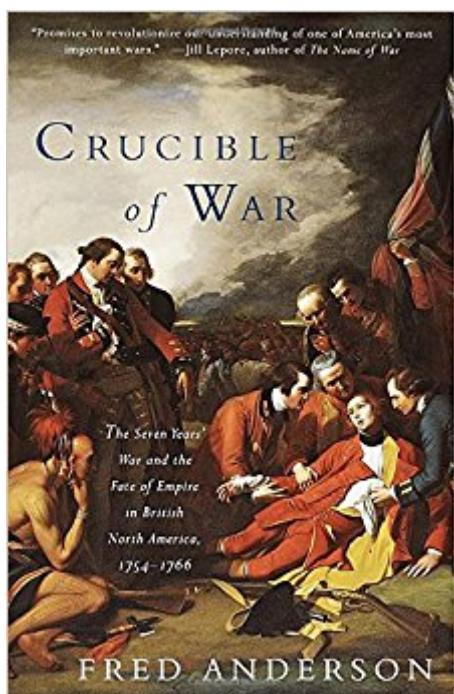


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# Crucible Of War: The Seven Years' War And The Fate Of Empire In British North America, 1754-1766



## Synopsis

In this vivid and compelling narrative, the Seven Years' War—often seen as a mere backdrop to the American Revolution—takes on a whole new significance. Relating the history of the war as it developed, Anderson shows how the complex array of forces brought into conflict helped both to create Britain's empire and to sow the seeds of its eventual dissolution. Beginning with a skirmish in the Pennsylvania backcountry involving an inexperienced George Washington, the Iroquois chief Tanaghrisson, and the ill-fated French emissary Jumonville, Anderson reveals a chain of events that would lead to world conflagration. Weaving together the military, economic, and political motives of the participants with unforgettable portraits of Washington, William Pitt, Montcalm, and many others, Anderson brings a fresh perspective to one of America's most important wars, demonstrating how the forces unleashed there would irrevocably change the politics of empire in North America.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Histories of the American Revolution tend to start in 1763, the end of the Seven Year's War, a worldwide struggle for empire that pitted France against England in North America, Europe, and Asia. Fred Anderson, who teaches history at the University of Colorado, takes the story back a decade and explains the significance of the conflict in American history. Demonstrating that independence was not inevitable or even at first desired by the colonists, he shows how removal of the threat from France was essential before Americans could develop their own concepts of democratic government and defy their imperial British protectors. Of great interest is the importance

of Native Americans in the conflict. Both the French and English had Indian allies; France's defeat ended a diplomatic system in which Indian nations, especially the 300-year-old Iroquois League, held the balance between the colonial powers. In a fast-paced narrative, Anderson moves with confidence and ease from the forests of Ohio and battlefields along the St. Lawrence to London's House of Commons and the palaces of Europe. He makes complex economic, social, and diplomatic patterns accessible and easy to understand. Using a vast body of research, he takes the time to paint the players as living personalities, from George III and George Washington to a host of supporting characters. The book's usefulness and clarity are enhanced by a hundred landscapes, portraits, maps, and charts taken from contemporary sources. Crucible of War is political and military history at its best; it never flags and is a pleasure to read. --John Stevenson --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

From 1756 to 1763, the Ohio Valley was the site of a historic contest between the French and the English, both of whom wanted to add this fertile soil to their colonial holdings. In this elegant new account of the Seven Years' War, University of Colorado historian Anderson demonstrates that the conflict was more than just a peripheral squabble that anticipated the American Revolution. Not only did the war decisively alter relations among the French, the English and the Native American allies of the two powers, who for decades had played the English and French off one another to their own advantage, but just as critical, argues Anderson, the war also changed the character of British imperialism, with the mother country trying to reshape the terms of empire and the colonists' place in it. (It was the British victory of 1763, for example, that led the British to post a permanent, peacetime army in America and to support those troops with new taxes.) Indeed, Anderson shows that familiar events of the mid-1760s, like the Stamp Act and Tea Act crises, are better understood as postwar rather than prewar events: they did not "reflect a movement toward revolution so much as an effort to define the imperial relationship." This volume, then, will be of interest not just to Seven Years' War buffs, but also to those interested in the entire Revolutionary era. Anderson's magisterial study--like his earlier book, *A People's Army*--is essential reading on an often ignored war. 90 illus. and 9 maps. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I love well written history. This account reads as interestingly as a novel. I would say it stands up to some very notable and well known histories I have read such as; William Shirer's *Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, *Son of the Morning Star* about George Armstrong Custer, the Bruce Catton Civil

war histories and so forth. This is a magnificent work on 3 fronts: 1) The interworkings of the British government during a near world wide war with France over the colonies of North America and elsewhere, as well as the continent of Europe. 2) The effect on the American colonists and their views as being equal as English colonists to every Englishman in Britain with the same rights and privileges - which the government of Britain and the King did not agree on (which made the American Revolution inevitable). 3) The fascinating differences between how the British and French dealt with the various Indian nations, and the repercussions of that on trade, Indian attacks and war with the colonists, the colonists expanding the colonies westward, and so much more. Vivid details are included, famous people included in the narrative are many, including George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, famous Colonial Governors, British generals, Pontiac, and many of the other famous chiefs of Indian nations. It's the history of England, Canada, America and the French and Indian Wars with a touch of Last of the Mohicans. A very very fascinating read.

Outstanding, only problem is book is really too thick to be a soft cover. My copy and another I saw were both broken at the exact same spot on the binding. I went onto YouTube to see how to repair it. This book is well worth paying the extra for a hardback because you will want to refer back to it often as I do.

This is the best treatment I've read of the French and Indian War, or Seven Years War, given from the perspective of the American colonies. It's not merely a history, but a primer on how American thoughts on liberty and representation were developed and how those thoughts led to the arguments for independence and colonial unity. A must read for any student of American history or political thought.

If you read one book on the French and Indian War this is the one to have. It is a very complete history of the war with enough detail to wet your interest for further reading on this very interesting time in the development of our nation and all the players. The French, British, Colonial, and Native Indians all jockeying for position in this fledgling country. Well written and carries you through the entire war with a summary at the end. If you are taking the time to read this review Buy This Book, Enjoy my friend.

As I explained in my last few posts, a short while ago, I decided to do a straight reading up on the history of my country. Not by a series of biographies or of any particular event; but a simple march

through the ages exploring all the eras of the United States of America. The biggest challenge is to find books that try their best to explore from multiple perspectives in order to avoid just one narrow view, without at the same time surrendering a general narrative that is both readable and enjoyable. After finishing Jill Lepore's book on King Phillip's War, I decided to move on to Fred Anderson's book covering what we in America call the French and Indian War. The book looks at the major actors in the British and French Empires, and the Iroquois Confederacy and how this conflict changed them from top to bottom. Like many wars, especially European Wars in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the conflict covered in this work is known by two names. Anglo-American colonials tended to name their wars after their kings and queens. The colonists had named the War of Austrian Succession, 'King George's War', and created a problem because King George II was still on the throne. They needed a new name for the conflict that Europe would call the Seven-Years' War. The name the Anglo-American colonists came up with was: 'the French and Indian War'. Fred Anderson's reason for producing this book is that the place we historians assign the French and Indian War in the historical narrative, he argues, is as the simple prologue of the American Revolutionary War. With this book, Anderson brings the America's most forgotten and--arguably--most important war, to the forefront to be study on its own terms and not as the inevitable beginning of a different conflict. Prior to this war, the two great colonial powers in North America were the British and French Empires. These empires were populated by colonists who were strongly identified with their imperial connections and a powerful Native American Nation in the Iroquois Confederacy that was able to provide a buffer and power broker between the two powers. After this conflict the French would be vanquished and the British would be left with an empire that was most ungovernable and the Iroquois would be set on the beginning of their fall from power. When I was in college, I, who had always been a history buff, felt I had strong understanding of World War II. Then in my Western Civilization II class with Parker Albee, we spent some time going over World War I. I remember thinking--as if a light had gone off in my head--'I understand why World War II happened better now.' Prior, all I had known of World War I had been some of its aftermath that helped lead to World War II, but nothing in real strong detail. I now view World War I and World War II almost as the different chapters in the same historic event. Having read this book I feel the same way about my understanding of the French and Indian War and the American Revolutionary War, as I did with my earlier reevaluations on World War I and World War II. I realize that this may sound the opposite of Anderson's intentions; however, I want to stress that reading this book you understand the French and Indian War as its own event but it still increases your understanding of the American Revolution. One of the biggest things that stood out in my mind while

reading this book was how some of the politics that led to the American Revolution against Britain during the late 1760s and 1770s were foreshadowed by the early events of the French and Indian War. The Earl of Loudoun, who was the commander in chief of the British armies in America, made several attempts to command the colonial governors and legislatures as if they were his colonels. His actions and the massive attempts to resist them by the colonial Anglo-Americans strongly resembled what was to come a decade later. Fortunately for the British cause in this war, William Pitt, who was a strong believer in the colonial subjects British rights, relieved Loudoun of his command and set the colonial relations to rights. "By mid-December 1757, Pitt knew that if the American assemblies were to be transformed from centers of resistance into sources of men and money, he would have to reverse entirely the course of colonial policy. Instead of treating the colonies like subordinate jurisdictions and requiring them to finance the war effort by forced contributions to a common fund, Pitt resolved to treat them like allies, offering subsidies to encourage their assemblies to aid in the conquest of New France. Rather than continuing to demand that civil authority, in the persons of colonial governors and legislatures, submit to military power in the person of His Majesty's commander in chief, Pitt resolved to withhold from Loudoun's successor direct authority over the provinces. In the future, as always in the past, the governors would receive their instructions directly from the secretary of state for the Southern Department. By this new grant (or more properly, restoration) of autonomy to the provinces, by offering inducements to cooperation rather than by seeking to compel union among them, Pitt hoped to create a patriotic enthusiasm that had not been much in evidence since 1756." p.214 In this book Anderson masterfully moves his readers from one military theater on the frontiers North America to another on continental Europe, he also cross-cuts from one political scene to another. While reading this book, the reader will go from the court of King George II to the assemblies of the American colonies, to military headquarters of Fredrick the Great, to the Massachusetts colonial militia. Yet it never becomes confusing making the reader feel out of place, Anderson's narrative flows smoothly from one event and theater to another without missing a beat. I highly recommend this work to anyone it is really exceptional book. Fred Anderson takes a highly difficult and at times confusing subject and lays it out rather neatly making it easy for his readers to understand this war that had so much impact on the modern world.

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