



Material Culture in Anglo-America: Regional Identity and Urbanity in the Tidewater, Lowcountry, and Caribbean (Carolina Lowcountry and the Atlantic World)

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Material Culture in Anglo-America examines the extent to which regions project cultural identities through the material forms of objects, buildings, and constructed environments. Utilizing more than 130 illustrations and essays by scholars representing a variety of disciplines, this volume explores the material constitution of the West Indies, Carolina lowcountry, and Chesapeake Tidewater—three historically related regions that shared strong likenesses in culture, commerce, and political development in the colonial through antebellum eras, yet also cultivated the distinctive regional flair with which they are now associated. Without reducing regionality to iconic signatures of place, the essays in this volume explore broadly the built and crafted artifacts that define and confine cultural identity in these geographic areas, locating regionality in the distinctive uses of objects as well as in their design and creation.

The contributors—an impressive and international array of historical archeologists, art historians, literary historians, museum curators, social historians, geographers, and historians of material culture—combine theoretical reflections on the poetics of representative material culture with empirical studies of how things were made and put to use in specific locales. They argue that there was a “presence of place” in the built environments of these regions but that boundaries were imprecise. The essays illustrate how the material culture of urban and rural settings interpenetrated each other and discuss the complications of class, race, religion, and settler culture within developing regions to reveal how all of these factors influenced the richness of crafted artifacts. The study is further grounded in several striking case studies that dramatically demonstrate how constructed things can embody communal self-understanding while still participating in an overarching transatlantic cultural community.

In addition to Shields, the contributors are Benjamin L. Carp, Bernard L. Herman, Paul E. Hoffman, Laura Croghan Kamoie, Eric Klingelhofer, Roger Leech, Carl Lounsbury, Maurie D. McInnis, Matthew Mulcahy, R. C. Nash, Louis P. Nelson, Paula Stone Reed, Jeffrey H. Richards, Natalie Zacek, and Martha A. Zierden.

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