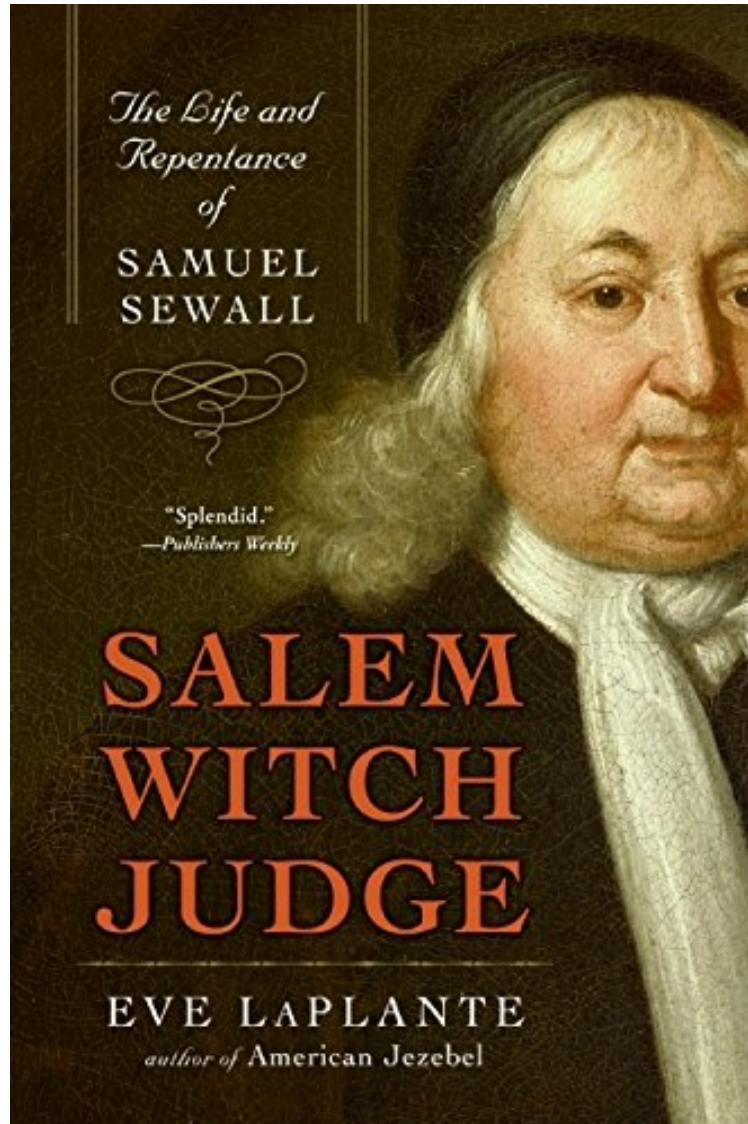


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## Salem Witch Judge: The Life and Repentance of Samuel Sewall

*Eve LaPlante*

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#1176201 in Books Eve Laplante 2008-11-04 2008-11-04Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.00 x .83 x 5.311, .68 #File Name: 0060859601368 pagesSalem Witch Judge The Life and Repentance of Samuel Sewall | File size: 15.Mb

**Eve LaPlante : Salem Witch Judge: The Life and Repentance of Samuel Sewall** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Salem Witch Judge: The Life and Repentance of Samuel Sewall:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. More about minutia that witch trialsBy Ken SimmonsWhat you will learn about halfway into this book is that the extensive diary kept by the judge was almost non-existent during the

period that he was overseeing the witch trials. What this means is that a small part of this book covers that, which may be an issue because that's probably why you would buy the book. Much of the book is tedious minutia, some of it revealing about the time period, some not. Not at all what I had hoped for. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This history will repeat itself: witches will be judged. By Droozy Button The author's point of view as a direct descendant of this Judge and the resulting access to very personal documents was enlightening. The constricted Puritan life style with its endless hardships, rules and fears carries a strong warning for us today with our fear induced tipping into comparable insanity. The considerable research was impressive but my relative low score is due to the overly repetitious identification of persons by their family and educational histories. It robbed the book of readability and made it a chore. Influence and birth begat influence and birth begat influence and birth, what the poor witches lacked. There was not enough about the victims in the book to warrant labeling the Judge as USA's earliest feminist. 8 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Rounded Realistic Portrait of Former "Villain" By Reader Melanie The author, a direct descendant of Samuel Sewall, provides a much-needed full assessment of the life of her notorious ancestor. The most important fact in this book is provided in the frontispiece illustration--a portrait of Sewall's apology before his congregation for his role in the witch trials and executions, known by few, if any, readers outside Massachusetts' students of history. Sewall was the only judge to apologize for his role in this horrific episode in American history. More fascinating, though, are the other extraordinary acts of repentance enacted by the judge over his long life. And his writings are nothing less than astounding--including examinations of experiences of various groups and even a piece on women - making him an equalitarian of the first order centuries ahead of his time. At the least, official historical accounts of what happened at Salem need to include information about Sewall's apology and repentance.

In 1692 Puritan Samuel Sewall sent twenty people to their deaths on trumped-up witchcraft charges. The nefarious witch trials in Salem, Massachusetts represent a low point of American history, made famous in works by Longfellow, Nathaniel Hawthorne (himself a descendant of one of the judges), and Arthur Miller. The trials might have doomed Sewall to infamy except for a courageous act of contrition now commemorated in a mural that hangs beneath the golden dome of the Massachusetts State House picturing Sewall's public repentance. He was the only Salem witch judge to make amends. But, remarkably, the judge's story didn't end there. Once he realized his error, Sewall turned his attention to other pressing social issues. Struck by the injustice of the New England slave trade, a commerce in which his own relatives and neighbors were engaged, he authored "The Selling of Joseph," America's first antislavery tract. While his peers viewed Native Americans as savages, Sewall advocated for their essential rights and encouraged their education, even paying for several Indian youths to attend Harvard College. Finally, at a time when women were universally considered inferior to men, Sewall published an essay affirming the fundamental equality of the sexes. The text of that essay, composed at the deathbed of his daughter Hannah, is republished here for the first time. In *Salem Witch Judge*, acclaimed biographer Eve LaPlante, Sewall's great-great-great-great-great-great-granddaughter, draws on family lore, her ancestor's personal diaries, and archival documents to open a window onto life in colonial America, painting a portrait of a man traditionally vilified, but who was in fact an innovator and forefather who came to represent the best of the American spirit.

From Publishers Weekly In 1692, Salem magistrate Samuel Sewall (1652-1730), along with several others, presided over the conviction and execution of 20 people accused of witchcraft. Five years and much soul-searching later, Sewall publicly repented of his part in the witch trials. Much as she did in *American Jezebel*, the marvelous biography of her 12th-generation ancestor Anne Hutchinson, LaPlante, who counts Sewall as her sixth-great-grandfather, richly narrates his life in its cultural and religious setting. Drawing on Sewall's diaries and stories told by her Aunt Charlotte, LaPlante sketches a compelling portrait of a committed family man, a dedicated magistrate and a deeply religious Puritan confronting his own shortcomings and questioning the doctrines of his religion. After his public repentance, Sewall reconsidered many Puritan teachings and wrote controversial treatises arguing for the equality of Native Americans, women and slaves. LaPlante's splendid biography brings a personal touch to Sewall's story (also recently recounted by historian Richard Francis in *Judge Sewall's Apology*, 2005) and his efforts to take the difficult but righteous path. (Oct. 1) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist Sewall (1652-1730) was an English-born American jurist who presided over the 1692 witchcraft trials in Salem, Massachusetts. Nineteen innocent men and women were hanged, and one man was pressed to death with large stones, the result of trumped-up charges of witchcraft. Some suspects were strangers to Sewall, but others were his friends. For several years, he struggled with a growing sense of shame and remorse and later assumed in public the blame for the executions. He spent much of the remainder of his life trying to restore himself in the eyes of God. Sewall wrote prodigiously and left behind extensive diaries, poems, essays, books, annotated almanacs, ledgers, and letters. His diary, covering the years from 1672 to 1729, was first published in the nineteenth century and is still in print. LaPlante also chronicles the man's later life. Sewall became the author of America's first antislavery tract and published an essay affirming the equality of the sexes. A fascinating account of the man and of daily life in

colonial America. Cohen, George LaPlantes touching biography seems hauntingly timely. Beneath the sensational title is a figure more familiar than we realize. (New York Times Book )An intriguing journey into a world as far away as colonial America - and yet as close as the human heart. (Christian Science Monitor)LaPlantes splendid biography brings a personal touch to Sewalls story and his efforts to take the difficult but righteous path. (Publishers Weekly)Insightful...a reformative, assenting spin on Salems hellfire and brimstone history. (Kirkus s)