

[PDF] A Praying People (American Indian Studies)

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Dane A. Morrison

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Dane A. Morrison : A Praying People (American Indian Studies) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Praying People (American Indian Studies):

This is the first book-length history of the remnants of the Massachusetts and Wampanoag tribes, documenting their struggle to survive devastating epidemics and Puritan colonization. Morrison incorporates insights from anthropology and organization studies to show how the adoption of Puritan beliefs and practices by bands of praying Indians constituted a viable, if defensive, strategy of acculturation. The emergent institution of Praying Town became both the organization and the process through which these groups of Native Americans hoped to achieve cultural revitalization. Tragically, as the remnant peoples looked to Puritan ways for guidance in redefining their identity, profound changes within colonial society were leading a new generation of colonists to subsume their own spiritual mission under more commercial concerns. In linking their destiny to weakening elements in Puritan culture, the Praying Indians were left unprotected when King Philip's War recast the framework of relations between colonists and Native Americans.

Fully aware of the challenges of reconstructing indigenous voices from the written histories of English colonists, Morrison carefully scrutinizes New England colonial histories and documents, skillfully piecing together 17th-century native responses to European colonization. Morris tells the tale of the 'Remnants' - Algonkian survivors of the 1616-

1619 epidemics. With their social structure and cultural assumptions profoundly challenged, remnant people struggled individually and collectively to adapt to English religious and civil organization in hopes of creating for themselves a new order. What emerges in this beautifully written narrative are not stereotypes of Indians, not victims nor villains, but individuals and broken communities wrestling intellectually and emotionally with fundamental questions about how to define themselves anew, positioned, as they were, between 'frontier Indians' and English settlers. Even those who are familiar with the tragic conclusion of this early episode of Native/European interaction will find Morrison's thoughtful account riveting. *A Praying People* is an impressive contribution to the important work of reconstructing American and Native American history. (Hertha D. Wong, University of California, Berkeley) This is a thought-provoking book that provides a good chronicle of the struggles of the Massachusetts Praying Indians during the seventeenth century and represents a valuable addition to the literature. (Michael J. Puglisi, *William and Mary Quarterly*) Fully aware of the challenges of reconstructing indigenous voices from the written histories of English colonists, Morrison carefully scrutinizes New England colonial histories and documents, skillfully piecing together 17th-century native responses to European colonization. Morrison tells the tale of the 'remnants' - Algonkian survivors of the 1616-1619 epidemics. With their social structure and cultural assumptions profoundly challenged, remnant people struggled individually and collectively to adapt to English religious and civil organization in hopes of creating for themselves a new order. What emerges in this beautifully written narrative are not stereotypes of Indians, not victims nor villains, but individuals and broken communities wrestling intellectually and emotionally with fundamental questions about how to define themselves anew, positioned, as they were, between 'frontier Indians' and English settlers. Even those who are familiar with the tragic conclusion of this early episode of Native/European interaction will find Morrison's thoughtful account riveting. *A Praying People* is an impressive contribution to the important work of reconstructing American and Native American history. (Hertha D. Wong, University of California, Berkeley) This is a thought-provoking book that provides a good chronicle of the struggles of the Massachusetts Praying Indians during the seventeenth century and represents a valuable addition to the literature. (Michael J. Puglisi, *William and Mary Quarterly*)

About the Author
The Author: Dane Morrison is an assistant professor of History at Salem State College and Visiting Lecturer at Tufts University in Massachusetts. He received his Ph.D. in History from Tufts University and his M.B.A. from Boston College. As an Organization Consultant, he specialized in organizational culture and change.