

# BIOGRAPHIES IN AMERICAN HISTORY

## *The Colonial Period*



### *An Annotated Bibliography for Elementary and Middle Grades*

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## **Biographies of the Colonial Period**

Most of what we know about the early colonial period in America comes from a very few primary sources. For example, most of the written record of Jamestown comes from the writings of John Smith; the record of the Plymouth Colony comes from William Bradford, and the record of the Massachusetts Bay Colony was written in great part by John Winthrop. These men were very far from being impartial observers. Each had a combination of personal, social, financial, religious, and political interests in their colony and in the way they and their colony were perceived by others. In addition, this written record overwhelmingly reflects the viewpoint of the colonists and not of the American Indians. Authors writing biographies about people of the colonial period must decide which parts of these primary sources to accept as fact and which parts to question or label as "myth". Teachers and students will find that different biographies about the same individual often contain contradictory information and conclusions.

Nonfiction books for children are expected to have lots of pictures. However, there are very few authentic images from the early colonial period in America. To supply pictures for their books, publishers often include images that have little to do with the text. In many instances, pictures look "historical" but were actually created many years after the event by artists who had no firsthand knowledge of their subjects and at a time when historical accuracy was not considered important. Many of the biographies of the colonial period contain these kinds of images. In just a few of these biographies, there are captions that indicate when and by whom the pictures were made. Books with illustrations that were created recently are often more historically accurate because contemporary illustrators usually base their images on the best research and information available. It is important for students to be aware that just because an image appears old and "historical" doesn't mean that it is authentic and correct.

## **About the Bibliography**

The biographies are grouped by colony and are roughly in chronological order:

- **John Smith and Jamestown**
- **Pocahontas and Jamestown**
- **William Bradford and Plymouth**
- **Miles Standish and Plymouth**
- **Squanto and Plymouth**
- **Additional resources about the Plymouth Colony**
- **Additional resources about the Wampanoag**
- **John Winthrop and the Massachusetts Bay Colony**
- **Anne Hutchinson and Massachusetts, Rhode Island and New York**
- **Roger Williams and the Rhode Island Colony**
- **Metacom/King Philip and King Philip's War**
- **William Penn and the Pennsylvania Colony**
- **Daniel Boone of Pennsylvania, Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, and Missouri**
- **Collective biographies of the Colonial Period**
- **Additional history resources**

**Note:** The information about the books listed in the bibliography often includes a "Note". This is the very brief summary of the book that the publisher submits as part of the book's description for cataloguing by the Library of Congress. Our annotation follows this description.

## ***John Smith (1580?-1631)***

### **Doak, Robin S. John Smith and the Settlement of Jamestown**

Minneapolis, MN: Compass Point Books, c2003, 48 pages.

SERIES: Exploring the World

*Grades 3 – 6. Attractive format with many illustrations, but a few pictures are historically inaccurate, and the captions do not set the record straight. The author does address the questions surrounding the legend of Pocahontas, rescue of John Smith. Writing captures the excitement of Smith's life.*

### **Doherty, Kieran. To Conquer is to Live: the Life of Captain John Smith of Jamestown**

Brookfield, CT: Twenty-First Century Books, c2001, 144 pages.

*Grades 6 – 8. Well-written, well-researched and thorough biography told mostly from colonists' point of view using quotes from primary sources. Some pictures are historically inaccurate, and the captions do not set the record straight. May be useful for a teacher who wants more information.*

### **Mello, Tara Baukus. John Smith: English Explorer and Colonist**

Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, c2000, 77 pages.

SERIES: Colonial Leaders

*Gr. 5 – 8. One in a series about significant people of colonial times. The information is presented in a clear, accessible and interesting way. The illustrations look historic but some are not authentic to the period, and the captions do not make this clear. The author does address the questions surrounding the legend of Pocahontas's rescue of John Smith. The glossary and chronology are helpful, but a map of Smith's travels would have been useful.*

### **Sewall, Marcia. James Towne: Struggle for Survival**

New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, c2001, 40 pages.

*Grades 3 – 6. Not a factual biography, but it may be very useful in giving students a real feel for life in Jamestown. It is an account of the difficult early years of the colony told from the viewpoint of one of the settlers and supported by original quotations.*

## ***Pocahontas (1595?-1617)***

### **McLeese, Don. Pocahontas**

Vero Beach, FL: Rourke Pub., c2004, 32 pages.

SERIES: Native American Legends

*Grades 3 – 5. An appealing format with attractive graphics and sidebars, but this book makes several unsubstantiated assumptions, i.e. "Pocahontas and Rolfe loved each other very much." The illustrations look historic but many are not authentic to the period, and the captions do not make this clear. Could be useful as a teaching tool about what to watch out for.*

### **Sita, Lisa. Pocahontas: the Powhatan Culture and the Jamestown Colony**

New York: PowerPlus Books, Rosen publishing, 2005, 112 pages.

SERIES: Library of American Lives and Times

*Grades 5 – 9. Recommended. An excellent, thorough and balanced biography. The full color historical pictures have captions that explain when and by whom*

*they were created. The author appropriately uses expressions such as "Some historians doubt..." and "Other modern scholars think..." to show that there is much that is not certain about Pocahontas's life. Note that the "About the Author" shows that she is well-qualified to write this biography.*

**Sonneborn, Liz. Pocahontas, 1595-1617**

Mankato, MN: Blue Earth Books, c2003, 32 pages.

SERIES: American Indian Biographies

NOTE: Discusses the life and people of Pocahontas, her involvement with the Jamestown settlers, her trip to England, and her death. Includes activities, sidebars, a map, and a chronology.

*Grades 3 – 6. Very attractive format and a well-done and accessible text. The pictures are large and colorful. However, the illustrations look historic but many are not authentic to the period, and the captions do not make this clear.*

**Sullivan, George. Pocahontas**

New York: Scholastic Reference, 2002, 128 pages.

SERIES: In Their Own Words (Scholastic)

*Grades 4 – 8. Recommended. The introduction is excellent; the author explains primary and secondary sources and how historians attempt to fill the gaps in the record. The biography is thorough and accessible. Most of the black and white illustrations have captions that explain and date the images.*

**Zemlicka, Shannon. Pocahontas**

Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, Inc., c2002, 47 pages.

SERIES: On My Own Biography

NOTE: An introduction to the life of Pocahontas, a Powhatan Indian, which covers her birth, meetings with English settlers, trip to England, family life, and death.

*Grades 2 – 4. A good, basic biography in an early reader format with new illustrations. The Author's note and the Afterword are very useful in offering insight into the gaps in knowledge about Pocahontas. "Even though she left behind many unanswered questions, people have always wanted to tell stories about her. Some people may not have told the truth, and some made mistakes in what they told."*

***William Bradford (1590-1657)***

**Doherty, Kieran. William Bradford: Rock of Plymouth**

Brookfield, CT: Twenty-First Century Books, c1999, 192 pages.

NOTE: A biography of one of the founders of the Plymouth Colony in Massachusetts and a history of the Pilgrims' difficult times during their early years in the New World.

*Grades 6 – 10. For older students and adults. Thorough, well-researched and with many quotes from primary sources. The writing is lively and the few illustrations are well chosen with interesting captions. Includes an excellent bibliography, source notes, and timeline.*

**Hering, Marianne. William Bradford: Governor of Plymouth Colony**

Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, c1999, 79 pages.

SERIES: Colonial Leaders

NOTE: A biography of William Bradford, who sailed to America aboard the Mayflower and later became the governor of Plymouth Colony.

*Grades 5 – 8. One in a series about significant people of colonial times. The information is presented in a clear, accessible and interesting way. Includes a partial list of the myths about the Pilgrims followed by the truths. The illustrations look historic but many are not authentic to the period, and most of the captions do not make this clear. The glossary and chronology are helpful.*

**Schmidt, Gary D. William Bradford: Plymouth's Faithful Pilgrim**

Grand Rapids, MI.: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers, 1999, 200 pages.

*Grades 6 – 9. Author is clearly excited about his subject. There are many quotes from primary sources, including Bradford's own writings. There is a good explanation of the differences and conflicts between the Separatists of Plymouth and the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Bradford's flaws are included: about the massacre of four hundred Pequots, "Bradford's exultation in this victory seems to go against his character. His vivid description of the scene is horrific, yet gloating...."*

**Whitehurst, Susan. William Bradford and Plymouth: a Colony Grows**

New York: PowerKids Press, 2002, 24 pages.

SERIES: The Library of the Pilgrims

*Grades 3 – 5. This book has large-sized print and many illustrations which students will find inviting. It provides basic information about the subject. The illustrations look historic but many are not authentic to the period, and most of the captions do not make this clear*

## ***Miles Standish (1584?-1656)***

**Miller, Susan Martins. Miles Standish: Plymouth Colony Leader**

Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 1999, 77 pages.

SERIES: Colonial Leaders

*Grades 5 – 8. One in a series about significant people of colonial times. The information is presented in a clear, accessible and interesting way. Standish was not a Puritan; he was asked to join the Pilgrims because he was a professional soldier, but he later became one of their leaders. Information is included about some of Standish's brutal dealings with the Native Americans. The illustrations look historic but many are not authentic to the period, and most of the captions do not make this clear. The glossary and chronology are helpful.*

**Witteman, Barbara. Miles Standish: Colonial Leader**

Mankato, MN: Capstone Press, c2004, 48 pages.

SERIES: Let Freedom Ring

*Grades 3 – 6. Students will be drawn to this book with its attractive layout and many sidebars that give information about colonial times. Illustrations are vivid (though some are not authentic to the period.) The text is clear and accessible and includes some of Standish's brutal dealings with the Native Americans. Useful map, timeline and glossary.*

## ***Squanto (1585?-1622)***

**Bruchac, Joseph. Squanto's Journey : the Story of the First Thanksgiving**

San Diego, CA: Silver Whistle, 2000, 32 pages.

NOTE: Squanto recounts how in 1614 he was captured by the British, sold into slavery in Spain, and ultimately returned to the New World to become a guide and friend for the colonists.

*Grades 3 – 6. An excellent fictionalized biography in picture book form and told in the first person. The author’s note explains that he wanted to tell the story from a Native American perspective, and gives details about his research. Very good for reading aloud, includes large, colorful illustrations.*

**Dubowski, Cathy East. The Story of Squanto: First Friend to the Pilgrims**

Milwaukee: Gareth Stevens Pub., 1997, 105 pages.

SERIES: Famous Lives

NOTE: Describes how Squanto played an important role in making peace between his fellow Native Americans and the settlers at Plymouth.

*Grades 4 – 8. Begins with an excellent author’s note that acknowledges that most of what we know about Squanto and other Native Americans comes from the writing of the colonists. The author provides information about Squanto’s people, the Patuxet, and explains what the first Thanksgiving feast was really about. Excellent timeline; a few uninteresting black and white drawings.*

**Hirschfelder, Arlene B. Squanto, 1585?-1622**

Mankato, MN: Blue Earth Books, c2004, 32 pages.

SERIES: American Indian Biographies

NOTE: A biography of Squanto, a Patuxet Indian who served as translator to the Pilgrims of Plymouth in what is now Massachusetts and aided them in establishing a successful colony in the early 1600s.

*Grades 3 – 6. Attractive large-format book with many illustrations and good background information about the Wampanoag. The captions put the pictures into historical perspective. The author clearly states that there are large gaps in what we know about Squanto and often uses the phrase “historians believe” – which is a welcome way of dealing with the lack of certainty. The book also deals well with an issue that is not well-known – that Squanto caused a lot of trouble between the colonists and other Native Americans. There is also some discussion of the causes of King Philip’s War.*

**Kessel, Joyce K. Squanto and the First Thanksgiving**

Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda Books, c2004, 48 pages.

SERIES: On My Own Holidays

NOTE: An introduction to the life of the Massachusetts Indian Squanto, best known for befriending the Pilgrims of the Plymouth Colony.

*Grades 2 – 3. A biography in a beginning reader format, but some of the vocabulary is challenging. The story has been simplified but may be helpful as an introduction to Squanto and the Pilgrims.*

## **Other Resources about the Plymouth Colony**

These books are not biographies. They are included because they have useful information and illustrations that are more accurate than the images in many of the biographies about the people of Plymouth. The titles here are attractive, engaging, and appealing to students, and they can be read aloud and used as introductions to the historical period. They will also be helpful in exploring the myth of the first Thanksgiving.

**George, Jean Craighead. The First Thanksgiving**

New York: Putnam & Grosset Group, 1996.

NOTE: Describes how the colonists aboard the Mayflower founded New Plymouth and celebrated their first harvest with a feast of thanksgiving.

*Grades 2 – 6. Beautiful oil paintings illustrate the story of the first interactions between the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag.*

**Grace, Catherine O'Neill and Margaret M. Bruchac with Plimoth Plantation. 1621: A New Look at Thanksgiving**

Washington, DC: National Geographic Society, c2001, 47 pages.

*Grades 4 – 8. A superb and valuable resource which explores the myth of the first Thanksgiving and gives historical perspective to the interactions between the Pilgrims and Wampanoag. The foreword is excellent in its discussion of perspective and bias: "Unquestioning acceptance of biased interpretations can affect the way we treat one another, even today."*

**Sewall, Marcia. The Pilgrims of Plimoth**

New York: Atheneum, 1986.

NOTE: Chronicles, in text and illustrations, the day-to-day life of the early Pilgrims in the Plimoth Colony.

*Grades 2-6. Written in language that evokes the period, this book includes information about the beliefs, customs and daily life of the Pilgrims. Colorful and vivid illustrations.*

**Stanley, Diane. Thanksgiving on Plymouth Plantation**

New York: Joanna Cotler Books, HarperCollins, 2004.

SERIES: The Time-Traveling Twins

NOTE: Twins Liz and Lenny, along with their time-traveling grandmother, visit Plymouth Plantation to see how the Pilgrims lived and to celebrate a big feast with the Pilgrims and Native Americans.

*Grades 2 – 5. Using the techniques of time travel and humor, this book does a great job of making the time period exciting and accessible.*

**Waters, Kate. Giving Thanks: the 1621 Harvest Feast**

New York: Scholastic Press, 2001.

*Grades 2-6. A re-enactment of the event photographed at Plimoth Plantation. Includes information about thanksgiving traditions of the Wampanoag and the Pilgrims, food and clothing of the time, and the research involved in creating this book.*

## **Other Resources About the Wampanoag**

**Bial, Raymond. The Wampanoag**

New York: Benchmark Books/Marshall Cavendish, c2004, 124 pages.

SERIES: Lifeways

NOTE: Discusses the history, culture, beliefs, changing ways, and notable people of the Wampanoag.

*Grades 5 – 8.*

**Gray-Kanatiiosh, Barbara A. Wampanoag**

Edina, MN: Abdo Pub., c2004, 32 pages.

SERIES: Native Americans/Set III

NOTE: An introduction to the history, social structure, customs, and

present life of the Wampanoag Indians.  
*Grades 3 – 6.*

**Levy, Janey. The Wampanoag of Massachusetts and Rhode Island**

New York: PowerKids Press, 2005, 64 pages.

SERIES: Library of Native Americans

NOTE: An introduction to the Wampanoag -- Daily life -- Encounters with Europeans -- King Philip's War -- The Wampanoag today.  
*Grades 4 – 8.*

**Sewall, Marcia. People of the Breaking Day**

New York: Atheneum, c1990.

NOTE: A poetic evocation of the lifestyle and traditional beliefs of the Wampanoag Indians.

*Grades 2 – 6. A companion book to The Pilgrims of Plymouth. Presents the world of the Wampanoag just before the arrival of Europeans. Colorful and vivid illustrations.*

***John Winthrop (1588-1649)***

**Connelly, Elizabeth Russell. John Winthrop: Politician and Statesman**

Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, c2001, 80 pages.

SERIES: Colonial Leaders

*Grades 5 – 8. One in a series about significant people of colonial times. The information is presented in a clear, accessible and interesting way. The sidebars offer additional information about the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The illustrations appear historic but many are not authentic to the period, and the captions do not make this clear. The glossary and chronology are helpful.*

**Pell, Ed. John Winthrop: Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony**

Mankato, MN: Capstone Press, c2004, 48 pages.

SERIES: Let Freedom Ring

NOTE: A biography of John Winthrop, religious leader and governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

*Grades 3 – 6. One of a recommended series. Students will be drawn to this book with its attractive layout and many sidebars that give information about colonial times. Illustrations are vivid (though some are not authentic to the period.) The text is clear and accessible. Useful map, timeline and glossary.*

***Anne Hutchinson (1591-1643)***

**Clark, Beth. Anne Hutchinson: Religious Leader**

Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, c2000, 77 pages.

SERIES: Colonial Leaders

NOTE: A biography of the Puritan woman who was banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony for disagreeing with the prevailing religious practices.

*Grades 5 – 8. One in a series about significant people of colonial times. The information is presented in a clear, accessible and interesting way. At times, the text seems to confuse the Plymouth and the Massachusetts Bay colonies.*

*The illustrations look historic but many are not authentic to the period, and the captions do not make this clear. The glossary and chronology are helpful, but a map of Anne Hutchinson's travels would have been useful.*

**Anne Hutchinson: Puritan Rebel**

Cobblestone Magazine, November 2003.

*Grades 3 – 8. An excellent resource that provides information about Hutchinson, the religious issues of the day, daily life, and the role of women. Also includes a short play based on her trial, maps, timelines and activities.*

**Ilgenfritz, Elizabeth. Anne Hutchinson**

New York, NY: Chelsea House Publishers, c1990.

SERIES: American Women of Achievement

NOTE: Recounts the story of the Puritan woman who was banished from her colony for being outspoken against the religious leaders there.

*Grades 6 – 9. Thorough biography with many quotes and images from primary sources. Also has very good explanation of the religious differences among the colonists.*

**LaPlante, Eve. American Jezebel: the Uncommon Life of Anne Hutchinson, the Woman who Defied the Puritans.**

San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, c2004, 312 pages.

*For adults. This is an excellent resource for teachers who want to explore the life and times of Anne Hutchinson.*

**Mangal, Melina. Anne Hutchinson: Religious Reformer**

Mankato, MN: Capstone Press, c2004, 48 pages.

SERIES: Let Freedom Ring.

NOTE: A biography of the Puritan woman who was banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony for disagreeing with the prevailing religious practices.

*Grades 3 – 6. Students will be drawn to this book with its attractive layout and many sidebars that give information about colonial times. Illustrations are vivid (though some are not authentic to the period.) The text is clear and accessible. Useful map, timeline and glossary.*

**Walsh, Kieran. Anne Hutchinson**

Vero Beach, FL: Rourke Pub., c2005, 24 pages.

SERIES: Discover the Life of a Colonial American

*Grades 3 - 4. Part of a series that provides very short and basic introductions to colonial figures. Includes a mixture of contemporary drawings and historic images that are often not accurate. May be useful for students who need a simpler introduction to reading biography.*

**Roger Williams (1603?-1683)**

**Allison, Amy. Roger Williams: Founder of Rhode Island**

Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, c2001, 80 pages.

SERIES: Colonial Leaders

*Gr. 5 – 8. One in a series about significant people of colonial times. The information is presented in a clear, accessible and interesting way, and the text*

*captures how remarkable Williams was: unlike the other colonial leaders, he truly believed in religious liberty, and he dealt with the Native Americans as equals. The illustrations look historic but many are not authentic to the period, and most of the captions do not make this clear. The glossary and chronology are helpful, but there is no map to show Williams's extraordinary journeys.*

**Avi. Finding Providence: The Story of Roger Williams**

New York: Harper Trophy, 1997, 46 pages.

SERIES: I Can Read Chapter Book

NOTE: After being forced to leave the Massachusetts Bay Colony, Roger Williams travels south and, with the help of the Narragansett Indians, founds Providence, Rhode Island.

*Grades 3 – 4. A fictionalized biography in the format of an early reader and told from the viewpoint of Williams's daughter. The book is short, well-illustrated and would encourage interest in this remarkable man.*

**Roger Williams and the Lively Experiment of Rhode Island**

Cobblestone Magazine, September 1998.

*Grades 3 – 8. Excellent resource for understanding Williams, his times, beliefs and contributions. Includes information about the religious and political issues and a brief biography of John Winthrop.*

**Gaustad, Edwin S. Roger Williams: Prophet of Liberty**

New York: Oxford University Press, c2001, 139 pages.

SERIES: Oxford Portraits

NOTE: Recounts the life of 17th century clergyman Roger Williams who championed the separation of church and state and also the rights of Native Americans.

*Grades 7 – 12. For older students and adults. An excellent, well-researched biography that uses many quotes from Williams's own writing. Gives a great deal of attention to Williams's Key into the Languages of America, in which he gave firsthand accounts of Native American customs and beliefs. Includes an excellent preface which sums up Williams's beliefs and links them to present-day concerns about "the authority of the state and the freedom of the soul."*

**Walsh, Kieran. Roger Williams**

Vero Beach, FL: Rourke Pub., c2005, 24 pages.

SERIES: Discover the Life of a Colonial American

*Grades 3 - 4. Part of a series that provides very short and basic introductions to colonial figures. Includes a mixture of contemporary drawings and historic images that are often not accurate. May be useful for students who need a simpler introduction to reading biography.*

**King Philip/Metacom (1638?-1676)**

**King Philip's War**

Cobblestone Magazine, October, 2000.

*Grades 3 – 8. Has short biography of King Philip, also known as Metacom and excellent information about the causes, battles, and results of the war. Includes very helpful maps and timeline.*

**Lepore, Jill. The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity**

New York: Knopf, 1998, 337 pages.

*Adult. An excellent resource for learning more about "not only the most fatal war in American history but also one of the most merciless." Also provides information about individual colonists and Native Americans, and examines their attitudes toward each other.*

**Roman, Joseph. King Philip**

New York: Chelsea House Publishers, c1991, 109 pages.

SERIES: North American Indians of Achievement.

NOTE: Examines the life and career of the seventeenth-century Wampanoag Indian chief.

*Grades 6 – 9. Excellent attempt to give the Native Americans' as well as the colonists' perspective. Includes much information about Native American social, cultural, political and spiritual life and how this differed from that of the colonists, leading to profound misunderstandings between the two groups.*

**Sewall, Marcia. Thunder From the Clear Sky**

New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, c1995, 56 pages.

*Grades 3 – 6. Not a biography, but an excellent and beautifully illustrated resource that includes specific information about Metacom/King Philip, other Wampanoag people and colonists. Told in the alternating voices of a Wampanoag and a settler, "this is a tale of good intentions, misunderstandings, betrayal, and finally of terrible, all-out war, which ultimately meant the end of the Native American way of life in New England."*

**William Penn (1644-1718)**

**Baczynski, Bernadette L. William Penn: Founder of the Pennsylvania Colony**

Mankato, MN: Capstone Press, c2004, 48 pages.

SERIES: Let Freedom Ring.

NOTE: A biography of the religious leader and founder of the Pennsylvania Colony, whose Quaker beliefs helped him form peaceful relationships with the American Indians and lay the foundation of religious freedom in America.

*Grades 3 – 6. Part of a recommended series. Students will be drawn to this book with its attractive layout and many sidebars that give information about colonial times. Illustrations are vivid (though some are not authentic to the period); the text is clear and accessible and includes facts about Quakers and Penn's respectful dealings with the Native Americans. Useful map, timeline and glossary.*

**Doherty, Kieran, William Penn: Quaker Colonist**

Brookfield, CT: Millbrook Press, c1998, 192 pages.

NOTE: A biography of William Penn, founder of the Quaker colony of Pennsylvania, who struggled throughout his life for the freedom to practice his religion.

*Grades 6 – 10. For older students and adults. Thorough, well-researched and with many quotes from primary sources. The writing is lively and the few illustrations are well-chosen with interesting captions. Includes an excellent bibliography, source notes and timeline.*

**Kroll, Steven. William Penn, Founder of Pennsylvania**

New York: Holiday House, c2000.

NOTE: A biography of William Penn, founder of the Quaker colony of Pennsylvania, who struggled throughout his life for the freedom to practice his religion.

*Grades 3 – 6. Picture book format with excellent illustrations. Despite the format, the text uses complex language and concepts. The information is good, but it is so condensed that it may be confusing for students. With a teacher providing needed explanations, this would be a very good read-aloud and introduction to Penn*

**Steffoff, Rebecca. William Penn**

Philadelphia, Pa.: Chelsea House, c1998, 112 pages.

SERIES: Overcoming Adversity

NOTE: Focuses on the struggles of the founder of Pennsylvania who promoted the Quaker religion and spent his lifetime preaching the right of each individual to choose his own faith.

*Grades 8 – 10. For older students and adults. An excellent biography that probes the seeming contradictions in Penn's beliefs and actions. His concept of religious liberty included only Christians and he did not outlaw slavery in his colony. The author writes, "It would be unfair to judge Penn strictly by modern standards of democracy, for although he was an enlightened and progressive thinker, he remained a man of his own era."*

**Walsh, Kieran. William Penn**

Vero Beach, FL: Rourke Pub., c2005, 24 pages.

SERIES: Discover the Life of a Colonial American

*Grades 3 -4. Part of a series that provides very short and basic introductions to colonial figures. Includes a mixture of contemporary drawings and historic images that are often not accurate. May be useful for students who need a simpler introduction to reading biography.*

## **Collective Biographies of Colonial America**

**Furbee, Mary R. Outrageous Women of Colonial America**

New York: Wiley, 2001, 118 pages.

NOTE: Includes the following women: New England: Anne Marbury Hutchinson (1591-1643), Queen Weetamoo (163?-1667), Deborah Samson (1760-1831), Elizabeth "Mumbet" Freeman (1742-1829), Abigail Smith Adams (1744-1818), Phillis Wheatley (1753-1784); Middle colonies: Margaret Brent (1601-1671), Peggy Shippen Arnold (1760-1804), Betsy Griscom Ross (1752-1836), Esther DeBerdt Reed (1746-1780); South: Anne Bonny (1697-17??), Eliza Lucas Pinckney (1722-1793), Anne Trotter Bailey (1743-1825), Mary Draper Ingles (1731-1815).

*Grades 4 – 8. Collection of humorous and engaging short biographies of colonial women. Included are many Native American and African American women for whom information is difficult to find.*

**Haskins, James and Kathleen Benson. Building a New Land: African Americans in Colonial America**

New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2001; 44 pages.

NOTE: Discusses the changing roles, rights, and contributions of Afro-Americans in the United States during the colonial period from

1607 to 1763.

*Grades 3 – 8. Includes information about some individual African Americans in the colonies, but it is most useful in the descriptions of their lives and the attitudes toward them in the various colonies. Includes information about how Africans arrived in the colonies. This is information that is often difficult to find. With vivid illustrations by James E. Ransome and a thorough chronology of milestones in the history of Blacks in the colonies.*

**Miller, Brandon Marie. Good Women of a Well-Blessed Land: Women's Lives in Colonial America**

Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications, 2003, 96 pages.

SERIES: People's History

NOTE: A social history of the American colonial period with a focus on the daily lives of women, including European immigrants, Native Americans, and slaves.

*Grades 5 – 8. Provides biographical information about some individual women in the colonies, but is most useful in describing how women actually lived - information that is very difficult to find in history books and biographies. Native American, black and white women are included. There is a very helpful author's note about the work of historians in uncovering the lives of women.*

## **Additional Resources for Colonial History**

These books may be helpful for getting more background information about the subjects of the biographies.

**Abrams, Ann Uhry. The Pilgrims and Pocahontas: Rival Myths of American Origin**

Boulder, CO: Westview Press/ Perseus Books Group, 1999.

*For adults. "Following the American Revolution, citizens of the United States began to write a history of their new nation starting with the first English settlements, Jamestown and Plymouth. By comparing these two origin myths, investigating them in art, literature, and popular memory, Abrams uncovers surprising similarities in traditions of remembrance as well as striking differences in the character of the myths and the messages they convey." A very useful resource for distinguishing between the history and the myths of colonial history.*

**Collier, Christopher. Clash of Cultures: Prehistory--1638**

New York: Benchmark Books, 1998, 95 pages.

SERIES: The Drama of American History

NOTE: North American lives -- Algonquians and Europeans in The sixteenth century -- Indians repulse the Europeans invaders -- The cultures clash on the Chesapeake -- The cultures clash in New England  
*Grades 4 – 8.*

**Collier, Christopher. The Paradox of Jamestown, 1585-1700**

New York: Benchmark Books, 1998, 93 pages.

SERIES: The Drama of American History

NOTE: Discusses the circumstances surrounding English colonization of Virginia and the evolution of slavery in that colony.  
*Grades 4 – 8.*

**Collier, Christopher. Pilgrims and Puritans, 1620-1676**

New York: Benchmark Books, 1998, 94 pages.

SERIES: The Drama of American History

NOTE: Recounts the religious, political, and social history of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, and its influence on our lives today.  
*Grades 4 – 8.*

**Hakim, Joy. Making Thirteen Colonies**

New York: Oxford University Press, 2003, 186 pages.

SERIES: A History of US; Book 2

NOTE: Presents the history of the United States from the colonization of the New World through the middle of the eighteenth century.  
*Grades 4 – 8.*

## EDITORS

**Sasha Lauterbach** has been a teacher and storyteller. For the past eighteen years she has served as librarian at the Cambridge Friends School, a Quaker school for grades pre-kindergarten through eighth whose mission includes anti-bias work and teaching about social justice. Sasha teaches courses in research, drama, folklore, mythology, biography, and media literacy.

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