

# Literature review of the puritan dilemma



This assignment is based on the review of the books "The Puritan Dilemma: The Story of John Winthrop" Authored by Morgan, Edmund and "America: A Concise History, Volume 1: To 1877" Authored by James A. Henretta and David Brody.

## Chapter 6

According to the Puritans, what was government's role in society?

The Puritans believed that the church and government should work together to promote holiness and help people to succeed both materially and spiritually. A government official had to be apart of the church. Government was viewed as a proper agency for carrying out the church's goals, even on family worship.

Who were the Separatists? Where, in America, did they first settle? Did Winthrop agree with them? Why/why not?

The separates were the puritans who did not recognize the established church and others doubted that the England church was scriptural or its administrations was valid. In America, they settled in Massachusetts Bay. Winthrop did not agree with the separatists because their viewpoints were not in line with puritans believe that evil was everywhere. In addition, the separatists also threatened the relation with England.

What, to Winthrop was the most compelling reason to leave England for America?

Winthrop made the decision to move his family to America to escape religious prosecutions.

The charter for the Massachusetts Bay Colony company did not specify a place for the member of the company (the owners/stockholders) to meet? Why was this important?

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It was important to keep it secret from the board of governors in England.

Did the colony prove to be a good business investment

They were as the company becomes successful as the company becomes the only successful company that was not under influence of board of governor's in England. Also they engaged in business

What was Winthrop's attitude towards the Indians?

Winthrop first perceived Indians to be a Godsend but later changed his tune after they killed many whites.

What was the role of immigration in the colony's survival?

The role of their migration to the colony survival was void the coming war with France, gain wealth, escape the jurisdiction of the Virginia company, as well as practice their purified Protestantism.

What were the differences between Presbyterians and Congregationalists?

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The difference between Presbyterianism and congregationalism is not all about elders rule, but whether the region of congregations need be ruled by a single bishop or just a congregation of presbyters. In other words, Presbyterianism means rule by Presbytery.

## Chapter 7

How did the definition of “ freemen” of the colony change? Why was this important?

To be a freeman was like to be given the power of making decisions for your own. Minors for instance were not legally supposed to make any decision. Freemen were supposed to attend meetings in Plymouth town, but the court voted to give room for freemen to assemble in individual towns, as they were to select deputies who were to attend court sessions in Plymouth. In addition, the freemen were to meet in Plymouth for the selection of governor and the assistant, but the court voted to give room for proxy voting hence done away with colony wide meetings of all freemen. This was much important as it allowed formal representative assembly holding.

What was the relationship between (Puritan) church membership and voting rights? Were voting rights in the colony more restrictive than in England, or less restrictive? Why?

The relationship between church membership and voting rights was that, only freemen were allowed to vote. For the qualification one had to show visible means of support and the necessary level of being responsible. The population was strongly puritans and the small group leaders dominated its

governance. These people were strongly influenced by puritan religion elders. Though the governors were elected, such like elections were limited to freemen, who had been examined for religious opinions. As a result, the colonial leadership faced intolerance to other religious group. The voting rights became more restrictive as the colony grew wider and more diversified. There was a time where property needs excluded around 25% of the adult gents from voting. However the franchise remained still relatively open. The governmental systems of Plymouth also modified as the colony grew.

Was the colony a theocracy? Why/why not?

The government of the colony was just a mixture of both theocratic as well as democratic. The Massachusetts bay colony was partly theocratic. This is because, it was believed by puritans that they had a covenant with God for them to build a community that will act as a model to all other nations to copy from them. This is theocratic as everybody believed in it and worshiped a God who was to help them come up with such like a nation. In addition, the colony's franchise was extended to all adult males who were part and parcel of the puritan congregation, as they never took into consideration, the views of other churches or non- religious people, both the Catholics and Jews were all hanged in Boston. Also, the church influenced. This shows theoretic idea behind such like government, and how the church and God affected most decisions of the colony and provided background that established their governance.

The Puritan Dilemma by Edmund Morgan

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8. Did Winthrop do to stabilize the colony's economy? To stabilize the colony's economy Winthrop practiced moderation which served to bring the colony successfully through the years that separatism posed threats to its mission and survival.

9. What does Morgan say about the prudishness/drabness of the Puritans?

Morgan says that despite the puritans having to devote most of their lives to god, they would eventually sin and falls short of his glory. He also says that despite the relentless effort by a puritan to refrain from sin he could end up sinning anyway. These show prudish puritans were.

10. How did the idea of a covenant with God affect Puritan thinking? How did this lead to the Puritan idea of the " city on a hill?"

The puritan thinking was affected by the covenant with god such that he always has to put god as priority in their lives despite having pleasures of the earth god must always remain the main focus in a puritan life. This thinking made puritans to devote much part of their lives in finding a balance between life and god. The puritan idea of the city on the hill is derived from the belief that in order to win the belief of others one must try to do good in a world of wrong doing and that one must moderate in actions he does so that he comes close to god by being a shining star on a dark earth.

11. Why was Separatism problematic for the colony, in Winthrop's eyes?

In Winthrop's eyes separatism was seen as problematic for the colony because they were humble, living and respectful people but at same time they were defiant with a holy intransigence.

## Chapter 8:

What was the issue in which the people first expressed displeasure in Winthrop's government

The issue in which people first expressed displeasure with Winthrop's government is his inability to think critically about issues, instead he tends to take positions intuitively and justify it by arguing in the

Lawyerly attitude of 'I told you so'.

In Chapter 8, what does Morgan describe as Winthrop's greatest weakness?

In chapter eight the Morgan shows that Winthrop's greatest mistake is what he describes as his inability to be severe enough in enforcing the laws of the state as he tends to take weeks before banishing those guilty of crimes in the society.

How would you describe the theology of Roger Williams? What was his view of the relationship between church and state?

No puritan was not allowed to vote unless he was a member of the church hence Roger Williams can be described to counter the dependency of the state on church in which he believes that they did wrong when they didn't tolerate the views of the indigenous people but instead robbed them their land and started using church and state to reproof them.

4. How did Ann Hutchinson get into trouble in the colony? Why did her beliefs seem dangerous to Winthrop and others?

Anne Hutchinson got in trouble with the colony when she boldly begun preaching the doctrine of antinomianism which declares that a man is saved divine grace alone and not by the help of his good works. Thus; no matter how one lives wickedly his salvation doesn't not depend on it. Her belief seemed dangerous to Winthrop and others as they belief in judgment through doing well hence countered their root of faith.

5. Where did Hutchinson go after her trial?

After her trial Anne Hutchinson went to Rhode islands and letter to Netherlands where she got killed in one of the attacks on the Dutch settlements by the Indians.

6. What document was drafted by Nathaniel Ward of Ipswich, Massachusetts? Why was it important?

Nathaniel ward drafted the body of liberties which his model became preferred and then compiled to form the criminals' provisions of the body of liberties. He codified the Massachusetts in 1641.

7. What was the Puritan dilemma?

The dilemma of the puritans was the problem of doing right in a world that does wrong or equally same the ' being in the world but not of it', this dilemma challenged all every puritan throughout their lives.