Smith’s Virginia

Who was Philip the Prudent? What happened in 1588? Why were the Spanish and English fighting? Was the conflict between the English and Spanish part of a larger conflict? If so, what was that conflict? Why is the conflict relevant to the history we are studying? What is the El Escorial? Where is it? Why does Quinn begin this chapter about John Smith with a Spanish monarch? It seems strange, at first. What ideas does Philip II, also known as Philip the Prudent, represent in this tale? What ideas does Smith represent? Describe the worldview and its values that Philip II represents in the telling of this tale; Smith represents another worldview and a different set of values; describe them. Why was the Armada defeated from the Spanish point of view, Philip II’s point of view? What reasons might the English have given for its defeat? Pay careful attention at the beginning of that portion of the tale that involves English colonization. Who was Humphrey Gilbert? Who was Walter Raleigh? Describe the views of the English monarchs regarding colonization and the nature of the support they provided to these early colonial ventures? What was John Smith’s role in these ventures? Describe Smith and his motivations? What motivated most of the colonists? Did the colonists work well together? Were the suggestions from the corporate leaders in London about how to operate the colony wise suggestions? Were they based on a realistic assessment of the circumstances faced by the fledgling colony? What were the implications for governance of the colony if the corporate leaders’ instructions proved unhelpful? Why were the colonists dying? Describe the relationship between the colonists and the Indians? Who was Powhatan? Why didn’t the Indians just kill all the colonists? How did Smith get elected president of the colony? How did the colony fare under his leadership? What happened to Smith? What happened to the colony after his departure? How did the relationship between the Indians and the English change after Smith’s departure? Who was John Rolfe? Why did the Indians, in 1622, attack the colony that they had been in peace with for so long? What was Smith’s argument about the Indians in the wake of the attack of 1622? What would Smith want us to focus on as his legacy?

Champlain at Quebec

Quinn introduces us to Samuel de Champlain in the context of war. What was the war and why were they fighting it? Was it related to the war between the Spanish and English in the previous chapter? If so, how? What side would you expect Champlain to be on and why? How were the Spanish involved in this war? What does it say about Champlain that he cast his allegiance with Henry of Navarre? Why establish a colony? What is the lure of establishing it so far inland? Compare and contrast Smith and Champlain in their views about establishment of colonies and their manner of pursuing their goals. Who was the explorer who explored these lower reaches of the Saint Lawrence before Champlain? What was there when this explorer had been there that is not there when Champlain arrives? What does Champlain describe in his reports of his explorations that he extracts from Indian lore? Evaluate Champlain’s leadership in light of his encounter with the Basque fishermen and the conspirators who wanted to kill him? Why is it surprising that starving Indians asked the French at Quebec for assistance? Name the Indian tribes? Describe the different nature of conflict in the New World both during the battle and in its aftermath? Compare the French manner of interacting with the Indians with the English way of dealing with the Indians. Who was Etienne Brule? Was the French leadership in France supportive of Champlain’s efforts? What happened that disrupted all of Champlain’s plans? What was the painful loss that he suffered? What was the irony in the way events unfolded after the war and at the end of his life?

Pilgrim Separatists

Who was the person whose diary and account was being revisited at the beginning of this chapter? What tone does Quinn set here? There are indications, at times rather cryptic, of a struggle or struggles that has set these people on a journey of their own. What were these struggles? There is a reference to Philip II but also references to the Church of England being unacceptable somehow. What country did the Pilgrim Separatists leave? Where did they go and why did they go there? Who were the Ancient Brethren and why were they relevant to the pilgrimage of these Separatists? The Pilgrims left Amsterdam and moved to a new city; what was the name of the city? Who was Jacobus Arminius and what interaction did the Pilgrims have with him? Who was Thomas Weston and why did the Pilgrims need him? Was he a Pilgrim Separatist too? Where in the New World were the Pilgrims trying to go? Where did they finally land? What happened to Bradford’s wife? Who was Samoset and what did he ask of the Pilgrims when he met some of them for the first time? Who was Squanto? Who was the chief of the Massachusetts and what was Squanto’s warning to the Pilgrims about the Massachusetts? What was it that the Pilgrims realized could be had for a quick and sizable profit? Who was Robert Cushman and what was the misjudgment that he made according to Quinn? Can you describe, in the larger sense, what happened to this pilgrimage into the wilderness to avoid the sin of the English and Dutch societies in Europe? What did the Pilgrims learn about the Massachusetts’ intentions with regard to the colonists? Who was Miles Standish? What was Standish’s role in this episode that followed? Who was Thomas Morton? Why was the little aside about him and his abortive colony instructive? Who arrived to establish a colony near the Pilgrims and how do the Pilgrims get along with these new colonists? What was the irony in the fact that they began trading with them? What did the diminishing diary of Bradford symbolize, according to Quinn?

Godly Covenant

What were the two qualities that Quinn says John Winthrop had? Were these two qualities possibly at odds with each other? Defend Winthrop here as you answer this question: did the fact that these two traits might have been at odds with each other make Winthrop less devout in his religious beliefs? Did the Puritans believe that humans are innately good or evil? How did the Puritans feel about the notion that we should respect the autonomy of each individual, allowing each person to choose the best path in life for themselves? What was the Puritans’ goal; what was their reason for being? Did King Charles I and Archbishop of Canterbury William Laud facilitate or impede the Puritans in the pursuit of their goal? How? But how can they achieve this goal if they have left England? Then why did they leave? What was missing from the corporate charter for the Massachusetts Bay Company? Why did this matter? Can you describe the Puritan view about the order of society and by this I mean the prevailing nature of the relationships between people? Read the first full paragraph of page 124 carefully. Is the Puritan view of an ideally organized society a vertically-oriented society or a horizontally-oriented one? Did Puritans believe that there were duties and obligations that members of society owed to each other? If so, what were they? How did this colonial venture compare in size and organization to previous colonial ventures? Why the struggle over the freemen and their ability to legislate? The charter, as described on page 127, clearly allowed the company members, who numbered a few dozen at the beginning of the colony, to legislate for the entire colony of thousands. Why did Winthrop think it proper to relinquish some of this power? Who was it being surrendered to? Who was Thomas Dudley and why was he squabbling with Winthrop? Who was Roger Williams and what was controversial about Williams’s views? What happened in the Connecticut Valley with Native Americans? The Connecticut Valley is outside of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Who was John Cotton and what were the “demands” made upon “prospective members”? Members to what? What were the demands? What were the practical repercussions of membership? How well can the colony function if it is this hard to be a member in a church and the whole enterprise is religious in nature? What were the implications, keeping in mind that the entire enterprise is religious in nature, if you allow people to be members of the churches with little proof of their conversion? What is the name of the person who openly supported Cotton and what does this person contend? Why is this contention so threatening for the colony? How did Winthrop and other colonial leaders deal with this person? In broad brushstrokes, describe what happened in England in the 1640s and why this led many young Puritans in Massachusetts Bay to return to England. So what of this effort to reform the Anglican Church? Does it succeed or fail?

A Society of Jesus

Pay careful attention to the tribes mentioned here. Catalog them in your mind and visualize their general location on a map relative to each other and the British and French. If need be, pull your maps out. Who is Etienne Brule and what is noteworthy about his experience in the New World? What happens to Brule? What does this say about Native Americans and their tribal allegiance? Why would John Winthrop care that the French were bring Jesuits to Canada? What made the Jesuits such effective missionaries? Who is Jean de Brebeuf? And how do Brebeuf and his Blackrobes win the support of the Hurons? Describe the Huron Feast of the Dead? Why did the Huron treat their Iroquois captives this way? Something else was dramatically changing Huronia for the worse; what was it? How did the Jesuits deal with this unfolding disaster? Did it work? Why do you think that the Jesuit superior relieved Brebeuf of his duties and replaced him? How does the spread of disease reshape the relationship between the Iroquois and Huron? Who was Therese Oionhaton? What fate can you sense awaits the Hurons from what you learn about the situation in the 1640s? What happened to the Huron convey transporting Therese back to Huronia? What happens to Brebeuf after his return to Huronia? What happens to the Huron? And can you explain why this fate befell the Huron in a few sentences?

Director General of Babel

What does Quinn argue is the most virulent disease spread among the Indians by the Europeans? Was this disease only affecting the Indians? What colony is this chapter about and where was that colony? Who was the Director General of Babel? When are these events happening? Put all this in context. Describe the problems of this colony succinctly? How did the Director General first start to impart order to the colony? He runs into a problem unresolved from the tenure of the previous director general; briefly describe the problem and how this problem sheds light on just how effective Stuyvesant will likely be in bring order and discipline on his terms to the colony. Who was Adriaen Van der Donck and why was Stuyvesant’s victory over Van der Donck a Pyrrhic victory? How successful was Stuyvesant in resolving the dispute with the British over the Connecticut Valley with the Treaty of Hartford? Can you explain the outcome of the negotiations? Place the Swedish colony in perspective relative to the English, French, and Dutch efforts. All of Stuyvesant’s and the Dutch efforts in the New World are ultimately dependent upon what? Hint: read pages 209-210 carefully. When the English and Dutch go to war in 1652, what do the Dutch discover to their chagrin regarding their *economic* power? What was the worth of economic power when you didn’t have the military power to defend it? Summarize what happened with regard to the Swedes and English in the New World once the Dutch and English were finally at war? What was the irony for Stuyvesant and his relationship with the contrarian residents of New Amsterdam at the end of his tenure?

Bacon’s Virginia

Who was Deganawida, what tribe was he from, and what was his vision that he preaches about? Who preached his vision eloquently to the Iroquois? What did Garacontie achieve for the Iroquois in their relationship with the British and French? How did the Iroquois take advantage of the peace they established with the British and French to expand their power? So how did this eventually spill into Virginia, a British colony a great distance from the Iroquois? What does Quinn say had happened in Virginia between 1640 and 1660? How were the most senior planters profiting from the circumstances in Virginia? Describe Berkeley; describe Bacon. How did Bacon come to be commander of these troops on the frontier and events spiraled out of control on the frontier? How is it that this war against the Indians becomes a war against Berkeley? Who were the Occancechee and what happened in the war against the Indians? As events moved eastward why was Berkeley fearful of the outcome of the legislative session of the House of Burgesses? Why the necessity of the drama in front of the House of Burgesses? Why didn’t Bacon just kill Berkeley? After Berkeley and his forces were dispersed Bacon had his cohorts sign an oath of allegiance to him? What is the problem with this oath? Who should they have sworn their allegiance to? Berkeley was surprisingly resourceful and resilient; how did he demonstrate these qualities when Bacon sent a naval force to capture him? How did Bacon’s Rebellion end? What became of Berkeley and why? What does Quinn indicate as the immediate lasting consequence of Bacon’s Rebellion? And what does Quinn argue was one of the legacies or outcomes of that immediate consequence?

Sun King of the Wilderness

What attributes made Louis de Buade, Comte de Frontenac, a man of distinction in France? How did French society value these attributes in comparison to others such as frugality or paying one’s debts? What motivated Frontenac to seek the governorship of New France? Describe the structure of French society during Louis XIV? Why was he called the Sun King? When was Louis XIV king of France? What was happening in the English colonies during this time? What was Louis XIV’s interest in New France? Who was Jean-Baptiste Colbert and what objectives does he pursue and why? What role did Colbert envision for New France? What was the key to achieving this vision? What was the seigneurial system and why did it fail to shape New France? Describe the relationship between the Iroquois and the French in the 1660s? Who was Laval and what did Laval object to? What came of the objections? What did Frontenac claim as his great achievement during his tenure as governor of New France? Who was it who helped Frontenac in his effort to disregard Colbert’s instructions to keep the colony in a few dense settlements? Where was Fort Frontenac built and why did they build a fort there? What was the plan these two men crafted to encourage settlement? Where does La Salle explore and why? How did the Iroquois respond? How did it come to pass that the French, with Frontenac back as governor, and their allies attacked the English and not the Iroquois? Were the Iroquois ultimately successful in resisting French advances? Can you explain the dynamics of power that ultimately deprived the Iroquois of the peace they wanted with the French only and instead forced them into a general peace that benefitted the French? So what is your final appraisal of Frontenac as governor?

A Society of Friends

Can you recount the story of how it came to pass that William Penn, the father made a fortune, and somehow ingratiated his son, a Quaker, with kings and helped to found a colony for an obscure religious sect? What was the younger William Penn’s vision for Pennsylvania? Be specific about some features of his colony that he envisioned? Was he able to implement this vision and if not why? Explain the clash of ideals that transpired over how many votes Penn himself would have in the assembly? What was the price that Penn was paying in his relationships with Quakers to grow the colony? Was the colony proving to be profitable for Penn? What was the consequence of his efforts to extract a profit from the colony? What was the irony for Penn, who desperately wanted to be in Pennsylvania, when it came time to resolve the boundary dispute with Maryland? With Penn in England who was running the colony and how does Penn respond? How successful is Penn in governing the colony upon his return? What does Quinn suggest that the older Penn might have realized in his old age? Was he ever really in charge of the colony or was his power only fleeting at best? Explain how it could be ephemeral in light of the fact that it was his colony?

General questions and observations.

Note the occasional reference in one chapter about the people or events in previous chapters.

How successful were the Europeans in imparting their will on the New World?

Describe the dynamics of power between the Europeans and the Indians? Who is more powerful? When were they more powerful and under what circumstances?

The book leaves the reader with a sense of the frailties of human will and of human endeavors. Nature, disease, and distance all often play a greater role in the eventual outcome than humans and their intentions. Provide examples that support this contention.