

Civilizing savages

[History](#)



Civilizing “ savages”

This short analysis will look at the examples of 4 distinct groups (while one of these groups exists as a subset of multiple groups) – the British, the French, the Spanish, and the Pennsylvania settlers. Like all the groups that will be discussed, the British behaved in culturally and ethnically superior way to all native inhabitants; viewing them only as a source of trade and/or an obstacle in acquiring more land. For this purpose and to this end, the British oftentimes worked to forge temporary and superficial alliances with one group over another or with one group in opposition to another so as to weaken the advantage of some of their competitors in the New World (French-Indian War).

Of all the colonizers, the French perhaps treated the Natives with more of a modicum of respect than did the Spanish or the British. This is not to say that they viewed them as their equals; they most certainly did not; however, the subjugation of the native population and forced removal of their lands was at least not a primary policy as it relates to the French. Compared to the British, the French colonizers saw an increased duty to civilize/educate/convert the “ savages”. This determination can be seen by the money, time, effort, and lives expended by way of the Jesuit missionaries working to convert those tribes under French influence in and around Montreal and Quebec.

As it relates to the Spanish, there existed a desire to convert the “ saves” under their influence to Catholicism; however, it appears as if the first instinct was to utterly crush and decimate the population before such efforts were attempting. To this end, entire civilizations were rendered defenseless as large numbers of the male population was massacred/maimed (oftentimes by amputating limbs) and others forced into bondage. Only after <https://assignbuster.com/civilizing-savages/>

these acts were completed did the missionaries then come in to “minister” to the remnants of what was left of the group.

Conversely, the final group that will be discussed is that of the Pennsylvania settlers. Although they were far from perfect, this multi-ethnic group composed of Dutch, Irish, English, Scotch, and French settlers established a settlement that no doubt took first prize with regards to its overall treatment of the native population. Furthermore, William Penn instituted a tolerant approach to the natives that lived within Pennsylvania. Seeing the detrimental effects that alcohol had on the native populations, he also instituted a ban on all alcoholic beverages to the native population. Naturally, not all Pennsylvanians appreciated or abided by the laws and norms set forward by William Penn and as more and settlers came to Pennsylvania, Penn’s influence over them dwindled and Pennsylvania began to more and more closely resemble the other colonies.