



Playing Ourselves: Interpreting Native Histories at Historic Reconstructions (American Association for State and Local History)

Laura Peers

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Across North America, hundreds of reconstructed living history sites, which traditionally presented history from a primarily European perspective, have hired Native staff in an attempt to communicate a broader view of the past. *Playing Ourselves* explores this major shift in representation, using detailed observations of five historic sites in the U.S. and Canada to both discuss the theoretical aspects of Native cultural performance and advise interpreters and their managers on how to more effectively present an inclusive history. Drawing on anthropology, history, cultural performance, cross-cultural encounters, material culture theory, and public history, author Laura Peers examines living history sites as locations of cultural performance where core beliefs about society, cross-cultural relationships, and history are performed. In the process, she emphasizes how choices made in the communication of history can both challenge these core beliefs about the past and improve cross-cultural relations in the present.

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