**Chapter Outline**

to accompany

*Indigenous Peoples within Canada: A Concise History*, Fifth Edition

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**Chapter 6: The Struggle for Sovereignty in Eastern North America**

This chapter examines a few of the Indigenous–colonial wars that took place during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The chapter concentrates particularly on the Haudenosaunee War (1609–1701), the Mesquakie (Fox) Wars (1710–38), and the Mi’kmaq War (1713–61). The Haudenosaunee War was difficult for both sides and hard to stop because of the belief that warriors could not enter the afterlife until their death had been avenged through death of an enemy or abduction and adoption of a war captive to replace the lost. A key point raised in the chapter relates to the fighting techniques of the Kanien’keha:ka, who used what has been termed guerrilla tactics, a strategy based on speed and surprise. The strategy was successful against the field warfare strategy of the French and English in which columns of men lined up and fought. The 1690s saw New France in a state of siege as the Haudenosaunee put continued pressure on the colony. After nearly a century of war in the region, the Haudenosaunee replaced the Wendat as the regional power in the east and emerged with an expanded territory. However, the Haudenosaunee rise to power was not without consequences. Although they had expanded their territory, they suffered from severe population losses as a result of disease and warfare. Nevertheless, they managed to keep their confederacy intact. By being a formidable enemy, they had unwittingly helped to unite the colonists of New France, facilitating the establishment of the English on Hudson Bay and forcing the French to expand west.

The Mesquakie Wars resulted in more success for the French than they had experienced against the Haudenosaunee. The Mesquakie were trading partners with the Haudenosaunee and thus became involved in the English trading network. The Mesquakie opposed the French predominately because they did not get along with the Ojibwe and Odaawaa, who were important French allies. They also objected to the French trading with their western enemies, the Dakhóta, who were likely to use newly-acquired military technology against them. The French had success in these wars as a result of two factors: the French adapted to forest fighting techniques, and the nations of the *pays d’en haut* were not as stable in their alliances as the Haudenosaunee were.

The Mi’kmaw War was unique with several distinguishing characteristics. First, much of the war was fought at sea. Second, it is one of the few examples in what became Canada of where an Indigenous group fought on its own land for its own lands. As pointed out in the textbook, this war came to resemble the frontier wars in the United States.