

## **Eras Journal - Darren Reid Abstract**

### **Abstract of Soldiers of Settlement: Violence and Psychological Warfare on the Kentucky Frontier, 1775-1783**

The Kentucky Frontier War is arguably one of the most brutal and violent episodes in America's colonial history. During the American Revolution deaths linked to wartime combat in this region were over seven times higher than in any of the thirteen rebelling colonies.

Bolstered by their British allies the Shawnee, Cherokee, Wyandots, Pickaways, and numerous other Native American tribes, launched a war of attrition upon the Kentucky Frontier that would outlast the Revolution by thirteen years. For those living on this frontier, warfare with Native Americans was a distinct everyday, reality and strikes into the heartlands of both settlers and their Native American adversaries was commonplace.

From 1775 to 1783 Kentucky was transformed from an uninhabited hunting ground into a major destination for settlers migrating westward. During these early years settlements were constructed as forts and the settlers themselves were cast, out of necessity, into the role of soldiers responsible not only for their own safety but that of their families, kin networks, towns, and ultimately, the settlement of this new region.

In this paper the development of society on the Kentucky Frontier will be considered in the context of the hyper-violence caused by larger political movements affecting colonial America. This enables the assessment of the extent to which violence informed the shape of the Kentuckian frontier society.