

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910784437003321
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Titolo	New England's crises and cultural memory : literature, politics, history, religion, 1620-1860 // by John McWilliams [[electronic resource]]
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cambridge : , : Cambridge University Press, , 2004
ISBN	1-107-14704-2 1-280-54076-1 0-511-21465-0 0-511-21644-0 0-511-21107-4 0-511-32724-2 0-511-48560-3 0-511-21284-4
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (xii, 366 pages) : digital, PDF file(s)
Collana	Cambridge studies in American literature and culture ; ; 142
Disciplina	810.9/358
Soggetti	American literature - New England - History and criticism Politics and literature - New England - History Religion and literature - New England - History Literature and history - New England - History New England Intellectual life New England Historiography New England In literature New England History
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Title from publisher's bibliographic system (viewed on 05 Oct 2015).
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. 309-360) and index.
Nota di contenuto	pt. 1. Plantation and settlement. Of corn, no corn, and Christian courage -- Thomas Morton: phoenix of New England memory -- Trying Anne -- pt. 2. Time of troubles. Headnote -- A cloud of blood: King Philip's War -- The axe at the root of the tree: scarlet governors and gray champions -- Race, war, and white magic: the neglected legacy of Salem -- pt. 3. Revolution. Headnote -- Boston revolt and Puritan restoration: 1760-1775 -- Shots heard round the world -- Abolition, "white slavery," and regional pride -- Epilogue: "bodiless echoes."

## Sommario/riassunto

In this magisterial study, John McWilliams traces the development of New England's influential cultural identity. Through written responses to historical crises from early New England through the pre-Civil War period, McWilliams argues that the meaning of 'New England' despite claims for its consistency was continuously reformulated. The significance of past crises was forever being reinterpreted for the purpose of meeting succeeding crises. The crises he examines include starvation, the Indian wars, the Salem witch trials, the revolution of 1775-76 and slavery. Integrating history, literature, politics and religion this is one of the most comprehensive studies of the meaning of 'New England' to appear in print. McWilliams considers a range of writing including George Bancroft's History of the United States, the political essays of Samuel Adams, the fiction of Nathaniel Hawthorne and the poetry of Robert Lowell. This compelling book is essential reading for historians and literary critics of New England.

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