

AN EXAMPLE OF AN "A" PAPER

This paper is exemplary in several ways. It strongly articulates a position--both social upheaval and the presence of effective promotional literature explain why thousands of seventeenth-century English people migrated to America--and supports that position by marshaling evidence from primary and secondary sources. It is well structured: the exposition proceeds from an introduction outlining the argument through a body of discussion to a conclusion, building upon the readings and lectures. The thesis is one that many historians would accept, but the delivery is in the author's own words and terms; the paper displays a degree of independent thinking. The examples aptly and amply substantiate the points made. In addition, the writing is clear.

*The text retains the corrections I made on the original. ~~Strikeouts~~ indicate words or phrases to be eliminated, **boldface** words or phrases that should be inserted, and **[bracketed text in red]** marginal comments (usually on the essay's contents). The final paragraph in `courier new type` is the comment I appended to the original.*

The Lure Of A Better Future For Englishmen In The New World

From 1620 to 1642, nearly 80,000 Englishmen uprooted from their lives in Britain and set sail for America. The life that they found ~~there~~ was ~~one of great hardship~~. Conflict with native peoples, disease and starvation all contributed to mortality rates near 50 percent. **[initially, in some places. you mean, they had a clear motive for sponsoring settlement - profit.]** While wealthy investors had a clear profit motive in the new world, the motives that brought ordinary Englishmen to this dangerous frontier environment are more complex. The large-scale migration of laborers, cottagers and farmers during this period can be explained by the confluence of English social upheaval and an effective promotional campaign undertaken by investors, planters and trading companies. Social upheaval eroded many Englishmen's **[and women's]** reasons to stay at home[,] and at the same time promotional literature painted an enticing image of the new world. The combination of these essential elements led to the exodus. Motivations for emigration can be analyzed ~~closer~~ **[more closely]** by examining the approaches taken by the promotional literature. Promotional tracts appealed to the public's desire for greater economic opportunity and also advertised the chance to participate in the creation of a new and better English society. Both of these strategies **[poor word choice]** are good indicators of why 80,000 Englishmen saw a better life in America.

Domestic problems in England, including depressed economic conditions, religious conflict and overpopulation created social upheaval and a population ~~that was~~ receptive to promotional campaigns for colonization. The late sixteenth and early seventeenth century saw a sharp increase in England's population. In the meantime, the English economy, while undergoing a transformation from communal agriculture to commerce and foreign trade, was unable to keep pace with the population surge. **[explain]** Inflation forced landlords with fixed mortgages to raise rents and partition their lands. These moves, in combination with a widespread conversion of cropland to pastureland[,] displaced a great number of agricultural laborers. Some moved to the cities for ~~factory~~ jobs, but many became wandering vagrants (Cohen, 9/15). Religious tensions also contributed to social upheaval in the 1620's. Persecution of both Catholics and Puritans

created an atmosphere of religious conflict that infringed upon spiritual freedoms. [yes - why did this occur?] In addition to [experiencing] these social ills, the lower classes had no say in government and lacked any course of redress for their problems (Bridenbaugh, 395). These conditions eroded the quality of life for many laborers, cottagers and farmers. A general sentiment existed that England was overpopulated and lacking in opportunities for a great number of its citizens. Many felt that they were facing a bleak future in England. Social tumult generated a mobile and somewhat desperate segment of the population that had little incentive to remain in the old world (Cohen, 9/15). Conditions in England in the 1620's left many Englishmen receptive to the promotional campaign for colonization of the new world.

A literary promotional campaign undertaken by trading companies, planters and investors capitalized on the discontent of the English population and succeeded in creating a migration by painting an inviting image of the colonies. Promotional literature included accounts from explorers of the new world, letters from successful planters and propaganda pamphlets. By 1620, this literature was reaching a significant portion of the English population. Literature such as this was a very important means of communication at this time and was read very carefully (Bridenbaugh, 410). Promotional literature accentuated the positive draws of the colonies[,] sometimes at the expense of accuracy. In fact, many who wrote about the new world and its inhabitants in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century[,] had never visited America. Accurate or not, the promotional literature was likely the only information upon which many Englishmen were able to base their conception of America. It led many of England's downtrodden to envision America as the glimmer of hope that they were seeking. The promotional literature stirred the imagination of Englishmen and tempted many to seize the opportunity that seemed to be presenting itself to them.

Examination of strategies employed by promotional literature reveals many of the motives that induced so many Englishmen to uproot and sail for North America. One such strategy was to paint the image of America as a land of plenty and of economic opportunity. From early in the British exploration of America, literature described the new land as one of abundant resources. Traveling to the Carolina coast in 1584, Arthur Barlowe wrote[,] "The earth bringeth forth all things in abundance as in the first creation, without toil or labor" (Mancall, 16). In his 1590 description of American peoples and resources, Thomas Harriot stated that he "found the soil to be fatter, the trees greater and grow thinner, the ground more firm and deeper mould, more and larger champions, finer grass and as good as ever we saw any in England" (Mancall, 82). Promotional literature promised potential emigrants a chance to profit from this abundance by working the land. The abundance of open lands in America represented an economic opportunity for Englishmen that did not exist in their home country. Economic motives were especially important in the settlement of the Chesapeake region[,] where tobacco was a booming export by 1620. Planters advertised land in order to attract the labor force that they required. One Virginia Company tract in the 1620's guaranteed fifty acres of land to anyone who would come and settle. It should also be noted that, while less important, personal wealth also motivated settlers of New England. Again this is evident in promotional literature. Puritan John Winthrop, justifying settlement in Massachusetts[,] wrote[,] "why should we stand here striving for places of habitation and in ye mean time suffer a whole continent, as fruitful and convenient for the use of man to lie waste without any improvement", making clear that like other American settlers, the Puritans brought hopes of greater prosperity than that which they found in England (Mancall, 135). The lure of endless resources appealed to a large segment of people who felt that

England was too crowded to provide for everyone. They yearned for the opportunity to earn success, a prospect that they saw as more likely in America than in the old world.

Promotional literature also appealed to potential emigrants's[s'] desire to create a new and better society. For many, this meant a "new England", a transplantation of English culture that would eliminate the worst elements of society at home. In 1627, John Bellamy wrote a tract urging Englishmen to experience the glory of erecting towns, participating in local government and leaving ones name to prosperity (Bridenbaugh, 407). The new world seemed to offer the English a level of control over their lives and their society that they could not enjoy at home. Much of the literature that espoused creation of a new and better England had a strong religious emphasis. ~~They~~ [It] advertised the opportunity to build churches and spread religion to both a new part of the world and a new people. Bellamy's tract claims **that** "For such as are truly pious, shall find here the opportunity to put in practice the workes of piety" (Bridenbaugh, 402). Many emigrants were impressed by tracts which found ~~in scripture justification~~ [justification in scripture] for doing as the Israelites had done and leaving a land where they were not wanted (Bridenbaugh, 402). Religion was of vital importance to all Englishmen[,] and the linkage of godliness and the American settlements was of vital importance to promoters. Excitement over creating a new society and ~~religion~~ [a pure church] were most closely linked in the case of the Puritans. The Puritans sought more than freedom to practice their religion; [; more centrally,] they sought to create a new society based on devotion to ~~God~~ God. It [what?] is evident throughout their promotional literature, and most evident in the works of John Winthrop[,] who envisioned "a city upon a hill[,]"; a religious commonwealth to serve as a model society for the rest of the world. While on the surface it may appear that New England Puritans and settlers of the southern colonies had very different reasons for coming to America, they both shared in the excitement of creating a new and better society for themselves. [good]

~~Moving to the American colonies,~~ f [F]or the tens of thousands of Englishmen who did so in the seventeenth century, [moving to the American colonies] was an abrupt abandonment of the only lifestyle that they had known and a dangerous risk. The incentives that were able to overcome such deterrents and create a migration were a unique combination of attractive and attractive and ~~repulsive~~ [propulsive] forces. Domestic tumult created a mobile and poverty[-]stricken segment of the English population as well as a general sentiment that the island was overpopulated. Capitalizing on a population that was willing to listen to alternatives, promotional literature presented America as just the glimmer of hope that many Englishmen needed. The promotional literature appealed to would-be settlers' desire for economic opportunities as well as their excitement about creating a new society. The confluence of these attractive and repulsive incentives from 1620 to 1642 brought 80,000 Englishmen to seek a new beginning in the new world.

You've written an excellent paper that advances a clear thesis, marshals evidence effectively, and displays some original thought. I am particularly struck by your insight that the Puritans had economic motives for migrating as well as the more obvious religious ones, and your quotation from Winthrop is especially telling (p. 4). In general you use the primary sources well, and your argument that the promotional literature can be used to gauge migrants' motives makes much sense, although somewhere you ought to have said that it does so because we can see how people actually responded to it. Just because tracts advertized certain advantages for going to America does not in itself mean that people moved for the reasons the tracts educe. In many ways, though, this paper is an exemplary effort. **A**