



# Puritans at Play: Leisure and Recreation in Colonial New England

*Bruce C. Daniels*

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For over four centuries "puritan" has been a synonym for "dour," "joyless," and "repressed." In the 1930s however, historians began to reappraise the accuracy of this grim portrait. Bruce C. Daniels continues that reappraisal by examining leisure and recreation in colonial and revolutionary New England. He looks closely not only at what New Englanders did from 1620 to 1790, but also at what they said about play, pleasure, and relaxation, thereby placing their deeds and words in the context of an evolving and complex social structure. Daniels's descriptions of leisure and recreational activities do justice to both the intellectual richness of the historical material and to its inherent charm. Chapters on reading, music, civic celebrations, dinner parties, dancing, courtship, sex, alcohol, taverns, sports and games are presented in a lively style designed to make this book as entertaining as it is illuminating.

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