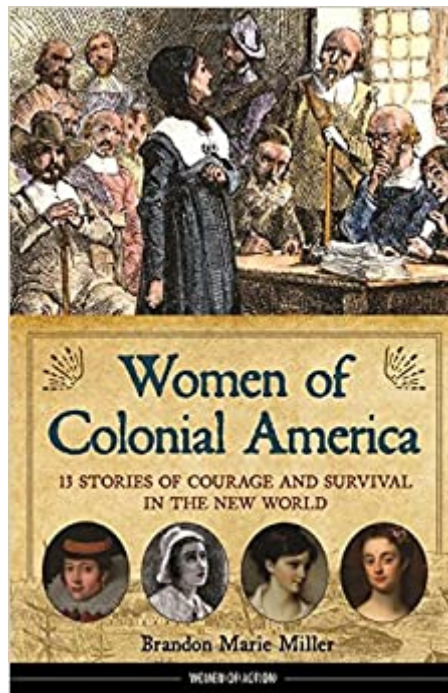




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Women Of Colonial America: 13 Stories Of Courage And Survival In The New World (Women Of Action)



Synopsis

In colonial America, hard work proved a constant for most women—some ensured their family's survival through their skills, while others sold their labor or lived in bondage as indentured servants or slaves. Yet even in a world defined entirely by men, a world where few thought it important to record a female's thoughts, women found ways to step forth. Elizabeth Ashbridge survived an abusive indenture to become a Quaker preacher. Anne Bradstreet penned her poems while raising eight children in the wilderness. Anne Hutchinson went toe-to-toe with Puritan authorities. Margaret Hardenbroeck Philips built a trade empire in New Amsterdam. And Eve, a Virginia slave, twice ran away to freedom. Using a host of primary sources, author Brandon Marie Miller recounts the roles, hardships, and daily lives of Native American, European, and African women in the 17th and 18th centuries. With strength, courage, resilience, and resourcefulness, these women and many others played a vital role in the mosaic of life in the North American colonies.

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

"A valuable and entertaining resource for both budding historians and those seeking biographical information on a few of the many nearly forgotten women of that time."

•Kirkus Reviews• "[Author Brandon Marie] Miller maintains a balance between objective historical accounts and personal biographies." • Publishers Weekly "A strong option for those looking for more materials on women's contributions to American history." • School Library Journal "The biographies in this book offer an in-depth look at the roles, hardships, and daily lives of women in Colonial America." • Learning "A worthy addition to women's history shelves." • VOYA "Readers of all ages will find these meticulously researched biographical profiles fascinating and inspirational." • The Midwest Book Review "This book acquaints readers with primary source documents alongside research materials and reference documents, giving readers a complete picture of women who dared and made a difference." • School Library Connection

Brandon Marie Miller is the author of Benjamin Franklin, American Genius, George Washington for Kids, and Women of the Frontier. She has received a dozen national awards for her writing.

Women of Colonial America is a well-researched account of thirteen prominent and influential women who lived from 1600 - 1750. Author, Brandon Marie Miller paints a very clear picture of the hardships and daily lives these women experienced in colonial North America. Featured women include Pocahontas, Anne Hutchinson, Anne Dudley Bradstreet, Martha Corey, and other lesser-known names. Within the context of these stories, readers can learn about what life was like for Native American women, the role of women in a world dominated by men, and the Salem witch trials. Historians will find the included photos of written records, paintings, and buildings fascinating. One I found particularly interesting was a photo of the poem, Meditations Divine and Morall, written in Anne Bradstreet's own hand. Ms. Miller also includes quotes written in the language of the time - a different variation of our modern English. It is interesting to see how the language has evolved over time. Women of Colonial America is an outstanding book for those wishing to learn more about the history of Colonial America, and the courage and resourcefulness of some of the women of that time. Highly recommended.

I have read a few similar adult narratives and histories of women in Colonial America, so I did not notice the fancy cover and the large font that separate this book into the young adult category. If it was for adults, it would have been more helpful if I decided to write a book about women in the colonies as there are too many dialogues and flighty descriptions here that aim to entertain kids

rather than convey information. For example in the section on Martha Corey, who was accused of witchcraft in Salem, Massachusetts, the accused appears before a judge, and then there is what looks like a fictionalized version of the court record. It starts with a question from the judge which is for some reason not in quotations: *“Who hurts these children? She must tell what she knew. Martha repeated that she was a gospel woman, & do you think I can have to do with witchcraft too?”* (161) The strange & and the unusual grammar seem to be taken out of the official record, but the first sentence is written in modern English and seems to have been invented for dramatic effect or altered from the original to improve its brevity or dramatic intensity. The women depicted are from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the British North American colonies, as opposed to in Spanish, French or other settlements across the colonized New World. I recently read a study about colonial women in the northeast that ran, at least temporarily if their husband died suddenly, many of the print shops and publishing companies, so my perspective is a bit different than what most young readers probably visualize for women in this period. Miller explains that the colonial woman had to work in the home first to assure their family’s survival in an environment where food and other resources were scarce and typically had to be homemade. Others found employment or became indentured servants or slaves, if the alternative was starvation, freezing or other disasters. Another woman Miller focuses on is Elizabeth Ashbridge who became a Quaker preacher after *“an abusive indenture.”* Miller makes it sound as if an indenture was a unique plight for poor women, but nearly all of the men who became printers or gained other serious professions in the Old and the New World as they were trying to rise out of poverty did an indentured contract or an apprenticeship. And *“abuse”* by an employer was very common; this was the primary motivation for Benjamin Franklin’s flight from his abusive brother’s print shop to start his own publishing franchise. Another common experience is the story of Anne Bradstreet who wrote poems while mothering her children; many women on both sides of the ocean dabbled in writing for pleasure when they did not have household duties. A more unusual case is that of Margaret Hardenbroeck building a *“trade empire in New Amsterdam.”* I’ve read about women who ran shops after their husband’s passing, but the word *“empire”* seems far-fetched. The saga makes a bit more sense when the narrator explains that Margaret was sent from Amsterdam to New York to represent her cousin’s interests as a *“factor,”* or the business and legal representative of the family’s interests in the New World.

The colonies were new enough at the time that her purse trumped her gender in business matters and she thrived (122-3). The story of Sarah Kemble Knight is more recognizable as she ran a writing school, owned a stationery shop, a boardinghouse and farms, components that were commonplace to American life and a natural accumulation of wealth led prosperous people (male and female) to their acquisition. This issue of the *Women in Action* women's biography series for youths should be an uplifting read for girls who want to find examples of courage and the hard work ethic in their American ancestors.--*Pennsylvania Literary Journal*: Summer 2016: [...]

Brandon Marie Miller combines extensive research and lively prose to tell the story of women in colonial America. She alternates between biographical narratives and historical context of women's lives more generally. Her sketches of several well-known women contain new information (to this reader) from current scholarship. The stories of many other unknown women are eye-opening in themselves. Taken together, Miller's narratives will appeal to young readers and will provide them a more complete understanding of colonial America than we of the author's generation knew.

Amazing details, great quotes, and compelling stories make up this well-researched book about the women in colonial America. Brandon Marie Miller provides 13 stories of women from the early 1600s through the founding of the country. Native Americans, Puritans, indentured servants, and businesswomen are just a few examples of the types of women represented in this book. In addition, Miller gives us details about the time period, the culture, and customs to provide historical context. For all the useful information in the book, it's also very dramatic at times and hard to put down. I found it a fascinating read, and I'd recommend it to anyone who likes historical books, both young adults and adults.

Very good book for all ages. Wonderfully written.

Fantastic collection of stories and historical artifacts documenting the lives of 13 women who lived when America was young. Native American women, European American women, and African American women are all featured in honest compelling narratives. Although this book is shelved for Young Adults, I know many adults would love reading it and learning more about the lives of women in colonial America. This book explores the lives of women, often overlooked in history books.

I loved this book. Cecily Jordan Farrar is my 7th great- grandmother. It was wonderful to read her story here.

There's an old saying that behind every great man, there's a great woman. After reading *Women of Colonial America*, I would suggest that behind every country, there are a large number of Great Women. This book serves not only as an easy to read historical reference, but also a great catalyst for discussion in any high school American History class.

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