

# The Sweet Taste of Empire

Sugar, Mastery, and Pleasure in the  
Anglo Caribbean

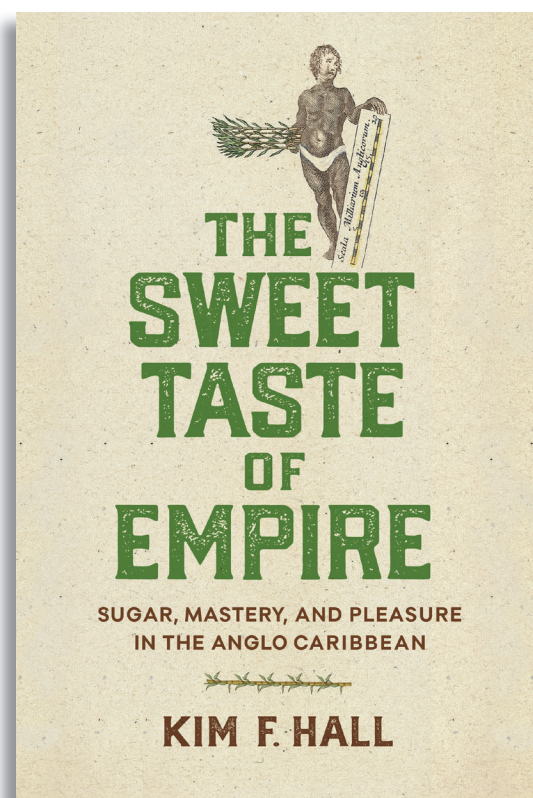
**Kim F. Hall**

"Kim Hall's exquisite account of the dreams and paradoxes of sugar is one of those books that reframes how and what you see."—**Jennifer L. Morgan**, author of *Reckoning with Slavery: Gender, Kinship and Capitalism in the Early Black Atlantic*

Over the course of the seventeenth century, sugar prices fell drastically. As this newly affordable luxury made its way from royal entertainments to the closets of home cooks in ever increasing quantities, sugar bound England's fortunes to the Caribbean. The pursuit of sugar's pleasures and profits generated newly visible and vexed relationships—not simply between enslaved and enslaver but also between enslaved and consumer—that threatened the English sense of the nation, the household, and the self.

Tracing the literal and literary uses of sugar in seventeenth-century England, *The Sweet Taste of Empire* shows how literary genres associated with gastronomic and aesthetic pleasure shaped representations of Caribbean colonization and slavery, developing a culinary language that functioned as a discourse of pleasure and white innocence. Drawing on a wide range of early Anglo-Caribbean texts, Kim F. Hall uncovers what she calls a plantation aesthetic that influenced the history of both English slavery and the later anti-slavery response.

**Kim F. Hall** is Lucyle Hook Professor of English and Professor of Africana Studies at Barnard College.



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