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"Much blood and treasure": South Carolina's Indian Traders, 1670-1755

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[Eirlys Mair Barker](#), *College of William & Mary - Arts & Sciences*

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the personnel actively trading with native Americans in the greater South Carolina area from 1670-1755. It concentrates on the mostly white and mostly male traders licensed to trade directly in the Indian towns by the colonies of South Carolina and Georgia.;Traders were active agents in formulating South Carolina's Indian trade and diplomacy. Some made a fortune in the trade while countless others died in the pursuit of that dream. Traders also took with them goods, germs, genes, a greed for deerskins, and attitudes that changed the old ways of life in Indian country.;Traders have traditionally been condemned for their selfish pursuit of a personal fortune without caring for native attitudes or for their colonies' welfare. This is an oversimplification. This work uncovered many instances where traders acted as diplomats and official interpreters for their colonies.;A major result of the dissertation is a classification of the persons involved in the Indian trade, using evidence culled from the official records such as South Carolina's Commons House of Assembly journals, also wills, and inventories of estates. It also uncovers the organization of those who took goods into the native American villages as well as the social and economic networks in which they functioned. The dissertation concludes that success and influence belonged to those who were respected in both cultures, especially when they safeguarded their interests through marrying Indian women.

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