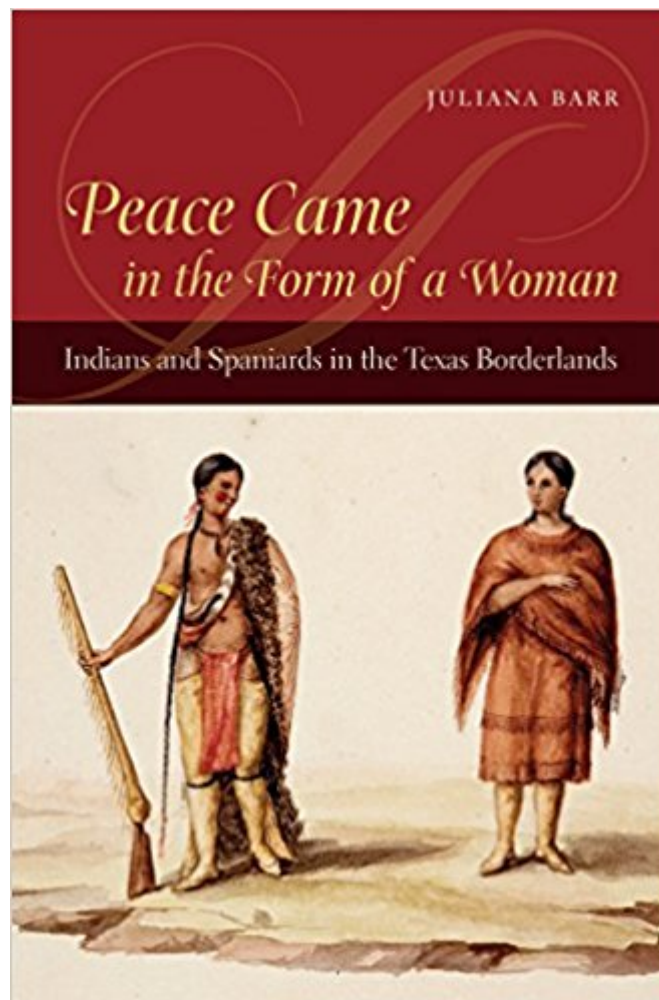




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# Peace Came In The Form Of A Woman: Indians And Spaniards In The Texas Borderlands



## Synopsis

Revising the standard narrative of European-Indian relations in America, Juliana Barr reconstructs a world in which Indians were the dominant power and Europeans were the ones forced to accommodate, resist, and persevere. She demonstrates that between the 1690s and 1780s, Indian peoples including Caddos, Apaches, Payayas, Karankawas, Wichitas, and Comanches formed relationships with Spaniards in Texas that refuted European claims of imperial control. Barr argues that Indians not only retained control over their territories but also imposed control over Spaniards. Instead of being defined in racial terms, as was often the case with European constructions of power, diplomatic relations between the Indians and Spaniards in the region were dictated by Indian expressions of power, grounded in gendered terms of kinship. By examining six realms of encounter--first contact, settlement and intermarriage, mission life, warfare, diplomacy, and captivity--Barr shows that native categories of gender provided the political structure of Indian-Spanish relations by defining people's identity, status, and obligations vis-a-vis others. Because native systems of kin-based social and political order predominated, argues Barr, Indian concepts of gender cut across European perceptions of racial difference.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A superbly crafted contribution to the growing literature that places Native Americans at the center of the struggle for control of eighteenth-century North America. . . . This finely conceptualized and beautifully executed book easily ranks on the short list of essential reading for scholars of Native

American history.--*Journal of Interdisciplinary History*A fine book in every respect, clearly written, persuasive, solidly documented, and useful for both student and scholar alike. . . . Encourages scholars to look anew at areas where Indians met Europeans.--*Hispanic American Historical Review*Historiographically significant and beautifully written, *Peace Came in the Form of a Woman* will enjoy a wide readership among those interested in early American, Native American, and Borderlands history.--*Journal of American Ethnic History*Barr skillfully blends anthropology and Spanish sources to present a complicated picture that revises the standard narrative of Spanish colonial Texas. . . . A nuanced picture of the shifting ground upon which Spanish-Indian relations were built, and the importance of tapping into indigenous understandings of diplomacy in order to more completely comprehend these cultural encounters.--*New Mexico Historical Review*Engaging and beautifully written. . . . Provides vivid accounts of Indian power and the gendered ways it was expressed.--*Western Historical Quarterly*A field-changing work. . . . The first to show how really essential gender is to contact studies.--*William and Mary Quarterly*Rich, complex, and detailed. . . . A well-crafted and thoughtful work that does much to alter the landscape of American history.--*Signs*Transforming enemies into allies took decades, and Barr offers a way to begin revising and rethinking the literature on these . . . encounters.--*The Journal of American History*An important analysis of Spanish-Indian relations in a borderlands region where Indian power stayed remarkably strong. Through her recovery of the stories of women, Barr shows that, at least until the nineteenth century, gender remained a stronger influence than race on those always volatile relationships.--*Church History*[Barr's] conclusions are compelling . . . . Everyone who studies the Spanish borderlands, Native Americans, or women needs to read this book.--*CHOICE*Contributes to a fundamental debate in North American history. . . . Well-written and insightful.--*Arkansas Historical Review*A highly valuable contribution to the indigenous historiography of the southwestern borderlands in the early period of European contact.--*Journal of Southern History*A carefully researched account of historical interactions.--*North Dakota Quarterly*Juliana Barr . . . brings us a brilliant re-analysis of the interactions of the Native Americans and Spaniards across the frontier . . . . With remarkable insight and cultural perspicuity, Barr filters the early Texas history story through a new historical lens. . . . From the book's opening Introduction, the reader is stunned with the inversion of historical understanding.--*East Texas Historical Journal*Deserves to be reckoned with by future scholarship on colonial Texas. . . . Provides . . . fundamental contributions to the historiography on colonial Texas.--*Catholic Southwest*

This monumental work on the diplomatic, military, and colonial history of Spanish Texas combines

careful archival research with theoretical sophistication about the ways gender served as an idiom for the power struggles between Spaniards and local Indian populations throughout the long eighteenth century. With a richly crafted narrative and lively prose, it is an amazing achievement.--Kathleen M. Brown, University of Pennsylvania  
Juliana Barr has a keen ear for those moments when women emerge from the din of borderland history as central protagonists in the shaping of diplomatic encounters. Likewise, she wisely discerns when indigenous and European men employed their own notions of gender in attempts to make sense of, and achieve momentary dominance over, their counterparts. *Peace Came in the Form of a Woman* vastly deepens our knowledge of the colonial Texas borderlands and thus our understanding of early North American history.--James F. Brooks, author of *Captives and Cousins: Slavery, Kinship and Community in the Southwest Borderlands*

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title grabbed me, fast read any history major should consider it

There is a common misconception concerning the relationship between Spanish settlers and Native peoples in the Americas. Following the traditional narrative consistent with conquest mythology, many historians have argued that Indians submitted to Conquistadors in the early decades of the sixteenth century. Recent scholarship has refuted this claim. Building on this new school of inquiry, Juliana Barr examines gender diplomacy in the Texas borderlands. The primary goal of this book is to demonstrate that native people commanded control over the region and in turn also regulated Spanish activity throughout the eighteenth century. Barr argues that women were essential to the "native codes of war and peace" (2). Furthermore, Barr contends that this Native American worldview of "social order and of political and economic relationships...were at the crux of Spanish-Indian politics in eighteenth-century Texas" (2). Drawing on colonial records and archaeological and ethnographic studies Barr's work equalizes the "military and provincial" narrative with social and cultural studies "of relevant Native American people" (345).

Honest, insightful, exhaustively researched, and gracefully written.

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