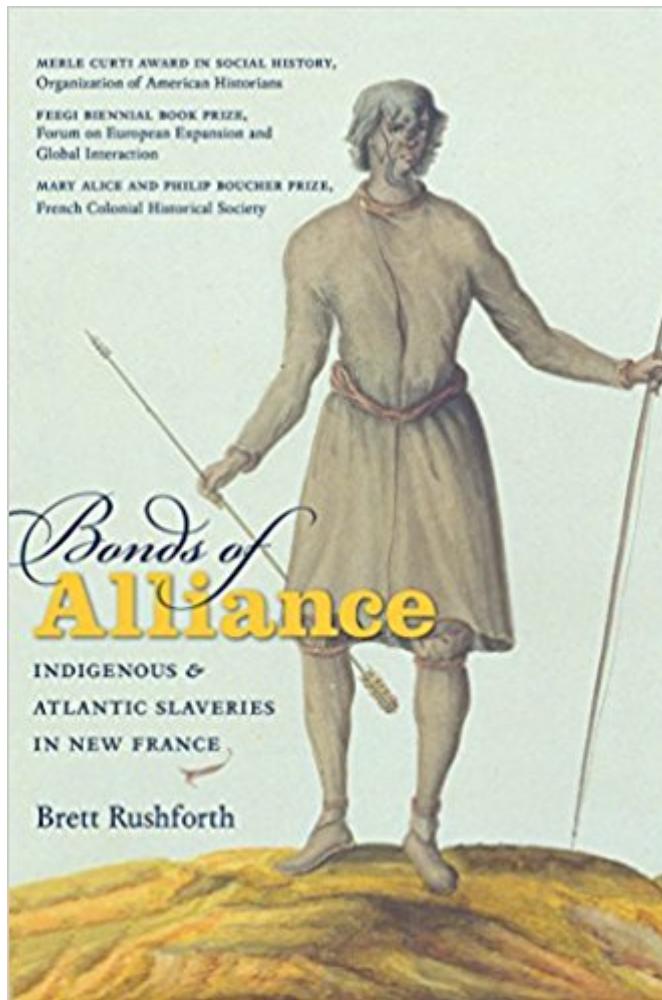


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# **Bonds Of Alliance: Indigenous And Atlantic Slaveries In New France (Published By The Omohundro Institute Of Early American History And Culture And The University Of North Carolina Press)**





## Synopsis

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, French colonists and their Native allies participated in a slave trade that spanned half of North America, carrying thousands of Native Americans into bondage in the Great Lakes, Canada, and the Caribbean. In *Bonds of Alliance*, Brett Rushforth reveals the dynamics of this system from its origins to the end of French colonial rule. Balancing a vast geographic and chronological scope with careful attention to the lives of enslaved individuals, this book gives voice to those who lived through the ordeal of slavery and, along the way, shaped French and Native societies. Rather than telling a simple story of colonial domination and Native victimization, Rushforth argues that Indian slavery in New France emerged at the nexus of two very different forms of slavery: one indigenous to North America and the other rooted in the Atlantic world. The alliances that bound French and Natives together forced a century-long negotiation over the nature of slavery and its place in early American society. Neither fully Indian nor entirely French, slavery in New France drew upon and transformed indigenous and Atlantic cultures in complex and surprising ways. Based on thousands of French and Algonquian-language manuscripts archived in Canada, France, the United States and the Caribbean, *Bonds of Alliance* bridges the divide between continental and Atlantic approaches to early American history. By discovering unexpected connections between distant peoples and places, Rushforth sheds new light on a wide range of subjects, including intercultural diplomacy, colonial law, gender and sexuality, and the history of race.

## Book Information

Series: Published by the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture and the University of North Carolina Press

Paperback: 424 pages

Publisher: The University of North Carolina Press; Reprint edition (February 1, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1469613867

ISBN-13: 978-1469613864

Product Dimensions: 6.4 x 1.1 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.7 out of 5 stars 12 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #118,051 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #3 in Books > History > Americas > Canada > Pre-Confederation #34 in Books > History > Americas > Canada > First

## Customer Reviews

A brilliant, bold, and remarkable journey into the Indian slave system of New France.--American Historical Review

Slavery is at once ubiquitous and highly localized in this masterly work by Brett Rushforth. . . . Bonds of Alliance engages with the historiographies of native studies, early America, early modern Europe, and the history of slavery, and it enriches them all.--Journal of American History

Rushforth unravels a complex and diverse skein of social, legal, and diplomatic practices that bind Native Americans and their French counterparts. . . [and] makes several significant contributions to the field. --Journal of Southern History

[A] sharp and superb study. . . . This book challenges us to seriously re-think slavery's role, and the history of race, in French colonial projects in early Canada.--Histoire sociale/Social History

A creative combination of linguistic, archaeological, and documentary evidence. . . . It is quite amazing how much Rushforth has found. . . . Everyone interested in the history of American colonialism and slavery should read this book. Its valuable reorienting effects. . . serve as a reminder that new histories can always be found in familiar places.--Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society

[A] compelling new study. . . . A landmark of historical interpretation.--Journal of Illinois History

Artfully conceived and engagingly written."--H-Net Reviews

Through his exhaustive research and attention to larger connections, Rushforth provides perhaps the most compelling account yet of the significance of Indian slavery to early American and Atlantic histories. . . . A must-read for historians of slavery, early American history, French colonial history, Atlantic history, and American Indian history alike.--William and Mary Quarterly

Rushforth's research is impressive. . . and the writing vividly brings to life the world of the Indian slaves in New France. . . . A well-crafted, detailed history and exciting narrative.--H-France

Will surely take its rightful place beside other required readings for anyone studying the nature of Indian slavery, Indian-French relations in New France, or colonialism in the Atlantic World.--Western Historical Quarterly

Those with an interest in the complexities of native-newcomer relations, the connections of the region to greater French history, or slavery outside the American South will find Bonds of Alliance to be worthwhile reading.--Indiana Magazine of History

General readers and professional historians alike will enjoy and learn from Brett Rushforth's fresh look at slavery in colonial North America and the Caribbean. . . . He successfully blends history and historiography with narratives and analysis.--The Annals of Iowa

The extensive use of linguistic and archaeological evidence makes this a pathbreaking work. . . . Highly recommended. Graduate students, faculty.--Choice

A sophisticated analysis. . . . This academic work could also introduce a general readership to a wide

range of subjects across disciplines including French colonial diplomacy, law, sexuality, race, slavery, and Latin America.--Arkansas Historical Quarterly Sets a new standard for scholarship on Indian slaver in the French colonial world.--New West Indian Guide Compelling...powerfully argued...brilliant...a landmark of historical interpretation.--Julie Saville, University of Chicago Rushforth [drew] on an impressive body of French- and Algonquian-language research and created a database that traces nearly two thousand Indian slaves. Such careful research enables Rushforth to recover the lives of individuals: their work, their social worlds, the ways violenceÃ¢â€šâ€œ including sexual violenceÃ¢â€šâ€œ framed their experiences of slavery.--Journal of American History Even those who disagree with the writer's arguments about race will find much of interest in this deeply researched, well-written work.--The Historian A book that will spark debate, scholarship, and conversation for years to come. . . . A brilliant, bold, and remarkable journey into the Indian slave system of New France.--American Historical Review An exceptional resource for the study of Indian slavery in North America.--Louisiana History

This pioneering approach to colonial North American history traces the traffic in Native American captives from the continental heartland into slavery in French Canada and on the sugar plantations of the Caribbean. . . . A highly original and strongly argued study that will force us to rethink the received wisdom on Native-French relations.--Allan Greer, McGill University Brilliantly bringing together Native American and Atlantic History, Bonds of Alliance offers a nuanced analysis of shifting forms, meanings, and experiences of slavery. Rushforth draws on prodigious and wide-ranging research, using travel narratives, social history, and linguistic analysis to tell a rich and vivid story. A tremendous contribution to our understanding of the French Atlantic.--Laurent Dubois, Duke University Avec Bonds of Alliance, l'histoire de l'esclavage en Amerique ne sera plus jamais la meme. Porte par une ecriture puissante et par une epoustouflante erudition, l'ouvrage de Brett Rushforth montre que non seulement plusieurs systemes serviles ont coexiste sur le continent americain a l'epoque moderne mais aussi qu'ils operaient a des echelles et a des fins bien differentes que ce qu'a retenu l'historiographie.--Dominique Deslandres, Universite de Montreal Rushforth imaginatively uses French and Native sources to illuminate a largely forgotten but vitally important chapter of the American encounter. . . . He never loses sight of the human stories, especially of enslaved Natives, which form the larger patterns he has found. A remarkable achievement.--James H. Merrell, Vassar College

Best I've seen on the subject on French slaving in North America.

A highly academic topic made readable for the lay person because of the good sense of the author.

This book is good read for anyone interested in the interactions between Europeans and Native Americans in North America. Rushforth discusses practices that have long been ignored. This book takes an in depth look at the practice of slavery in New France (Eastern North America, Great Lakes region) among indigenous groups as well as Europeans. He ties these practices to supposed practices conducted circa AD 1250 (the time of Cahokia), which is much farther back than most go. While I find his discussion on archaeological interpretations somewhat sketchy (he largely only uses one of the prominent viewpoints), I applaud his effort. You rarely find historians willing to venture out of their field. He also nicely links these North American actions with the larger Atlantic World. A point that I'm not sure I completely agree with is his linkage between the marriages "in the custom of the country" to slavery, which is a much stronger interpretation than most have had. Whether you agree with his interpretation or not, it is well worth the read. It provides thought provoking questions on the nature of the relationships between various indigenous groups, as well as between the French, the British, and the various Native Americans. As an archaeologist, I cannot vouch for the accuracy of some of his statements. However, much like archaeology, he can see the evidence in one way where others see it differently.

Take a look at the reviews (the professional reviews) of this book. Allan Greer, Jim Merrel... I'm inclined to trust the experts over anonymous screeds via product review. Rushforth is a world-class scholar and the Omohundro Institute's publication process is the cream of the crop. Every footnote and source is checked (no other publisher of academic history does this). The charge that one of their books has been "rushed to press" is ridiculous. If you purchase this book with a realistic idea of what it is trying to accomplish--synthesizing an immense amount of primary sourcework to illuminate an academically neglected part of North America's colonial era--then you will be very pleased with your choice.

Bonds of Alliance is a compelling and illuminating treatment of the patterns of Indian slavery in New France. Rushforth treats in great detail the patterns of slavery among Native groups as well as the ways in which French colonizers incorporated versions of those slavery practices. Rushforth treats his subjects with great respect, especially the Natives forced to participate in the systems of slavery. While this work forces a reconsideration of previous ideas about the ways slavery operated

in New France, it does so in a coherent, powerful way that leaves little room to doubt his interpretation. I look forward to further work by Rushforth on these fascinating topics. A note to readers with weak stomachs--life in these systems of slavery was brutal and in the process of honoring the lives and suffering of slaves, Rushforth does not hide the dark realities of life in slavery.

This is a highly-learned, deeply-researched, and altogether brilliant book on a much under-researched topic. It is one of the best books published recently in early American history, and will alter the way scholars and the general public have seen both native slavery and New France. It is published by an excellent scholarly press, yet offers a readable, provocative account of this world. Students, scholars, and indeed anyone with an interest in American history will benefit from reading this terrific book.

This work, years in the making, provides a breathtaking overview of the role of Native American slaves and slavery in the extended French Atlantic during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This book is richly sourced, with detailed footnotes on practically every page providing the evidence, background, and historiography (hence no bibliography). The parts that touch on my area of expertise exhibit a deep understanding of the key sources and debates. Crafted to stand the test of time, *Bonds of Alliance* has magnificent detail and rich insight that will pay scholarly dividends for decades to come.

Dr. Rushforth explores an under-studied realm of colonial American history in this masterful book and draws some exciting conclusions. For most readers this will be a great introduction to a now obscure slave system and it will leave them eager to learn more.

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