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the material itself remains compelling and contributes appreciably to an understanding of the poignancy and complexity of the interactions between families and schools.

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**Choctaw Genesis, 1500–1700.** By Patricia Galloway. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press. 411 Pages. \$25.00 paper.

I spent the summer of 1998 relearning the stories of Nanih-waya, the stomp dance, and my family's origins. From these stories I gained a greater sense of why I see myself the way I do. This experience taught me that Choctaws and Africans not only toiled together during the slavery period, but also united to combat racism and exploitation. Such bonds endured these dangers, easing the intermarriage between cultures and the absorption of one group into the other. However, to the outsider we remain Choctaw or African American—never both. In retrospect I wonder at the authenticity of my heritage. Were the experiences of my elders random cases of Choctaws intermarrying with Africans, or Choctaws borrowing African melodies so that both groups could express good times at a stomp dance? Are we and our dances still Choctaw?

At issue here is the question, How has Choctaw culture changed? Angie Debo's 1934 *The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic* provides an historical review of Choctaw cultural change from contact to the early twentieth century. Although Debo's work affords detailed insight into the social and political aspects of this issue, it questions neither the internal diversity of the Choctaw people nor our monolithic notions of Choctaw culture. On the other hand, Patricia Galloway, with extreme attention to detail and bias, presents an archaeological investigation that challenges Choctaw and non-Choctaw to question the ways scholars have addressed the effects of social and cultural change on political identities. Her premise is that what is often familiar about Choctaw cultural change is only the "end of the story," meaning that before scholars examined this process, intertribal politics, marriage, and adoption caused social changes undocumented in the historical and archaeological records (p. 1).

This original case study provides an unique synthesis of anthropology and history. Galloway shows how intertribal politics, war, and population diminution contributed to the dislocation of the proto-Choctaw and early historic Choctaw. Using the Choctaw creation story, Nanih-waya, in relation to the historical and archeological records, she traces the origin of the Choctaw people to Mississippian mound-building chiefdoms. Many of these chiefdoms were in a state of decline by the time of Hernando de Soto's 1539 expedition. The author also implies that the remnant populations of these chiefdoms united to create new confederacies. Galloway believes it was such movements and interactions that created the Choctaw.

Galloway believes this process to have repeated itself in response to European encroachment. In this context, slavery, war, and population

diminution engulfed the Choctaw and surrounding Choctaw-speaking nations. The author supports this argument with empirical data illustrating the linguistic and cultural ties shared by many groups in the region. Through the examination of oral and written sources the author provides a likely explanation of how Choctaws appropriated culture to cope with their changing environment. This book demonstrates that the formations of political identities through which individuals express how they see themselves collectively, may be powerfully constrained by social and political forces that allow for some identities to be maintained while others are absorbed.

The Choctaw make for an illuminating study of cultural change in pre-colonial North America because, according to Galloway, Choctaw sociopolitical organization shifted many times between the 1500s and 1700s to cope with population diminution, inter- and intra-tribal politics, locational shifts, and changes in their social reality (see chapters 7 and 8). Galloway's interpretation of how the Choctaw came to be is quite clear. By infusing her knowledge of archaeological and cultural data, she points to a way out for those trapped by monolithic conceptualizations of Native American nations and authenticity. In this book she illustrates the intersection between cultural change, cultural evolution, and political identification. With cartographic, archeological, and ethnographic evidence, this multidisciplinary book not only presents controversial and provocative arguments on the origin of the Choctaw, but also provides important new insight on how political identities shape and are shaped by social and cultural change. This book makes a major contribution to anthropology, archaeology, and Native American studies.

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**Daily Life on the Nineteenth-Century American Frontier.** By Mary Ellen Jones. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing, Inc., 1998. 269 pages. \$45.00 cloth.

The history of the American frontier fascinates many people in the United States and in various countries around the world. From dime novels to television to movies, many genres have dealt with some aspect of frontier life. In Mary Ellen Jones' *Daily Life on the Nineteenth-Century American Frontier*, however, one will find neither the gunfighter, a popular representation of the frontier period, nor a detailed description of federal and local policies relevant to the development of the American frontier as a region. As the title implies, Jones' focus is on the experiences of those who traveled West to live either temporarily or permanently.

*Daily Life on the Nineteenth-Century American Frontier* begins with a look at what the American frontier means and how it has been defined and studied over time. As Jones explains, the location of the frontier depends on the time period. By no means was there a specific boundary established on which all scholars agreed. That boundary advanced as settlement advanced and did not progress in a fixed east-to-west movement. As Jones and many others have