



Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835 (Indians of the Southeast)

By Theda Perdue

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Theda Perdue examines the roles and responsibilities of Cherokee women during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a time of intense cultural change. While building on the research of earlier historians, she develops a uniquely complex view of the effects of contact on Native gender relations, arguing that Cherokee conceptions of gender persisted long after contact. Maintaining traditional gender roles actually allowed Cherokee women and men to adapt to new circumstances and adopt new industries and practices.

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Editorial Review

Review

“A fascinating book that truly breaks new ground in the study of Cherokee history, women's history, and American history in general. Exemplifies women's history at its best. She neither concentrates only on so-called notable women—those Cherokee women who are supposedly worthy of historical study because they acted like white men—or on inserting Cherokee women into an already existing narrative of Cherokee and American history. Instead her work challenges the existing narratives and suggests an alternative reading of history. By characterizing women as agents of cultural persistence, Perdue makes a case that we should not see American Indian women as bit players but as ‘major players in the great historical drama that is the American past.’”—Margaret Jacobs, *Journal of Southern History*
(Margaret Jacobs *Journal of Southern History*)

“An interesting and effective overview. . . . It is to the author’s considerable credit that she is able to re-create the values and behavior of Cherokee women through court records, myths, and observers’ accounts. By examining women’s roles in farming and community life, Perdue argues that women were coequal contributors to Cherokee culture.”—*Choice*
(*Choice*)

“A well-documented, carefully argued book written in lively and engaging prose. It deserves a wide audience. . . . An exceptional piece of scholarship.”—*William and Mary Quarterly*
(*William and Mary Quarterly*)

“Gracefully written and convincing.”—*H-Net Reviews*
(*H-Net Reviews*)

About the Author

Theda Perdue is a professor of history at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Her works include *Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society, 1540–1866* and *Native Carolinians: The Indians of North Carolina*.

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