



# **The American Backwoods Frontier: An Ethical and Ecological Interpretation (Creating the North American Landscape)**

*Professor Terry G. Jordan, Professor Matti E. Kaups*

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HISTORY/ENVIRONMENTAL Selected by Choice magazine as an Outstanding Academic Book of the Year and by the Pioneer America Society as One of the Best Books of 1989-1990, and recipient of the Agricultural History Society's Theodore Saloutos Memorial Award America's woodland pioneers transformed forest into farmland more rapidly than any group in world history. Their agricultural colonization of the East not only helped guarantee and legitimize America's "manifest destiny" but massively altered the environment of the North American continent as well. In *The American Backwoods Frontier* Terry Jordan and Matti Kaups offer a detailed analysis of this remarkable culture and present an in-depth study of its colonial origins. Historians and geographers have traditionally traced these origins to the eighteenth-century Scotch-Irish and German settlers of the Pennsylvania backwoods. Jordan and Kaups reject this view, identifying seventeenth-century Delaware Valley Finns and their Indian neighbors as the major shapers of frontier culture. Their findings are especially timely, since today's problems of habitat destruction and massive environmental change have their roots in America's pioneer mentality.

"Substantiates a plausible theory with solid historiographical research and abundant evidence of material culture.... A well-illustrated and readable account." -Gregory Graves, *Journal of American History* "The most original contribution to American cultural geography in many years." -John C. Hudson, *Journal of Historical Geography* Terry G. Jordan is Walter Prescott Webb Professor of History and Ideas in the Department of Geography at the University of Texas, Austin. His many books include *American Log Buildings: An Old World Heritage* and *The European Culture Area: A Systematic Geography*. Matti Kaups is professor of geography and ethnohistory at the University of Minnesota, Duluth, and professor of Scandinavian Studies at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

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