed enslaved men and women to produce enslaved children, and so on, January 8, 1736, Père Vitry documented the legal wedding of Françoise and an enslaved African woman of the St. Denis household named Marie Françoise also known as Fanny (Mills, *The Forgotten People* 9). This “white” male-ordered wedding between the illegally

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<sup>11</sup> Located in Central Louisiana off Interstate 49, Natchitoches (Nack-a-tish) is the oldest permanent settlement/city in the 828,000 square miles that comprised the colony of Louisiana. Today, Natchitoches retains the flair of 18th and 19th century France through its architecture and culture. For more information on Natchitoches visit [www.natchitoches.com](http://www.natchitoches.com).

procured Françoise to Marie Françoise was not based on love.<sup>12</sup> Rather, this religiously-sanctioned yoking/helotry was one of many manifestations/techniques of white patriarchal capitalism. Throughout the Caribbean and the Americas, enslaved men and women were formally married/documented or informally paired/undocumented in order to increase a slaveholder's wealth through their offspring (Marable 9). Although a common practice in French Louisiana, the ecclesiastical records do not list the African tribes with which Françoise and Marie Françoise identified. The couple's fourth child and second-born daughter, baptized Marie Thérèse but also known throughout the written record as "Coincoin," or "Marie Thérèse *libre négresse*" was born around August 23, 1742.<sup>13</sup> (See Appendix A for a copy of Marie Thérèse baptismal record.)

Françoise and Marie Françoise's documented marriage and their registered eleven children provide one example of African familial ties in the Americas. One of the dehumanizing aspects of the transatlantic slave system has been the bitter denial of enslaved people's ability to establish solid familial ties (Midlo Hall 165). Whether it was due to Commandant St. Denis' powerful political position<sup>14</sup> or Madame St. Denis' Spanish/Mexican upbringing,<sup>15</sup> the St. Denis household took seriously French Louisiana

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<sup>12</sup> The French government had a ban on the importation of enslaved Africans in 1735. Françoise may have been illegally procured through the Spanish in Spanish territory or possibly stolen/confiscated during the Natchez Massacre of 1729.

<sup>13</sup> African historian, Dr. Jan Vansina, Department of History, University of Wisconsin, in correspondence with Gary B. Mills, on May 12, 1973, noted that phonetically Coincoin sounds like the name used for second-born daughters by the people of Togo. In the French language, Coincoin also translates to quack, quack, as in a duck.

<sup>14</sup> Commandant St. Denis was France's colonial administrator in the Natchitoches settlement. St. Denis was charged with maintaining King Louis XV's promises of prosperity to settlers as well as French law and order.

<sup>15</sup> Emanuela María Stefania Sanchez-Navarro Juchereau de St. Denis also known as Manuela Sánchez Navarro y Gomes Mascorro St. Denis was born and raised in Monclova, Coahuila, Mexico. She is a descendant of the military, political, and financial elite (royal service) of New Spain. Under Spanish laws

Governor Jean-Baptist Le Monyne, Sier de Bienville's *Code Noir* forbidding the separation of enslaved families that allowed Françoise and Marie Françoise to raise their children. Article 63 of the *Code Noir* proclaims:

Husbands and wives shall not be seized and sold separately when belonging to their same master, and their children, when under fourteen years of age, shall not be separated from their parents, and such seizures and sales shall be null and void. The present article shall apply to voluntary sales, and in case such sales should take place in violation of the law, the seller shall be deprived of the slave he has illegally retained, and said slave shall be adjudged to the purchaser without any additional price being required. (Digital Commons Law)

However, after Widow St. Denis' death, Madame Métoyer was not as fortunate as her parents.<sup>16</sup> She was separated from four of her fifteen children, including two who were sold away illegally as children to cover business debts. As forms of capital/wealth, enslaved people (men, women, and children) were business transactions for building dirty "white" equity and securing/collateralizing dirty "white" debt. Husbands were routinely separated from documented and undocumented wives. Documented and undocumented children were routinely sold away from their parents. Madame Métoyer, her children, and grandchildren would eventually gain their freedom. As an iconic symbol of

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bondmen and women were encouraged to marry and it was easier for married bondmen and women to gain their freedom. Madame St. Denis may have been influenced by Spanish customs to marry and keep enslaved families intact.

<sup>16</sup> Easter Sunday (April 16-19) 1758 Madame St. Denis, Françoise, and Marie Françoise were visiting Madame St. Denis' family in the nearby Spanish settlement of Los Adaës when a pandemic broke out. Upon returning home Madame St. Denis, Françoise and Marie Françoise who was pregnant at the time fell ill and died within days of each other.

determination, foresight, and expertise, her existence and that of her progeny challenge white patriarchal capitalism. Today, St. Augustine's Church, founded by son Nicolas "Augustin" Metoyer, and Melrose Plantation, founded by son Louis Metoyer, are national historic landmarks in Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana.

Most of what we know of Madame Métoyer and her progeny who came to be known as the Cane River Creoles is derived from the work of husband-and-wife scholars Gary B. Mills and Elizabeth Shown Mills. In the Mills' 1977 University of Alabama dissertation *The Forgotten People: Cane River's Creoles of Color*, we are introduced to the legendary Madame Métoyer and her progeny.<sup>17</sup> Gary B. Mills' research is extremely thorough and supports what we know of Madame Métoyer from oral tradition. However, as a 1970's "white" male writing about a free woman of African ancestry, Mills writes from a sexist critical framework fraught with implicit bias.<sup>18</sup> His preoccupation with Madame Métoyer's beauty, her body that had given birth to fifteen children, and to a perceived hypersexuality that entangled a "well-bred" Frenchman of the merchant class, is surprising and ironic considering the third-wave feminism and Black Power decade in which he was writing. For example, when making assumptions about the "sexuality 'immorality'" of Madame Metoyer and five of her African or possibly Indigenous/African children, Mills writes, "Although the elder St. Denis and wife have been lauded for their piety, some of their children fell short of their parents' example, and the moral laxity they

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<sup>17</sup> Dr. Gary B. Mills' dissertation was converted into a book and published as *The Forgotten People: Cane River's Creoles of Color*.

<sup>18</sup> Jennifer Eberhardt defines implicit bias as the beliefs and the feelings we have about social groups that can influence our decision-making and our actions, even when we are not aware of it. As such, Mills' writing style is indicative of the times.

displayed had a significant effect upon their slaves. . . . Upon reaching maturity, Coincoin was left to follow her own spiritual compass” (*The Forgotten People* 14). There is no way of knowing whether the name “Coincoin” is a Togo language derivative for second-born daughter or meant as a negative/insulting nickname. As such, I critique Mills’ use of the name without providing context. Did Mills forget the peculiarities of enslavement? What is sexuality “morality/immorality” to a bondwoman or bondman being transferred in the name of white patriarchal capitalism from one human being to another human being for generations? More importantly, if Madame Métoyer’s parents were baptized and legally married under the Catholic faith, did Mills consider that a young Marie Thérèse might have also been paired or married to an African or Indigenous bondman, thereby producing five baptized and socio-religiously legitimate children?<sup>19</sup> (See Figure 1 for a genealogy of Madame Métoyer’s first family.) It must always be remembered that a person—body, mind, will, and emotions—experiencing the brutality of enslavement is dehumanized, considered to be chattel: a thing, a privately owned commodity that could be sold on the open market (Pope-Hennessy 137).

Over the centuries, Madame Métoyer’s descendants maintained a rich oral history of her business accomplishments. Oral history is a vital part of African American genealogical and historical research and has been used to extract important facts and clues. However, Mills praises Madame Métoyer’s business accomplishments only after those oral accomplishments align with the written record. Nevertheless, the actual

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<sup>19</sup> For more on Madame Métoyer’s first family’s Indigenous/African connections see Elizabeth Shown Mills’ *Isle of Canes*.

triumph of Madame Métoyer's liberation has more to do with the paradoxes of "white" male hypersexuality and the iniquities of Black female enslavement than moral laxity. After the deaths of Commandant de St. Denis (June 11, 1744) and his widow, Madame St. Denis (April 16, 1758), Marie Thérèse became the human business property first of their son Louis and then of their youngest daughter Madame Marie des Neiges de St. Denis de Soto.<sup>20</sup>

It is during Madame de Soto's business ownership of her that Madame Métoyer's life and that of her descendants would change. The change started in 1766 when two ambitious French bachelors of the merchant class arrived at Natchitoches from the Atlantic seaport La Rochelle, France. Claude Thomas "Pierre" Métoyer and Étienne Pavie soon started a business as taverners and merchants. In 1767, Madame de Soto agreed to rent/lease/traffic Marie Thérèse, who was still nursing her fifth-born son Jean Joseph (b. February 21, 1766), to Pierre Métoyer. This arrangement allowed Madame de Soto to maintain her title of ownership, and "[i]n payment for Marie Thérèse's services, Métoyer promised to provide her room and board" (Mills 19).<sup>21</sup> Through this contract, Marie Thérèse and her infant were separated and isolated from the rest of the family. We do not know if, as the new entrepreneur's contracted help, Marie Thérèse shouldered an amount of work exceeding normal working conditions. However, we do know that through this business transaction of a rented/leased/trafficked Black female body, Pierre

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<sup>20</sup> According to Catholic baptismal records, Madame Marie des Neiges de St. Denis de Soto is also Marie Thérèse's *marraine*.

<sup>21</sup> See Affidavit of Pierre Métoyer to Athanase de Mézières, Rex v. de Soto, doc. 1227, NCA.

Métoyer and Marie Thérèse produced ten biracial—African/French/Creole—children.<sup>22</sup>

As Marie Thérèse's owner, Madame de Soto maintained legal ownership of Marie Thérèse's African/French/Creole children (*Code Noir*, Article 13, 1685). And so after each birth, Pierre Métoyer transacted—the negotiated/fair market price for half his genome and half the genome of a commodified Black female body—business with Madame de Soto. With each purchase, Pierre Métoyer became the legal slaveholder of his children. Some of those children worked for Pierre Métoyer for nearly the rest of his life. (See Figure 2 for a genealogical chart of Madame Métoyer's family with Pierre Métoyer.)

Shortly after presenting their seventh child Antoine Joseph (b. January 26, 1778), for Catholic baptism as commanded by the *Code Noir*, priest Luis de Quintanilla filed a complaint with Commandant Athanase de Mézières.<sup>23</sup> (See Appendix A for a copy of the complaint.) Madame Métoyer was found, without due process, of being a “public prostitute” by de Mézières. Although a mother of twelve, Madame Métoyer's Black

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<sup>22</sup> To this French/African union the following enslaved children were born: Nicolas Augustin and Marie Susanne on January 22, 1768 (Mills, *Natchitoches, 1729-1803*, entry 921 (Marie Susanne and Nicolas Augustin Bapt. Feb. 1, 1768). Louis arriving in 1770, Pierre II in 1772, Dominique in 1774, Marie Eulalie on January 14, 1776 and Antoine Joseph on January 26, 1778. To this French/African union the following free children were born: François Rosalie on December 9, 1780, Pierre Touissant on October 10, 1782 and François September 26, 1784 (Mills, *Natchitoches, 1729-1803*, entry 2489 (François, Bapt. Oct. 4, 1784).

<sup>23</sup> French-born noble Commandant Athanase de Mézières (var. Messiere) took charge of a Spanish controlled Natchitoches on November 24, 1769. Mézières married Commandant and Widow St. Denis' daughter, Marie Petronille Feliciane de St. Denis also known as Elizabeth Marie Félicité in 1746. Marie died in childbirth in 1747. He later married Pelagie Fazende. Mézières has an extraordinary career and was appointed governor of Texas in 1779. For more on Mézières see Herbert Eugene Bolton's *Athanase de Mézières and the Louisiana-Texas Frontier, 1768-1780*, and Donald E. Chipman's *Spanish Texas, 1519-1821*. Athanase Jr. chose an enslaved African woman, Marie Bernarde dite Le Noir, as his long-term companion and their seven African/French/Creole children inherited his estate. Flavie Mézières married Madame Métoyer's grandson. For more on the Mézières *de couleur* relationship to the Métoyers *de couleur* see Gary B. Mills' *The Forgotten People: Cane River's Creoles of Color*.

female body was brutally strapped to the whipping post and publicly tortured (Shown Mills 131-134). After this act of terrorism and humiliation, Pierre Métoyer, who received no punishment, negotiated the purchase price of Madame Métoyer and their infant son Antoine Joseph. Madame de Soto agreed to a market price of \$1,500 *livres*. Shortly after this transaction, Pierre Métoyer freed Madame Métoyer and their infant son Antoine Joseph. Madame Métoyer and the children continued to live with Pierre Métoyer in a relationship that came as close as possible to a modern common-law marriage. However, the first six children remained their father's property well into adulthood. Pierre Métoyer and Madame Métoyer go on to have three more free-born African/French/Creole children.

#### **A Business Administrator with a Womanist Consciousness – Madame Métoyer**

In 1786, Pierre Métoyer's business partner, Étienne Pavie, who had immigrated to Natchitoches with him from La Rochelle, France, was slain. Within two years, Métoyer had married his widow. As a slaveholder and slave trader, Pavie was known to be a brute. Tradition holds that Pavie was slain by enslaved Africans he brutalized. His executioner(s) were never apprehended. With Pavie's death, his widow Marie Thérèse Eugenie Buard and minor children inherited his business interest. Under Spanish law, widows had no restrictions upon their economic activities and could administer their property independently. However, Natchitoches officials reflected the beliefs of early modern France that, due to unchanneled and unattended sexuality, widows could not be left to their own devices. Because of this fear of a financially independent woman's agency, men were justified in taking active charge of governing widowed women and



their children. Marriage was the central institution through which men could exercise this control.<sup>24</sup> Protecting his business interests from a financially independent widow or her new husband, if she chose to remarry, may have been the reason for Pierre Métoyer's decision to separate from the Black Madame Métoyer and marry his business partner's "white" widow Marie Buard. We do know that within a decade of marrying the widow, Métoyer becomes a *syndic* as well as the largest slaveholder in Natchitoches.<sup>25</sup>

When Pierre Métoyer announced he was marrying his business partner's "white" widow, Madame Métoyer may have experienced severe emotional distress about her future and the future of her children (six were still owned by Pierre Métoyer in 1786). Despite the uncertainty, Madame Métoyer was not afraid to take risks. More importantly, she did not allow the uncertainty of life to still/steal her dreams/purpose. She acknowledged and actively engaged that feeling of uncertainty until she found a resolution. Then, she bent that uncertainty and resolution into several generational business enterprises. Pending Pierre Métoyer's marriage to the widow Buard, Madame Métoyer petitioned Commandant Mézières for an 800-*arpent* land concession.<sup>26</sup> Article nine of *O'Reilly's Ordinance of February 18, 1770, Concerning Grants of Land, etc.* states, "To obtain in the Opelousas, Attakapas, and Natchitoches a grant of forty-two *arpents* in front by forty-two *arpents* in depth, the applicant must make it appear that he

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<sup>24</sup> For a discussion on the threat of financially independent unattached widows and daughters, see Carol F. Karlsen's *The Devil in the Shape of a Woman: Witchcraft in Colonial New England*. For a discussion of the way Canadian settlers saw gender, see Karen Anderson's *Chain Her by One Foot: The Subjugation of Native Women in Seventeenth-Century New France*.

<sup>25</sup> Census of Slaveowners at Natchitoches, October 15, 1795, AGI, PC, legajo 201.

<sup>26</sup> Commandant Mézières is the same official/joker who had Madame Métoyer barbarically beaten eight years before.

is possessor of one hundred head of tame cattle, some horses and sheep, and two slaves to look after them” (239). As a mother of fifteen children (eleven enslaved and ten under the age of eighteen), she confronted her former terrorizer to ask for the concession. Then Madame Métoyer began a planting operation reserved and dominated by “white” men.<sup>27</sup>

In October 1788, Pierre Métoyer, age forty-four, and Madame Métoyer, age forty-six, went before Commandant Mézières a second time to execute a separation agreement. In the separation agreement, Madame Métoyer received a stipend of \$120 *piasters* a year to help her support their freeborn children and a sixty-eight-acre tract of land on Pierre’s homestead upon which a small cabin was built.<sup>28</sup> (See Appendix A for a rendering of Madame Métoyer’s cabin.) Their older children remained Pierre Métoyer’s property until he saw fit to emancipate them. It is important to note that Pierre Métoyer is an unhindered unashamed agent of white patriarchal capitalism. In *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery*, Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman estimate that once the cost of enslaved wages are calculated as compared to the cost of raising a person who is enslaved from birth, against the opportunity costs of capital, the break-even point of holding a bondsperson was twenty-six years. “Prior to age twenty-six, the accumulated expenditures by planters on slaves were greater than the average accumulated income which they took from them. After that age, the reverse was true. Planters broke even early in the twenty-seventh year” (153). Pierre Métoyer must have conducted some sort of a break-even analysis because his children continued to work in

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<sup>27</sup> She worked the land for seven years before receiving approval of the land grant in 1794.

<sup>28</sup> The existence of the separation agreement is noted and reiterated in Pierre Métoyer’s 1801 will, Melrose Collection, and Coincoin to Métoyer, Abrogation of Agreement, May 28, 1802, Misc. Book 2:206-7, NCCO.

his businesses/plantations until their mid-twenties and thirties before they received their freedom. In 1801, Pierre Métoyer freed the last three of his enslaved children (Louis, age thirty-one; Pierre, age twenty-nine; and Marie Susanne, age thirty-three).<sup>29</sup> As a result, Madame Métoyer released Pierre from the \$120 *piastre* annuity agreement for the three free-born children but excluded the sixty-eight acres of land given to her in the separation agreement that held her cabin.

In 1792, Madame Métoyer shared a barge with Pierre Métoyer and shipped three hundred hides, nine thousand *andullos* of tobacco, and two barrels of bear grease to the market in New Orleans. In addition, the understanding of emotional stress of enslavement that precipitated physical illnesses had to be remedied, and Madame Métoyer operated as an agent in the medical care of men, women, and children. Tradition holds that Madame Métoyer, her sisters, daughters, granddaughters, and great-granddaughters were highly skilled in the use and application of medicinal herbs and roots. Her *intreprenurship* not only sustained her and her minor children, but she also created income to negotiate the price of her adult enslaved children from her first marriage/pairing and minor grandchildren. Madame Métoyer's commercial savvy assured the survival of her family and helped to form the Isle of Brevelle community (comprised mainly of her descendants) in which the Cane River Creoles *de couleur* lived.

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<sup>29</sup> By 1801 Marie Susanne was a mother who still lived in her father's home and served as wet-nurse to her "white" half-brother Benjamin and nurse to her "white" stepmother. Additionally, she also engaged in a series of business endeavors including purchasing bondmen although she herself was still a bondwoman. Marie Susanne's business biography is just as impressive as her mother's and siblings'. Upon her death in 1838, during the midst of a world financial crisis, her heirs inherited the equivalent of a million-dollar estate in modern currency.

Madame Métoyer petitioned Commandant Mézières again in 1796 for a second tract of land five miles from her cabin. On this land, she raised cattle for mass production. This diversification of her business empire entailed hiring José Maré and his family to manage the *vacherie* property in 1797. Maré managed the *vacherie* for at least ten years. Mills used land ownership maps of the period as a guideline to compare Madame Métoyer's holdings to "white" inhabitants of the parish and noted her holdings far exceeded those of the other *gens de couleur libre* "white" and Black (Mills 56). (See Appendix A for a sketch of Madame Métoyer's land holdings.) According to Mills, the 1810 census (the last one taken before her death) showed that only 13% of the households had as many or more bondspeople than Madame Métoyer. Most of her sons, by this point were established on their own lands with bondspeople of their own. When United States Land Office officials set up a board at Natchitoches to accept the "claims" of French/Spanish/Creole property owners who needed a United States title, Pierre Jr. filed for his mother's property. Documents in 1810 and 1816 continue to place Pierre Jr. in charge of both her original farm and her bondmen and women.<sup>30</sup> Obviously, Madame Métoyer was committed to her work and had the physical stamina to run multiple enterprises with her bondspeople and possibly her children who were not working in Pierre Métoyer's home or businesses. We see from her business legacy that resistance to

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<sup>30</sup> See Affidavit by "Pierre Coinquoin, *mulâtre libre*," undated [but datable, via a companion document, at Dec. 26, 1806], Claim of "Marie Theresa, a free Negress," File "OPEL: May 1794," Opelousas Notarial Records Collection. See also (a) Louis Verchere to Dominique Rachal, Feb. 1810, doc. 3768, NCA, in which a sale of property adjacent to Madame's homestead identifies her son Pierre Jr. as the proprietor of her land.

white patriarchal capitalism was ongoing and continuous. In short, resistance fueled her *intrepreneurship*.

The exact date of Madame Métoyer's death is unknown. The last records for her are dated April 20, 1816. That spring, Madame Métoyer filed nine documents transferring her twelve to sixteen bondspeople to her Métoyer children.<sup>31</sup> At Madame Métoyer's death, cash, personal property, and over one thousand acres were divided amongst her Métoyer children. She had accomplished her business objectives and lived to see her children and grandchildren emancipated and resisting white patriarchal capitalism.

In the next chapter, I will ground myself in the wisdom/mental space of Madame Métoyer's *intrepreneurship* to examine how she made and used money, built viable businesses, and created security for her family and community. In so doing, she catalyzed and solidified her business legacy. Madame Métoyer's business accomplishments include an estate of more than a thousand acres, a tobacco plantation, a *vacherie*, the enterprise of hunting and trapping of bears and other wildlife for the market, and a pharmaceutical manufacturing business. Her children and grandchildren's business legacies would continue until the twentieth century. As a resister and barrier-breaker, Madame Métoyer also invested in the business ventures of her children, grandchildren, and at least one of her siblings in order to safeguard their ability to survive white patriarchal capitalism.

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<sup>31</sup> Gwendolyn Midlo Hall calculated sixteen bondspeople. However, Elizabeth Shown Mills noted that this is an error and Madame Métoyer only held twelve bonds people.

Perhaps even more importantly, she was instrumental in the social/cultural establishment and economic upliftment of the Cane River Creole community *de couleur*.

### **Mother Henriette Delille**

While Madame Métoyer built her businesses through the male dominated fields of tobacco production, hunting, and trapping, our second *intreprenuer*, Mother Henriette Delille, used religion, health, and human services to build businesses based on the creolization of Catholicism, collaboration, and community. (See Appendix B for a painting of Mother Delille). Mother Delille witnessed the love of Jesus Christ to the enslaved, the free, the immigrant, the sick, the orphaned, the aged, the instructed, and the uneducated in urban New Orleans<sup>32</sup> (colony of Louisiana) during the antebellum era.

New France's Governor Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville established New Orleans in 1718 on Chitimacha, Attakapas, Caddo, Choctaw, Houma, Natchez, and Tunica lands, and by 1803, it had become the largest, most economically viable trading port in the southern portion of North America. Through the importation of enslaved Africans and the exportation of products to Europe, the Caribbean, and North and South America, New Orleans quickly became one of the largest multicultural, multilingual cities in the southern region of North America. Under Spanish control, New Orleans was home to the largest population of multiracial *gens de couleur libre*<sup>33</sup> in North America. It was this ethnology of African, European, Indigenous, and Creole, free, semi-free,

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<sup>32</sup> For more on New Orleans, see John Blassingame's *Black New Orleans, 1860-1880*, John G. Clark's *New Orleans, 1718-1812: An Economic History*, and Shannon Lee Dawdy's *Building the Devil's Empire: French Colonial New Orleans*.

<sup>33</sup> The *gens de couleur libre* of New Orleans would grow to comprise nearly 20% of the city's population during Delille's lifetime.

enslaved, wealthy, and destitute that forged Mother Delille's worldview regarding white patriarchal capitalism's influence on who was allowed to flourish and who must suffer. As I will explain in more detail in Chapter IV, this nuanced understanding fueled her desire to serve free and enslaved *gens de couleur*.

Most of what we know of Mother Delille is derived from the words of other people: the journals of Sister Mary Bernard Deggs (d. 1863) and the books of Sister Audrey Marie Detiege (d. 1925), Virginia Meacham Gould, Charles E. Nolan (d. 2001), and Father Cyprian Davis (d. 2004). Henriette Delille was the youngest child born into a prosperous and well-respected *femme de couleur libre*-headed household in 1812. New Orleans was home to more *femme de couleur libre* households than any other city in North America (Hanger 70). A *femme de couleur libre* household was maintained by a financially independent French-speaking free woman of African descent during the colonial and antebellum eras when most women of African descent were enslaved laborers. The family lived in a Creole cottage on Burgundy Street in the French Quarter. (See Appendix B for a photo of Mother Delille's childhood home.) Delille's father was a married wealthy "white" French merchant, Jean-Baptiste Lille Sarpy (var. de Lille or Delille) and her mother was Marie Josephe also known as Josephine Díaz and Pouponne. Circumscribed by a father with two families (one "white" and one Black), Henriette Delille "understood her life within the context of both slavery and freedom" (Goudeaux 4).

Mother Delille's grandmother, Henriette Laveau for whom she was named, had been born into slavery, as had her mother and grandmother before her. This backdrop into

the lives of Mother Delille's foremothers is important because the business administration of enslavement created an environment where white patriarchal capitalism legally supported the unjust commodification of Black female bodies. Mother Delille's ancestry in the colony of Louisiana can be traced back to the 1700's. The *Sacramental Records of the Roman Catholic Church of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, Vol. 1: 1718-1750* lists the baptism of Mother Henriette Delille's great-great-grandmother Nanette as occurring in 1720 at St. Louis Cathedral.<sup>34</sup> (See Appendix B for a photo of St. Louis Cathedral.) As a bondwoman of Claude Joseph Villars Dubreuil, Nanette was among the first African women of the Wolof tribe, baptized into the "dangerous religious creolization" between human bondage, African spirituality, and Catholicism (Davis 6). Dubreuil was married with two sons when he arrived in Louisiana in 1718 from the Atlantic seaport of La Rochelle, France.<sup>35</sup> By 1724, Dubreuil had become an indigo, sugar cane, and tobacco planter, as well as an engineer. Dubreuil and Nanette produced five enslaved and commodified African/French/Creole children. When Dubreuil died in 1757, he was one of the wealthiest capitalists in the Louisiana colony.

In 1763, Nanette gained her freedom from Dubreuil's son, Claude Joseph Villars Dubreuil. With womanist-infused business administration acumen, a fifty-three-year-old

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<sup>34</sup> Research by Virginia Meacham Gould and Charles E. Nolan lists Henriette Delille's great-great-grandmother as a bondwoman named Marie Ann. Marie Ann was owned by Claude Joseph Villars Dubreuil. Marie Ann's baptismal date was 1745. Marie Ann's children with Claude Joseph Villars Dubreuil are identified as Marie Ann, Cecile, and Etienne. For more, see Virginia Meacham Gould and Charles E. Nolan's *Henriette Delille: "Servant of Slaves."*

<sup>35</sup> Claude Joseph Villars Dubreuil arrived in the colony of Louisiana in 1718. Claude Thomas "Pierre" Métoyer arrived in the colony of Louisiana in 1766. Both are from the Atlantic seaport of La Rochelle France and members of the merchant (business administration) class. Although beyond the scope of this dissertation, I wonder what merchant class ideology/philosophy informed white patriarchal capitalism in the Americas.



Nanette purchased and emancipated her daughter Cécile as well as her grandchildren Henriette (Laveau) and Narcisse for two thousand dollars. Within two decades, both Cécile (Delille's great-grandmother) and daughter Henriette (Delille's grandmother) were among the wealthiest *femmes de couleur libre* real estate owners in New Orleans. (See Figure 3 for a genealogical chart of Mother Delille's family.)

Like her foremothers, young Henriette's religious education was rooted in Afro-Creole spirituality and Jansenism, a reformation form of Catholicism emphasizing an individual's direct relationship with God. Born and raised into a religiously condoned "white" patriarchal world which approached women of colors—free or enslaved—as bodies that could be commodified to advance white patriarchal capitalism, Mother Delille was groomed to become a *placée* of a "white" wealthy male in the socially sanctioned system of *plaçage* (Copeland 2007).<sup>36</sup> *Plaçage* was a system in which "white" men entered into civil unions with women of colors. Institutionalized with contracts that purchased homes, established businesses, and educated children born into these unions, *plaçage* flourished throughout New France and New Spain.

Around 1828, Henriette's mother suffered a period of intense emotional distress, was declared mentally unstable, and placed in a mental health asylum. Oral histories suggest that the emotional breakdown may have been due to the ending of *plaçage*

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<sup>36</sup> During Mother Delille's canonization process for sainthood two burials appeared in the 1820s that suggests that as a teenager, Mother Delille may have given birth to two sons who died, each named Henry Bocno. This suggests Mother Delille may have been trafficked to wealthy "white" men like her sister, mother, and grandmothers. However, according to archdiocesan archivist Charles Nolan, it may also suggest that Henriette may have brought in two abandoned children for baptism and the priest recorded Henriette as the children's mother. I would also like to offer that Mother Delille's sister Cecile's last name is Bonile and Bocno may be a derivative of Bonile. These two young boys may have also been Cecile's sons that Delille presented for baptism as a witness and not as the boys' mother.

agreement with a wealthy “white” man. It was during this time that a young Henriette and her two young adult siblings were forced to make their own way in the world. Older sister Cecile Bonile chose the path of her foremothers, entering into a *plaçage* relationship with wealthy Austrian-born merchant Samuel Hart. Older brother Jean Delille became a slave trader, real estate speculator, and planter. Remarkably, Mother Delille was able to carve out a space that supported rather than supplanted the woman she chose to be. Hill Collins argues that due to the social practices of *plaçage* Mother Delille contained only one-eighth African ancestry at best. As an octoroon, if she had chosen *plaçage*, she would have fared better and lived a relatively luxurious and cultured lifestyle. According to Hill Collins, class distinctions “would become an increasingly important dimension of the Black social class in the South” (63). Mother Delille repudiated living in *plaçage* and chose to devote her life to God and her community.

Through her nonconventional act, Mother Delille redefined her position in society by deconstructing the mythology of the Black female body. Historically, the Black female body has been a highly traumatized raced, classed, and gendered space exploited and objectified by white patriarchal capitalism. Hill Collins offers an entry into this dialogue with her groundbreaking book *Black Sexual Politics: African Americans, Gender, and the New Racism*. Rather than debate the dominance of race versus sex in the history of enslaved and quasi-free people of color, Hill Collins reminds us that race, gender, and sexuality are inextricably linked. Mother Delille’s decision to live her life for God and her community provides an opportunity for renewal and healing unmarred by “white” hegemonic discourse or patriarchy. A living testament of human goodness, truth,

and beauty Mother Delille wrote an alternative reality with her body. In so doing, she invited Black female bodies to resist oppression and find their source(s) of independence.

### **A Business Administrator with a Womanist Consciousness – Mother Delille**

On May 2, 1836, a young Henriette inscribed in the opening pages of her prayer book, *The Soul United to Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar* by Comtesse de Carcado: “I believe in God. I hope in God. I love God. I want to live and die for God.” These statements are brimming with valuable business administration information from a womanist perspective. In these four basic statements, we glimpse an idea of Mother Delille’s overall spiritual and business administration health. For that reason alone, it is important to understand the significance of these four statements. If Mother Delille wanted to understand how to raise money, develop a new product or service, determine the best location for a new site, or take any other action to grow her businesses/ministries, she relied on these four basic statements as a guide. Feeling at peace with the life she chose, these four basic statements convey inner strength, wholeness, and the hope and comfort Mother Delille would find even in the most challenging times. More importantly, these statements connected her to Heaven and Earth by promoting a real sense of spiritual and collective well-being.

On November 21, 1836 (the Feast of the Presentation),<sup>37</sup> with Cuba-born *femme de couleur libre* Juliette Gaudin, Delille organized a religious confraternity.<sup>38</sup> Composed of married and single *femmes de couleur libre*, the mission of the congregation was to “care for the sick, assist the poor, and instruct the ignorant.” The initial group consisted of a board of twenty-four women and at least twenty-five repeat men and women donors. Today, it is hard to understand how such a large board was able to be so effective. The women adopted the name *La Congrégation des Souers de la Présentation de la Saint Vierge Marie*.<sup>39</sup> According to Sister Audrey Marie Detiege, S.S.F., a set of rules and regulations of the confraternity was drafted. (See a photo of the organizing documents in Appendix B.)

The women organized by electing a council consisting of a director, officers, and eight *zélatrices* or recruiters (evangelists). This group of married and single women referred to themselves as sisters and was not bound by vows of nuns. In addition, each woman lived at home, not in a convent. They chose as their motto, “One heart and one soul,” the very description that Luke gives in Acts 4:32. The rules stated that each woman should:

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<sup>37</sup> The presentation of the Blessed Virgin was based upon a belief coming from early apocryphal writings that Mary was placed in the Temple in Jerusalem as a very young girl. There is no Scriptural support for this notion, but a feast was established for the universal Church in the last quarter of the sixteenth century. Devotion to the Presentation of Mary became widespread in France in the eighteenth century. For more information see Father Cyprian Davis’ *Henriette Delille Servant of Slaves Witness to the Poor*.

<sup>38</sup> A religious confraternity is a voluntary association of lay people created for the purpose of promoting Christian education, charity, and piety. Customarily, a religious confraternity must be approved by the local Catholic diocese. We suspect but do not know if Delille and this group of women, who were not nuns, received approval from the local priest to form.

<sup>39</sup> See “The Rules and Regulations for the Congregations of the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary” Sisters of the Holy Family Archives, New Orleans, LA.

- “Seek to bring back the Glory of God and the salvation of their neighbor by a charitable and edifying behavior” and if a sister was to fall into “a considerable fault and continue to give scandal, the superior, either alone or with the assistance of her council, will charitably admonish her three times. If the advice is not heeded, she will be dropped from the membership of the congregation.”
- Help each other. Alone, very little could be done to evangelize or care for others. It was only through their collective strength that they could minister to the needs of their community.
- Understand “the sick, the infirm, and the poor” were the “first and the dearest objects of the solicitude of the Congregation.” (Detiege 10)

With these rules, the women (married and unmarried, affluent and desolate, educated and uneducated) organized themselves into a community that honored every woman's dignity by promoting multicultural cooperation. The rules also outlined how the women would approach their social justice ministry/work. Investing in each other to transform lives in their community, the women reimagined philanthropy and social bonds. We also see a consequence for women who refused to be cooperative in behavior.

Divided into three chapters, the first chapter listed the women forming the council as director, president, vice-president, two assistants, plus twelve councilors. In addition, there was a secretary, vice-secretary, treasurer, and vice treasurer. Finally, there were eight *zélatrices* (recruiters or possibly evangelists). The Board comprised twenty-four members from which the secretary, the treasurer, and their respective assistants were

chosen. Elections took place every year on November 20. Membership dues were fifty cents per month. According to Father Cyprian Davis, the purpose of the group was to:

Nurse the sick and the chronically ill among their members, taking care that a doctor be called and the remedies that he prescribed be obtained. If necessary, a watch was to be kept at the bedside and one was to attend to the spiritual needs of the sick. All the sisters were to be present at the burial. The interment was to be simple. The next day a Low Mass (a Mass without music or solemnity) was to be celebrated, and for the next week each sister was to recite Psalm 130 (*Out of the depths, I cry to you, O Lord.*) or a rosary. . . if funds were available, the congregation would take charge of any orphans of a sister who died in poverty.

(Davis 37)

To create meaningful change in each member's life, the women focused on health (spiritual, physical, emotional, and financial) needs. Extending care to a member's children, we see a profound understanding of sacredness beyond identity politics. In a world adjacent to slavery, as a *femme de couleur libre* who was neither wholly Black nor "white," neither enslaved nor free, Delille and this religious confraternity were able to transgress dominant customs and, in the process, redefine what it meant to be an *intrepeneur*. As *intrepeneurs*, these women's everyday actions are a direct critique of white patriarchal capitalism's aim to categorize human life based on race and gender hierarchies.

On November 21, 1842, Delille rented a house located near St. Augustine Catholic Church on Bayou Road. (See Appendix B for a sketch of St. Augustine Catholic

Church.) Delille, Sister Juliette Gaudin, and Sister Josephine Charles moved into the house on Bayou Road, and this is the first time that three members of The Congregation of the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary who are not yet nuns lived under the same roof. The home became the center of their ministry. From this location on Bayou Road and adjacent to St. Augustine Church, Delille aided those who were in need—the enslaved, the orphaned, the uneducated, aged, and the infirmed.

Shortly after moving into the house in 1842, Mother Delille, Sister Gaudin, and Sister Charles gained formal permission from the Vatican to organize as a religious community of women living under vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. In 1842, Mother Delille, Sister Gaudin, and Sister Charles established the canonical order *Soeurs de Sainte Famille* (Sisters of the Holy Family), with Delille becoming the first mother of the group.<sup>40</sup> Even after forming, the Congregation of the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary continued to exist and support the Sisters of the Holy Family. Although prohibited by law (and if prosecuted, the women could receive the death penalty because they were women of colors teaching people of African descent), the women catechized free and enslaved people of color, and taught basic reading, writing, and arithmetic.

Adopting a formal religious life to provide the corporal—food, clothing, shelter, healthcare, education—and as well as spiritual care, Mother Delille forged valuable connections between spiritual awareness and social justice work. The experience of using

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<sup>40</sup> Although recognized as nuns, these women of African descent would not be allowed to wear the habit (traditional dress) in public until 1872 without risking bodily harm by “white” racialized nuns and priests.

her identity to connect spiritual awareness and social justice work was more than an intellectual experiment. Nor was it a mere invitation given to her by “white” male religious advisers. For Mother Delille, it was an embodied experience that was activated by her belief that she would love, live, and die for God. Ironically, this belief happened when she took control of her body as a fifth-generation *femme de couleur libre* and refused to be held hostage by “white” patriarchal capitalism and culture. She would not be the subsidized object of “white” male pleasure. Instead, Mother Delille took joy in her ability to use her brilliance (mind, body, soul, and spirit) in service to God. In this meeting point of brilliance and service, Mother Delille found the source of her personal confidence and business acumen, connecting to her deepest administrative desire to serve the free, the quasi-free, and the enslaved.

I imagine that in the antebellum South, Mother Delille’s piety was a terrifying concept because women of colors’ bodies were desired and defiled in equal measure. According to M. Shawn Copeland, “Delille demonstrated considerable critical consciousness not only in understanding the way her own body was framed and read socially but in recognizing the way her body and those of enslaved persons and free black women were framed and read by others, white and black” (Copeland 4-5). Copeland’s claim provides a view of the intersectional nature of race, class, gender, and piety in the antebellum South. Mother Delille’s piety was also weighty. Amidst piety, Mother Delille reclaimed that which had been defiled yet was a valuable and necessary receptacle for white patriarchal capitalism to flourish—a woman of color’s physical, social, and spiritual body. Mother Delille had spent her entire life watching her mother,



grandmother, aunts, sister, and friends choicelessly participate in the perpetuation of “white” patriarchal culture through *plaçage*. She was a product of *plaçage* and surely had been taught since childhood that she too would live life as an object, existing exclusively for the enjoyment of a wealthy “white” male. However, in choosing piety, Mother Delille refused to be a vessel, created solely for “white” male use. Leading with piety, she asserted her right as a human being to think godly thoughts (how to best care for people of colors) and have godly experiences (caring for people of colors). Caring for versus commodifying people of colors was in direct opposition to white patriarchal capitalism.

In 1847, Mother Henriette Delille saw a need to care for older *femmes de couleur* through specialized nursing services. To do so, she incorporated and served as the first president of *L'Association de Sainte Famille* (The Holy Family Association). The Holy Family Association was the legal fundraising arm for the nursing home initiative. On September 18, 1848, the group purchased a lot on St. Bernard Avenue where they built a home for older women.<sup>41</sup> Sister Mary Bernard Deggs asserts that Mother Henriette Delille and Sister Juliette Gaudin moved into the house on St. Bernard Avenue with several “poor, aged women.” She then adds that the women had only been there a few months when the church parish trustees brought them “an old wounded man” who needed care (Deggs xxxiv).

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<sup>41</sup> The nursing home Mother Delille raised funds for in 1847 is known today as Lafon Nursing Facility of the Holy Family. Lafon Nursing Facility of the Holy Family is the first Catholic and oldest long-term care facility in the United States. The nursing home is named after *gen de couleur libre* businessman, human rights activists, and philanthropist Thomy Lafon (1810-1893). Lafon gave large sums of money to notable organizations like the American Anti-Slavery Society and the Underground Railroad, as well as to the Sisters of the Holy Family.

As previously stated, Mother Delille put particular emphasis on piety when this old wounded man needed to move into the house for care. Since Mother Delille, Sister Gaudin, and Sister Charles could not refuse to offer him aid, they received him into the house. But for pieties sake and to quell any gossip, they moved out of the house and into a nearby rental. They left the older women who resided at the St. Bernard house in the care of a manager.

In addition to piety politics, Mother Delille displayed strategic will, foresight, and organizational talent. On December 12, 1850, she expanded the ministry by purchasing a house at 72 Bayou Road for \$1,400. She borrowed \$700 from Jean Marie Aliquot,<sup>42</sup> put up \$391.25 from her inheritance, and took out a one-year note for \$308.75. The house was used for the religious education of people of colors, according to Catholic doctrine. In this way, Mother Henriette Delille used her inheritance to pay for the monthly expenses of the community for the rest of her life. From this property, the women ran a small school for girls, teaching them necessary literacy skills. They worked with the children during the day and taught adult women at night despite the illegality of doing so.

We do not know why, but Mother Delille and Sister Juliette Gaudin did not immediately move into the Bayou Road house. Instead, they moved to a rental house on Condé [Chartres] Street near the archbishop's residence. It was there that Mother Delille fell ill and believed she was dying. On May 23, 1851, Mother Delille summoned a

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<sup>42</sup> Jean Marie Aliquot was a pious French immigrant who came to New Orleans to join her sister who was an Ursuline Nun. Aliquot did not become an Ursuline Nun. Instead, she dedicated herself to the education of Louisiana's people of African descent. She caught a horrible cold after rescuing a young girl who was being trafficked by an older "white" man and died at the house on Bayou Road in 1863.

notary, Octave de Armas, and dictated the first of her three wills. She bequeathed her Bayou Road house to Archbishop Antoine Blanc and his successors “for the purpose of continuing or founding the work already undertaken by me, known as that of ‘the Children of the Holy Family,’ and having for its object the religious instruction of the poor and the illiterate.” Mother Delille bequeathed her bondswoman, Betsy, to her brother Jean. One must wonder why Mother Delille, who devoted most of her life to evangelizing and catechizing enslaved people, would have owned a bondswoman. Indeed, it was true that it was not unusual for *gens de couleur libre* in New Orleans to own bondspeople. Some *gens de couleur libre* owned their relatives; others bought and sold bondspeople, exploiting them for their labor. Betsy had been bequeathed to Mother Delille in her sister Cécile’s will in 1842. By 1850, when Mother Delille dictated this will, Louisiana laws governing the freeing of bondspeople had become repressive. To free Betsy, if she had desired to do so, Mother Delille would have had to post a sizable bond, and Betsy would be forced to leave the state. It is possible that Betsy did not wish to leave New Orleans but found her safety under Mother Delille’s protection (Detiege 14). We could also speculate that Mother Delille and Betsy did not have the funds to post the bond because all funds were dedicated for business/ministry use.

In 1852, the group made religious vows, and Delille became the Mother of the group. The Sisters of the Holy Family would go on to become the largest community of religious women in Louisiana by the turn of the twentieth century. In 1881, led by founding Sister Josephine Charles, the group purchased the infamous Quadroon

Ballroom<sup>43</sup> at 717 Orleans Street and converted it into the motherhouse, a boarding school, a day school, and an orphanage. The schools were so successful that by 1934 the women were educating over 4,000 students in seventeen schools throughout the Gulf Coast states of Florida, Louisiana, and Texas, and the settlement of British Honduras (Belize). By the 1950s, their good works would span three continents (North America, South America, and Africa) and comprise more than 300 sisters (Goudeaux 5).<sup>44</sup>

As an *intrepeneur*, community leader, and spiritual figure, Mother Delille is vitally important to United States business administration history. As a woman of African ancestry, Mother Delille's story emphasizes the profound ways women of colors continue to resist white patriarchal capitalism. Moreover, her efforts simultaneously deconstruct and reconstruct the concept of race, gender, and spirituality, as well as notions of who can participate in business. Despite identity, sexual, and white patriarchal capitalism politics, Mother Delille was able to change the course of her life, the lives of the women who served with her, and the communities they aided. In the process, her commitment led her to something greater and more profound—wealth was created and put to work for social transformation.

As her health deteriorated from tuberculosis, Mother Delille never stopped working for the most destitute members of her community. Honored for her compassion

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<sup>43</sup> The Quadroon Ballroom was the scandalous site where *femme de couleur libre* met and with their “mother’s help” were presented and placed with wealthy “white” men in the socially acceptable practice of *plaçage*.

<sup>44</sup> During the history of the Sisters of the Holy Family, this community of pious women of African descent served people living in cities and towns throughout the following states and territories: Alabama, California, Florida, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas, and Washington, D.C. In addition, the group has served in Belize, Panama, and Nigeria.

in providing care, comfort, and education to the free and enslaved *gens de couleur libre*, the very poor, the very sick, orphans, and the dying, and for her business acumen in effectively establishing and managing projects, on November 22, 1862, Mother Delille's obituary appeared on the front page of the archdiocesan newspaper, *Le Propagateur Catholique*. The brief obituary notes:

Last Monday, there occurred the death of one of those humble women whose obscure and retired life has nothing remarkable in the eyes of the world but is full of merit before God. Mademoiselle Henriette Delille for many years devoted herself without reserve to the religious instruction of the unlettered principally of slaves. In order to carry on this type of apostolate—so painful yet so useful—she had founded, with the help of several pious persons the House of the Holy Family, a poor house, little known, except by the poor and insignificant. And for the last dozen or so years, it has brought forth without much noise a considerable amount of good which will continue.

Without ever having heard the word philanthropy, this poor young woman has done more good than any of the philanthropists with their systems so brilliant and yet so sterile. Worn out by labor, she has died at the age of fifty after a long and painful illness, borne with the most edifying resignation. The large crowd that assisted at her funeral revealed by their grief the extent of the loss clearly felt for her who for the love of Jesus Christ had become the humble and devout servant of the slaves.<sup>45</sup>

As the first of only two native-born African Americans whose cause for canonization has been officially opened by the Catholic Church, Mother Delille provides insight into what it means to be a woman-of-color *intreprenuer* amongst white patriarchal capitalism (a

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<sup>45</sup> *Le Propagateur Catholique. Journal Officiel du diocese de la Nouvelle Orléans. Novembre 22, 1862.* Translation by Father Cyprian Davis, O.S.B.

system designed to exploit and oppress). More importantly, Mother Delille's life and contributions exemplify what it means to be faithful to God and the community amid adversity and uncertainty.

*As femmes de couleur libre*, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille were neither fully enslaved nor entirely free. More importantly, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille used community ties and maternal holiness—community affiliation and spiritual beliefs—to protest race, class, and gender injustice through their *intrepreneurship*. Gould makes a similar assertion in “Henriette Delille, Free Women of Color, and Catholicism in Antebellum New Orleans, 1727-1852.” Gould asserts, “These women recast their identities and thus their influence and power within their community” (280). Gould demonstrates how ancestral legacy and *intrepreneurial* activities molded *femmes de couleur libre* into spiritual servants and social activists.

In the next chapter, I will ground myself in the wisdom/mental space of Madame Delille's *intrepreneurship* in order to examine how she catalyzed and solidified her business legacy through making and using money, building viable businesses, and creating security for communities of colors, to catalyze and solidify her business legacy. Mother Delille's business legacy includes a hospital, a nursing home, an orphanage/asylum, boarding and day schools, a luxury clothing retail, and an array of social service ministries to support people regardless of race or social (free or enslaved) status.

## Conclusion

Embodied in socially constructed Black female bodies/Black spiritual souls, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille were wholly integrated into the womanist production of work and wealth creation in the colonial (c.1492-1763) and antebellum (c.1812-1861) colony of Louisiana. As powerful representations of *intrepreneurs*, “these astonishing women skillfully bargained with the master class” to function on the frontlines of white patriarchal capitalism (Johnson-Fisher vii). Keeping body and soul whole (*en pleine forme*), Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille carved out spaces where women of colors could not only survive but collectively resist the normalization of “white” racialized men as the only administrators of business history in the Americas.

CHAPTER III  
ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCY:  
MAKING AND USING MONEY

**Womanist Approaches to Business Administration**

As suggested in the previous chapters, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille can be described as *intrepreneurs* who made and used money through a womanist framework. As the primary stewards of their economic and social legacies, they forged an economic development consciousness that continues today. Using multiple forms of capital—courage, influence, liberty, financial, and social—Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille shattered paradigms long before the term paradigm had made its way into business administration lexicon. It took courage for Mother Delille to ignore legality and educate and marry the enslaved at the risk of death (Davis 46, Deggs xxiv). It took influence for Madame Métoyer to obtain a land grant from a Spanish King. She also financed her enslaved children and grandchildren’s freedom/liberty (Shown Mills 7). Mother Delille also used social clout to recruit *femmes de couleur libre* to present their “everyday, ordinary life—[their] sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—” in service to God (The Message Bible, Romans 12:1).<sup>46</sup> Although the terms “womanist” and

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<sup>46</sup> Eugene Peterson’s version of Romans 12:1-2 presses, “So here’s what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don’t become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You’ll be changed from the inside out. Readily, recognize what he wants from you,



“womanism” had not yet been coined, throughout their lives, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille articulated a womanist consciousness in their *intrepreneurial* endeavors.

The community/social well-being work they engaged in and their business contributions can be described, in contemporary terms, as womanist administration. In this dissertation, I am defining the term womanist administration as a womanist survival technique through which one engages in business and uses money generated from those businesses for community advocacy, social justice, racial uplift, and gender equity. As I will explain in Chapter Four, womanist administration aims include transcultural/interracial cooperation, political empowerment, economic advancement, education, cultural enhancement, spiritual enrichment and generational endurance. As I will explain in Chapter Five, womanist administrators as a way of life promote communal esteem, help to heal collective consciousness, and contend with multiple dynamics to counteract the “metabolic shocks (traumatic retentions)” of white patriarchal capitalism (Menakem 137).<sup>47</sup> By rejecting socially constructed identity categories regarding who could (and could not) engage in business, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille confronted stereotypes about women of colors and stripped away the primacy of white patriarchal capitalism. These successful *intrepreneurs*’ significance and accomplishments provide fertile ground for the embodied concept of womanist-inspired/-influenced labor and economics.

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and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.

<sup>47</sup> For more on traumatic retentions see Resmaa Menakem’s *My Grandmother’s Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies*.

As weavers of womanist administrative wisdom these findings provide insight into how gender intersects with other markers of difference—race, gender, class, spirituality—to form a distinct *intrepreneurial* and womanist-infused identity. Additionally, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille’s work challenges numerous discriminatory and inequitable issues (race, gender, class) driven by white patriarchal capitalism. The complex nature of white patriarchal capitalism’s influence on how we make and use money in socially constructed gendered, raced, and classed bodies has implications for women of colors, like Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille, who hold threshold identities (e.g., Black/bi-racial, sexual/asexual, community/spiritual leader/healer, prosperous/influential *femme de couleur libre*, etc.). Gloria Anzaldúa makes a similar point in *Light in the Dark: Los En Lo Oscuro: Rewriting Identity, Spirituality* when she notes, “If you’re a person of color, those expectations take on more pronounced nuances due to the traumas of racism and colonization” (65). The paradoxical psychology of expectations Anzaldúa speaks of suggests that Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille were conscious of the impact imperialism and colonization (byproducts of white patriarchal capitalism) had on their ability to engage in business.

Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille’s wide range of business involvement with numerous industries (healthcare, agriculture, ministry) illustrates the complexity and multiplicity of women of colors’ activities and lives. From a womanist perspective, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille’s administrative activities are not value-neutral, but a practical expression of whom they were born to be. Expressed individually and

collectively, womanist administrative activities have little to do with obsessions/possessions and everything to do with the ancestral memory encoded in our bodies and passed down from generation to generation. Remembered in “family and communal strategies that African Americans have used for generations” and an inherited pre-white patriarchal capitalism, ancestral memory lives in our breath as well as our movements while simultaneously prophesizing the future we envision (Menakem 191). Exercising womanist administrative activities calls us, as members of the universe, to understand that we are much, much more than the racial, economic, and sexual labels imposed on us by those long dead—but whose ideas are alive and well assigned to us as women of colors. Whether we are managing homes, classrooms, departments, groups, institutions, or global markets, it is essential that womanist administrators develop the sound convictions at the core of Maparyan’s womanist ideal(s) and find ways to integrate womanist theories with administrative theory.

No longer can we counter white patriarchal capitalism’s ideology, politics, and public policy with only social and political action. We owe it to our ancestors and the generations that will follow to counter white patriarchal capitalism with professional tenacity, just as Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille did. For womanist administrators, simply redefining administration by recontextualizing it into a more tokenized “white” patriarchal system is insufficient. At our core, we were created to be resilient flesh-and-blood healers, peace-seekers, and wisdom-givers. As healers, seekers, and givers, we must comprehend “how underlying systemic institutions and beliefs (linkages among

hyper-capitalism, white-supremacism, sexism, and so on) contribute to individual experiences of alienation and self-loss” (Keating, *Transformation Now!* 153-154). To be more effective as a community, we must be more equitable, and to be more equitable something influential and critical is needed to shape both the concept and positionality of how we make and use money. This is necessary because “the liberation of all oppressed peoples necessitates the destruction of the political-economic systems of capitalism and imperialism as well as patriarchy” (Combahee River Collective 19). One alternative for us to consider is a womanist theories paradigm based upon a more nuanced understanding of Maparyan’s womanism. To test my argument, I will focus on three of the five overarching characteristics Maparyan outlined in *The Womanist Reader*. The three characteristics are (1) vernacular, (2) commonweal, and (3) spiritualized.

### **Womanist Insights of Administration**

As I define the term, “vernacular” symbolizes activities of daily living. Whether attending to routine tasks such as eating, clothing, and housing, or working on instrumental tasks like using technology, managing finances, and organizing living/workspaces, all human beings (self-aided or assisted) engage in elements necessary for existence. As a nonofficial prescriptive approach, vernacular also implies a down-to-earth style of expressing and communicating with the seen and unseen. As an evolving set of collective beliefs, values, and attitudes about what we choose to eat, how we live, whom we are in relationship with, the ways we practice self-care and health, and what gives meaning to our lives, “vernacular” quickly reminds us that “all people have

‘everyday’ lives” (Phillips xxiv). Appreciating Maparyan’s definition, as vernacular *int*repreneurs, problem-solvers, and negotiators, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille stood on the front lines of non-white non-male business management vernacular (daily language/communication). As a matter of fact, current research suggests Madame Métoyer was unable to read or write in any language (Creole, Togo, French, Spanish, or English). However, she was able to establish and operate multiple business enterprises as well as invest in the business ventures of others.

In contrast to Maparyan’s vernacular, white patriarchal capitalism often functions through complex and fanciful terms and phrases to keep people excluded. Meaningless business jargon includes the latest business buzzwords and vacuous management-speak. For example, as a child growing up in rural Central-Louisiana in the 1980s I watched my Great Depression-era grandmother’s business management vernacular. My community-gardening grandmother did not need a packed room of executives to understand how to manage her garden or what was looming on the food-and-ornamental flower-gardening horizon. Grandma’s 1980s stage/podium was a laminated kitchen table she purchased in the 1950s, and her PowerPoint deck was both sides of one of many brown paper bags she saved from every grocery store visit, a pencil often sharpened with the nearest carving knife, a free calendar from her banking institution, and that year’s edition of the *Old Farmer’s Almanac*. I speculate that Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille, like my grandmother, accomplished “everyday” business management tasks by asking simple questions like: (1) What do I need to do? (2) What or whom do I need to know to

accomplish what I need to do? (3) How will this work? (4) At the end of the day, what will this mean for people, the land, etc.? (5) What am I forgetting/missing? and (6) What do I need to do next? I further speculate that, like my grandmother, they ended this uncomplicated management exercise with a petition of prayer for a good outcome.

As an administration function, business management vernacular is a key component and has an impact on the strategic direction of the conventional home, communal economy, and global business environment. Just as the higher education community has advocated the necessity of an inclusive approach to education, we must likewise advance a womanist-infused business administration approach for contemporary *intrepreneurs*. I would posit that business management vernacular is also closely related to administrative behavior, etiquette, values, vision and mission statements, and working styles. The ease through which we can communicate our ideas influences business vernacular management decisions and activities—Technical (“production, manufacture, adaptation”), Commercial (marketing or “buying, selling, exchange”), Financial (“search for and optimum use of capital”), Security (risk management or “protection of property and persons”), Accounting (profit and loss or “stocktaking, balance sheet, costs, statistics”) and Managerial (“planning, organization, command co-ordination, control” or “co-ordinating and harmonizing effort and activity”)—as outlined by French mining engineer Henri Fayol in his 1916 seminal work *Administration industrielle et général (General and Industrial Management)* (3-5). More importantly,

[e]veryone needs some concepts of management; in the home, in affairs of State, the need for managerial ability is in keeping with the importance of the undertaking, and for individual people the need is everywhere greater in accordance with the position occupied. Hence there should be some generalized teaching of management; elementary in the primary schools, somewhat wider in the post-primary schools, and quite advanced in higher educational establishments. (16)

In the modern workplace this includes unpacking white patriarchal capitalism biases about women of colors brains, bodies, and cultural style. For example, Black folx<sup>48</sup> and other culturally humble/competent folx already know you should never touch or ask to touch a woman of colors' hair in the workplace. Nor should you comment that her hairstyle is unprofessional.

When we consider the business management vernacular enucleation of how we make and use money from a womanist perspective, we see how we can integrate a worldview that is inclusive and accessible for all. For Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille, daily administrative tasks and strategies were motivated and understood through a context of inclusivity (gendered, raced, and classed). For instance, when Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille were building their business enterprises they had to build a sense of acceptance and belonging (inclusivity) within the production of their labor. I

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<sup>48</sup> Folx is an alternative spelling of folks. Folx has been adopted by communities of color to denote inclusion of historically excluded groups.

speculate that they were not just generating debt/credit for the sole purpose of emancipating an enslaved child, illegally educating and marrying the enslaved, caring for enslaved and free orphans of colors, or manufacturing medicine/nursing the ill of all colors; as *femmes de couleur libre* intrepeneurs, they were exhibiting their everyday convictions/beliefs/values of what it meant to resist white patriarchal capitalism.

The second characteristic, commonweal, is the process of ushering in collective well-being for all livingkind. Commonweal is the goal of any womanist-informed civil/political/economic/spiritual movement. According to Maparyan, “[F]ull-fledged commonweal is not possible until its prerequisites are achieved: (1) universal recognition of the organic wholeness of humanity (and creation), (2) universal recognition of Innate Divinity (including the “Three Recognitions”), and (3) a universalization of health and education (sound body and sound mind)” (10-11). Building on Maparyan’s three qualifications, I describe commonweal as the capacity to cultivate kindness in our souls, homes, classrooms, workspaces, communities, and the world. In addition to ethical and theological considerations, kindness must be at the center of our commonweal efforts. As such, a home, workspace, community, institutional, or government space practicing kindness would be committed to teaching the ways rugged individualism and dehumanization as “a joint creation of biology, culture, and the architecture of the human mind” impacts us personally, relationally, and collectively (Smith, *Less Than Human* 4). All forms of cruelty must be spotted and categorized for what they are—unkindness.



Thus, *intrepreneurs* must be committed to correcting and ending all forms of white patriarchal capitalism cruelty.

Kindness as a practice encourages commonweal but also promotes positive self-identity to help people develop. Obviously, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille were committed to making and using money for their communities and had the physical/mental/spiritual stamina/power to run multiple enterprises. We see from both women's *intrepreneurship* that this power source and practice of kindness brought ongoing continuous satisfaction. Audre Lorde makes a similar assertion in *Sister Outsider* when she writes,

[t]he principal horror of any system which defines the good in terms of profit rather than in terms of human need, or which defines human need to the exclusion of the psychic and emotional components of that need—the principal horror of such a system is that it robs our work of its erotic value, its erotic power and life appeal and fulfillment. Such a system reduces work to a travesty of necessities, a duty by which we earn bread or oblivion for ourselves and those we love. But this is tantamount to blinding a painter and then telling her to improve her work, and to enjoy the act of painting. It is not only next to impossible, it is also profoundly cruel. (55)

Empowered people live their truth. As an empowered woman, Mother Delille understood that the ministry could not be successful in its mission if any member of their community was in need. Returning to the wounded man who needed care described in the previous

chapter, Mother Delille did not turn him away. She hired a manager for the nursing home and the sisters moved to another home. Through this process, we see that Mother Delille contradicts any gossip, especially from religious “white” women/sisters, about women of African descent being incapable of living holy/pious because a wounded man was being cared for under their roof (Deggs 8).

There is also the realm of commonweal that is larger than what we can see with physical eyesight; it is the insightful realm of universal spiritual experience that can be used as a guide to spot out unkindness. Mother Delille used spiritual insight and the theological concept of grace to commit to issues and initiatives that combated unkindness. She dedicated her commonweal *int*repreneurship to this goodness and invited likeminded women to serve with her. In the process, she changed her life, and her legacy of commonweal continues to affect the world.

As I look into the eyes of images of Mother Delille and the women who served alongside her, I see a shared devotion in their hearts. As a cultivator of commonweal, Mother Delille ensured that communities and futures generations, regardless of race, class, gender, or age, would inherit the world that she wanted to leave to them—a world of collective kindness. Based on Sister Deggs’ journal and Father Davis’s research, I will not fool you and say that Delille’s service was easy. Mother Delille and the band of sisters wrestled with many challenges. Many of those challenges came from within the

Catholic Church.<sup>49</sup> Sister Degg's writes, "In spite of the charity of their many kind friends, they (the foundresses) suffered much owing to the strictness of the times" (9). Beneficent and useful, Delille's and the sisters' work defined who they were and what they stood for in a suffering/unkind world fueled by white patriarchal capitalism. While pushing for social change, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille (as well as the sisters who served with her) served with their hearts and lives by carving out a space where free and enslaved people lived side-by-side, pushed products and services to global markets, aided in the continuation and multiplication of the *gens de couleur libre* population, relieved human suffering, and used money for commonweal.

As a physical/emotional/spiritualized site of kindness, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille also used food to promote commonweal. Even after he was married to the widow Buard (Pavie), Pierre Métoyer noted in an 1801 will that he was "indebted to Coincoin for turkeys she had furnished him" (Mills 39). We know that Mother Delille and the band of sisters often went without food to feed a community member and drank

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<sup>49</sup> When Archbishop Antoine Blanc requested permission from the Vatican for the band of *femmes de couleur libre* to be affiliated with the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Rome, he failed to mention the women were *de couleur libre* as required by Louisiana and ecclesiastical law. Because of race, when Mother Delille took vows in 1851 it was only to "serve the Church" and not the formal vows of "poverty, chastity, and obedience" taken by all who enter religious life. In addition, as the poorest and Blackest Catholic community, the women were forced to transport, by foot, and wash ten to twelve baskets of priest and altar boy clothing two days per week. Deggs writes in her journal that the women were also persecuted by the "white" Sisters of St. Joseph who tried to make them take off their holy habits by physically assaulting them in public because they were Black. In addition to legislative laws that were created to restrict the rights of *gens de couleur libre*, the Louisiana diocese had its own internal conflicts that impacted the Sisters of the Holy Family. This conflict may have been attributed to the fact that the diocese reported to Bishop John Carroll in Baltimore, Maryland, more than one thousand miles away. The priests who were assigned to New Orleans (the Sisters of the Holy Family), Fathers Claude Thoma and Jean Kouine, were refugees from Saint Domingue with a notorious reputation of being too fond of *femmes de couleur libre*. Both priests were living with *placees* and the children they had fathered.

sugar water to stave off hunger pains so that they could sleep at night (Deggs xxxv). I speculate that Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's workspaces were also sites of kindness where everything within was shared and belonged to everyone, including money. We know that for fifteen years, Madame Métoyer used her business earnings to pay off the slaveholders who owned her children and grandchildren.<sup>50</sup> Every product and service had a dual reason and purpose. Madame Métoyer's daily mindset was focused on how to reach her personal and familial goals—emancipation and community security through business ventures. She did not have the privileges or opportunities afforded to “white” men or women in a society built on white patriarchal capitalism, but she had resiliency and “collective-action—action that heals” (Menakem 237).

In contrast to the healing power of Maparyan's commonweal, white patriarchal capitalism is characterized by rugged individualism. As I write this dissertation in mid-October 2020, rugged individualism has been unleashed and continues to affect our fight against COVID-19 in the United States. Requests from epidemiologists (the experts) to stay at home as much as possible, wear a mask out in public and in buildings, wash your hands frequently, avoid situations where you can't stay at least six feet apart, treat essential workers with respect and dignity, and limit the number of people at social gatherings has been fraught with a “me-first/don't inconvenience me” mentality of unkindness. This false narrative of rugged individualism over commonweal is baked into

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<sup>50</sup> When Madame Métoyer arranged for the emancipation of her children on credit, the children did not immediately go home with Madame Métoyer in the ways we think of the credit process today. The children remained with the slaveholder until the freedom price was paid in full. It took Madame Métoyer over 15 years to free all of her enslaved children.

the United States' founding. The United States values individualism, materialism, and wealth over the collective well-being of our neighbors, and is literally quite willing to sacrifice human life to continue cruelty. COVID-19 has exposed the unkind hearts of many of our neighbors. However, this rugged individualism is having horrific consequences for the men, women, and children with intersecting identities (people of colors, essential workers, people with pre-existing health conditions, etc.,) who are impacted by the illness and the rising death toll.<sup>51</sup>

Commonweal is about valuing differences and recognizing that they contribute to the whole. More of us need to be a part of a commonweal approach to administrative efforts if *intrepreneurs* are going to be successful. As members of the *femme de couleur libre* caste, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's success hinged on building a strong community. During times of business expansion, they surrounded themselves with people who supported, grew, and articulated their vision of collective well-being. In 1847, when Mother Delille saw the need to build a nursing home for older women, she organized and surrounded herself with like-minded *gens de couleur libre* who helped her realize her vision. Delille's nursing home continues to promote well-being today. When Madame Métoyer expanded into ranching in 1797, she hired José Maré and his family to manage the cattle operation. José Maré and his family managed the cattle operation and supplied meat to the fledgling Natchitoches economy until Maré's death in 1807.

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<sup>51</sup> COVID-19 has quickly become the disease of the haves and have-nots. If you have the funds and the political clout, the access to care (kindness) is different from those who do not.

Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille understood that people are the heart of any successful enterprise. People provide kindness as well as creativity and innovation but are rarely reflected in white patriarchal capitalism financial statements. Considering the vital role people play in a business's ability to make and use money, collective well-being must be calculated into every business endeavor. Therefore, as an administrative function every business should be concerned with commonweal. In *The Protestant Ethic and the "Spirit" of Capitalism*, German political economist and sociologist Max Weber discusses Christian charity for the commonweal in the following way:

“Christian charity” [*Nächstenliebe*]*—since, after all, it was to serve only the glory of God, not that of a creature—expressed itself principally in the fulfillment of the duties of the calling given through the *lex naturae*, and in this it took on a peculiarly neutral and impersonal character—one which served the rational structuring of the surrounding social *cosmos*. The wonderfully purposeful structuring and organization of this cosmos, which, according to the biblical revelation and equally according to natural insight, is evidently designed to be of “use” to the human race, shows that labor in the service of this social usefulness furthers the divine glory and is willed by God. (76)*

Seeing through the chains of oppression (undignified mercilessness), Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille continuously projected a path forward as if supernaturally ordered. In so doing, they honored who they were as women capable of making and using money and created a sense of shared purpose within the communities they led. As pragmatists, they

were not afraid to do what was necessary, including facing anti-Blackness, prejudice, and persecution from the Catholic Church and inequality governmental regimes, in order to meet their anti-white patriarchal capitalism business goals. As *intrepreneurs*, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille saw with clarity and believed in succession planning. Guided by a vision of a future of freedom, Madame Métoyer built her businesses and then understood the importance of transferring her workforce and wealth to the next generation prior to her death. Mother Delille also made sure her community would continue after her death by bequeathing capital through three known wills.<sup>52</sup>

The third and final womanist characteristic we will discuss in this chapter is a spiritualized approach. This spiritualized approach acknowledges, invites, and welcomes the supernatural. As a discerning communicative-based (knowledge, wisdom, faith/encouragement, revelation, prophecy) worldview that prioritizes inspiration, regeneration, and transformation, a spiritualized approach is where the physical meets and intertwines with the cosmological and metaphysical. As Maparyan asserts in *The Womanist Idea*, a womanist perspective of this communicative-based worldview

is cross-cutting and global, and it serves as the basis for a new kind of universalist politics; namely, spiritualized politics. Spiritualized politics are animated by metaphysical and cosmological understandings and practices, by love for people

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<sup>52</sup> Mother Delille's first will was drawn in 1851, the second will was drawn up in 1852, and the last will was drawn in 1860. Octave de Armas, notary, drew up the wills of 1852 and 1860. In all three wills she confirmed that she was foundress and Mother of the Sisters of the Holy Family. Betsy, her bondwoman, was to be given her freedom. It is important to note that legally in 1860, it was no longer legally possible to manumit a bondwoman in the state of Louisiana. For more on Mother Delille's wills see Father Cyprian Davis' *Henriette Delille Servant of Slaves Witness to the Poor*.

and other beings as a feeling and a praxis, by inspiration as a higher vibrational state filled with clarity and power, and by an inspired vision illuminating and giving life to future, present, and past realities. . . womanism is a spirit of being and a spirit of doing. . . . For womanists, decisions about what to do and how to be and what to expect and what is possible are informed by this ongoing *personal, practical, lived, and alive* engagement with the spiritual and metaphysical strata of existence and human understanding. (86-87)

Encouraging and empowering, the spiritualized politics womanism offers feels boundless and illusory. How do Maparyan's bold ideas about spiritualized politics play out in the life of *intrepreneurs* like Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille? A spiritualized approach to *intrepreneurship* must be centered on the supernatural. Throughout Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's *intrepreneurial* endeavors, we see how the supernatural influenced how they made and used money as *femmes de couleur libre* (outliers). The supernatural was expressed in their hearts (who they helped), abilities (businesses they engaged in), and intellect (how they used their brains daily to forge a divergent path from white patriarchal capitalism). We also see a demonstration of the supernatural as we consider Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's status as *femmes de couleur libre* during a time in history when most women of African descent in the Americas were enslaved commodified laborers. Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's lives (spiritualized



*intrepreneurship*) are both prophetic and revelatory considering the number of women of colors engaged in education, business, and politics today.<sup>53</sup>

In Chapter One, we defined *intrepreneurs* as business professionals who bring value to the work/marketplace. Building on Maparyan's concept of spiritualized,<sup>54</sup> I am defining spiritualized *intrepreneurship* as the act and commitment of organizing/managing the change you want to see in the world and having the audacity to invite *others*, including the supernatural, to join you. Spiritualized *intrepreneurs* understand a more pliable approach to livingkind is required than is offered by contemporary administrative/management paradigms. Currently, contemporary administrative paradigms make assumptions about human nature. These assumptions, based on stereotypes, are then used to make critical business decisions and respond to human and nonhuman workers. For instance, it is troublesome and out of order to base decisions of business funding and promotion upon white patriarchal capitalism stereotypes such as the notion that a woman's emotions will always override her logic or that African American and Latinx workers are incompetent and lack ambition.

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<sup>53</sup> Women of colors have made inroads in the Americas. In 2020 Catalyst reported that women of colors are earning more college degrees than men and will be the majority of all women in the United States by 2060 (*Advancing African American Women*). According to the Department of Labor, four out of every ten businesses in the United States are owned by women, growing from 402,000 in 1972 to 12.3 million in 2018. In 2017, women of colors accounted for 71% of new female-owned businesses. The Center for American Women and Politics reported that women of colors serve in every state of the United States except Nebraska 37.3% of United States Congress are women of colors and 25.2% of women of colors are state legislators. In addition, the United States just elected its first woman and woman of colors Vice President, Kamala Harris in 2020.

<sup>54</sup> AnaLouise Keating coined the term spiritualized politics and Layli Maparyan built on the concept. For more on spiritualized politics see "Shifting Perspectives: Spiritual Activism, Social Transformation, and the Politics of Spirit." *Entre Mundos/Among Worlds: New Perspectives on Gloria E. Anzaldúa*.

Biased paradigms about human nature (individual, corporate, and collective) are dangerous and harmful. The nature of livingkind is not rigid but in a constant state of transition. For spiritualized *intrepreneurs*, regardless of the perceived status, position, and/or level of performance, livingkind is imbued with the supernatural and hence deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. Supernaturally, Madame Métoyer never stopped working for her children and grandchildren's freedom, nor did Mother Delille ever turn away anyone (Black or "white") in need. Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille built their family/community's extensive holdings from the ground up while navigating the oppressive and unjust dimensions of white patriarchal capitalism. Considering that women of colors have traditionally had higher rates of workforce participation, women of colors social and cognitive skills have unsurprisingly been a vital part of the "history and evolution of inequality regimes" in the Americas (Piketty, *Capital and Ideology* 3). As pragmatists who navigated global label markets (the Black enslaved and "white" free worlds), Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille were perceptive and modern in their business administration principles while being governed by multiple inequality regimes.

In contrast to the vernacular, commonweal, and spiritualized approaches Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille employed to make and use money, white patriarchal capitalism and its focus on dehumanization for profit is utterly flawed and materialistic. Dehumanization has deeply influenced the inequality seen since European regimes made landfall in the Americas. According to David Livingstone Smith in *Less than Human: Why We Demean, Enslave, And Exterminate Others*,

Dehumanization isn't a way of talking. It's a way of thinking—a way of thinking that, sadly, comes all too easily. . . Dehumanization is a scourge. . . It acts as a psychological lubricant, dissolving our inhibitions and inflaming our destructive passions. As such, it empowers us to perform acts that would, under other circumstances, be unthinkable. (13)

As objects of dehumanization because of their gender and race, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille supernaturally were able to carve out a space where they were able to make and use money according to their own goals. Perhaps even more importantly, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille used the agency of their own labor, liberation, and resilience to their advantage and in the process helped contribute to a rich but overlooked womanist *int*repreneurship (business administration) tradition.

Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille included the larger community in their interconnected network where people recognized and honored individual and community worth. Their ability to mobilize was linked to kinship groups (a sense of belonging). Also noteworthy is their ability to build communal business legacies in a vast range of industries (viable business enterprises). A renewed commitment to (re)discover these legacies of community well-being, confidence, and pride that have been overshadowed throughout history is sorely needed. Their ability to accurately assess community needs (see a need and fill it) also contributed to their *int*repreneurial success.

I'm reminded of the rap group Wu-Tang Clan's<sup>55</sup> song lyrics "C.R.E.A.M.," an acronym for Cash Rules Everything Around Me. The song is not an anthem for white patriarchal capitalism but rather a harsh critique. The hook is, "Cash rules everything around me/C.R.E.A.M./Get the money/Dollar, dollar bill y'all," and is an indictment of the hopeless sufferings and frustrations created by white patriarchal capitalism. If chasing cash is the only option for the survival of communities of colors within white patriarchal capitalism then we are doomed to a vicious cycle of continued injustice. Based on the Wu-Tang Clan's assessment, white patriarchal capitalism renders life unlivable for those on the wrong side.

Spiritualized *int*repreneurship demonstrates the various ways cash is to be put to work and is an argument for collective well-being. The 1990s sentiment in which "C.R.E.A.M." was written is profound. If you find yourself on the wrong side Wu-Tang Clan raps about, the twenty-four/seven news cycle reminds us that no amount of business advice *du jour* or principles of scientific management may ever be enough to help counter the impact of white patriarchal capitalism on your life. Hopefully, if you learn to apply the spiritual approach Maparyan recommends, you learn to resist, you heal your soul/vagus nerve<sup>56</sup> and that of your ancestors, and you teach the next generation survival

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<sup>55</sup> Wu-Tang Clan is an influential 1990's rap group. The Wu-Tang Clan consisted of ten MCs: RZA, GZA, Ol' Dirty Bastard (1968-2004), Inspectah Deck, Raekwon the Chef, Ghostface Killah, Method Man, U-God, Masta Killa, and Cappadonna.

<sup>56</sup> A soul/vagus nerve is the network of nerves that runs from our spines to our brains. The soul nerve is where we process heartache and heartbreak. For more on the soul nerve see Bessel Van Der Kolk's *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the healing of Trauma*, and Resmaa Menkema's *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies*.

intelligence. For instance, if ever caught driving (managing an automobile) while Black, bird watching (managing binoculars) while Black, working (managing business tasks) while Black, playing (managing leisure time) while Black, napping (managing self-care) in a dorm while Black, or dwelling (managing basic needs of food, clothing, shelter) while Black, you resist the byproducts of white patriarchal capitalism with your birthright—resilient flesh-and-blood healers, peace-seekers, and wisdom-givers.

Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille left us a very special gift: an example of how we can transgress socially constructed identity categories to engage in strategically scalable business enterprises and accumulate and transfer wealth to future generations. Their journey was not linear but quite complexed, and involving individual agency, kinship/group (biological and spiritual) action, assessment of community needs, and the administrative authority of three inequality regimes—France, Spain, and the United States. Demographic compositions and economic roles of Natchitoches and New Orleans were essential to the local, regional, and global markets. Historical understanding of the business methods (how to organize the inequality regime to promote the dehumanization of colonialism, human bondage, and racialism) used by France, Spain, and the United States remains our best tool for understanding the inequality that fueled the growth of white patriarchal capitalism.

Determined yet hidden contributors of American business administration history, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's business enterprises emerged alongside the propagation of white patriarchal capitalism in the Americas. In *Capital and Ideology*,

Thomas Piketty defines an inequality regime “as a set of discourses and institutional agreements intended to justify and structure the economic, social, and political inequalities of a given society” (2). Inequality regimes are not new and have existed for millennia. Unfortunately, the business history of the Americas has widely and profoundly been told from an inequality regime “white” male perspective. From the French Crown to the Spanish Bourbons to the British Anglo to the United States, the expropriation of surplus value created by enslaved male and female labor alongside the sexual exploitation of free and enslaved women of colors “does not begin to present the unique dimensions of the Black woman’s historical experience” (Marable 61). Transferring vast amounts of wealth to Europe while destroying civilizations of colors in the name of anti-Blackness, authoritarian religiosity significantly influenced and continues today to influence both the argument for and the structure of white patriarchal capitalism.

The perverted exploitation of women of colors’ bodies was deep-rooted in the white patriarchal capitalist policies of the French Crown (New France), Spanish Bourbon (New Spain), British Anglo, and the United States. As a web of interlocking, reinforcing inequality regimes (economic, military, legal, educational, religious, and cultural), the white patriarchal capitalism policies of nations affected every aspect of life. According to Caitlin Rosenthal in *Accounting for Slavery: Masters and Management*, “Inequality can drive innovation, and innovation can entrench inequality, particularly in highly unregulated labor markets that put everything—even lives—up for sale” (192). Let us delineate the innovative processes through which Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille

navigated their lives through white patriarchal capitalistic inequality regimes. It is important to note that each inequality regime was designed to bring economic wealth, power, and privilege to the “mother” country (France, Spain, Great Britain, and the United States) and death, theft, and destruction to Indigenous and African civilizations.

### **The Business of Regimes**

From 1714 to 1803, people of Indigenous, French, Spanish, African, and British descent formed communities in the Louisiana colony.<sup>57</sup> Madame Métoyer’s birthplace, Natchitoches, was a rural town located on the Louisiana-Texas frontier. Mother Delille’s birthplace, New Orleans, was a thriving urban city and the capital of the Louisiana territory. While Natchitoches was the economic (business) gateway into the Great Plains, New Orleans was the economic (business) gateway into the Atlantic. During the colonial and antebellum period before the widespread usage of trains and automobiles, the Atlantic Ocean served as the highway between Europe, Africa, and the Americas. This oceanic highway tied together a complex business network of human capital, a cheap supply of raw materials (timber, tobacco, sugar, furs), and finished goods that brought wealth to European empires and warfare, cultural change, and decimation to people of

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<sup>57</sup> The Louisiana Purchase was a land deal between France’s Napoleon Bonaparte and the United States’ Thomas Jefferson in 1803. Consisting of 828,000 square miles of land bordered by the Mississippi river on the east, the \$15M deal included the present-day states of Arkansas, Oklahoma, Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, Nebraska, parts of Minnesota, South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, and of course, Louisiana.

Indigenous and African descent. In short, the European expansion into the Americas was for the sole benefit of enriching monarchies and elite citizens of inequality regimes.<sup>58</sup>

Monarch tariff collection led to the emergence of what historian Herbert S. Klein calls the “triangular trade.” Based on wind patterns and currents during the age of navigation by sea, the triangular trade became a class-based system of exchange in which European monarchies supplied Africa and the Americas with finished goods, the Americas supplied Europe and Africa with raw materials, and Africa supplied the Americas with enslaved unpaid laborers. European inequality regimes (monarchies and elite citizens/friends) with the means to act as financiers (engage in business) had a hand in every aspect of the triangular trade business model. Lamentably, the entire Atlantic economy was dependent upon the unpaid and unparalleled human suffering of Indigenous and African enslaved, European indentured laborers, and the destruction of Indigenous and African civilizations.

The deployment of the triangular trade by inequality regimes is well documented in census information, marriage contracts, wills, and agricultural records.<sup>59</sup> Most

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<sup>58</sup> Monarchies are a political-administrative form of government based upon the sovereign rule of an individual. Consisting of interconnected institutions—state administration and court/social life of associated elite—monarchies are intentionally designed to create a class-based society. For more on monarchies see Fernando Bouza’s *The Iberian World 1450-1820* and James Pope-Hennessy’s *Sins of the Fathers: The Atlantic Slave Traders 1441-180*.

<sup>59</sup> For more on the impact of the triangular trade on people’s lives, see Edward E. Baptist’s, *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism*, John Blassingame’s *Black New Orleans: 1860-1880*, Ira Berlin’s *Slaves without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South*, Gilbert Din’s *Spaniards, Planters, and Slaves*, Gwendolyn Midlo Hall’s *Africans in Colonial Louisiana*, Kimberly S. Hanger’s *Bounded Lives, Bounded Places*, Sybil Kein’s *Creole: The History and Legacy of Louisiana’s Free People of Color*, Caitlin Rosenthal’s *Accounting for Slavery: Masters and Management*, and Daniel H. Usner’s *Indians, Settlers, and Slaves*.



scholarship on the topic approach the lives of colonial and antebellum people—free and enslaved, Indigenous, “white,” and of colors—through a historical rather than womanist or history of capitalism lens. However, “[b]usiness strategies can help to connect scholarship on the history of American and Atlantic slavery,” with the business experiences of *femmes de couleur libre* as will be explained in the following section (Rosenthal 195). Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille’s kinship (family/community) networks and business endeavors straddled three inequality regimes.

### **French Crown Business Methods, 1682-1762**

The first inequality regime that actively engaged in the business of the triangular trade was France. In 1685, King Louis XIV decreed the *Code Noir* (Black Code) for the Louisiana colony. As a business method/strategy of white patriarchal capitalism, the *Code Noir* served as a method for managing the economic conditions of enslavement and controlling the bodies of women of colors. Under the *Code Noir*, Black women’s reproductive bodies were commodified, and the mother’s status determined the child’s status to further guarantee an enslaved labor force and capital for (re)investment. The *Code Noir* imposed Roman Catholicism on all inhabitants of the colony. All enslaved men, women, and children had to be “purified” through baptism as a condition of French Crown sovereignty (oppression).

In 1724, the *Code Noir* was revised to forbid free “white” males from contracting marriage with women of colors or living in concubinage with them.<sup>60</sup> This revision was necessary because in an inequality regime (monarchy/class-based society) people of colors were classified as capital/real estate. Therefore, marrying and reproducing with women who were viewed and classified as capital/real estate was bad for business (the (re)investment and accumulation of wealth).<sup>61</sup> The 1724 revision further prescribed owner and slave behavior and granted slaves little protection while allowing masters the right to mete out harsh punishments including penalizing people of colors more than “whites” for the same infractions.<sup>62</sup> “Slavery and the accumulation of slaveholder power relied increasingly on Black women’s reproduction directed toward enslaved population expansion as the basis of slaveholder real estate and political power” (Sell 20). These real estate deals based on the valuation of women of colors bodies and dispossession of political power created problems relating to property ownership, rights, the effects of inequality governmental change, title documentation, and financing for women of colors.

At the same time, this growing valuation of real estate and political power created an opportunity for a new elite citizenry/friends of the monarchy to rise by providing a

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<sup>60</sup> This 1724 law forbidding marriage between “whites” and people of colors in Louisiana would remain unlawful until 1967 (243 years) when the United States Supreme court legalized interracial marriage in *Loving v. Virginia*. In 2009 a “white” racialized Louisiana Justice of the Peace, refused to issue a marriage license or officiate an interracial wedding based on his personal views.

<sup>61</sup> For a discussion on people of color described as real estate in contracts and United States treaties with Indigenous nations see W.E.B Du Bois’ *Black Reconstruction in America 1860-1880* and Vine Deloria Jr.’s *Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties: An Indian Declaration of Independence*.

<sup>62</sup> This law is still on the books in the form of the 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act in the shift towards mass incarceration rates for people of colors for minor drug offenses.

business space to experiment between the Atlantic slave trade (African bodies from the triangular trade) and the internal slave trade (commodification of women of colors bodies already in the Americas). According to Gwendolyn Midlo Hall in *Africans in Colonial Louisiana: The Development of Afro-Creole Culture in the Eighteenth Century*, the French inequality regime was a period of chaos and disorganization. As a result, people of African descent were able to hold their own by forming alliances with Indigenous groups. For instance, a significant number of enslaved Africans joined the Natchez Indians on November 28, 1729, killing “145 French men, 36 French women, and 56 French children” (Midlo Hall 101).

To squelch the rebellion, the French Crown sent in troops to reestablish economic order in the colony that was being run by Scottish financier John Law and his Company of the West. The Company of the West had a twenty-five-year monopoly charter to develop the colony of Louisiana on behalf of the French Crown.<sup>63</sup> As booty in the 1731 victory over the Natchez Indians, Commandant St. Denis (Madame Métoyer’s first slaveholder) confessed that he kept some African slaves he had “taken in war.”<sup>64</sup> Madame Métoyer’s father Françoise and/or mother Marie Françoise may have been among those taken as contraband. Following the Natchez Revolt, the French Crown assumed control of the colony from the Company of the Indies.

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<sup>63</sup> After John Law’s defection, the Company of the West reorganized into the Company of the Indies.

<sup>64</sup> Hall, Gwendolyn Midlo. *Africans in Colonial Louisiana*, 35; St. Denis to Salmon, November 2, 1731, C13 A13, folios 167-168, ANC.

Louisiana Governor Bienville and the Roman Catholic Church encouraged slaveholders to baptize and force their bondmen and bondwomen to marry like Madame Métoyer's parents, who were both owned by Commandant St. Denis. Since baptism was compulsory, "white" men and women served as *parraines* and *marraines* of enslaved Africans and their enslaved children. As another business method of inequality regimes, this aided in acculturating enslaved men, women, and children into the colony's religious and social life as well as tying them to the "white" community (Din 18). The Catholic Church rationalized the possession of human beings and actively participated in the business of enslavement to fund their missions within inequality regimes. This Church sanctioned compulsion tactic and relative balance among enslaved men and women in the colony allowed for familial ties that somewhat served to (re)stabilize enslaved life on plantations. As a business method, stabilization "neatly resolved the apparent contradiction between servitude and the "divine law of human brotherhood [*sic*]" (Fogel and Engerman 30). Divinely sanctioned profits and Christian truths became inextricably linked as bondmen, women, and children were internally/spiritually equal through forced baptism but viewed externally/bodily as real estate. Stable bondfamilies indoctrinated into Christianity and community were less likely to rebel. In an inequality regime, familial stabilization methods were good for business.

Through coerced (physical and bodily) labor, mothering bondwomen developed their own business methods in response to the value placed on their minds, bodies, and spirits. Bondwomen quickly learned to survive while being/embodying business and they

passed this knowledge on to bondchildren. As a result, bondwomen of African descent in the colony of Louisiana had a visible and dominant role in the family and labored harder than men due to the interests/benefits/valuation of their wombs. For instance, when Commandant St. Denis recorded inventories of enslaved men, women, and children, he assessed infants with their mothers and rarely mentioned fathers. In baptismal entries, when priests bothered to record a newborn infant's parents, they only listed the child's mother.<sup>65</sup> Although Article 63 of the *Code Noir* prohibited the separate sale of enslaved children under the age of fourteen, after the deaths of Commandant and Widow St. Denis, Françoise and Marie Françoise's children—Madame Métoyer's parents—went in a different lot to each of the St. Denis six heirs. Under the ownership of Madame Marie des Neiges de St. Denis de Soto, two of Madame Métoyer's children were illegally sold away to pay de Soto family debts.

During the French inequality regime, we also see the rise of the business and social methodology/practice of *plaçage*,<sup>66</sup> a practice that marked the lives of both Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille. Although interracial marriage and miscegenation were both illegal and had been since 1724, "white" men covetously craved and took advantage of commodified free and enslaved women of colors whom white patriarchal capitalism continued to view as real estate. Although scholars like Mills and Olmstead describe women of colors as concubines, mistresses, and willing partners who used

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<sup>65</sup> Slaves of Madame St. Denis, September 20, 1756, NPCR, book 1.

<sup>66</sup> Without the bonds of matrimony, *plaçage* was the socially sanctioned system in which a "white" man entered into a long-term sexual relationship with a woman of colors. *Plaçage* will be discussed in greater detail later in this dissertation.

relationships with “white” men to their advantage, I disagree. Carnal business (real estate) exchanges came with a high cost for all—especially women of colors and the children born from these relationships. In a system of such glaring inequity, the free will typically associated with desire is not possible for women who are viewed and classified as real estate deals. This new family/household business model of “white” men having a “legitimate” “white” family, and an “illegitimate” family or multiple families of colors, became the facts of life for many families. In *La Nouvelle Heloise*, Jean-Jacques Rousseau notes that household administration (the money and tasks necessary to sustain a family) became known as the cult of domesticity. Within this byproduct of white patriarchal capitalism, “white” males had power over their “white” and Black households and used this business/political power to negotiate/claim rule and profit.

### **Spanish Bourbon Business Methods, 1762-1801**

Although the Louisiana colony was ceded to Spain in 1762 in the Treaty of Fontainebleau, the byproducts of white patriarchal capitalism continued under the Spanish Bourbon inequality regime. Since Louisiana was one of the French Crown’s least profitable colonies possibly due to sheer land size, the colony quickly became Spanish Bourbon’s most heavily subsidized colony (Herbermann 380). With the shift to Spanish Bourbon business ownership/rule, Bourbon reforms and enlightenment business methods were introduced to transform the Louisiana colony into an efficiently governed and economically productive business territory for the “mother” country. These Bourbon reforms strongly impacted the Indigenous/French/African/Creole class-based citizenry.

Additionally, the colony was administered through the Captaincy-General of Havana, Cuba. To support the expansion of Louisiana's tobacco production, King Charles III removed all barriers to the importation (triangular trade) of enslaved Africans into the territory, and for the first time since the 1740s, nearly thirteen thousand bondmen, women, and children entered the Louisiana colony directly from West Africa, most arriving between the mid-1780s and mid-1790s (Midlo Hall 276-280).

Under Spanish Bourbon rule, economic and legal circumstances spurred the growth of the *gens de couleur libre* caste (a third class) and the colony flourished. During the French Crown era, most enslaved people toiled on plantations in rural areas and worked as laborers and skilled workers in more urban areas. In the Spanish Bourbon period, free "white" males continued to occupy a dominant position in the colony. As a result, "white" males supported the Spanish Bourbon monarchy's plans to bankroll (provide free land/real estate and extend credit to purchase enslaved laborers/real estate) and develop the area into a plantation-style business model, as seen in other Spanish Bourbon ruled parts of the Americas. Under Spanish Bourbon law, widows of "white" planters had privileges that unmarried women under the protection of a father and married women under the protection of a husband (the French cult of domesticity) did not have. Consequently, and as seen through notarial records, "white" widows in the Spanish Bourbon period participated more frequently in the business of plantation life than they did during the French Crown era. By the end of the Spanish Bourbon era, widowed women were among the wealthiest businesspeople in the colony. Seven out of the twenty-

four slaveholding business households that owned ten or more bondspeople in 1790 Natchitoches were widows who would never remarry. Wealthier older widows and *femmes de couleur libre* with laboriously earned business acumen were also better positioned to take advantage of Spanish Bourbon laws to invest wealth and make money than were their married counterparts.<sup>67</sup>

Due to the push for an increase in the development of the tobacco plantation/business economy, bondmen, women, and children had to labor hard in the fields. It is also under the Spanish Bourbon business rule, as seen through baptismal records that we see a more significant increase in masters and other “white” men having children with bondwomen and *femmes de couleur libre*. However, Spanish Bourbon laws, unlike the French Crown *Code Noir* laws, supported manumissions. Kimberly S. Hanger’s *Bounded Lives, Bounded Places* traces the increase of the *gens de couleur libre* caste, where more than two-thirds of Louisiana’s free people resided in the capital of New Orleans.

Under Spanish Bourbon business law, there were three types of manumissions: owner-driven, enslaved-driven, or third party-driven. Under owner-driven, owners could emancipate a bondman, woman, or child by a simple notarized act called a *Graciosa*. There were two types of *Graciosa*—one outright and one with conditions in which emancipation was contingent upon service or the death of the owner. For example, in

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<sup>67</sup> Mills, ed., “1766 Census of Natchitoches,” “Church Tax Roll of Natchitoches, March 1, 1790,” *Natchitoches Colonials*, 9-14, 68-75.



1802, Pierre Métoyer drew up a will that allowed through *Graciosa* for the emancipation of Marie Susanne, his first-born daughter with Madame Métoyer. The emancipation was contingent upon Marie Susanne caring for Pierre Métoyer's "white" son (her half-brother, Françoise Benjamin,) whom she nursed as an infant. Pierre Métoyer also stipulated in his will that Marie Susanne care for her "white" stepmother as long as she lived. As a result, Marie Susanne and her children lived in her father's household until 1813 when her stepmother went home to be with her Lord. With her stepmother's death, Marie Susanne was finally able to legally live as a *femme de couleur libre intrepeneur* like her mother, Madame Métoyer.

Under the enslaved-driven manumission, there was a system of self-purchase called *coartación*. Under *coartación*, an enslaved person could manumit herself if she paid her slaveholder a set market price. Under Spanish Bourbon business law, if a slaveholder refused to sell a bondwoman, the bondwoman could request a tribunal manumission if she had the money to buy her liberty. Although less common, the commercial courts would arbitrate a sum for the bondwoman based on the slaveholder's valuation. Once the slaveholder received payment, the commercial court could enforce the right of the former bondwoman to remain out of the former slaveholder's business control. Lastly, under third-party-driven manumission, a relative or friend legally bought a bondwoman directly out of bondage. Both *coartación* and third-party manumissions were contingent upon meeting the slaveholder's set market price.

Spanish Bourbon economic (bankrolling of real estate/people/land for plantation businesses) and commercial manumission policies greatly impacted *gens de couleur*. In *The Forgotten People: Cane River's Creoles of Color*, Mills argues that the surge in racial mixture during the Spanish Bourbon era contributed in large part to the growth in the *gens de couleur libre* caste because “white” men used manumission laws to free bondwomen who bore their children and the bondchildren of these coerced and imbalanced (real estate) unions. At the close of the Spanish Bourbon period, the prosperity of the Louisiana colony had attracted the attention of the United States, Great Britain, as well as former French Crown business financiers/owners.<sup>68</sup>

### **United States Business Methods, 1803-1863**

President Thomas Jefferson purchased the Louisiana colony from Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte in 1803 for fifteen million dollars. In return, the United States acquired 828,000 square miles and nearly doubled the size of the United States. When United States commerce administrators assumed control, Louisiana's Spanish Bourbon paths to freedom laws were quickly abolished to align with other United States slaveholding states. White patriarchal capitalism forms of bondage became an even bigger enterprise and cash crops like cotton and sugar boomed (Ingersoll 283). As a result, there was a considerable drop (two-thirds) in manumission agreements after the Louisiana Purchase because the human labor was needed for intensive crop production as

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<sup>68</sup> Napoleon briefly regained ownership of the Louisiana colony in 1801 but sold the territory to the United States in 1803.

the United States set out to make the internal slave trade even more profitable than the triangular trade. In addition, the market price of bondpeople increased, and there was a dramatic increase in the number of bondmen, women, and children relocated from the United States to the Louisiana colony. According to Edward Baptist in *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism*, bondmen, women, and children were forced to walk seven to eight hundred miles into the Louisiana colony from other slaveholding states as far away as Maryland or Virginia with their United States business owners who were given free land and financed enslaved laborers (real estate) by the United States (Baptist 1-37). However, a large-propertied *gens de couleur libre* continued into United States business rule. During the United States period, *gens de couleur libre* in the rural area of Natchitoches and the more urban New Orleans prospered by working together. Due to the ethnic and cultural diversity of the Louisiana colony and repeated changes in inequality governmental/business administration, the colony's racial ambiguity and status of free people of colors, especially the *femmes de couleur libre*, were forever altered once the Louisiana territory became a part of the rigid United States.

The Saint-Domingue slave revolt and subsequent influx of refugees also contributed to the business methods of the Louisiana colony under the United States. According to Paul Lachance in his article, "The 1809 Immigration of Saint-Domingue Refugees to New Orleans," over nine thousand "white," free, and enslaved refugees of all ages poured into New Orleans, nearly doubling the population. For the city's United States administrators however, these refugees greatly complicated their efforts to bring

New Orleans' various cultural factions under control. United States administrators made a series of attempts to halt or regulate the influx of *gens de couleur libre* asylum seekers. Governor Claiborne permitted the city council representatives to search commercial vessels and inspect the passengers landing on the docks to prevent illegal immigration from Saint-Domingue, with a particular focus on excluding *gens de couleur libre* seeking entry into the city (Spear 192-93). Three years later, in 1807, the territorial legislature attempted to bar all new *gens de couleur libre* from entering the Louisiana territory. Louisiana officially became a state of the United States on April 30, 1812. Throughout the antebellum period, even into the 1830s and 1840s, numerous petitions from concerned citizens and local politicians failed to limit the introduction of "strange negroes" into the city (John Watkins to Governor Claiborne, April 24, 1804).

Another incredibly important aspect of the lives of people of colors, especially free women, that should not be overlooked or understated, is the presence of a female majority amongst the *gens de couleur libre* caste. As autonomous *intrepreneurs*, *femmes de couleur libre* can be seen in the censuses as heads of households. Notarial records for the early United States period bear witness to the variety of *intreprenurial*-related activities of *femmes de couleur libre* like Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille. These examples suggest that *femmes de couleur libre* retained power over their business and personal property under United States administration. Through their unique place in the three-caste social hierarchy, *femmes de couleur libre* were in many ways more

independent and economically significant to the Louisiana colony/state as a whole than the majority of their “white” contemporaries.

Via their *intrepreneurship* and community-based determination, *femmes de couleur libre* constructed much of the world in which they lived entirely on their own. Of the three hundred sixty-four free Black property owners in the Vieux Carré Survey for the years 1805 and 1820, two hundred fifty-five or seventy percent were *femmes de couleur libre*. In notary records between 1804 and 1820 specifically, we see *femmes de couleur libre* acting on their own/business behalf, negotiating terms of business/real estate contracts without male representation. The fact that so many *femmes de couleur libre* were able to purchase and maintain real estate without the financial support or assistance of a man of either race points to their brains, strength, and the essential role they played in the business economy of the Louisiana colony/state. Their willingness to defend their rights to a given property and to sell their holdings when they decided further supports the idea of the autonomy of *femmes de couleur libre*. It also suggests that these women were comfortable with navigating when necessary the official channels of real estate/property transfer. Few descriptions of Louisiana’s settlement patterns have factored in the independence and economic stability of *femmes de couleur libre*. Instead, sexual relationships with “white” men have been overemphasized as the only way of life for *femmes de couleur libre*.

Due to the innumerable social/economic/political/spiritual problems fomented via white patriarchal capitalism, as women of colors we must rouse from our stupor and

understand that the current system(s) will never create substantive change for the masses who are treated unjustly or for the planet that is treated with avarice. Worse still, the colonizer, too frequently with the aid of the colonized, delegates the burden of pulling one up by one's bootstraps to individuals, thereby obscuring the avaricious nature of inequality regimes in the organization and advancement of white patriarchal capitalism. Thus, this continued ambivalence to imperialism will never dismantle the global organizing principles designed to oppress women of colors. If women of colors are to be free from oppression, "everyone else would have to be free since our freedom would necessitate the destruction of all systems of oppression, captures the dialectic connecting the struggle for Black liberation to the struggle for a liberated United States and, ultimately, the world" (Taylor 11).

In this chapter, we see the motivation to engage in business and accumulate wealth is quite complex, involving the individual, one's kinship group (biological and spiritual), the communities we serve, and the inequality regimes under which we live. Both Natchitoches' and New Orleans' demographic composition and economic roles were essential to the internal slave trade, the Atlantic slave trade, and the global world markets of the triangular trade. In the final chapters, I will provide a womanist framework of what an everyday conversant (vernacular), communitarian mindful (commonweal), spiritualized-inspired *int*repreneur model might look like and what such a model may offer the disciplines of Women's and Gender Studies and Business Administration.

CHAPTER IV

A WOMANIST BUSINESS POLITIC:  
BUILDING VIABLE BUSINESSES

**Systematic Evolution, Enlargement, and Expansion**

Women of colors remain disproportionately impacted by inequalities. According to the Women's World Bank, of the 1.7 billion people worldwide that remain excluded from the economy, nearly one billion are women. As women of colors (mothers, daughters, sisters, aunts, wives, theorists, activists, subversive leaders, and prayer warriors), the impending crises (social emotional well-being, financial, and climate) require us to engage in the politics of business differently.

The first five hundred years of the global business experiment of the Americas and the practice of white patriarchal capitalism has only worked out for the top one percent who currently own more than half of the world's wealth. More than half of the \$16.7 trillion in fiscal year 2020 new wealth was in the United States, which grew \$8.5 trillion richer. In addition to trillionaires, the United States still leads the world in millionaires, with 15.3 million people worth \$1 million or more. To put this into perspective, Japan ranks second with 2.7 million millionaires and the United Kingdom ranks third with 2.2 million millionaires.<sup>69</sup> Despite our fascination with leadership, our

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<sup>69</sup> For more see Credit Suisse's October 2020 *Global Wealth Report*.

paradigm shifts, and grand theories, we have not managed to unrig the inequalities nor the commodifications of our collective labors.<sup>70</sup>

In our homes and workspaces, our collective labors bear witness to the ravages of white patriarchal capitalism. We bear witness when individuals, families, institutions, and governments (mis)manage evacuations during hurricane season.<sup>71</sup> We bear witness when men, women, or children of colors are assassinated because of police brutality.<sup>72</sup> We bear witness when there is an undeniable connection between adverse childhood experiences, literacy skills, and incarceration rates.<sup>73</sup> And we bear witness when our loved ones with pre-existing conditions are forced to go to work in meat factories, corporate (large-scale) farms, or classrooms during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>74</sup>

We are teetering on a precipice where new problems cannot be solved using the established tools and frameworks of white patriarchal capitalism. Historical, contemporary, and imminent transgressions against humanity and the planet require us to look outside our current disciplinary skill set to find new ways of conceptualizing how we build viable businesses. The business administration (planning, politics, and practices)

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<sup>70</sup> A Google search on leadership returns 2,810,000,000 results in 0.66 seconds.

<sup>71</sup> 2020 has been a record year in the Atlantic. As of this writing, there have been twenty-five named storms. Meteorologists tell us this is due to global warming.

<sup>72</sup> Mapping Police Violence ([www.mappingpoliceviolence.org](http://www.mappingpoliceviolence.org)) reported that 54% of all victims of police harm between 2013 and 2019 were people of colors.

<sup>73</sup> For more on the long-term impact of adverse childhood experiences on life outcomes see Naomi Duke's "Adolescent Adversity, School Attendance and Academic Achievement: School Connection and the Potential for Mitigating Risks" and Nadine Burke Harris' *TEDMed* "How Childhood Trauma Affects Health Across a Lifetime."

<sup>74</sup> For more on essential workers responsible for keeping society alive and running during COVID-19 see Jennifer D. Robert et al.'s "Clinicians, cooks, and cashiers: Examining Health Equity and the COVID-19 Risks to Essential Workers."



that support white patriarchal capitalism are contradictory to the personal values and beliefs of those who embrace the promises of womanism. A few examples of this are narcissistic leaders, disrespectful cutthroat co-workers, unmotivated and unfulfilled workers, and business methods that focus on short-term shareholder profits at the expense of lives or the environment.

As these strange COVID-19 times demonstrate, we have reached a tipping point. The challenge of building viable businesses cannot be solved using established business administration tools and frameworks. The times (police brutality, civil unrest, economic collapse, global warming) require us to look outside our current disciplinary skill set to conceptualize the possibilities a womanist approach offers to the field of business administration. To begin developing these tools in this chapter, I propose the post-oppositional engagement<sup>75</sup> of peaceful wisdom-oriented decolonizing *intrepreneurial* opportunities and practices. To develop illuminating tools for building a viable business using a womanist business politic, I return to Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's business legacies. By 1830, Madame Métoyer's descendants owned and controlled approximately eighteen thousand acres of the Isle of Brevelle on Cane River and owned more bondspeople than any other *gens de couleur libre* in the United States (Mills 132,

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<sup>75</sup> Oppositionality is a western way of believing, being, and behaving that sets workers, employers, and business ideas against one another thereby promoting competition, division, dehumanization, and harm. Post-oppositional engagement is a way of thinking that includes the womanist business ideas we hold dear, the socially just things we do, and the multiple identities we embrace that resist competition, division, dehumanization, and harm. AnaLouise Keating's *Transformation Now! Towards a Post-Oppositional Politics of Change* provides a detailed discussion on the possibilities of a post-oppositional approach to social change work.

Woodson 7). And by the turn of the twentieth century the Sisters of the Holy Family business endeavors would span three continents through the collective efforts of more than three hundred sisters (Goudeaux 5).

In their contradictory world of white patriarchal capitalism there was an obligation to those impacted by inequality regimes, and Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille used their purpose (liberty, knowledge and expertise, social and political power) to make a difference in the lives of others (Black, “white,” multiracial, free, quasi-free, enslaved). Purpose and vision are fundamental features of any *intrepreneurial* activity. How Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille were able to create and bring their businesses to life with people who were inspired to follow them is worth considering. As I consider the *intrepreneurial* activity of Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille, the following questions come to mind: (1) How did they select the business activities they chose to pursue? (2) What was their North Star/mission (why)? (3) What products (works of art and affirmation) or services (acts of kindness and respect) did they provide? (4) Where did they operate? (5) What methods did they use to analyze their internal and external environment (situational analysis)? (6) What marketing tactics helped them achieve their *intrepreneurial* goals? (7) How did they start and finish each workday (inventory of thoughts/plans to reach equitable goals)? (8) How did they organize and structure their work amongst their team? (9) What were their funding costs (time, money, energy)? (10) Lastly, what did their succession plans look like? Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille

operated across very different business environments, but they left us many clues to answer these questions.

### **A Womanist Methodology of Administration**

Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille started with the end in mind—their commitment to the upliftment of their families and communities of colors. This commitment placed them in important leadership roles and represents powerful symbols of African and Indigenous heritage defiantly surviving the hegemonic methods (inequality regimes) of white patriarchal capitalism. Advanced by *femmes de couleur libre* in a patriarchal enslaved society and with blood ties to both the free “white” dominant and enslaved Black marginalized worlds, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille’s commitment to communities of colors embodies the catchphrase, “Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness” as outlined by the Declaration of Independence. By choosing “Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness” and resisting racism, sexism, elitism, and colonialism for themselves, their families, and communities of colors, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille’s business politics defy the power dynamics of white patriarchal capitalism that equate community survival with assimilation and conformity. It is this commitment to the upliftment of communities of colors that compelled Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille to build viable businesses. Maparyan offers a powerful model for understanding the ways a womanist business politic embraces the inherent capacity of building viable businesses while honoring differences.

To address the processes by which Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille developed a womanist business politic, in this chapter, I return to Maparyan's womanist theory to further analyze their business contributions. In so doing, I continue to challenge white patriarchal capitalism, establish a cornerstone for contemporary business leaders, and illustrate how womanist theory might influence social, political, and spiritual transformation work and wealth-building for the upliftment and empowerment of all livingkind.

As historical, symbolic, and mythical figures, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's *intrepreneurship* nurtures a number of womanist-infused processes to draw from: liberation, innovation, cooperation, and appreciation. In Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's business endeavors, work is an act of liberation (liberatory management)—a channel through which the women expressed their purpose and helped others find their purpose starting with their liberation from enslavement. The liberation processes the women utilized to operate their various businesses serve as an alternative to white patriarchal capitalism. As such, there is a method of practicality and a genius in how Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille were able to match their various business strategies to their socio-political circumstances as they moved through various inequality regimes (French Crown, Spanish Bourbon, United States).

If we, like Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille, are to move with purpose and confidence through uncertain and challenging times, what core principles and values can we glean from their business legacies? As a starting point, I will use Maparyan's

womanist theories to focus on the following three methods: (1) harmonizing and coordinating; (2) mutual aid and self-help; and (3) motherhood. After each method, a whisper of womanist wisdom follows. Whispers are spoken softly with the breath and not the vocal cords. Therefore, I have chosen to call each a whisper because when we put in work to listen, we must do so with more than just our physical ears. Each whisper of wisdom is based on one of Maparyan's methods and taken from Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's womanist business politics. In all, they provide us with a fascinating look into the innovative business lives of two remarkable *femmes de couleur libre* who transformed themselves into great *intrepreneurs*, and in so doing, left us an invaluable legacy.

### **Harmonizing and Coordinating**

*Intrepreneurs* operate in environments of rapid and continuous innovation/change. From changing inequality regimes/business administration priorities to the fluctuating costs of much-needed materials during times of war or pandemics, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille harmonized and coordinated innovation. I am defining harmonizing and coordinating as organizing innovation into actionable plans. To be achieved, actionable work needs clear-cut harmonization and coordination. When planting tobacco (Madame Métoyer) or raising funds for the new nursing home (Mother Delille), the *intrepreneurial*-minded women may have asked: (1) What do we hope to achieve by the end of the year? (2) How do we achieve those objectives as a coordinated unit? and (3) What resources are available to reach those objectives? Harmonizing and coordinating people, non-

human capital, and tasks connects business planning outcomes to accountability. In other words, business planning provides a framework through which to identify what needs to be done, and when, why, how, and by whom. With every new business endeavor, we see Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille harmonizing and coordinating people, non-human capital, and tasks to business goals (upliftment of communities of colors through emancipation or the provision of corporeal or spiritual needs).

One could argue that harmonizing and coordinating is likely one of the biggest challenges an *int*repreneur might face because change can be developmental, transitional, and transformational. Developmental change is the simplest type of change because it does not require the creation of something new. Transitional change requires designing and implementing completely new products and services. Transformational change requires acknowledging the unknown in the quest to shift mindsets and culture.<sup>76</sup> As such, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille had to harmonize and coordinate at the speed of need in a collaborative and community-based business environment. For example, when Pierre Métoyer announced he would be marrying his “white” deceased business partner’s widow, Madame Métoyer had to find and process critical land grant/concession information. Likewise, when deadly and highly contagious diseases like cholera, smallpox, malaria, and yellow fever struck New Orleans each year, Mother Delille had to

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<sup>76</sup> For more on developmental, transitional, and transformational change see Chip Heath and Dan Heath’s *Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard*, William Bridges and Susan Bridges’ *Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change*, and John P. Kotter’s *Leading Change*.

learn how to protect herself and her fellow sisters as they nursed and cared for “white” and Black people.

Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille harmonized and coordinated self-sustaining business ventures. In so doing, they created the first branches that comprise the trees that continue to this day. In contrast to Maparyan’s harmonizing and coordinating, white patriarchal capitalism encourages opposition, competition, and division. Designed to keep our *intrepreneurship* and our bodies (internally and externally) out of harmony, white patriarchal capitalism is the mastermind of antagonizing those who have been labeled Other (Menakem 181-186).

### **Whisper of Womanist Wisdom: Harmonizing and Coordinating with Bodies**

Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille had a rare opportunity to have not only a positive affect on communities of colors, but to do so through them. As members of those communities, the women inherently possessed the capacity to solve the problems (social, economic, and political) that come with white patriarchal capitalism. As those most impacted by white patriarchal capitalism and its effects, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille, like contemporary women of colors, had the deepest insights into innovative solutions for transforming communities of colors. These solutions included reimagining the beliefs, systems, and outcomes that come with building socially viable businesses. Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille articulated a formula for business and social change that relied on the leadership, wisdom, and buy-in of communities of colors.

## Mutual Aid and Self-Help

In addition to harmonizing and coordinating, *intrepreneurs* advance mutual aid and self-help by placing co-laborers as a source of unlimited ideas on ways to improve an organization's products, work processes, and systems. We see from the above whisper of womanist wisdom that Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille engaged and invited their families, friends, and communities into their *intrepreneurial* efforts. For instance, Madame Métoyer's children likely helped her trap and prepare three hundred hides and two barrels of bear grease for market, and Mother Delille invited *femmes de couleur libre* to join her in building the ministry businesses.

Mutual aid and self-help efforts have a distinguished tradition in communities of colors and are recognized as mechanisms for counteracting white patriarchal capitalism. Furthermore, group and self-help cooperation formed the foundations of womanist-conscious business enterprises for Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille. Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille led with their hearts open in attending to the needs and lived experiences of those around them. From this vantage point and accompanied by a genuine interest and concern for the circumstances of those around them, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille negotiated from a place of mutual aid and self-help. Their commitment to cooperation and negotiation capitalized on differences by turning diversity into positive business results. For example, in 1790 after negotiating the fair market price of her daughter and grandson with her former owner, Madame Métoyer invested in the intergenerational *intrepreneurial* endeavors of her younger sister, Maria



del Marger, daughter Therese, and grandson Joseph Mauricio. Mutual aid and self-help are a major source of strength and exemplify Madame Métoyer's and Mother Deilille's commitment to not only their course in life but that of others.

"White" racialized men have written ad nauseum on self-help business theories like emotional intelligence (the ability to discern one's own emotions and those of others), ecological intelligence (the ability to discern the interactions between human systems like transportation, energy, building, commerce, industry, and natural systems), social intelligence (the ability to discern oneself and others), adaptability competence (the ability to discern optimal outcomes based on recent and future change), and bodily-kinesthetic intelligence (the ability to control one's bodily motions and the capacity to handle objects skillfully).<sup>77</sup> Despite all the writing and theories, according to a 2013 Gallup 142-country study on the *State of the Global Workforce*, Steve Crabtree found that only about one in every eight workers around the world is psychologically committed to their jobs and likely making a positive contribution to the business administration of their

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<sup>77</sup> See Marc Brackett's *Permission to Feel: The Power of Emotional Intelligence to Achieve Well-Being and Success*, Christopher D. Connors' *Emotional Intelligence for the Modern Leader: A Guide to Cultivating Effective Leadership and Organizations*, Mark Craemer's *Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace: How to Use EQ to Build Strong Relationships and Thrive in Your Career*, Daniel Goleman's *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More than IQ*, Brandon Goleman's *Emotional Intelligence: For a Better Life, Success at Work, and Happier Relationships. Improve Your Social Skills, Emotional Agility and Discover Why It Can Matter More than IQ*, Morton Johnson's *Emotional Intelligence: Build Strong Social Skills and Improve Your Relationships by Raising your EQ With Proven Methods and Strategies*, Daniel Goleman's *Ecological Intelligence: The Hidden Impacts of What We Buy*, Ian McCallum's *Ecological Intelligence: Rediscovering Ourselves in Nature*, C.A. Bowers et al's *Perspectives on the Ideas of Gregory Bateson, Ecological Intelligence and Educational Reforms*, Karl Albrecht's *Social Intelligence: The New Science of Success*, Gerald Confienza's *Social Intelligence for the Socially Awkward*, Daniel Goleman's *Social Intelligence: The New Science of Human Relationships*, Patrick King's *The Science of Social Intelligence*, Zechariah Blanchard's *Leading the Curve: Maximize the Efficiency, Productivity, and Adaptability of Your Business*, M. J. Ryan's *AdaptAbility: How to Survive Change You Didn't Ask For*, and Howard E. Gardner's *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*.

organization. Of the remaining eighty-seven percent of employees in those 142 countries, sixty-three percent are not engaged and lack the motivation to invest effort in business administration goals and twenty-four percent are actively disengaged, unhappy, and unproductive at work and likely to spread negativity to coworkers. In very rough numbers, this translates into nine hundred million employees who are not engaged and only three hundred forty million actively engaged workers in 142 countries (Crabtree 2013). Imagine the possibilities posed by Maparyan's mutual aid and self-help efforts in reversing those numbers.

In contrast, those bonded to white patriarchal capitalism suffer from a form of narcissism and the oppressions doled out (administrative policies that separate migrant children from parents, enslavement, anti-Blackness, and all forms of exploitation and oppression) are types of narcissistic abuse (Anzaldúa 87-90). White patriarchal capitalism, like narcissism, requires constant validation and there is little to no room for confrontation or criticism. Shadow workers, like Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille, must be "wise as serpents and [appear] innocent as doves" when practicing Maparyan's form of mutual aid and self-help. Rule by power and fear leads only to reckless psychotic derangement. Social psychologist Dacher Keltner says it this way:

The power paradox is this: we rise in power and make a difference in the world due to what is best about human nature, but we fall from power due to the worst. We gain a capacity to make a difference in the world by enhancing the lives of others, but the very experience of having power and privilege leads us to behave,

in our worst moments, like impulsive, out-of-control sociopaths. How we handle the power paradox guides our personal and work lives and determines, ultimately, how happy we and the people we care about will be. It determines our empathy, generosity, civility, innovation, intellectual rigor, and the collaborative strength of our communities and social networks. Its ripple effects shape the patterns that make up our families, neighborhoods, and workplaces, as well as the broader patterns of social organization that define societies and our current political struggles: sexual violence, bias and discrimination against blacks, Asians, Latinos, and gays, and systemic poverty and inequality. Handling the power paradox well is fundamental to the health of our society. (5)

A balancing process that comes with responsibility, Keltner's perspective of power clearly demonstrates what is at stake—truth, healing, and transformation. Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's positions as *femmes de couleur libre* entrepreneurs necessitated a vision of what communities of colors could do despite white patriarchal capitalism.

Discerning the care, respect, and competence that Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille took to create/challenge/present their *intrepreneurial* goals while coexisting with administrators shackled to white patriarchal capitalism is key to unleashing the liberatory management and creativity of womanist theories on business administration (employee teams, superior customer service, strengthened client relations, productive relationships with investors, vendors, suppliers and Earth's bounties/gifts like the land needed to house

a business enterprise, the sun needed to grow business products, the water needed to power business services, the raw minerals needed to fuel technological innovation, etc.).

### **Whisper of Womanist Wisdom: Mutual Aid and Self-Help Healing**

Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille invited trusted family and friends to join them in their business endeavors. Setting aside personal agendas, each family member and friend became the blueprint from which future generations were built. This generation-changing potential aided in buffering younger generations from the white patriarchal capitalism social perils designed to endanger their well-being. Multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-sectoral, and intergenerational, the women worked/invested in communities of colors and achieved lasting results because community members could effectively navigate, engage, and collaborate with women they trusted. In so doing, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille built and deepened trusting relationships, committed to sharing power/leadership, and developed the individual and collective capacity of those who had been labeled Other. When you act with mutual aid and self-help, it inspires an environment where community values, culture, knowledge, and aspirations are highly regarded and allowed to flourish within your home/business/community/world.

### **Mothering: Love and Leadership**

Lastly, all good relationships take time and must be grown through patience and mutual experience, with respect put at the center of their points of view and interactions. Mothering involves not looking for the fruits of your relationships up front; instead, it

involves appreciation and a deep interconnectedness. Relationship management involves negotiation of power struggles and fosters an environment where internal competition isn't ignored. Business administration, like motherhood, is built on forging strong rich relationships and understanding the total landscape. Building viable businesses relies on a network of strong relationships in order to succeed—a network consisting of investors and donors, clients and customers, colleagues and peers, distributors and suppliers, co-workers and employees, service providers, community leaders, political administrations, global markets, and even colleagues (not to be confused with white patriarchal capitalism understanding of competitors) engaged in the same business endeavors. A womanist approach to business administration is concerned with the changing nature of managing relationships both internally and externally. A womanist approach to business administration works through identifying strategies for ensuring that critical relationships grow deeper and more mutually beneficial for all livingkind. Building and fostering womanist business relationships involves a sincere and forthright appreciation that is devoid of organizational charts and hierarchies. Everyone is on the same page when it comes to expectations, productivity, and efficiency.

By practicing appreciation, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's communities worked together to dispel harmful and dehumanizing narratives about Black motherhood, children, families, and communities. These harmful narratives were designed to disrupt their very existence. Disruptions are not the end of the world; disruptions can be key to pushing relationships forward. Once Madame Métoyer achieved freedom (c.1778),

motherly love and the pain of seeing her children and grandchildren enslaved for life pushed her further than most were willing or able to go. Madame Métoyer understood that her children were her future and her legacy. She saw an opportunity to better position them in life and she used the Spanish system of self-purchase and credit to seize it. For fifteen years (1786-1801), Madame Métoyer was actively involved in freeing her enslaved children and grandchildren. Her labor was not in vain. Free status allowed the Métoyer clan to claim their labor production as their own, establish families, accumulate human and non-human property, and demand the rights accompanied by freedom (Shown Mills 424).

When people looked at Madame Métoyer, they probably did not see anything special—just another formerly enslaved African woman (real estate), the mother of fifteen children (also real estate), and the former companion of a wealthy “white” man. They could not see the contents of her mind or the business strategies she was conceiving through her social networks. As an *intreprenuer*, she never lost sight of what she was working for: her children’s continued independence and freedom. In relation to survival or freedom, Madame Métoyer had no place for a defeatist woe-is-me mentality. As an *intreprenuer* and mother, she engaged the details of life without wallowing in or being overcome by the details of her life. As a mother, Madame Métoyer guided and inspired a group of followers, established business administration goals, and used her influence to enlist the support and cooperation of stakeholders at every sphere. Each of these relationships was continuously cultivated for the advancement of her business endeavors.

In contrast, it is not a mothering method to use one's power position to coerce, intimidate, or terrorize what one wants done. Instead, it was Madame Métoyer's ability to influence human and nonhuman capital, both internally and externally, that determined her success.

*As femmes de couleur libre*, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille experienced the brutal stings of racism and sexism; however, they resisted the demoralizing influence of racism and sexism on their business endeavors. *Intrepreneurs* have the power to continue in the footsteps of Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille and the millions of others who continue to work to end global enslavement, enable women's rights, improve workplace well-being/safety, and reduce the pollution of water and air.

In contrast to mothering, the founding patriarchs who enforced white patriarchal capitalism in the United States did not reflect the diversity of the Americas. However, as I write this dissertation, the reality is that in the United States seventy percent of the United States workforce are women and/or Black and Latino (Visconti). The United States marketplace will be defined by the fact that, for the first time in United States history, less than half of all newborns in the United States are non-Latinx Caucasian. The percentage of United States citizens who identify as "white" (non-Latinx) is on a demographic trend downwards, particularly among our Millennial and Generation Z citizens who make up half of the workforce. According to the United States Census, by 2050 people of color will constitute the majority of the population (Bush). Imagine how the generational trauma that is stored in the bodies of this demographic will impact every aspect of our lives if left unhealed and unacknowledged (Menakem 253-259).

### **Whisper of Womanist Wisdom: Empowering Motherhood**

If left wounded, it may take several generations to push beyond the social constraints of white patriarchal capitalism. Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's *intrepreneurship* provides a framework for understanding the reasons that women of colors engage in building viable businesses. Although it is not as apparent to historians who have written about Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille, I see a treasure trove of womanist theory in the diverse range of their business participation. In the next section, I will trace each business industry and chart the importance of each woman's participation in colonial and antebellum business politics. By so doing, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille invested in an uncommon vision/framework for the upliftment of communities of colors. Opportunities to make and use money, build viable businesses, and create security for families and communities were woven throughout their liberation, innovation, cooperation, and appreciation processes.

### **The Business Economics of Tobacco**

Settling into a small cabin on sixty-eight acres, Madame Métoyer began the cultivation of tobacco and in the process established the basis of her family's wealth. As a manager and owner of a planter operation, Madame Métoyer was able to participate in the most lucrative business enterprise of the New World. Tobacco quickly replaced trade with Indigenous groups as the most important source of income in Natchitoches. During the Spanish period, with both government and local officials bankrolling the production of tobacco, Madame Métoyer actively participated in the production. Tobacco was



produced for export, but prices fluctuated, determined by international supply and demand. Spanish Bourbon inequality Governor O'Reilly restructured the political administration of the colony, paving the way for successors to foster economic development by emphasizing the cultivation of such cash crops as tobacco and indigo for export. The first crop was tobacco, which had been grown in small quantities during the French Crown inequality regime, and Luis de Unzaga y Amezaga was the first Spanish inequality governor to promote systematic tobacco cultivation in the colony. As a result, Natchitoches inhabitants became more involved in raising tobacco under the Spanish Bourbon inequality regime.

In 1766, at the end of the French Crown inequality regime, forty-nine planters harvested 83,360 pounds of tobacco. Although the 1766 figure was a highpoint for the French Crown inequality regime, by 1791 this figure had increased to 731,935 pounds of tobacco being harvested by Madame Métoyer and eighty-two other tobacco producers.<sup>78</sup> In Natchitoches, the price for most of the French Crown inequality regime was between eight to ten sous a pound. In the early 1760s, the cost of tobacco went up to an almost unheard of fifty sous per pound. For most of the French Crown inequality regime,

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<sup>78</sup> Statement of the Quantity of Andullos and Pounds of Tobacco Made in the Post of Natchitoches in the Harvest of the Present Year of 1791, December 15, 1791, AGI, PC, legajo 17; Brian E. Coutts, "Boom and Bust: The Rise and Fall of the Tobacco Industry in Spanish Louisiana, 1770-1790," *The Americas* 42 January 1986: 289-309.

Natchitoches officials reported that “the price. . . usually varied from ten to eight sueldos [sous] a pound, never falling below the latter.”<sup>79</sup>

Fig. 1. Number of Tobacco Planters in Natchitoches, Louisiana and Pounds Produced, 1765-1791

Year	Households	Planters	Percentage	Pounds of Tobacco
1765	77	49	63.6	84,360
1790	175	62	35.4	713,900
1791	175	83	47.4	731,935

\*\*Madame Métoyer’s tobacco production is included in the 1790 and 1791 numbers.

Considering the amount of care each tobacco leaf needed, such as the labor-intensive hand removal of caterpillars and other pests, Madame Métoyer prospered in this “white” male-dominated business enterprise. Her harvest grew until her annual production was of sufficient size to send a barge to the New Orleans market. A passport issued by Commandant Louis de Blanc in April 1792 granted her barge a pass to the New Orleans markets (Walker, *The History of Black Business in America* 172). This shipment included 9,900 *carotes/andullos* of tobacco (Mills, *The Forgotten People* 38). Madame Métoyer, as a member of the *femmes de couleur libre* labor force, contributed significantly to the economic development of the Americas. As a woman of African

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<sup>79</sup> Jacob M. Price. *France and the Chesapeake: A History of the French Tobacco Monopoly, 1674-1791 and of its Relationships to the British and American Tobacco Trades*. 2 vols. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1973.

descent, Madame Métoyer is a part of the masses of women of color entrepreneurs dating back to the 1700s.

### **The Business Economics of Hunting, Trapping, and Trading**

While Madame Métoyer's tobacco plantation linked her to the global markets in Europe through the triangular trade, the hunting economy provided another source of income for her family's survival on the Natchitoches frontier. Madame Métoyer hunted bears, turkeys, deer, and other small animals. As a huntress, she would have been required to skin, tan, and boil the animals to prepare them for shipment outside of Natchitoches. Hunters worked hard under dangerous conditions. Throughout the era, prices for products of the hunt remained consistent for the most part. Colonists and Indigenous peoples highly valued deerskins and bear's oil as exchange commodities and used them instead of currency to pay taxes, duties, and fines. "For generations her descendants recounted how the family's matriarch trapped the wild bears in the Natchitoches wilderness and sent bear grease to market in large stone jars" (Mills, *The Forgotten People* 39). The passport for the 1792 barge she sent to New Orleans also included the shipment of three hundred hides and two barrels of bear grease. Considering the data, I speculate that Madame Métoyer actively participated in her trapping enterprise.

### **The Business Economics of Ranching**

The third business enterprise Madame Métoyer participated in was cattle ranching. In 1796, she petitioned the commandant for another tract of land for a *vacherie*

for grazing her cattle. The petition was answered with a concession of typical size: twenty *arpents*' (appx. seventeen acres) frontage by a depth of forty (appx. thirty-four acres). Herding was a significant industry on the Natchitoches frontier. A Spanish law for colonial Louisiana from February 1770 required applicants for land grants in Opelousas, Attakapas, and Natchitoches districts to have "one hundred head of tame cattle, some horses and sheep, and two slaves to look after them" (Ainsworth 560). *Vacheries* required no clearance or fencing. Circa 1797, after making the minimal improvements needed in the first three years of possession, Madame Métoyer hired Jose Maré, a man of Spanish descent, to manage the *vacherie* on her behalf. For ten years, he and his family managed the *vacherie* (Mills, *The Forgotten People* 42). Madame Métoyer also invested in a *vacherie* for her enslaved daughter, grandson, and free sister in Opelousas.

### **The Business Economics of Pharmaceutical Manufacturing**

Madame Métoyer's fourth source of income was pharmaceutical manufacturing, and "[t]radition holds that she was highly skilled in the use and application of medicinal herbs and roots" (Mills, *The Forgotten People* 39). Although medicine historiography has not adequately addressed women of colors' proactive participation in and development of medicine in the Americas, Madame Métoyer actively engaged in the diagnoses, treatment, and/or prevention of disease, injury, and other damages to the physical body or mind. This includes surgical and non-surgical treatments such as drugs, herbs, diet, and other activities intended to heal the physical body or soul (mind, will, and emotions). Madame Métoyer's proactive administration of colonial and antebellum healthcare was

necessary due to the brutality and punishment of enslavement. Agricultural labor, hunting, enslavement mutilation, and the sexual exploitation of women of colors through forced breeding and rape were high health hazards. “Madame Métoyer’s younger sister Mariotte is on record as a *médecine*” (Mills, *The Forgotten People* 39), and Madame Métoyer’s daughter Thérèse was the primary/critical care attendant to her owner Madame de Soto who had been bedridden for decades. Madame Métoyer’s daughter Susanne and great-granddaughter Sidalise Sarpy Dupre were both skilled *femme sages* and nurses (Mills, *The Forgotten People* 39; Walker, *The History of Black Business in America* 181).

### **Religious Women as *Intrepreneurs***

As a *femme sage*, Mother Delille oversaw budgets, obtained financial backing for building construction, raised money from the *gens de couleur* community, and competed for clients with other institutions. The woman-centered *intrepreneurship* of Catholic sisters like Mother Delille continues to have a distinctive effect on the character of the Americas today. Because of the need for *intrepreneurship*, nursing the elderly and sick, educating free and enslaved people of colors, and feeding and clothing the poor were both businesses and charities. “At the same time, they were attuned enough to the marketplace to adopt business strategies that allowed their institutions to grow and thrive” (Wall 50). Rather than providing a service to obtain revenue, *femmes de couleur libre* religious women created charitable ventures to further their missions despite opposition from the Catholic Church. In short, their *intrepreneurship* and spirituality worked together.

## **The Business Economics of Religious Education**

Religious women like Mother Delille established schools to teach religion and to better human life. Rather than simply training students to be wives, mother, or *placées*, girls were trained to be independent (Deggs 108). Educational opportunities for people of African and Indigenous descent were nonexistent. The Catholic Church has traditionally been an institution that fostered education for missionary and humanitarian reasons. We find the basis of this educational mandate in Matthew 28:19 which states, “[t]herefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” The lack of knowledge, like poverty and illness, is an evil which Christian discipleship prompts us to ameliorate whenever and wherever we can. Mother Delille willingly identified with the poor and enslaved, and educated and catechized in defiance of the law and at the risk to her own freedom (it was illegal to publicly teach an enslaved laborer how to read and write). For people who are suffering from the dehumanization of white patriarchal capitalism, education can be a way to a better life. Mother Delille took a stand against authority as well as the systems of oppression designed to subjugate. In the process, she elevated the status of *femmes de couleur libre* and stood “as a symbol of how oppression and injustice can give way to justice and how justice can be crowned by brotherhood [*sic*] and Christian love (Dunne 314).

## **The Business Economics of Religious Caring for the Sick and Elderly (Hospitals and Nursing Homes)**

Nursing the sick and dying placed Mother Delille in situations that linked the worldly and the divine. In the nineteenth century, a recognition of the inevitability of pain and suffering was still part of the American Catholic ethos.<sup>80</sup> Catholic approaches to suffering, sickness, healing, and death help us to understand why sisters like Mother Delille felt compelled to establish hospitals and nursing homes. Caring for the sick could ease suffering, and it was a personal demonstration of Christian discipleship. During the summer months when yellow fever pandemics claimed the lives of many, the sisters were frontline workers whose services were needed by both “white” and Black patients. For those who had the money to pay for private services the sisters received ten dollars per day (Sterkx 231).

As a hospital administrator and nurse, Mother Delille provided care by dressing wounds and performing emergency nursing measures such as stopping hemorrhages. Equally important, she also tended the dying, giving spiritual care, and saving souls. In addition, Mother Delille built and operated a healthcare and service-oriented empire where she and the sisters served as administrators, department heads, and trustees. Mother Delille, as an *intreprenuer* and business administrator, challenged paradigms that equate service and caretaking primarily with weakness and subordination. Mother Delille’s ethos of service did in no way make her weak or subordinate. She established

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<sup>80</sup> See Roselyne Rey’s *The History of Pain*.

the hospital and nursing home within a white patriarchal, capitalistic economic system.

Yet her business activities did not follow the interests of the capitalist class.

### **The Business Economics of Religious Orphanages/Asylums**

As an extension of *intrepreneurial* pursuits, Mother Delille and the Sisters of the Holy Family took up the task of operating asylums for girls and boys. As the working arm of the free and enslaved *gens de couleur*, she created a welfare network for children of colors in need. Evidence from New Orleans Catholic orphanages shows that orphanages were created for children who needed them in temporary and extenuating circumstances and especially when the pandemic season hit. Diseases like yellow fever and cholera could kill within hours. Children were sent to the orphanage to escape infection and receive care. Orphanages represented one viable solution of social distancing during periods of infection crisis. If parents recovered, children were retrieved or sent home (Kelley 70). While under Mother Delille's care, children were catechized, educated, and taught a skill like dressmaking or nursing.

### **The Business Economics of Religious Dressmaking and Fashion Design**

New Orleans was home to one of the largest *gens de couleur libre* populations in North America and dressmakers capitalized on the high value placed on fashion in urban markets. As a trade, dressmaking generated income for Mother Delille and the sisters. Dressmakers to both "white" people and *femmes de couleur libre*, Sister Mary Bernard Deggs' notes that "our linen department was among the best in New Orleans and was better supplied than many. Many were the trousseaux made for not a hundred but a



thousand of the richest and best families in the state” (9). Sister Deggs’ statement demonstrates the historical role the sisters played in the development of urban dress and fashion in the Louisiana colony.

In conclusion, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille’s initial motivation for becoming *intrepreneurs* was basic survival. While Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille were successful in building their enterprises despite social and economic encumbrances, there is limited research available about this group of women *intrepreneurs*. Unlike white patriarchal capitalist, a system in which profit is the primary goal, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille did not work for mere profit. Their primary purpose was to change the social conditions of their families and communities.

The business administration success of Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille was inextricably tied to kinship groups. Both Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille used their labor activities to their own advantages, and in the process helped contribute to a womanist-infused business administration tradition. The extensive diversity of industries/enterprises Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille participated in is astonishing. Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille built their family/community’s extensive holdings from the ground up while navigating the intersecting dimensions of white patriarchal capitalism.

Women of colors have traditionally had higher rates of workforce participation, and through this approach, women of colors’ social and cognitive skills have unsurprisingly been vital to the evolution of the global labor markets in the Americas. As

pragmatists who navigated the Black enslaved and “white” free worlds, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille were perceptive and modern in their *int*repreneurship. As the primary stewards of their economic and social legacies, these weavers of wisdom forged an economic-development consciousness that continues today. These findings provide insight into how gender intersects with other markers of differences—race, class, spirituality—to form a business identity. In the following chapter, we will focus on the spiritualized nature of what a womanist-administration business model may offer to the discipline of Business Administration.

## CHAPTER V

### WOMANIST ADMINISTRATION:

#### CREATING SECURITY FOR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

##### **A Hyper-Changing World**

As I write this dissertation in the fall of 2020, the world is facing an increased global shortage of women leaders due to COVID-19 wreaking havoc on the lives of mothers who are caring for children and/or aging parents,<sup>81</sup> the Baby Boomer generation that is retiring from the workforce,<sup>82</sup> and the general malaise associated with underemployment/unemployment.<sup>83</sup> In the wake of a global pandemic, civil unrest, and climate change a more nuanced understanding of womanist-infused business administration and the interplaying enactment of making and using money, building viable businesses, and creating security for families and communities is needed because we are all in this galaxy together. And together, we all need to become resilient flesh-and-blood healers, peace-seekers, and wisdom-givers (Keating, *Transformation Now!* 179-184).

We need new markers of success that are not contingent upon shareholder profits in order to keep up with the complex problems, issues, and movements we find in a more

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<sup>81</sup> Globally, women make up 70% of COVID-19 essential workers. For more on women leaders and COVID-19 see Priya Shah and Rehmah Kasule's *Sheroes of COVID-19: Women Leading in the Crisis* and Jennifer Haupt's *Alone Together: Love, Grief and Comfort in the Time of COVID-19*.

<sup>82</sup> For more on the aging workforce see Ingrid Boveda and A.J. Metz's "Predicting End-of-Career Transitions for Baby Boomers Nearing Retirement Age."

<sup>83</sup> For more on the underemployment of people of colors see Manning Marable's *How Capitalism Underdeveloped Black America: Problems in Race, Political Economy, and Society*.

global marketplace. New business administrative models for the “management of our homes; the management of our farms; the management of the business of our tradesmen, large and small; of our churches, our philanthropic institutions, our universities, and our governmental departments” must rise to meet the realities of today (Taylor iv).

Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille’s stronger-together model of womanist-infused business administration has much to offer contemporary flesh-and-blood healers, peace-seekers, and wisdom-givers. Moreover, it contains clear revelation on combatting white patriarchal capitalism and at the same time has many inspiring and helpful lessons for today’s *intrepreneur*. Today’s women of colors, like their foremothers, have participated in business and the workforce at a much higher rate than their “white” counterparts. However, work has generally not been supportive of women of colors because white patriarchal capitalism is designed to maximize shareholder profits while exploiting women of colors’ bodies/labor.

Today’s *intrepreneurs* cannot replicate white patriarchal capitalism’s exploitative decision-making processes if they are to be effective. *Intrepreneurs* must incorporate much more two- and three-way communication with human and non-human stakeholders, rather than relying on biased orders and directives that do not serve the collective well-being of livingkind. The top-down white patriarchal capitalism pyramid needs to be replaced by a circular/reciprocal womanist approach because the current business administration environment is symbiotic and extremely complex. For instance, households and the workforce currently span five-six generations (the Greatest

Generation, the Silent Generation, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z), cultures, values, and interests—not all of which are compatible with one another. In today’s fast-paced and innovative marketplace, expectations are high, choices are plentiful, and employee and customer retention is constantly evolving. In short, fiscal year 2020 has shown us that the disparities associated with the white patriarchal capitalism business models are out-dated and deadly.

In the next section, I will review prevailing administrative theories in order to provide a historical analysis of the unjust (dated and deadly) ways white patriarchal capitalism management practices have functioned over the past five centuries in the lives of women of colors like Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille.<sup>84</sup>

### **Theories of Administration**

From every aspect from professional to spiritual, in Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille’s lives progress/success was greatly influenced by acknowledged and unacknowledged relational roles and administrative functions (Daniels 24). Traced from its Latin roots, the word “administration” derives from *administrate* which means “to serve.” Administration enables service to take place. Functionally, as administrators and *intrepreneurs*, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille were effective servant leaders. In addition to prioritizing goals, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille were family- and community-focused and sought to empower others. As I argued previously, both women

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<sup>84</sup> For a sweeping account of inequality and the economy, see French economist Thomas Piketty’s *Capital and Ideology*, *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, and *The Economics of Inequality*.

exhibited several sets or combinations of relational qualities including but not limited to humility, perseverance, and spiritual giftedness.

For many years, administration theories have been applied to corporate, church, nonprofit, philanthropic, small and large business, institutions, and government communities. In *General and Industrial Management*, Henri Fayol notes that no matter how simple or complex administration will always involve the following activities: Technical (production), Commercial (marketing), Financial (capital), Security (risk management), Accounting (profit and loss) and Managerial (coordination and harmonizing) (3). There are several ways to approach the activities involved in Fayol's administrative theory. Each approach brings a different perspective in order to provide an overview of the field of business administration and its relationship with white patriarchal capitalism. Currently there are eight major administrative paradigms in the public discourse. (See Appendix C for a brief description of each administrative/management theory.) Those paradigms are as follows:

- Classical Administration/Management
- Community-Based Governance
- Behavioral Management
- Management by Objectives
- Management Science
- Contingency

- Theory X and Theory Y
- Theory Z

### **General Principles of White Patriarchal Capitalism**

While this dissertation recognizes that the adoption of a “management science” approach legitimized the management discourse in the late nineteenth century, the forces of oppression, patriarchy, and big-money-takes-little-money reinforce a narrowly defined range of business administration art and science, thereby re-inscribing hegemonic structures of oppression. A “management science” approach that continues to replicate existing behaviors around money and power will never reduce the gaps between the haves and the have-nots (Piketty, *Capital and Ideology* 18). Perhaps even more alarming, this hierarchical approach to business administration fragments and isolates business production, stymies *int*repreneurial creativity, and prioritizes seven-step leadership<sup>85</sup> knowledges that uphold and maintain white patriarchal capitalism approaches to conducting business (Piketty, *The Economics of Inequality* 42). This disorderly and unjust approach that has come to define what constitutes business must be uprooted because our destinies are on the line. Allowing this Trumpish<sup>86</sup> behavior to go on will continue to put our interconnections with the planet and others at risk. These

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<sup>85</sup> In my opinion, seven-step leadership approaches put a great deal of pressure on women of color professionals to perform at high levels. These approaches that do not consider how women of color bodies are perceived in the workplace nor how women of color perceive themselves.

<sup>86</sup> The *Urban Dictionary* defines trumpish as to be petty or vindictive, or worse both at the same time. The term was inspired by Donald Trump, 45th president of the United States, who incited a riot in which five people lost their lives because he did not want to come to terms with being voted out of office.

interconnections are too consequential to nonchalantly roll the dice in deciding how we continue to conduct business (Daniels 24; Wright 14).

In the white patriarchal capitalism models of business, problems and conflicts are often solved by blaming, shaming, and maiming. Oppressive, domineering, abusive business conduct, protocols, and regulations that required women of colors to work long hours under dangerous conditions at the risk of brutalization or death continues to this day (Baptist 261-307). There is a “my way or the highway” mentality that “exposes workers to potentially injurious practices associated with supervisor’s personal proclivities and defects—increasing exposure to chaos and abuse” (Crowley 418). Either/or analyses were often the only methods used to annihilate the competition and get things moving in the white patriarchal capitalist direction. Rarely was the administrator responsible for mistakes or the lethal impact on members of the work community, larger community, or environment. The sole priority was making the maximum profit for owners/shareholders and pushing products/services at customers without considering the actual needs of women of colors, the community, or the world (Wright 69). Perhaps even more importantly, women of colors were frequently overworked, endangered, and miserable/unsatisfied with their work and personal lives. In addition, there was no line of demarcation for women of colors between private and work life because their bodies were always in work mode.

It matters to *int*repreneurs, if we or our ancestors were exposed to racism, sexism, and/or classism in work mode. It matters if we or our ancestors were the ones doling out



the oppression, domination, exploitation, and destruction. Peace be still if complex trauma<sup>87</sup> from experiencing and doling out white patriarchal capitalism is concurrently stored in our bodies/souls as we work. For these reasons, conventional administrative theories (like the ones above) that continue to focus on increasing workers' efficiency, effectiveness, and/or productivity for the sake of increasing shareholder profits and not collective well-being are unwise. Similarly unwise are approaches that place administrators, who may have never done the job as the expert of the job instead of the *intrepreneur* who performs the job daily. Unhealed work-related trauma that has been passed down from one generation of women of colors to the next generation of women of colors impacts the way we show up in the workplace (Menakem 38). Therefore, the major flaw of the above administrative theories is the lack of attention to the ways white patriarchal capitalism impacts our lives for generations (Harts 43).

Within the context of women of colors experience with white patriarchal capitalism and work, the focus has always been on comparing women of colors to “white” men, Black men, or “white” women. Comparisons are problematic because the complex traumatic nature of the women of colors experience is gendered and raced (Hill Collins 22). As such, women-of-colors *intrepreneurs* frequently find themselves being “lorded over” and dictated to by men and women in authority as well as by those under

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<sup>87</sup> Complex trauma is exposure to multiple traumatic experiences and the difficulties that arise from adapting to or surviving these experiences. For instance, in *The Courage to Love*, the movie about Henriette Delille's work, a twelve-year-old enslaved girl named Simone is told by her “white” master that in addition to her daily work she must now breed. After surviving the birth of her master's child, Simone soon hemorrhages and dies from complex trauma exposure.

their authority. More importantly, the top-down authoritarian model of business administration will continue to botch the equitable work opportunities for women of colors if left unchecked (Berry and Gross 1-8).

In these final pages, I explore Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's *int*repreneurship movements from a womanist-based speculative theorizing perspective. In so doing, I demonstrate that their *int*repreneurial spirits exemplify the way(s) that womanist theories challenge us to think about new strategies for creating and sustaining high social/communal/business performance and progress.

During Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's day, white patriarchal capitalism consumed human and nonhuman resources in the name of profit (advancing the bottom line). Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's business contributions share two womanist principles: first, they decentered the individual; and second, they were rooted in the communities they aimed to uplift (Maparyan 44-45). As a narrative, white patriarchal capitalism forces a world ecology centered on competition, greed, extraction/extinction, and consumption that only leads to complete exhaustion/expenditure/disbursement.

Reflecting upon the ways through which Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille navigated white patriarchal capitalism to form alliances and create a womanist business administration helps us to reconsider and define new dimensions of womanist-infused business principles. Whether it was making the world better for the next generation or caring for the marginalized, both women placed creating security for families and communities at the center of their business philosophies.

While clear distinctions can be made between Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's eighteenth and nineteenth-century forms of activism and white patriarchal capitalism, familial/community upliftment is one model of social, political, and economic security. Likewise, the women viewed their agency (ability to create wealth and security for families/communities) as coming from God; this belief implies a level of spiritual adeptness removed from white patriarchal capitalism's whitewashed Christianity.<sup>88</sup> They served as stewards of that agency and understood that they were to perform the duties of their office/workspace with an attitude of humility and service.

### **Womanist Administrative Theory**

As Gloria Anzaldúa and many others have observed, we are observing an epistemological shift (*Light* 118). The transformation required by this radical shift ripples through every aspect of our world. The womanist administrative theory I envision calls for a radical business future that embraces critical use of money/capital to enhance equity and security for all livingkind, liberates *intrepreneurs* from the pernicious influences of white patriarchal capitalism, and recognizes the reciprocal interdependence of all. To accomplish this vision requires a closer look at Maparyan's womanist theory. By decentering white patriarchal capitalism, Maparyan's womanist theory will lead us in recognizing the continuity between what we do and who we are. The fixed hierarchical

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<sup>88</sup> For more on the whitewashing of Christianity see Antipas Harris's *Is Christianity the White Man's Religion?: How the Bible is Good News for People of Color*, Bettye Collier-Thomas's *Jesus, Jobs, and Justice: African American Women and Religion*, Vashti M. McKenzie's *Not Without a Struggle: Leadership for African American Women in Ministry*, and Raphael G. Warnock's *The Divided Mind of the Black Church: Theology, Piety and Public Witness*.

arrangement (in order for someone to be feel safe, rich, and free someone must remain unsafe, poor, and captive) of the business administration theories we have inherited (metaparadigm, grand theories, middle-range theories, practice theories) continues to limit our thinking and constrain our ingenuity.

This impulse to create a womanist administrative theory is rooted within the beliefs of Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's emancipatory business/body politics. The potential for changing how we do business (putting money rather than people to work) is revolutionary and radical. Dismantling the boundaries and male-centered proscriptions of business thought is necessary because living on this planet we see all around us undeniable opposition and crises. These struggles include widespread inequality in hiring practices (discriminating against applicants with perceived Black names),<sup>89</sup> overtly racist business ideologies (who can qualify as a mathematician, inventor, and/or politician),<sup>90</sup> disturbingly patriarchal politics (senior executives, boardrooms, and glass ceilings that exclude),<sup>91</sup> and continued destruction to our homes, businesses, communities, and universal well-being.

This paradigm shift will require a (re)awakening that is similar to what Gloria Anzaldúa calls *conocimiento*. Mobilizing business possibilities in ways that are useful and necessary for the world, the shift that womanist administrative theory proposes links

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<sup>89</sup> See Marianne Bertrand and Sendhil Mullainathan's "Are Emily and Greg More Employable than Lakisha and Jamal: A Field Experiment on Labor Market Discrimination."

<sup>90</sup> See Abbe H. Herzig's "Becoming Mathematicians: Women and Students of Color Choosing and Leaving Doctoral Mathematics."

<sup>91</sup> See Jana Oehmichen's "Beyond Human Capital Explanations for the Gender Pay Gap among Executives: Investigating Board Embeddedness Effects on Discrimination."

the womanist perspectives of scholars like Anzaldúa, Keating, and Maparyan to the critiques of white patriarchal capitalism. This linkage inevitably leads to new disciplinary concepts for a radical and emancipatory future of business conduct.

This paradigm shift also requires the confrontation and critique of the Americas' history with white patriarchal capitalism, beginning with the land theft that began with the first European colonizers, moving through slaveholding, and continuing on into the present. Alienation from this history keeps us subjugated, vulnerable to the same troubles, toils, and snares that come with oppression. The narrative of modern business administration theory also ignores and in other ways erases a long tradition of womanist-infused business principles exemplified by Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille prior to the fathers of modern management discourse (Fayol, Taylor, and Weber), thereby dismissing the role women-of-colors business leaders and *int*repreneurs played in alleviating human suffering for much of human history. Maintaining this racialized “white” male status-quo keeps us from coming to terms with the truth that the workforce is rapidly changing.

What would a successful learning/workspace look like if we were to successfully/positively integrate Maparyan's womanism into the education and business endeavors of *int*repreneurs? As I ponder this question, three activist practices emerge based on Maparyan's traits of vernacular, commonweal, and spiritualized. The three practices of activism are diversity, kindness, and spiritual. The implications for *int*repreneurs follow within the context of a womanist speculative model of theorizing.

Moreover, this model offers a usable guide for theorists and practitioners seeking to successfully move their *intrepreneurial* pursuits from a white patriarchal capitalism model to a sociological, political, and economical intercession *intrepreneurial* model.

### **Diversity Activism**

Homes, classrooms, and businesses are no longer constrained by physical borders. We can talk face-to-face with anyone in the world at any time of the day or night via the internet and a good web app. Likewise, many of us can do business with anyone in the world from our homes, cars, office buildings, or the beach. Although the Earth's surface is 197 million square miles, we are more like a global village just happening to operate on seven continents rather than 195 countries with distinct borders. Globalization is still one of the most important and broad-based challenges currently facing *intrepreneurs*. Today's question of how best to manage our multiculturalism requires *intrepreneurs* to consider the needs, aspirations, and attitudes of those who may have been born and raised as the colonizer or the colonized. Motivation, communication, management style, and productivity take on new meaning and require modification and qualification. A successful (people/planet-centered versus making money-centered) status of workforce diversity (how we respectfully address those who are not "white" male and able-bodied) requires several adjustments. A one-size approach will never fit all. For the influx of *intrepreneurs* who have been *othered*, the request for assimilation is negligence and therefore not an option.

For instance, in 2017 much attention was placed on the move of Deloitte (one of the largest accounting and professional services firms in the world) to take a more assimilationist approach to their diversity efforts. For Deloitte this meant a diversity and inclusion administration practice that moved away from specific demographic groups like women's networks and other affinity groups. According to Avivah Wittenberg-Cox in her 2017 *Harvard Business Review* article entitled "Deloitte's Radical Attempt to Reframe Diversity," "The central idea: [Deloitte will] offer all managers—including the white guys who still dominate leadership—the skills to become more inclusive, then hold them accountable for building more-balanced businesses." However, colorblind/assimilation diversity approaches are not the answer. In fact, researchers have found that colorblind/assimilation efforts do not actually help anyone in any real or tangible ways because companies do not want to invest the necessary funding to transform from the inside when doing so would take funding away from shareholder profits, and "white" racialized men truly believe the system is already fair.<sup>92</sup> The "diversity defense" has led many people of colors to view companies with pro-diversity initiatives as no less likely to discriminate against them, no more inclusive, and ultimately no better to work for than a company that does not say a single thing about diversity. A womanist administrative theory calls for diversity/change activism, and I am defining diversity/change activism as

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<sup>92</sup> For more on this study see Alexandra Kalev, Frank Dobbin, and Erin Kelly's, "Best Practices or Best Guesses? Assessing the Efficacy of Corporate Affirmative Action and Diversity Policies."

the everyday practice of digressing from the status-quo. In *Transformation Now: Toward a Post-Oppositional Politics of Change*, AnaLouise Keating asserts,

those of us raised and/or educated in western systems of thought have been trained to read and evaluate ourselves and others according to status-quo stories. We have been indoctrinated into a supremacist worldview—an over reliance on rational thought, scientific empiricism, and hierarchical binary thinking that creates a restrictive framework that labels, divides, and segregates based on socially defined difference and sameness. (36)

This unstable melting pot of fuzzy math does not consider the cultural values, beliefs, or lifestyle preferences of *int*repreneurs who show up in homes, classrooms, and workspaces daily. Therefore, the promise of diversity activism is to advocate a people-/planet-first approach where our individual and collective lifestyles, family needs, communication, and work styles are valued over how much money we can make for shareholders or ourselves. Intended to help intrepreneurs achieve diversity objectives, open channels of communication, and listen to the voices of the diverse communities they serve, diversity activism is about responding to the changing demographics of global business.

Businesses must be places where diversity principles are valued and practiced and adjust to meet new demands. Diversity activism must take into account such things as the intersecting dimensions of ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion, experiences, beliefs, geographic locations, education, frameworks of thinking, and socioeconomic status.



So what does diversity activism look like? Diversity activism starts with understanding equity, which should not be confused with equality. Equity describes fairness and justice in securing outcomes and starts by honoring and welcoming differences. From honoring and welcoming differences in resources, decision-making, expertise, experience, connections, and opportunities, diversity activism is about the survivability and thriveability (security) of communities. Considering the outsider-within ways that women of colors have been silenced and excluded from contributing to the business knowledge,<sup>93</sup> diversity activism requires that all:

- Hear voices that have been silenced.
- Actively listen to perspectives that have been disregarded.
- Addressing and correcting systemic discrimination.
- Incorporate those voices and perspectives into business communication dialogue.
- Consciously validate, honor, and respect diverse views, experiences and realities with our minds, bodies, spirits, and money.

For diversity activism to be effective, our focus, like that of Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille, must be on self-reflection, dialogue, education, information, and financial sharing for the upliftment of communities. When considering the needs of communities, we must ask how does this business product (works of art and affirmation) or services

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<sup>93</sup> For more on the ways women of colors have been treated as objects rather than contributors of knowledge see Patricia Hill Collins' "On Race Gender, and Science: Black Women as Objects and Agents of Sociological Knowledge."

(acts of kindness and respect) look through the lens of various communities, such as communities categorized by gender, race, class, ability, or culture. Applying a lens for each perspective and intersectional perspective is essential and can be transformative in business planning, decision-making, and allocating financial resources to a new or existing product or service. Without this crucial intersectional lens, *intrepreneurs* could continue to perpetuate inequities.

Despite the under-index of women in senior executive positions in the workplace, research by such scholars as Robert Sutton, Hayagreeva Rao, and Janice Bryant Howroyd remind us that as many women as possible should be included because the more men you have in a group, the more the status quo prevails. Nevertheless, *intrepreneurs* will need to learn how to put people and the planet first and actively work to recruit, retain, and empower a diverse workforce.

Research by Catalyst and McKinsey and Company<sup>94</sup> shows that businesses with more diversity—gender, race, ethnicity, and other dimensions—are more likely to have a competitive advantage. Financially, these businesses outperform their competitors and attract and retain employees. As a result, communities benefit from the innovation and productivity of diversity activism. When I consider the ways Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille contributed to a business environment of diversity activism the following prerequisites/must-haves emerge:

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<sup>94</sup> See Catalyst's *Advancing African American Women in the Workplace: What Managers Need to Know* and McKinsey and Company's *Delivering Through Diversity*.

- They provided training. Madame Métoyer taught her children how to care for tobacco plants and hunt and her daughters and granddaughters how to manufacture medicine. Mother Delille taught the sisters how to nurse patients during seasonal pandemics and how to educate children and adults.
- They communicated the plan. All knew and understood the business goals at stake—the upliftment of communities of colors. Communication was key to achieving their business goals because freedom was precarious.
- They led/mentored from the frontlines. Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille set the tone for every business endeavor. Both women demonstrated a commitment to work that included providing guidance and resources and investing in the business ventures of others.
- They saw human hearts and not statistics. Seeing beyond statistics was woven into the fabric of their *int*repreneurship. It took Madame Métoyer fifteen years to free her children and grandchildren. It took Mother Delille multiple fundraising endeavors to serve and uplift communities of colors. Seeing beyond the numbers was instrumental in their ability to transform communities and survive inequality.
- They were aware of their own diversity. Both women knew who they were and capitalized on their strengths.

Diversity activism has important implications for the discipline of business administration. *Int*repreneurs must shift their ideology of socially defined difference and sameness in ways that ensure greater productivity and ultimately security for families and communities. Today's successful home, classroom, and workspace must foster diversity/change activism or they will become candidates for extinction.

### **Kindness Activism**

White patriarchal capitalism is embedded with a nasty/mean streak. Challenging this mean streak can be hard in a hierarchical system imbued with power and authority. Consider the words we use in our homes and workspaces in any given workweek. Were they words that empowered and inspired? Or were they words that dehumanized and demeaned? Some managers can humiliate staff by embarrassing them in the presence of customers and their peers. This mean streak can be extended to bullying and harassment which often goes unchecked. Institutional mean streaks can create complex trauma in the lives of staff when the focus is on measuring success in numbers and bank accounts. It is paradoxical that we have developed the most sophisticated methods of communication (technology, research on the benefits of kindness, disciplines, etc.) but remain entrenched in a 24/7 enterprise culture of overtime, anxiety, competition, and isolation—attributes that continues to reinforce white patriarchal capitalism's nasty/mean streak.

Kindness is one of the traits that helps us understand our interdependence with each other as citizens of the universe. In other words, kindness is derived from kinship or concern for fellow humans and acts as a connection between the self, people, and the

planet. Although “kindness can be mistaken as weakness,” the value of kindness cannot be underestimated (Muñoz 150). In *Less Than Human: Why We Demean, Enslave, and Exterminate Others*, Smith argues that “dehumanization is a joint creation of biology, culture, and the architecture of the human mind” (4). Kindness is expressed in giving the time to care and share with people, animals, nature, and more. We depend on each other for survival, for thriving, and for flourishing, and our kindness skills appear to be related to our ability to cope with the daily stresses of a modern workforce.

The essence of kindness as an inclusive communication strategy ensures that all share/stakeholders and anyone likely impacted by the communication are able to understand the information and respond accordingly. Information should be kind—clear, direct, accommodate cultural frameworks, respectful, and easy to understand—because people have different communication needs and process information differently. At a minimum, kindness communication requires awareness, sensitivity, and an ability to communicate with diverse communities in a thoughtful, respectful, and nonjudgemental manner.

*Int*repreneurs will need to develop their interpersonal skills, starting with their own work/life conflicts. How many *int*repreneurs are working around the clock to get things done at work while often denying their own basic needs and the needs of their families and communities in order to participate in the busy-ness of white patriarchal capitalism? If the answer is too many, the price that some *int*repreneurs have had to pay is too high. When *int*repreneurs are actively engaged in practicing kindness, mindfulness

research<sup>95</sup> shows they are better able to be aware of their own thoughts and emotions in their interactions with others. In this way *intrepreneurs* could serve as models of kindness in the many large and small leadership moments that present in a workplace, home, and/or community.

Kindness activism may be just the medicine needed to bring positivity into our everyday lives and the lives of those around us. Kindness is about managing open honest conversations and inspiring constructive positive activities that change lives. Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille may have lived simple lives, but both women lived a form of kindness activism in their communities and their legacy of kindness activism is far from simple. In so doing, they paved a path of kindness, love, and compassion for us to follow.

### **Spiritual Activism**

Every act for social change whether expressive or spiritual is embedded in a vast network of cultural and material principles/ideologies and practices/methods. As such, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's spiritual awareness sheds much light on what it means to also be of African descent, female, and pious amid the adversity that came with the rise of white patriarchal capitalism in the Americas. The spirituality of administration is the act/movement of transforming into who you were intended to be. This

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<sup>95</sup> For more on the kindness mindfulness connection see Amy Saltzman's *A Still Quiet Place: A Mindfulness Program for Teaching Children and Adolescents to Ease Stress and Difficult Emotions*, Jon Kabat-Zinn's *Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness*, and Patricia A. Jennings' *Mindfulness for Teachers: Simple Skills for Peace and Productivity in the Classroom*.

transformative act is directive (encoded in our personalities,<sup>96</sup> bodies, proclivities, life, and metaphysical experiences) but not drudgery. This is not to say that discipline/effort is not involved, but when we are living from a spiritual place of purpose, it is a delight not drudgery. At first glance, it may be difficult to conceive of administrative tasks and practices as being delightfully spiritual. From a western perspective, so much of administrative work seems so monotonous or strictly business that it appears to function counter to the spiritual nature of life.

More specifically, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille used spiritual awareness and social innovation to transcend colonial and antebellum systems of oppression for free and enslaved people of colors. Both women had the goal of uplifting communities of colors and did so through business contributions (planting, hunting, and ministry) primarily reserved for elite “white” able-bodied men. This is important because systems of oppression seldom function alone. As a result, they form a system that maintains the domination of one or more groups of people over another. In this way, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille used faith, hope, and love of livingkind to transcend the system of oppression.

Throughout the history of the Americas, spiritual awareness/vision coupled with action has played a significant role in the work producing social change. Anzaldúa first introduced the term spiritual activism into feminist thought in a 1999 interview

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<sup>96</sup> Although beyond the scope of this dissertation, it is important to note that personality assessments are, in my opinion, overemphasized in contemporary business leadership (decision-making) efforts. In future projects, I will explore the impact of spiritual activism on leadership formation.

discussing her theory of *conocimiento*. Spanish for consciousness, Anzaldúa's theory of *conocimiento* is a profoundly transformative roadmap/process for establishing metaphysical, social, political, and technological interconnections. *Conocimiento* encompasses the following pathways/seven stages: el arrebató, nepantla, desconocimiento, el compromiso, putting Coyolxauhqui together, the blow-up, and spiritual activism. Anzaldúa's theory of *conocimiento* involves a spiritualized understanding of interconnectedness coupled with action for universal wholeness and wellness (89-90). In this dissertation, I am defining spiritual activism as 1) the ability to formulate a transformational vision of harmony, equality, and well-being; 2) aligning that transformational vision to that which connects us all; and 3) applying that transformational vision into the time-bound material world (Keating, *Transformation Now!* 181-184). Scholars like Cheryl Townsend Gilkes, Marcia Riggs, and Emilie M. Townes would classify the pursuit of spiritual activism as akin to understanding and then finding meaning in one's purpose and passion. I am positing that spiritual activism derives from a womanist intersectional interpretation of moving towards positive social change and strategic functions (Cannon, Townes, and Sims xv-xvi). Three strategic functions of spiritual activism are based on Maparayan's methods of harmonizing and coordinating, mutual aid and self-help, and motherhood. Those three strategic functions are spiritually active business planning, spiritually active service, and spiritually active production.



Spiritual activism, combined with preparation (spiritually active business planning) and reciprocity (spiritually active service), fosters an ability to harmonize our thoughts, our intellect, our feelings, and, ultimately, our world (spiritually active production). This harmonization leads us to stand up, say a prayer, and know “[t]o own it, one must be able to make use of it, and that implies that one is aware of the purpose for which it was created and has the means, the information, or the knowledge to use it as it was intended” (Walters 125). This “it” Walters speaks of is inherent in all life, devoid of Western “objectivity,” and part of the inexplicable, nonmaterial world of Spirit. Besides, spiritual activism starts when we invite the power of the Spirit (the supernatural) to play an active role in the life of those “adept at switching modes” (Anzaldúa 59).

### **Spiritually Active Business Planning**

When it came to planning, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille were adept at switching modes. Considering the number of successful businesses in which the two women engaged (tobacco plantation, a *vacherie*, hunting and trapping bears and other wildlife for the market, and a pharmaceutical manufacturing business, hospital, nursing home, orphanage/asylum, boarding and day schools, luxury clothing retail, and an array of social service ministries), they had to be spiritually active business planners. In a fast-changing world, spiritually active business planning as a practice is essential to focusing on what really matters—the radical interconnectedness and upliftment of communities of colors. Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille’s business legacies teach us that at the most fundamental level, planning is about listening to the collective well-being of

clients/families/communities and making decisions that support that well-being. As the stewards of their families/communities during extraordinarily complex times, both women's business endeavors, designs, and implementation capabilities point to what really matters—collective well-being.

I speculate that Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's spiritually active business planning started with asking Spirit to assist in the development or refinement of the mission, goals, and strategies tailored for each business endeavor. For contemporary *int*preneurs, this might look like:

- First, spending time in prayer or with Spirit and then performing the research necessary to make logical and sound business planning decisions.
- Second, creating a mission statement for each business endeavor that will act as your North Star/guiding light throughout your journey.
- Third, developing the goals, strategies, tactics, and budgets that will form the infrastructure of your business plan.
- Fourth is to integrate the business plan into day-to-day routine.
- Last is to measure success of business efforts and modify the plan as needed to continue success.

While Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's business contributions offer an excellent framework for contemporary *int*preneurs, it is up to us to put in the work and allow Spirit to do the rest.

It is that simple. Spiritually active business planning takes place through relationships. By focusing on establishing, strengthening, and retaining human and nonhuman relationships, *intrepreneurs* can change behaviors in ways that positively affect communities and the world—the very reason Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille were in business.

### **Spiritually Active Service**

The next strategic function is spiritually active service, which I define as a forward-thinking philosophy focusing on questions regarding existence and intention. Spiritually active service builds on spiritually active business planning. In short, there can be no service without planning. Our spiritually active service establishes the social, political, cultural, and economic framework for conducting business.

Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille were determined to serve wherever need existed. Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille assembled the service tools at their disposal in order to reconsider the oppressive world in which they lived. How we read and understand their serviced-based contributions can inform our understanding of the present. As *intrepreneurs*, their way of servicing their world spans broad swaths of the women of colors experience in the Americas and spans understandings around privilege, positionality, labor/action, and the action that comes from being complicit in white patriarchal capitalism regimes. For instance, in their passion for the upliftment of their families and their communities, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille were the benefactors of the unpaid labor of people of colors.

It cannot be overlooked that both women engaged in the wickedness of human bondage. As *intrepreneurs* we must always analyze our spiritually active service through the historical lens of time as well as contemporary patterns lest we run the same risk of being a complicit partner in white patriarchal capitalism. Their unusual position of slaveholder continues to be problematic but does not subvert my argument. This huge flaw reminds us that we will make mistakes. We cannot fully avoid/rise above the values of our time. Slaveholding was very normalized at that time, and they stayed within that system. As a core purpose (reason for being), spiritually active service was deeply ingrained in their business contributions and guided the women's actions.

Spiritually active service was inherent, required no justification, and never compromised for economic gain. Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's core purpose reflects their motivation for engaging in business. Both women knew that uplifting communities of colors and reversing the impact of white patriarchal capitalism on people of color's lives would not be realized in their lifetimes, but they were willing to begin the spiritually active service process despite the contradictions.

### **Spiritually Active Production**

An *intrepreneur* is considered productive if service goals are met. Thus, productivity implies efficacy. Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille were productive because they were able to successfully meet the needs of their families and communities. Notice that I'm not talking about organizational outputs (sales) and inputs (cash) as a measure of success but instead womens of colors' lives and the lives of those they

cherished. As a result, their businesses were profitable because while there was an expectation of profit, profit was not the primary goal.

I speculate that Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille began each day with the same challenge: too many tasks on their to-do list and not enough time to accomplish them. However, they made real progress because they ran their day versus their day running them. I further speculate that with Spirit's help they discovered what worked for them based on their personal and professional motivations, strengths, preferences and the things they must accomplish (e.g. tobacco harvest season or pandemic season). When it comes to spiritually active productivity, we must think in terms of how many hours per week we are willing to work and how our work will influence our personal, family, and communal life. It has never been more critical for *int*repreneurs to understand and develop comprehensive and holistic businesses such as the kind that womanist administration offers—approaches that honor all livingkind.

## **Conclusion**

This dissertation has (re)framed the business administration contributions of Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille. Both women engaged in business in the colony of Louisiana not for mere profit but to carve out a space for familial and community well-being for those who suffered under the harmful effects of white patriarchal capitalism. A focus on the motivating factors and womanist-infused business administration theories of these exemplary womanist business leaders offers a window into the lives of

administrators who forged new avenues for advancement in the rural and urban iconic colony of Louisiana.

Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's business contributions are emblematic of Maparayan's theoretical concepts of womanism. The transformation we want and the reality we need I pray will be led by womanist *int*repreneurs like Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille who knew how to turn their wounds into wisdom. As innovators and advocates, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille set their sights on making and using money, building viable businesses, and creating security for their families and communities. As a group effort, Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille's business contributions included a diverse workforce at every level, a multicultural marketplace, and an image that supported growth and expansion. Following in the footsteps of Madame Métoyer and Mother Delille, may we too propagate, nurture, educate, and lead women of colors toward progress.

Table 1

## Madame Métoyer - Business Administration Transactions

Date	Business Transactions
Fall 1786	A promissory note (credit) is drafted to purchase the eldest daughter, Marie Louise, from Pierre Dolet for \$300. The manumission process takes place from 1786-1795.
January 18, 1787	Madame Métoyer petitions Commandant Mézières for 800- <i>arpent</i> (675.8 acres) land concession. She can settle/cultivate/work the land subject to meeting conditions. All conditions are met, which includes having the property surveyed, and the actual/final land grant occurred in 1794.
October 1788	A "Separation Agreement" is drafted by Claude Thomas "Pierre" Métoyer. Madame Métoyer is given an annuity of \$120 piasters to support three free-born children plus a 68-acre tract of land. All ten of their children are minors. Pierre retained ownership of seven of those children and the child she was nursing when she was rented/leased/trafficked to him in 1766 (Pierre Métoyer's 1801 will, Melrose Collection, and Coincoin to Métoyer, Abrogation of Agreement, May 28, 1802, Misc. Book 2:206-7, NCCO).
1790	Madame Métoyer travels to Opelousas (approximately 120 miles from Natchitoches). A promissory note (credit) is drafted to purchase her daughter, Therese, and grandson Joseph Mauricio from her former owner Madame de Soto for \$700. The sale/emancipation is contingent upon Madame de Soto's death. The manumission process takes place from 1790-1797 (Marie St. Denis to Marie Thérèse Coincoin, doc. 2804, NCA).
1790	Madame Métoyer sets her younger sister Maria del Marger, who is also living in Opelousas, Therese, and grandson, Joseph, up in a cattle partnership.
1792	Madame Métoyer shares a barge with Pierre Métoyer and ships, tobacco, bear hides, and bear grease to New Orleans.
1793	A promissory note (credit) is drafted for the purchase of Madame Métoyer's son Nicolas. He was illegally sold away from her as a child and is living in Nacogdoches (Spanish territory). Nacogdoches is approximately 115 miles away from Natchitoches. In 1797, Nicolas' former owner, Antonio Gil y Barbo is imprisoned, and because Nicolas' freedom was provisional, he is remanded to bondage. In 1799 Madame Métoyer sent her son Augustin to pay off the promissory note. Because Antonio Gil y Barbo is imprisoned, the legal representative will not accept the funds. Y Barbo is released and banished from Nacogdoches in 1799,

	and Nicolas finally receives his freedom. The manumission process takes place from 1793-1799.
Late 1794	Madame Métoyer purchases her granddaughter Catiche also known as Catherine, for \$150. Catiche is Louis' daughter with a bondwoman. Catiche has been living with Madame Métoyer since she was two years old. Madame Métoyer frees Catiche in 1794 (Coincoin's" subsequent manumission of Catiche see Doc. 2552).
October 1795 Post Census	Madame Métoyer attributes five enslaved people.
1796 Land Grant	Madame Métoyer petitions a land grant for a Vacherie.
1797	Madame Métoyer hires José Maré and his family to manage the Vacherie property. Maré manages the Vacherie for at least ten years.
1797	Madame de Soto dies and Madame Métoyer frees her daughter Thérèse (39 years old) and grandson Joseph (16 years old).
1801	Pierre Métoyer frees the last three of his enslaved children (Louis, age 31, Pierre, age 29, and Marie Susanne, age 33). As a result, Madame Métoyer releases Pierre from the \$120 piastre annuity agreement for the three free-born children but retains the 68 acres of land he gave her in the separation agreement.
June 5, 1807	After closing the Vacherie, Madame Métoyer purchases 100 acres for \$500. The land is adjacent to her farmstead and is for her son Toussaint.
September 14, 1807	Madame Métoyer sales the supplemental tract to Toussaint (See NCA Doc. 4365). Payment of the land takes place from 1807-1814 (Jean La Lande to Marie Thérèse, Natchitoches "Original Conveyance Acts," Book 42, doc. 501)
1816 Post Census	Gwendolyn Midlo Hall attributes sixteen enslaved people to Madame Métoyer. Elizabeth Shown Mills says this is an error and should be twelve enslaved people.
March 9, 1816	Madame Métoyer sells the smaller 68-acre farmstead to her neighbor.
April 20, 1816	Madame Métoyer files nine more documents transferring her 12-16 bonds people to her Métoyer children. The bonds people are valued at \$5,250. At Madame Métoyer's death, the cash and Old River land grant of 1,000 acres was divided into ten strips among her children without probate.



Table 2

## Mother Delille – Business Administration Transactions

Date	Business Transactions
November 21, 1836	Mother Delille and her companions organize themselves into a confraternity and adopt the name La Congrégation des Souers de la Présentation de la Saint Vierge Marie (The Congregation of the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary). Mother Delille writes a set of administrative rules and regulations. The organizational date occurs on the Feast of the Presentation of Mary (Luke 2:22-38).
1838	Mother Delille begins to serve as a sponsor and witness for enslaved people and free people of colors.
August 25, 1842	Mother Delille's sister Cécile dies at the age of thirty-four. Cécile bequeaths \$1,000 and her bondwoman Betsy to Mother Delille.
November 21, 1842	Rental of Bayou Road near St. Augustine Catholic Church. The house becomes the headquarters of the ministry.
1847	Mother Delille incorporates and becomes the first president of L'Association de Sainte Famille (The Holy Family Association). The Family Association is the legal fundraising arm for the ministry.
September 18, 1848	Mother Delille purchases a lot on St. Bernard Avenue and builds a nursing home for older women of African and Indigenous descent.
Late 1848	Church parish trustees bring a wounded man of African descent to the St. Bernard Avenue house. Mother Delille and the pious women move out of the nursing home for propriety's sake and leave the older women and the man in the care of a hired woman.
c. 1848-1850	Mother Delille and Juliette Gaudin rent a home on Condé (Chartres) Street near the Archbishop Antoine Blanc's residence.
December 12, 1850	Mother Delille purchases a house at 72 Bayou Road for \$1,400. A promissory note (credit) of \$308.75 was made. Five months later, she paid \$1,091.25. Marie-Jeanne Aliquot loans Mother Delille \$700 at no interest using funds the owner of the house owed her. The house is for the religious education of men and women of African and Indigenous descent. According to tradition, the women taught girls during the day and women at night.
May 23, 1851	Mother Delille falls ill and dictates her first will. She bequeaths the Bayou Road property to Archbishop Blanc for the continued work of the

	“Children of the Holy Family” ministry. Her bondwoman, Betsy, was bequeathed to her brother Jean.
November 21, 1852	Mother Henriette Delille, Sister Juliette Gaudin, and Sister Josephine Charles pronounce their initial vows after being instructed by the Religious of the Sacred Heart – St. Michael’s Convent.

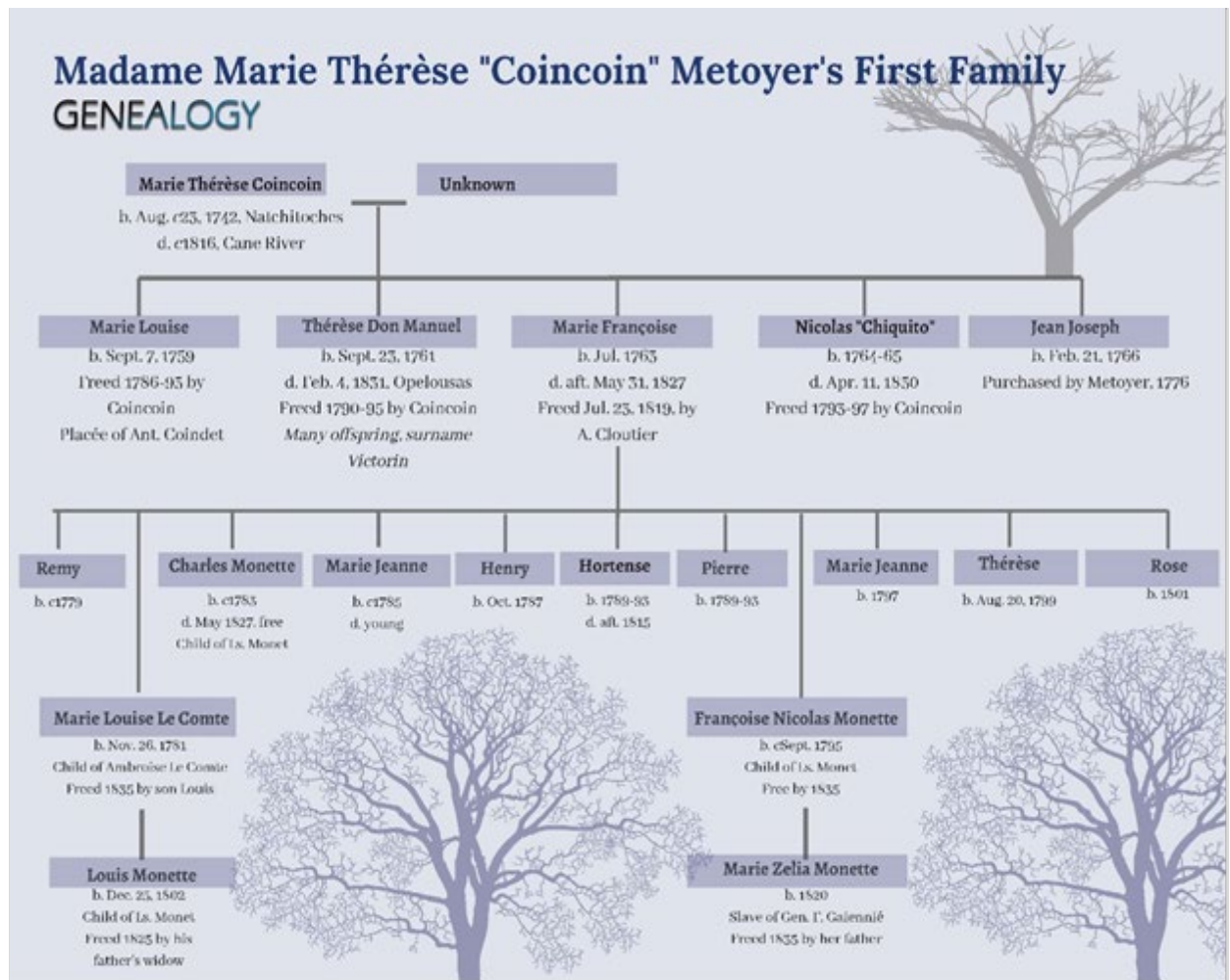
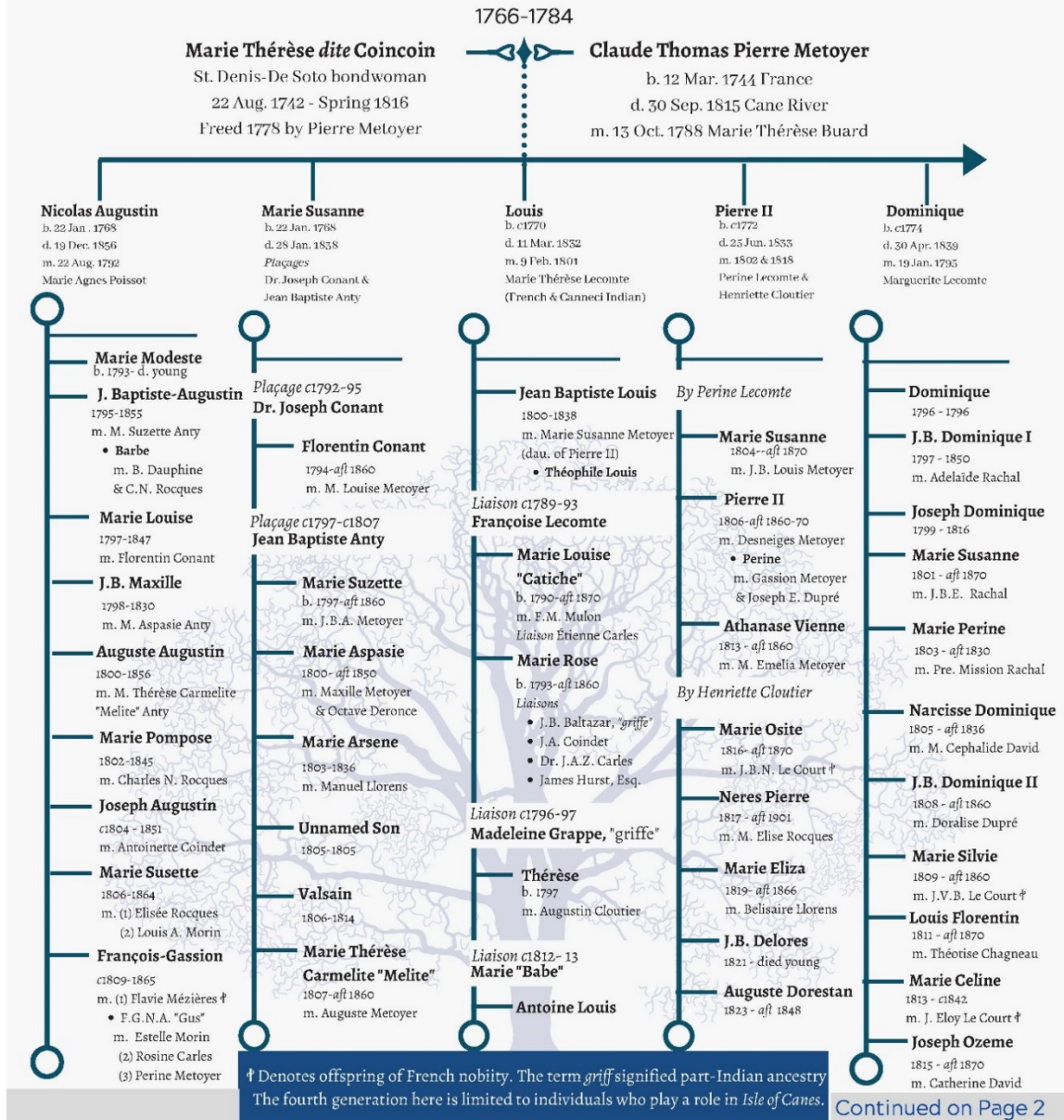


Fig. 2. Madame Métoyer Genealogy

Adapted from: Elizabeth Shown Mills, *Isle of Canes*. Ancestry Publishing, 2006.

# Madame Marie Thérèse "Coincoin" Metoyer's & Claude Thomas Pierre Metoyer's Family

## GENEALOGY



## Madame Marie Thérèse "Coincoin" Metoyer's & Claude Thomas Pierre Metoyer's Family

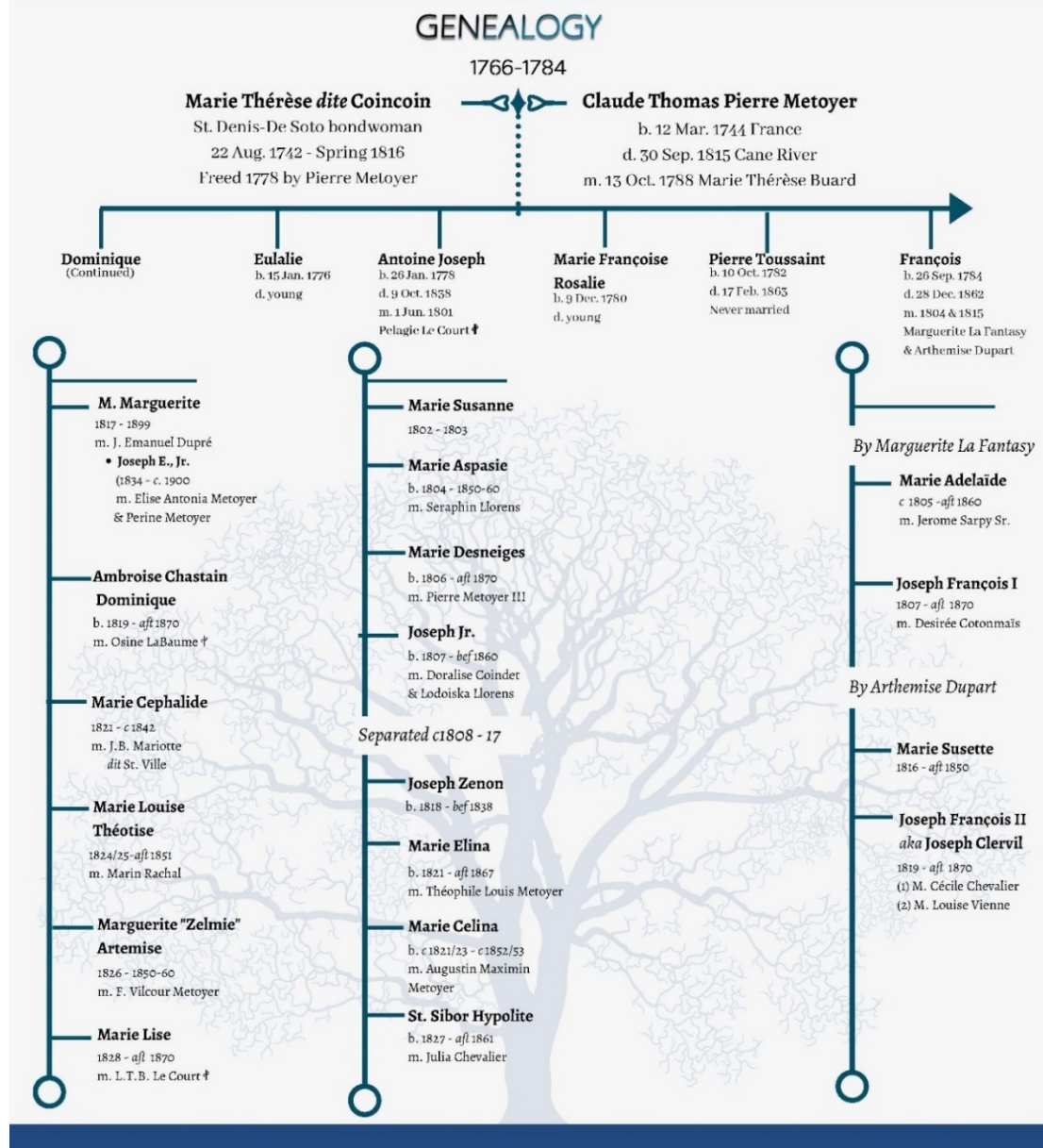


Fig. 3. Madame Métoyer Genealogy

Adapted from: Elizabeth Shown Mills, *Isle of Canes*. Ancestry Publishing. Provo, 2006.



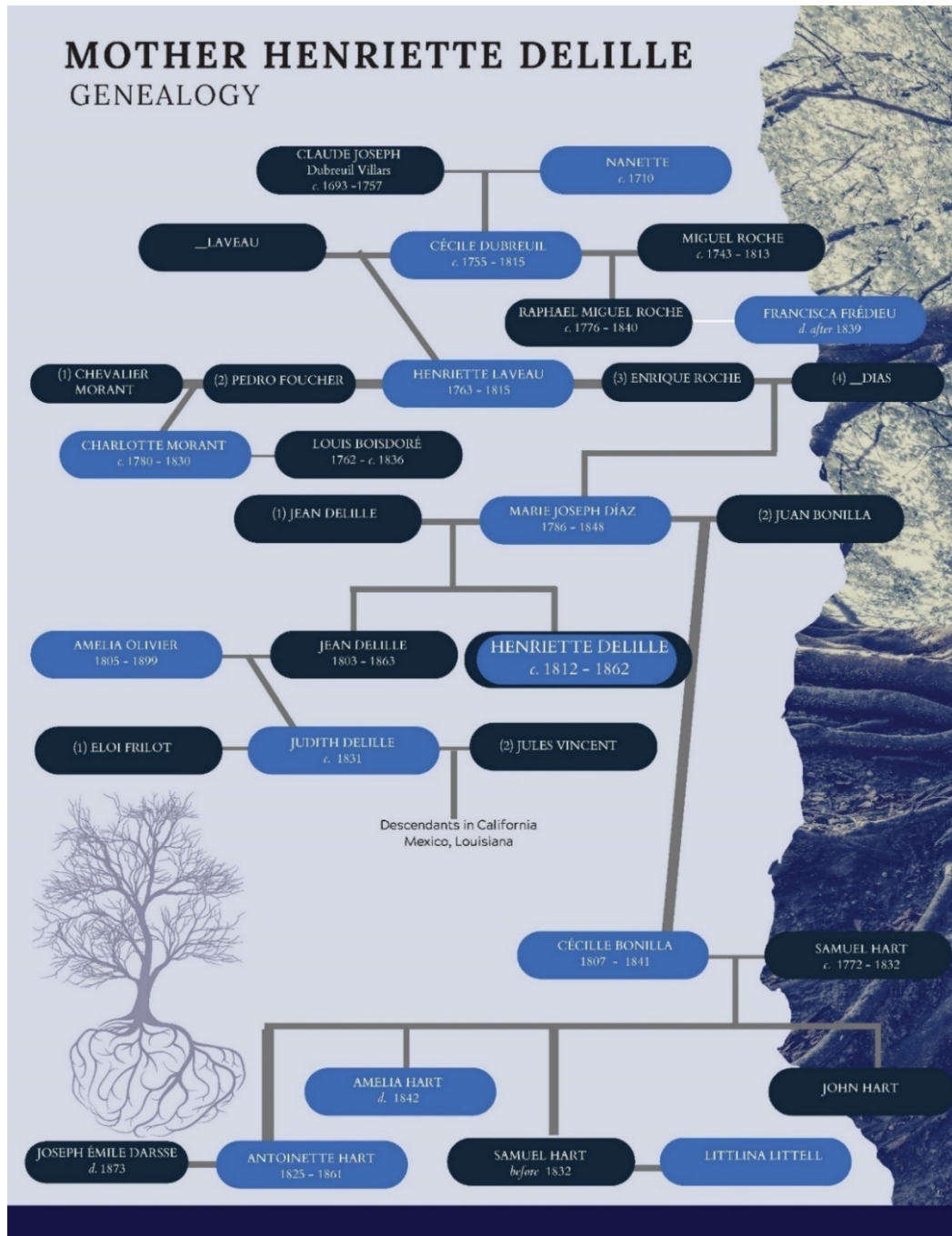


Fig. 4. Mother Delille Genealogy

Adapted from: Cyprian Davis' *Henriette Delille Servant of Slaves Witness to the Poor*.  
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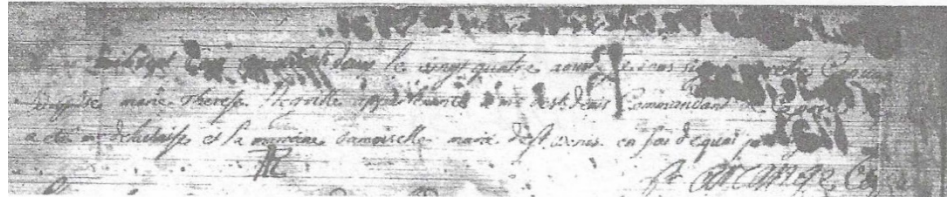
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## APPENDIX A

Artifacts: Madame Marie Thérèse “Coincoin” Métoyer



## Baptism of Marie Thérèse dite Coincoin, 1742

### Parish of St. François des Natchitoches

*L'an mil sept cent quarante deux le vingt quatre août, je soussigné prêtre Capucin ai baptisé Marie Thérèse, Negritte appartenant à Mr. de St. Denis, Commandant de ce poste. Le parrain a été Mr. de Lachaise et la marraine Dameselle Marie de St. Denis, en foi de quoi j'ai signé. P<sup>r</sup> Arcange, Capucin.*

*"In the year seventeen hundred and forty two, the twenty-fourth of August, I, the undersigned Capuchin priest, have baptized Marie Thérèse, an infant Negro girl belonging to Mr. de St. Denis, Commandant of this post. The godfather has been Mr. de la Chaise and the godmother, Demoiselle Marie de St. Denis. In testimony whereof, I have signed. Father Arcange, Capuchin."*

Image Credit: Elizabeth Shown Mills, *Isle of Canes* (12).

Fr. Luis de Quintanilla, Religioso Capuchino y Cura Parroco del sobradicho Puerto tiene el honor de representar a V. m.ª, que, hallando se obligado en virtud de su ministerio a desarraigas los vicios y cortar los escandalos que de ellos se originan, no ha podido despues de muchas diligencias poner freno al escandaloso amancebamiento de una Negra llamada Cuencuen esclava de Dn. Manuel de Soto, alquilada muchos años ha al nombrado Metoyer, en cuya casa y compañía la dicha Negra ha parido (no extendo casada) cinco o seis mulatos, y mulatas, sin comprehender en este numero el o la, de que esta actualmente embarazada, y como esto no puede suceder en la casa de un soltero y una soltera, sin que el publico piense y juzgue haber cometido ilícito entre los dos monachos, de que se sigue un grande escándalo, y detrimento en las almas, y siendo le mandado al Suplicante por su Superior el Illmo. Señor Obispo de Cuba, que en caso, que los amancebamientos no cesen desp. de las amonestaciones apostolicas, los amancebados se entreguen alas Justicias Reales para que los coerzan, y castiguen, cuyo tenor es el siguiente: Comlos amancebados use V. m. de los medios apostolicos: pesuadosos a que satisfiquen su mala amistad por la union del Matrimonio, y si despues de todo insistieren, denuncielos V. m. alas Justicias Reales para que los coerzan, y quiten el escándalo.

El Suplicante en atencion a esto a V. m.ª denuncia la sobredicha Negra Cuencuen como publica, amancebada para que V. m.ª se sirva castigarla conforme ala Ley, prohibiendo bajo graves penas de jemes volver a entrar en casa del mencionado Metoyer, afin de evitar el escándalo publico, mandando a su Dueño de ella, de cuidar, que no incurra mas en semejante pecado porque de otra manera se exponda a perder su Negra. Justicia, que espone de la equidad de V. m.ª. Natchitoches. Octubre. 23. de 1777.

Fr. Luis de Quintanilla, qui ut supra

**Protest of Padre Luis de Quintanilla, Capuchin and Parish Curate—and Decree of His Honor Athanase de Mézières, Chevalier of the Royal and Military Order of St. Louis, Lieutenant Colonel, Lieutenant Governor, and Commandant of the Post of Natchitoches**

Fr. Luis de Quintanilla...by virtue of his duty to eradicate the vices and relate the scandals as they occur, reports that after much diligence he has still been unable to end the scandalous concubinage of a Negress named Coincoin slave of Dn. Manuel de Soto. She has been hired for many years to the man named Metoyer, in whose house and company this unmarried black woman has produced five or six mulatto children, not counting the one with which she is now pregnant.

Your honor, this cannot happen in the house of an unmarried man and an unmarried woman without the public thinking and judging there to be illicit intercourse between the two and this has resulted in a great scandal at the post and great damage to all its souls...

It is therefore prayed that the woman Coincoin be taken from Metoyer's house and returned to her rightful owner; that this owner be compelled, as she has heretofore refused to do, to control the behavior of her slave or else have the slave taken from her and sold for the public good. It is also demanded that the woman Coincoin be prohibited, under the supreme punishment, from ever again entering the house of the above-named Metoyer, in order to avoid future public scandal, and it is moreover demanded that she be castigated according to the law for her sins to date.

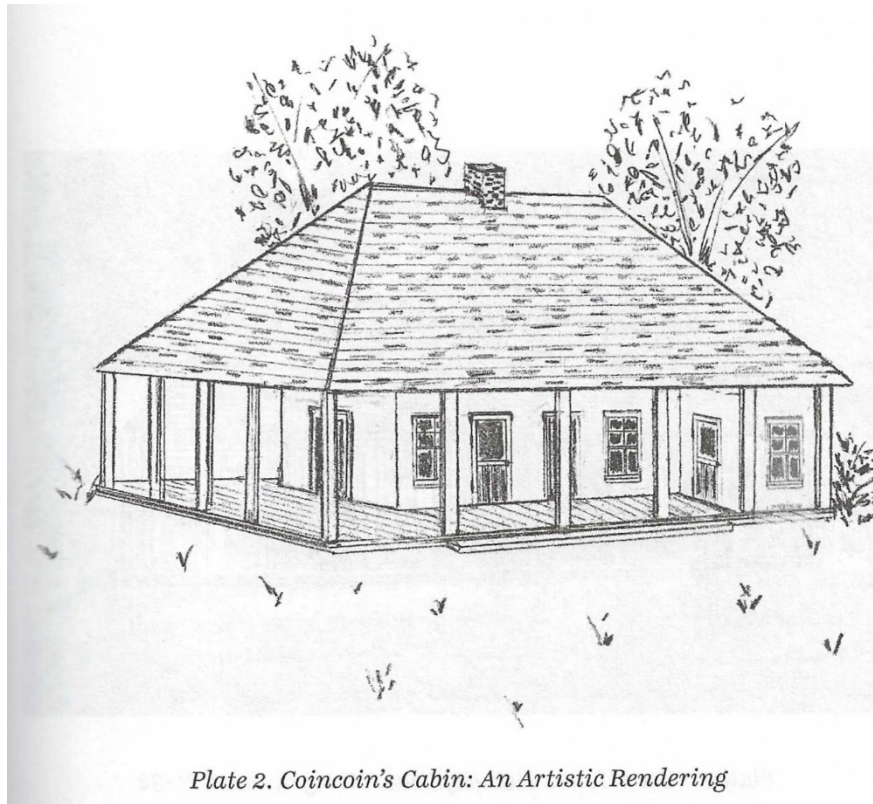
Padre Luis de Quintanilla—Who is Supreme

October 23, 1777 Protest of Padre Luis de Quintanilla

Image and Translation Credit: Elizabeth Shown Mills, *Isle of Canes* (128).







*Plate 2. Coincoin's Cabin: An Artistic Rendering*

### Madame Métoyer's Cabin

Image Credit: Elizabeth Shown Mills, *Isle of Canes* (343).

2596

Aujourd'hui Vingt neuvième Jour Du  
Mois de Janvier De L'année mil sept Cent  
quatre Vingt quinze. Par Devant moy Don  
Louis Charles DeBlanc, Capitaine d'In-  
fanterie des Armées Du Roy, Commandant  
Civil Et Militaire Du Port Des Natchitoches  
et dépendances, adhérent De Notaire  
et Courain Public en ce dit Lieu, en faisant  
Les fonctions: fut Présente Marie Thérèse  
Coinquin Négron Libre Résidente en ce  
Port, qui Declare et Confess avoir par ses  
Présentes, de sa Puissance, et Entière Volonté,  
Sans aucune Contrainte, Mais d'un  
Son propre mouvement, Donné et accordé  
La Liberté à la Nommez Marie Louise  
Son Esclave et sa fille, la quelle elle a  
achetée au Sr Pierre Dolet, Par Vente  
faite en ce Lieu, afin que de ce jour  
et à la Venir, elle Soit Libre  
De la dite Liberté, avec Tous Les Privilèges

29 January 1795, before me, Don Louis Charles DeBlanc,...Civil and Military Commander of the Post of Natchitoches...there has appeared Marie Thérèse Coinquin, free Negress, resident of this Post, who declares and confesses having by the presents, of her pure and entire wish, given liberty to Marie Louise, her slave and her daughter, whom she purchased of the Sieur Pierre Dolet..."

January 29, 1795 Manumission of Madame Métoyer's daughter Marie Louise

Image and Translation Credit: Elizabeth Shown Mills, *Isle of Canes* (210).

## APPENDIX B

Artifacts: Mother Henriette Delille



Image Credit: Venerable Henriette Delille, founder of Sisters of Holy Family in New Orleans in 1842 by Haitian artist Ulrick Jean Pierre



Henriette's childhood home on Burgundy Street

Image Credit: Sisters of the Holy Family





Image Credit: St. Louis Cathedral in New Orleans, Photograph,  
Courtesy of 64Parishes.org



ST. AUGUSTINE CHURCH, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA.

Image Credit: St. Augustine Church, New Orleans, Sketch Courtesy of  
The Historic New Orleans Collection



## 1836 Rules of the Congregation

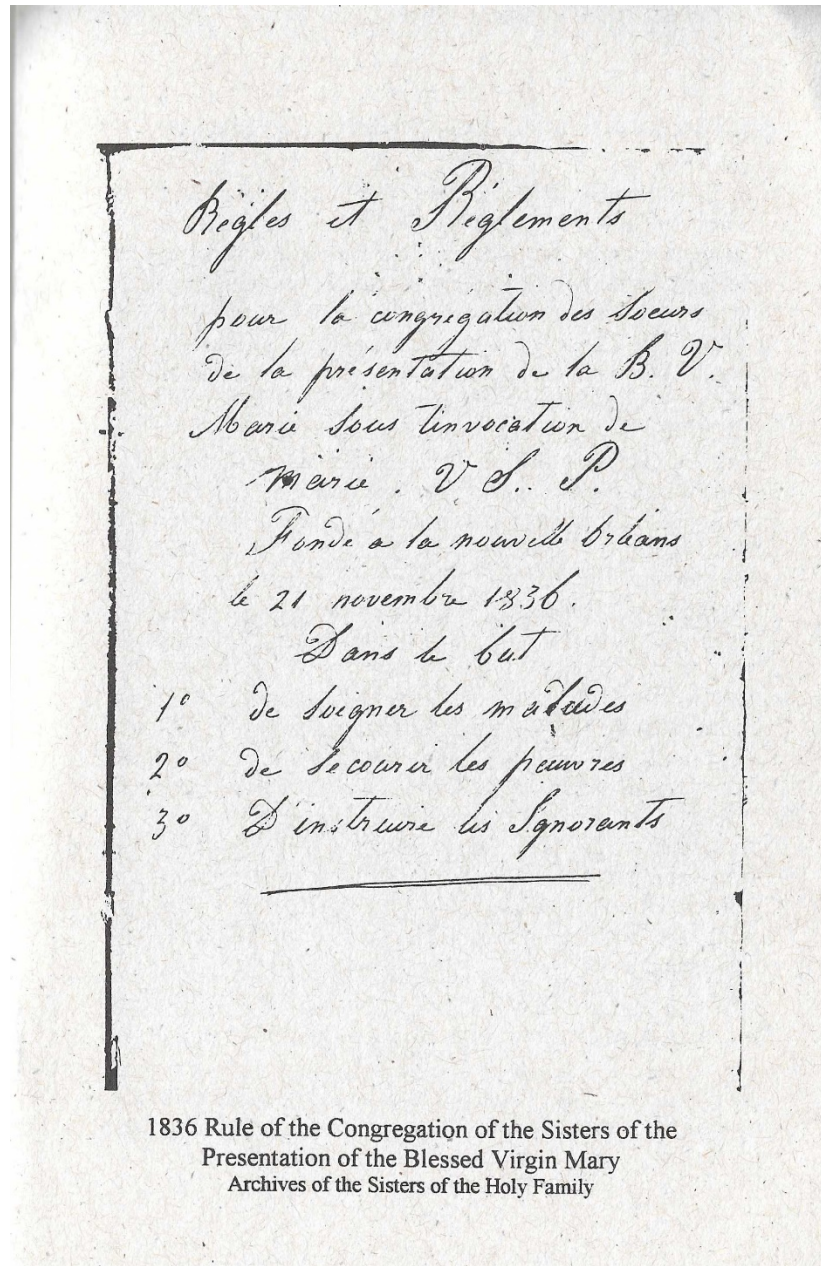


Image Credit: *Henriette Delille*: "Servant of Slaves" Virginia Meacham Gould and Charles E. Nolan New Orleans Sisters of the Holy Family 1999 (9).

## APPENDIX C

List of Abbreviations Used In Notes

Glossary

Management Theories

ADM	Bolton, Herbert Eugene, ed. <i>Athanase de Mézières and the Louisiana-Texas Frontier, 1768-1780</i> . 2 vols. Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1914.
AGI, PC	Papeles Procedentes de Cuba, Archivo General de Indias, Seville, Spain.
ANC, C13	Archives des Colonies, Series C13, Microfilm Copy, The Historic New Orleans Collection, New Orleans, Louisiana.
BA	Béxar Archives. Microfilm Copy. University of North Texas Library. Denton, Texas.
FreeDatabase	Compiled from <i>Marriage Contracts, Natchitoches Abstracts, Natchitoches Colonials, Natchitoches, 1800-1826, Natchitoches Church Marriages</i> , NPCR, AGI, PC. Copy Deposited at Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana.
LHQ	<i>Louisiana Historical Quarterly</i>
Marriage Contracts	De Ville, Winston, ed. <i>Marriage Contracts of Natchitoches, 1739-1803</i> . Nashville: Benton Printing Co., 1961.
Manumission Database	Compiled from NPCR, Melrose Collection, AGI, PC. Copy Deposited at Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana.
Melrose Collection	Melrose Collection, Cammie G. Henry Research Center, Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana.
Natchitoches Abstracts	Mills, Elizabeth Shown, ed. <i>Natchitoches Abstracts of the Catholic Church Registers of the French and Spanish Post of St. Jean Baptiste des Natchitoches in Louisiana: 1729-1803</i> . New Orleans: Polyanthos, 1977.
Natchitoches Colonials	Mills, Elizabeth Shown, ed. <i>Natchitoches Colonials: Censuses, Military Rolls, and Tax Lists, 1722-1803</i> . Chicago: Adams Press, 1981.
Natchitoches, 1800-1826	Mills, Elizabeth Shown, ed. <i>Natchitoches, 1800-1826: Translated abstracts of register number of five of the Catholic Church Parish of St. Francois des Natchitoches in Louisiana</i> . New Orleans: Polyanthos, 1980.
NPRC	Natchitoches Parish Conveyance Records, Microfilm Copy, Mormon Genealogy Society, Family History Center, Dallas, Texas.
RDLF	Records of the Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas, Microfilm Copy, The Historic New Orleans Collection, New Orleans, Louisiana.
Slave Database	Compiled from <i>Marriage Contracts, Natchitoches Abstracts, Natchitoches Colonials, Natchitoches, 1800-1826, Natchitoches Church Marriages</i> . NPCR, AGI, PC, Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, Ancestry.com. Copy Deposited at Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, Louisiana.
SMV	Kinnaird, Lawrence, ed. <i>Spain in the Mississippi Valley, 1765-1794</i> . 3 vols. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1949.
SWHQ	<i>Southwestern Historical Quarterly</i> .

## GLOSSARY

Andullo	Tobacco rolls
Arpent	French linear and area measure; in lineal terms equivalent to 190 feet
Bousillage	A four-inch mixture of clay, Spanish moss, and deer hair used in building houses and other buildings in colonial and antebellum Louisiana
Coartación	A Cuban practice introduced to the Louisiana colony that permitted enslaved person to purchase their freedom in the Spanish period
Compadrazgo	God parenthood; fictive or ritual kinship
Creole	French term used to describe a person of any race or ethnicity born in Louisiana or the Americas (New World)
Graciosa	Manumission without conditions in the Spanish period; comes from <i>graciosamente</i> in Spanish that means <i>gratis</i> or <i>freely</i> without conditions
Habitacion	French term for a large landholding or plantation
Libre	Free person of color who was formerly enslaved; word comes from <i>libre</i> that means <i>free</i> in French and Spanish
Livre	French monetary unit equivalent to five piastres, or pesos
Marchand	French term for a shopkeeper who was often a merchant as well
Marraine	French term for Godmother
Marriage à la façon du pays	A French-Canadian term, literally meaning marriage according to the custom of the country, that indicates a stable, long term liaison, between an Indigenous woman and a man of French descent
Mestizo(a)	Spanish term for a <i>métis</i> , or the offspring of a European and an Indigenous person
Métis(e)	French term for a <i>mestizo(a)</i> , or person of mixed European and Indigenous heritage
Moreno(a)	A dark-skinned person of African descent
Mulatto(a)	French term for a person believed to be one-half African ancestry
Octoroon	French term for a person believed to be one-eighth African ancestry
Parraine	French term for Godfather
Plaçage	A socially acceptable liaison between a “white” man and a woman of color
Quadroon	French term for a person believed to be one-quarter African ancestry
Sage Femme	French term for a midwife
Syndic	Judge, tax collector, and justice of the peace
Vacherie	French Louisiana term for a cattle ranch
Zélatrices	The evangelist responsible for “bringing the Good News of Jesus into” every human situation and seeking to convert individuals and society by the divine power of the Gospel itself (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops).

## **MANAGEMENT THEORIES**

Classical Administration/Management	A hierarchical approach to administration that adheres to a top-down or bottom-up one-way-only style of work as determined by an expert or authority. Workers are expected to simply adhere to the instructions given by the expert. This view is espoused by French engineer Fayol (1841-1925), American mechanical engineer Frederick Winslow Taylor (1856-1915), and German sociologist Max Weber (1864-1920). It is important to note that Weber draws a correlation between the rise of capitalism in the United States and the sixteenth century Calvin Protestant Reformation <i>spiritual</i> revolution. In short, Weber states that the United States' form of white patriarchal capitalism is Jesus-inspired and God-ordained.
Community-Based Governance	An administrative approach that is concerned with the human nature of government, democracy, and the role of the local community in power-sharing. This approach is espoused by United States social worker and theorist Mary Parker Follett (1868-1933).
Behavioral Management	A psychological approach to administration that seeks to improve workers' efficiency and motivate workers by better understanding the worker rather than better defining the task. This approach is espoused by Australian psychologist Elton Mayo (1880-1949).
Management by Objectives	A five-step administrative process based on defining specific objectives within an organization and was inspired by the work of Mary Parker Follett. This view is espoused by Austrian born management consultant/educator Peter Drucker (1909-2005).
Management Science	a scientific or mathematical approach to administration advanced after World War II that sought to increase workers' productivity by using scientific and mathematical methodologies to better understand the task and efficiency quotient (also known as Operations Research). This view is espoused by United States economist Herbert A. Simon (1916-2001).

Contingency	A situational approach to administration that suggests that maximizing efficiency and productivity is a process of applying the correct leadership style to a given situation. This view is espoused by Austrian born psychologist Fred Fiedler (1922-2017).
Theory X and Theory Y	Made popular by United States psychologist Douglas M. McGregor. McGregor was a student of Abraham Maslow (Maslow's hierarchy of needs). Theory X asserts that workers are generally lazy, apathetic, and irresponsible and will only respond to discipline. Inversely, Theory Y maintains that people are energetic, participatory, and responsible and will respond favorably to rewards.
Theory Z	A participative approach to administration that emphasizes consensus decision-making and achievement among groups, not individuals. This view of administration originated in Japan and recently became popular in the United States, where it is expressed in two administrative models—Quality of Work Life and Quality Circles. This view is espoused by United States business administration professor William G. Ouchi (1943 to present).