



# **The Pox and the Covenant: Mather, Franklin, and the Epidemic That Changed America's Destiny**

*Tony Williams*

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"Tony Williams tells a rollicking good story about the contagious crisis experienced by Colonial America. The Pox and the Covenant is a superbly nuanced and well-written account of the interactions of human disease and events." – Howard Markel, MD, PhD, George E. Wartz Distinguished Professor of the History of Medicine, the University of Michigan, author of *When Germs Travel*

After several days of skirting the North American coast, the Seahorse reached Boston, the largest city in the colonies, with a population of roughly eleven thousand souls. With such a large number of people, Boston rivaled the cities of mother England, save only for London. Boston was moreover one of the great hubs of the Atlantic trade network. It gathered goods from the farms of the New England hinterland and from smaller cities and ports along the American coast. These commodities were shipped all over the Atlantic while other goods were imported into the city and sent elsewhere. For a virus, a better place to contaminate could hardly be found....

A skeleton crew was left on the Seahorse while the rest of the crew and officers went ashore. At least one carried an infectious disease, one that would send a city into chaos, and put to its greatest test the covenant between the Puritans and their god.

– from *The Pox and the Covenant*

Praise for Tony Williams's *Hurricane of Independence*:

"Williams recovers the victims' speculation on the hurricane's meaning and its almost poetic commingling of the natural and moral worlds....An unusual and affecting take on the American colonies at the precipice." – Kirkus Reviews

"[This] double tale of natural disaster and epochal human events makes a good reading." – Booklist

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