



The Indianization of Lewis and Clark

Dr. William R. Swagerty Ph.D

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Although some have attributed the success of the Lewis and Clark expedition primarily to gunpowder and gumption, historian William R. Swagerty demonstrates in this two-volume set that adopting Indian ways of procuring, processing, and transporting food and gear was crucial to the survival of the Corps of Discovery. *The Indianization of Lewis and Clark* retraces the well-known trail of America's most famous explorers as a journey into the heart of Native America—a case study of successful material adaptation and cultural borrowing.

Beginning with a broad examination of regional demographics and folkways, Swagerty describes the cultural baggage and material preferences the expedition carried west in 1804. Detailing this baseline reveals which Indian influences were already part of Jeffersonian American culture, and which were progressive adaptations the Corpsmen made of Indian ways in the course of their journey. Swagerty's exhaustive research offers detailed information on both Indian and Euro-American science, medicine, cartography, and cuisine, and on a wide range of technologies and material culture. Readers learn what the Corpsmen wore, what they ate, how they traveled, and where they slept (and with whom) before, during, and after the return.

Indianization is as old as contact experiences between Native Americans and Europeans. Lewis and Clark took the process to a new level, accepting the hospitality of dozens of Native groups as they sought a navigable water route to the Pacific. This richly illustrated, interdisciplinary study provides a unique and complex portrait of the material and cultural legacy of Indian America, offering readers perspective on lessons learned but largely forgotten in the aftermath of the epic journey.

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