

Reading Log #2 on "We are Well as We are"

"We are Well as We are" is an essay that examines the largely negative impact the missionaries, particularly Jesuits, had on the indigenous North American population. The author does a good job of supporting his claim with evidence from several primary sources, such as the journals of Jesuit missionaries, to show that missionaries were attempting to completely change the way of life native Americans. One point that the author makes is that Jesuit missionaries were trying to force the ideas of heaven and hell onto the Huron, Montagnais and New England native Americans,¹ this idea was met with derision as the Jesuit heaven didn't sound like a place the natives wanted to go.² The idea of hell was met with even more disagreement as the thought of eternal punished did not sit well with the native peoples.³ Native Americans were also highly opposed to the idea of baptism and since baptisms had generally been given as close to the end of life as possible to make sure the baptised person stayed faithful, the native peoples began to associate baptism with death.⁴ Jesuit missionaries also tried to rid native culture of traditional healing ceremonies as they believed the traditional rituals were far too satanic.⁵

While reading this document I have to wonder just how many native people were converted by the Jesuit missionaries and if the missionaries ever used to force in order to make the native people follow their beliefs.

¹ Ronda, James P. "'We Are Well As We Are': An Indian Critique of Seventeenth-Century Christian Missions." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 34, no. 1 (1977): 69.

² Ronda, "We are Well as We are", 70

³ Ronda, "We are Well as We are", 71

⁴ Ronda, "We are Well as We are", 72

⁵ Ronda, "We are Well as We are", 73