



## Anne Orthwood's Bastard: Sex and Law in Early Virginia

By John Ruston Pagan

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**Anne Orthwood's Bastard: Sex and Law in Early Virginia** By John Ruston Pagan

In 1663, an indentured servant, Anne Orthwood, was impregnated with twins in a tavern in Northampton County, Virginia. Orthwood died soon after giving birth; one of the twins, Jasper, survived. Orthwood's illegitimate pregnancy sparked four related cases that came before the Northampton magistrates -- who coincidentally held court in the same tavern -- between 1664 and 1686. These interrelated cases and the decisions rendered in them are notable for the ways in which the Virginia colonists modified English common law traditions and began to create their own, as well as what they reveal about cultural and economic values in an Eastern shore community. Through these cases, the very reasons legal systems are created are revealed, namely, the maintenance of social order, the protection of property interests, the protection of personal reputation, and personal liberty. Through Jasper Orthwood's life, the treatment of the poor in small communities is set in sharp relief.

*Anne Orthwood's Bastard* was the winner of the 2003 Prize in Atlantic History, American Historical Association.

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## **Anne Orthwood's Bastard: Sex and Law in Early Virginia** By John Ruston Pagan **Bibliography**

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"Pagan's *Anne Orthwood's Bastard: Sex and the Law in Early Virginia* spin engaging yarns that tie together the best of recent scholarship while also interweaving fresh historical questions and issues....the kind of work tailor-made to grip and hold the imaginations of undergraduates in early American survey courses everywhere."--*Reviews in American History*

"Four cases provide the basis for John Ruston Pagan's intelligent and highly readable book." --*Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*

"superb analysis of the colony's nascent social, economic, and judicial structures. . . . terrific scholarship that adds significantly to historians' understanding of early Virginia. . . . Microhistories succeed when their case studies illuminate larger themes; at their best, the stories they tell rate as literature. John Pagan scores on both counts."- *The Journal of Southern History*

"John Pagan's subtle and sophisticated research and analysis and his lucid and evocative writing bring to life these Virginians of 350 years ago. The character sketches of the servants, justices of the peace, planters, jurors, and of Anne Orthwood and her lover are gems of historical writing....[An] excellent book."--*Richmond Times-Dispatch*

#### About the Author

**John Ruston Pagan** is a Professor in the School of Law at the University of Richmond, Virginia.

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**Ross Adams:**

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**Carl Fox:**

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