The young women that found their way from France to New France were far more than just a “pull factor” to get men to settle in colonies. These women were seeking a better life than what was available to them in France, and were willing to secure it by whatever means necessary. In addition to uprooting the lives they were already leading to journey halfway across the world, the wives of male colonists were responsible for maintaining business when it was required. These women were far more than subservient dependents, they were courageous and determined to make the most of this opportunity.

Many of these young women, often referred to as, “Filles de roi,” or, “The King’s Daughters,” were orphans. As such, securing a marriage, or even life in a covenant, was impossible to do in France without a dowry. In order to sway young women to journey to a new world, they were rewarded for their efforts in money, fabrics, and materials, as well as an additional sum of money once the marriage contract was signed. Although the financial compensation was more than fair in the eyes of many, there was no guarantee the girls would arrive alive. As mentioned in Adrienne Leduc’s editorial, the women and girls that died at sea were, “…sewn up in sailcloth, weighed down by a cannonball, and simply dropped into the sea, while the captain recited a funeral oration,” (Leduc 2001). For many of the women making the voyage, death still wasn’t enough to deter them. The chance to have the life that their status denied them was far too great to turn down.

As for the wives of the colonists in New France, their lives in the colony were far more strenuous than those they had left behind. On top of bearing children and maintaining the home, many colonial wives also became well versed in the fur trade. In some cases, once the husband died, wives, “…continued to outfit vessels, to underwrite insurance, and to make investments,” (Noel p49). This is only one of the many ways that women were involved in the trades of the colony. It has also been stated that women may have played a role in smuggling furs, or serving as diplomats between the French and Indigenous people. While the role of the girls and women of New France are still being analyzed by historians, their intricate understanding of the fur trade, as well as their courage to uproot their lives in France for an unknown world, are more than enough proof that they were more than just a bonus for men to colonize.