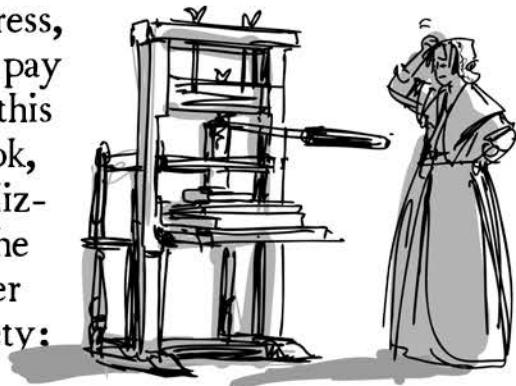


BOOK GUIDE

The purpose of this book is to introduce readers to the underrepresented stories of colonial American history. When I was curating creators for this collection, I asked them to focus on stories that we normally don't hear about in history books. I think they all did a fantastic job.

"The Press's Widow" (written by Erika Swyler and illustrated by Noël Tuazon), for example, introduces us to Elizabeth Glover. By itself, it's a great story about a woman whose husband died and was left with nothing but a printing press, children, and two debtors who had to pay their passage to the New World. But this story, like all of the stories in this book, serves as a bridge to a larger story. Elizabeth Glover is just one person, but she represents so much more than that. Her story is about widows in Puritan society: about women who tried to open their own businesses in a culture that would not allow it. There are other subjects to think about and discuss after reading this story. For example, the importance of the printed word in the English colonies; the emphasis on education, as the story touches upon the formation of Harvard University; the emphasis on religious texts, as the first book printed in America was *The Bay Psalm Book*; and the fact that many people couldn't afford passage to America, and were in debt to the people who paid their way.



These stories are launching points into bigger stories, and help to paint a complete picture of the English colonies.

One of the first people I reached out to for this collection was Dr. Virginia DeJohn Anderson. She wrote a book called *Creatures of Empire* which is about free-range animal husbandry and the role the practice played in English and Native American relations. When the colonists came to the New World, they brought livestock with them, which doesn't seem like that big of a deal to us now.

However, there are two things that you need to understand in order to appreciate why this was important:

- 1) Native Americans did not domesticate animals. They farmed and hunted, but they did not keep cows or pigs for the purpose of food and labor.
- 2) Domesticated animals need a lot of room to graze.



I asked Dr. Anderson if we could do a story that emphasized how crucial livestock was to the tensions between these two societies and we set out to see how it could be done. The story in this book isn't an exact account - it's more an amalgamation of several stories, but it touches upon the rising tensions in the following manner:

- 1) The colonists brought their livestock to the New World
- 2) Needing room, the colonists would allow their livestock to graze outside of their farms
- 3) The livestock found easy-to-get sources of food in Native American farms
- 4) At first, the colonists tried to make reparations for any damages. Then they taught the Native Americans how to build fences. When the fences didn't work, the tendency was to blame the Native Americans
- 5) As the Native Americans moved further westward to get away from the livestock, tensions began to grow
- 6) These tensions eventually lead to war...and the Native Americans did not win. They continued to move westward

In Dr. Anderson's story (illustrated by Mike Sgier), we see three Native American men on trial. This was done to represent how Native Americans were forced out of their lands. However, the tensions that resulted from colonists encroaching on Native American land caused even bigger problems. As the colonists began to threaten their own Native American allies, who believed themselves to be immune from the effects of the growing settlements, they began to encourage very powerful enemies. These hostilities lead to King Philip's War, the subject of Nate DiMeo and Mal Jones's story "Church and Anawan."



On the surface, Dr. Anderson's story is about a troublesome pig. But the story is really a collage, a connection of different stories that lead to war, and how a lot of it all started with a troublesome pig. That is a much bigger story and a much bigger discussion.



Because the book is laid out in chronological order, many of these stories lead directly to the next, even if the connections are not obviously stated. We are working to develop guides for the stories in this book, including guides on how to connect these stories to give the full picture of colonial America. You will be able to find them on <http://www.colonialcomics.com>.