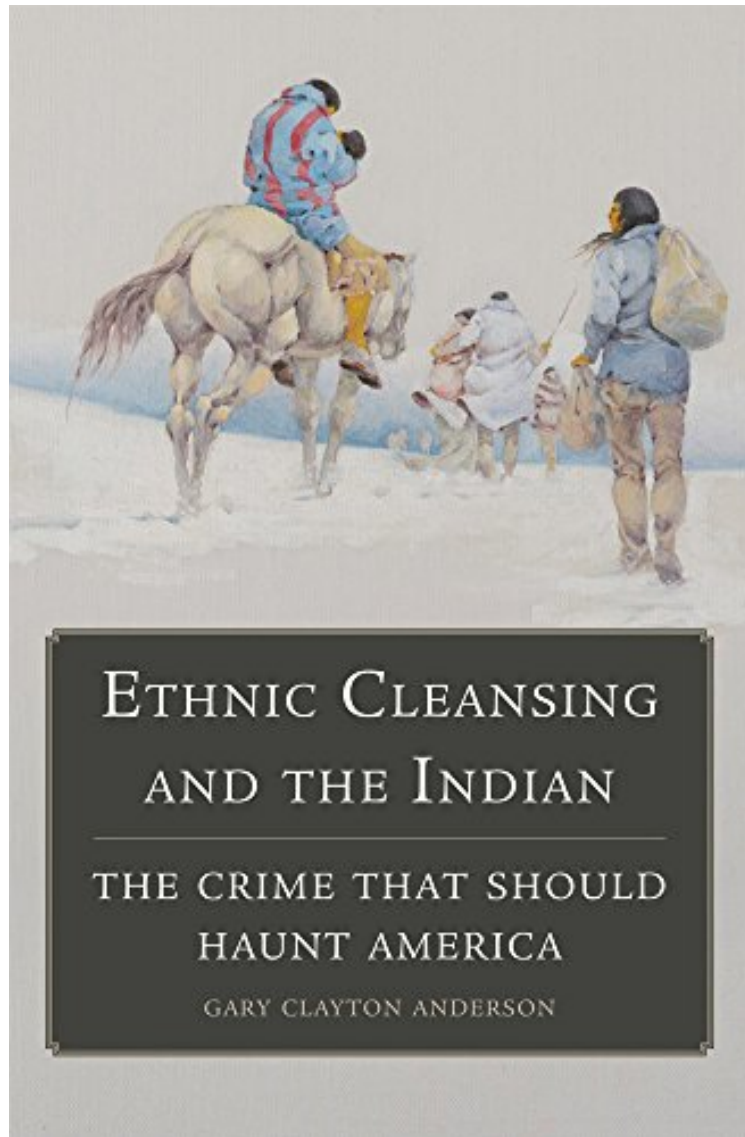


(Free download) Ethnic Cleansing and the Indian: The Crime That Should Haunt America

Ethnic Cleansing and the Indian: The Crime That Should Haunt America

Gary Clayton Anderson

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#423954 in Books 2015-07-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.25 x 1.02 x 6.131, 1.50 #File Name: 0806151749472 pages | File size: 41.Mb

Gary Clayton Anderson : Ethnic Cleansing and the Indian: The Crime That Should Haunt America before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ethnic Cleansing and the Indian: The Crime That Should Haunt America:

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Genocide, Ethnic Cleansing, or Something Else? By Roger D. Launius There has been a debate over the last quarter century about the fate of Native Americans at the hands of

Europeans who came to the American continent and displaced them. An extreme position is that the Europeans engaged in “genocide,” systematically seeking to wipe them out. There were some instances in which this clearly took place—Small Pox infected blankets, various massacres, and other atrocities come to mind—but United States policy was far from such an approach. No question, for nearly four centuries a technologically superior European civilization constantly pressed the native population either to conform to a new hegemony or to withdraw from it, conquering the various first peoples and destroying their population in the process. By the close of the nineteenth century the native population had dwindled, ravaged by war and disease and starvation, to the extent that some began to characterize it as a “vanishing race.” In 1900 the Native American population in the United States reached a nadir at 237,196, a seven-fold decline from what it had been estimated in 1492. But was it genocide? Historian Gary Clayton Anderson does not believe so. Extermination was never the intention of Euro-Americans. Instead, he uses the term “ethnic cleansing” to characterize how Europeans and their descendants dealt with the native population. The objective of acquiring land and other resources from the native population motivated every aspect of Euro-American engagement with them. In that sense, according to Anderson, the “ethnic cleansing” term is more appropriate than genocide to describe what happened to Native Americans. The term, of course, gained fame in the Balkan wars of the 1990s and suggested the same concept of purging some groups from land wanted by other groups. One may debate this characterization and there are other books that argue for Native American genocide. An argument about genocide may be found in Alex Alvarez, “Native America and the Question of Genocide” (Rowman Littlefield, 2014) and Andrew Woolford, Jeff Benvenuto, and Alexander Laban Hinton, eds., “Colonial Genocide in Indigenous North America” (Duke University Press, 2014). The bulk of Anderson’s book is devoted to making his case for “ethnic cleansing,” followed by a set of case studies explicating it throughout American history. 2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. An excellent account of this tragic series of events. Whilst the thirteenth amendment to the US constitution is and will always be commendable, it is an astonishing enigma in the history of the US, how they treated the indigenous and rightful population of the land. 3 of 15 people found the following review helpful. So, Dakota Daughter, two things: what’d you think of the book? 2) is it also your assertion that Americans can also not write histories of European nations? Just because somebody isn’t from a particular ethnic group or nationality doesn’t mean they have nothing to contribute.

Mention “ethnic cleansing” and most Americans are likely to think of “sectarian” or “tribal” conflict in some far-off locale plagued by unstable or corrupt government. According to historian Gary Clayton Anderson, however, the United States has its own legacy of ethnic cleansing, and it involves American Indians. In *Ethnic Cleansing and the Indian*, Anderson uses ethnic cleansing as an analytical tool to challenge the alluring idea that Anglo-American colonialism in the New World constituted genocide. Beginning with the era of European conquest, Anderson employs definitions of ethnic cleansing developed by the United Nations and the International Criminal Court to reassess key moments in the Anglo-American dispossession of American Indians. Euro-Americans’ extensive use of violence against Native peoples is well documented. Yet Anderson argues that the inevitable goal of colonialism and U.S. Indian policy was not to exterminate a population, but to obtain land and resources from the Native peoples recognized as having legitimate possession. The clashes between Indians, settlers, and colonial and U.S. governments, and subsequent dispossession and forcible migration of Natives, fit the modern definition of ethnic cleansing. To support the case for ethnic cleansing over genocide, Anderson begins with English conquerors’ desire to push Native peoples to the margin of settlement, a violent project restrained by the Enlightenment belief that all humans possess a “natural right” to life. Ethnic cleansing comes into greater analytical focus as Anderson engages every major period of British and U.S. Indian policy, especially armed conflict on the American frontier where government soldiers and citizen militias alike committed acts that would be considered war crimes today. Drawing on a lifetime of research and thought about U.S.-Indian relations, Anderson analyzes the Jacksonian “Removal” policy, the gold rush in California, the dispossession of Oregon Natives, boarding schools and other “benevolent” forms of ethnic cleansing, and land allotment. Although not amounting to genocide, ethnic cleansing nevertheless encompassed a host of actions that would be deemed criminal today, all of which had long-lasting consequences for Native peoples.

"Gary Clayton Anderson has uttered the words that most American historians have, for a variety of reasons, been unwilling to use. In evaluating American Indian policy as an early example of ethnic cleansing, he has launched an important debate. More than just a rephrasing of existing historical narratives, *Ethnic Cleansing and the Indian* contains important new research."—Richard White, author of *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815*