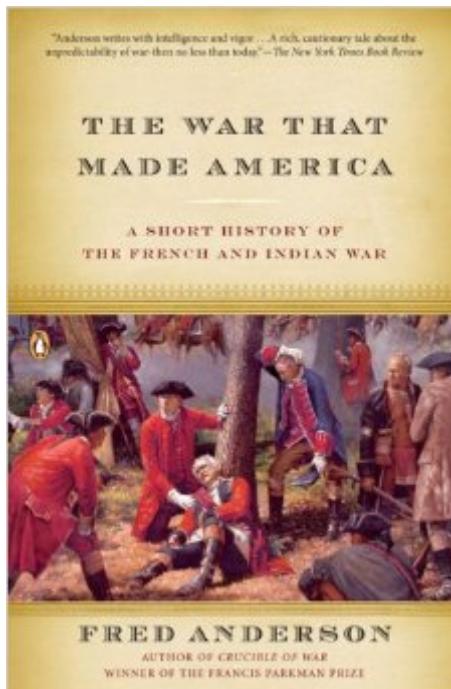


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The War That Made America: A Short History Of The French And Indian War



Synopsis

The globe's first true world war comes vividly to life in this "rich, cautionary tale" (The New York Times Book Review) The French and Indian War -the North American phase of a far larger conflagration, the Seven Years' War-remains one of the most important, and yet misunderstood, episodes in American history. Fred Anderson takes readers on a remarkable journey through the vast conflict that, between 1755 and 1763, destroyed the French Empire in North America, overturned the balance of power on two continents, undermined the ability of Indian nations to determine their destinies, and lit the "long fuse" of the American Revolution. Beautifully illustrated and recounted by an expert storyteller, The War That Made America is required reading for anyone interested in the ways in which war has shaped the history of America and its peoples.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The French and Indian Wars are generally treated as a subtheme in the wider context of the war between Britain and France that in a single year -- 1759 -- gave Britain its Empire -- Wolfe's capture of Quebec, Clive's victories in India which provided the treasures that funded the Industrial Revolution, the capture of the sugar islands that created Silicon Valley wealth for the new political class, and Hawke's and Boscawen's naval victories that began the ownership of the oceans that soon was extended by Cochrane and Nelson as the consequent protagonists of an entirely new style of sea battle. The American colonial part of this triumph is generally seen as at most a sideshow, although one of the well-known and great ironies of history is that the entire war was launched -- after a long build up -- by the blunder of a young British officer, George Washington that

gave the French the excuse they needed to start what was indeed the first global war. This excellent, well-written book with, from my own knowledge, its impeccably researched and balanced scholarship, shifts the focus from Europe to the complex four-sided relationships and intense politics of the Iroquois Six Nations, very sophisticated and key to the British success, the British administrators/military commanders, the Colonial players and their French equivalents. It helps explain better than any other book I have read how it was this period and this war that is at the roots of the American Revolution and perhaps made it inevitable.

The author, Fred Anderson, having written a scholarly account of the French and Indian War in his book Crucible of War, in this book writes a shorter account of that war that was the North American component of Europe's Seven Years War. In the Prologue, the text states "...by sheer force of numbers, if nothing else, they would overwhelm the French who claimed that territory....Anglo-American mastery in North America was effectively determined before the first shot was fired." However, defeating the French in North America was no "push-over." The English were interested in settling land west of the Allegheny Mountains while the French had no plans for the area "apart from keeping it out of British hands." The text gives an excellent discussion of Indian diplomacy that the British did not understand. Basically the Indians needed trade to procure arms and fought a guerilla war while the British fought a conventional European war. The French governor-general allied with several Ohio area Indian tribes and exploited the Indian warfare culture that included scalping, hostages and exploitation. It wasn't until French commander Montcalm challenged the use of Indian guerilla tactics that conventional European warfare was adopted by the French North American forces. Following the English takeover of the Dutch colony of New York, the Iroquois Indian Nation forged an alliance with the English in 1670. This supplied the Iroquois with arms while providing the English with a valuable partner. The text narrates the history of the fighting in North America until the end of the Seven Years War in 1763. The British North American commander-in-chief, Lord Loudoun, acted as a regal viceroy taking property when desired, forcing colonists to raise militias and finance military operations.

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