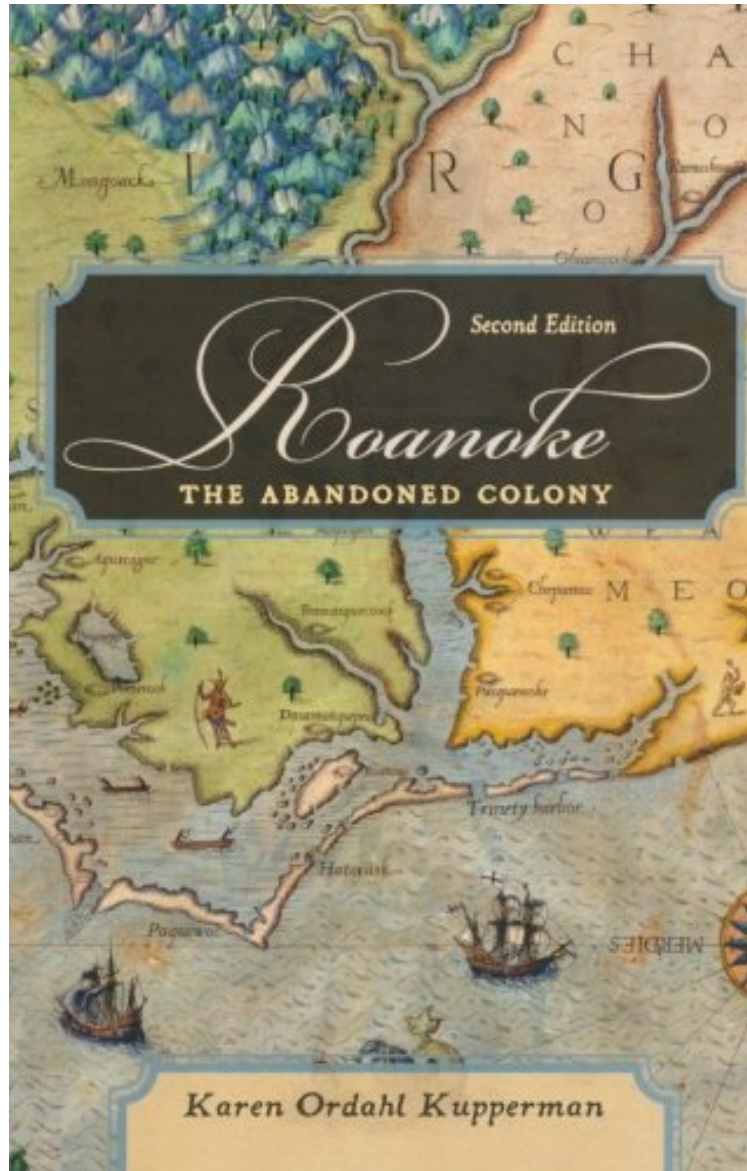


Roanoke: The Abandoned Colony

Karen Ordahl Kupperman

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Karen Ordahl Kupperman : Roanoke: The Abandoned Colony before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Roanoke: The Abandoned Colony:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A fine and thorough history of the Lost Colony By CochiseIm not knowledgeable enough about the Lost Colony to judge whether the scholarship of this book is entirely up to date at the time of this review (, in 2015, but the author has updated the original book twice, to 2007, explaining what has been

discovered since the first edition. This is a clearly written and thorough explanation of the various English colonies started at the unpromising site of Roanoke Island unpromising because it was difficult for a large ship carrying supplies to approach the island, and because it was difficult to hide such a ship from hostile Spanish ships. The fact that the local friendly Indians were in the midst of a prolonged drought and could not trade their own small supplies of food also complicated the colonists' plight. I was also entirely unaware how politics in England endangered the project. Kupperman is by far the best book on Roanoke that I've read, and I recommend it highly. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. and it laid out each detail in great order and it was very accessible and interesting. By Sunmist Group LLC I had to read this book for a history paper, and it laid out each detail in great order and it was very accessible and interesting! I learned a lot :) 30 of 33 people found the following review helpful. Interesting and relevant history. By Atheen I'm not certain why, but books on the "lost" colony of Roanoke seemed to catch my eye, so I added several to my wish list. I selected Karen O. Kupperman's volume as the first to read and found it interesting and insightful. Roanoke, the Abandoned Colony is a little old and reflects its 1984 vintage. Settlement of the North and South American continents is described as having occurred by way of a "land bridge" during the glacial epoch 10,000 to 40,000 years ago. Native people are depicted as having followed their game animals across the Bering Strait into the Americas. Today this is considered somewhat less likely than it was prior to the 1990s, and alternative possibilities are usually given in more recent works on the topic. Once beyond the background history of the native population, however, the author is on firmer ground. The ample documentation of early English settlement provides her with evidence for a thorough discussion of the period. Much of her background information, however, is taken from secondary rather than primary sources. The notes to the edition contain references to works written in the 1960s, 70s, and 80's about Roanoke, Raleigh, the Southeastern Indians, and so on, rather than documents by early explorers, although she consults those doing original research with primary sources or with archaeological field data. I had rather expected a more sensational approach to the topic; most of us who know anything at all about Roanoke simply know of the mysterious disappearance of its colonists and the name Virginia Dare. Neglected beyond that introduction by most high school American history courses—in fact many college courses—the average reader is left with a lacuna in his/her understanding of the colonial era. Ms. Kupperman ably fills that breach. Her discussion of Indian culture and politics during the age is very insightful. When I studied American colonial history years ago, the Indian people were hardly considered at all, and then mostly as "background noise," sort of part of the flora and fauna of the continent. That they had political acumen, let alone a political agenda, was not even considered, a lapse that made the history of the period lopsided and confusing. The academic perspective at the time—prior to the establishment of American Indian Studies programs in colleges and universities—was no doubt an outgrowth of the European point of view. Historians and like-minded individuals in US society saw the expression of expansionism and the displacement and even extermination of native peoples as part of its "manifest destiny." So integral is this perspective to society's concept of itself even now, that it requires works like Roanoke to remove the cultural blinders. Through it all, though, the author neither blames nor excuses. Like a good journalist, she describes and explains what occurred, giving cultural background information on all parties that helps clarify interactions. Her discussion of 16th century English policy with respect to Ireland is especially relevant. One of the most interesting facets of the book, but definitely one that took me a while to appreciate, was the degree to which it involved the history of Elizabethan England and the life of Sir Walter Raleigh and other English explorers. In fact this period of North American history from the perspective of its European heritage is pretty much about England and its relations with others: its international fortune, its social structure and social outlook, and so on. While the story of Roanoke is part of US history, understanding its experience and demise only makes sense when placed in the context of what was going on world wide at the time. In fact, it's possible that the history of no specific place on the globe ever makes complete sense without referring to world context. Overall the book gives a very detailed and informative account of early English experience in North America. With the above caveats, it would make an excellent source book for high school history and a good addition to a school library.

In telling the tragic and heroic story of Roanoke, the lost colony, award-winning historian Karen Ordahl Kupperman recovers the earliest days of English exploration and settlement in America the often forgotten years before Jamestown and the landing of the Mayflower. Roanoke explores Britain's attempt to establish a firm claim to North America in the hope that colonies would make England wealthy and powerful. Kupperman brings to life the men and women who struggled to carve out a settlement in an inhospitable environment on the Carolina coast and the complex Native American cultures they encountered. She reveals the mixture of goals and challenges that led to the colony's eventual abandonment, and discusses the theories about what might have become of the first English settlers in the New World as they adapted to life as Indians. With a new preface and afterword written by the author, *Roanoke: The Abandoned Colony* brings the fascinating story of America's earliest settlement up-to-date, bringing together new work from scholars in a variety of fields. The story of Roanoke remains endlessly fascinating. It is a tale marked by courage, miscalculation, exhilaration, intrigue, and mystery.

The definitive account of the 'lost colonists' of Roanoke. Karen Ordahl Kupperman tells a dramatic story of courage, greed, and misadventure. . . . Anyone curious about the enduring mysteries of Roanoke will enjoy Kupperman's book.--
T. H. Breen
About the Author
Karen Ordahl Kupperman is Silver Professor of History at New York University. She is the award-winning author of *Indians and English: Facing Off in Early America* and *Providence Island, 1630-1641: The Other Puritan Colony*.