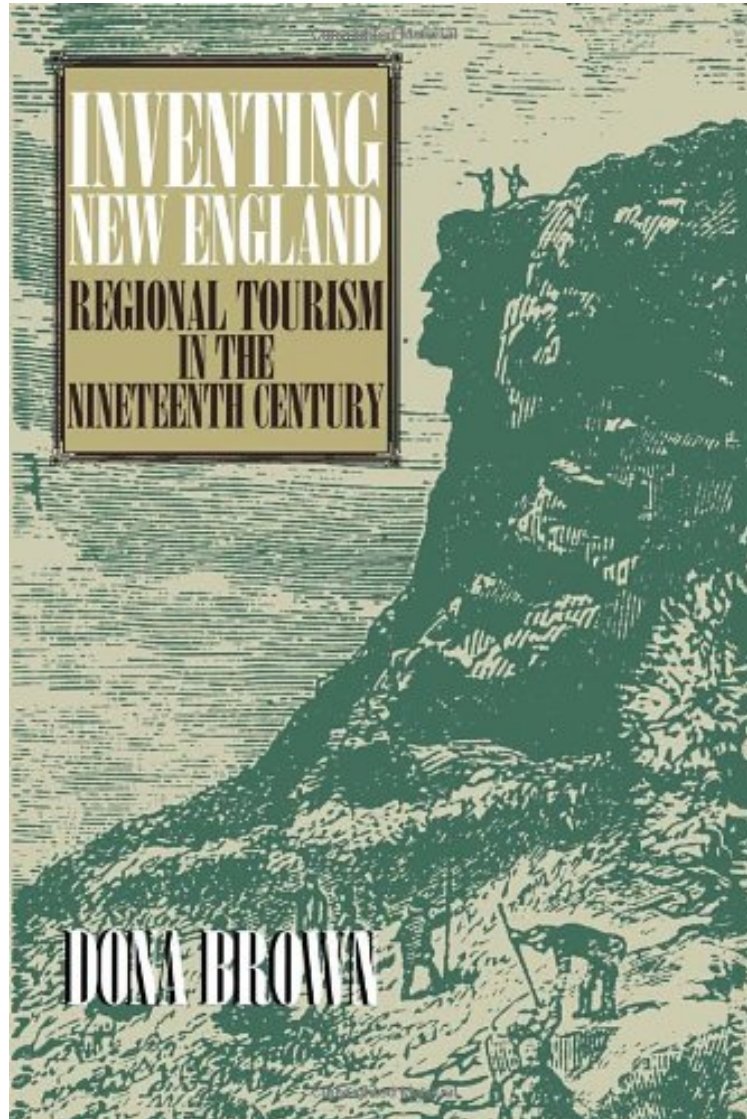


# Inventing New England: Regional Tourism in the Nineteenth Century

*Dona Brown*

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**Dona Brown : Inventing New England: Regional Tourism in the Nineteenth Century** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Inventing New England: Regional Tourism in the Nineteenth Century:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. One of the best books I've ever read about New England By Oceanic" To a modern eye, there may appear to be something inevitable about the growth of tourist industries.

Wherever they have flourished, they seem to have emerged naturally out of the attractions of a particular place: mountains, sea air, or quaintness. But nothing could be further from the truth. [...] Tourism is not destiny, imposed on a community or a region by its geography or its history. Tourist industries were built by people." This is for anyone from a tourist area who's wondered "how did this happen?" and "why here?" Read it on the beach. Alongside Paul Fussell's *Class: A Guide Through the American Status System*. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Amazing book! By Julien Aklei This was a great book. I read it after I had been living in New Hampshire for a couple years, and was feeling puzzled by many aspects of New England culture. Why is the cost of living so extremely high while earning potential is relatively low? Why do such expensive houses look rundown (rustic, I mean)? Why is the coldest, darkest part of America a tourist destination at all? Why are there no black people living in Portsmouth? There were many little questions in my mind, to which I could find no good answers, until I read this book which explains how New England re-invented itself as a tourist destination after the decline of its once thriving industries. This is a very informative, insightful book. A true gem, if the subject interests you. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Deep Exploration of How Quaint New England Came to Be By Janet Loved this look at how the notion of New England as "old" was created. A whole new understanding of the tourism industry for me.

Quaint, charming, nostalgic New England: rustic fishing villages, romantic seaside cottages, breathtaking mountain vistas, peaceful rural settings. In *Inventing New England*, Dona Brown traces the creation of these calendar-page images and describes how tourism as a business emerged and came to shape the landscape, economy, and culture of a region. By the latter nineteenth century, Brown argues, tourism had become an integral part of New England's rural economy, and the short vacation a fixture of middle-class life. Focusing on such meccas as the White Mountains, Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket, coastal Maine, and Vermont, Brown describes how failed port cities, abandoned farms, and even scenery were churned through powerful marketing engines promoting nostalgia. She also examines the irony of an industry that was based on an escape from commerce but served as an engine of industrial development, spawning hotel construction, land speculation, the spread of wage labor, and a vast market for guidebooks and other publications.

Brown . . . writes with charm and cautionary insight about the beginnings of what has become one of New England's major industries. . . . *Inventing New England* would be the perfect book to read before heading off down to the Cape, up to the lake, or . . . for a day at the beach. *Boston Globe* A marvelous examination of the economic, cultural, and ideological foundations of the development of regional tourism. . . . Combines the best of local history with strong thematic analysis. . . . An exemplary book. *American Historical* The chapters are eye openers. . . . Few studies of New England are as perceptive in their appreciation of the complex relationships between place, time, economics, and society. *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* Brown provides her readers with a richer portrait of early vacationing in New England than any previous writer. . . . *Inventing New England* will come as a breath of fresh air to readers who have had their fill of Puritanism, the writers of the flowering, and the victims of industrialization. *New England Quarterly* Along with John Sears' *Sacred Places*, *Inventing New England* ranks as essential reading for students of nineteenth-century tourism and leisure. *Journal of Social History* A solid contribution to the history of tourism and the understanding of tourism's cultural and economic significance. Brown's discussion of tourism as one of the earliest forms of industrial capitalism is particularly impressive. John F. Sears, author of *Sacred Places* From the Back Cover Quaint, charming, nostalgic New England: rustic fishing villages, romantic seaside cottages, breathtaking mountain vistas, peaceful rural settings. In *Inventing New England*, Dona Brown traces the creation of these calendar-page images and describes how tourism as a business emerged in the nineteenth century and came to shape the landscape, economy, and culture of a region. She examines the irony of an industry that was based on an escape from commerce but served as an engine of industrial development, spawning hotel construction, land speculation, the spread of wage labor, and a vast market for guidebooks and other publications. By the mid-nineteenth century, New England's whaling industry was faltering, lumbering was exhausted, herring fisheries were declining, and farming was becoming less profitable. Although the region had once been viewed as a center of invention and progress, economic hardship in the countryside fueled the development of the tourist industry. Before that time, elite vacations had been defined by the "grand tour" up the Hudson River to Saratoga Springs and Niagara Falls. Recognizing the potential of middle-class vacations, promoters of tourism fashioned a vision of pastoral beauty, rural independence, virtuous simplicity, and ethnic "purity" that appealed to an emerging class of urban professionals. By the latter nineteenth century, Brown argues, tourism had become an integral part of New England's rural economy, and the short vacation a fixture of middle-class life. Focusing on such meccas as the White Mountains, Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket, coastal Maine, and Vermont, Brown describes how failed port cities, abandoned farms, and even scenery were churned through powerful marketing engines promoting nostalgia. "Old salts" dressed in sea captains' garb were recruited to sing chanteys and to tell tales of old whaling days to crowds of mesmerized tourists. Dilapidated farmhouses, "restored" to look even older, were transformed into quaint country inns. By the late nineteenth century, much of New England was highly urbanized, industrial, and ethnically diverse. But for tourists, the "real" New England was to be found in the remote

areas of the region, where they could escape from the conditions of modern urban industrial life - the very life for which New Englanders had been praised a generation earlier. In an epilogue that addresses the "packaging" of Cape Cod in the twentieth century, Brown discusses how human choices - not scenery - create a market for tourism. With fascinating anecdotes about entrepreneurial innkeepers, farmers, and others, *Inventing New England* explores the early growth of a new industry that was on the cutting edge of capitalist development even though its cultural "products" appeared untainted by market transactions.

About the Author  
Dona Brown is an assistant professor of history at the University of Vermont.