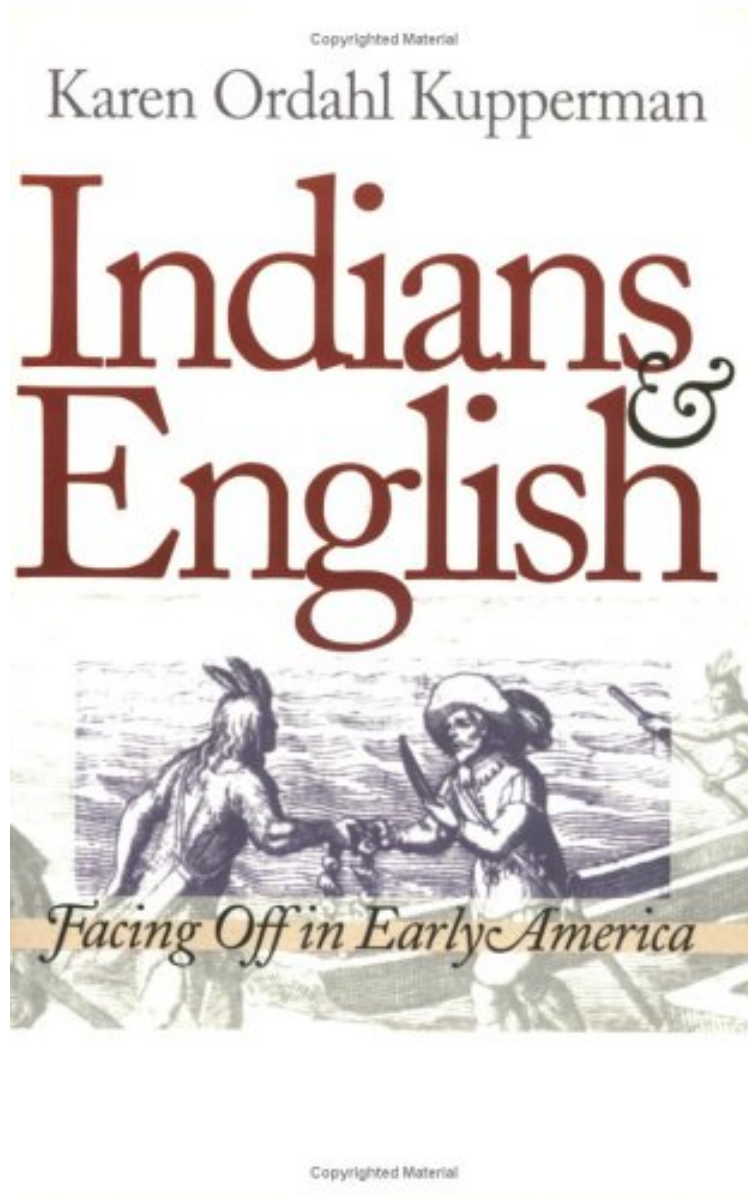


(Free) Indians and English: Facing Off in Early America

Indians and English: Facing Off in Early America

Karen Ordahl Kupperman

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#601416 in Books Karen Ordahl Kupperman 2000-04-13Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.88 x .76 x 5.911, .95 #File Name: 0801482828320 pagesIndians and English Facing Off in Early America | File size: 19.Mb

Karen Ordahl Kupperman : Indians and English: Facing Off in Early America before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Indians and English: Facing Off in Early America:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Well researched, fascinating! Like to give it 10 stars...By Nancy

MeheganWell researched. "God is in the details" - I learned more about the Jamestown colony than I did in all my years in history classes. Talented historian author. So well done. Perhaps this book is best for history buffs like myself, but I could not put this book down. Fascinating accounts. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. First cultural contacts explored anew By Non-fiction Addiction Excellent overview and analysis of first cultural contact interactions breaking down some of the assumptions in our national founding myths. The depth and range of sources brought to the analysis was impressive. 8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Incisive Study of Indian and European Relationships By Roy E. Cloudburst The traditional Indian-Euro paradigm of colonial America incorporates an unbalanced and unilateral interpretation of early U.S. history that relies heavily on a one-sided Eurocentric view. In recent years, scholars have moved toward a new, more academically balanced, school of thought. They have re-visited the early relationships between Native Americans and Europeans, and have given equal attention to both the Indian and European narratives. Consequently, new and more sophisticated tales have emerged about the early Americans. One such work, *Indians and English*, provides an incisive study of the complex relationships that defined the early years of colonial history. Building on a previous work, *Settling with the Indians*, Karen Kupperman explicitly explores the early interactions and struggles of Indians ("Americans") and early European settlers. Kupperman sees the "English as supplicants rather than conquerors, doubtful and insecure rather than self-assured and dominant." (14) She dismisses scholars who argue that the English were imperialists who only sought to exploit Native Americans for their resources. Instead, she strongly contends that ambivalence defined the roles of the aforementioned people. According to the author, she "seeks to recover the fear and uncertainty in which all sides lived." (x) Masterfully comparing and contrasting writings and images between New World and Old World Europeans, Kupperman notes that the former portrayed a much more accurate and wider range of reactions about the Indians than the latter. "Those who stayed home [Old World]" Kupperman suggests, "could be much more definite in their judgments." (x) Illustrations of an Indian mother and daughter (44-45) highlight this point. In the initial portrait, New World artist John White illustrates the dark skin tone of the Indians and their close proximity to one another. In contrast, Old World artists modified the mother and daughter images to reflect "body shape and posture . . . to fit Old World expectations." (44) The theme that emerges, argues the author, is that artisans and writers who resided in the New World were more credible historical sources than those who resided outside of it. In the latter chapters, the author unpacks the rather subtle changes that progressed between the English and Indians, which ranged from incorporating to resisting the 'Other.' The author further discusses the spiritual, and language, exchanges between New World residents. For instance, early colonials re-named Pocahontas to Rebecca in order to reflect a strong spiritual connection to Christianity. According to Kupperman, this "was intensely meaningful, evoking the Genesis account of the origins of the people of Israel." (197) Kupperman eloquently sprinkles vignettes, such as the aforementioned one, to convey a convincing argument that colonial interactions with Native Americans had rich and deep meanings, which underscored the complexity of their relationships. The "stretched identities" (211) of the English and Indians, inevitably, reached a boiling point. The author notes that "both the Americans and the English were always aware that, however friendly their relationships, enmity lay just over the horizon." (220) Of course, Kupperman details the various skirmishes and battles that erupted throughout the New World between the Americans and English, however, she is quick to re-iterate that "at no time was there a single hegemonic voice in the Euro-American population." (239) There are no glaring weaknesses to this work, but Kupperman does seem to ignore the African-American voice during her studies. Surely, they were an integral part of the colonial society. Also, Kupperman claims that the English were interested in the Americans "partly as a way of learning more about themselves." (40) Her evidence on this point is very speculative, as she contends that Indians reminded early settlers of their distant ancestors. It could just as easily be argued that the English needed a philosophical reference point, a jumping off point if you will, to provide them with a means, or method, to understand Native Americans. In laymen terms, they may have just sought a way to compare and contrast Native Americans with a known - in this case their ancestors. Other than the minor criticisms previously noted, Kupperman succeeds in delivering a powerful "new" colonial interpretation of New World relationships. Well researched, organized and synthesized; Kupperman, like Daniel Richter, approaches the study of Native Americans from an "eastward" perspective. The simplicity of former Indian and English histories, which have been Eurocentric slanted, must be re-examined by serious scholars. This work is sure to withstand the test of time, and challenge new scholars to delve deeper below the historical surface for English-Indian studies in colonial history

In this vividly written book, prize-winning author Karen Ordahl Kupperman refocuses our understanding of encounters between English venturers and Algonquians all along the East Coast of North America in the early years of contact and settlement. All parties in these dramas were uncertain, hopeful and fearful about the opportunity and challenge presented by new realities. Indians and English both believed they could control the developing relationship. Each group was curious about the other, and interpreted through their own standards and traditions. At the same time both came from societies in the process of unsettling change and hoped to derive important lessons by studying a profoundly different culture. These meetings and early relationships are recorded in a wide variety of sources. Native people maintained oral traditions about the encounters, and these were written down by English recorders at the time

of contact and since; many are maintained to this day. English venturers, desperate to make readers at home understand how difficult and potentially rewarding their enterprise was, wrote constantly of their own experiences and observations and transmitted native lore. Kupperman analyzes all these sources in order to understand the true nature of these early years, when English venturers were so fearful and dependent on native aid and the shape of the future was uncertain. Building on the research in her highly regarded book *Settling with the Indians*, Kupperman argues convincingly that we must see both Indians and English as active participants in this unfolding drama.