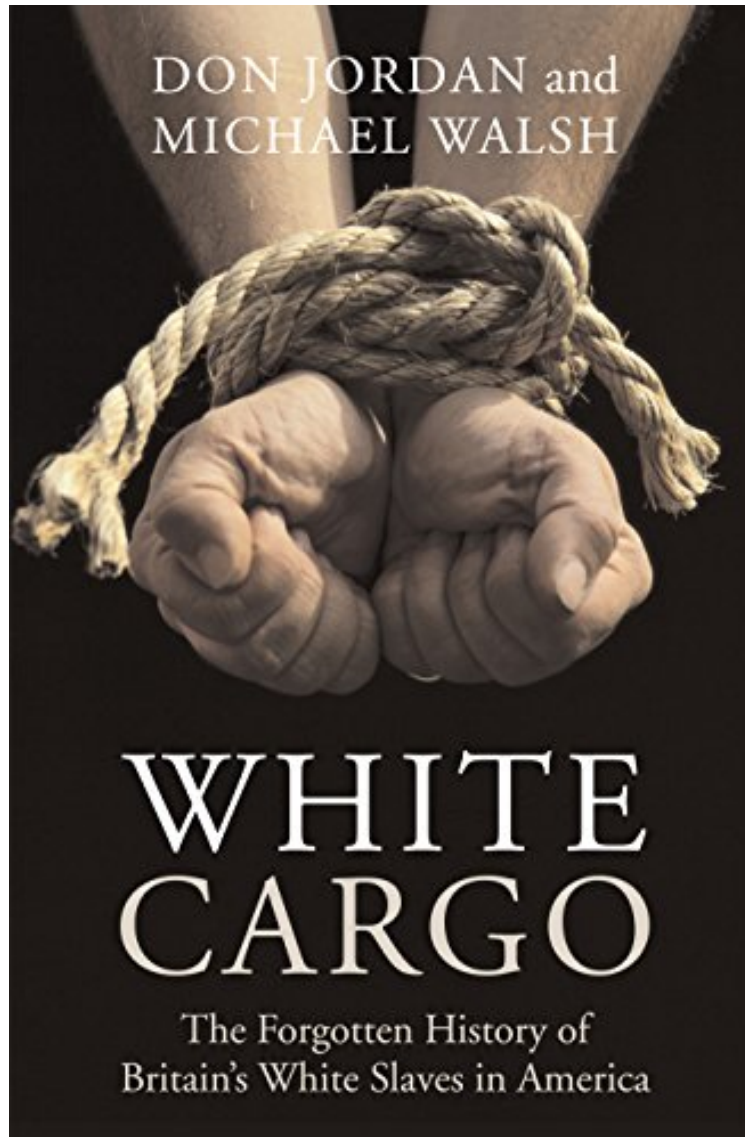


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White Cargo: The Forgotten History of Britain's White Slaves in America

Don Jordan, Michael Walsh

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review helpful. This book sure was an eye opener regarding the indentured ...By Lisa K SaundersThis book sure was an eye opener regarding the indentured. Not what I was expecting to read, conditions were much harsher than I thought and so little of it known about till now.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy J. TurnerAmazing Read

White Cargo is the forgotten story of the thousands of Britons who lived and died in bondage in Britains American colonies. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, more than 300,000 white people were shipped to America as slaves. Urchins were swept up from Londons streets to labor in the tobacco fields, where life expectancy was no more than two years. Brothels were raided to provide breeders for Virginia. Hopeful migrants were duped into signing as indentured servants, unaware they would become personal property who could be bought, sold, and even gambled away. Transported convicts were paraded for sale like livestock. Drawing on letters crying for help, diaries, and court and government archives, Don Jordan and Michael Walsh demonstrate that the brutalities usually associated with black slavery alone were perpetrated on whites throughout British rule. The trade ended with American independence, but the British still tried to sell convicts in their former colonies, which prompted one of the most audacious plots in Anglo-American history. This is a saga of exploration and cruelty spanning 170 years that has been submerged under the overwhelming memory of black slavery. White Cargo brings the brutal, uncomfortable story to the surface.

From Publishers WeeklyHigh school American history classes present indentured servitude as a benignly paternalistic system whereby colonial immigrants spent a few years working off their passage and went on to better things. Not so, this impassioned history argues: the indentured servitude of whites was comparable in most respects to the slavery endured by blacks. Voluntary indentures arriving in colonial America from Britain were sold on the block, subjected to backbreaking work on plantations, poorly fed and clothed, savagely punished for any disobedience, forbidden to marry without their master's permission, and whipped and branded for running away. Nor were indentures always voluntary: tens of thousands of convicts, beggars, homeless children and other undesirable Britons were transported to America against their will. Given the hideous mortality rates, the authors argue, indentured contracts often amounted to a life sentence at hard laborsome convicts asked to be hanged rather than be sent to Virginia. The authors, both television documentarians, don't attempt a systematic survey of the subject, and their episodic narrative often loses its way in colorful but extraneous digressions. Still, their expos of unfree labor in the British colonies paints an arresting portrait of early America as gulag. 8 pages of photos. (Mar.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. With information gleaned from contemporary letters, journals and court archives, White Cargo is packed with proof that he brutalities usually associated with black slavery were, for centuries, also inflicted on whites. -Daily MailAn eye-opening and heart-rending story. -The Times (London)High school American history classes present indentured servitude as a benignly paternalistic system whereby colonial immigrants spent a few years working off their passage and went on to better things. Not so, this impassioned history argues: the indentured servitude of whites was comparable in most respects to the slavery endured by blacks. Given the hideous mortality rates, the authors argue, indentured contracts often amounted to a life sentence at hard laborsome convicts asked to be hanged rather than be sent to Virginia . . . their expos of unfree labor in the British colonies paints an arresting portrait of early America as gulag. 8 pages of photos. -Publishers WeeklyA colorful series of portraits of villains and victims, exploiters and exploited, rendered with bemused outrage.-ChoiceThis vividly written book tells the tale from both sides of the Atlantic . . . meticulously sourced and footnotedbut is never dry or academic...Jordan and Walsh offer an explanation of how the structures of slaveryblack or whitewere entwined in the roots of American society. They refrain from drawing links to today, except to remind readers that there are probably tens of millions of Americans who are descended from white slaves without even knowing it.-New York Times Book About the AuthorDon Jordan is an award-winning television director and writer who has worked on dozens of documentaries and dramas. He lives in London.