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Slavery in Indian Country: The Changing Face of Captivity in Early America. By Christina Snyder. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010. 344 pages. $29.95 cloth.

In this book, Christina Snyder examines a delicate and often-unrecognized topic. "Captivity . . . and slavery," she argues, were "indigenous to North America" and the practice evolved from the early mound-building culture of the Mississippian period through the nineteenth century (4). Snyder maintains that Indian captivity practices along the lower Mississippi River began centuries before Europeans and Africans arrived on the continent. As Europeans brought diseases, war, and a burgeoning economic market, traditional Indian attitudes toward slavery collapsed and a transformation in their captivity practices was necessary. Snyder juxtaposes European and Indian slave societies in order to illustrate how Indians frequently redefined definitions of slavery through the beginning of the nineteenth century. Furthermore, she puts herself in the larger academic context of analyzing slave societies. For her, the study of the evolution of Indian captivity practices provides a new understanding of racial slavery in America.

Focusing primarily on what is now the southeastern United States, Snyder begins by exploring how Indian slaves, captured during sixteenth-century wars, were viewed as less than human. Instead slaves only existed as "status symbols and laborers" (38). In these hierarchical societies, chiefs determined the role of a captive. Chiefs often gave slaves as gifts to a respected tribal member or deserving elite. Slaves were considered expendable and were almost never incorporated into the group. Quite often they were forced to maintain some physically distinctive trait. Hairstyle, rather than skin color, was the most recognizable trait of a degraded Indian. Removed from all physical and emotional ties to their kin, slaves existed on the lowest rung of the social ladder, and it was the responsibility of the kin to ensure that they remained there.

Snyder believes that Indians accelerated the capture of slaves to unprecedented levels upon the arrival of European colonists. New diseases and manufactured goods caused Indians to adapt their captivity practices. Diseases destroyed the traditional system of subordinating slaves within the kin, while a desire for European trade goods, especially firearms, intensified wartime captivity. Indian slavery could not remain stagnant in these new social, political, and economic circumstances.

Furthermore, Snyder explores the cultural incompatibility of Euro-Americans and American Indian slavery during the late seventeenth century. She illustrates how racial identity was not a factor in Indian country during this period. Slavery was instead based on sex and age. Although slavery for a war captive might be permanent, a slave's child might join the kin through

marriage or adoption despite his or her color, heritage, or race (151). These rules were relatively fluid and kept the clan ethnically diverse. No restrictions existed to prevent whites, Africans, and Indians from becoming members. Euro-American slavery, however, became racialized relatively quickly. Children born to slaves in the colonial South became slaves and remained slaves their entire lives. As the African slave trade became the only source for slaves in the Americas, colonists degraded Africans to a naturally servile status. Although it also happened in Indian country, racial slavery was more of a response to changing market conditions. Thus Indians adopted new notions of slavery.

The late eighteenth century saw two major transformations among the Indians in the Southeast: first, a reliance on Africans as marketable goods for trade with colonists, and second, the invention of a distinct racial identity. As the latter hardened, membership into a clan relied strictly on an individual being Indian. African Americans were targeted as slaves, and by the early nineteenth century, the Cherokees and Creeks passed legislation to lower the status of only African Americans as slaves. Eventually, "Cherokees outlawed marriage between Indians and blacks, and Creeks imposed a fine on those who chose to do so" (210). As racial boundaries were drawn, Indians grew less concerned with traditional captivity practices that incorporated blacks and whites into the clan and were more interested in closing off kin relations to anyone who could not prove an Indian ancestral heritage.

Snyder, however, argues a much broader point: "American history and Native history cannot . . . be separated, for each is indelibly part of the other" (248). She argues that race-based slavery among the Indians was a result of changing captivity practices. Furthermore, she sees the Indians of the lower Mississippi as active players in the war for power and dominance, rather than as passive recipients. The flood of Indian slaves into Carolina, due in large part to the Indian reaction to the economic market, helped the Carolinian colony grow. Colonists, she seems to argue, did not dictate the terms and conditions of alliance and trade; Indians and colonists were both equally responsible for the growth of the colony.

Snyder could have expanded a bit more at this point. In response to other authors who have argued that Carolinians set the terms for trade with the Westos and the Savannah Indians, Snyder only briefly touches upon this. Her argument would have benefited from an analysis of whether Indians actually had a choice if they wanted to survive. As Alan Gallay believes, the Carolinians dictated the terms of trade with the Westos and exterminated them when they were seen as expendable. Snyder does not sufficiently address whether Indians truly maintained power in the area or were simply reactionary entities. She does not address the issue of who actually wielded the power and whether control in the Southeast swayed at different times.

Were Indians expendable, as Gallay points out, when colonists either had little use for them or they were impeding upon trade routes? The answer to this question remains absent from the book. (For more information about the relationship between the Westos and the Carolinians, see Gallay, "South Carolina's Entrance into the Indian Slave Trade," *Indian Slavery in Colonial America*, 2009, 109–46.)

Snyder's argument that slavery adjusted and adapted to countless circumstances from the early mound-building culture in the lower Mississippi through the nineteenth century is clear, concise, and meticulously substantiated. Her focus on the Indians of the Southeast, namely the Natchez, Cherokee, Chickamaugas, Chickasaw, Creek, Choctaw, and Seminole groups, offers a well-researched addition to the historiography of American slavery. Throughout the book, she rightfully encourages those who research slavery, from all periods, to incorporate Indian captivity practices into the historical narrative as a way to understand the development of race and slavery in America better.

Furthermore, she concludes this book with a discussion of the Seminole tribe, announcing a far more complex system of captivity in the southern United States than historians have, in the past, imagined. Here racism took an entirely new form: together, African Americans and Seminoles used the Second Seminole War to invent racist values against whites. By discussing the complex and intertwined relationship among Indians, Euro-Americans, and African Americans throughout hundreds of years, Snyder encourages more research to be done. Not only is this book informative and well researched, but also it offers a new way of looking at the relationship among these three cultures. Snyder does not wholly settle the considerations presented in *Slavery in Indian Country* but proposes an entirely new method to analyze the changing relationship among the three most prominent cultures east of the Mississippi at this time. It is this relationship, she claims, that deserves a significant amount of attention.

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Spirit Wind. By Jon L. Gibson. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2010. 208 pages. $21.95 paper.

Retired anthropologist Jon L. Gibson's first novel, *Spirit Wind*, is a thoroughly detailed and inventive account of life among the Chitimacha people of the lower Atchafalaya swamp in Southern Louisiana. Like Ella Cara Deloria's *Water Lily* (1988) or Charles Hudson's *Conversations with the High Priest of Coosa* (2003), Gibson's work is a fictionalized ethnography, an imagined narrative of