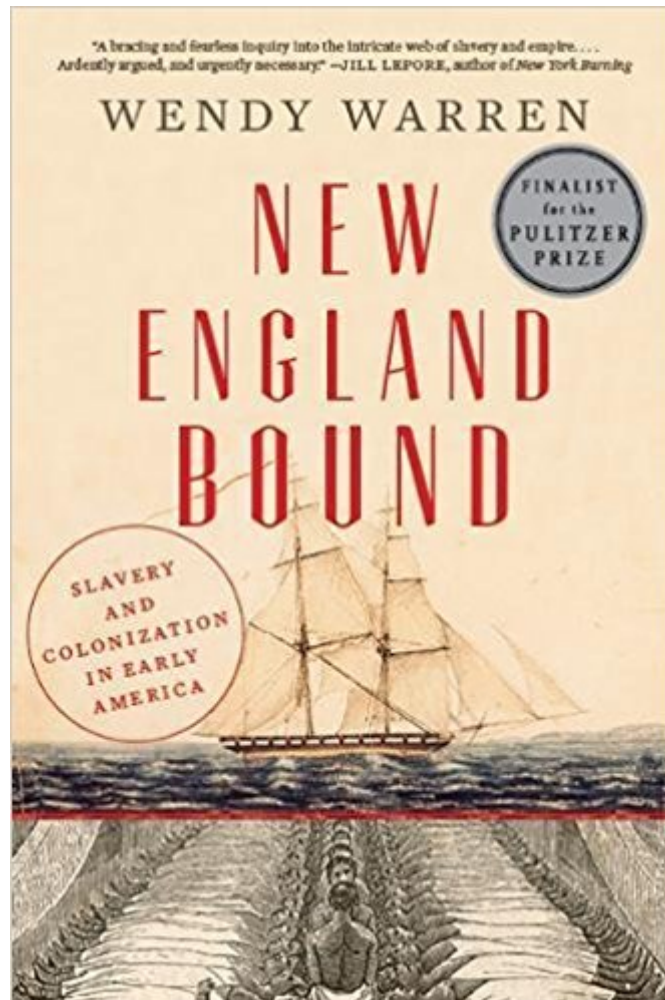




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New England Bound: Slavery And Colonization In Early America



Synopsis

A New York Times Editor's Choice "This book is an original achievement, the kind of history that chastens our historical memory as it makes us wiser." —David W. Blight
Finalist for the Pulitzer Prize
Widely hailed as a "powerfully written" history about America's beginnings (Annette Gordon-Reed), *New England Bound* fundamentally changes the story of America's seventeenth-century origins. Building on the works of giants like Bernard Bailyn and Edmund S. Morgan, Wendy Warren has not only "mastered that scholarship" but has now rendered it in "an original way, and deepened the story" (New York Times Book Review). While earlier histories of slavery largely confine themselves to the South, Warren's "panoptical exploration" (Christian Science Monitor) links the growth of the northern colonies to the slave trade and examines the complicity of New England's leading families, demonstrating how the region's economy derived its vitality from the slave trading ships coursing through its ports. And even while *New England Bound* explains the way in which the Atlantic slave trade drove the colonization of New England, it also brings to light, in many cases for the first time ever, the lives of the thousands of reluctant Indian and African slaves who found themselves forced into the project of building that city on a hill. We encounter enslaved Africans working side jobs as con artists, enslaved Indians who protested their banishment to sugar islands, enslaved Africans who set fire to their owners' homes and goods, and enslaved Africans who saved their owners' lives. In Warren's meticulous, compelling, and hard-won recovery of such forgotten lives, the true variety of chattel slavery in the Americas comes to light, and *New England Bound* becomes the new standard for understanding colonial America. 10 illustrations, 3 maps

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“Whereas most studies of slavery in the United States concern the antebellum South, this one stakes out less visited territory—the laws and decisions made by the colonists in New England two centuries earlier.” —The New Yorker

“[Warren] builds on and generously acknowledges more than two generations of research into the social history of New England and the economic history of the Atlantic world. But not only has she mastered that scholarship, she has also brought it together in an original way, and deepened the story with fresh research.” —New England Bound conveys the disorientation, the deprivation, the vulnerability, the occasional hunger and the profound isolation that defined the life of most African exiles in Puritan New England, where there was no plantation community.

—Christopher L. Brown, New York Times Book Review

“[Warren] widens the lens to show the early New England economy was enmeshed in the seafaring trade that developed between four Atlantic continents for the transport, clothing, and feeding of African captives. The region’s early growth and prosperity, Warren shows, sprang from that tainted commerce. . . . Southerners resentful of Northerners’ condescension about the slaveholding past may find some comfort in these pages. In them should be some Northern discomfort too.” —Kenneth J. Cooper, Boston Globe

“Historians have written penetratingly on North American colonial racism and slavery—Edmund Morgan, Alden Vaughan, Ira Berlin, for starters—but New England Bound is a smart contribution to the New England story, a panoptical exploration of how slavery took root like a weed in the crack of a sidewalk. . . . What we have in this account is sharp explication of the deadly symbiosis of colonization and slavery, written with a governed verve that perks like a coffee pot. It makes the New England story that much fuller, challenging, and more accountable.” —Peter Lewis, Christian Science Monitor

“A bracing and fearless inquiry into the intricate web of slavery and empire into which all New Englanders were bound. Ardently argued, and urgently necessary.” —Jill Lepore, author of New York Burning

“A beautifully written, humane and finely researched work that makes clear how closely intermingled varieties of slavery and New England colonization were from the very start. With great skill, Warren does full justice to the ideas of the individuals involved, as well as to the political and economic imperatives that drove some, and that trapped and gravely damaged

others. — Linda Colley, author of *Captives: Britain, Empire, and the World, 1600-1850* — “New England Bound is a book of revelations. Not only does Wendy Warren cast startling new light on early America, not only does she uncover how racial slavery was woven into the fabric of New England from the very beginning, but she also shows how forgotten folk — people long thought lost to history — can be brought to light, and to life, if we look, and listen, for their stories. A remarkable achievement.” — James Merrell, author of *Into the American Woods*, winner of the Bancroft Prize — “With intrepid research and stunning narrative skill, Wendy Warren demonstrates how much seventeenth-century New England societies were dependent on the West Indian slave trade, and especially on the labor, bodies, and lives of black slaves. Warren has turned the prophetic lessons of Ecclesiastes back upon the Puritan fathers with scholarly judgment, humanizing both them and the people they enslaved. This book is an original achievement, the kind of history that chastens our historical memory as it makes us wiser.” — David W. Blight, Yale University, author of *Race and Reunion* — “In *New England Bound*, Wendy Warren builds a powerful case for the centrality of slavery to the economy of the Puritan colonies in the North.” — Joyce Appleby, author of *The Relentless Revolution*

Wendy Warren received her PhD in history from Yale University and is currently an assistant professor in the Department of History at Princeton University. She lives in New Jersey.

I think this fine history can be best described as a real "eye opener." I assume it was written for folks just like me who had minimal knowledge of slavery in colonial New England, and are even surprised to learn that such existed, which indeed it did. It was even a greater revelation to me to learn that Indians were frequently enslaved in New England during the 16th and 17th centuries as well. In fact, slavery of Indians and Africans existed and flourished in New England from the very founding of the Massachusetts Bay colony. The author makes clear that New England slavery was distinct in most ways from that found in Virginia, where it had been established as early as the founding of Jamestown. To be sure, while in New England there were some individual slaves serving families and businesses, usually 1-2 in number, obviously the vast plantation system of Virginia was absent. So what role in did New England play in Atlantic slavery? The fascinating answer to this question is found in Part I, comprising three chapters of the book. While New England had relatively few slaves (Indians or Africans) resident within its boundaries, it was deeply involved in the Atlantic slave trade, particularly with its ships engaged in transporting slave cargo from Africa (but also including Indians), to the West Indies (especially Barbados and Jamaica) to be exchanged for sugar and other

forms of payment, which then flowed back to New England. In addition, New England furnished fish, farm products, shipping and other services to the Sugar Islands' large plantations. All of this naturally linked back to Great Britain who owned the colonies in New England and the West Indies generating all this wealth. So, in short, this study is an example of historians studying the Atlantic Community as a unity during this period, an approach pioneered by Bernard Bailyn and others, designed to demonstrate the manifold interconnections between Britain, Africa, the Indies and New England as components of one giant trading system. How this all worked is carefully and thoughtfully dissected by the author and it is a fascinating story. Part II consisting of another three chapters focuses upon on how slaves in New England lived and worked. While not as interesting as Part I, this section really puts a human face on what it meant to be a New England slave. Constant fear of slave conspiracies and arson, led to public executions (including burning wrongdoers alive), curfews, and exile to the harsh Indies. The adoption of chattel slavery under English common law is briefly, but not thoroughly, discussed. But the lives of some individuals are analyzed in depth. The really surprising aspect that emerges, especially for those of us raised on Perry Miller's intellectual studies of the Puritans ("the city on the hill"), is how slavery and inflicting hell upon slaves apparently presented absolutely no problems to these early New Englanders. They could be just as brutal as their brothers in Virginia. No wonder that southerners were enraged at the superior attitude of New England abolitionists who condemned them as the Civil War approached. The final Part III discusses the famous 3-page published document "The Selling of Adam" (1700) by judge Samuel Sewall in which he initiated a highly critical discussion of slavery and its effects. The author shows how a vigorous dialogue took place with some authors (e.g., John Saffin) not too concerned about slavery in their midst, while others such as Cotton Mather were appalled. The supporters of exploitative slavery reminded me of the excuses and arguments offered by some 19th Century Virginians to justify the practice, including supposed biblical citations. Apparently wherever American slavery emerged, it generated the same common arguments and attempted justifications for the practice, whether in Puritan New England or plantation Virginia. A most interesting and sometimes shocking historical study. The author's research is enormous, and her judgments for the most part reasonable and cogent. The book supports the "Atlantic System" methodology in studying slavery and other economic issues rather than focusing upon areas such as New England, Virginia, Africa or the Indies in isolation. Those interested in New England and the history of American slavery need to read this book to learn valuable elements of the story.

Professor Warren offers keen insights into a place and period often glossed over in scholarship on

chattel slavery in North America. I would recommend it as a companion piece to Edmund Morgan's classic "American Slavery, American Freedom."

New Englanders who think it was the South that abused Africans in slavery should Read This Book. A more true history of our earliest impact on this continent, already occupied by the original 'Americans' when the first Pilgrims came to its shores, and what these earliest settlers did, shamefully, to both Indigenous tribes and african slaves. This is the history of our country. It is far from the happy myths of Thanksgiving we are taught as school children. We will be a better people if we acknowledge this history. It is a book to be widely read and shared.

The "rest of the story" of slavery in America.

A great book for those who love New England.

great

superb...

This book is tedious and repetitive to read but provides a history of which most Americans are completely ignorant. It is important to recognize and own our past. This book helps one to do that.

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