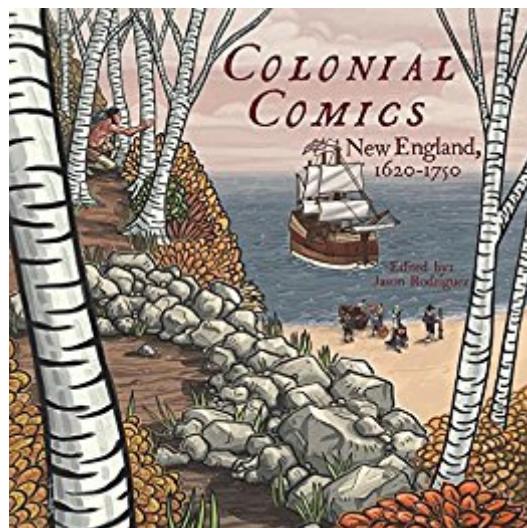


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# Colonial Comics: New England, 1620 &#150; 1750



## **Synopsis**

Colonial Comics is a graphic novel collection of twenty stories focusing on the colonial period from 1620 through 1750 in New England. Created in partnership with the Massachusetts Historical Society and the Concord Museum, these illustrated stories focus on tales you cannot find in history books. Includes stories about free thinkers, Pequots, Jewish settlers, female business owners and dedicated school teachers, whales and livestock, slavery and frontiers, and many other aspects of colonial life. Jason Rodriguez is a writer and editor whose books have been nominated for an Eisner Award and eight Harvey Awards. Jason lives in Arlington, Virginia, with his wife and their two dogs, four cats, and a parrot. You can usually find him on a street corner, staring out into the future.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

A fantastic collection of stories, diverse and well-told, and filled with some great artwork. It's fascinating stuff for anyone interested in history, regardless of whether it's your own or not. I'm definitely looking forward to follow-up!

Great gift for youngsters that love comics and history!

A beautiful anthology of colonial historical vignettes in the same vein as Matt Dembicki's collections. In fact, Dembicki has illustrated a story in this collection. I'm actually only familiar with a couple of the authors or illustrators but I found the stories and art top-notch. This chronological history of New England tells the lesser known tales and I had not heard many of them, even though they are populated with famous people. Because the stories are chronological, geographically specific and focused on a set time period, often characters will reappear in several stories, sometimes as a major player, other times as a background figure. The book is best suited for middle graders to high school and the book's website is making educator guides for the stories. However, the material is perfectly satisfying to the adult reader and the art is varied and showcases a variety of styles. I found it quite impressive and highly readable.

Colonial Comics: New England starts with one of the best prefaces I've ever encountered: Editor Rodriguez wryly noting that prior to this book, his knowledge of New England history and the founding of America was pretty much limited to, "a country that was once inhabited by other nationals, reduced to several cities, a single Native American, a group of people who weren't happy in England, and some charred bodies." It was to correct that lack and bring to life individual histories - to give perspective to the founding portion of American history- that this book's stories were collected. Quoting Rodriguez again, "these people did more than eat turkey and burn suspected witches." And yes, it is a very, very good book indeed. The title is a bit misleading - this is a full color graphic novel (or, rather, a graphic history book) and not a comic. Ordered chronologically, this is a collection of very short stories that are loosely tied together by the shared history of a New England setting. All are about people and events, ramifications and repercussions, and the every day life of both Europeans and the natives. Each story is by a different author/artist. Typically, I have a hard time with diverse collections since the abruptness of art styles or storytelling can be disconcerting and throw off a read. But the nature of the stories and the non-fiction grounding make the style differences not only palatable but enjoyable. The stories are just long enough that one didn't get hooked on a particular style (art or storytelling) but not so short that they were disaffecting, either. Rodriguez manages a good balance throughout - from wordless tales to text-heavy historical factoids. From almost comic lighthearted illustrations to woodblock type carvings and beautiful pastel watercolors. The stories are diverse: from the impact of the introduction of domesticated animals to the plight of indentured servants. Goodwives, clergy, governors, inkeepers, chiefs,

braves - a lot of care was given to bring stories that represented all sides of New England life in the 1620 to 1750 time period. There are around 15 full color stories, ranging from landing in Plimouth (sc) to the last stands of the new England natives. There are also frontisplates with short descriptions of time periods in which the following stories would be set and reproductions of parts of important documents of the period. Finally, there are activities such as an origami mayflower to be made from cutouts of a book page. The stories are interesting enough to read for enjoyment value; but of course, the historical value cannot be understated. Since these are stories that rarely have been told outside of academic circles, there isn't any repetition of typical historical discussions about the founding of the colonies. Each story should be quite new to the reader. As well, the length of the stories make this a great book to use as a reading assignment - to discuss the thoughts presented within. The authors/artists don't pander or spoonfeed the history: a great example is the last story in the book, about a young midshipman named Meliville and the day his crew fought and captured a large pale whale. The name of the midshipman is only given once, in passing - a wonderful observation of restraint and avoidance of overtelling the obvious. I really enjoyed the stories and plan to share them with my 11 year old. As the editor notes, "they're stories about people, which are oftentimes more interesting than stories about caricatures." Reviewed from an ARC. Quotes may not be final.

This is a beautiful book! I have never been very interested in American History but this book is written about several different events that took place during colonial times and they were all very interesting. The stories are all short and beautifully illustrated by many different talented artists. I would have loved to been able to read something like this in 4th grade when the whole year was dedicated to learning about Virginian History...a lot of focus being Virginia during the Colonial times. My daughter is 3 but already loves comics and I'm sure she'll love this book when she's older.

Loved it. This book made the history feel real by taking the time to show us all sorts of people that would be supporting characters in a streamlined narrative of the history. The stories in the book are chronological but short so it's a quick read even though it's a LOT of stories. Some of the art I enjoyed more than others but everything seemed to fit the style of the story.

Awful

Not impressed.

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