

Staff Picks



American Immigrants Stories: Some Came as Indentured Servants

The history of America includes immigration stories from all over the world. People came in waves from many countries including: Africa, China, Russia, Ireland, and Mexico among other places. While many immigrants came as free people seeking new beginnings and opportunities in life, others came as indentured servants or slaves. These books examine a vibrant but often neglected aspect of our history.

Compiled by: Keith C.



A Mercy

Toni Morrison Morrison

Set in late 17th century New Amsterdam, Anglo-Dutch trader Jacob Vaark reluctantly accepts a slave girl as payment on a debt owed to him. She enters a world of women made up of slaves, indentured servants, Native Americans and a grieving wife and mother.



Albion's Seed

David Fischer 973.2 Fis

A cultural history of the early United States, this book focuses on the impact the wave of immigrants from Britain, including those who came as indentured servants, has had on current American customs.



Bound

Sally Gunning Gunning

Alice Cole spent her early childhood in England. Her family immigrates to the colonies in 1756. Alice is indentured by her father to a family for an 11 year period. When the master dies, her indenture is inherited by the old master's son-in-law. She flees from an abusive situation to Cape Cod and is taken in by a widow. Deceit and lies lead to a bitter end.



Copper Sun

Sharon Draper Y Draper

Focusing on an Ashanti girl captured in 1738 and taken to the Carolinas and sold, the story then alternates between Amari and Polly, a white indentured servant at the same plantation. This young adult book is graphic and violent, leading to larger questions of slavery in various forms and its impact on the early U.S.



Lost German Slave Girl

John Bailey 305.896 Ba

A chance encounter with a young slave girl starts in motion an unprecedented court case in 1843 New Orleans. Is the girl in question really Salom Muller, a German orphan who was to be indentured or a clever young woman who sees a chance for freedom?



Same Kind of Different as Me

Ron Hall 976.45315 Hal

The story of a homeless man who had worked as an unpaid laborer in the mid 20th century

South until he fled in the 1960's. He later met a New York art gallery owner who helped him out of poverty.



Sweet Release

Pamela Clare Clare

A romance set on a Virginia plantation. Owner Cassie buys indentured servant Cole, who has been beaten, abducted and sold off. He is actually a British aristocrat. Can he prove his identity?



Testimony of an Irish Slave Girl

Kate McCafferty Mccaffe

Written in the form of a testimony, Irish servant Cat Daley was abducted from Galway at age 10 and sent to Barbados to work as a house servant or a field hand in the late 16th century. She becomes involved in an uprising of Irish and African slaves, has been arrested and is giving her life story.



White Cargo

Don Jordan 306.362 Jor

Focusing on the 17th and 18th centuries, this book is a look at the difficult life of the men, women and children who were sent "over the seas" to the American colonies. With short chapters and extensive bibliographies, this popular history is a good overview of the early beginnings of the US.
