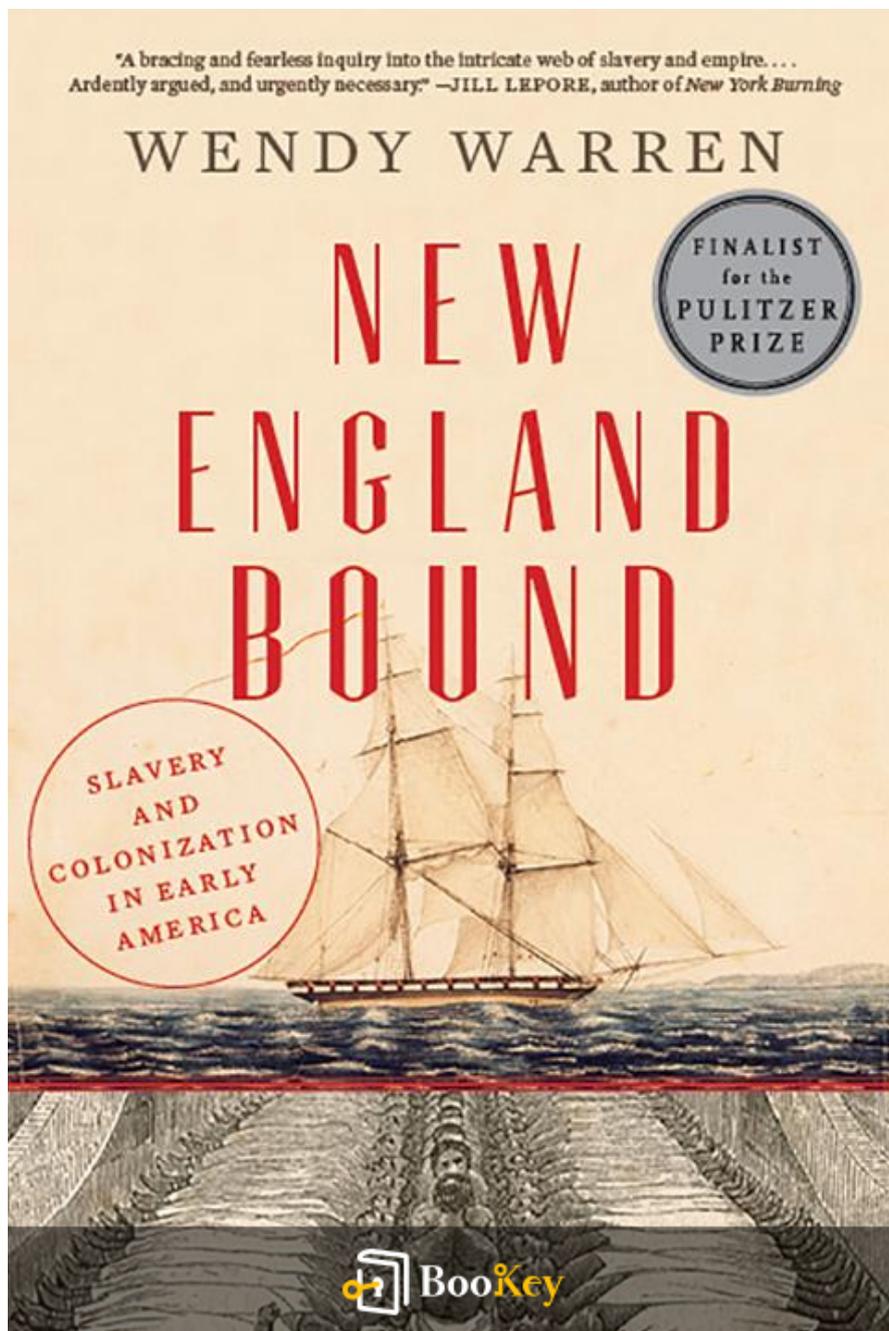


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New England Bound Summary

The Slavery and Freedom of New England's Past

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About the book

In "New England Bound: Slavery and Colonization in Early America," Wendy Warren uncovers the often-overlooked intersection of slavery and colonial America, revealing how the practices and ideologies of slavery were not just relegated to the Southern plantations, but were deeply entrenched in the very fabric of New England's economic and social systems. Through meticulous research and vivid storytelling, Warren illustrates how enslaved individuals shaped the region's development, challenging the myth of New England as a bastion of freedom, and exposing the complicity of its institutions in sustaining the institution of slavery. This compelling narrative invites readers to reconsider America's foundational myths and reflects on the lasting impact of this history on contemporary society, urging us to fully acknowledge and confront our past.

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About the author

Wendy Warren is a distinguished historian and author, known for her research and scholarship focusing on the intersections of race, gender, and colonial history in early America. She serves as an assistant professor of history at Princeton University, where her expertise in the formation of colonial societies has been instrumental in shaping contemporary understandings of American history. Warren's work is characterized by its innovative approach to archival materials, combining thorough historical analysis with compelling storytelling. Her acclaimed book "New England Bound" delves into the entangled histories of slavery and freedom in the New England colonies, shedding light on the often overlooked narratives of enslaved people and their impact on the region's development.

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Chapter 1 Summary: Beginning

Chapter 1: The Foundations of New England Colonialism

The concept of "New England" can trace its origins back to Captain John Smith, an English adventurer, who employed the term during his scouting expedition of North America in 1614. His narrative aimed to draw attention to the economic potential of the region, especially considering that England was entering the colonial arena later than Spain and Portugal but with considerable ambition. As trading companies sprouted in England, from the Muscovy Company to the East India Company, a shift towards looking westward for colonization opportunities became evident. This period of exploration was characterized by excitement and an eagerness to reap the rewards of newfound lands, particularly evident in the aspirations of the Virginia and Newfoundland Companies.

Smith's work, "Description of New England," served as both a guide and a lure for potential investors, praising the region's advantages while cautioning against unrealistic expectations of immediate wealth. He advised focusing on the region's marine resources, particularly its rich fishing grounds, rather than the elusive dreams of gold. Smith's own experiences in Virginia had shown him the dangers of unchecked ambition among colonists, illustrating the importance of hard work and practicality in the pursuit of success.

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In his observations, he noted that many early English settlers were ill-prepared for the rigors of colonial life, which resulted in high mortality rates. The demand for labor in New England necessitated a shift from the expectations of quick riches to sustainable endeavors like fishing, farming, and trade—a reality that many potential colonists struggled to accept. Smith believed that successful colonization depended on honest labor, a sense of community, and a pragmatic approach.

This complex landscape of colonization was not merely about economics; it mixed ideals of piety, hope, and a quest for a promised land. Many English colonists were motivated by a Puritanical vision, believing their migration was divinely ordained. Figures like Edward Winslow articulated concerns about past failures, emphasizing the need for a strong, committed community instead of the ambition that had led to prior misfortunes.

John Cotton, a Puritan minister, further fleshed out the religious motivations behind colonization, positing that leaving England for New England was reflexive of divine command. He stressed the importance of knowledge, prosperity, and spiritual purity as justifications for the decision to migrate, intertwining economic aspirations with a religious mission. Yet the potential for failure loomed large; previous attempts at colonization had often ended in horror or brutality, exemplifying the profound challenges inherent in such a massive endeavor.

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The settlers faced numerous obstacles not only from the land and weather but also from the Indigenous populations who were reluctant to relinquish their territories. Though some sought to engage mutually, the encroaching English land claims would inevitably lead to conflict. It is worth noting that colonization required a delicate balance of power, economics, and ethics—one that would persist through the years.

As this new society began to take shape, social hierarchies, marginalization, and the interactions between different communities would profoundly influence its development. While early settlers attempted to delineate their truth, encompassing broad societal changes, they ultimately found themselves subsumed in the complexities of colonial life.

Thus, while Smith's guide promised opportunities and riches, the reality of human suffering and conflict, particularly regarding Indigenous peoples and future discussions surrounding slavery, would emerge as critical underpinning narratives very much tied to the reality of colonization in New England.

Chapter 2: The Enslavement of Africans and its Place in Colonial New England

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As New England developed, so too did the necessity for labor, which would eventually turn to the dark institution of slavery. The initial stages of colonization led to a paradox: settlers sought prosperity and success, yet the means required to achieve such a vision often involved morally and ethically repugnant practices.

Though initially relying on indentured servants and Native Americans, the English colonists soon turned to African slaves to fulfill their growing labor demands. Enslaved Africans were not unfamiliar to the English; they had already been introduced through myriad trade dynamics established by European powers long before England's formal entry into the slave trade. The Portuguese, for instance, had established extensive networks in Africa, capturing and trading enslaved people.

The English began to assert themselves in the Atlantic slave trade, most notably when figures such as John Hawkins participated in slave captures in Africa, selling his captives for profit. By the middle of the seventeenth century, with colonies increasingly dependent on enslaved labor, the brutal mechanics of slavery generated wealth while entrenching systems that dehumanized its victims.

Despite the existing myths about a Puritanical aversion to slavery, evidence suggests that many New England colonists, including those espousing Puritan beliefs, accepted and rationalized slavery as vital to their economic

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mechanisms. Puritan theology, shaped by Calvinist underpinnings, viewed social hierarchies as divinely ordered, thereby justifying slavery's existence in both scripture and practice. Laws such as the Body of Liberties in Massachusetts even institutionalized the legitimacy of slavery under certain circumstances.

However, the legality of slavery often became a double-edged sword. While it provided economic utility, it also necessitated a complex set of justifications that at times sparked internal dissent among colonists. Incidents, like the trial concerning the ship *Rainbow*, reveal that while New Englanders participated in the slave trade, they occasionally grappled with the ethical ramifications of their actions—specifically when it came to capturing individuals through violent means.

Colonial legal structures began materializing around the slave trade, with laws that acknowledged and navigated the murky waters between servitude and slavery. These foundations allowed for the burgeoning economy in New England while also ignoring or downplaying the violence employed to maintain it.

Through the lens of economics, politics, and social justifications, New England's relationship with slavery remained fraught—both a source of wealth for colonists and a grim reminder of the dehumanization of those enslaved. By the century's end, while colonists' economies became more

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entrenched in the slave trade, it became clear that the expansion of slavery in North America fed on both avarice and moral compromise, shaping a society built on the intersection of pursuit for spiritual fulfillment and material gain.

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Chapter 2 Summary: The Key of the Indies

Chapter 2 Summary: The Key of the Indies

In 1648, John Winthrop, the pivotal leader of the Massachusetts Bay Colony and a dedicated diarist, grappled with the financial sustainability of his vision of a thriving Puritan community in New England. His journal entries reflect the fallout from a recent ban on trading firearms with Native Americans, aimed at curbing their military power but resulting in a sudden decline in the barter economy. Local tribes, now without access to guns, increasingly sought trade with the French and Dutch rather than the colonists, leading to a significant drop in beaver pelt trade—an essential commodity for the economy of New England. Winthrop noted grimly the diminishing returns on English commodities, reflecting a broader economic malaise exacerbated by the halt in immigration from England after the reconvening of Parliament in 1640, which shifted many Puritans into a state of economic stasis.

However, salvation emerged in the Caribbean. Winthrop celebrated a newly opened trade route with Barbados and other West Indies islands, where the burgeoning sugar industry was reshaping commerce. New England's economy, once reliant on the influx of new settlers and the trade of furs, transitioned into a robust supply base for the sugar-producing colonies,

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offering provisions like fish and livestock in exchange for sugar and tobacco—commodities that fueled trade with England and restored economic vitality. A drought in 1648 devastated West Indian crops, creating demand for New England's surplus, which helped improve the colonists' standing among London merchants who had previously viewed them with disdain.

The chapter emphasizes the complex interdependencies between New England and the Caribbean, highlighting the distinction between "societies with slaves" and "slave societies." While New England was not a slave society in the way the Caribbean was, it was economically intertwined with the slave labor economy that underpinned sugar production in the West Indies. As trade routes expanded, New Englanders increasingly participated in this global economy, often profiting from the brutal realities of slavery, despite their moral frameworks, which condemned it. The intricate web of trade linked New England ports to Caribbean plantations, and the exchange of commodities was a reciprocal relationship benefitting both regions, albeit with starkly different social and economic structures.

The chapter also documents the rise of influential families such as the Winthrops, who thrived in both the New England and West Indian trade networks—detailed through generational connections that reveal a shared economic ambition. With the expanding wealth of New England's merchant class, the practice of slavery gradually penetrated the region, reflecting a

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broader societal acceptance shaped by economic necessity. As such connections to the Caribbean intensified, New England became increasingly recognized as a crucial player in the Atlantic economy—a "key to the Indies," unlocking trade opportunities that would shape its future and secure its ties to slave labor systems far beyond its borders.

In conclusion, Chapter 2 illustrates the emergence of New England as a vital economic player in transatlantic trade, forced to navigate the moral complexities of its economic participation in slavery while leveraging its geographical and strategic advantage as a provider to the sugar-rich Caribbean. The interplay of familial networks, mercantilism, and the dark realities of slave labor interwove the fates of New England and the Caribbean, setting the stage for the region's evolving identity within the broader context of colonial America.

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Chapter 3 Summary: Unplanting and Replanting

Chapter 3: Unplanting and Replanting

The chapter opens in 1675 with Thomas Hamilton, an official of the Royal African Company, who is faced with an unexpected shipment of thirty Native Americans from New England. The precarious condition of the nine ill and dying individuals highlights the harsh realities of the Atlantic human trade. Hamilton sees potential in the remaining survivors, viewing them as better candidates for labor than local Moorish slaves. Though the shipment's high mortality rate is grim, Hamilton's thoughts are entrepreneurial, recognizing the potential benefits such exchanges could bring to English interests and imperial ambitions.

Before European colonization, New England had a rich tapestry of Native American life, estimated to have a population of 126,000 to 144,000, distributed across multiple tribes, including the Pequots, Narragansetts, and Massachusetts. This pre-colonial diversity complicates the narrative often portrayed as a simple clash between "Indians" and "English." Instead, colonization introduced a new layer to an already intricate society, motivated by European ambitions of land acquisition and resource exploitation.

The chapter elaborates on the historical notion of a "colony" as a place of

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Roman inhabitants surrounded by 'savage' peoples. New England's early settlements, fortified with garrisons and armed settlers, reflected this ethos as they sought to establish control over the land against perceived threats, notably from Native Americans. The military preparedness of these settlers underscores their intent not merely to coexist but to dominate.

Philosophers like Francis Bacon and Thomas Hobbes articulated the conflicted nature of colonization, grappling with concepts of "plantation" and "extirpation," highlighting a consistent thread across colonial practices: the removal of Native peoples to allow for European settlement. John Smith's advice to maintain friendly relations with Native Americans was largely ignored, leading to a trajectory of conflict and dominance.

The chapter further discusses the evolution of slavery in this context. The term "slave" historically encompassed a range of peoples, not exclusively Africans. Native Americans were also subjected to enslavement, particularly in the wake of violent conflicts such as the Pequot War and, later, King Philip's War. The enslavement of Native Americans escalated following these wars, serving to eliminate potential resistance and open up land for English settlers.

The Pequot War epitomized the violent dynamics of colonization, where both military defeat and brutality—such as the massacre at Mystic—resulted in widespread displacement and enslavement of Native Americans. Colonial

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governors and officers documented the commodification of captured individuals, illustrating a growing market for Indian slaves that complemented and intersected with the African slave trade.

Much of this trade and the associated violence were justified through a colonial lens that viewed indigenous peoples as obstacles to progress. The string of wars and skirmishes over land led not only to a decline in the Native American population but also to their replacement with enslaved Africans, as colonies sought more permanent labor solutions.

In seeking labor for their burgeoning agricultural systems, colonists like John Winthrop and others began to view Indian captives as a commodity. As the trading networks expanded, the process of enslaving and exporting Native Americans to the Caribbean became normalized, with New England colonists engaged in a brisk trade that ignored the moral and human implications of their actions.

Yet dissent emerged in the form of voices from both colonists and indigenous peoples who opposed this increasingly brutal practice. Roger Williams and others expressed unease about the moral implications of enslaving fellow humans, even as they participated in or benefited from the system.

By the chapter's conclusion, the scope of displacement is laid bare. The

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interlinked fates of Native Americans and Africans become evident; as two cultures faced genocide and enslavement within the framework of settler colonialism, they were forced into a perilous balance of survival amid annihilation. The narrative skillfully points to the gruesome realities of a colonial project rooted in a relentless drive for control, land, and profit, underpinning a complex history that continues to resonate today.

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Chapter 4: Visible Slaves

Chapter 4: Visible Slaves

The chapter begins with reflections on the transformation from the early days of English colonization in New England—when places like present-day Boston were just marshes—to a thriving center of trade by the early eighteenth century. Boston had developed a flourishing economy, complete with robust infrastructure, including warehouses and churches, showcasing the stark contrast to its humble beginnings.

While the labor of enslaved individuals was critical in the Caribbean colonies, their roles in New England were often obscured, as they performed similar tasks as free laborers. The distinction between slave and free labor was not as pronounced in New England, which contributed to a delayed emergence of a racialized labor system. This contrasts sharply with regions like the West Indies, where labor systems were more specialized due to the cultivation of cash crops like sugar.

The chapter examines how enslaved individuals were intertwined with the societal fabric of New England. An example comes from 1679, when a man named Wonn testified in a Salem witchcraft trial, recounting eerie encounters with apparitions and demonstrating his knowledge of local

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customs and community dynamics. Wonn's narrative illustrates that enslaved individuals were not merely invisible laborers; they were active participants in the community and folktales, navigating the complexities of their roles within colonial life.

Wonn's daily responsibilities—such as farming, caring for animals, and maintaining the property—highlighted the significant contributions enslaved people made to the colonization process. Their labor included tasks that facilitated the clearing of land and the construction of society itself, creating an undeniable link between enslavement and the growth of colonial settlements.

The chapter also explores the story of Roco and Sue, who signed a contract to barter turpentine and tar for their freedom, further emphasizing the complex nature of labor and autonomy among enslaved individuals. The labor required to harvest these materials was strenuous, and it demonstrated how enslaved people participated in industries vital to the colonial economy, despite the inherent dangers posed by the contested nature of the forests.

The repeated references to probate records and wills throughout the chapter provide insight into the ways enslaved individuals were commodified—often noted alongside livestock in inventories—reflecting how their worth was assessed alongside material possessions. Examples of different estate inventories illustrate that while enslaved people were

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valuable, their status was often relegated to that of property rather than individuals.

Additionally, the wills of various colonists reveal the personal dynamics of slave ownership, illustrating how enslaved individuals were factored into familial legacies and social standings. Figures like George Clarke established a pattern where enslaved people's reproductive potential contributed to their value, further intertwining their lives with those of their owners.

Despite the oppression of slavery, instances like the story of Angola, who negotiated his freedom through a labor contract, present a nuanced understanding of agency within enslavement. Angola's eventual recognition and respect from prominent figures illustrate that although enslaved individuals faced immense societal restrictions, they could still forge paths toward autonomy.

The juxtaposition of these personal narratives emphasizes the dual nature of existence in New England—within a societal context that was often unforgiving and racially hierarchical, yet also allowed for instances of negotiation and the potential for freedom. The chapter concludes by underscoring how slavery in New England was not only a reflection of the broader Atlantic economy but was deeply embedded in everyday life and social structures.

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In summary, this chapter paints a complex picture of slavery in New England, reflecting how enslaved individuals were integral to the region's economy and culture while simultaneously navigating the challenges of their subjugated status. The intermingling of financial, social, and legal narratives about enslavement illustrates the intricacies of colonial life and the visible yet often unacknowledged contributions of enslaved people.

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Chapter 5 Summary: Intimate Slavery

CHAPTER 5: Intimate Slavery

This chapter explores the life of Hagar, an enslaved African woman in 17th-century Massachusetts, who became pregnant and was compelled to name the father. Hagar's case reveals the deep injustices within the institution of slavery and the moral complexities faced by the enslaved in colonial America. She accused her owner's son, John Manning, of sexual relations but also mentioned Daniel Warro, a fellow enslaved man, as potentially being the father. Hagar defended her dignity, presenting herself as a "married woman" separated from her family in Angola. Her narrative was filled with deep emotional loss and a yearning for the life she had been forcibly taken from, emphasizing that her slavery was illegal under Puritan law, which prohibited kidnapping.

Despite her assertions of illegal enslavement and emotional suffering, the court, led by magistrate Thomas Danforth, took little interest in her plight, prioritizing property rights over her humanity. Danforth, a slave owner himself, was perhaps sympathetic but felt powerless to act; the tragic weaving of personal loss was common for enslaved individuals whose relationships were dictated by the market. Hagar's story illustrates the broader issues of chattel slavery, wherein New England's colonists regularly

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disrupted the familial bonds of those they owned.

The chapter expands on the realities of slavery in New England, contrasting the lives of the enslaved with the patriarchal family structures of the English settlers. Enslaved individuals often experienced profound alienation from their families due to enforced separations, dictated by owners and market forces. Legal frameworks in colonies like Virginia codified that a child's status followed that of the mother, creating a cycle of loss for enslaved families. The text elucidates the fraught nature of family among the enslaved, often matrilineal due to the vulnerabilities of enslaved men's paternal rights, leading to unstable familial structures pervaded by the constant threat of separation.

Interracial relationships among the enslaved with both their own community and English colonists are highlighted through anecdotes, showcasing attempts at kinship despite legal prohibitions against marriage for enslaved individuals. These interactions show how enslaved men and women sought connection in an oppressive system, forming bonds across racial lines. The narratives of individuals like Katherine and Jugg illustrate how such relationships often resulted in punishment through the colonial justice system and led to new lives complicating dynamics of ownership.

The chapter concludes by discussing the transitory nature of relationships formed under the duress of slavery, the resulting families often viewed as

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property rather than human connections. The pervasive threat of sale or separation reinforced the fragility of family ties among the enslaved, who lived in a state of constant concern for their loved ones. In examining the complexities of intimate relationships and familial structures, the chapter emphasizes the lasting emotional toll of slavery on those forced to endure it and the paradox of finding family amidst profound loss and dislocation.

CHAPTER 6: [The title appears to be missing or overlooked.]

This chapter will continue to examine the themes of intimate relationships, legal challenges, and the experiences of enslaved individuals in colonial America, drawing further on both historical and emotional narratives to tell their stories. The intricate interplay of personal agency amidst systemic oppression remains at the forefront, illuminating the realities of life for those bound by slavery's harsh constraints.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: The resilience of familial bonds among the enslaved

Critical Interpretation: Hagar's experience underscores the profound resilience of familial bonds, revealing how love and connection can endure even in the face of systemic oppression. This serves as an inspiration for our own lives, reminding us that no matter the challenges we face, it is the relationships we cultivate and the love we share that provide strength and purpose. By valuing our connections with one another, we can navigate through adversity, fostering a spirit of unity that transcends hardships. Hagar's narrative encourages us to cherish our families and communities, recognizing that they are our greatest support in times of trial.

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Chapter 6 Summary: The Law of the Land

In Chapter 6, titled "The Law of the Land," the narrative explores the intersection of law, race, and mortality within the framework of slavery in seventeenth-century New England. The chapter begins with the grim quote from Ecclesiastes, setting a tone that reflects on justice and oppression. It recounts the harrowing tale of John, an enslaved man who took his own life in 1661, and the subsequent investigation by a jury. While the jurors concluded that John's death was a suicide—an act viewed as defiance against divine order and the moral fibers of Puritan society—their decision also sheds light on the complex realities faced by enslaved individuals, conveying that his death symbolized an act of resistance against his oppression.

John's owner, Henry Bartholomew, a prominent merchant, epitomizes the economic interests that underpinned the institution of slavery. His acquisition of enslaved people reflects both his wealth accumulation and societal status. This dynamic reveals how the colonial system interwove legal authority with personal property rights, complicating the moral implications of enslaved lives and deaths. John's suicide served as a stark reminder of the lengths to which one might go to reclaim autonomy, even at the cost of their life, highlighting the daily terror and despair endured by the enslaved.

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Despite the overarching societal disdain for suicide, the nuances of John's identity as an African-born enslaved person suggest that perceptions of morality may have altered when the victim was a slave. The chapter contrasts this tragic scenario with anecdotes reflecting colonial attitudes toward the enslaved, such as Wait Winthrop's mocking comments about an enslaved man's mimicked suicide attempts. This juxtaposition emphasizes the dehumanization often faced by enslaved individuals, while also indicating that their suffering was sometimes met with indifference or derision in colonial society.

The chapter also discusses laws surrounding suicide and punishment, noting that individuals who took their lives were denied burial in Christian cemeteries. However, societal distinctions complicated this punishment, with enslaved people often excluded from the very privileges granted to free men. The discussion of firearms further illustrates the complexities of power dynamics: while free colonists had access to weapons, enslaved individuals faced restrictions, heightened by fears of rebellion. The authorities had a fraught relationship with enslaved people possessing guns, as demonstrated by incidents where enslaved individuals faced severe punishments for both violent and nonviolent crimes.

Arson appeared as a prevalent form of resistance among enslaved people, with various cases revealing their creative yet dangerous navigation of oppressive systems. The horrific execution of Maria, the first woman

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publicly burned alive in New England, for allegedly committing arson, encapsulates the brutal reality of punitive justice meted out to the enslaved. The chapter traces how societal fears of rebellion led to heightened vigilance and severe consequences for acts of resistance, further entrenching racial hierarchies.

Through various cases of theft and petty crime, the narrative showcases the desperation of enslaved individuals resorting to theft for survival, often risking severe punishment as they sought to alleviate their suffering. The overarching theme acknowledges the complex interplay of societal roles, economic structures, and moral standards, illuminating the harsh realities faced by the enslaved in this historical context. As the narrative concludes, the chapter hints at the frequent acts of escape, underscoring how enslaved individuals continuously maneuvered within a system designed to suppress their freedom, often with nascent hopes for autonomy and agency in a landscape rife with peril.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: The Act of Resistance through Desperation

Critical Interpretation: Consider how John's tragic decision to end his life reflects an ultimate act of resistance against unyielding oppression. Just as John sought a powerful form of autonomy even in despair, you may find inspiration in the idea that the quest for freedom and self-determination can manifest in both subtle and overt ways. Each of us encounters situations where we feel confined or powerless, but recognizing the courage it takes to stand against our own struggles, whether through small acts of defiance or major life changes, can empower you to reclaim your narrative. In a world where voices often go unheard, channeling your frustrations into constructive actions can ignite change, not just for yourself but for those around you, echoing the enduring will to persist in the face of adversity.

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Chapter 7 Summary: The Selling of Adam

In Chapter 7, titled "The Selling of Adam," we explore the life and thoughts of Samuel Sewall, a merchant, judge, and prominent figure in colonial Massachusetts, whose journey profoundly intersects with the issue of slavery in New England.

Samuel Sewall arrived in New England as a child in 1661 and by 1700 was a wealthy merchant and recently appointed justice of the Massachusetts Colony Superior Court. He had a reputation for introspection, particularly following his disavowal of the Salem witch trials, which marked the only recorded apology from a judge involved. Despite the rise of a new merchant class, Sewall remained committed to Puritan principles, grappling with the moral implications of his society's values amidst its increasing prosperity.

In 1700, Sewall published a groundbreaking pamphlet titled *The Selling of Joseph: A Memorial*, which heralded a rare antislavery position within New England, addressing the enslavement of Africans. He critiqued the widespread acceptance of slavery, positing that enslaved individuals are "the offspring of God" with an inherent right to liberty. This pamphlet can be seen as the first overt call for the abolition of slavery in the region, marking a significant moment in colonial discourse on human rights.

As the 17th century drew to a close, questions about the permanence of

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English colonization had largely been resolved: the colonies had survived and established a tenuous peace—largely at the expense of Indigenous populations. By now, slavery had become deeply entrenched in the societal fabric of New England, a fact which Sewall began to contest, albeit as one of a minority voice. Critics of slavery had begun to emerge both in the colonies and in England, such as Morgan Godwyn and Thomas Tryon, who condemned the inhumane treatment of enslaved peoples from a Christian perspective.

Sewall's reflections were partly catalyzed by a petition for the freedom of a local enslaved couple, and he became increasingly aware of how economic interests intersected with moral corruption. His writing was spurred by an intersection of personal unease and societal events that suggested a growing discomfort with slavery among some sectors of the population.

While Sewall argued fervently against slavery, he was also entrenched in the trade system. His diaries reveal his transactions involving enslaved individuals, indicating his personal involvement despite his moral objections. The biblical story of Joseph served as a framework for his argument against the legitimacy of slavery, pointing to a divine order that opposes the commodification of human beings.

Contrasting with Sewall was John Saffin, a slave owner and merchant who vehemently opposed Sewall's stance, seeing it as an affront to the

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established societal hierarchy. Saffin, drawing upon common beliefs of the time, contended that some individuals were naturally suited to slavery. He owned a man named Adam and became embroiled in legal troubles after Adam sought to affirm his freedom, revealing the layers of tension and personal conflict inherent in slavery.

Over the course of prolonged court proceedings that involved Sewall's advocacy for Adam, themes of power, ownership, and identity emerged. Adam's struggle for freedom highlighted the moral complexities and systemic inequalities that characterized colonial New England. Despite Sewall's efforts, he faced significant opposition, even from those within his social circle, including his own family, exemplifying the deeply rooted justifications for slavery that prevailed in broader colonial society.

In conclusion, Chapter 7 of this narrative unfolds the idiosyncrasies of New England's shifting moral landscape concerning slavery. Samuel Sewall, through his controversial yet pioneering critique, represents the beginning of antislavery discourse, revealing the profound struggles between commerce, morality, and human rights that would continue to evolve in the region's history.

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