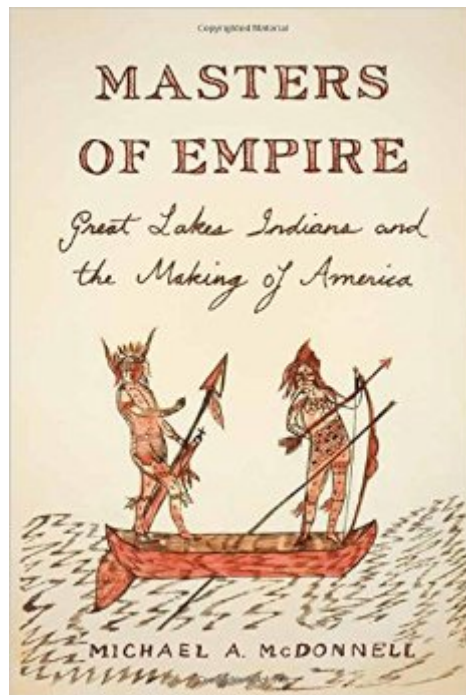


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# Masters Of Empire: Great Lakes Indians And The Making Of America



## Synopsis

In *Masters of Empire*, the historian Michael A. McDonnell reveals the pivotal role played by the native peoples of the Great Lakes in the history of North America. Though less well known than the Iroquois or Sioux, the Anishinaabeg, who lived across Lakes Michigan and Huron, were equally influential. *Masters of Empire* charts the story of one group, the Odawa, who settled at the straits between those two lakes, a hub for trade and diplomacy throughout the vast country west of Montreal known as the pays d'en haut. Highlighting the long-standing rivalries and relationships among the great Indian nations of North America, McDonnell shows how Europeans often played only a minor role in this history, and reminds us that it was native peoples who possessed intricate and far-reaching networks of commerce and kinship, of which the French and British knew little. As empire encroached upon their domain, the Anishinaabeg were often the ones doing the exploiting. By dictating terms at trading posts and frontier forts, they played a crucial part in the making of early America. Through vivid depictions—all from a native perspective—of early skirmishes, the French and Indian War, and the American Revolution, *Masters of Empire* overturns our assumptions about colonial America. By calling attention to the Great Lakes as a crucible of culture and conflict, McDonnell reimagines the landscape of American history.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

MASTERS OF EMPIRE endeavors to detail our country's colonial history from the perspective of Native Americans. Author Michael McDonnell emphasizes his desire to present a native-driven

narrative throughout. This is a critical and long-overdue enterprise, as our history books are and always have been written by the victors, which skews and propagandizes the truths of our country's foundations. Too long have we only taught the timelines and cultures of the colonies. Without understanding what existed on this land physically and socioculturally before invaders irrevocably altered its nature, we continue to exist dangerously ignorant of our Native forebears, and the atrocities committed that established white supremacy in this nation. Without understanding history from a Native perspective, we cannot understand our relationships with Native peoples today, nor our own roles in the longstanding and ongoing erasure of Native peoples and cultures. **MASTERS OF EMPIRE** is a necessary reaction to American history that stereotypes, misrepresents, misunderstands, oppresses and erases Native America. McDonnell intersperses maps and images throughout, and the visual representation enhances the narrative. His writing edges on dull at times, but viscerally engaging at others --- overall a riveting telling of an expansive portion of history. He delves into great detail, though he centers his scenes on research rather than speculation. The volume of detail, coupled with the visuals, crafts a rich and informative history. McDonnell takes care to present every conflict and cultural moment from all the relevant perspectives involved: Odawa, Anishinaabe, French, English, colonizers, etc., which constructs a more sensitive and accurate narrative than most books on the era.

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