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## ASECS ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF 2024 CLIFFORD PRIZE

The American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (ASECS) awards the James L. Clifford Prize annually to an article that presents an outstanding study of some aspect of eighteenth-century culture, interesting to any eighteenth-century specialist, regardless of discipline.

The 2024 Clifford Prize is awarded to **Lisa Forman Cody**, “**Marriage is No Protection for Crime’: Coverture, Sex, and Marital Rape in Eighteenth-Century England**,” published in *Journal of British Studies*, 61. Two articles have been awarded honorable mention. In alphabetical order, they are **Ramesh Mallipeddi**, “**Roads, Bridges, and Ports: Infrastructures of Plantation Agriculture in the British Caribbean, 1627-1840**,” a chapter from the edited volume *The Aesthetic Life of Infrastructure*, and **Nana Osei Quarshie**, “**Spiritual Pawning: ‘Mad Slaves’ and Mental Healing in Atlantic-Era West Africa**” which appeared in *Comparative Studies of Society and History*, 65.3.

With “**Marriage is No Protection for Crime**,” **Lisa Forman Cody** offers a rich and meticulously researched study that probes marriage law and social histories. In vivid and compelling prose, this article brings to life five case studies drawn from divorce proceedings in ecclesiastical courts to show how these trials defined, tolerated, and limited cruelty and marital rape. Revealing the complex relations between property, personhood, sex, and violence, Cody points to the role that changing perceptions of women’s sexuality played in redefining consent within marriage. Her inventive archival work provides a timely new perspective on the legal doctrine of coverture, making an important contribution to understanding women’s rights in eighteenth-century England.

**Ramesh Mallipeddi’s** chapter, “**Roads, Bridges, and Ports**,” shows how the underpinnings of plantation agriculture and the willful neglect of white landowners in the British Caribbean sowed racial division and ecological devastation with enduring effects. Inviting environmental history and diasporic studies to the infrastructure debate, Mallipeddi makes welcome contribution to our field.

In **“Spiritual Pawning,”** Nana Osei Quarshie broadens the field of eighteenth-century studies with an ambitious research agenda that draws on the Ga shrines of Accra to show how West African spaces of mental healing were used to produce subjects of European enslavement. Quarshie’s illuminating and wide-ranging article insightfully situates mental health as a central concern of the Transatlantic slave trade.