Abraham in Arms: War and Gender in Colonial New England (Early American Studies)

Ann M. Little
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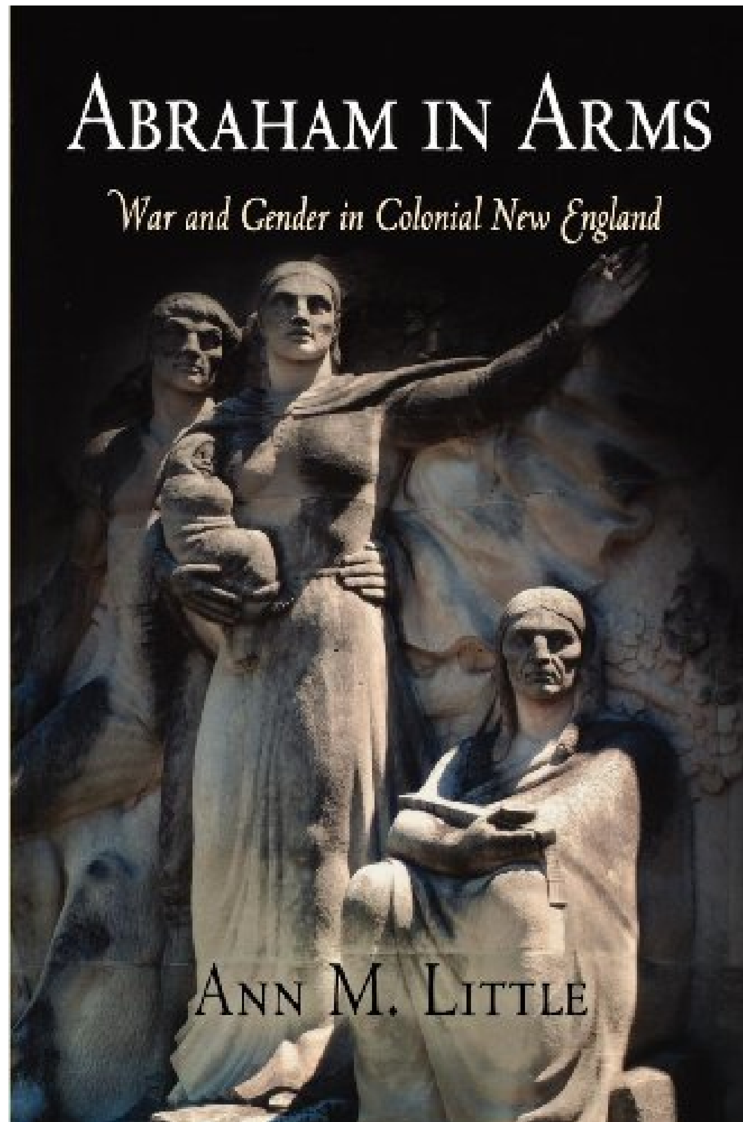

#1137524 in Books University of Pennsylvania Press 2007-06-19Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.02 x .62 x 5.98l, .93 #File Name: 0812219619272 pages | File size: 18.Mb

Ann M. Little : Abraham in Arms: War and Gender in Colonial New England (Early American Studies) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Abraham in Arms: War and Gender in Colonial New England (Early American Studies):

5 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Original and Brilliant ScholarshipBy CustomerAbraham in Arms takes a totally original approach to early New England history. By bringing a gendered analysis to fields of war,

cultural contact, and New England community formation, Little shows how concepts of masculinity were inseparable from early Americans attempts to colonize a New World. Whether talking about war, about cultural cross-dressing, or the many gendered facets of captivity, Little smartly shows how combining extensive archival research with a feminist analysis encourages us to rethink how we understand early America.My graduate students regularly rate this book as one of their favorite pieces of new scholarship in the field. Undergrads find it accessible and engaging, and take away a whole new picture of the silver-buckle wearing Puritans they grew up with.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. How Were American Indians and European Colonists Not So Different?By Frank BellizziIn this book, Ann Little describes and interprets the ways in which people in New England, New France, and Indian country thought and spoke about their cross-cultural experiences in the colonial Northeast. Her timeframe runs from approximately the 1630s to the 1760s. The author focuses on the experience and rhetoric of warfare. The decades she takes up include seven distinct military episodes, beginning with The Pequot War (1636-37) and concluding with the French and Indian War, also known as the Seven Years' War (1756-63). Little observes that all of the various warring parties of this era routinely used the language of family and gender to describe things like their enemies, their victories, and the experience of captivity. She explains that her book is part of a current scholarly trend that notices and comments on similarities between Indians and Europeans, as opposed to their often discussed differences. Little relies on primary sources like Anglo-American captivity narratives and the tracts and sermons of Increase and Cotton Mather and lesser-known Puritan divines. She also cites and refers to contemporary scholarship. Overall, this is a fine piece of work on the topic.7 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Great research, great argumentBy History ProfessorAnn Little has written a fascinating account of the ways in which Native Americans and English and French settlers of the 17th and 18th centuries understood the wars they entered with and against each other (particularly the Pequot and Seven Years Wars, but also more generally the ongoing disputes between Europeans and Indians throughout the colonial period in New England). Drawing on English and French sources, Little also incorporates the experience of Indians as well, though of course that remains difficult when they did not leave written records from these periods.Her argument writ large is that Indians and Europeans actually shared a number of the same understandings about warfare and masculinity, even as they also differed vastly in a number of their cultural practices. And in documenting those practices Little does a great job of showing why and how confusion arose between cultures, but also how Europeans exploited those differences whenever possible in their quest for the land then occupied by Indians. She also includes a really interesting chapter on the experiences of English children taken captive by Indians and sold to the French, many of whom (girls especially) opted not to return home, noting all the reasons that these girls may well have achieved a much more elevated status in French Canadian society than in their native New England.I've taught the book in a number of classes and it is well argued, accessible, and chock full of evidence. It has worked successfully in those classes and I recommend it both to students of history and to lay readers interested in a more nuanced history of warfare in colonial New England that takes Indian AND European men's AND women's perspectives into account.

In 1678, the Puritan minister Samuel Nowell preached a sermon he called "Abraham in Arms," in which he urged his listeners to remember that "Hence it is no wayes unbecoming a Christian to learn to be a Souldier." The title of Nowell's sermon was well chosen. Abraham of the Old Testament resonated deeply with New England men, as he embodied the ideal of the householder-patriarch, at once obedient to God and the unquestioned leader of his family and his people in war and peace. Yet enemies challenged Abraham's authority in New England: Indians threatened the safety of his household, subordinates in his own family threatened his status, and wives and daughters taken into captivity became baptized Catholics, married French or Indian men, and refused to return to New England.In a bold reinterpretation of the years between 1620 and 1763, Ann M. Little reveals how ideas about gender and family life were central to the ways people in colonial New England, and their neighbors in New France and Indian Country, described their experiences in cross-cultural warfare. Little argues that English, French, and Indian people had broadly similar ideas about gender and authority. Because they understood both warfare and political power to be intertwined expressions of manhood, colonial warfare may be understood as a contest of different styles of masculinity. For New England men, what had once been a masculinity based on household headship, Christian piety, and the duty to protect family and faith became one built around the more abstract notions of British nationalism, anti-Catholicism, and soldiering for the Empire.Based on archival research in both French and English sources, court records, captivity narratives, and the private correspondence of ministers and war officials, Abraham in Arms reconstructs colonial New England as a frontier borderland in which religious, cultural, linguistic, and geographic boundaries were permeable, fragile, and contested by Europeans and Indians alike.

"This innovative and thought-provoking analysis of why New Englanders and Indians went to war, and how they interpreted their experiences in war, effectively reshapes our perspectives of culture and society on the early New England frontier."Journal of American History"A clearly written, cogently argued book on early American cultural encounters. Highly recommended."Choice"A creative and fascinating tour-de-force. Sweeping across two centuries of conflict in the colonial Northeast, from the Pequot War of 1636-37 to the Seven Years' War of the mid-eighteenth

century, Little shows how northeastern Native peoples, English colonists, and French settlers interpreted each other's actions through the lens of their own gendered sense of proper social order. The book makes a very persuasive case for gender being central to any study of war that historians might undertake, and the writing flows elegantly from insight to insight."Nancy Shoemaker, University of ConnecticutAbout the AuthorAnn M. Little is Associate Professor of History at Colorado State University.Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.IntroductionOnward Christian Soldiers, 1678In 1678 Samuel Nowell preached an artillery election sermon he called "Abraham in Arms," in which he urged New England men to remember that "Hence it is no wayes unbecoming a Christian to learn to be a Souldier, not only a Spiritual Souldier but in the true proper sence of the letter." His warning was timely, and prescient: Nowell preached in the wake of King Philip's War (also known as Metacom's Rebellion), a united Indian uprising that lasted from 1675 to 1676 in southern New England and persisted on the eastern frontier until 1678. Unlike previous Indian wars and threatened uprisings, King Philip's War was not waged by just one Indian tribe or by one leader, as the name implies, but by nearly all of the Algonquians living near the English settlements of New England. From the Narragansett and Wampanoag of Rhode Island to the Eastern Abenaki of Maine, Indians made common cause against English settlers. At the time that Nowell warned his flock that they must be soldiers for their faith and for New England, the war had barely ended in Maine. The eastern frontier was worrisome for another reasonnamely, because it harbored another enemy to Protestant New England. Early English explorers and French Jesuits had made competing claims on Maine's waterways, land, and peoples, from the Saco River northeast to the mouth of the Kennebec. Already in this latest war, Maine settlers notified their governor in Boston that they had spied French men among the Abenaki, aiding them in their efforts to drive the English back into the sea. Thus with New England on the brink of more than eighty more years of war with Indians and the French, Nowell urged New England men to be girded for battle, ready to advance and defend the frontier of English Protestant settlement. Perhaps this is why Nowell preached so insistently that military readiness was on a par with spiritual preparedness: after all, "the Battle is the Lords." Nowell's sermon title was significant. The Abraham of the Old Testament resonated deeply with English men in the New World, as he embodied the ideal of the householder-patriarch, at once obedient to God and the unchallenged leader of his family and of his people in war and peace. Also like Abraham, the authority of English men was based on their sex, their religion, and their ethnicity. But over the years of English settlement, Abraham's enemies in New England had manifested themselves with a vengeance. Algonquian and Iroquois peoples threatened the safety of his household and mocked his pretensions to dominate New England: "you dare not fight, you are all one like women," they taunted in battle, and then stripped the bodies of the dead and took English captives alive into the wilderness. Although the English had won both major New England Indian wars (the Pequot War, 1636-37, and King Philip's War), by 1678 they still did not dominate the northeastern borderlands militarily, politically, or economically. Moreover, warfare between the English and Indians was devastating for Indian and English communities alike, characterized as it was by attacks on small settlements, the burning of individual homes and farms, and the constant involvement of so-called noncombatants like women, children, and the infirm. Although victorious over King Philip, English men might still be stung by comments like those of John Wompus, an Indian who judged that English men "had acted all one like children" in the late war, and their inability to protect their homes and families from fire and captivity meant that "New England hath Lost the day yt is knowne in old England." Furthermore, subordinates within the English communityeven within their own familiesthreatened the governorship of their households and of New England itself. Wives ran away, and daughters taken into captivity in colonial warfare sometimes became baptized Catholics, married French or Indian men, and refused to return to New England.This book tells stories about the people who lived in New England, New France, and Indian country, from the establishment of the first permanent English colony in New England to the end of the Seven Years' War. It argues that ideas about gender and family life were central to the ways in which these people understood and explained their experience of cross-cultural warfare. In fact, they had a great deal in common when it came to warfare in particular, since in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries European and Indian cultures were organized around a gendered hierarchy that privileged manhood and reserved politics and war for men almost exclusively. This book is part of a trend in recent scholarship to move away from an emphasis on cultural difference and instead analyze the implications of the many similarities between Indians and Europeans. Questions of similarities and differences in women's lives have been a point of contention for feminist scholars, and many have labored for decades to move beyond the essentialism of early feminist assumptions that the experience of womanhood was universal and transhistorical. Recent important early American women's histories illustrate the dramatically different experiences of Euro-American, African American, and Indian women, as well as signal the ways in which a gendered hierarchy structured the lives of all women and men in the Atlantic world. Despite these differences, some assumptions about gender (and especially about men's roles in their societies) were also strikingly similar in Africa, Europe, and the Americas. It was a universally understood insult throughout the early modern Atlantic world to call a man a woman. Nowhere in colonial America would being called a woman be understood as a compliment or a neutral comment on a man's competence or worthiness.These important similarities notwithstanding, Indian and European observers in the colonial period focused on their differences when talking or writing about each other, and as the colonial period wore on, they became even less willing to acknowledge their

similarities. However, historians must not take these observations at face value. Portraying one's enemies as utterly strange and differentas savage, irrational, weak, or foolish (as opposed to oneself: civilized, rational, strong, and wise)undoubtedly served the psychological needs and political agendas on all sides, although only English-speaking peoples had the technology and literacy rates that would help spread their version of the truth throughout the North American colonies and across the Atlantic Ocean.Finally, this book attempts to reconstruct the colonial Northeast as a borderlands whose religious, cultural, linguistic, and geographic boundaries were permeable, fragile, and contested by Europeans and Indians alike. Just as a mythology of difference served the various political agendas of Europeans and Indians in the northeastern borderlands as they embarked on nearly a century and a half of almost uninterrupted warfare, so the nation-states that arose in peacetime hired surveyors, cartographers, and historians to impose boundaries and create a new mythology of differenceone that has created segregated histories for Canada, the United States, and Native America.Power relations in the northeastern borderlands, as in the wider early modern Atlantic world, were based in large part on gender inequality, an idea that was gaining renewed social and political importance in the first century after Columbus's discovery. Scholars of early modern Europe have identified a major shift in gender politics in the Reformation era, when both Protestant and Catholic religious reformers turned to male heads of household to assert more control in the ordering of society in the face of diminished church authority. At the time of the Columbian encounter, Native American and African cultures also privileged men over women, especially in the realms of political and military leadership. While Indian and African women usually retained more economic power than European women did, all four continents that formed the basin of the Atlantic world used gender as a fundamental tool in the hierarchies that ordered their many and diverse societies. Furthermore, historians of Native Americans have recently argued that the stresses and conflicts that European colonization brought to Indian country may have exacerbated tensions between Indian men and women.The borderlands of colonial New England, New France, and Indian country are a promising place to understand the workings of gender and power, as it was a place where all familiesNative, English, and Frenchwere undergoing rapid changes. Indian families and communities were pressured not just by the changes brought by Europeans in the form of new technologies, trade goods, and political and military conflict. Many Indian communitiessome of them otherwise untouched by the European invasion of the New Worldwere devastated by Old World diseases to which they had no inherited resistance. Indian families were faced with threats on all sides to their traditional ways of life, as they were pressured by the new environmental, demographic, and political realities of the colonial world. Most Native peoples used a variety of strategies to adjust to an increasingly European-dominated politics and economy, such as joining other tribes, living in missionary towns, fighting against European encroachment, or seizing and adopting European captives into their families. Whether they chose to accommodate to or resist European invasion, the colonial world fundamentally altered Indian families. Similarly, with imbalanced sex ratios in the immigrant European population and without the powerful institutions that shaped late medieval and early modern Europethe manor house, schools, and guildscolonial Euro-American households were stressed by having to assume a number of social functions for which they were frequently inadequate. In New England, households in tandem with town and colony governmentwhat was known as "household government"became a legally defined and empowered "second estate" charged with ensuring the proper ordering of society. In the fledgling agricultural villages and towns along the St. Lawrence River, where the sex ratio among French settlers remained extremely imbalanced through the seventeenth century, female religious orders like the Ursulines and the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame attempted to fill the gap in social services by running poor houses, hospitals, and schools in Qubec, Montreal, and Three Rivers. French men frequently turned to intermarriage with Indians or English captives, as well as keeping Indian and English servants and slaves to populate their households. However, instead of allowing for the reproduction of an ideal European social order, these mtis families and families with war captives embodied many of the tensions and instabilities of life on the northeastern frontier.Because of the many challenges their families faced, these cultures used ideas about gender and family life to explain and justify their political and military conflicts with one another. Time and again, Indian, French, and English people found each other wanting in the particular roles they assigned men and women and the ways they managed their households. No other men were as manly as their men, no other women understood their honorable place in the community like their women, and no other children were being raised properly in the North American borderlands. I must be clear about the nature of my argument: I do not argue that the French, English, and Indian people warred on and killed each other because they hated the ways in which their enemies organized household and family life. Other historians have demonstrated clearly and convincingly that material reasons drove the competition for the conquest of North Americaagricultural lands and hunting grounds for furs were in fact the great prize for whoever could dominate New England, Acadia, and the St. Lawrence River Valley militarily and politically. Gender and family differences were, however, central to the language and ideology of conquest and were the key principles upon which theories of difference were constructed in the colonial northeastern borderlands, and the English were especially garrulous in making their arguments. Their justifications for warfare, and for conquering and removing Indians and French Catholics, were not coincidentally developed at the same time that other Atlantic world societies were justifying the mass enslavement and exploitation of African labor for similar material goals.The historiography of cross-cultural

gender relations that informs this book was pioneered by women's historians, many of whom in the past twenty years have shifted to a more theoretical focus on the nature of gendered power. Pathbreaking studies of extraordinary sophistication not only historicized women's experiences by showing how the nature of women's work, their roles in family life, and the ideals of womanhood changed over time; they also opened new doors for considering the ways in which gender and class, or gender and race, worked together to structure power relationships in colonial America and the early national United States. This focus on genderits historical and cultural specificity, and how it changes over timehas also led to a burgeoning literature on early American masculinity and the ways in which manhood was constructed, experienced, and challenged by others in different places, times, and cultures. This study both draws on and adds to both of these literatures on early American men and women, showing how in one specific region rent by warfare and intercultural conflict we can see the same broad changes that characterized the entire colonial Atlantic world. At the same time that women's historians were broadening their focus to include evaluations of gender and power, ethnohistorians openly challenged the eurocentric historical narratives of the past four centuries. In the 1970s and 1980s, ethnohistorians urged the profession to abandon its traditional approach to American Indian history, which treated Native peoples more as environmental or meteorological forces rather than as human beings whose decisions were rational and could be explained through traditional historical methodology and anthropological approaches to understanding Native cultures. Native Americans were not the irrational, inscrutable, wild creatures most often described in colonial documents, nor did they simply die off, fade away, or retreat to the margins of colonial society as Europeans and the Euro-Americans achieved the demographic advantage. Like women's historians, ethnohistorians insisted that colonial history was unintelligible without a consideration of inter-Indian and Euro-Indian power relations. Through varying strategies of forming trade and military alliances, warfare with Europeans and other Indians, migration, segregation, and intermarriage with Euro-Americans and African Americans, Native peoples chose different paths at different times to preserve and even strengthen their numbers, power, and prestige.One of the principal aims of this book is to draw together these two rich and fruitful literatures and use them together to interpret the complex world of colonial New England, New France, and the Indian lands that lay between these shifting and fragile borders. By using the insights of gender and ethnohistory together, I depart in significant ways from the 1990s' cultural studies emphasis on difference as an explanatory concept for encounters among New World societies. Although it is true that colonial French, Indian, and English people alike insisted that it was cultural differences that drove their political and military conflicts, historians should read such pronouncements skeptically. While there were in fact great economic, religious, and cultural differences among Indian, French, and English people, what seemed to disturb them even more was evidence of their essential sameness. Most northeastern borderlands people made their living in agrarian-based economies supplemented by hunting, fishing, and trade; all three peoples therefore were fighting for political and military control of the same resources. But perhaps the most important common touchstone of these cultures was the value they placed on masculinity and on men's performance in war and politics. Indian, French, and English men agreed that to be ruled by other men was to be reduced in statusto that of a woman perhaps, or a child, a servant or slave, or even a dog. Because everyone spoke and understood the same gendered language of power, they knew very well that it was not only their sovereignty or their livelihoods that were at stake in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century warfare; what was at stake was their very manhood.Because of the cross-cultural nature of this study, it also draws on the rich historiography of the new Western history and of the emerging field of borderlands history. Like those early U.S. borderlands historians Francis Parkman and Frederick Jackson Turner, I see the colonial border wars as part of a larger story of North America; unlike my nineteenth-century predecessors, I do not see this story as having such a righteous outcome. While deeply influenced by the new borderlands historiography, this book remains a study of New England fashioned within a borderlands frameworkit is not an equally balanced investigation of Canada and Indian country as well. This is in part due to the sources available, which are overwhelmingly English-language sources written and published in New England and London. Widespread literacy and a printing press meant that New England was able to record and publish the first draft of history faster than French or Native North Americans. This book is an effort to examine that first draft of history from a variety of critical perspectives and to help us see its contradictions, complexities, truths, lies, and political and diplomatic calculations.The strategies of talented ethnohistorians have helped colonial historians read European sources for Native voices, and they have forced us all to be a lot shrewder and more cautious about the bias of our sources generally. I have used Canadian sources wherever possible, although the low levels of literacy there in the colonial period (at least compared to colonial New England) mean that my French sources are overwhelmingly from church and political elites, who frequently had as little regard for their working-class habitants as they had for their foes in New England and Iroquoia. While in a sense this study is burdened by its wealth of New England sources, the advantage they offer is that they reflect a much broader cross-section of New England society than French or Indian sources can. Like many traditional studies of colonial New England, this book relies on official records like court and probate records, the correspondence of colonial officials, and the published and private writings of ministers and other elites. Boston's own publishers and presses also did their share for the preservation of colonial history, putting into print countless election sermons, captivity narratives, broadsides, and calls to arms. However, colonial New England's relatively high literacy rate

means that we have a good number of public and private writings of nonelitesaccounts of skirmishes and battles from volunteers and soldiers stationed in outposts far from Boston; petitions from desperate Maine and New Hampshire families destroyed by Indian attacks and captivity; diaries kept by provincial soldiers during the Seven Years' War; and even the letters and private musings of a few Anglo-American women.Because of the bias of the sources, these war stories told in captivity narratives, dispatches from the front, and histories written by war veterans and civilians alike are all representations of the past rather than necessarily reliable truths. I am indebted to the work of cultural studies scholars who have argued persuasively that every historical source has its own agenda. However, this book strives to do more than just discuss English representations of their enemies and their experiences of war. As unreliable as the sources are, they are relatively rich and numerous in colonial New England, so I hope that I am also uncovering something of the truth of what the experience of war was like for English, French, and Indian peoples alike.My story begins with the first seventeenth-century encounters between English settlers in southern New England and the different Algonquian-speaking nations they found there, principally the Mohegans, Pequots, Narragansetts, and Wampanoags. Chapter 1 establishes the gendered nature of early Anglo-Indian contact and conflict by describing the essential similarity of Indian and English men on two key points: both politics and war were men's occupations, and both were arenas for establishing one's manhood. Both groups believed that to be bested (or, as the English of the time tellingly called it, mastered) by other men in war meant a possible loss of self-mastery and the prospect of being ruled by other men. Thus, both English and Indian people understood that what was at stake in their struggle for dominion in the northeastern borderlands was their masculine privilege of self-rule. Chapter 2 extends this theme of warfare and gender (particularly masculinity) into the mid-eighteenth century, following the progress of borderlands conflicts throughout New England and into the St. Lawrence River valley, Acadia, Iroquoia, and Abenaki country. It considers one particular aspect of Anglo-Indian warfare, the Native American ritual of stripping dead enemies and live captives, and the English experience as subjects and witnesses of these rituals. English people were disturbed by their own nakedness and by seeing Indians dressed in European-style clothing, transgressions they saw not just as a blurring of ethnic lines but also as a frightful blurring of gender identities as well.Chapters 3 and 4 shift the focus from masculinity and men's experiences in war to a consideration of Native and English women's experiences in warfare and captivity, which come more to the fore in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. At this time, the center of conflict shifted from southern New England to its northern and western frontiers because of the French engagement of imperial warfare with England. With declining numbers within Indian families, and French allies willing to pay Indian warriors for English captives, captivity among the Indiansboth temporary and lifelongbecame a much more common strategy of Indian warfare against the English. Chapter 3 argues that captivity was stressful not just for English captives but also for the Indian households that had to incorporate sometimes several strangers into their families, at least temporarily. Indian women in particular seem to have borne more than their fair share of the burden of integrating strangers into their families, strangers who were utterly ignorant (if not contemptuous as well) of the kinds of work and behavior required of them. Furthermore, this chapter argues that the purpose of the captivity narratives written and published by returned New England captives (or by their ministers) was to show the disorderly nature of Indian family life as a further means of undermining Native sovereignty: weak (or brutish) Indian men, arrogant women (or their opposite and equally distorted stereotype, "squaw drudges"), and unruly childrenthis evidence of households in chaos was intended to suggest that Indians were unworthy of political sovereignty. Chapter 4 continues this focus on women caught up in the consequences of war by considering the fates of English female captives who never returned to New England, the majority of whom chose to remain with their French Catholic redeemers. Although the French likely modeled their treatment of English captives on the strategies of their Indian allies, this chapter suggests that they were much more successful than Indians at keeping English captives for two reasons: New France had a cadre of seasoned missionaries, and Canada was desperate for European women and their domestic skills. This chapter also argues that we should see these girls and women as agents, not simply as victims of warfare or fortune, as life in Canada offered them more legal rights in marriage and better economic protections than New England did.Finally, Chapter 5 continues to analyze the nature of the conflict between New England and New France but returns to explore the relationship between martial prowess and manhood in the mid-eighteenth century during the last two imperial wars. It demonstrates the striking similarity of the gendered language and ideas used by New Englanders to discredit French masculinity and sovereignty in Canada to the language and ideas used to discredit Indian masculinity and sovereignty in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. French Catholicism was described in private writings and published propaganda as even more dangerous than Indian waysperhaps a reasonable conclusion, given French successes at keeping more of the daughters of New England than their Indian enemies ever did. The colonial encounter changed the political and human geography of New England, but what doesn't seem to change much at all are the ways in which the English and Anglo-Americans saw their enemies, whomever they were. Perhaps the most significant shift in the minds of New England men was their own conception of their manhood. With the shift from wars against local Indian rivals to wars against the French crown, the seventeenth-century ideal of Puritan manhood built closely around family headship, Christian piety, and military prowess in defense of Christian families was transformed into an eighteenth-century imperial masculinity built around more abstract concepts like

Anglo-American nationalism, anti-Catholicism, and soldiering for the empire.Abraham in Arms shows how warfare was central to the political discourse and social and material reality in the northeastern borderlands. Ideas about gender and family lifeexpressed in language, coercion, force of law, and brute forcesaturated these conflicts as French, English, and Indian people struggled to articulate and impose their vision of an ordered society in the rapidly changing colonial world they shared. Although this book ends in 1763, in most of the important ways the struggles outlined here continued for more than a century on the advancing southern and western frontiers of the Ohio and Mississippi river valleys, the Great Plains, Texas, the Rocky Mountains, Oregon Territory, and California. Anywhere in North America where Anglo-American settlements, competing French and Spanish claims, and Indians met, these conflicts continued. If John Winthrop's "City Upon a Hill" became a model for the emerging United States, it was built upon a dark and bloody ground.* * * * *Finally, a note on some of the terms commonly used in this book. When writing about English people and their descendants who peopled New England, I use the term "English," although admittedly this word tends to erase some of the important regional, religious, and cultural differences among them. (However, until the American Revolution, this is the term they used to describe their national and ethnic identity.) I also sometimes use the term "Anglo-American" to describe the same people in the later chapters, so as to distinguish New England-born English people from the British regulars and officers who were only used in North American wars beginning in the 1740s. I use the terms "Indian" and "Native American" interchangeably when referring to the original peoples of North America and their descendants in the colonial period. When appropriate, I use the more specific terms to distinguish between the two major cultural and linguistic groups of Native peoples discussed, the Algonquians of the eastern seaboard, and the Iroquois west of the Hudson River. I also try to refer to the specific Indian nation when possible, such as Narragansett, Wampanoag, Pequot, Mohegan, Eastern Abenaki, and Western Abenaki (the Algonquian peoples most often discussed in this book) or the five nations of the Iroquois in this period, which were the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca.The term "New England" here generally refers not just to geography but also signifies lands under significant cultural and political control by the English. I use the term "Canada" to refer to the French settlements of the St. Lawrence river valley and upper Great Lakes, and I use New France when referring to all North American territories claimed by the French, from the maritimes through the Great Lakes, the Mississippi Valley, into the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean. Lands controlled and used by Indians I call generically "Indian country." But of course, the point of this book is that the lines dividing these spheres of influence were constantly shifting and contested, so when I am uncertain about the status of a particular place in time, or when I want to generalize about all three regions together, I use the term "northeastern borderlands."