

Public Abstract

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Graduation Term:FS 2015

Department:Romance Languages

Degree:PhD

Title:l'Ecorce grossiere, l'ame aristocrate: Literary Representations of Cajuns in Francophone Louisiana, Nineteenth Century to Present

Cajuns have traditionally been defined as originating from French Acadian refugees who arrived in Louisiana from present-day Nova Scotia beginning in the late eighteenth century. However many of the people today who identify with the Cajun ethnicity are not descendants of those Acadian settlers. Moreover, this and other modern definitions of 'Cajun' have been solidified fairly recently in the twentieth century and have been formed through a dialogue with Anglo-American stereotypes. These stereotypes restrict the identity and ignore the major influences from a plethora of diverse cultures: French, Spanish, American, Irish, German, African, and Native American.

This study provides a Francophone alternative to the English stereotypes that more accurately portrays the complexities of Cajun identity and provides an alternative portrayal with which to enter a dialogue.