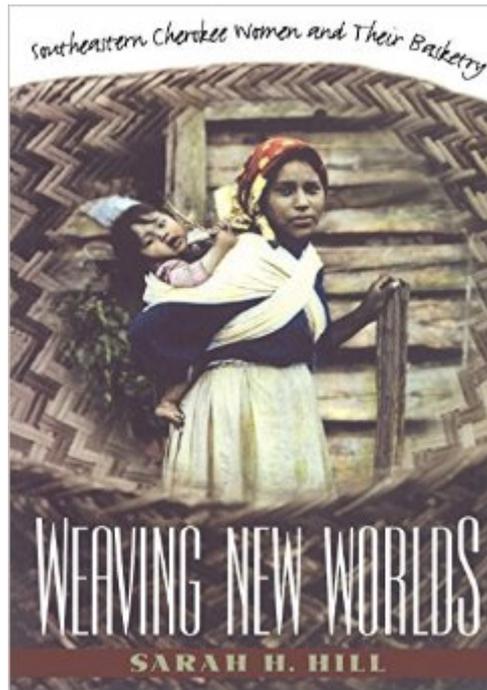


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# Weaving New Worlds: Southeastern Cherokee Women And Their Basketry (And Government; 5)



## Synopsis

In this innovative study, Sarah Hill illuminates the history of Southeastern Cherokee women by examining changes in their basketry. Based in tradition and made from locally gathered materials, baskets evoke the lives and landscapes of their makers. Indeed, as *Weaving New Worlds* reveals, the stories of Cherokee baskets and the women who weave them are intertwined and inseparable. Incorporating written, woven, and spoken records, Hill demonstrates that changes in Cherokee basketry signal important transformations in Cherokee culture. Over the course of three centuries, Cherokees developed four major basketry traditions, each based on a different material--rivercane, white oak, honeysuckle, and maple. Hill explores how the addition of each new material occurred in the context of lived experience, ecological processes, social conditions, economic circumstances, and historical eras. Incorporating insights from written sources, interviews with contemporary Cherokee weavers, and a close examination of the baskets themselves, she presents Cherokee women as shapers and subjects of change. Even in the face of cultural assault and environmental loss, she argues, Cherokee women have continued to take what they have to make what they need, literally and metaphorically weaving new worlds from old.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Upon seeing the title of Sarah Hill's Book, "*Weaving New Worlds: Southeastern Cherokee Women and Their Basketry*," one might think this is a book only about Indian baskets or a how-to manual for

making baskets. Both of these assumptions would be far from the truth. "Weaving New Worlds" is a broad, masterful compilation of research and expression of ideas on Cherokee culture. Put simply and without hyperbole, it is one of the best books one will find on Cherokee History. The book focuses on what has become the Eastern Band of Cherokees in western North Carolina. Though Hill writes an excellent history of the Cherokees prior to their forced removal by the federal government in the late 1830s, she does not attempt to tell any aspect of the story of the Cherokees who settled in Oklahoma. The strength of her work is in the creative chronology she provides and in her description of the environment of the southern Appalachian Mountains. Hill divides her work into four chapters: Rivercane, White Oak, Honeysuckle, and Red Maple. These chapter names derive from the material Cherokee women used to weave their baskets. The author cleverly interweaves the shifts in Cherokee history with the shift in basket making and the materials from which the baskets were made. The Prologue is a stand alone, worthy essay in itself. It describes with tremendous knowledge the plants and animals of the southern Appalachians and how the Cherokees used these resources. In reading Hill's Prologue, one feels they are diving into the nuts and bolts of history. There are parts of the Prologue and in Hill's writing on specific plants that are as good as historical writing gets. It is rare to find a book this focused and replete with encyclopedic information.

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