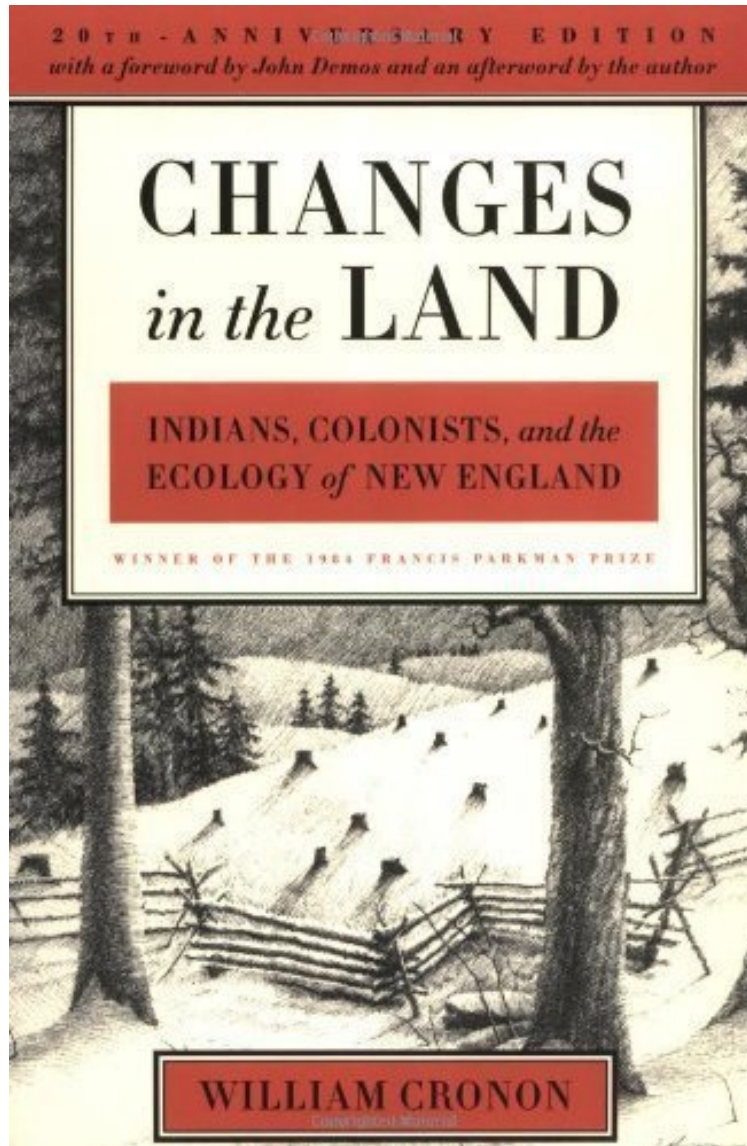


(Mobile pdf) Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England

Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England

William Cronon

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#19735 in Books William Cronon 2003-09-01 2003-09-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 207.52 x .77 x 5.511, .56 #File Name: 0809016346288 pages Paperback with scene of forest and snow. | File size: 38.Mb

William Cronon : Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Reflections on a People of Plenty By Roger D. Launius Perhaps it is

appropriate that this book review be done at this particular time; since it is so much about the convergence of cultures in early America and how the use of resources changed as a result. This is especially important as we pause for the holidays and the bounties that are so much a part of the American experience. William Cronin has been a leading figure in the study of the environmental history of the American West for a generation. This book is one of the reasons why. It is an elegant study, at once entertaining and enlightening as well as seminal in its characterization of the New England frontier and the relationships of the native population to the English immigrants in their homeland. Cronin's thesis is straightforward. As he characterized it: "the shift from Indian to European dominance in New England entailed important changes—well known to historians—in the ways these peoples organized their lives, but it also involved fundamental reorganizations—less well known to historians—in the region's plant and animal communities. To the cultural consequences of the European invasion—what historians sometimes call 'the frontier process'—we must add the ecological ones as well" (p. xv). So true, but that insight was lost on many earlier historians who had previously studied native/English interactions. What Cronin offers is a well-researched, effectively-argued, and finely-honed explanation of this situation. Chapters on the landscape and its changes over time, the different natures of agriculture among the native and English populations, ownership and patterns of use, and the interactions of both communities bring this together in a useful manner. Accessing standard historical materials as well as works in archaeology, anthropology, plant and animal science, and climatology Cronin synthesizes a major historical episode in a new way. His greatest conclusion, at least from my perspective, harkens back to the "frontier thesis" of Frederick Jackson Turner. Turner asserted, and I believe Turner was correct that this was the case, that the broad expanse of land available dominated the thinking of Europeans coming to America and prompted a structuring of the American experience along a specific path. Cronin makes the case that this European path was uniquely destructive to the New England ecology. "They assumed the limitless availability of more land to exploit," he wrote, "and in the long run that was impossible" (p. 169). Ultimately, Cronin noted, "the people of plenty were a people of waste" (p. 170).

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. He discusses the misunderstanding between their concept of how to use the land and the Europeans' concept of land as real estate. By Rebecca Smith This is one of the most fascinating books I have ever read. It is absolutely packed with important information and insightful analysis. If you are interested in ecology, Native Americans, history, anthropology, economics and the law you have a lot to learn in this book. Cronon describes how the Native Americans lived before the Europeans came and how their hunter-gatherer lifestyle shaped the land and forests. The colonists found land that was far from being wilderness. He discusses the misunderstanding between their concept of how to use the land and the Europeans' concept of land as real estate that was rightfully owned by whoever could "put it to good use" as laid out in Genesis in the Bible. I could go on and on.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Interesting. By Granny-By-The-Sea This is a very well researched summary of the changes in the New England landscape due to the arrival of white men. I read it as part of a study I have been doing on how the New England forest has evolved over time. Both the English and the Indians manipulated the natural forest to meet their own needs and expectations, but as they began to share the same landscape, new changes emerged. The story is much less simplistic than we were all taught and reminded me that we all shape the world we live in - whether we think we do or not,

The book that launched environmental history now updated. Winner of the Francis Parkman Prize In this landmark work of environmental history, William Cronon offers an original and profound explanation of the effects European colonists' sense of property and their pursuit of capitalism had upon the ecosystems of New England. Reissued here with an updated afterword by the author and a new preface by the distinguished colonialist John Demos, *Changes in the Land*, provides a brilliant inter-disciplinary interpretation of how land and people influence one another. With its chilling closing line, "The people of plenty were a people of waste," Cronon's enduring and thought-provoking book is ethno-ecological history at its best.

"Changes in the Land exemplifies, and realizes, the promise of ecological history with stunning effect. Setting his sights squarely on the well-worn terrain of colonial New England, [Cronon] fashions a story that is fresh, ingenious, compelling and altogether important. His approach is at once vividly descriptive and profoundly analytic." ?John Demos, *The New York Times Book* "A superb achievement: Cronon has changed the terms of historical discourse regarding colonial New England." ?Wilcomb E. Washburn, director of the Office of American Studies, Smithsonian Institution "A cogent, sophisticated, and balanced study of Indian-white contact. Gracefully written, subtly argued, and well informed, it is a work whose implications extend far beyond colonial New England." ?Richard White, Michigan State University "This is ethno-ecological history at its best . . . American colonial history will never be the same after this path-breaking, exciting book." ?Wilbur R. Jacobs, University of California, Santa Barbara "A brilliant performance, from which all students of early American history will profit." ?Edmund S. Morgan, Yale University

About the Author William Cronon is the Frederick Jackson Turner Professor of History at the University of Wisconsin--Madison. His book *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* won the Bancroft Prize in 1992.