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SUBMISSIONS

The editorial board of *SAIL* invites the submission of scholarly manuscripts focused on all aspects of American Indian literatures as well as the submission of poetry and short fiction, bibliographical essays, review essays, and interviews. We define "literatures" broadly to include all written, spoken, and visual texts created by Native peoples.

Manuscripts should be prepared in accordance with the most recent edition of the *MLA Style Manual*. *SAIL* only accepts electronic submissions.

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An earlier version of Alice Azure's "Connecticut River Valley Awakening" appeared in her memoir *Along Came a Spider* (Greenfield Center, NY: Bowman Books, 2011). It is reprinted here by permission of the author and publisher. Her poems "Woodland Medicine" and "To Joanie My Sister" appeared in *In Mi'kmaq Country: Selected Poems & Stories* (Chicago: Albatross Press, 2007), "Bear Medicine" and "Heroes" in *Games of Transformation* (Chicago: Albatross Press, 2011), and "Gospel Singing on Valentine's Day" in the e-journal *Native Literatures: Generations*. They are reprinted here by permission of the author.

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Guest Editors: Margo Lukens and Siobhan Senier

FROM THE EDITOR

Making and Marking Transitions

This special issue on Indigenous New England marks the first published issue under my care as the new editor of *SAIL*. I want to begin by thanking my immediate predecessors, Daniel Justice and Jim Cox, for their careful shepherding of the journal over the past five years and for their guidance in helping me make the editorial transition. Their predecessors, too, deserve acknowledgment and gratitude, not only the several previous editors but also the early leaders of ASAIL, whose vision and hard work built the journal from nothing and continues to sustain us. I also want to thank the larger *SAIL* team: our highly organized and efficient book review editor, Lisa Tatonetti; our insightful editorial board, which includes continuing members Lisa Brooks, Robin Riley Fast, Susan Gardner, Patrice Hollrah, Molly McGlennen, Margaret Noori, Kenneth Roemer, Christopher Teuton, and Jace Weaver, and new member Jodi Byrd; our many expert reviewers (you know who you are); and our helpful contacts at the University of Nebraska Press, especially APM Project Manager Terence Smyre. The College of Arts and Sciences at The Ohio State University has provided funding for a graduate editorial assistant, Anne Mai Yee Jansen, who is my very capable PhD. advisee. With this team on board, *SAIL* is in good hands.

Our editorial goals for the next five years are simple. We will pursue the standards set for the journal at the beginning: to encourage a diverse range of voices and ideas; to publish scholarship that is innovative in its objects of study, in its resources and methodologies, and in its presentation and style; to thus promote the production,

study, and teaching of Native self-representation. *SAIL* remains the only journal dedicated to the study of American Indian literatures, and our central mission must always be to set the bar high and to help push the field forward. Since the 1970s, American Indian literary studies has broadened its view to include an ever wider range of authors, genres, historical periods, and media. It has also developed an increasingly diverse and generative array of research methodologies, analytic frameworks, and grounding theories about the complex workings of literature, culture, identity, history, and politics. Some of the most striking recent developments explicitly pursue, on the one hand, methods, frameworks, and theories that look to specific American Indian cultures, histories, and languages for content and inspiration, and, on the other hand, methods, frameworks, and theories that look beyond Native North America toward Indigenous cultures, histories, and languages around the globe. These simultaneous engagements with the Native American local and the Indigenous global have begun to create palpable tensions in the field that are already highly productive. In the years to come it will be exciting to see exactly how these tensions will continue to transform our scholarship.

This special issue begins that process. Margo Lukens and Siobhan Senier, our guest editors, have organized a terrific lineup of essays, dialogue, and autobiography to highlight the complexity of Indigenous New England, an area often simply left out of orthodox constructions of contemporary Native North America. The issue's focus on a specific region, however, has national and global implications in its deft examinations of the networks Indigenous individuals and communities in what is now New England created in the past and continue to sustain in the present, as well as in its sophisticated challenges to any simple understanding of the very concept of region. We see Indigenous New England as an auspicious beginning for the next phase of *SAIL*. We hope you agree.

Chadwick Allen

Announcement

Please join the *SAIL* Editorial Board in congratulating Kirby Brown, whose essay "Citizenship, Land, and Law: Constitutional Criticism and John Milton Oskison's *Black Jack Davy*," published in *SAIL* 23.4, has won the Don D. Walker Award for the best essay published in western literary studies. The annual award is sponsored by the Western Literature Association, and Professor Brown will be recognized for his achievement at the upcoming Western Literature Association conference in Lubbock, Texas, in November 2012.

The Award committee offered high praise of Professor Brown's winning essay:

> Brown's method of Indigenizing reading is revelatory. He reframes the popular western genre, providing an exciting challenge to its fundamental assumptions (and territorial thefts) through his identification of the 'Cherokee western.' He models 'the potential of using tribally specific constitutional traditions as a lens through which to read tribal-national literatures' by recuperating an under-valued novel with thorough historical scholarship, good close reading, and, as a citizen of the Cherokee Nation, a compelling understanding of the stakes involved in this critical and cultural work.

We couldn't have said it better ourselves.

Introduction

MARGO LUKENS AND
SIOBHAN SENIER

At a Native American Literature Symposium in the late 1990s, Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, the respected Crow Creek Lakota author, scholar, and editor of *Wicazo-Sa Review*, opined that most scholars of Native literature knew nothing of literature from Native New England, not to mention Maine, and urged a young colleague to publish some scholarship on it. The prospect was daunting; at the time, not only was there a void of scholarship, but most of the primary work was out of print. Since then, things are looking up. The essays included below offer a strong response, after some intervening years, to Professor Cook-Lynn's request.

This special issue follows close on the heels of the publication of a *woliwikhikon*, or "great book." *Peskotomuhkati Wolastuoqewi Latuwewakon: A Passamaquoddy-Maliseet Dictionary* (2008) represents lifetimes of work in Passamaquoddy language preservation and teaching, involving numerous community members and native speakers.[1] The project began in the 1970s as a manuscript collaboration between linguist Philip S. LeSourd and Wayne Newell, a native speaker of Passamaquoddy and director of the bilingual education program at Indian Township in Princeton, Maine.

The dictionary's publication also represents a new way that works of Native literature and culture are getting produced and published. A true collaboration among community knowledge keepers and academics, it drew on the expertise of longtime friends David A. Francis, a native Passamaquoddy-Maliseet speaker and elder at the Pleasant Point community, and the linguist Robert M. Leavitt, now

retired as the director of the Mi'kmaq-Maliseet Institute at the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton. Margaret Apt, also from Pleasant Point, served as the community research coordinator.

Francis received an honorary doctorate in 2009 from the University of Maine for his devoted work on language preservation, with the dictionary as tangible evidence. He and other Passamaquoddy-Maliseet speakers spent forty years carefully documenting the meanings of the words and phrases. In the dictionary they place these terms in full sentences collected directly from native speakers, to illustrate their meanings and uses.

The dictionary is thus much more than a compendium of vocabulary; it is a living document that describes and ensures the cultural survival of the Passamaquoddy people and situates them firmly within their homeland. The word *wikhikon* means something written or drawn in words or pictures; it can also be a map telling the ways through and uses of the land that feeds and supports people. The dictionary can be read as one of these *wikhikonihkuk*—a way to understand Passamaquoddy territory as what the Abenaki historian Lisa Brooks would call "a network of waterways and relations" (xl). Maine's indigenous people have used the territory's network of rivers for generations: rivers are roads inland and to the sea, roads between communities, roads to seasonal locations, gathering and harvesting places. In the Wabanaki languages, names signal safe or unsafe places for travel, and places where food is plentiful or where communities were established; so the dictionary is about naming place and the networks that constitute it.

Besides the Passamaquoddy-Maliseet dictionary, this special issue owes an enormous debt to another important *wikhikon* (or, as the Abenakis would say, *awikhigan*): Brooks's own 2008 study, *The Common Pot: The Recovery of Native Space in the Northeast*. Like David Francis and his colleagues, Brooks wrote her book out of a sense of responsibility to her own people; like the Passamaquoddy-Maliseet dictionary, *The Common Pot* has benefited a much wider audience. It brings a particular focus to the literary history of the Wabanakis and other northeastern indigenous people, illustrating their deployments of writing as political and intellectual responses

to colonization. Brooks makes visible the connection between Wabanaki writing in English and traditional systems of textualization—such as wampum belts and maps on birchbark scrolls—that were used to document social organization, law, treaties, and people's relationship to land.

She provides linguistic evidence of this in the Abenaki verb root *awigha*, to draw, write, or map, and the noun *awikhigan*, the tool resulting from the act of drawing, writing, or mapping. Brooks recounts how *awikhiganak*, birchbark scrolls containing symbolic and mnemonic information, were documented in *The Jesuit Relations* by seventeenth-century French priests at the Gaspé Peninsula, who discovered their students creating their own hieroglyphic texts to help remember Catholic prayers and catechism. Brooks argues that the step from creating these *awikhiganak* to writing letters and petitions in English was a short and natural one for northeastern Native people, who incorporated European writing as a tool of resistance and a way to shape their communities' future from the eighteenth century forward. In this framework Native people entered the colonial encounter with tools for chirographic representation and quickly bridged the divide between alphabetic and non-alphabetic systems:

> *Awikhiganak* and wampum were facets of an indigenous writing system that was based on "cartographic principles." The graphic symbols used in both forms represented the relationships between people, between places, between humans and nonhumans, between the waterways that joined them. The communal stories recorded on birchbark and in wampum would even connect people with their relations across time, bringing the past, present, and future into the same space.
>
> . . . It is no coincidence that the word *awikhigan* came to encompass letters and books or that wampum and writing were used concurrently to bind words to deeds. Transformations occurred when the European system entered Native space. Birchbark messages became letters and petitions, wampum records became treaties, and journey pictographs became

> written "journals" . . . while histories recorded on birchbark and wampum became written communal narratives. . . . These texts, which emerged from within Native space, represent an indigenous American literary tradition. (12–13)

Brooks is building on previous scholarship on early indigenous literacies by Joanna Brooks, Hilary Wyss, Kristina Bross, and others; but she facilitates new conversations on the literature of indigenous New England in especially groundbreaking ways. Because she emphasizes *networks*—of kin, of writing technologies, and of geographic spaces and landscapes—she allows us to rethink "New England" without reifying it. Indeed it is this reification of region—as a bastion of Yankee authenticity, from whom Native people inexorably vanished to make way for the "founding" Americans—that has provoked much of our own scholarship and teaching, and that the essays in this issue emphatically challenge.

"New England," of course, is a construct; its very borders traverse and divide a number of the Native nations whose literature is discussed in this issue. But precisely as a construct, the region exerts force for the indigenous people who live within and around it. Those people often share histories, individually and collectively, of being literally written out of existence, as the historian Jean M. O'Brien (Ojibwe) has recently demonstrated in her compelling book, *Firsting and Lasting*. Many of these people share more recent histories of brutal and protracted fights for federal recognition and of popular misconceptions that they only declare their "Indianness" in the disingenuous interest of acquiring casinos. While, taken separately, these experiences aren't necessarily peculiar to indigenous New England, they do exert peculiar force here. Thus, an attention to region, coupled with a healthy understanding of how the region itself breaks down around the edges, strikes us as salutary. It helps mediate between two apparently competing strains in our profession: the imperative to attend rigorously to Native literature's specific tribal contexts (as called for by Craig Womack, Robert Warrior, Daniel Heath Justice, and others), and the enduring interest in what is variously called comparative or cosmopolitan studies (as demon-

strated by the likes of Chadwick Allen and Shari Huhndorf). What *The Common Pot*—and, we believe, the essays included here—achieve is what Mvskoke Creek scholar Tol Foster calls a "relational regionalism," one that "look[s] outside the tribal archive" and yet is "also in a strange way tribally specific" (270).

All of the essays in this issue indicate, one way or another, that indigenous people in New England are *networked*. These scholars offer fresh perspectives on regional authors. No doubt the best known of those is the Mohegan minister Samson Occom, who has been ensconced in the Heath and Norton anthologies of American literature for some years now, and who has elicited a rich body of scholarship including Joanna Brooks's massive scholarly edition of his writing. A good deal of the initial scholarship on Occom tended to worry the question of whether Occom, an indigenous clergyman, was "assimilated" to Euro-American, Christian ideals; or, alternatively, whether he subverted that position to advocate for tribal sovereignty and persistence. Once again we can credit Lisa Brooks with breaking that debate open; by situating Occom in a wider network of relations—members of surviving wampum-making nations along the northeast coast, many of whom worked with Occom on jointly authored petitions—she shows how Occom joined a group of Native writers who collectively fashioned new discourses of communal responsibility.

In the first two essays below, Reginald Dyck and Michael LeBlanc follow Brooks's lead. Dyck deepens our understanding of Occom's writing networks by casting them in economic terms—detailing the Mohegan and Anglo-US economies in which Occom worked, and against which he often defined his emerging Christian beliefs. LeBlanc, meanwhile, radically reconstructs Mohegan literary history. He sets one of Occom's best-known pieces, his 1772 sermon at the execution of Moses Paul, in conversation with two other Mohegan texts: Paul's own letter to Occom requesting the sermon, and a letter to Paul from Occom's fellow minister, Joseph Johnson. Dyck's and LeBlanc's work is interesting enough insofar as it illustrates how Mohegan writers established their connections with each other and with their homelands. But in our view these essays go even further,

for one practice that has continued to marginalize New England Native writers is the scholarly habit of reading Native American authors (or any authors, for that matter) in isolation. The persistent focus on individualized notions of authorship, in turn, can make regional Native writers appear few and far between.

Implicitly or explicitly, all of the scholars in this issue show how New England Native writing expresses what Jace Weaver (Cherokee) calls "communitism": an activist commitment to Native land and Native community. This commitment persists into the twentieth century, and into the ever-expanding variety of literary genres that Native people have been producing in more recent times. Dale Potts offers the first sustained examination of the pulp fiction written during the 1930s and onward by the Maliseet celebrity Henry (Red Eagle) Perley. Potts describes Perley's remarkable literary output as creating a northeastern landscape thickly populated by living Native people. Since, as the historian Jean M. O'Brien has shown, most mainstream historians were busy writing that landscape, instead, as "thickly populated by 'last' [members of vanishing tribes]" (113), Perley's fiction stands as what Potts calls a powerful "counternarrative to the dominant discourse of white victory and Native submission."

Our slate of scholarly essays concludes with Christine M. DeLucia's assessment of one of today's most influential regional writers and publishers. Joseph Bruchac (Abenaki) has been an ardent promoter and publisher of indigenous New England writers at least since the early 1970s and has written over a hundred books of his own; and yet, inexplicably, he has yet to attract much scholarly attention. Mapping Bruchac's own extensive network of relations—professional, tribal, and personal—DeLucia offers what she calls "a robust cataloging" of the ideas and "the conduct of the artist-as-community-member," rigorously illustrating how Bruchac's reciprocal relationships influence, and are influenced by, both print culture and tribal communities.

We conclude this special issue with two works of creative nonfiction. Lorrayne Carroll interviews Charles Norman Shay (Penobscot), who has become known in Native literature circles since

Annette Kolodny republished his grandfather's 1893 *Life and Traditions of the Red Man* (Nicolar). Shay's own memoir of Penobscot life at home and abroad, *From Indian Island to Omaha Beach*, is forthcoming from the University of Nebraska Press. In his interview Shay offers a rich assessment of Penobscot literary history as both tribally rooted and deeply interconnected with the rest of the world.

Finally, Mi'kmaq poet Alice Azure generously gave us an autobiographical piece that perhaps represents the indigenous New England experience as well as any. Riffing on the name of "The Great Awakening"—which many New Englanders regard as a watershed moment in the cultural history of the Anglo-Protestant Northeast—Azure recounts her painful childhood in a Connecticut religious orphanage and the various "conversions" that led her to reconstruct her own Native family history.

Speaking as teachers of American literature and Native American literature, we believe this volume of scholarship about New England Native authors to be only a beginning. In the field of Native literature, much work by and about writers from western tribes has been published since the late 1960s, starting with *House Made of Dawn* by N. Scott Momaday and *Ceremony* by Leslie Silko. The habit of mainstream academics and publishers continues into the present, with the works of Sherman Alexie (Spokane/Coeur d'Alene) and Louise Erdrich (Chippewa). The North American literary world will be much richer with the publication of scholarship that gives readers access to previously unpublished (or out of print) works by northeastern Native writers, whose Algonkian cultures are ancestrally connected to the Chippewa, for example. These scholars make an important contribution to the field of Native American literature, because their research attends to many writers whose work is unknown, out of print, or new to publication. It has been a slow process to train the attention of scholars on northeastern Native writers, aside from the few already recognized such as William Apess (Pequot) and Samson Occom (Mohegan). The research in this issue makes visible contemporary and historical writers from these and other northeastern communities and contradicts the mainstream mythology that Native people have "vanished" from the East Coast.

NOTE

1. Today the Passamaquoddy and Maliseet people belong to two distinct nations, though they share a language. In Maine the Passamaquoddy people have two reservations: one at Indian Township (or Princeton) and one at Sipayik (or Pleasant Point). The Maliseets have a reservation at Houlton. The Maliseets have an additional six bands in the Canadian Maritimes, and the Passamaquoddies have relatives across the border also. Both nations belong to the Wabanaki Confederacy, along with the Mi'kmaq, Penobscot, and Abenaki.

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Special Issue
Indigenous New England

EDITED BY
MARGO LUKENS AND SIOBHAN SENIER

The Economic Education of Samson Occom

REGINALD DYCK

During his lifetime Samson Occom (1723–1792) experienced the transformation of tribal life in southern New England. As a Mohegan and pan-tribal leader, he spent his adult working life as a Christian minister and missionary. Occom's profound sacrifices make clear the depth of his Christian beliefs.[1] Nevertheless, he increasingly challenged the Christian practices of Anglo-US society.[2] Key to understanding Occom's life and writing is recognizing the acuteness of his distinction between belief and practice. This essay analyzes his effort to differentiate between religious beliefs and their resulting economic practices, both for the form of Christianity to which he converted and for the Mohegan religion into which he was born. I argue that Occom's writings—journals, sermons, petitions, and other documents—show that this differentiation led him to reject Anglo-US economic practices as fundamentally unchristian while remaining faithful to the New Light Christian beliefs of the Great Awakening. And although he turned away from the beliefs of his birth, he found in Native traditional lifeways a truly Christian economic practice. Through his experiences of both Native and Christian beliefs and practices, Occom gained an experiential economic education that shaped his role as a tribal and pan-tribal leader.[3] This work culminated in his efforts to help found and guide the separatist community of Brotherton. Through his negotiations between these two, Occom gained an experiential economic education.

His early education was in the Native economics of subsistence living, which had provided well for the Mohegan people. His com-

mitment to these lifeways is evident throughout his life. However, with his conversion to Christianity and his resulting vocation, Occom's education shifted. His experience of inequitable missionary wage structures prompted a sharp critique of Anglo-US economic practices, as did his participation in land leasing and sales disputes, particularly the Mason-Mohegan case. His developing critique of Christian practices and his commitment to Native economics culminates in his efforts to help establish the Eeyawquittoowauconnuck-Brotherton community.[4] Here Occom and the other leaders created a Native nation that rejected, as much as was possible, the dominant culture's economic practices that failed to follow its proclaimed Christian beliefs. Instead it embraced an economics, adapted from Native tradition, that more closely followed the community's New Light Christian beliefs.

Occom's economic analysis of Christian practice occurs within a broader debate in Anglo-US society because of the increasing use of abstract economic systems. Paper money, banknotes, and public debt created a new system of value. Cotton Mather, like Occom, was concerned with the intersection of economics and Christian community. With his vision of "godly capitalism," Mather saw public paper money as a tool for strengthening community bonds because participants would be tied together through mutual financial obligation (Baker 29, 27). It also offered an indirect reassurance of difference between the embattled Puritan community and the Native peoples they were dispossessing of their lands. For Mather societies without money were "brutish and savage," revealing "ignorance of Writing and Arithmetic" (qtd. in Baker 29). Similarly, many of Occom's eighteenth-century Anglo-US contemporaries, including Benjamin Franklin, thought that for the newly independent nation, public credit would help strengthen its fragile cohesiveness. This system could only work, like language, if everyone agreed to its meaning (5).

Occom's problematic is quite different, however, particularly in his (and the Mohegan tribe's) economic interactions with the Connecticut Colony and the missionary boards that supported him. Later, as a leader of the Brotherton experiment, Occom did concern himself with the intersection of economics and community. Inter-

nally he focused on religious unity as the basis of economic mutuality. This unity was based on Native values as well as Christian teachings. His external analysis focuses on economic power relations with the outside organizations on which the Native community was dependent. Paper money as a means to wealth was not his concern; rather it was economic survival—for himself, his family, and the Native groups with which he worked—in the face of practices carried out in the name of Christian civilization.

Occom's negotiation of belief and practice, both Christian and Native, is a central feature of his writing. His autobiography, written at the midpoint in his ministerial career, records a key moment in his economic education. In the 1765 first draft he calls the document "the true Account of my Education." Here he explains: "I Was Born a Heathen in Mmoyanheeunnuck alias Mohegan . . . my Parents were altogether Heathens, and I was Educated by them in their Heathenish Notions" (51). This seems to imply a stark contrast between traditional Mohegan beliefs and the Christianity he had embraced for almost three decades. It also may seem the product of a colonized mind using the before-and-after form of a conversion narrative. Yet it is part of a complex rhetorical and cultural strategy to integrate true belief and practice. Heathenism, like Christianity, was not only a set of religious beliefs but also a web of related practices.[5]

Already in a 1761 journal entry, two years after his ordination, Occom had complicated the hierarchy of Christian and Heathen: "I have thought there was no Heathen but the wild Indians, but I think now there is some English Heathen, where they Enjoy the Gospel of Jesus Christ too, Yea I believe they are worse than ye Savage Heathens of the wilderness" (260). This understanding of the colonists' failed Christian practice, shared by many other New England Indians, was reflected in their increasing use of the term *whites* rather than *Christians* when referring to Europeans (Silverman 513). Occom also complicates the Christian/Heathen hierarchy by including specific Native details such as the name of his community, which indicates a continuing identification with the Mohegan world he had lived in until age sixteen and to which he continually returned

until his move to Brotherton. He notes without criticism, and seemingly with pride, that his family was "very Strong in the Customs of their fore Fathers" and that his father was "a great Hunter" (51–52). In the 1768 second draft of the autobiography, Occom continues to call traditional Native beliefs and practices "Heathenism." However, in describing an early missionary effort to the Mohegan people, he points out the failed missionary economic practice of giving blankets so that Mohegans would attend services. In contrast, he offers no critique of the traditional "wandering life" (52).

Here and in other writings, Occom makes clear that even after his 1741 conversion he continued to value many aspects of traditional life and did not find them contradictory to his Christian commitment. In 1754 he created a list of traditional healing recipes using herbs and roots (44–47). In 1761 he wrote a detailed ethnography of the Montaukett people (47–52). Two political petitions written during the last decade of his ministry also show Occom's continuing commitment to traditional Native life ways.[6] In 1785 Occom petitioned the US Congress on behalf of the Brotherton community, requesting two mills, some tools, and a library, out of "pinching Necessity" (150). In contrast to this present need, the petition extensively describes "this Boundless Continent." Its "a boundence . . . the Spontaneous Product of this Country" had originally been given by God to "the aboriginal Nations of this Great Indian World." Until they were "Stript of all our Natural Priviledges," Indians had fully provided for themselves by hunting, fishing, and gathering (149). In a related document of approximately the same time, Occom petitioned the state of New York on behalf of the Montaukett Tribe. Again he describes the abundance of the Indian world. Then he states that God had ordained some to be rich and others poor and "Saw fit, to keep us in Porverty, Only to live upon the Provisions he hath made already at our Hands" (151). Occom seems caught in a contradictory economic analysis. He describes an Edenic state rather than a world of Heathenism as understood by the missionary establishment. The traditional forms of production hardly seem to be production at all because Indians had been provided for directly by God. Thus while from one perspective the traditional Native eco-

nomic situation looked like poverty because of the absence of production, from another it was abundance. God's abundance, however, was reduced to poverty for the regions' Native peoples when the ocean boundary was breached and "your Fore Fathers Came With all the Learning, Knowledge and Understanding, that was Necessary for Mankind to make them Happy" (151). And yet the traditional life has just been described as completely happy. As he considers the economic transformation Native people experienced, Occom struggles with the concept of a fortunate fall into Anglo-US Christian civilization: he makes this transformation seem quite unfortunate. These two petitions thus provide a clear, if rhetorically troubled, example of Occom celebrating and advocating traditional Native economics in the context of his Christian beliefs.

Occom's remembrance of "this Indian world" (151), a rhetorical strategy with political intent, challenges dominant attitudes by asserting a basis for Native dignity in the face of demeaning socio-economic conditions. The petitions are also a broad call for justice, even as they conclude with a deferential plea for material help.[7] His descriptions of traditional life provide a model that could be adapted by late eighteenth-century New England Native peoples. From accounts of his early tribal life through the late writings in support of the Brotherton community, Occom negotiated the problem of religious belief and practice by embracing the values and, to the extent possible, the practices of traditional life.

In contrast, Occom increasingly turned away from the so-called Christian civilization that missionaries had promoted as the people he ministered to became more entwined with Anglo-US forms of production and experienced its injustices. By the end of his life, Occom had reconceived Heathenism as an exemplary practice, though not belief, and Christian practice or "civilization" as fundamentally destructive, particularly for Indians as they were forced to give up their un-alienated life for a marginal, impoverished, and continually threatened place in Anglo-US society. The process of reaching this conclusion involved painful steps in Occom's economic education.

Occom was not the first Mohegan to make a Native critique of Christian economic practices. Rev. Experience Mayhew, on his 1714 missionary trip, found that Mohegans were uninterested in his message. They had concluded, Mayhew notes, that English settlers had profited little from their own religion since it did not stop them from cheating Indians out of their land (Love 25). Occom's evaluation of Anglo-US Christian practice reached a similar conclusion. Influenced by the New Light movement of the Great Awakening, Occom extended the movement's challenge of established religious practices by questioning the effect its economic practices had on Native peoples.[8]

Occom's religious beliefs had personal economic implications. Financial concerns are seldom far from spiritual ones in Occom's writing. Occom, and later his family as well, lived almost continually with economic uncertainty and often with depravation (Love 45). Unlike the autobiographical writings of his near-contemporary Jonathan Edwards, who had no need to mention his material circumstances in his writing because his salary was assured, Occom's writings are filled with economic concerns. His letters regularly reference money worries, debt, and donations. From his first extant letter, which informs a white fellow minister that he is "Driven to the want, almost, of every thing," to the last one, which addresses a land lease scandal, Occom regularly wrote to challenge the economic status quo (64, 137). He often used dramatic rhetoric to shake up his parsimonious supervisors: "I leave my Poor Wife and Children at your feet and if they hunger starve and die let them Die there—Sir I Shall endeavor to follow your Directions in all things" (73). As missionary, minister, and teacher, he necessarily spent much of his working life depending on a mission salary or donations, both insecure and inadequate forms of compensation. This economic dependence on Anglo-US individuals and organizations resulted in the often conflicted tone of Occom's autobiography and letters. While he presents himself as a grateful recipient of whatever support was offered, he also explains its often severe inadequacy. Of necessity missionary work was not his sole source of income. He also supported himself and his family with hunting, fishing, farm-

ing, and craftwork. "I was obligd to Contrive every way to Support my Family," he explained defensively, and yet he could not remain out of debt (57). Occom's commitment to ministry, the impoverished status of the Indians to whom he ministered, and discriminatory Anglo-US remuneration practices put him in a precarious financial state and thus forced economic considerations to be central in his life and writing.

The causes of his economic insecurity, Occom regularly makes clear, lay in the unfair practices of Christian individuals and institutions. A religion that could support slavery, Occom realized, would also employ discriminatory practices against Native Christian workers. In the second draft of his autobiography, he links these two forms of economic oppression as he condemns "the Conduct of the Most Learned, Polite, and Rich Nations of the World" as "the Most Tyranacal, Cruel, and inhuman oppressors of their Fellow Creatures" (58). In a powerful 1787 sermon on loving one's neighbor as oneself, Occom uses similar language against those who fail to follow this injunction: "they are worse than the Heathen, Heathen in general manifest more Humanity, than such degenerate Christians" because "they are very kind to one another, and they are kind to Strangers." He then condemns "Slavekeepers," asking, "do you Love your Neighbour, your Neighbour Negroe as Yourself, are you willing to be Slaves yourselves"? (206). In this conjunction Occom challenges the assumed racial hierarchy by applying what he sees as true Christian principles to the economic practices of both slavery and discriminatory missionary pay. Economic superiority, he argues, does not create moral superiority.

Much of Occom's economic education focused on what he saw as the contradictions between Christian belief and its economic practice. One of his earliest lessons in Christian economics was delivered by missionary society commissioners. Having left Wheelock's school because of eye strain, he took a teaching position across the sound on Long Island. Although Occom and his mentors expected that he would receive support from the mission board, for two years he received nothing and so had to depend on what the Indian com-

munity could provide him (Love 44). Only after he married, and with the urging of white ministers, did the society provide him a severely inadequate salary (55). In his first position as missionary teacher, Occom learned that financial arrangements with mission societies could be uncertain and misunderstood. Even when they were clear, the salary offered would be unfair.

Discriminatory pay for Indian workers was acceptable practice among missionary society leaders. However, this did not mean that it went unchallenged. Occom, individually and in concert with others, expressed his grievances and, where he had the power and vision, took action to rectify unjust work relations. His grievance against unfair practices while working among the Montaukett people, like most labor disputes, was shaped by larger social conflicts, including the general status of Native missionaries. A key purpose of establishing Indian education had been to train new missionaries who would be less expensive and more effective than Anglo-US workers. Seeing Occom's success, Wheelock commented, "No reason to regret our toil and Expense." Saving money by keeping Native wages low made sense to the missionary society because it felt that Indian workers could live like the Indians to whom they ministered (Peyer 66–67).[9]

In his argument against this practice, Occom presents financial calculations that support his charge of discrimination (55–58). He concludes the second draft of his autobiography by explaining that a young single white missionary had cost the society 180 pounds a year, and he had been sent where he was not needed. Occom then dramatically explains that although he was more effective in his work, it took him twelve years to receive this amount. Occom had been faithful, prudent in expenses, and productive in his missionary endeavors. Although his needs increased with his growing family, even with his ordination the society did not increase his salary (Szasz 243). Interestingly, rather than appeal to God or the ecclesiastical world as his judge, he writes, "I leave it with World, as wicked as it is, to Judge, whether I ought not to have had half as much, they gave the young man Just mentioned" (58). Even in the wicked world of economics, Occom is confident he has a convincing case.[10]

Occom's voice is strong as he makes his accusation; he opens most sentences in this section with "I" and directly asserts claims like "I am not under obligations to them" (58). Yet as he levels the charge of racially motivated economic discrimination, he shifts his tonal register and makes the point indirectly. Because Occom understands his position in the missionary hierarchy, he uses a sermonly illustration of an Indian boy "Bound out to an English Family" whose master "Beats me for the most of the time, because I am an Indian." Although the final paragraph suggests a direct connection to Occom's own situation, he then apologizes for his comparative lack of success as a missionary and also for being an Indian: "I Can't help that God has made me So; I did not make my self So" (58). In making his case, Occom adapts his rhetoric to its colonial context. First he boldly makes his accusation and sets forth the evidence. Then he draws back in what may seem an agonized, dependent position of pleading. Margaret Connell Szasz states, "Occom's relationship with the Boston board served as the first of many reminders that most of the English ministers and their missionary societies saw him as a means to achieve their own ends, rather than as a fellow minister with equal stature" (243). Occom's writings show that he was well aware of being caught in the mission establishment's construction of him, even as he challenged their assumptions.

In 1764 he was further demeaned economically as he left his work in Montauk, Long Island, for a sponsored mission trip to western New York. At this time he was almost twenty years into his career as minister, teacher, and missionary. When the project failed to gain economic support, Occom was left unemployed and without a salary.

Wage theft was not Occom's only economic grievance. Land theft was another. When he returned home in 1764, he resumed his position as a tribal councilor. This was at a time when the Mason-Mohegan land case was at a crucial point (Peyer 72). As Occom spoke out for economic justice, his engagement in this long controversy helped him conclude that the Anglo-US practice of economic justice was fundamentally unchristian and could not serve as a model.

Occom's participation put him in conflict with the missionary society. Wheelock recognized Occom's importance in this controversy: "Clamours spread through the government, and almost every one cryed out against Mr. Occom as a very bad, mischevious, and designing man" (qtd. in L. Brooks 96). The missionary board, "as loyal ministers of the colony," made their colonial interests clear by requiring that Occom desist from advising his fellow Mohegans to side against the colony. While standing his ground on other issues that day, Occom did agree that he would not again become involved in this land dispute (Love 127–28). Caught in a precarious position—committed to ministry and having little alternative financial support—Occom submitted to the board's authority. Yet while he was faithful to the letter of his promise, Occom continued to challenge the colony's interests in the case and was recognized as a leader shaping others' opinions (L. Brooks 96).

Anglo-US society was predicated on individual ownership and the acquisition of Native land. Indian religious conversion, from the mission societies' perspective, required the transformation of all structures of Native life, including land use. The Mason-Mohegan land dispute developed within this context. Major John Mason, a Mohegan ally from the Pequot War, was enlisted as a trustee of their lands in 1640. Believing in Mason's good faith and power to protect their land, Sachem Ben Uncas later deeded all Mohegan lands to him. What Uncas meant by the deed and subsequent agreements is unknown, but likely he saw them as involving only land sharing with the Mohegans' new ally (Conroy 416). However, when the Connecticut Colony received its charter from the Crown, Mohegan reserved lands were included. In 1687 the colony began granting these lands to townships. In response, and with the help of Major Mason's descendants, the Mohegans appealed to the Crown in 1704, claiming that these land grants were in violation of previous treaties. Thus began a tortuous legal struggle that finally ended sixty years later with a verdict favoring the Connecticut Colony (Jarvis 22–32; Walters 804–05).[11]

As an influential Mohegan tribal councilor, Occom advocated for communal land ownership rather than individual profit (Lopenzina, "Whole " 1132). In a 1773 letter to his white missionary friend

Rev. Samuel Buell, Occom gives his bitter comment on "the great Controversy." Recognizing the insidious relationship between English economic interests and practice of justice, he asserts that Indians "will never Stand a good Chance" because "they have no Money" (104). Occom believed that the Crown ruled in favor of the colony because of its claim that settlers had purchased the land and made improvements. Court documents state that five or six hundred white families now living on this land would be ruined, their churches would be destroyed, and the land would again become a "Wilderness" (Conroy 409). Occom condemned the injustice of using expediency and self-interest to reach a verdict. Not surprisingly Mohegan tribal medicine woman and historian Dr. Glaydys Tantaquidgeon called Occom a "money-hater" (qtd. in Fawcett 16). This was a fundamental conclusion in his economic education.

Occom came to this understanding through his increasing skepticism of Anglo-US practices. His involvement with the Mason-Mohegan case reflects Occom's differentiation between Christian belief and its practice in Anglo-US economics. It was also another step in his education about the challenges of attaining economic justice for Native peoples. He learned the importance of having a "compact tribal organization" so that Native peoples could be effective in self-determination. He also recognized the loss of Indian political power from selling their land and having white settlers live near them. We can imagine Occom concluding that the only solution was a separatist one. In the same year as the final verdict of the Mason-Mohegan case, Occom participated in the first meeting to organize the new settlement of Brotherton.

Another key economic experience, Occom's fundraising trip to Great Britain, reinforced the lessons of the land dispute. Just as he was leaving at the end of 1765, he found himself caught in a vindictive power struggle involving a mission board that felt it was not receiving proper credit for the money it had invested in Occom's work (Occom 74n23).[12] Although this conflict was resolved, it foreshadowed economic conflicts with mission authorities that were not resolved so readily.

The trip afforded Occom a firsthand look at British society's treat-

ment of its own economic outsiders. His journal reveals his shock at seeing London's economic disparity: "Such Confusion as I never Dreamt of," including "the poor Begars Praying, Crying, and Beging upon their knees" (266–67). He connected the gulf between English rich and poor with the biblical story of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19–25): "What a great Difference there is Between The Rich and the Poor—and What Difference there is and will be, Between Gods poor and the Devils Rich" (Occom 68).[13] Occom would later remember back to "the old Britains in their Heathenism" (339).

These lessons in so-called Christian economic practice were personal for Occom. While he was raising considerable sums in Great Britain, his family suffered deprivations because the missionary society did not provide for them as promised. Later Occom expressed "great Discouragement" to Wheelock about how the funds he had raised were being used. He explained to Wheelock that the great evangelist Rev. George Whitefield had predicted to him, "you have been a fine Tool to get Money for them, but when you get home, they won't Regard you the'll Set you a Drift" (Occom 99). This is precisely what happened. The money he had raised was not spent on Indian education, and on his return Occom was ordered "into the wilderness," where he would be less threatening to the missionary establishment.

Anglo-US economic practices, demonstrated on both sides of the Atlantic, were disillusioning for Occom. What he learned from the Mason-Mohegan land dispute, together with his trip to Great Britain, was that Christian civilization offered little to emulate.

As an alternative Occom looked to traditional Native life, which provided an ideal congruent with his Christian beliefs. The political documents Occom wrote for the Brotherton community and its related neighbor, New Stockbridge, set forth practices that are separatist in intent, Native in tradition, and true to the leaders' Christian faith. Together with Occom's letters and journals from this time, these documents present a determined assertion of Native sovereignty and a model for living in an antagonistic world.

In 1783, a year before the emigration to Brotherton, Occom wrote

"The Most Remarkable and Strange State Situation and Appearance of Indian Tribes in this Great Continent," which provides a conceptual context for this move. Using an astute cultural analysis and rhetorical strategy, the document seems to accept the dominant culture's assessment of Indian civilization while at the same time presenting both a biblical critique of the Anglo-US culture and an indirect defense of Indian separatism (58–59). In describing present Indian conditions, Occom begins by agreeing with the assumptions of his apparently Anglo-US audience. Then in explaining the cause of these conditions, he shifts blame from Indian character to the dominant culture's failure to live up to its Christian ideals.

Occom begins with a critique, using "the Poor Negroes" as a point of comparison. In wondering if they are under a "great Curse," he plays on the biblical curse of Hamm, a commonly used justification for slavery. However, he challenges this belief by explaining that the problem is actually the "Rich Nations." He condemns them in strongly confrontational language: "the Most Tyrannical, Cruel, and inhumane oppressors of their Fellow Creatures in the World." Occom then shifts his critique of those who "are Calld Christian Nations" because of their treatment of Native peoples. Following the same pattern, he first describes their present conditions: "Indians, So Called, in this most extensive Continent, are Universally Poor, they have no Notion of Laying up much for the Future." In using the phrases "are Calld Christian Nations" and "Indians, So Called," Occom questions fundamental assumptions about civilization and savagery. By echoing Jesus's command in the Sermon on the Mount, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth" (Matt. 6:19), he implies that Indian failure in not "laying up much for the Future" is actually true Christian practice.[14] In this way Occom not only accuses the "Christian Nations" of failing to live out their Christian beliefs but also preemptively undermines his assessment that follows of the apparent Indian failure.

New England Christianity linked economic success and moral virtue. Occom challenges this association by using one of the appeals of New Light Christianity: "its denial of earthly goods and promise of ultimate justice for the chosen[] appealed to dreams of poor Indians

who saw white people around them far more prosperous than they" (Johnson 42). Mohegan tribal historian Melissa Jayne Fawcett states that because of the "hated" shift from "the Native trade and barter economy" to a money-based one, some converted to Christianity because of its "anti-money philosophies" (16). This form of Christianity could be practiced as a means of economic resistance rather than assimilation. Occom adds support for his critique by observing that the Indians who have had the benefit of living near white settlers are still "wastful and imprudent," thus having gained little by their association with Christian civilization (59). Again, while seeming to acknowledge Indian failure, Occom instead suggests that the now dominant economic values fail as Christian practice.

Continuing his analysis, Occom notes that Indians lack "Ambition to appear Great in the World" (59). While certainly a capitalist failure, this is not at odds with the Christian belief that the first shall be last and the last first (Matt. 19:30). Then he repeats the colonizing claim that "They have no Laws or Regulations . . . , every on des what is right in his own Eyes" (echoing Deut. 12:8). However, Occom immediately undermines this critique by asserting Indians' characteristic tendency to follow Jesus's new commandment to love one another (John 13:34): "Yet in general they [are] kind to one another" and treat each other fairly. By noting that Indians "are not given to Lying, Cheating, and Steeling," Occom implies again that colonial practices, not traditional Native ones, fail to meet Christian standards (59). In this critique, he exploits the contradictory principles of New England capitalism and Christianity.

Occom could be confident in a Native economic alternative because he had throughout his ministry depended on the Native practice of mutual support. Harold Blodgett notes that "his diary is witness to the fact that he found hospitality everywhere. Indeed he lived from hand to mouth with rarely a dollar in his pockets, depending for food and lodging upon whatever family was at hand at the dusk of day" (170). For Occom and the other leaders, Brotherton could institutionalize this practice of mutuality as an alternative that was both Native and Christian.

As a survival strategy in a world of anti-Christian economics, Indians from a number of tribes moved west to Oneida land in New York State to establish a separatist Native Christian community. "And thus a *new Nation* sprang into existence, phoenix-like, from the ashes (if I may so call it), of six different tribes . . . known as the Brothertown tribe of Indians," Nantucket historian Thomas Commuck exclaimed (97). The economic lessons Occom had learned through painful experience with mission boards, Indian schools, colonial courts, and US legislatures now shaped his role as a Brotherton leader. With his extensive economic education, he helped guide the group's efforts. The goal in moving was to, as much as possible, live apart from Anglo-US society. As a separate community the Brotherton group needed to become self-sustaining. However, Occom makes clear that this was a goal to strive for, a process rather than a precondition. He states in a 1787 journal entry, a year and a half after moving to Brotherton, "It is high Time that We should begin to maintain ourselves, and to Support our Temporal & Religious Concerns" (376). He had learned the precariousness of depending on mission organizations. The community also had to contend with the prejudice of the dominant society, the weakness of its legal structures for protecting their rights, and the seemingly insatiable demand for new land by white settlers.

In 1773, around the time when the Brotherton movement held its first meeting, Occom wrote down the "Mohegan Tribe Standing Agreements." These agreements set forth principles for Native economic self-sustainability. The first agreement stated the principle of communal economics over individual gain. Individual control of plots of land was accepted, but with limitations. For example, land could be leased in summer but not in the fall. However, common pastures and fields needed to be protected for tribal use only (146). Then five years later, after the Brotherton plans had been postponed because of the 1776 war, Occom reported unanimous agreement that "we Shall look upon one another as one Family" and that "Rent money . . . does belong to the Whole Tribe . . . for the Benefit of the Whole" (147).

This commitment did not mean that Brotherton Indians were

returning to the economic lifeways of the pre-invasion era. They had to contend with the fact that traditional forms of production had been largely destroyed by settlers' "seemingly endless miles of fences" and all that they entailed (Cronin 128; see also Johnson 46–47). Brotherton itself was divided into mainly fifty-acre plots (Love 307). The first request they made of their New York superintendent included four pair of oxen and twelve cows, which indicates the use of Anglo-US forms of agriculture. Yet within this context, the Brotherton community struggled to maintain its principle of mutuality by creating communal oversight of individual land holdings as well as maintenance of common lands. The structures established for this were not strictly traditional, yet they did help sustain the traditional value of mutuality. By adapting traditional values to new economic conditions, Brotherton worked to maintain its unique Native and Christian identity.

Brotherton faced two threats to their economic independence. One was the problem of production. In his journal Occom expresses thankfulness and communal pride regarding the work his fellow Indians had done in clearing ground for his house and crops: "this is the . . . first Labour I ever had from my Brethren in the Flesh, and it was a Voluntary offer" (376). In calling him as minister, New Stockbridge and Brotherton leaders offered Occom a basic salary, trusting in God that "to the proportion that we Shall increase in Number and Substance, All we Shall be able to Support you fully" (154). Yet they understood their economic limitations. In a letter to "all Benevolent Gentleman," the tribe through Occom acknowledged their need for outside help but stated that they are "determined to be independent as fast as we can" (155). Native missionary work had continually demonstrated that the group providing the money would also expect control. The Brotherton community's determination to become economically self-sustaining came against the other, external threat. Like Native peoples throughout southern New England, Brotherton struggled with unscrupulous land leasing and sales to white settlers. Although the group had moved to what they called a wilderness, white settlers jeopardized the new community's stability and eventually its survival. The 1791 Brotherton petition to the

New York State Assembly, the last petition written by Occom, makes clear the continuing threat to their common life: "a great number of your People, and a Number of our People are Joining together to ruin and Destroy our Town Your people are Flatering, treating and urging our distracted Indians, to lease Lands to them." These actions challenged communal life by setting "Crazy Indians" against "old Substantial People" and "Boys" against "their Fathers." This undermined their common economic base through the desire for individual gain (157). Alcohol, Occom notes, was usually a weapon in land dispossessions (158). Brotherton's separatist identity was threatened as "White People have Come in amongst, We are all mingled together" (158).

In appealing for help to the New York State Legislature, the petition recognizes the diminished sovereignty this would bring to their nation. Thus, it explains that if the Brotherton situation becomes so desperate that they cannot maintain their present way of life, they will not give up but instead will "push off Some Where, for we Can not live so" (158). For the time being, however, they continued striving to maintain their land base as a separate community.

Conflicts over land use caused destructive divisions within the Brotherton community. Rev. Kirkland, representative of a mission board, wrote in his diary, "for several months past they have been in a most unhappy divided state, & their spirit of resentment towards each other so great as to break up the peace of the settlement & threaten its ruin." The individualistic economic motives of some members threatened both the group's common lands and community authority over all Brotherton land. At the cost of ceding much of their land to New York State, the community was given significant control over land distribution and preserved much commonly owned land (Jarvis 132, 123). Although the structures established to govern individual and communal land use and distribution were not traditional per se, they did help sustain the traditional value of mutuality. Their intent was not to recreate the past Indian world strategically envisioned in the documents discussed above but rather to maintain Native practices and Christian principles as they adapted to continually changing realities.

In the end these structures could not solve the problem of internal divisions and external demands. Land leased to settlers quickly became land lost. The resulting socioeconomic pressures threatened their identity as a separate Native Christian community and in the end induced the community to migrate farther west to Wisconsin, a move that Occom probably had foreseen as a necessity. He referred to an offer of land in the West made to Captain Hendrick of New Stockbridge, who later led the movement to leave (Blodgett 213; Love 316).[15] In 1830, nearly four decades after Occom's death, the community established a new Brothertown, again named Eeyamequittoowauconnuck.[16]

The economic lessons Occom learned throughout his life were hard ones. As a child his family could sustain themselves mainly through traditional production. As Occom became an adult, this was no longer possible. Through his experiences, Occom increasingly recognized the need to challenge the Anglo-US economic practices that left him and the communities to which he ministered in poverty and demeaning dependence. He found an alternative by adapting the Mohegan tradition of mutuality to new circumstances. Recognizing the Anglo-US failure to practice a truly Christian form of economics and seeing increasing Anglo-US dominance of Native life, he and other Brotherton leaders developed a separatist strategy. Working to create a new, Native nation, Occom dedicated himself to helping establish its self sustainability.

Near the end of his life, Occom was "Despairing the loss of about 2,000 acres of Brotherton lands, including common groves and cedar swamps." Fighting back, he wrote his final petition. In response, the New York State Assembly set a May 1792 date for expelling white settlers from land that had been illegally leased (J. Brooks in Occom xxv). Thus to the end, Occom used his experiential economic education to help sustain a Native, Christian alternative to the unchristian practices of the Anglo-US missionary societies and land-grasping settlers. Two months later Samson Occom died, having completed a steadfast struggle for Christian belief, economic justice, and Native sovereignty. The documents he left behind

provide a witness, a model, and an encouragement to continue the struggle.

NOTES

1. However, as Bernd C. Peyer explains, Occom's acceptance of the colonists' religion was complex and layered: "[H]e undoubtedly saw Christianity as an alternative to the spiritual void left by the colonial situation and, most likely, a vocational means of escaping poverty and social degradation" (65). In regard to poverty, Christianity offered Occom little escape. As for social degradation, he gained the deep respect from the Native people he served, but his struggles with the missionary establishments show the severe limitations of their acceptance of him.

2. I use the term "Anglo-US" rather than "Anglo-American" to avoid implying that "America" is synonymous with the United States rather than the American hemisphere. The term "US" here includes the pre-revolutionary colonies and territory that became the nation.

3. Drew Lopenzina's analysis of William Apess's *Eulogy on King Philip* shows this next generation of New England Native ministers using a similar strategy of critiquing Anglo-US Christianity for its failed practice and finding Native traditions a purer form of Christian practice ("What" 683).

4. Joanna Brooks quotes Mohegan tribal linguist Stephanie Fielding's translation of *Eeyawquittoowauconnuck*: "he does so like someone looking in a certain direction or a certain way." She then adds, "Phrased differently, this meaning might indicate a group united by a distinctive shared perspective" (Occom 25n28). Brotherton is also known as Brothertown. I use the former spelling except when referring to the community in Wisconsin, which officially uses the latter spelling.

5. I use Occom's terms "Heathen" and "Heathenism" to invoke the missionary meanings with which he contended as well as the resistance he developed from within the Christian belief structure.

6. Occom was a part of the first generation of Mohegan leaders who could use their own literacy to write these petitions rather than depend on the help of their English neighbors (L. Brooks 67).

7. Other Native leaders used a similar rhetoric. Mohegans Henry Quaquaquid and Robert Ashpo wrote to the Connecticut Assembly: "we have changed [lost] the good times, chiefly by the help of the white people. For in Times past our forefathers lived in peace, love and great harmony, and had everything in great plenty" (qtd. in L. Brooks 51).

8. Missionary work among New England Indians had been deeply hurt by King Philip's War. However, that work was rekindled with the Great Awakening. "Even the Mohegan, who had long held out against the new religion, were turned to Christianity at this time" (Conkey 185). For a fuller description of Native participation in and adaptation of the Great Awakening, see Johnson 40–45; J. Brooks 56–58; Peyer 59–60. Missionary leaders themselves recognized the worldly implications of their spiritual mission. For example, Occom's mentor Rev. Eleazar Wheelock argued that religious conversion was the best way of protecting settlers against Indians (Wyss 129). And when Occom worked as a missionary, he received instructions from his sponsor, the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, to "use your utmost endeavor . . . to attach them to our sovereign King George the Third of Great Britain" (qtd. in Wyss 130). Rather than accepting that his work should economically benefit Anglo-US interests, Occom critiqued this link as exploitative and unchristian.

9. Thus when Occom went into debt and needed additional help, he was accused of being extravagant (57). Having detailed all the work he had to do for his family and for the community, he made an effective case for seeing this accusation as cold-heartedly self-interested.

10. Occom was not alone in receiving unfair pay. In writing to a missionary board member, he pointed out that the salary for other Native school teachers was "Very Small, in these Hard Times, Who ever undertakes it, must not pretend to live by it" (93). He complained to Wheelock that fellow Mohegan missionary David Fowler wanted to settle his family in the wilderness, but "not . . . for What you offer" (98). Joseph Johnson, another Mohegan missionary, also argued for equal wages. To a benefactor he stated that "an Indian should meet with the same encouragements and be made Equal Sharer of the bounty with the English man Since they are both labouring in a Noble Cause and since it was given freely for the good of the poor Indians and Natives in Particular" (qtd. in Wyss 138).

11. William Bollan, attorney for the Masons and Mohegans in the 1743 hearing, noted that treaties and agreements were written by colonists "to express matters favorably for their own interests" (qtd. in Conroy 412). David W. Conroy summarizes the point: "Language masked intentions; words were at odds with truth." He further concludes that this case, from 1705 to 1773, "had always been more of a conflict between the partisan interests of colonists in Mohegan lands than a principled defense of tribal culture" (396). Major Mason and his descendents never intended to reserve disputed land for Mohegan hunting. Rather they were pursuing their own economic and political power (Conroy 416–18).

12. This was the same mission board that Occom earlier accused of paying inadequate and unfair wages, as explained above.

13. In contrast, Occom found a positive example of his economic philosophy in revivalist Rev. George Whitefield: his relatively modest home "is Surrounded with the poor, the Blind, the Lame, the Halt and the mamed, the Widow, & the Fatherless" (267).

14. Mohegan people's not laying up treasures had its source in their material conditions: "The combination of a subsistence pattern that required frequent shifts of habitation and the lack of easy methods of land transportation did not permit the accumulation of numerous or cumbersome material possessions" (Salwen 163).

15. Hendrick Aupaumut (1757–1830), often called "Captain Hendrick" in historical documents, was a Hudson River Mahegan sachem and Christian leader for the Stockbridge, and later New Stockbridge, community (Peyer 111, 115). A close friend of Occom, Aupaumut was often his host when Occom traveled and interpreted Occom's messages at meetings (347, 373, 382, 403, 404). Aupaumut helped facilitate the New Stockbridge and Brotherton communities' move to Wisconsin (115).

16. The Wisconsin Brothertown community also had its land taken and is now struggling to regain tribal status (Johnson 289). The Brothertown website indicates that the nation actively strives to maintain its sovereignty (Brothertown). Recently the Bureau of Indian Affairs denied their application for federal recognition. Kathleen A. Brown-Pérez, tenth great-granddaughter of Occom and chair of the Brothertown Indian Nation's federal acknowledgment committee, is protesting the process (Toensing). The Mohegan tribe of Connecticut, the group that remained on their traditional land, gained US federal recognition on March 7, 1994. Occom as a historical figure played an important role in the process of gaining this recognition. He provided the link between "the easily substantiated sachemship and the more subtle sociocultural leadership" that followed after colonial powers had helped corrupt the sachemship authority. Occom's role as leader supported the claim of continuous political authority (Wigginton 24). His leadership in education is also recognized in Mohegan tribal history (Fawcett 16–17).

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Putting on "the Helmet of Salvation" and Wielding "the Sword of the Spirit"

Joseph Johnson, Moses Paul, and the Word of God

MICHAEL LEBLANC

And be assured, if you fall short of heaven, into hell you must be turned: and I doubt not, but this is the earnest prayer and desire of many, who have a prejudice against the Indian nations.

Joseph Johnson to Moses Paul, March 29, 1772

And considering that we are of the same nation I have a peculiar desire that you should preach to me upon that occasion & therefore that I may likely better receive and be more impressed with the same things said by you, than if said by any other man.

Moses Paul to Samson Occom, July 16, 1772

On September 2, 1772, Moses Paul, a Christian Indian, was hanged in New Haven, Connecticut, for the murder of Moses Cook, a white man.[1] In "The Execution of Moses Paul: A Story of Crime and Contact in Eighteenth-Century Connecticut," Ava Chamberlain comprehensively investigates and clearly explains the details surrounding Paul's case, which probably "would have been quickly forgotten had he not, as his 'earnest & dying request,' invited the Reverend Samson Occom to deliver the execution sermon" (414–15). Mohegan minister Samson Occom's sermon was first published just two months after the execution (on October 31), and by 1827 it had been published at least nineteen times, including one edition in Welsh (Love 174–75). A murder committed by a drunken Indian, his subsequent execution, and a dramatic sendoff by the most famous Indian

preacher of the day combined to make Occom's *A Sermon Preached at the Execution of Moses Paul, an Indian* an almost instant best-seller. It has, indeed, kept Moses Paul's story alive into the twenty-first century by its inclusion in anthologies of early American literature. Although Occom's sermon is the most well-known text connected to Moses Paul's story, it belongs to a web of documents that have, as yet, received little attention. The March 29, 1772, letter from Joseph Johnson (Mohegan) to Moses Paul—an important item of public correspondence that addresses Paul's salvation, but that Chamberlain's detailed account relegates to a passing reference in two footnotes—and the July 16, 1772, letter from Moses Paul to Samson Occom, in which Paul asks Occom to preach at his execution, are two strands in this web that illustrate some of the communitistic ways in which early New England's indigenous peoples used Christianity, literacy, and the rhetoric of nationhood to assert Native sovereignty.[2]

I

The alleged murder took place on Saturday, December 7, 1771; an account that was printed in both the December 10–17 *Connecticut Courant* (published in Hartford) and the December 20 *New London Gazette* provides the details:

> New-Haven, [. . .] Dec. 13. [. . .] Last Saturday evening Mr. Moses Cook, of Waterbury, being at Mr. Clark's tavern, in Bethany, where there was an Indian named Moses Paul, who had behaved so disorderly, (on Mrs. Clark's refusing to let him have a dram) that he was turned out of doors, when he swore to be revenged on some one person in the house; and Mr. Cook going out soon after, received from the Indian (who tis supposed lay in wait near the house, in order to put his threat in execution) a violent blow on his head, with some weapon, that broke his scull in so terrible a manner, that he died of the wound last night. The Indian was apprehended and committed to the goal [*sic*] in this town last Sunday.

Chamberlain explains that the December 13 dateline indicates that the story probably first appeared in the December 13 issue of the *Connecticut Journal, and New-Haven Post-Boy* (421n21). It was not unusual for the same story to be printed in numerous publications, and considering the fact that the three newspapers in which the story appeared were all operated by members of the Green family,[3] it is likely that the sharing of an item sure to interest readers of all kinds would have been automatic. It seems clear that the news of Moses Paul's arrest traveled quickly, and it is easy to imagine the stir that it caused in communities across Connecticut. The article's portrayal of a drunken Indian driven to violence would have raised concern among colonists, who "believed [that] drunks of any race posed [threats] to a well-ordered society . . . [and that, a]lthough all people were prone to violence when drunk, . . . intoxicated Indians, whose rational natures were questionable even when sober, [were] especially dangerous" (Chamberlain 420).[4] The details of the incident are described in a way that reinforces colonial ideas and fears about Indians as inherently uncivilized—vengeful, sneaky, and savage. Not only was Paul "disorderly" because he couldn't get another drink, but he also "swore to be revenged" and "lay in wait" for his victim and the opportunity to deliver the deadly "violent blow" that, "in so terrible a manner," "broke his scull." As A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff points out, "[t]he murder of a respected white citizen by a drunken, Christian Indian must have confirmed the worst suspicions of those whites convinced that Indians were unsalvagable [*sic*], inhuman instruments of the devil who must be removed or exterminated" (79). The story's depiction of Moses Paul must, therefore, have been of even greater concern to the local Native community, the Mohegans.

A special grand jury was assembled to hear the case, and on December 18 it found sufficient cause to indict Paul for premeditated murder; the superior court, which made a special trip to New Haven to hear the serious case, held the trial on December 20 (Chamberlain 423, 425). The following account of the proceedings was published in the *Connecticut Journal, and New-Haven Post-Boy* one week later (it also ran in the December 24–31 *Connecticut Courant* and the January 3, 1772, *New London Gazette*):

> NEW-HAVEN, DEC.27.
> Last Friday came on, in this town, before the Honorable, the Superior Court, the trial of Moses Paul, an Indian, for the murder of Mr. Moses Cook, as has been mentioned. The trial began at 11 o'clock in the forenoon, and continued till eight in the evening.—The jury soon agreed; and the next morning brought in their verdict, *Guilty*; and this day sentence of death was pronounced upon him.

Paul's execution was initially set for June 17, 1772, but as a result of appeals to the court for a new trial by Paul and his lawyer, it was delayed until September (427–28). Although the media coverage, guilty verdict, and capital punishment of a "murderer" portrayed as a drunken savage provided colonists with the ammunition and the opportunity to attack Indian integrity (or worse), it also provided Native people with an opportunity to address—and answer—the challenges posed by this kind of stereotypical portrayal by demonstrating Native sovereignty and promoting the importance of indigenous community.

II

> Remember to take the best of what the white man has to offer . . . and use it to still be an Indian.
> Mohegan Medicine Woman Gladys Tantaquidgeon

In "Towards a National Indian Literature: Cultural Authenticity in Nationalism," Simon Ortiz (Acoma Pueblo) emphasizes the importance of recognizing that acquiring literacy in English and converting to Christianity are examples of "the way that Indian people have creatively responded to forced colonization" (10). Recent scholarship continues to stress the importance of understanding that, for many Native Americans, writing in English and being Christian are integral components of Indian identity. Lisa Brooks (Abenaki) explains that the "focus on questions of authenticity, and the maintenance of binaries that assume that the adoption of Christianity or literacy is concomitant with a complete loss of Native identity,

has obscured the complex ways in which Native communities have adopted and adapted foreign ideas and instruments in particular places" (xxxi). Laura Murray contends that "Christianity was, for Johnson and for his 'brethren,' a way of being Mohegan, or being Indian" (176). Michael Elliott argues that much of Occom's life "was spent preaching to Indians about the possibilities of conversion and . . . about the steps he viewed as necessary for cultural preservation" (248). And Joanna Brooks tells us that "Occom did not believe that Christianity cancelled out tribal thought-worlds: . . . [He believed that] God made 'this Indian world' for Indians" (Brooks in Occom 39). The writings of Occom and Johnson—and the letter to Occom written by Moses Paul—provide insight about what it was like for these men to continue "being Indian" even as they embraced the language and the religion of English colonizers.

Joseph Johnson was born into a Christian family in Mohegan, Connecticut, in 1751 (Murray in Johnson, *To Do Good* 1). He was educated at the Reverend Eleazar Wheelock's Indian Charity-School (in Lebanon, Connecticut) and went on to teach in an Indian missionary school among the Oneida Indians in upstate New York (1). Johnson had a falling-out with Wheelock, who was his mentor and supervisor, in 1769, and he left his position "amidst charges of drunkenness and misbehavior" (1). After leaving Oneida territory, Johnson taught school in Providence, Rhode Island, and spent time working on a whaling ship; in 1771 he returned to Mohegan, where, "[s]urrounded by a fervent native Christian community [of which Samson Occom was a prominent member], [he] experienced a spiritual conversion" (1–2). Johnson's letters and journal entries written during 1771 and 1772 reveal his struggle to fight the temptation of sin and devote his life to Christ. For example, in his December 9, 1771, entry, he steels himself against the challenges of sin and doubt: "O my Soul think seriously of your latter End, and trifle not in affair of So great Consequence. Now with all your Heart resolve to Set out in Search for Christ Jesus, and take warning, too flee from the wrath that is to come" (117). The entry in Johnson's diary dated December 27, 1771—the very date that news of Moses Paul's conviction and sentencing to death was published in the *Connecticut Journal,*

and New-Haven Post-Boy—is particularly interesting because, even though it does not mention Paul's name, its language and subject matter suggest a connection between Johnson and Paul:

> This morning dedicated my Self to God by Prayer, in the family. Dreampt a Strange dream the night past, and I Suppose that I have in Small measure felt, the terror, and Supprize which will seize on those upon whom the Lord Jesus will come Unawares, for I dreampt that the Earth was on fire, and the moon and the Stars were droping from the heavens. And what was my greatest astonishment I was unprepeared, and had never knew the Saviour. But I Stood a while Seeing many People crying or Praying. I took Encouragement also and I began to Pray, looking, and Expecting Each moment to See Christ and all the host of heaven Coming to Judgment, and amidst of the fire I did hope to be Saved and heard tho I trembled not knowing what my Sentance will soon be. I thought alas is time now to be at an End with me, then time Seemed Precious indeed. And in this destruction of the mind I awoke, and am yet a Probationer . . . O Jesus grant that I may no longer remain in Unbelief, and Impenetency, but give me a pardon of all my Sins, and prepear me for thy Second Coming. (Johnson, *To Do Good* 124–25)

Johnson's dream alerts him to the "terror" that awaits those like him, who were raised as Christians, and Moses Paul, who "had been schooled in many important articles of the Christian Religion," but who are, nonetheless, "unprepeared" because they "never knew the Saviour" ("Short Account"). Johnson's description of the punishment for one who "never knew the Saviour" as a "Judgment" and a "Sentance" that brings his "time [to] an End," when added to his self-description as a "Probationer," seems beyond coincidence, especially in light of our knowledge that three months later he wrote to Paul in an attempt to "prepear [him] for [Christ's] Second Coming." The manifestation of this clearly Christian revelation to Johnson in a dream and the concern that it causes him are significant because they illustrate the important role that dreams played in his belief

system. Quoting Dr. Gladys Tantaquidgeon, a twentieth-century Mohegan Medicine Woman, Laura Murray explains that "among the Mohegans there is a belief that dreams are messages from their ancestors who are in the spirit world. These spiritual advisers appear in dreams to guide and instruct the dreamer" (in Johnson, *To Do Good* 70). That the Mohegan importance attributed to dreams was one of the ways in which Johnson was inspired in his Christian faith and in his resolve to help Moses Paul clearly shows that, for Joseph Johnson, being Christian was *part* of being Mohegan.

If the news of Moses Paul's arrest had sparked interest among members of the Mohegan community, then the news of his conviction and impending execution must have seemed like an explosive call to attention. Although I have not (yet) found evidence that proves Mohegans were thinking and talking together about Paul's case before his execution, it is clear that Joseph Johnson thought carefully about what he might be able to accomplish by trying to save Paul's soul. In an open letter, which is dated March 29 and was published (sometime between April 17 and May 8[5]) as a pamphlet entitled "LETTER from *J——h J——n*, One of the Mohegan Tribe of Indians, to his Countryman, *Moses Paul*, under Sentence of Death, in New-Haven Goal [*sic*]," Johnson reaches out to Paul in an attempt to convince him to put his faith in the mercy of a loving Christian God. Laura Murray, whose interest in and high regard for Joseph Johnson are reflected in her works, surprisingly devotes little attention to the letter and its significance as a document apart from its being "a companion piece to Samson Occom's execution sermon for the same man" (*To Do Good* 87). Although Occom's sermon has attracted a number of academic inquiries, scholars have thus far not taken a close look at Johnson's letter.[6]

III

The public nature of the letter indicates that Johnson's intended audience was large, widespread, and diverse. The letter's publication in pamphlet form was advertised before and after it became available, and people would have immediately recognized the subject

matter because the story of Moses Paul's trial, conviction, and sentencing had appeared in newspapers all over the colony. The title of the pamphlet must surely have excited interest among whites and Indians alike. It draws the reader's initial attention to the fact that the publication is a "LETTER": *letter* is the first word in the title and is printed in uppercase type. There is something about the opportunity to read a letter that is ostensibly addressed to another person that piques one's interest. Announcing that "*J——h J——n*" is "One of the Mohegan Tribe of Indians" would have effectively accomplished a couple of things. For white audiences who didn't know any Mohegans, it probably protected the author's anonymity and created a sense of mystery while providing the crucially interesting (and titillating) information that he is an Indian. For Mohegan audiences who were able to read (and/or who heard about the article from others who could read) and for others familiar with the Indian community, the hints provided by the first and last letters of the author's names and the fact that he is a Mohegan would have almost certainly identified the author as Joseph Johnson. Knowing who the author was—or maybe even knowing the author personally—would have, in essence, made all Mohegan readers stakeholders in the letter: Moses Paul was every Indian's "Countryman," and Joseph Johnson was, too. The fact that the letter is addressed to "*Moses Paul*, under Sentence of Death, in New-Haven Goal"—Moses Paul, who would be the first person to be hanged in New Haven in twenty-three years[7]—made this pamphlet a must-read for all.

While the letter can clearly be seen as an attempt by Johnson to save Paul's soul by getting him to "seek God's favor, and pray to him in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ," the letter is also a call to Christianity that appeals to a universal audience ("LETTER" 142). More significantly, the letter is an argument for Native sovereignty. It is important to keep the context of the Moses Paul case in mind when thinking about the significance of Johnson's letter. The newspaper accounts all emphasize Moses Paul's Indianness (by referring to him as "Moses Paul, an Indian" and "the Indian") in a way that differentiates him from "Mr. Moses Cook," whose whiteness, inferred by the titular prefix, is understood. The publication of Johnson's letter

brought an Indian voice into the public discourse about Paul's case. By identifying himself as "one of the Mohegan Tribe of Indians" and by identifying Moses Paul as "his Countryman" in the title of the letter, Johnson turns being "an Indian" (not necessarily Mohegan) into a signifier of Native sovereignty—of Indian nationhood. But, immediately after acknowledging the importance of Indianness in the title, Johnson begins the letter (which has no salutation) by addressing an audience that could easily include all of mankind:

> My dear fellow traveller into a vast eternity; listen unto me a-while. I am an Indian, known by the name of J——h J——n, a native of this land and of the Mohegan tribe. I am one who am truly sorry for your misfortune, but so it was fore-ordained by an all-wise God; and so you see it is by woeful experience, but who knows what God has designed by it, perhaps to the good of your immortal soul. (141)

It is obvious that when it comes to heading "into a vast eternity," we are all Johnson's "fellow traveller[s]." As the letter continues, Johnson addresses Paul—and the reader—as "My dear fellow mortal" and as "you," and he also refers to "we" and "our"; but not once does he mention Moses Paul's name within the text of the letter (141, 142). In fact, Johnson does not mention or refer specifically to Indians again for three pages (until the halfway point in the letter).

After introducing the idea that Paul's predicament in particular and mankind's "misfortune" in general are God's design, Johnson builds a case for believing in God, the pain of hell, and the possibility of salvation. He argues that "it is too evident (that there is a God) for us to deny a being of a God" (141). And he explains that God "over-rules all things by his secret Providence, though we see him not, we do his will, and fulfil his word: Perhaps not designedly, yet he is glorified by us, or will be, either by our eternal salvation, or condemnation" (141). Johnson's explication of the existence of God's power to save and condemn is followed by the necessary conclusion that we must make it "our highest concern to know how we might escape" the pains of hell (141). And, lucky for us, he continues, the "good and gracious" God "in whom we believe . . . has in

infinite wisdom found out a glorious way, not only to be saved from hell torments, but to give eternal life and glory that [passeth?[8]] not away; and true happiness to every one, humble, penitent, believing soul, by the gift of his only begotten Son Jesus Christ" (141–42). This paraphrase of John's Gospel (chapter 3) is followed by a quotation from John 3.16[9] in a direct appeal to the reader:

> You have heard of this Jesus Christ, the only Son of the ever living and true God; you was brought up in a Christian land where Christ was named and worshipped, and loved, trusted, and adored. We have heard that God so loved the world, that he gave this Christ his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have eternal life. Well, come and let us believe in this Jesus Christ the glorious Son of God, that we may not perish, but have eternal life. I do really wish your soul well, and I hope that you will sincerely seek an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ. (142)

The appeal is illustrative of the complex nature of Johnson's message. On the one hand it addresses an audience made up of anyone "brought up in a Christian land." But on the other hand it is clearly directed to the "you" who is Moses Paul—and who is also one of the "we" who "have heard" about God's love but who do not yet "believe in this Jesus Christ." If this message is for Moses Paul—an Indian and a countryman of Joseph Johnson—then it is also metonymically a directive for all Indians: "seek an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ." Moreover, stating that "you was brought up in a Christian land" unites belief in Christianity with indigenous belonging on the land, another strong declaration of sovereignty.

The publication of Johnson's letter suggests that Indians were not the only audience he had in mind. By making the letter public, Johnson takes advantage of what David Murray characterizes as "the complex situation of Indians talking to each other, but being overheard . . . by whites" (47). As a public document, the letter shares characteristics of "Native American oratory," which, as Kimberly Roppolo (Cherokee, Choctaw, and Creek) explains, "when addressed to a culturally and racially mixed audience, carries mes-

sages intended for Indians and other messages intended for both those outside the culture and within it" (307). The opening paragraphs of the letter encourage all audiences to listen in, and when the message becomes more clearly addressed to an Indian audience, the white audience becomes captive—wanting (and needing) to know what these Indians are talking about. Colonists reading the letter must have been tempted to see Johnson's evangelism, along with his persuasive use of argument and scripture, as evidence of his assimilation into white colonial culture. And they must have been surprised when (and if) they realized where Johnson's use of scripture was heading. As the letter continues, Johnson cites biblical passages that reveal Christ's message in a way that would have encouraged Indian interest in Christianity while forcing white Christian colonists to reassess their attitudes toward Indians.

Johnson refers to passages in the Bible that support the points he is making in the letter but that also encourage the reader to think about what else those passages have to say about life in eighteenth-century New England. For example, in trying to convince Paul that his greatest fear should not be death by execution but that it should be the eternal death that he will suffer if he does not become born again in Jesus Christ, he cites Matthew 10.28: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him, which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell, that is God" ("LETTER" 142). While Moses Paul would have been encouraged at the possibility of everlasting life, Indian audiences unfamiliar with scripture and inclined to "seek an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ" would have been encouraged to be both hopeful and fearless in their struggle to survive the onslaught of colonial expansion—the onslaught of "them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." When in his sustained attempt to convince Paul of the necessity and benefit of conversion, Johnson cites Matthew 12.31, colonists familiar with Matthew's Gospel would have been reminded that Matthew 12.50 explains that all Christians—without regard to race—are of one family: "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." Johnson performs communitism by carefully

choosing scriptural references that work to promote the well-being of the Native community by providing encouragement and hope for Indian audiences while alerting white colonial audiences to the hypocrisy of their unchristian behavior.

After strategically reminding his white audience about what Christ tells us in Matthew 12.50, Johnson makes it clear to Moses Paul and to all readers that this letter is about the power that Christianity offers Indians:

> And be assured, if you fall short of heaven, into hell you must be turned: and I doubt not, but this is the earnest prayer and desire of many, who have a prejudice against the Indian nations, and wish no better of your soul, than to endure God's eternal wrath, and even rejoice that one of the devilish Indians, (as many express themselves) are suffered to act such a part; and wish that all were as nigh their end. But such as these it is to be feared, know but little of God, or have never had God's love shed abroad in their hearts; and therefore are liable to endure God's eternal wrath. ("LETTER" 144)

When Johnson, here and elsewhere in his writings, refers to "Indian nations," he likens his people to God's chosen people, the Israelites (see, for example, Murray on Johnson's letter to Connecticut Governor Trumbull, "What Christianity Did" 175). In the 1772 context of the letter to Paul, Johnson's use of (and allusion to) the terms *nation* and *countryman* in reference to Indian communities asserts Native sovereignty in language that all members of his audience would have clearly understood. By qualifying prejudice against Indians as "the desire of many" and not as the desire of all, and by adding that "there are some, I doubt not, who know the great worth of souls," Johnson carefully avoids making a blanket condemnation of his entire white audience while clearly indicating that *real* Christians "know the great worth of [*all*] souls," Indian souls included ("LETTER" 144). Allowing that some whites may not be prejudiced shows the audience that Johnson is judging people based on their actions and not on their race. By admitting that *some* whites are not prejudiced, Johnson forces *all* whites to assess their own beliefs about and

interactions with Indians (144). But he does not leave much room for doubt about exactly what he's getting at when he uses quotes from both John 6 and Isaiah 1 as he continues to explain Christ's offer of salvation:

> And he saith in another place; and he that cometh to me, I will in no way cast out, Joh. vi. 37. . . . Again, he reasons with us in Isaiah i. 18. Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow: though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (144)

Johnson's use of John 6 promotes a connection between Christianity and Native sovereignty by emphasizing that those who believe will not be "cast out" and leads his readers to the rest of the chapter and another encouraging promise from Christ: "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (John 6.35). When Johnson then steers the reader to chapter 1 in the Book of Isaiah, he makes the most subversive move of the letter.

Isaiah 1 provides Johnson with numerous ways to address the predicaments of Moses Paul and all Indians. He makes an unmistakable reference to Indian redness and colonial whiteness by citing verse 18: God's love will make the scarlet white and the crimson as wool. But the invocation of color to describe sin and its forgiveness in verse 18 becomes complicated by the gist of the entire chapter, in which the people of Zion who have yet to accept Christ—but who are (in verse 18) promised forgiveness—are told: "Your country *is* desolate, your cities *are* burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and *it is* desolate, as overthrown by strangers" (Isaiah 1.7). Johnson's choice of Isaiah 1 as a way to show Moses Paul and all Indians that God's message is undoubtedly meant for them further illustrates the degree to which his letter addresses multiple audiences. Indians—sinners or not—whose land, like Zion, was being devoured by strangers, would have found hope not only in the promise of forgiveness, but also in the promise that "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness.

And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed" (Isaiah 1.27–28). White New Englanders would have recognized themselves as not unlike the devouring strangers and transgressors in Zion and been prompted once again to contemplate their roles as Christian colonizers. Johnson affirms Native sovereignty by reminding all of his audiences that Indians, like Zion—God's chosen nation—are in *their* homeland and will be redeemed.

In the closing paragraphs of the letter, Johnson reiterates the importance of realizing that "Christ came for such as you and me, who are sinners" ("LETTER" 145). And, again, he emphasizes the wealth of "precious promises, in God's book, called the holy scriptures, which I advise you to search diligently" (145). Although Johnson continues to be adamant about having faith in the power of God's salvation, the tone in which he speaks to the reader seems to become somewhat obsequious. He apologizes for his inadequacy as a writer, and he unfavorably compares himself to others "who have been favoured with great learning, and have had great experiences, and those who know all arts and sciences" (145). But this change in Johnson's voice is not an indication of self-doubt with regard to his ability as an evangelist or even as a writer; it is a political move that further illustrates his careful design of the letter as a public document.

Laura Murray explains that the self-deprecating language found in many of Johnson's writings reflects his understanding of the societal expectations in his world: "as a Christian Johnson was expected to be humble before God, and as a laborer in God's vineyard he was expected to be humble toward his church superiors, but as an *Indian* Johnson was expected to be humble before white people. He delivers meticulously on all counts" (171). In what is ostensibly an apology for his inadequacy as a writer, Johnson appears to be a humble Indian writer trying to save a condemned Indian's soul and spread God's word. By appearing humble, Johnson (quite probably) protected against possible objections to the publication of his letter and, at the same time, worked to ensure that the letter would be read by white and Indian audiences. And if we listen carefully to the

words that Johnson says and ignore the humble tone in which they are delivered, we can see that he tells us—and all observant readers—that this letter is more that it appears to be on the surface: "I desire you would take notice of what I have in so broken a manner hinted unto you. I mean to be sincere" ("LETTER" 145). Johnson's repeated directives: "listen unto me a-while," "seek an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ," "search [the scriptures] diligently," and "[t]ake heed how you hear, and try to understand the meaning of these words, for they proceed from the mouth of our exalted Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Son of God" are his less than subtle hints to look *beyond* the selected verses he has cited and to follow them to the chapters of the Bible that assert sovereignty and make Christianity an empowering choice for Indians (141–43). The rhetorical move of adopting a humble attitude in the closing paragraphs of the letter illustrates Murray's observation that "self-abasement was one of Johnson's most important skills, a subterfuge that looks like subservience but acts like its opposite" (172).

IV

Because there is (as yet) no way of knowing whether Moses Paul ever received a personal copy of the letter from Joseph Johnson, we can only assume that he had access to it in the same way and at the same time as the general public—in its published form.[10] The letter was advertised as "to be Sold at the Printing Office in New-Haven (Price five Coppers)" in the May 8, 1772, edition of the *Connecticut Journal, and New-Haven Post-Boy*, so it would have been readily available to Paul through his lawyer or the local ministers who were attending to his soul prior to his execution, which had originally been scheduled for June 17 (Chamberlain 427). And given the direction that the case took subsequent to the letter's publication, it is clear not only that Moses Paul read the letter, but also that he listened to Johnson, sought "an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ," studied scripture, and understood "the meaning of [at least some of the] words" that Johnson relayed in his letter.

Chamberlain explains that on June 7, 1772, which was ten days

before Paul was scheduled to be hanged, Jonathan Edwards Jr. (who was one of the local ministers meeting with Paul) preached a sermon at Paul's request (432). According to Chamberlain, Paul probably chose Edwards because of his familiarity with Indians: "Edwards had been raised in the interracial and bilingual setting of the Indian mission at Stockbridge, Massachusetts, and he was fluent in the 'Indian language'" (432). Paul's choice of Edwards based on his apparent racial tolerance suggests that Paul saw him as one of those "who know the great worth of souls" ("LETTER" 144). Edwards's sermon was based on Psalms 55.23, and Chamberlain states that even though "[i]t is unclear whether Paul chose the particular biblical verse or simply suggested the topic for the sermon[. . .] the text . . . was fitting: 'But thou, O God, shall bring them down into the pit of destruction: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days; but I will trust in thee'" (432).[11] What Chamberlain does not note (and what makes me think that Paul learned something from Joseph Johnson and *did* request the specific passage) is that other verses in Psalm 55 are even more fitting, especially for a prisoner who, according to Chamberlain, was appealing the court's sentence based on the fact that some details in the case had been "misrepresented" and other pertinent evidence had not been heard (426–27, 430):

> Give ear to my prayer, O God; and hide not thyself from my supplication. Attend unto me, and hear me: I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise; Because of the voice of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked: for they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me. . . . Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved. (Ps. 55.1–3, 22)

By getting Edwards to preach on verse 23 of Psalm 55, Paul was able to remind all those who heard the sermon (and who would have undoubtedly been familiar with the rest of the Psalm) that, like the plaintiff in the first three verses, he was asking to be heard not only by God, but also by those authorities with the power to grant him a retrial; Paul used Psalm 55 to request justice in the same way that Johnson used Isaiah 1 to convert Indians, promote sovereignty, and

criticize colonists. (The "LETTER" was working!) But although his execution was postponed until September, unfortunately for Moses Paul his pleas were ineffective; he was not granted a retrial (435). The June 5, 1772, edition of the *Connecticut Journal, and New-Haven Post-Boy* reported: "We hear also, that Moses Paul's Execution is respited 'till the last Day of September." Chamberlain points out that the paper was mistaken (the date of the execution had been set for September 2) and that it printed a correction in the very next edition (434, 434n59).[12]

The corrected report that appeared in both the *Connecticut Journal, and New-Haven Post-Boy* (June 12) and the *Connecticut Courant* (June 16), though only one sentence long, is an important document in this web of texts because it shows just how well known and closely watched the Moses Paul case must have been; it does not mention Paul's name: "The Execution of the Indian, is to be on the Second of September, and not the last, as was by Misinformation mentioned in our last." While it seems obvious that the newspapers expected their readers to be familiar with the case, the fact that they do not mention a name and refer only to "the Indian" indicates that—at least for the newspapers and their intended audience—the most significant details of the case were the criminal's Indianness and pending execution; Moses Paul's identity as an individual was apparently of little consequence. Although Paul's execution must have been big news because it was the first execution in twenty-three years, it was even bigger news because he was an Indian.

It is impossible to know how Moses Paul made the decision to ask Occom to preach at his execution. Perhaps it was, as Chamberlain suggests, because the basis of his final appeal to the court focused on the prejudicial treatment he had received, and he wanted "to appeal to the one minister whose race would serve as a bond" (444). Or perhaps—after constantly being reminded by the newspapers of his Indianness—it was because he had already been inspired by Johnson's communitistic encouragement and promises of salvation that Paul decided to write a letter asking Samson Occom, a fellow Indian—not of the same tribe, but as his indigenous "*Countryman*," "of the same nation"—to preach at his execution (Paul,

in Blodgett, 139–40).[13] A number of scholars mention the fact that Paul requested Occom's services as preacher at his execution, and some of them even mention that the request was made in writing, but very few admit to believing that Moses Paul actually wrote the letter. Harold Blodgett reprints the letter in his 1935 biography of Samson Occom, but his skepticism with regard to Indian literacy is evident in his assessment of the letter: "The letter is so literate that doubtless it was written for him" (139n1). Blodgett does not attempt to qualify his comment, apparently assuming that all of his readers would have known that Indians are not literate. Surprisingly, David Murray, whose insightful observations about how Indians used speech and writing with the expectation that it would be overheard by whites have informed my reading of some Native American texts, accepts Blodgett's assessment that Paul's letter "was undoubtedly written for him" without question (D. Murray 45).[14]

But it was not unusual for condemned criminals to "attempt . . . to control the public display that accompanied their hangings by requesting 'particular ministers to deliver execution discourses,'" and Chamberlain convincingly characterizes Moses Paul as a prisoner who could read and write and who did everything that he could do to help himself (443, 418–19, 419n16). Moses Paul probably knew that Occom's appearance would be a spectacle. And he probably knew that white colonists would be glad to see one Indian expounding upon the sins of another. Perhaps he asked for help in making a convincing plea for Occom's appearance, and perhaps he even allowed his white collaborators to think that they were managing things. Such strategies would have made sense because he probably also knew that no matter who arranged it, Samson Occom preaching at the execution of Moses Paul, an Indian, would provide the perfect opportunity for Indian voices to be heard (and overheard)—loudly and clearly. Taking his cue from Joseph Johnson, Moses Paul entered into the public discourse surrounding his own execution by writing a letter to Samson Occom. And whether composed with help or not, the letter expresses *Paul's* wish to have Occom preach at his execution.

Moses Paul's letter to Samson Occom is illustrative of the connectedness in this web of texts. It is a manifestation of the influence that Johnson's letter had on Moses Paul. Paul appropriates some of Johnson's language, sometimes echoing exact words and sometimes changing their forms, in a way that makes his letter to Occom sound almost like a response—or a reaction—to Johnson. For example, Paul opens the letter with the following passage:

> You have doubtless heard of my doleful Situation. God in his righteous providence has left me to conduct in such a manner that I am fallen under condemnation to an untimely death. However great a sinner I am & may have been, & however just my condemnation may be, I doubt not but I have the pity and the prayers of you and every other well wisher to immortal souls. (Blodgett 139)

Paul's letter begins by acknowledging what he has learned from Johnson, responding in similar language to the following excerpts from Johnson's letter:

> We *hear* that you are *condemned* by the Judges of this Colony, and that your life must be taken away by the execution of *justice* . . . God . . . over-rules all things by his secret *Providence* . . . yet he is glorified by us, or will be, either by our eternal salvation, or *condemnation* . . . but who knows what God has designed by it, perhaps for the good of your *immortal soul* . . . I am your *soul's well-wisher*. ("LETTER" 141–46, italics added)

I do not propose that Paul tried to copy or imitate Johnson, but rather that the similarities between the language and the ideas expressed in the two letters suggest that he read and was influenced by Johnson's letter. Paul, like Johnson, appeals to a fellow Indian and Christian by emphasizing their membership in "the same nation," and he reiterates the importance of their indigenous kinship by closing the letter with a final echo of Johnson: "*your most unhappy condemned Countryman* Moses Paul" (Blodgett 139–40, italics in original). The frequency with which and context in which both Johnson and Paul use the terms *nation* and *countryman* links indig-

enous people from different tribes to each other and to the land and emphasizes the importance of asserting and maintaining pan-Indian sovereignty and community.

Skeptical of Paul's agency in requesting Occom, David Murray points to the passage in the letter ("supposedly from the condemned man") that explains to Occom that his appearance "is desired by many Gentlemen in Town, and also that if you should come, I have reason to think, not only that you will be obliged to put yourself at no expence while you are here, but that any expence you may be at in travilling will be made up to you by Gentlemen here" and infers that "the very public nature of the affair and the degree of stage-management involved" was entirely out of Indian hands and controlled by the "Gentlemen" referred to in the letter (D. Murray 45; Blodgett 139–40). Murray's contention that "[b]y having the sermon actually preached by a virtuous Indian (though one who also had shown his weakness for alcohol [. . .]), it was possible to stage a sort of moral tableau which encapsulated the moral capacities and disabilities of the Indians" blatantly ignores the fact (or even the possibility) that Moses Paul was the person who requested Occom and who was initially responsible for setting the stage "of a sort of moral tableau" that would ultimately expose "the moral capacities and disabilities" and responsibilities of whites and Indians alike (45). Paul's appeal emphasizes the importance of Occom's Indianness in delivering a message to all who will hear it:

> considering we are of the same nation I have a peculiar desire that you should preach to me . . . that I may likely better receive it and be more impressed with the same things said by you, than if said by any other man; considering also that your discourse may likely be more affecting and consequently more beneficial to others who may be present on that occasion. (Blodgett 139)

What David Murray misses (or refuses to acknowledge) is that Moses Paul's use of "many Gentlemen in Town" as allies (unwitting or not) in his attempt to enlist Occom's services was, like the humble closing paragraphs of Johnson's letter, what Laura Murray would

call "a subterfuge that looks like subservience but acts like its opposite" (Johnson in *To Do Good* 172).

Joseph Johnson's letter may have in some way had an influence on Moses Paul's second appeal to the court, the petition for which was submitted on August 21, but on which he was probably working even as he wrote to Occom (Chamberlain 435). According to Chamberlain, Paul's appeal "charged preexisting jury bias . . . [noting that] the town was 'greatly incensed at the Death of said Cook' and 'the Voice of the Populace was; Hang the Indian! Hang him! Hang him!'" (435–36). Paul's "petition claims . . . [that] the court convicted Paul of murder and not a lesser manslaughter charge because it failed publicly to acknowledge that race influenced its disposition of his case" (438). Johnson's warning that "many, who have a prejudice against Indian nations, and wish no better of your soul, than to endure God's eternal wrath, and . . . wish that all were as nigh their end" must have been running through Moses Paul's mind as he tried to make a case for appeal ("LETTER" 144). Paul's appeal and its focus on racial discrimination, along with his choices of Indian-friendly Edwards and Indian countryman Occom as preachers at his execution, collectively indicate an awareness of the implications attached to his Indian identity that reflects the sentiments expressed in Johnson's letter.

Less than two weeks before Moses Paul's execution, the August 21, 1772, edition of the *Connecticut Journal, and New-Haven Post-Boy* reported that Occom was to preach on the occasion. Two events that further illustrate the importance of Joseph Johnson's letter to Moses Paul occurred during the week prior to the execution. After Occom's presence was assured, according to Chamberlain, "Paul also sought the help of New Haven's white pastors to launch his soul into eternity," and on Friday, August 28, "Bella Hubbard, the Anglican missionary in New Haven, baptized Paul 'in the Jail house' (446). Paul's desire to be baptized reveals not only that he had taken Johnson's advice to "seek an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ," but also that he followed Johnson's directive to "search diligently" for the "terms of salvation" in the Gospel ("LETTER" 142, 145). In chapter 3 of John, Paul would have read,

> He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. . . . But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God. After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized. (John 3.18, 21–22)

Johnson's writing about John 3.16 apparently led Paul to the rest of the chapter, in which he learned about the saving power of baptism. The second event is closely related to the first in that it, too, shows Paul's interest in the Gospel of John. Chamberlain explains that "again at Paul's request, on Sunday, 30 August, Edwards preached a second sermon for the condemned man's benefit, taking as his text John 3:16, a comforting passage that emphasizes not God's wrath but his mercy and compassion for 'thieves, liars, even murderers'" (446–47). It is a safe bet that Moses Paul requested the text.

On September 2, 1772, the day of the execution, a broadside with a picture depicting a crowd of spectators surrounding and pointing at an Indian hanging from a gallows was published. Its lengthy title explains the picture above it: "A short Account of the Life of MOSES PAUL, (an Indian) who is this Day to be executed in New-Haven, for the Murder of Mr. Moses Cook, of Waterbury . . ." The ten short paragraphs that make up the narrative are introduced as follows:

> *As it is expected that the inquisitive Public will be desirous to know some particulars of the above* Moses Paul, *the following sketches of his Life and Character, have been collected, chiefly from his own Mouth.*

The sketches of Paul's life collected in the broadside—which must have been widely circulating throughout the crowd of colonists, Indians, and African Americans that gathered to see and hear Samson Occom perform in the spectacle that he had helped to orchestrate—provide, in addition to a recapitulation of the newspaper accounts of the crime, trial, and sentencing, a bit of crucial biographical information that helps fill in the gaps of the story trail:

> When about five Years old, he was bound as an Apprentice to Mr. JOHN MANNING of Windham, in this Government, with whom he liv'd Six or Seven Years, and in whose family he learnt to read and write, and where he was instructed in many of the important Articles of the Christian Religion.

Even though Paul admits that after he left the Manning family, his bad habits "almost entirely eradicated from his Mind, those good Principles in which he had been instructed," he did not forget how to read and write. His ability to read and write allowed him to actively participate in the discourse initiated by his own misdeeds and sustained by the newspapers and the publication of Joseph Johnson's letter. Paul's literacy in English enabled him to recognize Johnson's modeling of how Christianity could be used to advance an Indian agenda that included promoting Native community and sovereignty and criticizing the prejudicial treatment of Indians. Johnson's use of scripture to encourage Indian faith, affirm Native sovereignty, and criticize colonial hypocrisy showed Moses Paul how he could enlist the most famous Indian preacher of the day for his own benefit while allowing the "Gentlemen" in town to think it was their own doing. Joseph Johnson showed Moses Paul how to put on "the helmet of salvation" and wield "the sword of the spirit (which is the word of God)" (Eph. 6.17).[15]

NOTES

1. Although I have not been able to locate genealogical documentation, based on his stated place of birth and the account he gives of his mother's participation in the Barnstable community (which is home to the Mashpee Wampanoag), it is likely that Moses Paul was Wampanoag. According to the broadside circulated at his execution, "'A short Account of the Life of Moses Paul, (an Indian),' . . . chiefly from his own mouth," he "was born in the Town of Barnstable, and Province of the Massachusetts Bay, about the year 1742." His mother "was a constant Attendant on Divine Worship, in the Presbyterian Meeting-House in Barnstable," and his father "died at the Siege of Louisbourg" in 1745.

2. Cherokee religious studies scholar Jace Weaver explains "that Native literatures differ from dominant discourse in their commitment to commu-

nity" (163). Native literatures, he argues, are characterized by communitism, a term "formed by a combination of the words 'community' and 'activism.' Literature is communitist to the extent that it has a proactive commitment to Native community, including . . . the 'wider community' of Creation itself" (xii).

3. The Greens were a prominent printing family in early New England. "The first printing press in the American colonies, on which Stephen Day and his son, Matthew, began printing about 1639, was in the Massachusetts Bay colony. Ten years later, it was taken over by Samuel Green, who ran it for many years. He had sixteen children. Twenty-two of Samuel's descendants (including three of his sons) and his wife's brother became printers. [His] descendants . . . helped found, or took early part in the first five newspapers in Connecticut" ("Connecticut Newspaper Pioneers," History and Genealogy Unit, Connecticut State Library, http://www.cslib.org/newspaper/pioneers.htm).

4. According to Paul's testimony, he admitted to being "in Some measure Intoxicated with Spiritous Liquor," but he explained that his admittedly angry response to not being served was because he felt that he was being treated unfairly (Chamberlain 440). The Anglo-Americans focused on their fears about crime committed by intoxicated Indians generally, rather than upon Paul's actual degree of intoxication.

5. An advertisement in the April 17, 1772, *Connecticut Journal, and New Haven Post-Boy* promises that "Monday next, will be published, and sold at the printing office in New-Haven, (Price five Coppers) 'LETTER from *J——h J——n*, One of the Mohegan Tribe of Indians, to his Countryman, *Moses Paul*, under Sentence of Death, in New-Haven Goal,'" and an advertisement in the May 8 issue of the same paper announces that the "LETTER" is "Just Published, and to be sold."

6. Although Occom's *A Sermon Preached at the Execution of Moses Paul, an Indian* is discussed either in passing or as an example of an early publication written by a Native American in a fairly large number of biographies and anthologies, only a few scholars have focused on the sermon itself. For in-depth discussions of the sermon, see works by Michael Elliott, David Murray, and A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff. More general discussions of the sermon can be found in Blodgett, Brooks (see Occom), DeForest, Love, and Peyer.

7. According to the September 4, 1772, *Connecticut Journal, and New-Haven Post-Boy*, the last execution had taken place in 1749.

8. I quote Laura Murray's guess at the word *passeth*. In the extant copy of the letter, which can be accessed on Evans's *Early American Imprints*, the word is illegible.

9. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3.16).

10. Although it is not clear whether Moses Paul ever received Johnson's letter—either before or after it was published—and although there does not seem to be any written account of his seeing the letter at all, it is quite clear that Paul did read the letter. We know from Occom's sermon and from "A Short Account of the Life of Moses Paul," a broadside published on the day of his execution, that Paul could read and write. And Paul's reading of Johnson's letter is evidenced not only by his careful attention to scripture, but also by his appropriation of its language in the letter that he later wrote to Occom.

11. Chamberlain reports that Edwards's personal notes on the sermon state that it was on "a subject to which I have been led by the desire of the unhappy prisoner now in chains before us" (432).

12. Chamberlain points out that the June 2–9, 1772, edition of the *Connecticut Courant* also ran the news about the postponement of Paul's execution, but she incorrectly states that the *Connecticut Courant* published the news before the June 5 *Connecticut Journal, and New-Haven Post-Boy*. The dates of numerous articles in the *Courant* confirm that it was published on June 9, four days after the story appeared in New Haven. This is significant because only the June 5 *Journal* mentions Moses Paul by name; the *Courant* item and the identical corrections printed in the subsequent editions of both papers refer to him only as "the Indian."

13. A transcription of Paul's letter appears in Blodgett, 139–40. The manuscript is held by the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts.

14. Murray's unquestioning acceptance of Blodgett's reading might be explained by his belief that Occom's appearance as preacher at Paul's sermon was (as Bernd Peyer also believes) staged by white colonists intent on playing one Indian against another. (See D. Murray, esp. 47; Peyer 92.)

15. See also Occom's use of these words from Ephesians 6 in *A Sermon Preached at the Execution of Moses Paul, an Indian*, rpt. in *Collected Works*, 192.

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Indian Storyteller in the Mainstream

Henry Perley of Maine and the Pulp Fiction Market, 1910–1930

DALE POTTS

In "The Red Man's Burden," published in *All-Story Weekly* in 1915, Henry Perley (1885–1972) begins the story of Peter "Pe-al" Attean contentedly paddling the calm waters of Maine's Caucomgamoc Lake. Attean delights in a firm connection to the land of his forebears as "now and again his deep voice boomed into snatches of Indian song, for this to him was life; his Indian soul reveled in the surrounding landscape" (314). Attean's happiness closely resembles that of the Maliseet author Henry Perley, whose love of the north woods of Maine kept him returning throughout a life of world travel and popular culture employment.

During an active life, Perley embraced Native culture whether as a barker at Coney Island's Dreamland, a performer in medicine and Wild West shows, or an actor in a D. W. Griffiths film. His experiences assuredly influenced his most enduring work, that of writing for popular markets. In hundreds of published stories in a variety of magazines he used his experiences in the woods and waterways of Maine to comment on the Native American experience in the United States.

Perley's writing career for national pulp magazines began around 1910 and continued until the demise of that cultural venue in the 1930s. Writing for such magazines as *Argosy*, *Top-Notch Stories*, and *All-Story Weekly*, he used the pseudonym Henry Red Eagle. Perley related in a 1936 newspaper article that a Caughnawaga Native by the name of White Beaver, a fellow member of a 1911 Indian exhibit bound for England, gave him that name (Whitney). His sta-

tus as a Maine Native American as well as an international showman represents the connections between traditional culture and a more cosmopolitan worldview that heavily influenced his writing. In the 1930s Perley lived semi-permanently in the Moosehead Lake region while working at a series of children's camps and lecturing on Indian subjects in New England and beyond. He wrote for more regional tourist publications at this time such as the Bangor & Aroostook Railroad's tourist annual *In the Maine Woods* and for local newspapers such as the *Moosehead Gazette*.

In his fiction pieces Perley is interested primarily in countering the image of a silent forest where the Native peoples no longer live and work. His continued connection to the land and lakes of northern Maine, to his Maliseet ancestry, and to contemporary Native populations makes his work extremely valuable for understanding a Native writer from the Northeast of the generation of such luminaries as Zitkala-Sa, D'Arcy McNickle, and John Joseph Mathews, who published fiction and nonfiction of the Plains and Prairies.

By relating the plots to lumber operations, trapping, fishing, and hunting, Perley creates a northeastern forest where Native people are active participants. These present populations provide a counternarrative to the dominant discourse of white victory and Native submission. As Native peoples can be heroes of their own stories, Native voices can be restored to mainstream narratives that had written them out. What emerges most clearly from the many stories Perley wrote is that Native Americans in the Northeast have always been present, and cultural continuity, although under attack, is still the means by which those people will succeed in maintaining their way of life.

Perley's stories and his own life experiences exemplify the kind of return to a cultural and traditional "home" discussed by William Bevis in his critical essay "Homing In" (583). Perley creates characters similar to D'Arcy McNickle's character of Archilde in *The Surrounded*, characters that have "made it in the white world" and choose to return home. Perley used his fiction to comment on Natives who endure stereotyping, racism, and the harsh treatment of white laws while residing in their traditional landscapes (582).

To create strong connections to local Indian populations and traditions, Perley consistently uses Wabanaki names for his characters. For instance, in "The Red Man's Burden" the character of Peter "Peal" Attean is provided with a traditional Penobscot Indian surname (Speck 14). By using traditional names over stereotypical "Indian" names, Perley illuminates local and regional Indian cultures for a wider audience.

Born in 1885 in Greenville, Maine, Henry Perley grew to adulthood with a firm attachment to Maliseet cultural traditions that transcended national borders. The Perley family can be traced to the Maliseet Reserve in Tobique, New Brunswick, Canada (J. Perley xxxi). In 1910 the United States Census for Greenville Town lists Henry Perley's father Gabriel F. Perley and his mother Philomen Tomah as "Canadian Malecite [*sic*] Indian[s]." In the early nineteenth century Maliseet Reserves were located at Madawaska, Tobique, and Meductic along the Saint John River bordering the state of Maine and the province of New Brunswick (Pawling 12).

In 1946 anthropologist Frank Speck provided clues as to why Maliseets may have migrated away from these traditional lands in the late nineteenth century. Speck postulated that the absence of game by the 1870s contributed to declining numbers of Maliseet families in the region of Tobique (Speck and Hadlock 361).

Even before the twentieth century, then, Maliseet families moved off of long-established reservations and located to more southerly places such as Maine's Aroostook County (Erickson 125). In 1959 Henry Perley related to reporter Frances Green that Maliseet families in Greenville, among other Maine locales, "assimilated into their communities." However, to make clear the continuing political and cultural identity of the Maliseets, he continued, "They do, however, follow the tribal form of government . . . they elect their own chiefs for two-year terms, and each branch has one representative in the state legislature as well" (Green 4).

During his early years in the Moosehead Lake region, Henry Perley worked as a drug store clerk, in logging camps, and as a wilderness guide throughout the Allagash region. Perley possessed a strong

connection to the woods and lakes of northern Maine and southern New Brunswick as a member of the Maliseet nation, an Algonquian group that includes the Abenaki, Passamaquoddy, Penobscot, and Mi'kmaq. Together, these groups make up the Wabanaki peoples of northern New England, and whose populations are also found in the provinces of Quebec, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia.

To understand the upward trajectory of Perley's writing career, it is necessary to first follow his progression through popular culture occupations. By the 1910s he was already engaged in work with Wild West and medicine shows, Broadway plays, and film productions. His professional acting career began in New York in the production of Cole Porter's 1916 musical comedy *See America First*. He later acted in *Lo, the Poor Indian*, a collaborative effort between the Cherokee playwright Lynn Riggs and Cole Porter, which led to a move to more dramatic roles in film for such prominent early twentieth-century directors as D. W. Griffith and Thomas Ince (Whitney).

But by the 1920s Perley wished to return to Moosehead Lake on a more regular basis. Despite participation in venues that took him around the world, he is largely remembered today for the stories and articles he wrote about Maine's Native peoples and their relationship to the north woods landscape that he loved. Perley's connection to this environ was direct. When he was a child, his grandmother Mary (Malie) Tomah told him stories of how his

> forefathers and their contemporary tribes, journeyed along the waterways and trails of the woods, for days and weeks, in order to reach the big se'bem [Moosehead Lake]; on the shores of which rested the famed mountain [Kineo], whose geologic formation of felsitic rhyolite made the best arrowheads, spearheads and tomahawks (Perley, "Moosehead Lake" 19).

In a 1927 letter Perley further illustrates his love for family and culture, referring to his grandmother once more: "her passing into the Happy Hunting Ground marks the trail for the few scattered remnants of her many descendants; just as in life she helped to mark the trail with the old Indian pioneers who traversed the wood and waters of the north into the unknown land, just over the horizon"

(Perley, Letter). His published fiction helped to nuance discussion of the myth of New England's vanishing Native populations.

Another feasible reason he chose to remain in Greenville was that popular culture venues were often highly contentious places for minority performers. It is well known how Vaudeville, Wild West and medicine shows, Broadway productions, and film all limited the scope and direction of Native peoples regardless of their geographic origin. For instance, Chauncey Yellow Robe (Brule Sioux) asked in 1913, "What benefit has the Indian derived from the Wild West Shows?"; he continued, "None but what are degrading, demoralizing, and degenerating" (Moses 6). While in the Northeast, Native American entertainers from Chief Big Thunder to Lucy Nicolar to Molly Spotted Elk described the conflicts surrounding minority performers working in mainstream cultural venues where audiences and producers preferred the continuation of stereotypes over full representations of Native culture.[1]

Perley astutely followed popular culture markets, finding employment in venues as they emerged and transitioning to others when markets changed. But his primary focus of writing always remained the Moosehead Lake region. It was in this wooded place that he strove for the opportunity to address some of the stereotypes he, among others, encountered in popular culture venues and everyday life.

Perley's fiction included lumbering stories as well as guiding stories, often emphasizing the region's Native American presence. In these pieces Native people drew on traditional knowledge of the forest to assist them with adversarial whites. Red Eagle's work reinterpreted the vanishing American myth, asserting an ongoing Native connection to a landscape of utility temporarily disrupted by the pressure of white industry.

He incorporated many tropes of the pulp fiction market but still managed to turn the basic story of white hero and Native villain on its head, providing alternative plots where Native heroes succeeded, thus countering the vanishing American myth. In essence, he created Native characters who were the heroes of their own stories,

therefore providing a vision of cultural continuity available through publication in national magazines.

This is an eminent achievement for any period. Even major Native intellectuals of the early twentieth century who spent time in New England could seemingly buy into the common trope of the vanishing American. In his book *From the Deep Woods to Civilization* Charles Alexander Eastman wrote of his experience at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire with a significant perception of Native peoples in the East:

> The country around it is rugged and wild; and thinking of the time when red men lived here in plenty and freedom, it seemed as if I had been destined to come view their graves and bones. No, I said to myself, I have come to continue that which in their last struggle they proposed to take up, in order to save themselves from extinction, but alas! It was too late. (65)

Eastman wrote further that if only Native peoples in the Northeast had continued to be educated in white college institutions they would have become "leaders and men of culture." Although this statement is quite assimilationist in scope, Eastman was expressing the need for Native peoples to work within the white cultural, governmental, and economic systems to help themselves.

What Eastman neglected to stress, however, is the active and vibrant Native culture that continues in northern New England. At the time he wrote, the Wabanaki peoples lived a traditional cultural life in the north woods, worked seasonally in the lumber camps and potato fields, or lived and worked in the mill cities of Maine as well as Massachusetts (Prins 232; Doughton 217). It is their lives in the woods that Henry Perley sought to illustrate for a wider, national audience.

Perley's 1915 story "The Redman's Burden" established themes that he would utilize throughout his writing career: Native Americans working at least tangentially with white society and industry to meet their own needs, the prejudices and stereotypes they encounter, and their efforts to maintain their traditional Native culture in the face of white encroachment. The title is most certainly a play

on Rudyard Kipling's poem "The White Man's Burden," in which Kipling discusses the spread of the British Empire throughout the world and the subjugation of "less civilized" peoples. Perley, by contrast, crafts a tale that addresses stereotypes attributed to aboriginal peoples including immorality, criminality, and lack of character.

He confronts these cultural assumptions by delineating an atmosphere of cultural, economic, and political dominance where proof of morality, ethics, and innocence rests with Native people. In such a climate, mainstream culture's initial impulse is to think in terms of stereotypes that Natives must actively overturn.

What Perley offers in this and other stories are plausible character actions and reactions, dialogue, and plots that do not rely on banal stereotyping. Because this is pulp fiction, however, there is always a measure of melodrama, but Perley never lets it fall to the level of parody. The key to the verisimilitude of this and other stories is the reliance on lived experience for inspiration. Believable settings and character motivations are crucial to making such a story work on the level of Native peoples struggling to maintain their cultural traditions and integrity in the face of a dominant culture.

In Perley's fiction of the 1910s, the Native people in the north woods of Maine are living and working in that world; they are not denigrated as a remnant of a "once powerful tribe," nor are they elevated as the "last noble savages." Instead, Perley allows them to speak, think, and act as living beings. At a practical level, they also work in the forest, sometimes for lumber outfits and sometimes as trappers, closely connected to the market economy of the times.

In "The Red Man's Burden" the Native character Peter "Pe-al" Attean is accused of a crime, but his guilt is not immediately assumed by all whites. Perley understood that believable plots required a deeper understanding of motivations. As the story progresses, guilt and innocence are often delegated more evenly among the characters. But the point that Perley seems to make is that the burden of guilt in a system of dominance rests with the accused, in this case the Indian Peter "Pe-al" Attean.

Attean's strength is derived from his grounding in Native culture, navigating a life between that world and the world of big business

lumber operations. When threatened by outside forces, Attean and sympathetic characters around him draw on woods knowledge, traditional lifeways, and faith in their culture to help them to persevere.

Perley creates a tale of traditional Indian culture coming into conflict with racism, hatred, and the law. Attean is a confident trapper canoeist who carefully navigates the "eddying swirl of a huge boulder" as he makes his way down a treacherous river. "Wild Pe-al" goes into the woods every September 21st to trap animal furs for seven months of the year. Perley places him within the traditional hunting practices of his culture and acknowledges them when he states, "while there is no law controlling it, trappers' ethics forbade the transgression of one trapper upon the grounds of another" (314).

Attean's love of the trapper's life is clearly stated in his comparison to the life of the businessman. Mirroring Henry Perley's own life experiences, Attean acknowledges what the world of the city has to offer and declines its benefits in favor of a life of freedom in the forest:

> Millionaires may live in comfort and luxury, mid wealth and splendor; but for Pe-al Attean, give him this—the open sky for a roof, the soft, yielding ground for a marble floor, his rough garb for an evening suit, his old moccasins for patent pumps—and he would not ask for more. (315)

His sojourn is interrupted when he finds that a trapper has set lines on his grounds. His attention is further diverted by a young woman, Anita ('Nita), who is the daughter of a Franco-American trapper by the name of Henri Le Noir and his Native American wife. Henri and Anita appear to clarify points within the plot. Anita's mother is identified as Indian. Also, Henri makes it clear that lumber operations in the region have squeezed his resources to the point of poverty. After the truth is understood, the mood of the scene becomes much more relaxed:

> "Pe-al, dis is my gal, 'Nita. His mothair, she been a savage, too, lak you. 'Nita, dis been Pe-al Attean—she is dam gude wan feller." (316)

As a trapper, Le Noir has been pushed out of his own trapper's territory by a lumber company. The conflict, therefore, is not between Attean and Le Noir, but between the minority groups living and working in the north woods who must face lumber companies and pulp and paper operations encroaching onto their lands. More specifically, the unscrupulous individuals who run the day-to-day operations of these companies are often seen as antagonists in many north woods tales. Here, Perley stresses the industrial nature of logging and pulp operations in 1915, stating how the lumber companies "immediately began their war upon the forest, the rhythmic choc, choc of their axes echoing and reechoing through the autumn air" (317).

The conflict escalates when woodsmen take possession of Anita le Noir's cabin and property. Rather than have Peter Attean and Anita Le Noir face the entire lumber company, Perley centers the conflict between Attean and Roger Amberg, the son of the lumber company owner. Amberg makes lewd overtures toward Anita, assuming the stereotype of Native immorality, but she defiantly stands her ground. Further portraying Amberg's racism and cultural insensitivity, Perley has Amberg let out an Indian war whoop that is heard by all, including the approaching Peter Attean. As the owner of the company arrives on the scene at the same time as Attean, he introduces Attean to his son, Roger Amberg, in an exchange that establishes the intense dislike between these two characters:

> Roger pushed forward and thrust out his great palm. "Glad to meet you, Attean—shake."
>
> The Indian ignored the outstretched hand, nodded shortly, and half turned to go.
>
> The corners of Roger's mouth dropped disagreeable.
>
> "Huh," he snorted; "miffed, eh? Must have been my war whoop. I was only kidding on that yell. Can't you take a joke?"
>
> "Not when it's an insult," answered Pe-al evenly.
>
> "You don't call that an insult, do you?" demanded the young giant.
>
> "I do," declared Pe-al; "not only to me, but to my people as well, and I resent it." (318)

Roger Amberg seems incapable of letting the matter drop. Impetuous and socially inept, he presses Attean further, thus producing an angry response:

> "Resent it, eh," he drawled. "I must congratulate him on his fine sensibilities, dad. It's quite commendable, you know, and—er—quixotic."
>
> "Shut up, Roger!" commanded his father. "You have said quite enough, and your remarks are entirely unnecessary. You owe Peter an apology."
>
> "Oh, but father," protested Roger sarcastically, "he would resent it, you know; perhaps physically, and—"
>
> "And if I did," said Pe-al, stepping forward and confronting him with eyes that blazed, "I'd snap your caddish head off; and if you don't think I'm capable of doing it, I'll give you a demonstration right now. *You—speak—again!*"

Despite Roger Amberg's success as a University of Maine right tackle, he is disconcerted by Attean's reaction, "something in the menacing attitude, in the cold, steely glitter from the fathomless depths of the coal-black eyes that was quite unlike anything that the young giant had ever encountered." Amberg is thrown off guard by a "look of dormant animal ferocity [in Attean], an indomitable spirit, an inexorable foe." Attean then defuses the situation with a wry smile and proceeds to walk away. "Hell!" exploded the older Amberg," that man is half-savage yet!" (318).

In unpacking this scene, it is interesting to view it in the context of cultural insensitivity. The father is shown as at least on good terms with Attean, but the son will not respect cultural differences and seeks to dominate the situation. Roger Amberg may be a stock character, playing the role of the malicious coward, but his actions propel the story forward. He continues his pursuit of 'Nita and corners her in the forest far from camp. As Amberg assaults her, 'Nita fights back, "clawing and scratching at his smug face with the ferocity of a wild-cat" (320). Attean enters the scene, approaching Amberg and striking his jaw, nearly lifting him off the ground. As they flee, Amberg yells:

> "Here, you cave-dweller, come back here," he cried, pointing the weapon unsteadily at the Indian's retreating figure. "Do you hear? Come back here."
>
> Pe-al merely threw back his head and laughed.
>
> Roger lowered the weapon and watched them disappear. His bluff had been called." (320)

Amberg conspires to destroy Attean after this incident. In the closing act of the story it appears that Attean has violated game laws by shooting a moose out of season. The game warden comes down hard on him, threatening to prosecute him to the fullest extent of the law. People will come for miles around to the court proceedings, "for the name of Wild Pe-al was known in every section of Piscataquis and Aroostook counties" (321). He would be marched overland for twenty miles to Northeast Carry and then would take the stage across Moosehead to Greenville, where he would board the train to Dover-Foxcroft.

In real life, Perley held strong opinions regarding the right of Maine's Native peoples to hunt and fish. In the 1920s he related to newspaper reporter Henry Buxton how Native hunters and their families

> are controlled by the laws of the white man, and despite the fact that they have no representation and no vote they must obey these laws. . . . It may surprise you to know that in the archives at Augusta is an old law which provides that the Maine Indian may hunt all seasons of the year for food, but this law has been buried out of sight by the white man, and custom decrees that the red man must abide by the modern game laws. (Buxton)

Perley could have referenced a dozen past treaties to make this case. In both fiction and fact, therefore, he addresses the political situation of Maine's Native people regarding hunting. Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, continued debates in and out of Maine courts centered on Native rights to hunt on traditional grounds. In 1891, for instance, in a case heard by the Maine

Supreme Court, *State vs. Peter Newell*, the defendant was indicted for killing two deer on January 14, 1891, outside of season. Newell pleaded guilty, stipulating "unless the court should be of the opinion that he had a lawful right to do the acts complained of, by reason of the following treaties, viz: of 1713, 1717, 1725, etc." (Sprague 183–84, 194).

Newell's defense was that as a member of the Passamaquoddy tribe, he was not subject to the laws of the state of Maine; a position that the courts did not uphold. Defense attorney George M. Hanson drew upon federal legal precedence in his defense brief, a document that sounds strikingly familiar to early nineteenth-century Chief Justice John Marshall's US Supreme Court ruling in *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia 1831*. Sixty years later, in 1891, Hanson wrote of Native tribes:

> From the beginning they have constituted a distinct and separate people with their own laws and form of government . . . they are not citizens, but a nation within a nation, and entitled to be treated within the matters claimed as a separate nation, and in this case if they have violated a treaty they violate as a nation and not individuals, and as individuals I claim that they are not liable for violation of a law manifestly in direct opposition to the terms of the treaties under which they claim. (Sprague 185)

Since its creation in 1820, as part of the Maine-Missouri Compromise, the state of Maine first upheld (1853) and then denied (1869) Maine's Native people the right to hunt and fish under even older treaty agreements (Sprague, 186). In 1891, despite Newell's claims, Hanson's reliance on federal precedents, and the supposedly sacrosanct status of Indian and federal government treaties, Newell lost the case.

By the 1920s the situation had not appreciably changed as Henry Perley told reporter Henry Buxton, "The dozens or more Indians remaining about the [Moosehead] lake would starve to death if they depended upon game for their food on account of the different closed seasons imposed by modern fish and game laws." Especially

relevant to the story of Peter "Pe-al" Attean, he finds, "To hunt or fish out of season brings down a flock of vigilant fish and game wardens who do their best to clap the offenders into jail" (Buxton).

Perley stressed how Maine's Native people possessed traditional hunting practices that did not tax the environment but simply provided their basic needs season in and season out. There is evidence to support this statement from other quarters. For instance, anthropologist Frank Speck related that Maliseet hunters in adjacent New Brunswick practiced traditional need-based hunting of caribou and moose, alongside largely imposed agricultural "farm-land pursuits." This remained possible until Native hunters,

> seeing that the whites were bent on wholesale destruction of the game animals and fur-bearers, deliberately decided to take their share and profit from the forests [thus] the epoch of conservative, regulated hunting by the Malecite who worked the wild woods of New Brunswick east of the St. John toward the hunting grounds of the Micmac, came quite abruptly to an end. (Speck and Hadlock 361)

In the story "The Red Man's Burden" Perley describes an unsympathetic prosecutor who asks that "the prisoner be given the full penalty and his license taken from him," as "he is a dangerous character and a menace to the county" (322). Not all whites conspire against him as there are many who strongly doubt his guilt. A young lawyer by the name of Arthur Snowden, a graduate of the law school in Bangor, figures out Roger Amberg's ruse. At the courtroom climax of the story Snowden proves that the bullet that felled the moose was not fired from Attean's gun at all (322).

It is 'Nita who provides the testimony that points directly to Roger Amberg as the perpetrator; he shrinks "from the accusation as though it was the lash of a whip" (323). Faced with mounting evidence, including the testimony of Anita Le Noir and her father, Amberg is now shown at fault, and his father must pay the fines, "five hundred and twenty-five dollars to furnish a bunch of lumber jacks with moose-meat," he growled disgustedly, "and all on account of a big booby that ought to be shingled. Bah!" (323).

Roger Amberg confesses how he had shot the moose in a moment of excitement, had substituted a loaded cartridge, and decided to blame the shooting on Attean. His justification, to "revenge himself for the humiliation he had suffered at the hands of the Indian," is a telling point. Here, Perley shows Amberg humiliated but still unable to grasp his own initial racism that led to the confrontation. Interestingly, Amberg does not see his absence of tact and willful ignorance of Native culture as the reason he is in trouble.

In part, this story reestablishes a Native American connection to the landscape while including Native workers within the predominantly white lumber industry. By 1900 lumber operations were significantly smaller than they were at midcentury, but Native American, Franco-American, and Yankee loggers all continued to help in the winter cutting and spring log drives well into the 1920s before the industry significantly stalled.

Perley's placement of Native American characters in major positions within the story was rare in American popular literature. As literary historian Jon Tuska writes, after the 1925 publication of Zane Grey's *The Vanishing American*, "all Curtis publications, including *Saturday Evening Post*, adopted an editorial policy that prohibited authors of western stories and serials from characterizing Native Americans [positively] in their fiction," leaving Native peoples in the roles of renegades and minor characters (Tuska 14). This emphasis helps to explain the overwhelming portrayals of Native peoples as negative "foils" for white heroes in the popular fiction of the day.

Examples such as "The Red Man's Burden" show Perley's interest in creating fully realized characters to contrast the dominant plot lines of stories appearing in the pulp magazines. By comparison, stories appearing during these years relied heavily on myths of the lone Indian figure and vanishing race and on stereotyped behavior.[2]

But it is important to remember this period as one of transition. Issues of governmental responsibility, the well-being of Native populations, and the belief in the vanishing race all permeated debates surrounding Native peoples. There were attempts in the 1910s and the 1920s, for instance, to divest governmental responsibility for Native peoples, most notably in the Bursum Bill of 1922, which

attempted to further the processes of allotment begun in the nineteenth century by eliminating oversight and care for Native Americans on reservations.

In the early 1900s politicians from across the nation furthered the processes of assimilation and divested governmental responsibility for Native peoples by granting citizenship. At the time of Perley's initial publication success, Senator Charles D. Carter of Oklahoma proposed several Indian Citizenship Bills in Congress. These "Carter Bills" created commissions to inquire "into the habits and capabilities of all applicants for the full rights of citizenship." In the accompanying ceremony of "emancipation," as described in the *American Indian Magazine* of 1918,

> each candidate is handed a bow and arrow [and] as the arrow leaves the string major McLaughlin repeats impressively: "You have shot your last arrow. That means that you are to live no longer the life of an Indian. You are, from this day forward, to live the life of a white man. But you may keep that arrow. It will be to you a symbol of your noble race and of the pride you feel because you come from the first of all Americans." ("Carter Bill" 54)

Such legislation was indicative of not only the paternalistic attitudes of many governmental officials. It also represented ideas swirling in mainstream culture at a time when the vanishing American myth was quite strong. Feeling that tribal warfare, religious observances, and traditional knowledge must give way to Western civilization motivated many in the private sector as well. With such strong legislative action, it is little surprise that cultural venues such as Wild West shows and pulp fiction magazines, like the dime novels of a past era, followed similar lines of thought.

In this atmosphere Perley provided his Native characters with the opportunity to express themselves fully; consequently the stories illustrate that racism and stereotyping, if not addressed, can potentially lead to tragedy. Perley possessed the spark of subversion, the subtle critique, directed at mainstream culture that wryly demanded that it examine itself and its own prejudices. His short

works usurped the typical theme of white dominance over Native American characters and, indeed, made Native characters the heroes of the stories (Perley, "Journey" xxxiii).

Combining full characterizations, cultural traditions, and creditable dialogue with a pulp fiction plot was an enormous task. Yet, Perley dwelt within the realms of popular culture and the oral tradition. As literary scholar Lisa Brooks writes, the connections to writing and oral traditions are both stronger and more long-standing than most studies have suggested (L. Brooks 246). There need not be a separation between the processes of writing and those of the oral tradition.

By living a cosmopolitan life and, subsequently, by returning to Moosehead Lake Henry Perley retained a strong connection to his cultural roots and expressed those connections in a myriad of venues, some traditional, some popular. His move back to Moosehead Lake addresses the question of which life, for him, was most important. "Indians are great story tellers," he wrote, "and they love to gather in groups and relate these yarns, many of which are very humorous. They laugh long and silently at the denouement of such stories but if a white man should happen in on them in the midst of their merriment they stop laughing and become as sober as a lot of owls" (Buxton).

To read Perley's stories of the north woods is to see his craft—his love of wordplay—at work. But his conscious understanding of the contentious nature of Native American lives also rooted his writings, lectures, and other performances in popular culture in a strong commitment to Native values. As a writer supremely connected to place, he is very believable when he wrote in 1936 that Moosehead Lake was "the best place in the world to write" (Whitney).

NOTES

1. Several excellent sources include Harald E. L. Prins, "Chief Big Thunder (1827–1906): The Life History of a Penobscot Trickster," *Maine History* 37 (Winter 1998): 140–149; Bunny McBride, "Lucy Nicolar: The Artful Activism of a Penobscot Performer," *Sifters: Native American Women's Lives*, ed.

Theda Purdue (New York: Oxford UP, 2001); Bunny McBride, *Molly Spotted Elk: A Penobscot in Paris* (Norman: U of Oklahoma P, 1995).

2. Comparable examples include William Dudley Pelley, "A Verbal Contract," *All-Story Weekly* 87.1 (3 Aug. 1918): 169–78. Fiction writers for upscale "slick" magazine markets also included Native American characters. The "Casco Billy" and "Indian Detective Jimmy Crickett" stories, by Charles V. Brereton, in California's *Sunset* magazine, fit this description. A few examples include the stories "Man's Best Friend," *Sunset* 48.5 (Mar. 1922): 23–25, 64–67; and "The Owl and the Pussycat," *Sunset* 54.5 (May 1928): 9–11, 66–68.

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Placing Joseph Bruchac

Native Literary Networks and Cultural Transmission in the Contemporary Northeast

CHRISTINE M. DELUCIA

"I was taught to believe that the best relationships are reciprocal ones," Joseph Bruchac wrote in 1980 in a minor advice manual, *How to Start and Sustain a Literary Magazine: Practical Strategies for Publications of Lasting Value* (3). Bruchac (b. 1942) was then emerging as a powerful voice in American Indian and multicultural small-press publishing, and in this publication he passed along wisdom harvested from a decade of running his own magazine based in the Northeast, the *Greenfield Review*. He was responding to woes plaguing small-press publishers: perpetual financial struggle, difficulties in building up and retaining a critical mass of readers, and the tendency of promising enterprises to succumb prematurely, "evanescent as the Mayfly which hatches in the morning, dazzles the air with its bright wings for one long summer day, and then dies in the evening." He gave trenchant counsel on the fiscal and technical demands of publishing. But the guide's core concern involved more than pragmatic considerations. "There should be a sense of community and a bond between those people who care enough to write poetry and fiction and those who care enough to publish it," he wrote. The payoff of cultivating these relationships, and by extension long-lived literary publications, could be profound: "A sustained magazine creates, through the years, a meeting place for our culture, . . . a cumulative impact which goes beyond the total of its issues if considered one at a time" (2–3). This was a social vision of literature, stretching beyond the exclusionary "mainstream" of publications like the *New Yorker* and the *Atlantic Monthly*, and drawing

together diverse webs of thinkers for reasons inflected by more than personal standing or profit. Even at this early career stage, Bruchac advocated a community-oriented view of intellectual production, and he sought to bring others into the fold as much as to shore up his own reputation.

Using "reciprocal relationships" as a critical lens opens up a dimension of Bruchac's writing that has been neglected, and helps situate the intellectual and social labors of arguably the most prolific and widely recognized commentator on the Native Northeast of the late twentieth century. Bruchac has towered as a regional literary presence since the 1970s, publishing and performing as a poet, storyteller, critic, editor, and cultural consultant, and emerging as a public face for Abenaki and Native heritages. His writings have appeared in more than five hundred publications, ranging from ultra-local and literary to mass-market titles such as *National Geographic* and *Smithsonian*, and earning him national accolades like the 1998 Storyteller of the Year award from the Wordcraft Circle of Native Writers and Storytellers. A selection of his published works has gained critical notice, as in Ron Welburn's critique of the novels *Dawn Land* and *Long River*, in brief assessments of Bruchac's output through the late 1990s in a special issue of the journal *Paintbrush* in 1997 (Gardner; Hauprich; Thunderhorse; Winter), and in discussion of his environmental and social justice concerns by Scott Slovic. Anthologies have given Bruchac limited prominence in literary-critical circles, sometimes slotted as a representative northeastern or Abenaki author. Yet Bruchac has been surprisingly understudied, particularly from a historicist perspective that accounts for the fuller range of nonpublishing endeavors he has pursued; and for his place within larger currents of regional, national, and international social thought during the 1970s and 1980s, a tumultuous yet transformative period in American Indian literary history. Furthermore, the categories that have been used to identify Bruchac tend to fall short of capturing the extent and political potency of his influence. "Abenaki children's author," for instance, ascribes a pointed localism that pins Bruchac primarily and consistently as an Abenaki or northeastern voice, glossing over the cross-cultural, intertribal, and

interregional nature of his cultural commitments. It elides, too, his work's applications in mature spheres, sometimes with controversy in tow. Bruchac has called himself a Nudatlogit ("teller of stories," in Penobscot), yet there is presently little recognition of the multiple venues in which his stories have been mobilized, often far from New England and literary print culture.

This article seeks to place Bruchac more securely, and perhaps provocatively, by mapping his extensive networks of relations. Drawing upon his largely unexamined personal papers, it assesses Bruchac as a social figure, bound up in distinctively Native conceptions of community responsivity that govern literary decisions. Plugged into dozens if not hundreds of tribal and non-Native communities, and in touch with both marquee names in American Indian literature such as Leslie Marmon Silko and Simon Ortiz, and with myriad lesser-known but influential local community culture bearers, Bruchac has acted onstage and behind the scenes in an array of social networks in ways few other regional thinkers can claim. A social view of Bruchac illuminates debates about claiming Native writerly identity, the politics of publishing Native-themed work in staid mainstream presses, and disagreements about authority for transmitting tribally specific stories. It also opens up our conception of the "Native Northeast" in the late twentieth century, identifying the truly global set of materials that have contoured Bruchac's intellectual maturation and in turn have been woven into his commentaries on this region.

This article traces transformations over time in Bruchac's creative practices, using these to clarify or extend principles laid out in Bruchac's first major published statement on the communal character of literary activity, *Roots of Survival: Native American Storytelling and the Sacred*. It makes two critical interventions: identifying a place-connection that is both regionally intensive and globally extensive, and stressing the need for historicist approaches to Native literary studies that can address social applications of intellectual practice. First, it is vital to ground criticism in place, to locate Native authors in particular spaces with connections to real, emplaced communities grappling concretely with the definition and manage-

ment of community territories. But what is a logical space in which to ground the peripatetic yet lococentric Bruchac? *Regionalism* ought to be accorded more weight as a critical lens for Native studies, Tol Foster argued in a 2008 essay, since it can encompass both tribally specific voices *and* instances of "outward-looking, dynamic cosmopolitanism" (271). His framework proposes that "tribally specific work is necessarily incomplete if it does not have multiple perspectives and voices within it and is even incomplete *if it does not acknowledge voices without as well*" (272). Never a "theoretically or culturally pristine space," as Foster puts it (272), the region is a productive path into Bruchac since his relations have been relentlessly rooted in the Northeast yet conversant beyond it. The Northeast is a coherent spatial-cultural entity within which Bruchac has maintained contacts with multiple Eastern Algonquian communities, such as the Passamaquoddy and Penobscot (with reservations in the state of Maine), Abenaki at Swanton/Missisquoi (Vermont), and Mohegan (Connecticut); with Iroquoian communities near his home in the Adirondacks of New York; and with numerous Native individuals living beyond the formal boundaries of tribal reservations. Unlike the unit "New England," the Northeast as a spatial formulation can account for transnational indigenous kinship networks—a vital point since the diasporic Abenaki community of Odanak/St. Francis, north of the US border in the Canadian province of Québec, has been an enduring touchstone for Bruchac. Numerous northeastern writers have been steadily mentored by Bruchac; and the most pointed application of his work has been within the Northeast, where his writings and performances permeate local museums, curricula, and community gatherings. Furthermore, Bruchac has countered a regionally specific symbolic complex of "erasure," settler convictions about the withdrawal and racial negation of Eastern Algonquian peoples from the area after the colonial "Indian wars" (O'Brien).

Yet Bruchac has also sustained personal and professional conversations far beyond the Northeast and North America. Ghana, Nigeria, Haiti, Puerto Rico, Paris, Eastern Europe, Hawaii, Alaska, and tribal reserves in the Pacific Northwest and Southwest, to name a

few sites, have all affected his sensibilities. His relations are simultaneously intensive *within* the Northeast, in other words, and are consistently drawn *outside* this space, exporting the Northeast's cultural products abroad and bringing in new materials that enrich the Northeast. Bruchac at once grounds himself in the Abenaki conception of *Ndakinna*, "our land"—"the wide area that extends across the Adirondack mountains, into lower Quebec and across northern Vermont and New Hampshire," as he once defined its parameters—and is able and motivated to peer over its mountains and rivers (letter to Carol Snow Moon Bachofner). He is loyal to the lands and house inhabited by his great-grandparents and now by his own family, but he also has traveled widely. Mapping his connections reveals a space that is unevenly global, with a dense knot of ties darkening the Northeast, surrounded by a looser scatter of nodes farther afield. This geography's historicity—its change over time—is evident as well, as his traveling days have moderated in recent years to a tighter orbit near his home in New York.

Second, this essay puts forward a more social model of literary engagement. Rather than a view of storytellers as naively insulated from political currents, or a hermetic conception of northeastern indigenous literature that never admits outside influences, a more dynamic, multicentered understanding of the author situates a figure like Bruchac at the intersection of multiple networks: tribal, academic, public. Like a spider spinning a web, the growing and collapsing filaments of which can remain invisible until light strikes at the right angle, Bruchac and his complex relations can be hard to sight comprehensively, especially when only his published corpus is examined. This corpus might be understood better not as the final expression of Bruchac's thinking, but as a productive pause during which thought momentarily takes shape before resuming its flow onward. His writings have emerged out of ongoing community consultations, and in turn the published works have reverberated back among these communities in settings like museums, and storytelling performances onstage and in classrooms and homes. Rather than static objects that can be easily stilled in time for formalistic textual analysis, these writings need to be rewoven back into the

dynamic web of Bruchac's activities. Bruchac is a late-modern heir to traditions of northeastern collective meaning-production and action that have historically been both tribally centered and intertribal, and conversant with non-Native neighbors and interlocutors. This article thus takes a historical approach based on a survey of the entire Bruchac "archive," which permits more robust cataloguing not only of his ideas but also of his actions—the conduct of the artist-as-community-member.

Bruchac's life has traveled in a loop, beginning and taking root in the Northeast, then extending abroad, and finally returning back to the Northeast while retaining a wide net of connections to other places. Born October 16, 1942, Bruchac grew up in the foothills of the Adirondacks, raised by his maternal grandparents in Greenfield Center, New York. There he did not live a specifically "Indian" or "Abenaki" life, as he has said in his autobiography *Bowman's Store: A Journey to Myself*. But his grandfather Jesse Bowman's connections to the land had lasting effects, which have appeared more clearly in hindsight. This was an era, Bruchac later noted, when identification as "Indian" could be grounds for disparagement. It was also the ebb of American Indian political life in the United States as federal initiatives strove to dissolve tribal relations in the 1950s, and it is not surprising that familial ties to Native nations—the extended but cohesive Abenaki community—were at this point muted or absent. Bruchac's steadily growing cognizance of Native nations, and his willingness to champion their specific interests, parallel a broader shift in American Indian political, legal, and cultural history. His biography spans the same period (1940s–2000s) that legal historian Charles Wilkinson has identified as one of the most remarkable trajectories in American Indian history, from the "nadir" of the "termination era" to a resurgence of tribal sovereignty and nationalities, which has concurrently supported sociocultural reinvigorations. The historical circumstances that fostered Native nationalisms post-1950 contributed to the cultural matrix that has enabled Bruchac to speak in ever more specifically national ways on Native, particularly Abenaki, topics.

Bruchac remained in New York for college, studying wildlife

conservation at Cornell University before switching to an English major. Cornell today sustains an active American Indian Program (begun in 1975) that has centralized resources to support young Native scholars, but when Bruchac attended in the mid-1960s such networks and concerted institutional support had not crystallized. Cornell's main contribution to his development was not fostering Native activism or tribal links, but more general encouragement of literariness, broadening of aesthetic horizons, and immersion in publishing as he wrote and edited for campus publications. His college notebooks and letters home testify to early curiosity about narrating the ephemera of daily life, filled with bits of poetry, sketches of campus interactions, and attempts to capture dialogue in overheard conversations. "You know, the hardest thing in life is trying to communicate," he wrote to his parents, Joseph and Marion Bruchac, in 1963. "That's what makes a great speaker, or a great writer. The ability to have something to say and then say it in such a way that others can realize what has been said or written and understand." A simple statement this was, but a fair adumbration of his lifelong pursuit of connection and translation. Over time the "others" to which he gestured have become even more complex than he could have anticipated, demanding flexible means for addressing multiple audiences.

After earning an MA at Syracuse University in literature and creative writing—a period important for drawing him on his motorcycle to the nearby Onondaga Reservation, where he began to connect with elders and community members—Bruchac embarked on a postcollegiate sojourn far from the Adirondacks and Finger Lakes that reshaped his intellectual and cultural commitments. He moved to Ghana in 1966 to work for the Teachers for West Africa program and assumed a post at Keta Secondary School. Bruchac's three years as a teacher in West Africa were formative to his thinking on collective obligations and on the confrontation between tradition and Western "modernity" in colonial and postcolonial situations. Ghana exposed Bruchac to the persistence of older, alternate lifeways that had not been streamlined into Western modes, and raised to the surface the frictions of colonialism. His first prolonged "ethnic"

sensitization as an adult was not to American Indian or Abenaki issues, but to West African ones. Rather than having a deep-seated Abenaki interest from the outset of his literary career (though his grandfather's influence loomed large), Bruchac's focus gravitated to that over time after passage through a global set of influences. These early sensitivities to the fallout of Euro-American imperialism in an African context have remained underrecognized factors in Bruchac's later conceptions of American Indian issues.

The Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* was a major intellectual and aesthetic model for him in this period. Bruchac found that Achebe's work dramatized the creative potential in the "ability to see both the indigenous and the European point of view" (letter to Muriel Feldshuh). (Achebe later served as one of Bruchac's postgraduate advisers.) Bruchac drafted notes and poems on African themes during his time overseas and afterward, explorations that teased out meeting points of West and non-West, present and past, tradition and modernity. Ghana also bred in him a critical perspective on the United States and its contemporary valuation of capitalist "progress" and gave him a jaundiced outlook on even the seemingly altruistic incarnations of imperialism. Western volunteers like himself and Peace Corps members occupied vexed places, and in notes for a Ghanaian novel ("Thesis of novel: the volunteers need Africa *more* than it needs them") he elaborated on his ambivalence. "They teach a language which is un-African," he lamented. "They bring Western customs, Western music (which they badly understand themselves, rooted in Africa as it was), Western cynicism, racism, Freudianism & old sexual hang-ups"; in return they gain "material for a lifetime of stories, anecdotes for bars & parties." This indictment of cultural capital accorded to "exotic" cultures and casual misappropriation of other cultures' stories for personal gain and status in a West hungry for its antitheses intensified in later years as Bruchac's American Indian commitments strengthened. "When I came back to the United States, I saw the United States much more clearly than I had before because I'd seen it through African eyes." Bruchac later said:

> I found so many similarities between traditional Native culture here and their traditional Native culture there. Among other things, our respect for the earth, and recognition of the earth as the source of life. European culture has lost that. Respect for women, for motherhood; European culture has lost that. . . . [respect for children]; Respect for elders as the center of the culture, as the true keepers of tradition, and as the most valuable people in your society. (Gardner 34–35).

Countering rampant individualism, and productively relinking generations to foster community stability and regeneration of cultural inheritance, has been a long-term project for Bruchac, its foundation laid during this experience of living outside the West.

Ghana introduced Bruchac to a transatlantic network of intellectuals who remained confidants years later. He felt at home in many respects and had begun sustaining family of his own in West Africa—his wife, the late Carol Worthen Bruchac (1942–2011), was joined by their newborn son James. Yet Bruchac found himself feeling uneasily uprooted at a fundamental level. "There are many things that draw me back to America," he wrote to R. E. K. Matanawui, the Keta school's headmaster, in March 1968:

> The touch of green meadow grass beneath my feet, the smell of May flowers under the oaks and beeches of a backlot woods, the voices of friends, my grandfather who raised me as his son and whose death may come while I am six thousand miles away. Or, on the other hand, the violence breeding in America's troubled city heart which makes this a time when men of good will are needed.

The Chicago riots, escalation in Vietnam and antiwar protests, and other events in the late 1960s US maelstrom formed the backdrop of Bruchac's time in West Africa, and this "time of rebellion and uncertainty, the assassination of leaders, the start of a loss of innocence" (*Roots* 23) had a profoundly galvanizing effect on his consciousness. Home-ground obligations needed tending. In the fall of 1969 Bruchac returned to the Northeast and has kept that as his base ever since.

Following his return to Greenfield Center, Bruchac immersed himself in the next major undertaking of his professional career: small-press publishing, or literary ventures outside the purview of commercial conglomerates that had historically controlled America's creative outlets. Ghana's multilingual milieu, "where English was a *lingua franca* and yet only one of the many languages," had planted the seeds of an idea to encourage a more diverse publishing culture back in the United States: "I wanted to do what little I could to make that community of American writers aware of other voices, other poets than just those of male middle-class white America" (*How to Start* 4). He and Carol founded the *Greenfield Review* in 1969, and the first issue went public in spring 1970. The *Review*'s audience was broad, aimed at serious readers of poetry. Novel was its specific inclusion of diverse constituents: "people in prison," for example, and "an audience in Africa and the Caribbean among African and Caribbean writers and readers of poetry and in various so-called Third World Communities in the United States," as Bruchac clarified in a 1978 letter to John Gill about the *Review*'s editorial policy. In that same letter he restated the editorial mission: "to publish good poetry by a wide variety of people, but to pay special attention (without excluding any group or individual prior to seeing their work) to certain areas: African poetry, poetry by '3rd world' writers, women, people in prison, etc." Poets such as Simon Ortiz and Leslie Marmon Silko "fall into that '3rd world' category (though first and foremost, they are just plain good writers)," he added. "Third World" was a popular umbrella identifier of the time that served as shorthand for an unstable constellation of writers, including Native writers, circling around common themes and forms in opposition to high-literary convention. Prison writing was an important part of this mix, arising partly from time Bruchac devoted in the 1970s to teaching at and directing a Skidmore College-affiliated prison education program ("Union Graduate School Internship"). His interactions with incarcerated men fed convictions that massive sectors of American society were unheard from, silenced in print culture by the prejudices and hesitancies of publishers who shied away from untried material.

Overall, this small-press work was an expressly multivocal undertaking in which Native voices were a critical but not isolated component of a larger literary sea-shift aimed at prying open the gates of American publishing to racial, gender, class, and other types of diversity ("The Greenfield Review" typescript). The American publishing world could react viscerally—and viciously—to this shake-up of established practice. Some authors voiced concerns that they had been pushed aside by the latest multicultural fad (Flaherty to Bruchac); one wished in 1974 that Bruchac-as-publisher would not "spend so much of [his] crusading zeal on the fashionable fringe minorities" (Baxter Hathaway to Bruchac). Correspondence could be especially vitriolic in this period, as Bruchac weathered accusations of discrimination and mishandling and tirades about editors' powers to accelerate or forestall careers based on publishing agendas. Despite these acrimonious episodes, he and Carol succeeded by many measures in broadening publishing, if on a modest scale, in ways unanticipated in the first half of the twentieth century.

Publishing turned Bruchac into a uniquely connective figure. He became a kind of clearinghouse: a recognized nexus for publicizing and distributing new works, for compiling and making available thematic bibliographies and catalogues on topics that had previously escaped critical notice, and a go-to person for aspiring writers seeking advice on how to break into literary circles. He became a connective conduit for Native and other minority writers in both the United States and the rest of the world. Correspondents would send notes to Bruchac intended for other writers, asking him to forward the messages since he had the recipients' last known contact addresses on file. Bruchac was gaining the trust of others to be an intermediary through whom information could be transmitted, and he routinely received private kudos for this ad hoc networking. These semisecretarial obligations were vital social activities in a pre-Internet age, when the postal service was still the primary means of staying informed about private and political developments across a geographically far-flung web. He and Carol also maintained at their home a literary library, and he recalled how "people frequently visit us to disappear into the attic for hours at a time" to consult this per-

sonal yet public archive of hard-to-find materials (*How to Start* 23). These behind-the-scenes components of Bruchac's editorial and related labors may not have been as directly "productive" as individual composition, nor as glamorous, as measured by conventional standards of individual-oriented criticism. But it was vital collective work in which Bruchac has been almost without peer during this critical stage of Native and multicultural literary re-emergence of the 1970s to 2000s.

While editorial work occupied the bulk of Bruchac's time during the growth of the Greenfield Press and *Greenfield Review*, he was simultaneously developing creative projects of his own, including some of his earliest forays into "Native" themes. Critics issued pointed yet encouraging critiques of his submissions from this period, as reviewers sensed Bruchac was on the cusp of articulating something new, but still incubating the assurance and solidity of focus needed to be fully convincing. "You are seemingly after the creation of some new type of myth which is personally very important to you," Dana Ciccone wrote in 1973 after reading several poems:

> But every time you are on the verge of making that final break with what you know in favor of something you feel and want to be familiar with; the old elements, the old totems, intrude and foul up the new territory. . . . The birth pains of something necessary for the poet are branded onto these poems. It's just that damned gestation that's shattering.

The expansiveness of Bruchac's allegiances in this period came out strongly in *Border Crossings* (1975), a poetry collection Bruchac completed while earning a PhD in comparative literature from the Union Institute of Ohio. Restlessly comparing languages, customs, and physiognomies in sites like Ghana, Hawaii, Switzerland, Paris, and the Caribbean, the work exemplified a crucial broadening phase that led Bruchac to appreciate diverse world cultures, yet also to sympathize with common experiences of colonialism as well as worldwide stirrings of decolonization.

The most notable shift for Bruchac's personal and professional identities during and after the 1970s was his growing devotion to

American Indian subjects and writers and his participation in the so-called American Indian literary renaissance. His work became less generic, more precisely invocative of regionally, tribally specific topics, including those of the Native Northeast. This sensitization came about incrementally, through solidifying ties with knowledgeable community members and immersion in secondary literature. Bruchac parlayed this rising Native commitment into socially constructive forms such as the Wordcraft Circle of Native Writers and Storytellers, intended to connect established authors to emerging ones as mentors, and a 1992 multiday festival held in Oklahoma called "Returning the Gift." Conceived partly as a response to the Columbian Quincentenary's ongoing intransigence about Native subjects, it evolved into a means of bolstering networks of Native writers. Such participants as Marilou Awiakta (Cherokee), Joy Harjo (Muskogee Creek), and Gail Tremblay (Mi'kmaq/Onondaga) recalled the conference as a watershed for American Indian literature (Hauprich 101–06). The organizational documentation for these projects exists *en masse* in Bruchac's personal papers, and again, the staggering but under-visible labor of conceiving, publicizing, and pulling off events of this magnitude fell to Bruchac and his collaborators.

Bruchac's own subject matter circled ever closer to indigenous topics, and his burgeoning literary-social networks included hundreds of Native colleagues, but still Bruchac remained careful, and conflicted, about calling himself a "Native" artist. On one hand, "Indian" identity was gaining cultural currency in the 1970s, no longer seen as a badge of shame by Euro-Americans or a heritage to be denied. Yet the specter of "fake Indians" or "white shamans" also loomed. Bruchac was "very sensitive about the whole Indian rip-off that is going on," he told Geary Hobson in 1976. "Even though my grandfather was Indian I try to avoid being 'listed' as a 'Native American writer.' I tell people that I am a human being with some Indian ancestry." Bruchac's complex background led him to experiment with different terminologies for self-identification, particularly in the 1970s as he was intensively working through these matters for the first time. Initially he focused on "blood," as was common in

conversations of the time, and the percentages of his genetic heritage, which were themselves shifting as ongoing genealogical work uncovered new information. He sometimes called himself "metis"—"with not just American Indian (Mohawk and Abenaki) but also Slovak and English ancestors," as he wrote to Thomas Lynch in 1979. He called himself a "thin blood" as late as 2004 while corresponding with Vine Deloria, Jr., and in 1998 correspondence with Armando Jannetta invoked Gerald Vizenor's conception of "crossbloods" ("Standing on the crossroads, being crucified, having to 'bear a cross,' being confused, seeing the four directions"). Bruchac's major reservation about claiming "Native" identity seemed to be the absence of direct cultural inheritance. "[A]lthough I have inherited Indian blood," he wrote to Jim Barnes in 1976, "I inherited nothing of the cultural background—language, customs, it was all lost from our family." (Bruchac's conception of cultural "loss" shifted over time, and his more recent work has indicated a more expansive, dynamic conception of cultural, familial, and Abenaki heritage, as well as increasing appreciation for the resources his family did maintain.)

The publishing milieu in which Bruchac moved heightened the stakes of identity-definition since terms of affiliation became very public and potentially saleable. Many of the barbs Bruchac endured originated from critics' suspicions that he was conveniently deploying "Indian" or "Abenaki" links for profit. "So many people are now getting onto the Native American literature bandwagon," as Hobson put it in a 1977 letter. Such critiques signaled wider apprehension about commodification of minority experiences and about publishing's growing fascination with the variable marketability of writerly "types." Bruchac recognized these anxieties and periodically turned down opportunities to be published or anthologized because he demurred from occupying supposed "Native" quota spots that might otherwise go to emerging minority writers. (Suspicions that he was getting rich from Indianness were also misplaced, he indicated, routinely pointing out the low profits in small-press publishing. His 1980 *How to Start* guide soberly listed bake sales and garage sales as viable start-up capital sources for aspiring editors [33].)

Yet amidst this turmoil, Bruchac sought to maintain a constructive vision of his fraught place. He wrote of the advantages of seeing with a "double vision," approaching the world "as seen through Indian eyes and through those of majority society" (letter to Phyllis at Ion Books), invoking a kind of Du Boisian double consciousness. He came to call himself a "Translator's Son" with vision akin to that of a fish, which

> swims
> on the surface,
> its gaze shared by
> the depths of water and the sky. ("Translator's Son")

While working through these tangled possibilities for self-identification, Bruchac gradually became a prominent voice for Abenaki heritage specifically. His Northeastern focus tightened even further, and tribally specific figures like the Abenaki culture-hero Gluskap and his travails assumed a central role in Bruchac's oeuvre and performative repertoire, as in Bruchac's *The Wind Eagle and Other Abenaki Stories*. Abenaki identity could be learned, cultivated, and deepened over time, he maintained. "I know that I have come to think of myself much more as Abenaki over the last two decades," he wrote to Armando Jannetta in 1998. "Blood, of course, is only part of what makes us who we are. . . . Culture is of equal importance." Bruchac has been candid about the roots of his Abenaki knowledge. "Whatever I know about Abenaki history, culture and language came to me as an adult, but I have spent over 40 years in that pursuit," he wrote to Vine Deloria Jr. in 2004. Rather than being brought up as a child within a robust Abenaki familial tradition, Bruchac came to this culture through intensive research and building of community ties, all conducted later in life. Substantial research undergirded his "creative" projects, and Bruchac regularly directed correspondents inquisitive about Algonquian topics to academic sources such as Dartmouth historian Colin Calloway's monograph on the Western Abenaki and ethnolinguist Gordon Day's researches on the St. Francis Abenaki. Knowledge can come from many directions, Bruchac has suggested: from academia and the institutional

research agendas of Western-credentialed historians and ethnographers; from community elders and oral traditions; from archaeology and site investigations; from familial accounts of kinship ties. Bruchac's catholic view of viable source materials parallels a broader trend in the Northeast, whereby tribal communities and researchers have attempted to move beyond combative standoffs between "traditional" and "academic" knowledge and toward more collaborative relations that can further community ends (Kerber).

Navigating to a workable position on what constitutes legitimate heritage, and the acceptable routes through which cultural knowledge can be transmitted, has been contentious at times. On one hand Bruchac has achieved trust and respect from tribal community members (though not necessarily unanimously), who have over the years invited him to advise elders' councils, assist with petitions, and lead or participate in other private and semipublic capacities. He gave counsel about updates to La Musée des Abénakis, the tribal museum in Odanak-St. Francis (Bruchac, message to Patrick Côté), and the animated film there that introduces museum visitors to Abenaki creation stories is indebted to Bruchac's versions of Wabanaki narratives. His openness to knowledge potentially classifiable as "inauthentic," or true by standards other than those of tribal communities' internal traditions, has left Bruchac subject to critique, however. He has defended his approach, countering that cultural transmission does not happen through organic or innate means, but via active behaviors. "Being born Indian doesn't give anyone an inborn understanding of Indian stories," he wrote to Marianne Mitchell in 1998. "Stories, like culture, are learned and the process of learning takes time." Yet even while advocating for the soundness of late-acquired knowledge, Bruchac has not hesitated to identify his limitations. "I consider myself a kind of transitional person," he has said. "Raised in a European-oriented household, with a knowledge that there was Native ancestry. From my twenties onward I've sought the knowledge, and began listening to elders, and I've also done a lot of research. But I consider myself . . . a step, and I think there'll be a lot of steps beyond" (Gardner 33).

This "transitional" quality has animated Bruchac's desire to com-

municate with multiple audiences, including young people, non-Natives, and non-Americans. He has been attentive to how stories shaped for young audiences can perform vitally needed work of cross-cultural education, and he has corresponded extensively with students and schoolteachers seeking advice on incorporating Native materials into their classrooms. Certain literary forms move readily across cultural boundaries, he realized. Illustrated children's books lend themselves to being read aloud in mainstream venues, for instance, while publishing with popular imprints of major trade presses (Dial, Harcourt, Fulcrum) helps cultivate broader readerships. Translations of his work, such as *The Wind Eagle* collection of Abenaki stories (*Der Windadler und andere Geschichten der Abenaki*, published in German in 1997), introduced Algonquian and other Native narratives to sites including France, Germany, Greece, and the Netherlands and fostered substantive conversations with multilingual collaborators Käthe Recheis and Louis Olivier in the 1980s and 1990s. American Indian literature invoked a new host of sociopolitical resonances overseas, as crises like genocide in the former Yugoslavia prompted comparisons to North American indigenous experiences of dispossession (Olivier). Gluskap had gone global, transformed with other Abenaki beings into icons that transcended tribally specific, regionally rooted contexts and flowed across international and intra-American borders.

This expansive vision of Bruchac (the "Abenaki poet" as a cosmopolitan, capable of parleying with Native and non-Native, West and East) can be attractive for criticism today. The fluid boundary crosser, unbeholden to conventional delimiting categories of modernity like the State, tends to earn admiration, while regional or local place connections still can garner condescension for supposed parochialism. Yet it would be mistaken to characterize Bruchac as fostering a cultural free-for-all. In his view, cultural transmission should not be a ceaseless circulation of ideas, voices, and narratives, where information can be repurposed for whatever new aesthetic or political projects individuals or interest groups might want to mobilize it. The ultimate risk is that communities' cultural resources will be "borrowed" for use in pastiche, with little respect for the par-

ticular circumstances that gave rise to them. This is a risk accentuated in a cyber age of cut-and-paste multiculturalism. A "footloose, rootless, mixed-blood hybridity," in which "both everyone and no one is Indian," can be the result, as Jace Weaver, with Craig S. Womack and Robert Warrior, characterized this postmodern extreme in *American Indian Literary Nationalism* (xx). To the contrary: stories ought to be respected as "bearers of tradition and representatives of a *particular* Native tradition," Bruchac has written. "They are not just 'Indian' stories. . . . it is vitally important to recognize the origin of the tales, to be able to name the Native nation to which a story belongs" (*Roots* 73). Understanding the national contexts from which narratives emerged, and adequately articulating them when performing or publishing a narrative, is an important first step for a teller to take toward implementing this ethic. Given the rather generalized forms Bruchac's early forays into Native topics took, the pronounced antagonism toward Native nationalisms during the political-legal nadir of the 1950s, and ongoing literary-critical wariness of such nationalisms as legitimate interpretive frameworks (Weaver, xx), Bruchac's assertive defense of keeping cultural heritage materials firmly linked to their tribal-national points of origin is remarkable evidence of critical and political maturation.

Bruchac distilled his ethic on cultural transmission in a chapter titled "Native American Stories and Non-Native Tellers: Some Suggestions" (*Roots* 94–99), yet these published guidelines on practice were only one piece of extensive dialogues about transmissional ethics. Bruchac's more direct expressions of this ethic have come through personal correspondence with hundreds of letter writers seeking guidance on their ventures into Native storytelling, sometimes sensitively, sometimes with little regard for propriety. "The legality of using someone else's story and the morality of it are sometimes two different things," he wrote in 1998 (Bruchac to Barbara-Helen Hill). Terms such as *cultural theft* recur in his correspondence, especially with well-intentioned non-Natives who casually embarked into the field of Native literature and were dismayed to hear him prescribe restraint, even silence:

> Some stories IN EVERY CULTURE are private. I have been told stories that I do not share except on certain occasions or with certain people. . . . Here are a few key words to remember: PATIENCE, RESPECT, PERMISSION, ATTRIBUTION. (Bruchac to Marianne Mitchell)

Bruchac has maintained a strong and potentially controversial stance that cultural heritage is not wholly proprietary—that "outsiders" can, under the right circumstances, share stories from cultures not their own. But he offered ample caution about the historical baggage involved in these undertakings:

> Crossing cultural borders should not be taken lightly. The image of crossing a border into another sovereign nation makes sense. In the past, such borders have all too often been crossed by writers who have either been the equivalent of self-interested colonizers with little understanding or sympathy for the native people, or as cultural tourists, who do no more than skim the surface. . . . You do NOT have to be born into a culture to be able to write about it well, but the damage done by the "colonial past" in children's literature means that authors today have a special duty to be deeply immersed in any culture other than their own before they write about it. (Bruchac, message to Karen Kanarek)

All writers are subject to critique, but distinctive about Bruchac is the degree to which he has sought out responses to his work from tribal communities, displaying a profound sense of accountability to knowledgeable elders and other authoritative culture bearers within them. While drafting a piece on Francis Joseph Neptune during the fractiously politicized period of the Maine Indian land claims cases, he learned of community misgivings about the work and requested elders' input. "I am still a stranger when I come there and a stranger is like a little child," he admitted to Agnes Beckwith in 1978. "Those who are older than he is have to be patient with him and correct his errors so that he can learn the right way to walk among them." Displaying a sense of strong social checks on the individual storyteller's work,

this early episode conveyed a view of the teller, not as a lone artist, but as a participant in a historic community where collective constraints could revise a telling or halt it. While Western literary norms have tended to reward flouting of cultural taboos, Bruchac has long embraced a creative ethic that willingly amends work in response to community critique, no matter how long that process takes.

This responsiveness to tribal communities has had another effect on Bruchac's work. Opting out of a hermetically sealed view of creative work, or an ideal of the critic as willfully detached from ground-level unrest, Bruchac has acknowledged that intellectual endeavors can constructively counter social problems like language loss and land encroachment. Over more than four decades he has engaged with local, tribal, and regional politics, both at the request of others and of his own volition. One of Bruchac's most compelling interventions came on behalf of the Intervale Abenaki Camp in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, a historic transnational gathering site for Abenaki peoples from New England and Canada, and a noted local attraction since the 1880s when Chief Joseph Laurent would travel there annually with families to make a summer encampment. State plans to construct a highway bypass through the area threatened the site in 1988–89, jeopardizing the home and work of its caretaker, Abenaki linguist Stephen Laurent, and his wife Margaret. Laurent was himself an esteemed connective node in the Abenaki community, sought out by "Indianologists" and community members for guidance on linguistic and cultural matters and for school visits that taught youth about Abenaki culture in a region amnesiac about its indigenous past. The Laurents and Bruchac had been acquainted through common interests and a small-scale publication-sales channel, as Laurent requested copies of Bruchac's books such as *The Wind Eagle* to sell at the camp. At the time of the bypass crisis, Laurent was compiling an Abenaki dictionary, and he deplored the cultural reverberations that destruction of the site might cause. "Which would add more to the credit of New Hampshire: the preservation of its cultural heritage, or the construction of an 11-mile toll road of doubtful effectiveness?" he queried aloud in an emotional public statement made at a local hearing. Bruchac

heard about the dilemma and corresponded with the Laurents about resistance strategies. Moved by the prospect of loss, Bruchac submitted a forceful letter to the state of New Hampshire's Department of Transportation, chiding it for "standing in opposition to the peaceful continuance of one small representation of a tradition and a way of life thousands of years older than the United States," and cautioning that the state ought to be prepared to face "Civil Disobedience [from Abenakis] to protect the continuance of this sacred site." Bruchac's letter was one voice among many in the public outcry, yet his letter carried the distinctive weight of a recognized Abenaki authority. Planners ultimately abandoned the bypass, sparing the camp.

Bruchac's other interventions have been diverse: protesting "development" that threatens to irreversibly damage a landscape (Joseph and Carol Bruchac to the town of Greenfield); writing for clemency on behalf of prisoners; donating proceeds from publishing to Native causes in both Canada and the United States; supporting language restoration; and sustaining other commitments he has preferred to keep out of the public spotlight. By advocating for these causes, Bruchac extended a tradition of intellectual-creative work as socially vital. In the Northeast the Abenaki term *awikhigan*, as Lisa Brooks has identified it in *The Common Pot*, refers to writing as a "tool" (xxii), capturing a conception of writing as *invocative* (causing change) rather than simply *evocative* (reflecting the state of things), as Craig Womack has characterized it in *Red on Red* (cited in Brooks, *Common Pot* xxii). Valuing this kind of applied intellectualism—"writing as an instrument to reclaim lands and reconstruct communities" (xxii)—may mark a turn in literary criticism, Brooks has further argued, enabling new assessments of "intellectual work as an activity that has effects on and participates in the 'real' world that we inhabit" ("Digging" 242). Bruchac's activist energies will tend to elude the casual or classroom reader of his work, since his public persona as a storyteller emphasizes fruitful cross-cultural exchange rather than overt politicking. But the mass of research and community consultation that underlies his stories reveals they are intricately tied to politics of cultural transmission: debates over the

proprietary nature of heritage resources like traditional narratives and the high stakes involved in publicly disseminating narratives of historical continuity and vitality of Native communities within specific territories that remain legally contested.

Joseph Bruchac's most enduring legacy may be his contributions to the livelihoods and futures of other writers and communities. These are diffuse, oblique influences that cannot be fully tabulated, only recognized in the aggregate. A critical model still needs to be elaborated that accounts for such self-effacing literary labor, the deliberate, periodic withdrawal or transfer of creative energies from *authoring* to *supporting and enabling others*. The "vanishing Indian" has been a moribund colonial trope in the Northeast since the outset, but the "vanishing intellectual" may have merit, especially in the innumerable instances where influence gains acknowledgment only in private communications, or when a relationship's material payoff becomes apparent years down the road—as when Abenaki poet Cheryl Savageau, a beneficiary of mentorship from Bruchac, earned a Pulitzer Prize nomination for her collection *Dirt Road Home*. Bruchac has been attentive to the long time-span over which cultural change unfolds. His generation's literary efforts laid groundwork for the next generation—including his sons Jesse and James and his younger sister Margaret—to assume even more active roles in cultural transmission. In the early years of the twenty-first century Bruchac has started to see his stories taken up within communities' living memories, his contributions to print culture working in tandem with "authentic" vernacular practice. It is worth "planting fruit trees," he wrote in 2002 while citing a poem by Turkish poet Nazim Hikmet, "even if you know you won't live to harvest them" (Bruchac to Howard Nelson). *Roots of Survival* concluded with an anti-ending: "*Askwa âtlokawâgan paiâmuk*," or "My story is still traveling on" (206): an invocation of longstanding northeastern conceptions of the social reach of storytelling and incisive commentary on a body of work, prominent as well as low to the ground, that reverberates in ways defying containment.

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INTERVIEW

"To Remove the Fear"

A Conversation with Charles Norman Shay about Joseph Nicolar's *The Life and Traditions of the Red Man*

LORRAYNE CARROLL

Charles Norman Shay is the grandson of Joseph Nicolar, whose 1893 book, *The Life and Traditions of the Red Man*, serves as a fundamental document in Penobscot historiography and cultural heritage.[1] During our conversation, Mr. Shay respectfully considered Nicolar's purposes in writing and self-publishing *Life and Traditions*, and he discussed the book's meaning within his own family.[2] He also addressed the edition published in 2007 by Duke University Press and edited by Annette Kolodny, for which Mr. Shay contributed a brief preface. This conversation extends some of the remarks he made in the preface by drawing on *Life and Traditions* and on family memories.

A rich and thoughtful appraisal of the book emerges from the discussion, one that urges us to see Nicolar's text as a crucial entry into the canon of Native American literature, particularly within Wabanaki studies. Mr. Shay's insights about the complicated historical terrain that shaped Nicolar's work help readers to understand the specific economic, social, and cultural constraints against which Nicolar deftly deployed his narrative. He illuminates the contexts wherein we might read the narrative's constituents, such as its origin story and the descriptions of first-contact experiences, as well as its calls for perseverance and preservation. Mr. Shay emphasizes the critical work of Nicolar's book as a salutary antidote to historical ignorance regarding the literary and scholarly production of Penobscot people.

As a direct descendant of Joseph Nicolar, Charles Norman Shay

speaks from a unique vantage about his family and nation. Indeed, for Mr. Shay, "nation" holds multiple meanings: he is a much-decorated veteran of World War II, landing with American forces as a medic on D-Day. In 2007 he was presented with the French Legion d'Honneur by President Nicolas Sarkozy. He lived in Europe, primarily Vienna, for over forty years and returned to Indian Island, the ancestral land of the Penobscot Nation, in 2003. About his return to Indian Island, Mr. Shay says, "I had to reconnect with my people and my culture." He accomplishes this reconnection by publishing books on Penobscot people, notably his mother and aunt, as well as through his frequent public presentations on Penobscot history, the history of American Indian veterans, and his own personal journey that took him "from Indian Island to Omaha Beach" and back again.[3] Wherever Mr. Shay travels, he brings copies of the 2007 edition of *The Life and Traditions of the Red Man* in order to introduce Nicolar's version of Penobscot traditions to national and international communities of scholars, students, and all readers drawn to Native American topics.

* * *

LORRAYNE CARROLL: In the preface to the 2007 edition, you write, "I see it [the original edition] as a preservation of what he knew, what he'd heard and learned directly . . . so that those who came later might learn and understand" (xi). Would you expand a bit on what is preserved in the original edition of 1893?

CHARLES NORMAN SHAY: Joseph Nicolar wrote about the beginning of the creation of man, the Indian, and how he learned to survive, how he learned to clothe himself, how he learned to take animals down to feed his family, and so forth, and all of these things were taught to him by Gluskabe,[4] who was the spiritual leader of the Native Americans. . . . I find this important that this information has been preserved because there is so little known about Native American history because there was hardly anything ever written about it. The only written testimony that we have came about after the arrival of the settlers; before that we had no written language. And I think it was very important that he had enough education that he

was able to put these stories that he had heard, these legends, from other people that were passed down from generation to generation, that he was able to put them down on paper and preserve them for future generations.

LC: Do you think that when he preserved them by writing them down, he wanted a big audience for them, or did he want it just for a particular set of people to read?

CNS: No, I think . . . well, that's a difficult question to ask because we really don't know what he was thinking, we can only surmise. I think that anybody that writes or produces written documentation is looking for a broader audience; I don't think he was trying to preserve for his people, the Native Americans, but he was trying to create it to inform the general public about the life, how they lived, how they survived, the Native Americans.

LC: In the preface you wrote that you "find it interesting that my grandfather wrote his book in English." Why do you think he wrote it in English? Because he spoke Penobscot, yes?

CNS: He was Penobscot, but I'm not familiar with the language. I don't know if there was any written form of the Penobscot Indian language at that time, and he was a self-educated man, he went to several different schools all over the state of Maine, grammar schools and so forth. He was well versed, he taught himself to read English, and he was able to read the Bible. I put that quote in my book when I wrote it. He was able to, according to his [my?] mother, he was able to read the Bible quite well. This is what his [my?] mother said. So, there being no written form of the Penobscot Indian language at that time, and he was quite fluent in English, very fluent I would say, and I think this is why it was produced in English. This is my [opinion]. . . we will never know.

LC: Did he only speak Penobscot at home?

CNS: Yes, even my parents, both my parents spoke the Penobscot Indian language. I can recall as children, we used to do a lot of visiting because in those days we didn't have radio or television. Our mode of communicating with each other was visiting with each other and spending the evening, and I can remember when we used to visit my grandmother from my father's side. They only spoke

Indian. But my parents never taught it to any of the children, my mother and father. They both spoke the language, but they never spoke it at home because my mother was of the opinion that we had to assimilate and learn the English language so that we could live and get along.

LC: Did they speak to each other in Penobscot at home?

CNS: Oh, yes.

LC: So you heard it?

CNS: We heard it, but they never spoke to us. They didn't speak it that often, you know, because my mother was of the opinion that we should speak English.

LC: When you were visiting, though, you would hear more Penobscot?

CNS: Yes, as children we were just running around playing with the other children, cousins or whatever. We wouldn't pay any attention to the older people.

LC: And you were speaking English with your cousins?

CNS: Yeah, we were speaking English.

LC: Did any of your cousins speak Penobscot?

CNS: I think some of them did because some of them grew up . . . my grandmother spoke very little English. So they had to learn . . . yeah, some of them spoke the Indian language.

JOSEPH MEDLEY: Charles, what year were you running around with your friends?

CNS: I was born in 1924, and I was born in Connecticut. And my parents got caught up in the Depression also, the Great Depression of 1929, and we moved back to the reservation. So I moved back here when I was approximately four or five years old and then from 1930 I grew up here.

[We spoke for a while about Mr. Shay's years in Austria and the fact that he only spoke German at home with his Austrian wife and his son as well as with his grandson.]

LC: You said your grandfather wrote in English because there was no written form of Penobscot.

CNS: I may be wrong about that because I don't know that much about the history of the language. I say that because it doesn't seem

possible to me that there was a written form of the language at that time.[5]

LC: Now that there is a new edition out, what kind of readers would enjoy this book?

CNS: When we first entered this project, Professor Annette Kolodny from the University of Arizona contacted the tribal government up here; she had found the book. She was in Maine for some other project . . . and somebody mentioned to her my grandfather's book. So she couldn't find it any place, but she finally found a copy of it someplace in Canada—Quebec or someplace. She had the book and she read it . . . well, she was completely blown away with it because she knew that this was a masterpiece written by a Penobscot Indian in the English language. And she wanted to have it reprinted so she contacted the people up here and made an appointment to come up.

I was here at the time. I didn't know [about] it, nobody contacted me; I didn't know anything about it. Some of my nieces and nephews knew about it, but I didn't know anything about it. When she came, somebody asked me if I was going to go up to the meeting, and I didn't know what they were talking about. When I found out I said well, sure, I'm going. So, the people up there had the documentation that she had written. Anyway, she presented her ideas about what she was doing and so forth; she found no supporters for some reason or other because nobody knew her. She came from the University of Arizona. They didn't know what her intentions were and so forth. And they were a little bit skeptical, so she could not get any support. Once I had listened to her talk, I thought: this is an excellent opportunity for this book to get out of the state of Maine, because it's been lying dormant here since it was written, that was already over a hundred years ago. She came up here in 2005 or something like that . . . and I thought, well, this is an excellent opportunity for this book to get into print again. And she told us it was being printed by Duke University Press. But some people had thought about having it printed by University of Maine Press, but nothing was ever done there either. I was the only one who supported her 100 percent. And she still thanks me for that.

Even if it had been printed by the University of Maine Press, I don't think it would get the publicity, and I don't think they have the finances to do the things that Duke University Press is doing. So I gave her my support, 100 percent support, for the book, and at the same meeting I asked her, I said that as long as she would have this book reprinted, I think it would be a very good idea if [she] would write a short history of the Penobscot Indian Nation, Penobscot Indian people. So that once this book goes out into the national universities and so forth, that people can read about who are the Penobscots, because nobody knows who we are. And she agreed to do that and she wrote the summary of the Penobscot Indians and just because I had asked her to do that.

LC: So, who else would you think would be likely readers of this?

CNS: Oh, yeah. . . . First of all, I thought scholars, of course, professors that have anything to do with teaching Native American culture at the universities, and then it's getting down to the students when they do this. You're going to have a certain amount of students, and they're going to continue in this field, and then it's like a ball, it rolls, it starts rolling, and these students are going to pick up on it, and they're going to teach other students. It will just keep growing.

LC: In the class I taught this book in, I had teachers as my students who said that they were going to go back and teach this book in their classrooms in high school. At least the students I know from Maine are taking this back into the schools.

CNS: Like I said before, this book has been lying dormant here; nothing has been done with it. I'm really happy to see what is taking place now. I receive write-ups from Annette Kolodny still; I have a stack right here.

LC: What are some of your favorite parts of the book or your favorite passages in the book?

CNS: Well, I like the opening passage very much. When I made several presentations of the book, when I do a presentation, I always open up with the first two or three paragraphs because it's the creation of the man from nothing. I find that very powerful.

LC: Would you consider reading something for this interview?

[Mr. Shay reads the first paragraph in chapter 1, "The Creation.—Klose-kur-beh's Journey.—Meeting his Companions.—The Marriage" (97).]

LC: Why, particularly, do you like the opening so much?

CNS: Well, it explains already what you can expect in the book, what is taking place, the creation of the man, and how he was taught to survive, clothe himself, and so forth. That's why I find it so powerful.

LC: Do you have any other passages that you really like a lot?

CNS: I'm inclined to stick with the first one.

LC: What do you know about the world that your grandfather grew up in and the world that he lived in?

CNS: I only know about what I have read. It was a very difficult time for Native Americans when my grandfather was growing up because we had no rights even though we were living in our own land. We were wards of the state, and this put us in a special classification of people. We had no right to vote. We had a man that was appointed by the state to watch over our financial affairs and so forth. We had no control over our own lives; it was all controlled by the white men. And I can imagine that this was very degrading for people like my grandfather and people in general because we were not [helpless], we had our own way of living, we knew, we had our own form of government before the white man came, and we knew how to survive, and suddenly this was all taken away from us. So I'm sure it was a very difficult time for the people of that time.

LC: Are there any connections that you can make between the difficulties in the daily lives of your grandfather and the other Penobscot people, connections you can make between those difficulties and his writing the book?

CNS: Well, I don't think . . . it's difficult for me to answer that question. I'm not that much acquainted with the way of life of the time.

LC: I'd like to ask you about your mother: did you learn anything about your grandfather's life and the world he was living in from your mother?[6]

CNS: Oh, yes.

LC: And what kinds of things did she tell you?

CNS: Well, we always had in our home in the living room up above the chair, up above the piano, the very picture you see in the book. He always looked so dignified to me, because he was always dressed nice. I used to ask my mother who he really was and what he was like as a person. She told me that he was a very intelligent man; he was self-educated; he attended several different schools in the state of Maine. He was an elected official of the Penobscots, a representative in the state legislature. . . . I think he was one of the longest active representatives of the Penobscots to the state legislature of anybody else since that time. My mother was very proud of him, of course, because of what he was in the political scene, and that he was an author, that he had written this book.

LC: Did she have any stories in particular that she liked to tell about him?

CNS: Not really, no. . . . I was very young at that time so it's difficult for me to remember. I'm just trying to remember actually what stayed in my memory . . . just talking about my grandfather with her.

LC: What about your aunt? Did she ever talk about him?[7]

CNS: I did not have much connection with my aunt. Well, she came back, she was a showman; she always stayed as a showman. She used to travel the country in the 1920s with her husband; at that time they were not married but they got married later. They traveled the theater circuits throughout the United States, and they got caught up in the Depression and moved back to the reservation. They bought this piece of property here. This house was a Sears-Roebuck house. It was not prefabricated, but it was precut, and it was shipped precut like that. I think this house sold, at that time, for under a thousand dollars. It was shipped here from Chicago. They built the fundament for it. I didn't remember much about it because I was a young boy. I didn't pay much attention to things like this, but they built the fundament, and the house was assembled and put up on this fundament they constructed.

They found out that they could still perform Indian dances, teach Indian culture and songs and dances and so forth by visiting the camps and the resorts where the tourists used to come from out

of state, all up and down the East Coast because Maine was a very attractive summer vacation place for these people. My aunt took advantage of this. She used to go to the various resorts, hotels, and so forth, ask for permission to perform, without pay, because they would not pay her for that. They were allowed to set up a table and display baskets and moccasins and sell them, and once they performed their act, whatever they did, they would pass the hat around. That way they made their money. They must have done reasonably well because they continued, and I was part of the entertainment team at that time.

LC: What was that like?

CNS: I used to travel with them, and I was introduced as "Little Muskrat" and I would do a dance, do drumming and singing, and I had to dance for them.

LC: Did you enjoy yourself?

CNS: Oh yeah, because it was an adventure. We used to load up the car and take off someplace. It was an adventure for me.

LC: Were you the only child with the entertainment team?

CNS: Well, at that particular time, when I was doing it, yeah. I was one of the first ones; they continued on.

LC: About what age?

CNS: I was about six or seven, because they moved back here in 1929, 1930. About a year later they started doing this, so I was about five or six years or so.

LC: When did you stop doing that?

CNS: I don't know, when I got a little bit older, when I was going to junior high school or so.

LC: In the summertime mostly?

CNS: Mostly in the summer, and the fall, early fall.

LC: When you were traveling, would your mom and dad and your aunt and uncle, would they speak to each other in English mostly?

CNS: Yeah.

LC: Would they ever speak Penobscot?

CNS: No, they mostly spoke English.

LC: When you were traveling, was there storytelling as well? Did they ever tell stories as part of it?

CNS: Yes, [my aunt] used to give a little bit of history of the Penobscot Indians, and they would tell stories. He [Bruce Poolaw, a Kiowa, Lucy Nicolar's husband] came from Oklahoma, so he would do a rope act, jumping out of a rope . . . like in Westerns. They introduced the teepees, because we never had buildings like this, and the war bonnets that they wore.[8] They had a very large supply of costumes and war bonnets, and whenever they did a performance, they could choose, they had so many things. I don't know what ever happened to all of this. I haven't seen it since. I don't know if he took some things back to Oklahoma when he went back after she died. But I was not here anymore.

LC: What year did she die?

CNS: I think she died in 1968, if I'm not mistaken.

LC: And your mom?

CNS: My mother died in 1959, in the spring. She died in Lincolnville Beach; they had just moved down there; they were preparing to open up the business down there. She had a lung embolism, and she passed away.

LC: In part of the piece where they were performing, no one told stories that you could connect, for example, to the book? Like origin stories. . . .

CNS: Not really, no.

LC: And nobody told about Gluskabe?

CNS: I don't remember. . . . I can't answer that because I really don't remember. They probably did, but I don't remember.

LC: When did you first read your grandfather's book?

CNS: I didn't read it until after I came back from Europe. I was married because my wife was with me. It was around 1950 I came back; that's the first time that I read the book because I had never seen copies of it. I don't know if my mother had a copy of it or not. She probably did have a copy. I have an original copy here; this was given to me by my nephew; he got it from my brother, Patrick. So my brother probably got if from the family, probably had it from the family. So this was probably the copy that was in the family, and now I have it.

JM: [Your grandfather] broadened the tradition because the tra-

dition had been to tell the stories from generation to generation, and he broadened it by writing the story.

CNS: Putting it down on paper, yeah.

JM: That turned out to be crucial because you don't have much memory of the stories being told to you when you [were] young, but then [you] read them when you were twenty-five?

CNS: I never even heard [them]. . . . When I was young I don't even recall hearing any stories like this that I read in this book.

JM: So that was a real gift from your grandfather . . .

CNS: By the time I was born, radio had come out, so therefore [it] took up a lot of the [time]. . . . When once the families would sit around together and talk and discuss and probably tell stories to each other. . . . Radio was already in existence when I was born, so that's probably why I never heard any.

JM: And those were very different stories . . .

CNS: We used to sit around the radio with all of our neighbors coming over because we were one of the few families that had a radio here. We used to listen to boxing matches, the Lone Ranger, whatever . . . I probably knew more about Joe Louis and Max Schmeling . . . than I do about Gluskabe.

LC: Do you have a sense of a bunch of people sitting around listening to that fight?

CNS: Oh, yeah.

LC: In the Joe Louis and Max Schmeling fight, who were people rooting for?

CNS: Joe Louis.

LC: In the new edition that Annette Kolodny brought out, the 2007 edition . . . you mentioned before that you had suggested to her to write a short history of the Penobscots, so in that edition there's the summary history and then there's an introduction that explains or interprets some of the book. When you read this new edition, do you find those two pieces that Professor Kolodny wrote useful for your reading?

CNS: Yes, I find them useful because I know a lot of the history of the Penobscots, the same history but perhaps not as extensive because she did a lot of research on it. I found that it was a good

idea because, as I have said before, nobody knew; the Penobscot are not known out of the boundaries of the state of Maine—maybe in Massachusetts—I think it's time to broaden out.

[Professor Kolodny] also analyzed Joseph Nicolar's writings, what he was thinking, what he was trying to tell, trying to convey. Many of the people here—well, I'm talking about the Cultural Preservation Department—are not happy with this work she did with that because these were her words, they were not . . . she was just assuming what Joseph Nicolar would think today . . . nobody knows that.

LC: When you look at that history and you look at her analysis of his text, are there things that you would like to add?

CNS: No. I don't think I would like to comment on that, because I am too closely connected to Annette, and I'm not a scholar, so it's not appropriate for me to comment on this.

LC: Do you have suggestions for readers who might find parts of the book difficult to understand?

CNS: I had to read the book two or three times before I was able to digest everything that he was trying to tell, because some of this [is] difficult reading; the only way you can understand it is to reread. It gives you a bit more insight; once you read it a second time or a third time, you get a bit more insight into what he's trying to convey. Because I don't think with one reading, you cannot digest what he's trying to [say] . . .

LC: So your suggestion to readers who find it difficult is to keep reading it . . .

CNS: Keep reading it.

JM: When these were told as stories, people heard these stories over and over again, so they didn't have to reread but they had to listen . . .

CNS: They had to listen, exactly. They probably heard the same stories there in the woods at night when they had nothing else to do; they just kept repeating, and this is what kept the stories alive. James Francis wrote an interesting article on this. He says the stories, with the evolution of time, the stories begin to change a little bit. I think you should read his comments on this . . . it's true, I think.

LC: So in that sense your grandfather's book is just one version of the stories.

CNS: Yes, if you look at it that way, that's his version as he heard it and interpreted it and put it down on paper. Perhaps if other writers had done the same thing, you might, you would see the difference.

JM: Do you think there is any connection between somebody who wanted to tell these stories and write it down and somebody also who wanted to be in a leadership position? Here is somebody who was willing to step forward to be a leader; here is somebody who was willing to step forward to put it down on paper. Where do you think that comes from?

CNS: That's another difficult question because you never know what's in the mind of different people. Perhaps somebody had ulterior motives?

JM: It takes a certain amount of courage to be willing to step forward and put it down on paper.

CNS: That's why I look at my grandfather, because I think, for an Indian, a Native American, at his time . . . I have even heard comments, I don't know where, I read something, it sounds almost impossible that he could do something like this. Because his writings were very precise, and his language was very good. I've heard comments, I've read someplace that maybe he was dictating and someone was writing it for him. But I don't think this is true. I think this is his work, and he was very courageous to go about it and do it and put it down. Because at that particular time, no matter what you had accomplished as a Native American, you were still looked down upon.

JM: Do you think that it was because your grandfather was a courageous man and a man willing to take risks that he would not only go into the Legislature but he would also write a book?

CNS: I said "courageous," and I think it was part of his character. He wanted to write these things, he wanted to represent his people. I think this was part of his character. Well, we might call it courageous to step forward and do it.

JM: It was something out of the ordinary because not everybody was writing books, not everybody was going to the legislature eight times. . . .

CNS: Normally the legislators were the most educated people of

their time. Like today, even in the legislature today, most of them have studied law, are educated, college graduates . . . the majority of them are.

JM: While others are saying you are not an equal, he's going there and speaking in a powerful voice which represents equality; he reminds me of someone like Frederick Douglass . . . the voice is so powerful.

LC: You know that the book is now taught in high schools and some colleges. What do you think that high school students and college students are getting from the book?

CNS: I think they get an intimate knowledge of a Native American way of life, their survival. This is their being able to read about it, and they're getting the knowledge. As I said before, a lot of them will become teachers and will pass it on down to other students.

LC: Which brings us back to that first question about preservation . . .

CNS: Yeah, exactly, preservation and teaching the public, making the public aware of the plight of the Native Americans ever since the first settlers set foot on the shores of the so-called New World.

LC: Who have you given the book to in your family or who have you read passages from the book to in your family?

CNS: Well, we've had a couple of presentations here in the teepee, people coming from the reservation here. Whenever I do a presentation, I read a few passages. We've had people from the reservation come down here, and, of course, I gave presentations . . . one of the very first ones with Annette Kolodny at the University of Maine. We had a lot of people from the reservation there, but at that time I was not reading, I was just talking. The title of my paper was "Pride and Respect for My Ancestors."

LC: What kind of conversations have you had with your son about the book?

CNS: With my son, none.

LC: Has he read the book?

CNS: I don't know, I doubt it. He's taken up with his own life and his own family. He has no connection here; he has lost his connection to . . . his heritage, which I had almost lost myself, being away

from here so long. I came back here to live permanently in 2003, and that same year we came back my wife died, so I was occupied with that—she was very sick. I had to reconnect with my people and my culture. But in that short period from 2003 to 2009, I feel that I have accomplished quite a bit. I have published books; I've published a book on my mother. I didn't write it. A lady from Cape Elizabeth wrote it [Kate Kennedy]. I asked her permission first if she would permit me to publish it, and she said yes, but she said you have to go to the publishers that commissioned her to do the work. So I went to them . . . and they gave me permission to excerpt my mother's book, and we published [it,] and the same thing with Princess Watahwaso's book. That was written by Bunny McBride, and I asked her first—that was the first one I did. I asked her if she would have any objection if I published that book, and she said no. She told me the same thing, of course. . . . I had to get permission from them to republish it. . . . That was the first one, and then I did the same thing with my mother's book. And then I was instrumental, of course, in getting my grandfather's book republished.

I just had Bunny McBride and Harold Prins up here . . . and Bunny asked me if I could meet any of my ancestors—because I can trace my lineage all the way back to Madockawando and the Baron of St. Castin . . . Chief Orono, John Neptune. She asked me if I could meet anybody, who would I choose, and I said Joseph Nicolar.

LC: Why?

CNS: I feel a special connection to him, a spiritual connection. The other people, they go back too far . . . I feel that I have a special connection to my grandfather even though he died thirty years before I was born. I still feel that connection.

LC: In terms of what gets preserved: would you read a passage to your grandson?

CNS: Oh yes. I would like to read a couple of passages, just sit around with the family and read it.

LC: In your conversations with people in your community here—school children, adults, elders, other elders—how do folks here take the new edition? Are they in general glad that the book has come out?

CNS: In general, they are glad the book has come out. They take an interest in it. I've sold several copies, and I have given more copies away than I have sold. As I said before, some people are not happy with the interpretation of Joseph Nicolar's thoughts when he was putting this down on paper, which perhaps is understandable. But these very people, why didn't they do something with the book before?

LC: You're fine with this edition?

CNS: I'm fine with it. I'm very happy that I went the way I did, because I have seen what has happened with this book. It's become nationally well known. I have delivered, every time I have the opportunity, copies internationally. I dropped off a copy at the UNESCO library in Paris. Harold and Bunny went to Europe last year, so I gave him copies and said, "Drop these off," and he dropped them off in London.

LC: Do you have any other remarks about the book?

CNS: No, only to repeat again, that I'm very happy with my decision and that I supported Annette Kolodny wholeheartedly, 100 percent, because this book has gained wide recognition throughout the United States, and we hope that it will eventually be introduced internationally, which I take every opportunity to do myself.

* * *

Because of the conditions of the book's publication—written and self-published by a Penobscot in 1893, in Bangor, Maine, far from the literary and scholarly centers of Boston and New York—and because of the small initial run of the first edition and the subsequent fire that destroyed many copies, Joseph Nicolar's *The Life and Traditions of the Red Man* remained for over a hundred years an obscure text, known only among Penobscots or among a few academic specialists. Charles Norman Shay's instrumental role in supporting the 2007 edition emerges from his deep commitment to his heritage and to, as he sees it, the "special connection" he still feels to Joseph Nicolar. Presented in a modern edition with a broader distribution and an expanded audience of readers, students, teachers, and scholars, *The Life and Traditions of the Red Man* offers a powerful

voice from the Native American past that attempts to redress pernicious historical and cultural erasures resulting from centuries of racist practices. Nicolar writes in his preface:

> Where did the red man come from?
>
> This is the question we intend to answer! We intend also, to remove the fear, that the life of the red man will pass away unwritten, and this is written because there is an abundance of evidence showing that there is a general desire among the people that some one ought to write it now if ever. (95)

NOTES

Lorrayne Carroll wishes to thank Joseph Medley for his help with recording this interview but mostly for his incisive, respectful, and compassionate questions. She is also grateful to Conor Quinn for discussing the variants of "Gluskabe" and for his expertise—and unfailing generosity—in answering many questions regarding the Penobscot language and writing system. Finally, she wishes to express her deep appreciation to Charles Shay for his generosity and openness as well as his insights into his grandfather's work.

1. *The Life and Traditions of the Red Man* was first published by Joseph Nicolar in 1893 and printed in Bangor, Maine, by C. H. Glass. Nicolar paid for the printing himself. According to Annette Kolodny, "the original print run was relatively small, probably no more than a few hundred copies. An early fire destroyed most of the copies of the book, and few copies of the original printing exist today. Unfortunately, Nicolar died in 1894, just months after his book was printed. See "A Note on Nicolar's Text" in *The Life and Traditions of the Red Man*, ed. Annette Kolodny (Durham: Duke UP, 2007), 89. All quotations are taken from the 2007 edition.

2. The conversation, held on September 24, 2009, included Charles Norman Shay (CNS), Joseph Medley of the University of Southern Maine (JM), and myself (LC).

3. Harald E. L. Prins and Bunny McBride, *From Indian Island to Omaha Beach: The Story of Charles Shay, Penobscot Indian War Hero* (Gardiner: Tilbury House, 2010). See also http://charlesnormanshay.com for more information on Charles Shay and links to Penobscot Nation resources.

4. Nicolar spells the name "Klose-kur-beh." I use Frank T. Siebert's anglicized version of this figure's name in Penobscot because Shay was speaking English during the conversation. Other commonly encountered versions

of "Gluskabe" are the standard Passamaquoddy spelling "Koluskap" and its Anglicization as Glooskap or Glooscap, which also serve as the Anglicization of Maliseet and Mi'kmaq pronunciations.

5. Although there is a long-standing tradition of writing Penobscot by both Penobscots and non-Natives, a fully standardized system of writing was not adopted by the Penobscot Nation until fairly recently. See Frank T. Siebert, "The Suprasegmental Phonemes of the Penobscot Dialect of Eastern Abenaki and Eastern Algonquian Language," in *In Honor of Mary Haas*, ed. William Shipley (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1988), 715–63.

6. Shay's mother, Florence Nicolar Shay, was an early Penobscot activist. See Kate Kennedy, *Florence Nicolar Shay: Penobscot Basketmaker and Tribal Advocate* (Old Town: Charles Shay, 2006), a reprint from Kennedy, *More Than Petticoats: Remarkable Maine Women* (Guilford: Globe Pequot Press, 2005).

7. As Charles Shay notes, Lucy Nicolar Poolaw was his mother's sister. She traveled widely in the early twentieth century as a singer, dancer, storyteller, and recording artist, performing under the stage name Princess Watahwaso. See Bunny McBride, *Princess Watahwaso: Bright Star of the Penobscot* (Old Town: Charles Shay, 2002), later reprinted in *Of Place and Gender: Women in Maine History*, ed. Marli F. Weiner (Orono: U of Maine P, 2005).

8. See the photo gallery on Charles Shay's website for images of family members. On the website Shay notes that he restored the teepee, which was "erected as an Indian novelty shop. . . . Now it is a small Family museum dedicated to the memory of [his] ancestors and close relatives, as well as to the culture and history of the Penobscot Indian nation."

Connecticut River Valley Awakening

ALICE AZURE

Fruit cocktail. In all my childhood years, I had never tasted anything as wonderful as this dessert at my first meal in the Cromwell Children's Home. The golden chunks of pineapples, peaches, grapes, and pears, along with the bright red maraschino cherries, were new to my eyes. Mom had never fed us anything like this. I lifted the bowl to my lips in order to slurp every drop of the sweet juice. This action brought a swift, disapproving look from the counselor to whose care I had been assigned after our mother left us that afternoon.

It was the summer of 1951, just a short time before my eleventh birthday on July 30. My sister and brother, Carol and Freddie, would soon turn ten and nine. Our mother had reluctantly committed the three of us to the Children's Home in Cromwell, a town on the Connecticut River between Hartford and Middletown. She had little choice. Our father had been sent to prison due to his violence and abuse against all of us. Our house, part of Nim's Village, a World War II veterans' housing project built in West Springfield, Massachusetts, was slated for demolition, and she was unable to find another place for her little family. During the months that followed our first day at the home, we were of the hope our mother would soon take us back. She never did. Several months later Joanie, our sister, barely four years, joined us.

The home was an enormous brick building of four stories that sat atop a high hill close by the Connecticut River to the east. The Hanging Hills of Meriden were way off to the west. Built in 1914, the home's complex stood in the midst of fifty-plus acres. At that time

the only way up to the formidable building was by Missionary Road, which ran up the east side of the grounds, between cow pastures and an apple orchard. As the road curved left, you would pass a chicken coop, a pig house, a barn and its silo, and long tool sheds. Many big trees were all over the grounds, covered with nice lawns.

The East Coast Conference of the Swedish Evangelical Covenant Church of America owned and operated the home. This denomination also ran a summer camp located on the same grounds as the home. The camp included an enormous hangar-like worship center with a wall-to-wall stage to accommodate a large choir and the central pulpit. To the west of the home's building, the camp's screened-in dining hall overlooked the beautiful Hanging Hills of Meriden. Dormitories for campers, small staff houses, and a large tennis court completed the complex of buildings associated with the camp.

From my young point of view, the tour de force of my new home was a pond at the end of a gritty pathway that rolled downhill from the west side of the hilltop, curled between the tennis courts and baseball field, past cornfields, and continued down through a thickly wooded area. At the end was the pond, with its little beach, raft, boat, and diving board by the deep end, where there was a dam. This is where I learned to swim, to dive, and to row a boat. One summer, I even discovered crawdaddies up in the little stream that emptied into the pond. I was afraid to hold them. In wintertime we spent many hours ice skating or warming up by a big bonfire. I liked to be the person who could "crack the whip," using my considerable strength to snap a long line of ice skaters, testing the ability of the end kids to stay connected.

My father, a child of the north woods, spent his formative years in a similar environment. Joseph Alfred Hatfield was born in 1913 in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia. His cultural background was French and Mi'kmaq, in spite of the English sounding name, which was actually Dutch in origin. It has taken me many years of genealogical research to learn that he descended from families whose lineages were Acadian or Métis, two words I never heard from him or from my mother. Whenever he talked of his mixed ancestry, it was always in terms of French and Mi'kmaq.

I know very little about my father's childhood years. His mother, Anne Eliza Boudreau Hatfield, emigrated from Yarmouth into Maine in December of 1914. She was eighteen years old. After her husband, Joseph Edgar Hatfield, returned from World War I, there soon developed charges and countercharges of infidelity. The marriage failed. She went on to support her family (Dad and his sister, Aunt Rita) by working as a cook in various lumber camps of central and northern Maine and New Hampshire.

Somewhere along his young life, my father learned to play a harmonica. He bragged about impromptu competitions in bars, outperforming other musicians who challenged his abilities. Where these events took place I never knew, but to this day I sometimes hear in my head the clear notes of his harmonica rendering a merry "Donkey Serenade." It had to be his music that charmed my mother's heart. I can imagine Dad playing a variety of songs for her with all the sweetness or gusto he managed to blow into that harmonica of his.

From the vague memory I retain of his mannerisms and storyteller's style, he was a raconteur of considerable energy. One of his more colorful stories came to me in late summer of 1980 when I went to Portland, Maine, to visit him after a business trip. Somewhere along the Little St. John River in northern Maine where he was working as a lumberman, he told me that he came upon a bear. When the bear reared up at him, he realized he was facing a very angry mother because her nipples were swollen. There had to be babies around. "It was either me or her," my father said, "and all I had was my ax." Now, my father was a short man, around five feet five inches, but what he lacked in height, he had more than his share of abnormally powerful muscles. "I killed that bear. I had no choice," he said. A friend of mine called this incident a "seminal conflict" and the bear a "worthy adversary" (Hunter Gray, email to author, 23 Aug. 2008).

Other details of my father's life were gleaned from my mother's recollections of Dad, his mother Eliza, and Eliza's mother, Celestine Pothier Boudreau. Mom remembered Celestine as a tea-leaf reader and pipe smoker. In another story Mom described a toothache from which she was suffering. My father's remedy for easing her pain was

to poke at it with a wood sliver taken from a tree struck by lightning. One night in the mid-1980s when I was visiting my mother, she was in a very jovial mood, her glass of beer handy. She started to talk about her late mother-in-law, Anne Eliza Boudreau Hatfield Legace Hampson. Sensing that I was in for an earful about Eliza's complicated life involving four husbands, many sisters, and several children, I grabbed some scraps of paper in order to keep track of my mother's words. The combination of my deafness and Mom's drinking must have been a hilarious scene to behold. Her patience wore thin with me. "For Christ's sake, Alice, how many times do we have to go over the number of Eliza's children?" The notes of that night proved to be helpful when I began to construct genealogy charts on Dad's side of the family. To this day, however, there remain unanswered questions about the origins of a few uncles.

Catherine Pedersen and Joseph Alfred Hatfield were married December 3, 1938, in East Long Meadow, Massachusetts. Soon after, they moved to the northwestern corner of Massachusetts, into the lovely hills of the Green Mountain area. There my father found employment as a dairy farmer in North Adams. When World War II caught up with him in June of 1944, Dad was shipped off to Europe. Mom moved back to her father's apartment on Elm Street in West Springfield, with three children in tow. I was four, Carol was three, and Freddie was two.

My mother was born October 22, 1919, in West Springfield, Massachusetts, to Norwegian parents, Christian and Sophie Pedersen. Auntie Florence, Mom's sister, was already two years old. Three other children had died in early childhood. Due to Sophie's deteriorating mental health, my grandfather sent his family back to Tregde, Mandal, in Norway in 1923 so that relatives could provide needed care to his wife and daughters. He returned to West Springfield, where his skills as a cabinetmaker led to regular employment. It wasn't until 1936 that my mother and Auntie Florence returned to America—back to West Springfield, to that third-floor tenement on the intersection of Elm Street and Central Street.

My first lucid memories of my mother are of her walking everywhere with us in that Elm Street neighborhood. Whenever we went

out, which was often, she always looked pretty, even glamorous, especially when she had on her makeup. Curly strawberry blond hair, red lips, rouge on her cheekbones, penciled eyebrows, and high heels—all these I can still see in my mind's eye as I walked, ran, skipped, or hopped alongside of her. Many times, especially in hot humid weather when the three small rooms of the tenement became unbearable, not to mention Pa's radio blasting out ballgame scores to his hard-of-hearing ears, we would head for the little wading pool and shade trees at Pynchon Park in Springfield, just across the Connecticut River.

There were always trips to the A&P grocery store across from the Elm Street tenement. That's where I saw my first lobsters—stacked the way cabbages and apples are arranged in today's produce displays. Mom's ration stamps weren't good for lobsters, however. It seemed she always needed sugar, flour, or coffee.

I don't know when Mom started to drink. Maybe it was after she married our father. From many family stories, we learned that alcohol had been a constant in his life as a lumberman in Maine and New Hampshire. There is a story about a priest who wanted to enroll Dad in a seminary. My father's answer was to slap his ax on the table along with a bottle of whiskey he retrieved from his pocket. "This is what I choose," he replied, probably with no more intent than to display a bit of teenaged defiance to an authority figure. Whatever my father's frame of mind was in that day as he answered the priest, those words carried a chilling prescience of his life to come.

Certainly my mother's own father—Pa, as we all called him—had a penchant for beer, especially during the family card games at night or during afternoon ball games on his radio. At any rate, the combination of our grandfather's and mother's occasional morning hangovers and three young children must have been taxing at times to the businesses inside the tenement's mezzanine or to the manager of the gas station on the corner of Elm and Central Streets.

One morning my sister and I watched our brother throw our pet cat out the bedroom window. I am told I was the one who fashioned a little parachute for kitty out of a handkerchief. The gas station manager had hollered up to us to close that window and stop our

mischief, to no avail. When he brought the poor tiger-striped cat back upstairs to us, and told Mom, who had had a hard time waking up that morning, what we had done, I got the spanking of my life. Mom absolutely loved animals! Anyone who knew her for the slightest amount of time understood her fondness for animals. No matter how poor we were, there was always room for a cat or dog. Sadly, the little cat that we maltreated disappeared. We learned some hard lessons that day.

The wide, unpadded wooden staircase of the Elm Street tenement was its distinguishing feature. From its front street foyer, where all the mailboxes were lined up in rows, the stairs ascended to the mezzanine where, as I have said, there were a number of business offices. Some were inhabited by visor-capped men, hunched over their desks. One room, a barber shop, was always bright. From the mezzanine, the stairs narrowed up to the third floor where our three-room apartment was situated over some of these businesses. Of course, we children never wasted an opportunity to make noise on the staircase. Our loud stomping up and down created some pretty good echoes. That, along with our accompanying screeches and laughter, didn't endear us to the business tenants, either.

One day I was standing alone at the top of those stairs when a dark soldier came in from the street entry way. He was dressed in army fatigues and balanced a large duffel bag on one shoulder. All in one memory, I knew he was my father, but he didn't seem happy to see me. Grim-faced, he ascended the stairs and walked right on past me into our apartment. Not a word. How long had he been gone? Two years? Had I changed that much? Why weren't Mom, Carol, and Freddie at the top of the stairs with me? Didn't they know Daddy was coming home from the war?

Years later I learned that he wasn't returning willingly from the war or from Europe. There were rumors about a letter he had sent to my mother, saying he would not be back, that he was in love with someone else—in France or in Czechoslovakia—I don't remember. His military superiors thought otherwise and sent him home.

Life in the three little rooms on Elm Street became grim. Being hard of hearing like my grandfather, I never did make out the angry

words above the loud, bad noises at night. One morning I picked up some torn pieces of blue chenille, washed them, and started to hang them on the clothesline at the back porch. When she saw what I was doing, Mom ran out and snatched my "washing" away from me. I still remember the bruises on her face and eyes.

Soon we were able to move into a unit at the veteran's project near the intersection of Baldwin and River Streets, still in West Springfield and not far from Memorial Avenue School, where I entered the first grade. I remember our unit's address—11 Coast Guard Avenue. The project was southwest of our former Elm Street place, just past the railroad tracks, not a long walk from Pa's apartment.

There must have been some peaceful—maybe even happy—times after that move, for my sister Joanie was born in March of 1947. But the spiral of violence and abuse against all of us escalated to such an extent that its bile spilled out of me when our next-door neighbor asked about the weeping she heard at night through the very thin bedroom walls. The neighbor called the police. That, corroborated by my testimony, sent my father to prison.

We four remained in the Cromwell Children's Home until our high school graduations. Mom married a man named William Bovat, and they started another family—Sandy, Cindy, and Billy. They continued to live in the same general area except the boundary expanded across the Connecticut River to the North End of Springfield, Massachusetts.

To this day, we seven offspring of Catherine Pederson Hatfield Bovat, who died March 2, 1992, remain in a good relationship with one another. Few opportunities go by without sharing memories and stories of our early life in the Elm Street neighborhood. Sometimes, without warning, we find ourselves slipping into bouts of hilarious laughter—our tribute to her spirit. But it is different regarding some memories I have of my father. Memories of my father, however, seldom elicit laughter.

A female relative who lives on the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation once told me about being summoned to participate in a special ceremony before the remains of her son, a soldier, were buried. Without being told any particular details, I understood that

one purpose of that ceremony was to purify the soldier from the contamination and violence of war. A similar story with a bit more detail was told by a code talker in Valerie Red Horse's excellent documentary, *True Whispers: The Story of the Navajo Code Talkers*. A veteran of Iwo Jima, this soldier said that upon returning to his family on the Navajo Reservation, he had to undergo a ceremony to get rid of the bad dreams and evil that had infected him during that particular battle.

I believe in the healing power of such ceremonies, whether one is a victim or offender. That's why I can't help but wonder if life would have been better for us had our parents been part of some community of faith after our father's return from World War II. Of course, this is wishful thinking on my part. Whenever painful memories of my father surface, what has always helped me in such moments is my predisposition to spirituality, some of it a legacy from having been raised in the home.

EXPERIENCING THE COVENANT

Some of my brother and sisters' experiences at the home were very dissimilar from mine. It later upset me to learn of the ill treatment they endured at the home and the deviousness they described about people with whom I had had a good relationship, like Rev. Johnson, the superintendent. At that point in my life, there was little I could do about this new information, having my own family of three young children. But by listening to my brother and sisters' stories, I started to wonder why we had such different, even opposite, opinions and emotions about the years we spent at the Cromwell Children's Home.

Professionals knowledgeable about children's homes say that it is important to consider the role of resistance and accommodation played by institutionalized children. Some, like me, appeared to conform, thus avoiding trouble. Other children, like my brother and sisters, had their own ways of coping, anywhere from resistance to outward conformity. My friend Paulette Molin, Anishinaabe coauthor with Arlene Hirschfelder and Yvonne Wakim of a second edi-

tion of *American Indian Stereotypes in the World of Children*, once told me:

> Scholars who study boarding schools have noted that the institutions often evoke a variety of responses even within one individual . . . depending upon the aspect of the experience under discussion. The complications and nuances of the experiences and memories of institutionalization are profound and multi-faceted in individuals, families and communities. (Paulette Molin, personal correspondence, n.d.)

Not long ago, an event out of my past unexpectedly emerged as a possible explanation for why I had an easier time enduring the home. For decades I had not thought of what I called my "conversion experience" until I attended a history conference at the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center in Mashantucket, Connecticut, in September 2002.

There, scholars from nearby universities and tribal nations zeroed in on how the thoughts, beliefs, conflicts, and events of the eighteenth century impacted Native communities in southern New England. More than a few of the presentations dwelt to a certain degree on the Great Awakening of the 1740s in the Connecticut River Valley. At that time the fiery and powerful sermons of Jonathan Edwards were known to have spurred what has sometimes been called a "neurotic eruption" that had the end result—so some say—of freeing the American psyche "of a European and scholastical conception of an authority put over men because men were incapable of recognizing their own welfare" (Miller, 153, 166).

Of course, the history conference's backdrop was broader than the Great Awakening of 1740, yet I found myself responding to the unexpected pullback into the time when I had my own type of mental eruption—or true covenant experience, if you will—in that same Connecticut River Valley.

I had entered my twelfth year. A child evangelist was giving a series of sermons in the New Britain Covenant Church, north along the river from the Cromwell Children's Home. A group of us were bused to one of the revivals. The name of that preacher I have long

forgotten. But his voice must have been very powerful to get through my poor ears, hard of hearing as I was. His message of sin, hell, and salvation caught me at full attention.

Some of the behaviors he denounced I instantly recognized, as they had been practiced excessively by my parents—particularly drunkenness and physical violence. Whether I heard any other "sins" denounced that day or I simply intuited more from my own traumatic experiences in my parents' home, I can't say. But it was clear I had lived smack in the middle of *sin*—in a big way! And that evangelist was making it very plain what my end would be like if I went down the same path.

I started to cry, a whimper at first. Then convulsive sobbing started, which I was helpless to control. The strange thing, though, was the sensation of a simple understanding that poured over me. It wasn't so much that I wanted to be "saved" from hell's fire. That was a given. Rather, I was brought to a realization of becoming separate—or freed (to borrow Perry Miller's idea)—from my parents. I didn't have to be doomed to their way of living. I could choose another path. Indeed, that day I did choose another path—or perhaps that path chose me. At the time I couldn't have understood that this was indeed a type of covenant between the Great Spirit and me, which should have been cause for joy. Instead, I had great fear. And it was that fear that made me weep and wail so strongly that day, for I knew intuitively that I had lost the only mooring I had ever known—my parents, particularly my mother. I was alone. Cut off. Without help or love.

Like Jonathan Edwards has been described, that child evangelist "did not stoop . . . to console" me that fateful day in New Britain, Connecticut (Miller 155). While I remember one adult awkwardly patting my shoulder, no one offered an understandable debriefing about this new path, except to say that Jesus had saved me.

What does all of this have to do with the substantial differences in how I, my sisters, and particularly my brother fared in treatment at the home? I believe my own awakening had a redeeming effect upon my life. Prior to arriving at the home, I was a girl headed for

trouble. No one could make me behave—not the teachers at Memorial Avenue School or my mother. I wasn't anyone's favorite little girl! But once freed from that former environment of abuse, I began to thrive. At a new elementary school—Nathaniel White in Cromwell—I became a different person—sometimes, even a good person.

On the other hand, deliverance from our mother's home did not translate into a better life for my brother Fred. Organized religion of the type we were subjected to at the home turned him the opposite direction from my own experience. He rebelled, and certainly not quietly! Extraordinarily gifted intellectually and athletically, he challenged any authority that attempted to mold him against his will. When his athletic endeavors began to be noticed by staff at the Middletown YMCA, Fred was encouraged to work out and develop himself physically. It was clear that Rev. Johnson did not appreciate my brother's new mentors and friends. They all smoked, one was gay, and others loaned Fred their cars, giving him a great deal of freedom from the home's strict environment. There came a point, said Fred, that Rev. Johnson couldn't whip him anymore. Prior to graduating from high school, Fred won the Mr. Connecticut Teenager contest, held at the Stonington Community Center. This was one of a multitude of honors earned by my brother over the years, including a PhD from Temple University in 1973 in the psychology, sociology, and motor learning of sport.

When an arranged adoption failed, Fred believed that it was only through the intervention of a church social worker that he was allowed to go back to the home. I am willing to bet that an important reason for Rev. Johnson's great dislike of my brother had less to do with my brother's unorthodox friends than with the fact that, more than once, Fred and the daughter of Rev. Johnson were caught making out in the hayloft.

There is one aspect of those years about which Carol, Fred, Joan, and I agree: aside from the dysfunctional environment of the home, our lives were positively impacted—even blessed—as we became entwined with new classmates and teachers in the Cromwell public school system.

HEROES

I have mentioned the Memorial Avenue School in West Springfield. There I would unintentionally anger the teachers by drawing pretty pictures all through the reading lessons (I hadn't yet been diagnosed as being hard of hearing). One time I slashed several window shades as I pretended to be sword fighting sun shadows with my ruler. I did not get promoted to second grade. With my long legs and strength, I mercilessly chased down all the boys on the playground, for which I earned the scornful name "Old Lady Witch." My own grandfather made fun of my leggy skinniness, calling me by a name not much better—"Long-Legged Lobbin." I never knew what the phrase meant, and guessing from his jeering tone, I didn't want to know. Occasionally I even beat up the neighborhood bully, Butchie Ewig, if he dared to hit my little brother. More often the older neighborhood bullies destroyed my sumac and hay teepees or stole the few toys I had—especially one beloved doll.

Everything changed at Nathaniel White School in Cromwell. I received blue ribbons during field day and prizes for my drawing. My reading skills improved, and teachers' notes on my report card praised me for being a leader. Every morning our classmates—Dorene Caso, Charlotte Flynn, Richard Gugliemino, John Pronsky, sometimes Caroline Andrelski, and others—would meet us at the end of Missionary Road, and we finished the walk to school together. On the playground we played chasing games with Larry Jezouit, Michael Arcidiacono, Barbara Dagle, and others. Going home, I never walked alone. This was one way that my sister Carol and I became good friends with so many of the girls and boys. Occasionally a group of us would sing our little songs together, like "I Love to Go A-Wandering." We even sang in harmony!

During our eighth-grade graduation to a new high school a few miles away, I experienced my first kiss from a boy named Michael Ward. It all stayed wonderful—if very controlled, as we were chaperoned in the car, driven by Michael's father. At our graduation ceremony, Michael played "Indian Love Song" on his clarinet. When the dancing started, he very patiently tried to teach me some simple

steps. I thought I did pretty well on that front, considering I had been somewhat indoctrinated by counselors at the home about several sins, dancing among them. Anyway, eighth grade was a very happy time.

Pretty soon, Rev. Johnson wanted to know who walked me home from school each day. I must have told him a lot about Michael, including the fact that he was Catholic. Shortly thereafter Rev. Johnson compelled several of us kids to undergo a series of classes based on a dour book called *High Is the Wall*. It was about the hopelessness, even sin, of mixed marriages. Marriage? Good grief! I was only fourteen! What had I said? Had a defiant streak caused me to blurt that I wouldn't mind being married to this first childhood boyfriend of mine? Anything remotely related to a thought like this was not the thing to say to an old-fashioned Protestant minister charged with the keeping of my soul.

For that matter, the budding friendship between Michael and me might not have been a situation favored by Mr. Ward, either. He had a reputation of being a very strict Catholic, even if he might have had some lapses of judgment by driving his car all around the town in the dark, with two impressionable young teens smooching away in the back seat. I wonder if Mr. Ward and Rev. Johnson got together and had a few words about where they saw our young romance heading. I say this because I have little recollection of any further interaction with Michael the rest of the summer—no letters and no phone calls especially. Worst of all, I was sent down to Bridgeport for the summer to live with a Salvation Army couple, Roy and Ruby Engstrom, who, Rev. Johnson said, wanted to adopt me.

All summer I had free access to Mr. and Mrs. Engstrom's refrigerator. In spite of swimming every day in the ocean at their beachfront property, I ballooned in weight, gaining twenty pounds that I never lost until after my first child was born. At the end of the summer, after I declined their kind invitation of adoption, the Engstroms returned me to the home. I never saw them again. By that time it wasn't clear that Michael was still my boyfriend, but he did visit me once or twice at the home before our freshman year started. My sister Carol's boyfriend, Hugh Hunt, was present, too. I remember the

two guys being caught in the pantry with their hands in the cookie box. I tried to tell Rev. Johnson that I was the one who showed them where the cookies were. No doubt angry phone calls were made to Mrs. Hunt and to Mrs. Ward.

Once I entered high school, I soon had another boyfriend, even though Michael and I remained on good terms. In our senior year he left Cromwell High to prepare for the priesthood. I was preparing to enter North Park College in Chicago in the fall of 1959. In circumstances that seemed quite natural for young people of our age, we were all making plans to go our separate ways.

I didn't know it then, but these classmates had been like heroes to me, and would continue to be as my own life evolved and developed to what it is today. It has taken me many years to understand this.

From 1951 to 1959 these young people were beside me every school day, like lights on my path. Time and time again they showed me the meaning of "normalcy," in friendships, acceptance, kindness, athletic competition—even that normal, first sweet taste of a boyfriend's kiss. Hardly a day goes by without me being reminded how blessed I was to have had such special classmates. I am grateful for their unconditional acceptance, affection, and regard for that eleven-year-old girl who joined their fifth-grade ranks in the fall of 1951.

APPENDIX: MEMORIES OF MY CROMWELL YEARS, 1951–1959

The following poems are among many that began to pour out of me at the end of 2000, when I made a job move from Green Bay, Wisconsin, back to Connecticut to become a vice president for a United Way located in Gales Ferry, about an hour south of Cromwell. Over forty years had passed since I had left in 1959 for Chicago, after graduation from high school. The best explanation I have about this sudden, very poetic outpouring is that profound but hidden emotions associated with those eight years finally asserted themselves, demanding expression. Even in the 2010 poem, "Gospel Singing on Valentine's Day," I was surprised when its direction changed to cover a forgotten incident of those Cromwell years.

MEAT GRINDER

At the end of a hog-butchering day
the cook put her finger too far
into the meat grinder.
We found the severed tip—
wrapped it up and
sent it with her
to the hospital.
At least something
got put together
in those years.

WOODLAND MEDICINE

for Carol Hunt Bemis

These days I walk on asphalt roads,
not one to risk solitary
paths around this house,
until my sister walked with me one day.

"I hate this hard road," she said
"Let's go into the woods this way."

Remember the feel of crinkly leaf cushions,
reading our smuggled comic books,
backs snuggled to tree trunks
warmed by sun, light dappled through thickets
of ocher and garnet,
vermilion against pine, lavender on russet?

"Do you come here often?" she asks,
heading into the deepening path.

Remember how years and years ago,
we raced through woods and rocky path

down to our pond—sunny, mother mud-water
catching our hot, flailing child-bodies?
Remember our diving board belly-flops,
how that big, lolling snapper kept us captive
far out on that rickety raft?

"Do you come here often?" she asks again, and I say,
"No, it's too remote, not safe, and dark."

But on that spring day, we walked again through woods
alive with airy May apples and scattered trillium,
diving, gold-orange orioles, startled by
motor-like sounds of all the frog voices.

BEAR MEDICINE AND CULTS

for my brother, Bear

With claws like crooked knives,
he tears the ground,
scratches at roots, insect larvae, armies of ants,
anything
to quell the hunger roiling at his core.

Bear lumbers around dried-up meadows,
longing for summer's sweet berries,
until a winter chill
slackens his senses—pushes his bulk
toward the shelter of a western cave,
into dreams of a peaceful valley, a river
flowing with honey from an unknown tree.
Growls dissolve into groans.

Hovering over the cave,
the yellow-eyed Being listens.
Flicking his tongue, he infiltrates
Bear's winter dreamings—

introduces himself as a man of God,
his business called a House of Truth—
able to deliver results—everlasting life.
Bible clutched in one hand,
he keeps a steady back and forth pace
across the stage of the sleeping mind below—
shape-shifts his three-hundred-pound frame
into a yellow bird-suit—expounds
upon discipleship's cost—calls
himself an unwilling Chicken Little
who knows by divine calling that the sky
is certainly falling.

Sleeping Bear smiles, amused
by chicken's engaging ruse.

Predator knows he has Bear's
attention and ever so slowly
tightens the noose.

One day, Bear, roused from sleep
by cowboy-eisegete's to and fro clop,
sees the tips of cloven feet sticking out
from each pointed, snake-skin boot.

Feigning sleep, Bear gathers all his
strength and medicines—
courage born of introspection,
healing powers from the earth,
slicing intellect in search of truth.

Rearing in righteous aggression,
he breaks the satanic vise,
flings it far—far from his life.

Stumbling from the maw of cave,
he falls. Flattened on the ground—
the weight of sorrow's years gone from his core—
rays of Sun stream down upon his back.

GOSPEL SINGING ON VALENTINE'S DAY

Elvis's gospel songs fill the house, keep me going while grit
    from the grandchildren's waffle-soled shoes and cat hair
        play hide and seek with my mop,
    frequently dropped
        as I run to the subwoofer to better hear
the weaving harmonies of *Peace in the Valley,*
    the electric zing of *Sing You Children*
        or his unfurling tenor notes
            in *How Great Thou Art*—
                that sweet, seductive masculine voice
    makes me miss your music,
        miss your fiddling,
            miss those lilting waltzes, dizzy reels, and family gospel sings.
Remember when, after some evening meals,
        after we had washed all the dishes,
    I'd go to the piano and start a hymn—maybe *In the Garden*?
        —and by the time of the chorus,
    you and your fiddle had crept up behind me,
        wrapping that melody with a comforting alto vibrato
            or a descant of sheer desire?
    What I would give
        to have had more years with you
                who shared the music of your heart
            and put it back into mine again.
Did I ever tell you about the time
        my eighth-grade teacher

gave me a pile of sheet music from the thirties and
forties?
There weren't many gospels,
some Irvin Berlins like *Alexander's Ragtime Band*
but best of all I loved the ballads,
many my mother used to sing—
melodies you played on your harmonica—
White Christmas,
A Tree in the Meadow,
Lucky Old Sun or
Chattanoogie Shoe Shine Boy.
I stacked these treasures under my workbooks
while I practiced scales and chords,
struggled
with Chopin and Schumann
until I could no longer resist the siren
spell of those long-ago songs.
I asked Mr. Helsing, my teacher,
brilliant Minister of Music at the New Britain
Covenant Church,
to help me tackle
the tricky meters and rhythms
in my popular songs.
Trash he called them.
Hearing those words, grim-faced Miss Pierson, a secretary
at the Children's Home where I lived—her office
next to the piano room—
threw away
my songs.

I tell you this in remorse:
after that troll of a woman destroyed
my precious sheet music, I didn't want to fight
Rachmaninoff, Mozart, or the rest anymore.
Defiant, I turned my back
on drills of chords and scales

that would have given me the skills
to keep up with you and your Turtle Mountain family jams.
True,
I played those hymns well enough—but imagine
what some strides, a few flourishes and
transpositions
might have added to all we shared in our family's fun.
I'd like you to know—as the words go
in *Farther Along*—
one day I'll *sweep*
through the beautiful gates to be by your side;
there'll be no more asking,
midst your family's soft chuckles, for the
key of "F."
I'll understand how to make my piano sing, carry a riff—
improvise around the sweet sound
of your harmonica and fiddle.
Maybe some of your late Cheyenne River relatives—
Fred, Lloyd, Wanda, and the rest, will join us
at the Rock Island National Cemetery,
rouse our veteran-friends lying around,
start their toes a-tapping
while we all warm up with *Green Green*
Grass of Home.

TO JOANIE, MY SISTER
Heart's honor you give
Heart's honor you give
Heart's honor you give
To the spirit of our parents.

I honor your love
I honor your love
I honor your love
For the spirit of our parents.

Green bundle I offer
Green bundle I offer
Green bundle I offer
To honor your love.

Sage in this bundle
Sage in this bundle
Sage in this bundle
To purify my thoughts.

Cedar within
Cedar within
Cedar within
To shatter the dark.

Sweet grass all around
Sweet grass all around
Sweet grass all around
For goodness to stay.

Tobacco in this green bundle
Tobacco of earth
Tobacco of our Creator
Relate us in love.

HEROES

for the class of 1959, Cromwell, Connecticut

Time's chasm too vast to span,
friendships gone dry for lack of tending,
I decide to forego the fiftieth reunion
of my high school graduation.

Soon someone starts a crescendo of rapping
on the door and walls of the fortress
surrounding my memories and visions.
He shouts his name between the knockings.

I recognize my old friend, once a classmate,
now a conjurer from another dimension.
He strides past me, heads for the lighted hall
where hang our classmates' graduation portraits—
bright with smiles but strangely astir upon the walls.
He talks, his face away from me:

> *When I traveled the Night Wind to be at your side,*
> *filled the hollow of yourself with new regard,*
> *quenched endless fires fueled by guilt,*
> *did you ever connect me*
> *to these faces of our youthful years?*

He turns and faces me,
sending a revelation like lightening
bolts forcing an opening to my mind.
He stands as a mosaic—
a collective of seventy youthful heroes
from my Cromwell High School days—
seasons of peace, days of grace.

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Book Review

Judith Ranta. *The Life and Writings of Betsey Chamberlain: Native American Mill Worker*. Boston: Northeastern UP, 2003. ISBN: 10: 1-55553-565-8; 13: 1-55553-565-0. 284 pp.

Margaret M. Bruchac, *University of Connecticut*

By reconstructing the life history of Betsey Guppy Chamberlain (1797–1866), historian and librarian Judith Ranta has done some fine detective work that illuminates an otherwise little-known aspect of women's lives in nineteenth-century New England. This compilation will be useful for scholars of social history, yet there is one significant flaw. Ranta champions Chamberlain as a Native American author, and she has organized the collected works to emphasize this point.

We need not retroactively adjudicate degrees of Indian blood, but we must weigh real and fictive kin affiliation when discerning social identities. Betsey's paternal grandmother, Sarah Loud Guppy, was said to have some Indian blood, but no specific tribal nation was ever recalled. Betsey's parents, William and Comfort Guppy, who lived in Brookfield and Wolfboro, New Hampshire, near Lake Winnepesaukee, identified as white people. Given their locale, in Central Abenaki homeland, Ranta assumes that Betsey's grandmother was Abenaki Indian. There is no evidence, however, to indicate that Loud, her son, or her granddaughter ever self-identified or were counted among members of any Abenaki (or other Native American) community.

Chamberlain's publications began only after the death of her first

husband, Josiah Chamberlain, when she left an intentional community (likely Shaker) in New Hampshire. She worked in the textile mills around Newmarket and Lowell, Massachusetts, and ran a boarding house, while publishing dozens of articles in the mill's journal, the *Lowell Offering*. In 1843 she married Charles Boutwell and moved to Illinois, but she returned to Lowell to work two more years in the mills and publish more stories in the *New England Offering* before settling in Illinois.

Ranta convincingly demonstrates that Chamberlain had ready access to popular literature, so it is no surprise that her narratives reproduced prevalent social and ethnic stereotypes. Along with hundreds of her fellow female textile workers, she partook of Lowell's public libraries, lectures, and events and attended "Improvement Circles" featuring amateur readings at local churches. Chamberlain was sensitive to anti-Indian prejudices, and her style resembles that of Lydia Maria Child, with its feminine sensitivities and calls to justice for the downtrodden. Yet, as Siobhan Senier has observed, Chamberlain's melodramatic short fiction and vignettes of home life matched popular genres, and her "dream visions" resembled transcendentalist ramblings (Senier 673). None of this suggests tribal heritage.

Ranta claims that Chamberlain tapped Algonkian storytelling practices, but I see no trace of Indigenous oral traditions, cultural practices, or environmental knowledge in any of her writings. Curiously, Ranta censored the collection by omitting Chamberlain's lurid stories of Indian attacks against white settlers, perhaps because these might undermine assertions of identity. Chamberlain's anecdotes of Indian encounters on the colonial frontier employ sharp gender and racial divisions with satirical overtones and Christian messages; Native voice and agency are absent or marginalized. For example, "The Indian Pledge" recounts the rescue of a racist young white man by a "savage" Indian, in exchange for the gentle white wife's earlier kindness to the poor Indian. "A Fire-Side Scene" features an old Yankee veteran recalling, with some pride, the mass burning of a Native village on the western Miami frontier (125–26). Chamberlain's pseudonymous "Tabitha" (presented as the author of

these tales) seems to be an alternate identity, rooted in ethnic masking or cultural appropriation.

Chamberlain's creative work must be seen as a commercial transaction; whether paid or not, she trafficked in productions that elevated her own social position. She earned high wages in the mills, but she also found time to compose more than forty stories for the *Lowell Offering* and the *New England Offering* in a few years' time. Exotic narratives containing Indians, scripted by a woman of mysterious ancestry, would have been an easy sell, but what was her inspiration? Was her favorite literary character, the "old maid," based on some older woman who befriended the mill girls? Who was the old veteran who fought on the Miami frontier? Did she interview fellow mill workers (who could not write well, or could not write at all), or collect stories from her many boarders in Lowell? Whether her characters were real or imagined, truthful or apocryphal, it is both curious and notable that Chamberlain's writing took place only in Lowell; she wrote nothing in Illinois. Perhaps the dearth of writing reflected a dearth of informants?

Ranta generously dedicated her research to Abenaki people, but her overreaching speculations are not helpful. Ranta proposes tests to verify a Native American author—self-concept, acceptance by a tribal community, tribal enrollment, and commitment to Native American causes (98–99)—while admitting that Chamberlain passes none of these. Touting this mill worker as "Native" does not expand our understanding of Native American literature; it only muddies the waters by promoting the antiquated notion that trace amounts of Indigenous ancestry shape cultural expression. In nineteenth- (and twenty-first-) century contexts, Indianness must be measured through tribal recognition and kinship relations, not just blood quantum. Ironically, one of the best sources for first-person perspectives on nineteenth-century Abenaki lives is a narrative written in 1861 by a white man—Joseph W. Johnson—who was adopted by the Abenaki (Johnson). In Johnson's descriptions of his family's travels through 1840s New England (including Lowell), we find the very kind of Indigenous insights, experiences, and cultural markers that Chamberlain fails to provide.

A fellow mill worker, Harriet Hansom Robinson, claimed that out of the more than sixty women who contributed to the *Lowell Offering*, Chamberlain, who "had inherited Indian blood, and was proud of it," was "the most original, the most prolific, and most noted" (Robinson 145). Yet a trace amount of unknown Indian ancestry does not transform one into a Native American author; more careful and less romanticized contextualizations are needed. Betsey Guppy Chamberlain was a Yankee author with an engaging style and a family story of a mysterious Indian ancestor (which is not uncommon in that part of New England). Her writings offer us brilliant insights into the perspectives and experiences of white mill girls and middle-class Yankees. They also provide evocative visions of the angst-ridden longing, among freethinkers, early feminists, and transcendentalists, for deeper connections to Native American Indians in nineteenth-century New England.

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Contributor Biographies

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