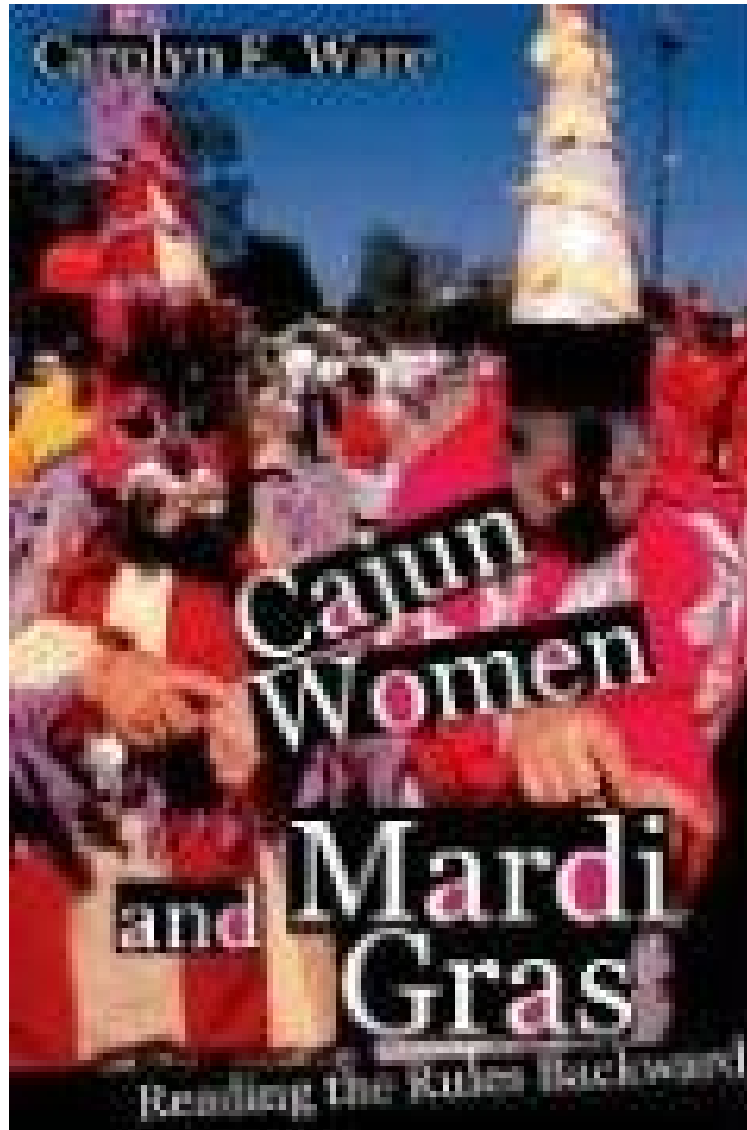


(Download pdf) Cajun Women and Mardi Gras: Reading the Rules Backward

Cajun Women and Mardi Gras: Reading the Rules Backward

Carolyn E. Ware

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Carolyn E. Ware : Cajun Women and Mardi Gras: Reading the Rules Backward before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Cajun Women and Mardi Gras: Reading the Rules Backward:

Cajun Women and Mardi Gras is the first book to explore the importance of women's contributions to the country

Cajun Mardi Gras tradition, or Mardi Gras run. Most Mardi Gras runs--masked begging processions through the countryside, led by unmasked capitaines--have customarily excluded women. Male organizers explain that this rule protects not only the traditions integrity but also women themselves from the events rowdy, often drunken, play. Throughout the last century, and especially in the last fifty years, women in some prairie communities have insisted on taking more active and public roles in the festivities. Carolyn E. Ware traces the history of women's participation as it has expanded from supportive roles as cooks and costume makers to increasingly public performances as Mardi Gras clowns and (in at least one community) capitaines. Drawing on more than a decade of fieldwork interviews and observation in Mardi Gras communities, Ware focuses on the festive actions in Tee Mamou and Basile to reveal how women are reshaping the celebration as creative artists and innovative performers.

"Ware's skillful use of oral testimonies and her detailed descriptions of the runs will be useful to those interested in the peculiarities of Cajun culture."--Journal of Southern History