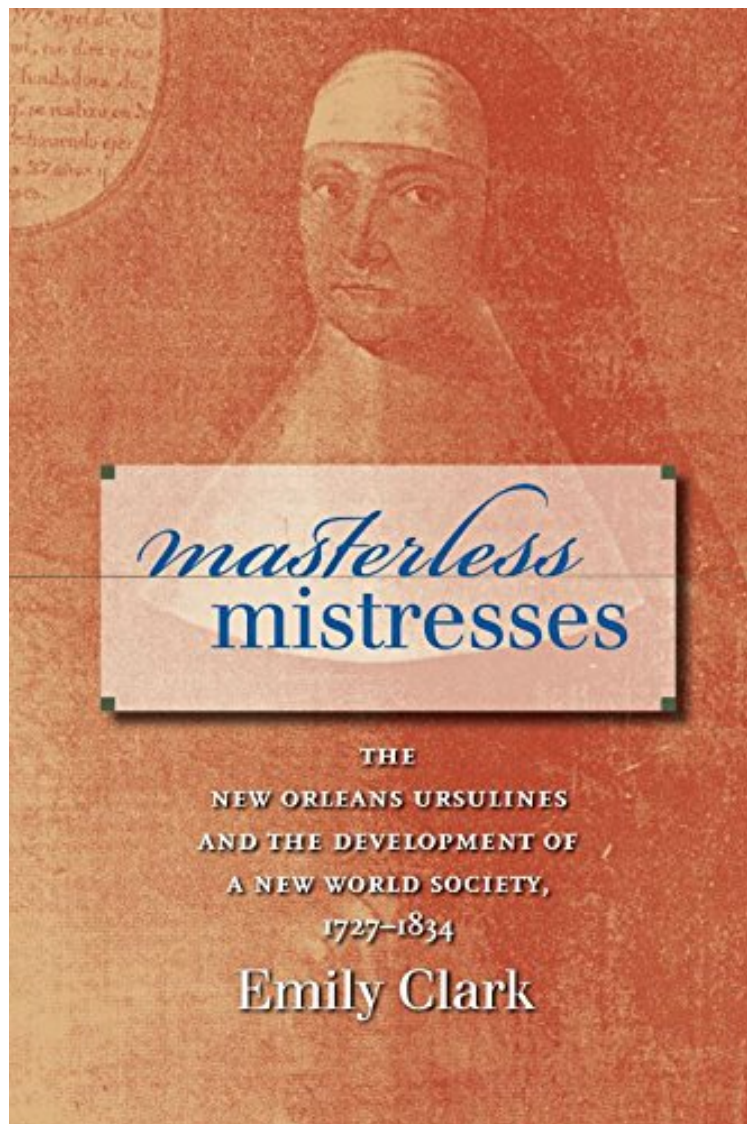


(Mobile ebook) Masterless Mistresses: The New Orleans Ursulines and the Development of a New World Society, 1727-1834 (Published by the Omohundro Institute of Early ... and the University of North Carolina Press)

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Emily Clark

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before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Masterless Mistresses: The New Orleans Ursulines and the Development of a New World Society, 1727-1834* (Published by the Omohundro Institute of Early ... and the University of North Carolina Press):

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. *Masterless Mistresses* By Customer This book by Tulane University Professor, Emily Clark, about the colonial history of the Ursulines in New Orleans is a wonderfully written tapestry of how only a handful of religious women became part of the complex and fascinating story of the city of New Orleans in the 18th and early 19th centuries. Clark's book is a blend of historical scholarship beginning with the spiritual founding and formation of the Ursulines in Italy and then development in France. Who were these Ursulines? Why did they come to Louisiana? What physical hardships did they undergo? (As a companion to this book I suggest *Voices From An Early American Convent*, edited by Emily Clark) What were their apostolic and cultural achievements? Professor Clark tells the story of the Ursulines not only in their charitable works such as teaching, running orphanages, and hospitalers, but also how they ran plantations as slave owners. This last activity may come as a surprise to modern readers but the story is well documented with the family names of slaves. Professor Clark credits the Ursulines with keeping slave families together, unlike Spanish and British/American slave owners. They also followed the French mandate of seeing that Indian and Blacks were baptized and raised Catholics. Still Professor Clark does not fail to mention that in 1864 with the emancipation of Blacks, all the slaves were happy to leave the Ursuline plantation. And how did the Ursulines deal with borders and slaves who could not live up to their strict moral code? They sold them off. Professor Clark devotes a large portion of her book to the thesis that the Ursulines, as unmarried self-supporting single women, (without master husbands) represented a different model of Christian womanhood than Protestant married women. In fact Professor Clark relates that the Ursulines posed a threat to leading men of New Orleans during the American Republican era which had little regard for the independence of women after its successful revolution from Britain. Professor Clark writes that the Ursulines were hierarchical in their own Order's makeup and that they conformed to the prevailing class social structure, yet they exhibited an egalitarian spirit when ministering to the spiritual welfare of their charges; i.e. Indians, blacks, rich, poor, women. Professor Clark's scholarship never gets in the way of a very clear and entertaining writing style. Even more important, in my opinion, Professor Clark, shows enormous admiration, even love for these pioneering women without losing her professional historian's discerning judgment. Definitely five stars. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Outstanding view of the life of early 1700s in New France. By Merle M. Albers Outstanding account of the difficulties encountered by these dedicated women who willingly left family and friends to help others in an unknown wilderness. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By R80533 Exacting in the depth of study. A must read for a researcher of the period.

During French colonial rule in Louisiana, nuns from the French Company of Saint Ursula came to New Orleans, where they educated women and girls of European, Indian, and African descent, enslaved and free, in literacy, numeracy, and the Catholic faith. Although religious women had gained acceptance and authority in seventeenth-century France, the New World was less welcoming. Emily Clark explores the transformations required of the Ursulines as their distinctive female piety collided with slave society, Spanish colonial rule, and Protestant hostility. The Ursulines gained prominence in New Orleans through the social services they provided--schooling, an orphanage, and refuge for abused and widowed women--which also allowed them a self-sustaining level of corporate wealth. Clark traces the conflicts the Ursulines encountered through Spanish colonial rule (1767-1803) and after the Louisiana Purchase, as Protestants poured into Louisiana and were dismayed to find a powerful community of self-supporting women and a church congregation dominated by African Americans. The unmarried nuns contravened both the patriarchal order of the slaveholding American South and the Protestant construction of femininity that supported it. By incorporating their story into the history of early America, *Masterless Mistresses* exposes the limits of the republican model of national unity.

A deeply imagined, beautifully written, and thoroughly researched account of the earliest order of Catholic sisters in what is now the United States. . . . General and specialist readers alike will be grateful to Clark for the vivid story she tells.--Church History Clark's enjoyable, punchy account . . . will prove valuable not only for what it brings to the history of New Orleans and Louisiana but also what it signifies about the intertwining of Franco-Iberian-Anglo-American societies and their faiths in the Americas.--American Historical Written with elegant precision. . . . Essential reading for those seeking to understand the intimate scale of racial and social transformations that occurred in a unique southern city.--Journal of American History This meticulously researched and engaging book makes an important contribution to our understanding of the intertwined histories of race, gender, and religion in American history.--The

Catholic Historical Elegant prose and riveting narrative . . . a tour de force that will intrigue any student of early American women's history.--Journal of the Early RepublicGroundbreaking social history.--H-Net sWith this finely crafted study, Clark contributes substantively to the burgeoning field of scholarship acknowledging the seminal roles women religious have played historically in the formation of American culture and society.--Register of the Kentucky Historical Society."So thorough it encompasses every aspect that touches on the order of the Sisters of Saint Ursula.--Louisiana HistoryInnovative and carefully researched . . . opens up the world of Gulf Coast Catholicism.--Books Culture Katrina reminded the nation of the extraordinary history of French and Spanish colonial New Orleans. As Clark shows in this richly textured study, women stood at the center of that history.--Jon F. Sensbach, University of FloridaA superb book. . . . Clark's bold and original study of the Ursuline community in New Orleans is deeply attuned to the rhythms and politics of religious life in the Old as well as the New World and to the changing racial and gendered dynamics of colonial Louisiana under three empires. The intricate meshing of local and transatlantic history is truly stunning.--Susan Juster, University of Michigan--A superb book on a neglected topic in early American history. Clark's bold and original study of the Ursuline community in New Orleans is deeply attuned to the rhythms and politics of religious life in the Old as well as the New World and to the changing racial and gendered dynamics of colonial Louisiana under three empires. The intricate meshing of local and transatlantic history is truly stunning.--Susan Juster, University of MichiganClark deepens our understanding of life in early New Orleans through this absorbing study of the Ursuline convent, a community of women who had a profound influence on colonial society. Her ability to draw eighteenth-century Louisiana insightfully into the wider examination of gender, class, race, and religion across the Atlantic world makes *Masterless Mistresses* a remarkable contribution to early American history.--Daniel H. Usner Jr., Vanderbilt UniversityFrom the Inside FlapClark follows the history of the Ursuline nuns of New Orleans through its years as a French colony, then a Spanish one, then as part of the U.S. after the Louisiana Purchase. The French Ursulines gained prominence in New Orleans through the social services they provided, which also allowed them a self-sustaining level of corporate wealth. The unmarried nuns contravened both the patriarchal republican order of the slaveholding American South and the Protestant construction of femininity that supported it. Clark's analysis joins the French and Spanish colonial history of Louisiana with the English colonial history of the settlers along the Atlantic to create a more complete picture of the whole of early America.