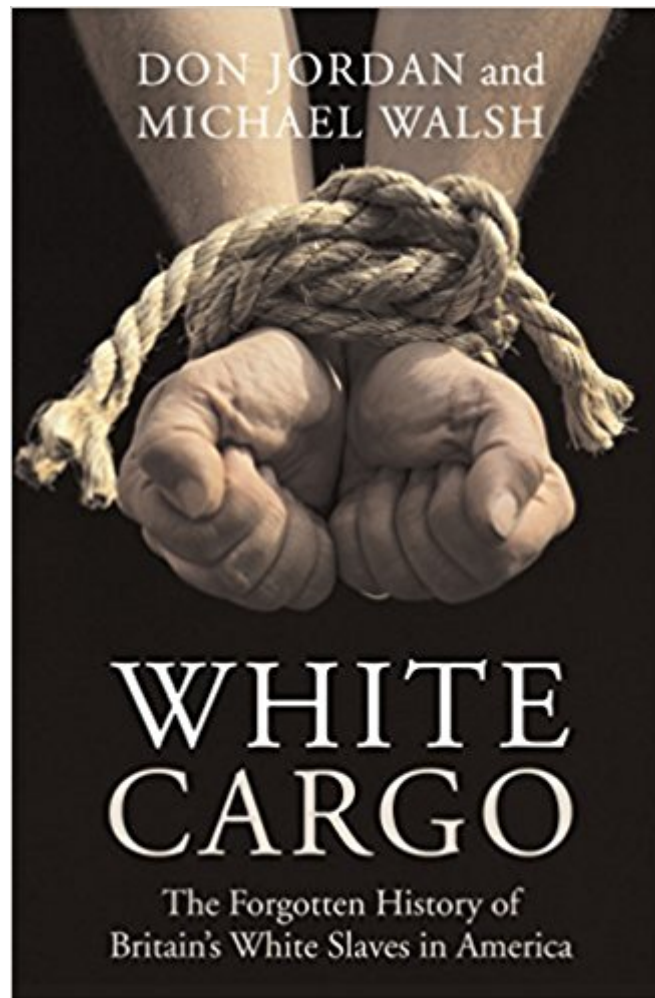




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White Cargo: The Forgotten History Of Britain's White Slaves In America



Synopsis

White Cargo is the forgotten story of the thousands of Britons who lived and died in bondage in Britain's 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 London's 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.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

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. 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 labor—some 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 exposé 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 the brutalities usually associated with black slavery were, for centuries, also inflicted on whites.” —Daily Mail —“An 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 labor—some convicts asked to be hanged rather than be sent to Virginia . . . their exposé of unfree labor in the British colonies paints an arresting portrait of early America as gulag. 8 pages of photos.” —Publishers Weekly —“A colorful series of portraits of villains and victims, exploiters and exploited, rendered with bemused outrage.” —Choice —“This vividly written book tells the tale from both sides of the Atlantic . . . meticulously sourced and footnoted—but is never dry or academic...Jordan and Walsh offer an explanation of how the structures of slavery—black or white—were 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 Review

This was a very detailed and well presented book. It took quite a while to read. I doubt that this

subject will be taught in most history classes as it deals with a part of history that most people would like to forget. We have all heard the term 'indentured servants.' In fact some of my ancestors were in that category. Most cannot fathom man's inhumanity to man as is presented in these pages. The black and white slaves alike were abused and oftentimes killed by their masters. There is no need for any human being to EVER have slaves, but it is a fact of history. I recommend this book all those who are the least bit interested, or curious, about this chapter in American History. A very detailed account of this part of America's birth and early growth.

Great revealing of how American was really formed. Exposes the formation of black slavery and the hundreds of thousands of white people who died in the early developments of the USA. Excellent in how the relation was made between the early unknown creators of America is made to Washington, Jefferson, & Lee. Although not the story of the pilgrims and the first Thanksgiving, it is the true story of our country in its birth. It took a couple of Brits to write the birth of America.

This book fills in a gap in history which in the US has been glossed over for centuries. At least the euphemism "indentured servant" was the term used for "White Cargo" in my day in history. Very revealing and something anyone interested in the colonization of coastal American should read.

Excellent book on the topic. I read this in two days. I would posit that we have covered this up far too long and it truly needs thoroughly explored. This is an excellent start. Kudos to the authors for bringing this out into the mainstream.

It tells of the history of All slavery in America. One small part was how the Mayor of London paid 5 pounds sterling to ship orphaned, runaway and thug children off to America to "Clean the Streets and teach them a trade" ages 8 to 16 and they were auctioned in America for 20 Pounds weight of tobacco each. 96% of the children died within 3 years I went to visit my daughter who has a son. He is an avid reader but prefers Kindle books. He is part Irish and part Cherokee so this book was amazing to him. He wanted my book but I didn't want to give it up so I ordered him a copy. On the inside of the cover I wrote the cost of an indentured servant, an African Slave and the cost to sail to America back then and what it converted to today. Bad part of the book..... it's not Kindle

This book will leave you saddened with facts they certainly don't teach in school. It is a must read. People need to know that white people were also slaves and it wasn't just the black folks in history.

Excellent book with significant detail as to the issue discussed. Which, is one that should be discussed more to enlighten people that slavery knows no particular race.

The American Colonies functioned using a system of slavery / unfree labour. This book explores that history and it makes for a distressing and disturbing read. This is a well written and researched account of the white slaves who found themselves transported to the Colonies.

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