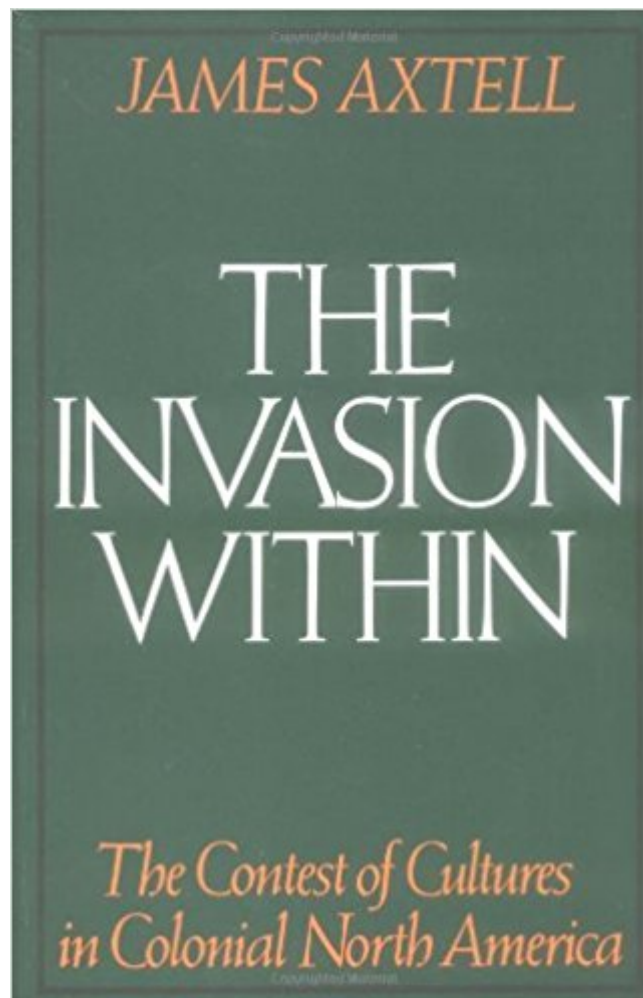




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The Invasion Within: The Contest Of Cultures In Colonial North America (Cultural Origins Of North America)



Synopsis

Colonial North America was not only a battleground for furs and land, but also for allegiances and even souls. In the three-sided struggle for empire, the English and French colonists were locked in heated competition for native allies and religious converts. Axtell sharply contrasts the English efforts to "civilize" the Indians with the French willingness to accept native lifestyles, and reveals why the struggle for control over the continent became a fascinating contest of cultures between shrewd opponents lasting nearly 150 years.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Axtell is interested in acculturation and the "imapct the major competing cultures of Eastern North America- English, French, and Indian- had had on each other, especially when they set out consciously to educate or convert their rivals." (p.IX) This book reveals the social and cultural interactions in the northeast of North America. The author rejects the prejudice of the moral superiority of the Europeans over the "savage" Indians and gives a profound account of the cultural interactions and conversions among the English, French, and Indian inhabitants of northeast North America. The English had the weakest cultural impact, according to the author. The French were more flexible and more successful in bringing new converts, but the Indians were the most successful cultural power, concludes Axtell, thanks to their more natural lifestyle and tolerance towards the cultures of the Europeans, who wanted to settle among them. It's an excellent book that tells the story of Colonial North America from a very interesting angle and it is a definite must for

readers interested in social and cultural history of North America.

In *The Invasion Within*, James Axtell has the best expository writing quality I've ever read. His treatment of the subject, based on broad unbiased research. He brings important insights to American Indian cultures before and since Europeans' arrival, clarification and new light on common misrepresentations and misunderstandings about the actions and reactions of both Indians and whites and the mutual influence the cultures have had on each other. I think this is an important offering to current thinking and issues -- not just those involving Native Americans but to constructive understanding of this country, our roots and our ability to continue to grow and change into a good future.

I bought two of Axtell's books on : this one and *The European and the Indian*. Both are restrained in their claims, both are clearly written, both are well researched. The best part - although included in both texts - is the "Little Red School" chapter on the schooling of Indians in white communities. Yet the work itself is well worth your time.

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