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Book Review: Voices of Cherokee Women

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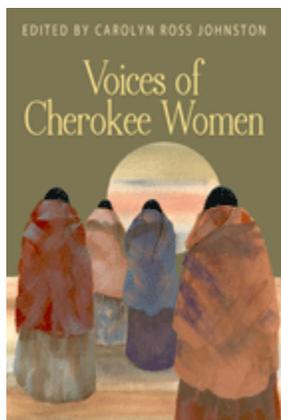
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those interested in New Orleans folklore and the supernatural, primarily public libraries.

Jennifer Culley
The University of Southern Mississippi

Voices of Cherokee Women. Edited by Carolyn Ross Johnston. Winston-Salem, NC: John F. Blair, Publisher, 2013. ISBN 978-0-89587-599-0. 256 p. \$12.95 paperback.



Many who might wish to read and review Carolyn Ross Johnston's new book, "Voices of Cherokee Women" are those like me who were introduced on summer family weekend vacations to Cherokee women, children, men and the Cherokee Indian Reservation in Western North Carolina. Frequent trips to see "real Indians" in our North Carolina mountains were summer adventures we happily joined our parents and friends, gleefully expecting we might come home with a tom-tom, an Indian head dress, a Pocahontas doll or if we were lucky bows and arrows! Little did we focus upon the real people—the Indians--, or the food they ate, the rituals they valued, their health and wellness, their strange language we ignored, or their customs of hunting and gathering food.

From a child's view, the Cherokee Indians we saw were like make-believe characters—super human warriors with spears, women who made baskets and pots and carried babies and small children on their chests or backs in woven cloth sacks. Colorful painted faces for the men and scant clothes for children made us think they may have arrived by some type of space ship to the mountains of North Carolina.

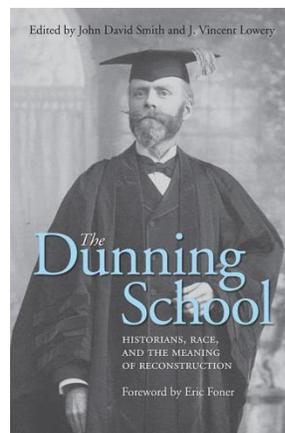
From those long ago days to today, many Indian tribes in the United States living on reservations in various states in the northern, southern and western regions of our country may provide these same impressions to children whose parents take them on summer weekend visits to "see the Indians". However, Carolyn Ross Johnston provides a documented and beautifully researched collection of stories, letters, diaries, newspaper accounts, oral histories to

paint a deeply moving panorama of the lives of the Cherokee culture and society.

Upon first read, I was overly impressed with the quality of research and sensitivity of Dr. Johnston's determination to give the reader truth and justice in her selection and variety of documents. Reading Dr. Johnston's research documents on the lives of Cherokee women revealed to me the misguided early American beliefs --social, political, religious, and folk lore--of the lives of our first American women. Additionally my childhood impressions were enlightened and my adult prejudices were shattered about the role of women in Cherokee life and culture. For anyone who explores and seeks to understand the role of women in the United States, Dr. Johnston's "Voices of Cherokee Women" is a critical research text.

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The Dunning School: Historians, Race, and the Meaning of Reconstruction. Edited by John David Smith and J. Vincent Lowery. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2013. ISBN 978-0-8131-4225-8. 338 p. \$40.



Who said, "history is written by the winners" ?

This phrase continued to flow through my thoughts as I grappled with the introduction and ten essays written by the doctoral students who surrounded Professor William Archibald Dunning (1857-1922) at Columbia University's graduate studies program on the reconstruction period following the American Civil War. Brilliant Professor Dunning was of such great charisma and intellectual rigor that he immediately attracted the brightest and most passionate of graduate students. Their desire to record, analyze and interpret the evolving American historical landscape following reconstruction of the southern states was passionate.

In those early days after the Civil War, Professor Dunning seemed to believe and promote opinions and passions of American citizens who said, "black people did not belong in American political society and had no business wielding