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**Wild Frenchmen and Frenchified Indians: Material Culture and Race in Colonial Louisiana.** By Sophie White. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012. 329 pages. \$45.00 cloth; \$24.95 paper.

Sophie White's text *Wild Frenchmen and Frenchified Indians: Material Culture and Race in Colonial Louisiana* employs a material culture analysis to consider how Native and European people presented and interpreted identity in French colonial Louisiana from 1673 to 1769. The book is grand in scope, extending not merely to the area that is present-day Louisiana but into Illinois Country, formerly Upper Louisiana. Indeed, the author's emphasis is on individuals from the northern part of this region. This rare geographic expansion is productive in that it illuminates how identity expressions in Illinois Country impacted those in Lower Louisiana, making the book useful to researchers of areas from the Great Lakes to the Gulf Coast. Demonstrating thorough knowledge of the literature relevant to these regions as she points out that the ways women displayed identity through clothing and material culture shaped wider conceptions of identity as mutable, White argues that while the notion of identity as biologically racial and fixed was beginning to take hold, especially in Lower Louisiana, such expressions slowed its progress.

White undertook meticulous archival research in libraries and museums in areas as widespread as Louisiana, Wisconsin, and France, exhibiting a tremendous amount of hard work and attention to detail. By mining such disparate sources as probate records, drawings, photographs, colonists' writings, and more, White weaves together the stories of a variety of individuals who lived at the time. Her analysis of such materials puts forth a multifaceted methodological model that demonstrates the importance of attention to material goods in interpreting the lives of people who lived in the past. White's critical examination of photographs like those of Rachel Lawe Grignon, a Métis woman of Green Bay, demonstrates how vital it is to contextualize such photos to thoroughly understand them rather than take them at face value.

The book brings to life the stories of Native women like Illinois convert Marie Rouensa, Marie Turpin, an Ursuline nun of Illinois and French descent, and a young voyageur, Jean Saguingouara, also of Illinois and French descent. In considering how individuals deployed clothing and other material culture to signify identity, White also considers how French individuals like the young cadet Antoine Philippe de Marigny adopted Native apparel to successfully negotiate the physical and social spaces that they traversed. These stories give the book its emphasis on the agency of individuals and make up one of its most important contributions by illuminating and preserving accounts of their lives.

The story of Marie Rouensa is fascinating in terms of how clothing illustrated her conversion and the dispute with her father over an arranged marriage. Through such examples, White questions the treatment of women by both Native and French men. She underscores the importance of women and their role in marriage in the social, political, and economic relations between European and Native people. There is a bit of confusion in terms of Illinois kinship and marital residence patterns that could be clarified in terms of the impact of intermarriage and the separation of French and Native villages on Illinois kinship relations. One distinction she points out was the way European officials regarded Native-European intermarriage depending on whether it was sanctified by the church and legally recognized. Indeed, White focuses on European interpretations of these performances of identity. Such marriages and the material expressions of identity that women conducted, White shows, played an important role in shaping colonists' attitudes and policies towards "Frenchification."

White's analysis complicates discussions of cultural continuity and change. She points out that while women like Rouensa adopted French clothing upon their marriages with French men, this process was contiguous with Illinois practices in which women took on new identities with exogamous unions. Illinois individuals used similar means to mark captive adoption and crossing gender categories. In addition, White underscores that cultural assimilation cannot be measured by the adoption of material items alone; rather, the people's use and meanings of such things must be considered. In looking at the manipulation of clothing, household goods, and so forth, she also distinguishes between temporary performances of identity and more lasting experiences of acculturation.

The story of Marie Turpin, who became an Ursuline nun in New Orleans, demonstrates the tension between notions of identity as mutable and the biologically based, fixed racial definition of identity that would supersede it. In this way, the book makes a useful complement to studies of later eras that plumb the intricacies of race in the Southeast, such as Denise Bates's *The Other Movement* and Brian Klopotek's *Recognition Odysseys*. White provides a fascinating look inside the practices and social divisions within the Ursuline order. In doing so, she traces the prejudices that relegated Turpin to a converse or domestic nun and prevented her from reaching the higher status of a choir nun.

The use of clothing marks such transitions in the lives and identities of these individuals. Saguingouara's story adds another dimension as it follows suit (no pun intended), showing how French conceptions of cleanliness mediated categories of identity. Individuals such as Saguingouara and Turpin, who traveled from Illinois country down the Mississippi River to New Orleans,

traversed not only geographic zones, but social and ideological space as well. White's retelling of their experiences echoes Claude Levi-Strauss's comment that "Travel is usually thought of as a displacement in space. This is an inadequate conception. A journey occurs simultaneously in space, in time and in the social hierarchy" (*Triste Tropiques*, 85).

*Wild Frenchmen and Frenchified Indians: Material Culture and Race in Colonial Louisiana* is a significant contribution that expands historical analysis both in terms of methodology and comparison across geographical ranges. White's work is enlightening alongside the research of other authors such as Richard White's *The Middle Ground*, Sylvia Van Kirk's *Many Tender Ties*, Susan Sleeper-Smith's *Indian Women and French Men*, Jacqueline Peterson's and Jennifer Brown's *The New Peoples*, and more. Her text will be useful to anyone researching the southeast to the Great Lakes region. While perhaps too challenging for an undergraduate text, the book would nevertheless provide valuable material for instructors in courses in history, anthropology, and other fields. White's discussions of identity, consumption, and cultural continuity and change resonate with contemporary theoretical explorations of these topics. The work may also be brought into comparison with ethnohistorical research on Native women in other areas, including such work as Theda Perdue's *Cherokee Women*, Nancy Shoemaker's *Negotiators of Change*, and Patricia Albers and Beatrice Medicine's *The Hidden Half*. This book enriches the literature on colonial experiences, especially through its accounts of Native and Métis women and its methods of material analysis.

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