

Naval War College Review

Volume 60
Number 1 *Winter*

Article 22

2007

The War That Made America: A Short History of the French and Indian War

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Recommended Citation

Calhoun, William (2007) "The War That Made America: A Short History of the French and Indian War," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 60 : No. 1 , Article 22.

Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol60/iss1/22>

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Nol government. For years enemy sanctuaries and supply caches on the border area of that country had been a problem for Americans and South Vietnamese. Now there was a government in Phnom Penh that would permit something to be done about it. By April, the Army of the Republic of Vietnam forces were mounting operations in the former sanctuaries.

Soon the notion of American forces participating in cross-border operations was considered. The last third of this book is dedicated to the Cambodian incursion, and here Keefer's editorial notes and footnotes are particularly valuable. Some touch upon the U.S. domestic situation that developed in that unforgettable spring of 1970: "On May 4, 1970 at approximately 4:45 p.m., the President told Kissinger, 'At Kent State there were 4 or 5 killed today. But that place has been bad for quite some time.'" The footnote goes on to develop related conversations through May 7.

This volume is an essential source for anyone researching the period, in particular American foreign and military policy toward Southeast Asia. Edward Keefer has done an outstanding job in bringing together and giving focus to this vital aspect of American foreign policy during the early Nixon administration.

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Anderson, Fred. *The War That Made America: A Short History of the French and Indian War*. New York: Viking, 2005. 293pp. \$25.95

"It is the nature of great events to obscure the great events that came before them." This memorable phrasing begins nineteenth-century historian Francis Parkman's masterwork on the French and Indian War, *Montcalm and Wolfe*. One hundred twenty years later, Fred Anderson's *The War That Made America* clears away with lucid prose and effective narrative style the obscurity that has veiled the French and Indian War. Described as the "first world war" by Winston Churchill, it was the fourth in a series of six wars fought between England and France and their various allies between 1689 and 1815. It enflamed French Canada and British North America from the Carolinas to Nova Scotia, and it spread to Europe, the Caribbean, West Africa, India, and eventually to the Philippines. Despite this nearly worldwide conflagration and the approximately 800,000 total military casualties that occurred in all theaters, this conflict (also commonly known as the Seven Years' War) is no more familiar to most Americans than the Peloponnesian War, according to Anderson. His highly readable and concise history, primarily focused on the fierce struggle from 1754 to 1766 between the British, the French, and numerous American Indian nations for control of North America, elegantly remedies this lack of familiarity.

Anderson, a history professor at the University of Colorado and a former Army infantry officer, is the author of *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754–1766*, winner of the Francis Parkman and Mark Lynton history prizes in 2001. *The War That Made America* is a scaled-down telling of that prize-winning epic; it is also a

companion to a four-hour PBS television series of the same name. There is plenty of history to write about in this war and in the momentous clash of empires, usually viewed by Americans as only hazy background to the American Revolution. Throughout the first half of the eighteenth century, the distribution of power in the northern colonies had been kept in balance by the powerful Iroquois Confederacy, which skillfully played the French against the British in order to survive and thrive. But by midcentury, colonial expansion and land speculation, plus the Iroquois' own miscalculations, had led to conflict. The initial confrontation was sparked in a remote Allegheny glen by a young George Washington, whose small militia and Indian scouting party had a brief firefight with a French reconnaissance force. From this spark events were set in train that would see early French successes but eventually lead to a "most unequivocal" Anglo-American victory (in large part enabled by the Royal Navy), one that would destroy the American empire of France and place the British crown at its zenith after the Treaty of Paris was ratified in 1763.

Anderson, now perhaps the preeminent historian of the French and Indian War, relates this complex history in an insightful and succinct account. From the gilded halls of power—Whitehall and Versailles—to the remote banks of the Monongahela in the Ohio Valley, the story and its principal participants are clearly described. The key roles of Indian leaders, such as the Delaware

chief Teedyuscung, the Seneca chief Tanaghrisson (the "Half King"), and later the Ottawa war chief Pontiac, and their political and war-fighting skills are made unmistakably apparent. Numerous French and English military leaders, including the Marquis de Montcalm and Brigadier General James Wolfe, struck down within minutes of each other on the Plains of Abraham in front of Quebec, are also effectively portrayed. But Anderson's story is more than a chronological history, along with its significant characters; it is also the tale of cultural and intercultural interaction, with Indians and their different tribal interests an integral part of it.

In the end, the war overturned the balance of power on two continents, essentially subjugated the Native American nations and destroyed their control of their own destinies and lands, and lit the "long fuse" of the American Revolution. Professor Anderson's skillful account of this rich history is a cautionary story, pointing out the unpredictability and irony that attend war and the pursuit of power, and how "even the most complete victories can sow the seeds of reversal and defeat for victors too dazzled by success to remember that they are, in fact, only human." This excellent primer by a distinguished historian makes a most convincing case that the French and Indian War transformed the colonists' world forever, that "it is not too much to call it the war that made America."

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