

Native Women's History
in Eastern North America
before 1900

A Guide to Research and Writing

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and

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What Native Women Were Not

1. The Pocahontas Perplex

The Image of Indian Women in American Culture

RAYNA GREEN

New Introduction by Rayna Green

“The Pocahontas Perplex” is not about the cultures and lives of Native women. The essay is about the imaginative construction and representation of Native women’s lives and histories by non-Indians, about cultural constructions and cultural practices that affect and dislocate Native lives and histories. The essay names and defines the barriers between “Americans” and Native women. It suggests an American obsession, played out through time and space, that stands between Pocahontas and her sisters and their history, a Native history, a women’s history, my history, our history, an American history.

I wrote “The Pocahontas Perplex” in 1975 in response to a request from two colleagues, then editors for the *Massachusetts Review*. For the American Bicentennial they wanted material from an American Indian perspective, work on and by women, and writing that might reach and influence an audience beyond the academy. We were all engaged in what we thought was canonical, pedagogical, and social reform in the midst of the academic and political movements that produced new, interdisciplinary, often applied, advocacy, and activist studies—scholarship with an agenda for change. “Pocahontas,” then, was driven more by the promises of the New Feminism, Red Power, and Radical Pedagogy than by the opportunity afforded an untenured assistant professor to get another publication posted to the record. I do not mean to suggest that this little essay alone bore the burden of that big political agenda, but rather that the big agenda—pretentious, even futile as it may sound now—was very much on our minds in post-1960s America.

“Pocahontas” did come out of my dissertation, a study of American Indian images in American culture, for a degree in Folklore and American Studies (Indiana, 1973). The material on Native women was from that larger study, where I had begun to note particularly pervasive and significant gendered patterns to the American cultural behaviors I’d described. Examining the image of Native women became a central part of a more comprehensive description of the major form of American identity I’d identified. Moreover, “The Pocahontas Perplex” had as its “inspiration” an all-pervasive scholarly silence on gender, sexuality, and identity. It was also motivated by the conventional and skimpy body of anthropological and historical work on Native women, the singular inspirational exception to which was Nancy Lurie’s *Mountain Wolf Woman*.¹ I suppose I thought of “Pocahontas” as a stand-in for activist and community-centered scholarship, and (with the wonderful work of others that had begun to appear in that time period) potentially as a Native/woman’s voice emergent. That emergence was directed to a new audience—not altogether an academic one, but a general, complex audience that actually might include both Indians and women. I was writing to, for, and about women and Indians, some of whom were the new academics. And, as it happens, I realized that I was writing for me, an Indian woman, making the personal political, as my friend Gloria Steinem had urged, an act of indulgence long forbidden us by the customary distanced, third-person standards of academic publishing.

Thus the audience, the historical context in which it appeared, the “inspirations” negative and positive, and the political intent (mine and my editors) of the piece were and are as important to consider—in retrospect—as the theoretical or analytical framework of the essay. Actually, I was and remain a resistant-to-theory kind of gal. In a way, the title of the piece tells the reader that; while it offers hints to a hypothesis about the very nature of American culture, it also makes a joke about theorizing it. The title offered homage to a monograph very popular with counter-cultural scholars, Frederick Crews’s spoof of current literary theory and literary criticism entitled *The Pooh Perplex*. In short, the title proposes a theory, the essay supports, then mocks its truth. I suppose, had I written the piece in the 1980s and 1990s, with the (de)volution of Critical Studies, I would have had to parody my own essay as a poststructuralist, Marxist, feminist, new historicist, postcolonialist, deconstructionist, and counterhegemonic theory. And the piece would have been called “(De)Constructing the Post-Colonial Pocahontas.”

I do recognize that everything I was doing then, both in “Pocahontas” and much of my later work, were precursors to the thoroughly interdisciplinary and theoretical study of “identity” and “whiteness,” particularly through “representations.” They were then and remain today studies of cultural expression and cultural practice in order to examine race, class, gender, sexuality, identity both national and racial, belief, and ideology.

But there was more. I was using “evidence” that was not (then as now) generally accepted or used by historians or even most anthropologists. “The Pocahontas Perplex” used as its “data” songs, stories, items of common linguistic usage, oral histories, jokes, sayings and proverbs, popular novels and plays, poems, paintings, commercial advertising materials, prints, drawings, nineteenth-century photographs, sculptures, carvings (cigar-store Indians, figureheads), craft items (quilts, weathervanes). What I called vernacular culture was evidence, not merely supplemental “illustrations.” These were artifacts, not unreliably interpretive art, of what Americans, through and over several centuries, were thinking about Pocahontas, about Native women, about themselves.

In spite of the virtual flood of stellar, corrective, and visionary scholarship on Native women in the last twenty years, some of it by writers in this volume, the Perplex still has us in its deadly embrace. I had come to think in the 1980s that the Perplex was losing its hold on Americans, that we’d lost our collective need for her and her sisters (and Indian team mascots). But, no! She’s back! Every time (often) I meet an upper-class Virginian who tells me she is a “Daughter of Pocahontas”; every time (regularly) I meet someone who tells me that their grandmother was a Cherokee Princess; whenever (frequently) I pick up a Land O’Lakes butter carton with that Indian maiden on it; and whenever (still too often) I am confronted with the ever-reified and -renewable Pocahontas mythologies that appear in the movies (e.g., *Pocahontas*, 1995, and *The New World*, 2005), I know it’s not just a theory. It’s a reoccurring pandemic. I just gave it a name. So, six reprintings and thirty years of appearances on college course lists haven’t done the job I intended “Pocahontas” to do, in the pretentious optimism about social change I described for this article. In fact, the very durability of the Perplex guarantees the perpetual popularity of the essay. That’s scary! But I have to believe that somehow, all those college course lists and reprints will eventually vaccinate enough Americans against the Perplex and they’ll just laugh the next resurgence right out of the box office. That’s why I keep writing.

The Pocahontas Perplex

The Image of Indian Women in American Culture (1975)

In one of the best known old Scottish ballads, “Young Beichan” or “Lord Bateman and the Turkish King’s Daughter” as it is often known in America, a young English adventurer travels to a strange, foreign land. The natives are of a darker color than he, and they practice a pagan religion. The man is captured by the King (Pasha, Moor, Sultan) and thrown in a dungeon to await death. Before he is executed, however, the pasha’s beautiful daughter—smitten with the elegant and wealthy visitor—rescues him and sends him homeward. But she pines away for love of the now remote stranger who has gone home, apparently forgotten her, and contracted a marriage with a “noble” “lady” of his own kind. In all the versions, she follows him to his own land, and in most, she arrives on his wedding day whereupon he throws over his bride-to-be for the darker but more beautiful Princess. In most versions, she becomes a Christian, and she and Lord Beichan live happily ever after.

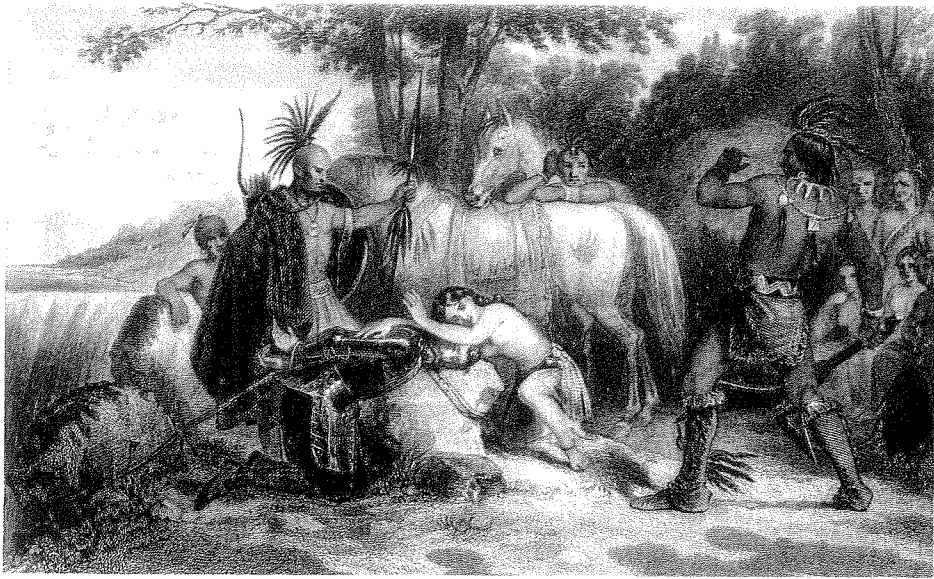
In an article called “The Mother of Us All,” Philip Young suggests the parallel between the ballad story and the Pocahontas–John Smith rescue tale.² With the exception of Pocahontas’s marriage to John Rolfe (still, after all, a Christian stranger), the tale should indeed sound familiar to most Americans nurtured on Smith’s salvation by the Indian Princess. Actually, Europeans were familiar with the motif before John Smith offered his particular variant in the *Generall Historie of Virginie* (1624).

Francis James Child, the famous ballad collector, tells us in his *English and Scottish Popular Ballads* that “Young Beichan” (Child #40) matches the tale of Gilbert Beket, St. Thomas Aquinas’ father, as well as a legend recounted in the *Gesta Romanorum*, one of the oldest collections of popular tales. So the frame story was printed before 1300 and was, no doubt, well distributed in oral tradition before then. Whether or not our rakish adventurer-hero, John Smith, had heard the stories or the ballad, we cannot say, but we must admire how life mirrors art since his story follows the outlines of the traditional tale most admirably. What we do know is that the elements of the tale appealed to Europeans long before Americans had the opportunity to attach their affection for it onto Pocahontas. Whether or not we believe Smith’s tale—and there are many reasons not to—we cannot ignore the impact the story has had on the American imagination.

“The Mother of Us All” became our first aristocrat, and perhaps our



1. Pocahontas, oil on canvas, ca. 1595–1616, by an unidentified artist, probably after Simon Van de Passe, after 1617. National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, gift of the A. W. Mellon Educational Charitable Trust, no. 65.61.



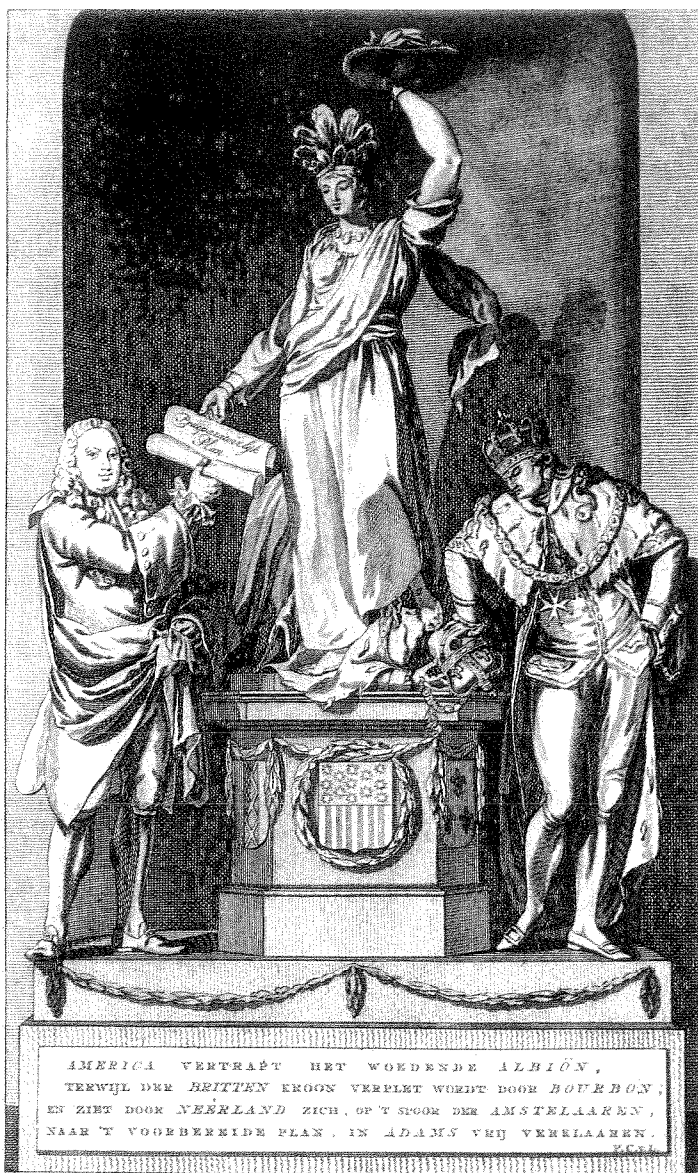
2. *Smith Rescued by Pocahontas* by Edward Corbould, ca. 1880, engraving by George Virtue after T. Knight. Courtesy Rayna Green.



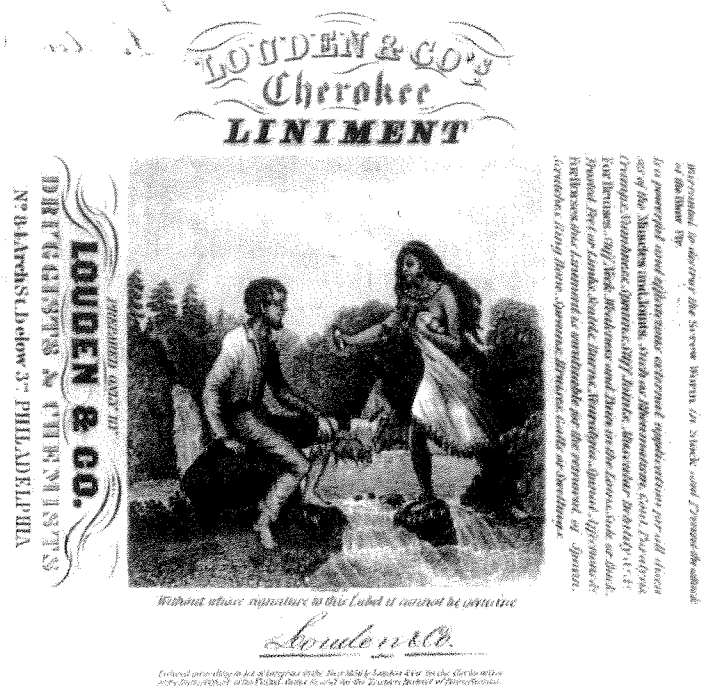
3. Pocahontas tobacco label, ca. 1880. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, 11365.



4. *America*, ca. 1775, copy of engraving by Adrian Collaert II, after Martin de Vos, ca. 1595. Courtesy Winterthur Museum, 57-83.8.



5. Holland Recognizes American Independence, engraving by G. Brouwer after A. Borghers and P. Wagenaar, ca. 1782. Courtesy National Park Service, Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum, NPX62-148.



6. Cherokee Liniment medicine label from Loudon and Co., ca. 1856. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, LC-USZ62-55633.



7. Advertising poster of Wild-root Dandruff Remedy. Courtesy Warshaw Collection of Business Americana, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution Archives Center.



8. Indian Girl Chewing Tobacco label from James Moran and Co., ca. 1874. Courtesy Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, LC-USZ62-57904.



9. Watercolor of Princess figure carved for cigar store or shop in Samuel Robb's workshop, ca. 1850. Courtesy National Gallery of Art, Index of American Design.

first saint, as Young implies. Certainly, the image of her body flung over the endangered head of our hero constitutes a major scene in national myth (fig. 2). Many paintings and drawings of this scene exist, and it appears in popular art on everything from wooden fire engine side panels to calendars. Some renderings betray such ignorance about the Powhatan Indians of Virginia—often portraying them in Plains dress—that one quickly comes to understand that it is the mythical scene, not the accuracy of detail that moved artists. The most famous portrait of Pocahontas, the only one said to be done from life (at John Rolfe's request), shows the Princess in Elizabethan dress, complete with ruff and velvet hat—the Christian, English lady the ballad expects her to become and the lady she indeed became for her English husband and her faithful audience for all time (fig. 1). The earliest literary efforts in America, intended to give us American rather than European topics, featured Pocahontas in plenty. Poems and plays—like James Nelson Barber's *The Indian Princess; or, La Belle Sauvage* (1808) and George Washington Custis' *The Settlers of Virginia* (1827), as well as contemporary American novels, discussed by Leslie Fiedler in *The Return of the Vanishing American*—dealt with her presence, or sang her praises from the pages of literary magazines and from the stages of popular playhouses throughout the east.³ Traditional American ballads like “Jonathan Smith” retold the thrilling story; schoolbook histories included it in the first pages of every text; nineteenth-century commercial products like cigars, perfume and even flour used Pocahontas' name as come-on (figs. 6, 7, 8); and she appeared as the figurehead for American warships and clippers. Whether or not she saved John Smith, her actions as recounted by Smith set up one kind of model for Indian-White relations that persists—long after most Indians and Anglos ceased to have face-to-face relationships. Moreover, as a model for the national understanding of Indian women, her significance is undeniable. With her darker, negatively viewed sister, the Squaw—or, the anti-Pocahontas, as Fiedler calls her—the Princess intrudes on the national consciousness, and a potential cult waits to be resurrected when our anxieties about who we are make us recall her from her woodland retreat.⁴

Americans had a Pocahontas Perplex even before the teenage Princess offered us a real figure to hang the iconography on. The powerfully symbolic Indian woman, as Queen and Princess, has been with us since 1575 when she appeared to stand for the New World. Artists, explorers, writers and political leaders found the Indian as they cast about for some symbol with which to identify this earthly, frightening, and beautiful paradise; E. McClung

Fleming has given one of the most complete explications of these images.⁵ The misnamed Indian was the native dweller, who fit conveniently into the various traditional folkloric, philosophical and literary patterns characteristic of European thought at the time.⁶ Europeans easily adopted the Indian as the iconographic representative of the Americas. At first, Caribbean and Brazilian (Tupinamba) Indians, portrayed amidst exotic flora and fauna, stood for the New World's promises and dangers. The famous and much-reproduced "Four Continents" illustrations (circa early sixteenth century) executed by artists who had seen Indians and ones who had not, ordinarily pictured a male and female pair in America's place.⁷ But the paired symbol apparently did not satisfy the need for a personified figure, and the Indian Queen began to appear as the sole representation for the Americas in 1575. And until 1765 or thereabouts, the bare-breasted, Amazonian Native American Queen reigned (fig. 4). Draped in leaves, feathers, and animal skins as well as in heavy Caribbean jewelry, she appeared aggressive, militant, and armed with spears and arrows. Often, she rode on an armadillo, and stood with her foot on the slain body of an animal or human enemy. She was the familiar Mother-Goddess figure—full-bodied, powerful, nurturing but dangerous—embodying the opulence and peril of the New World. Her environment was rich and colorful, and that, with the allusions to Classical Europe through the Renaissance portrayal of her large, naked body, attached her to Old World History as well as to New World virtue.

Her daughter, the Princess, enters the scene when the colonies begin to move toward independence, and she becomes more "American" and less Latin than her mother. She seems less barbarous than the Queen; the rattlesnake (Jones' "Dont Tread On Me" sign) defends her, and her enemies are defeated by male warriors rather than by her own armed hand. She is Britannia's daughter as well as that of the Carib Queen, and she wears the triangular Phrygian cap and holds the liberty pole of her later, metamorphosed sister, Miss Liberty (the figure on the Statue of Liberty and the Liberty dime). She is young, leaner in the Romanesque rather than Greek mode, and distinctly Caucasian, though her skin remains slightly tinted in some renderings. She wears the loose, flowing gowns of classical statuary rather than animal skins, and Roman sandals grace her feet. She is armed, usually with a spear, but she also carries a peace pipe, a flag, or the starred and striped shield of Colonial America. She often stands with The Sons of Liberty, or later, with George Washington (fig. 5).

Thus, the Indian woman began her symbolic, many-faceted life as a

Mother figure—exotic, powerful, dangerous, and beautiful—and as a representative of American liberty and European classical virtue translated into New World terms. She represented, even defended America. But when real Indian women—Pocahontas and her sisters—intruded into the needs bound up in symbols and the desires inherent in daily life, the responses to the symbol became more complex, and the Pocahontas perplex emerged as a controlling metaphor in the American experience. The Indian woman, along with her male counterparts, continued to stand for the New World and for rude native nobility, but the image of the savage remained as well. The dark side of the Mother-Queen figure is the savage Squaw, and even Pocahontas, as John Barth suggests in *The Sotweed Factor*, is motivated by lust.

Both her nobility as a Princess and her savagery as a Squaw are defined in terms of her relationships with male figures. If she wishes to be called a Princess, she must save or give aid to white men. The only good Indian—male or female, Squanto, Pocahontas, Sacagawea, Cochise, the Little Mohee or the Indian Doctor—rescues and helps white men. But the Indian woman is even more burdened by this narrow definition of a "good Indian," for it is she, not the males, whom white men desire sexually. Because her image is so tied up with abstract virtue—indeed, with America—she must remain the Mother Goddess-Queen. But acting as a real female, she must be a partner and lover of Indian men, a mother to Indian children, and an object of lust for white men. To be Mother, Queen and lover is, as Oedipus' mother, Jocasta, discovered, difficult and perhaps impossible. The paradox so often noted in Latin/Catholic countries where men revere their mothers and sisters, but use prostitutes so that their "good" women can stay pure is to the point here. Both race conflict and national identity, however, make this particular Virgin-Whore paradox more complicated than others. The Indian woman finds herself burdened with an image that can only be understood as dysfunctional, even though the Pocahontas perplex affects us all. Some examination of the complicated dimensions of that image might help us move toward change.

In songs like "Jonathan Smith," "Chipeta's Ride" and others sung in oral tradition, the Indian woman saves white men.⁸ In "Chipeta's Ride," she even saves a white woman from lust-enraged Indian males. Ordinarily, however, she rescues her white lover or an anonymous male captive. Always called a Princess (or Chieftain's Daughter), she, like Pocahontas, has to violate the wishes and customs of her own "barbarous" people to make good the

rescue, saving the man out of love and often out of “Christian sympathy.” Nearly all the “good” Princess figures are converts, and they cannot bear to see their fellow Christians slain by “savages.” The Princess is “civilized”; to illustrate her native nobility, most pictures portray her as white, darker than the Europeans, but more Caucasian than her fellow natives (see fig. 2).

If unable to make the grand gesture of saving her captive lover or if thwarted from marrying him by her cruel father, the Chieftain, the Princess is allowed the even grander gesture of committing suicide when her lover is slain or fails to return to her after she rescues him. In the hundreds of “Lover’s Leap” legends which abound throughout the country, and in traditional songs like “The Indian Bride’s Lament,” our heroine leaps over a precipice, unable to live without her loved one. In this movement from political symbolism (where the Indian woman defends America) to psychosexual symbolism (where she defends or dies for white lovers), we can see part of the Indian woman’s dilemma. To be “good,” she must defy her own people, exile herself from them, become white, and perhaps suffer death.

Those who did not leap for love continued to fall in love with white men by the scores, and here the sacrifices are several. The women in songs like “The Little Mohee,” “Little Red Wing,” and “Juanita, the Sachem’s Daughter” fall in love with white travellers, often inviting them to share their blissful, idyllic, woodland paradise. If their lovers leave them, they often pine away, die of grief, or leap off a cliff, but in a number of songs, the white man remains with the maiden, preferring her life to his own, “civilized” way. “The Little Mohee” is a prime example of such a song.

As I went out walking for pleasure one day,
In the sweet recollection, to dwell time away.
As I sat amusing myself on the grass,
Oh, who should I spy but a fair Indian lass.

She walked up behind me, taking hold of my hand,
She said, “You are a stranger and in a strange land,
But if you will follow, you’re welcome to come
And dwell in my cottage that I call my home.”

My Mohea was gentle, my Mohea was kind.
She took me when a stranger and clothed me when cold.
She learned me the language of the lass of Mohea.

“I’m going to leave you, so farewell my dear.

The ship’s sails are spreading and home I must steer.”
The last time I saw her she was standing on the strand,
And as my boat passed her she waved me her hand.

Saying “when you have landed and with the one you love,
Think of pretty Mohea in the coconut grove.”
I am home but no one comes near me nor none do I see,
That would equal compare with the lass of Mohea.

Oh, the girl that I loved proved untrue to me.
I’ll turn my course backward far over the sea.
I’ll turn my course backward, from this land I’ll go free,
And go spend my days with the little Mohea.

Such songs add to the exotic and sexual, yet maternal and contradictorily virginal image of the Indian Princess, and are reminiscent of the contemporary white soldier’s attachments to “submissive,” “sacrificial,” “exotic” Asian women.

As long as Indian women keep their exotic distance or die (even occasionally for love of Indian men), they are permitted to remain on the positive side of the image. They can help, stand by, sacrifice for, and aid white men. They can, like their native brothers, heal white men, and the Indian reputation as healer dominated the nineteenth-century patent medicine business. In the ads for such medicines, the Indian woman appears either as a helpmate to her “doctor” husband or partner or as a healer herself (fig. 6). In several ads (and the little dime novels often accompanying the patent medicine products), she is the mysterious witch-healer. Thus, she shares in the Caucasian or European female’s reputation for potential evil. The references here to power, knowledge, and sexuality remain on the good side of the image. In this incarnation, the Princess offers help in the form of medicine rather than love (fig. 7).

The tobacco industry also capitalized on the Princess’ image, and the cigar-store figures and ads associated with the tobacco business replicate the Princess figures to sell its products (figs. 8, 9). Cigar-store Princesses smile and beckon men into tobacco shops. They hold a rose, a bundle of cigars, or some tobacco leaves (a sign of welcome in the colonial days), and they smile invitingly with their Caucasian lips. They also sell the product from tobacco packages, and here, like some of the figures in front of the shops, Diana-like or more militant Minerva (Wonder-Woman)-like heroines offer

the comforts of the “Indian weed.” They have either the rounded, infantile, semi-naked (indicating innocence) bodies of Renaissance angels or the bodies and clothes of classical heroines (fig. 9). The Mother Goddess and Miss Liberty peddle their more abstract wares, as Indian Princesses, along with those of the manufacturer. Once again, the Princess comforts white men, and while she promises much, she remains aloof.

But who becomes the white man’s sexual partner? Who forms liaisons with him? It cannot be the Princess, for she is sacrosanct. Her sexuality can be hinted at but never realized. The Princess’ darker twin, the Squaw, must serve this side of the image, and again, relationships with males determine what the image will be. In the case of the Squaw, the presence of overt and realized sexuality converts the image from positive to negative. White men cannot share sex with the Princess, but once they do so with a real Indian woman, she cannot follow the required love-and-rescue pattern. She does what white men want for money or lust. In the traditional songs, stories, obscene jokes, contemporary literary works and popular pictorializations of the Squaw, no heroines are allowed. Squaws share in the same vices attributed to Indian men—drunkenness, stupidity, thievery, venality of every kind—and they live in shacks on the edge of town rather than in a woodland paradise.

Here, Squaws are shamed for their relationships with white men, and the males who share their beds—the “squaw men” or “bucks,” if they are Indian—share their shame. When they live with Indian males, Squaws work for their lazy bucks and bear large numbers of fat “papooses.” In one joke, a white visitor to a reservation sees an overburdened squaw with ten children hanging on her skirts. “Where’s your husband?” the visitor demands. “He ought to be hung!” “Ugh,” says the squaw, “pretty well-hung!” They too are fat, and unlike their Princess sisters, dark and possessed of cruder, more “Indian” features. When stories and songs describe relationships with white men, Squaws are understood as mere economic and sexual conveniences for the men who—unlike John Smith or a “brave”—are tainted by association with her. Tale after tale describes the Indian whores, their alcoholic and sexual excesses with white trappers and hunters. A parody of the beautiful-maiden song, “Little Red Wing,” speaks of her lewd sister who “lays on her back in a cowboy shack, and lets cowboys poke her in the crack.” The result of this cowboy-squaw liaison is a “brat in a cowboy hat with his asshole between his eyes.” This Squaw is dark, and squat, and even the cigar-store Indians show the changes in conception. No Roman sandals

grace their feet, and their features are more “Indian” and “primitive” than even their male counterparts. The cigar-store squaws often had papooses on their backs, and some had corrugated places on their hips to light the store patrons’ matches. When realities intrude on mythos, even Princesses can become Squaws, as the text of the ragtime song “On an Indian Reservation” illustrates.

On an Indian reservation, far from home and civilization,
Where the foot of Whiteman seldom trod.
Whiteman went to fish one summer,
Met an Indian maid—a hummer,
Daughter of Big-Chief-Spare-the-rod.
Whiteman threw some loving glances, took this maid to Indian
dances,
Smoked his pipe of peace, took chances living in a teepee made of
fur.
Rode with her on Indian ponies, bought her diamond rings, all
phonies,
And he sang these loving words to her:

Chorus:
You’re my pretty little Indian Napanee.
Won’t you take a chance and marry me.
Your Daddy Chief, ’tis my belief,
To a very merry wedding will agree.
True, you’re a dark little Indian maid,
But I’ll sunburn to a darker shade,
I’ll wear feathers on my head,
Paint my skin an Indian red,
If you will be my Napanee.

With his contact soon he caught her,
Soon he married this big chief’s daughter,
Happiest couple that you ever saw.
But his dreams of love soon faded,
Napanee looked old and jaded,
Just about like any other squaw.
Soon there came papoose in numbers, redskin yells disturbed his
slumbers,

Whiteman wonders at his blunders—now the feathers drop upon his head.

Sorry to say it, but he's a-wishing, that he'd never gone a-fishing,
Or had met this Indian maid and said:

Chorus:

The Indian woman is between a rock and a hard place. Like that of her male counterpart, her image is freighted with such ambivalence that she has little room to move. He, however, has many more modes in which to participate though he is still severely handicapped by the prevailing stereotypes. They are both tied to definition by relationships with white men, but she is especially burdened by the narrowness of that definition. Obviously, her image is one that is troublesome to all women, but, tied as it is to a national mythos, its complexity has a special piquance. As Vine Deloria points out in *Custer Died for Your Sins*, many whites claim kinship with some distant Indian Princess grandmother, and thus try to resolve their "Indian problem" with such sincere affirmations of relationship.⁹

Such claims make it impossible for the Indian woman to be seen as real. She does not have the power to evoke feeling as a real mother figure, like the black woman, even though *that* image has a burdensome negative side. American children play with no red mammy dolls. She cannot even evoke the terror the "castrating (white) bitch" inspires. Only the male, with upraised tomahawk, does that. The many expressions which treat of her image remove her from consideration as more than an image. As some abstract, noble Princess tied to "America" and to sacrificial zeal, she has power as a symbol. As the Squaw, a depersonalized object of scornful convenience, she is powerless. Like her male relatives she may be easily destroyed without reference to her humanity. (When asked why he killed women and children at Sand Creek, the commanding general of the U.S. Cavalry was said to have replied, "nits make lice.") As the Squaw, her physical removal or destruction can be understood as necessary to the progress of civilization even though her abstracted sister, the Princess, stands for that very civilization. Perhaps the Princess had to be removed from her powerful symbolic place, and replaced with the male Uncle Sam because she confronted America with too many contradictions. As symbol and reality, the Indian woman suffers from our needs, and by both race and sex stands damned.

Since the Indian so much represents America's attachment to a romantic past and to a far distant nobility, it is predictable but horrible that the

Indian woman should symbolize the paradoxical entity once embodied for the European in the Princess in the tower and the old crone in the cave. It is time that the Princess herself is rescued and the Squaw relieved of her obligatory service. The Native American woman, like all women, needs a definition that stands apart from that of males, red or white. Certainly, the Native woman needs to be defined as Indian, in Indian terms. Delightful and interesting as Pocahontas' story may be, she offers an intolerable metaphor for the Indian-White experience. She and the Squaw offer unendurable metaphors for the lives of Indian women. Perhaps if we give up the need for John Smith's fantasy and the trappers' harsher realities, we will find, for each of us, an image that does not haunt and perplex us. Perhaps if we explore the meaning of Native American lives outside the boundaries of the stories, songs, and pictures given us in tradition, we will find a more humane truth.

Notes

1. I would later formalize my critique into an extensive review of that literature (*Signs*, 1980; *Native American Women: A Contextual Bibliography*, 1984). In that piece I would also ask how scholarly treatment of Native women had affected Native women's lives and histories, as well as how scholarly embrace of the specific cultural behaviors I outlined in "Pocahontas" had affected the very nature and intent of scholarship on Native women. "Pocahontas" was the beginning of an interrogatory that lasted over twenty years.
2. Philip Young, "The Mother of Us All," *Kenyon Review* 24 (summer 1962): 391-441.
3. See Jay B. Hubbell, "The Smith-Pocahontas Story in Literature," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 65 (July 1957): 275-300.
4. The many models, stereotypes, and images operative for the Indian in Anglo-American vernacular culture are discussed in my dissertation, "The Only Good Indian: The Image of the Indian in Vernacular American Culture" (Indiana University, 1973).
5. E. McClung Fleming, "Symbols of the United States: From Indian Queen to Uncle Sam," in *The Frontiers of American Culture*, ed. Ray B. Browne et al. (Lafayette IN: Purdue University Press, 1967), 1-24; Fleming, "The American Image as Indian Princess, 1765-1783," *Winterthur Portfolio* 2 (1968): 65-81.
6. For a summary of the philosophical backgrounds of the "Noble Savage" complex of beliefs and ideas, see Roy Harvey Pearce, *Savagism and Civilization: A Study of the Indian and the American Mind* (1953; reprint, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1967). For references to folk motifs in Indo-European tradition, see Stith Thompson, *The Motif Index of Folk Literature*, 6 vols. (1932-36; reprint, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1955-58).
7. See Clare de Corbellier, "Miss America and Her Sisters: Personification of the Four Parts of the World," *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 19 (1961): 209-23;

James Hazen Hyde, *L'iconographie des quatre parties du monde dans les tapisseries de Gazette des Beaux Arts* (Paris: Beaux Arts, 1924).

8. Austin Fife and Francesca Redden, "The Pseudo-Indian Folksongs of the Anglo-Americans and French-Canadians," *Journal of American Folklore* 67, no. 266 (1954): 381; Olive Wooley Burt, *American Murder Ballads and Their Stories* (1958; reprint, New York: Citadel Press, 1964), 146–69.
9. Vine Deloria, *Custer Died for Your Sins* (New York: Avon Books, 1968), 11.

2. The "Squaw Drudge"

A Prime Index of Savagism

DAVID D. SMITS

Excerpts

New Introduction by David D. Smits

After much reading in Anglo-American primary sources about Native Americans, it became clear to me that the preponderance of commentators, from the time of first contact through the nineteenth century, depicted Indian women as little more than "drudges," overworked and otherwise exploited by their indolent Indian husbands. It was also apparent that the least-biased commentators, admittedly many fewer, directly contradicted the majority viewpoint. Having been indoctrinated in the virtues of hard work since my boyhood on a dairy farm in Wisconsin, and being intrigued by peoples' attitudes toward the same, I set out to determine the true nature of Native American gender roles. My research ultimately persuaded me that the stereotypical "squaw drudge" and her work-shirking Indian husband were based on Euro-American misconceptions, ethnocentrism, and particularly on whites' deeply felt need to rationalize their budding hegemony in America.

To prove the "savagism" of the Native Americans, thereby negating their rights to their homelands, English colonists and later Euro-Americans routinely alleged that "abominably slothful" and oppressive aboriginal husbands forced their "poor squaws" to perform the most laborious and fatiguing essential chores. Such mistreatment of women was thought to be a defining characteristic of "savagism." Incidentally, these accusations also helped to refute the Old World charge that colonial women were oppressed by their backward and "Indianized" white husbands. Euro-Americans' condemnation of the mistreatment of Indian women deflected the charge and

3. Indian Women as Cultural Mediators

CLARA SUE KIDWELL

New Introduction by Clara Sue Kidwell

The inspiration for “Indian Women as Cultural Mediators” was necessity. I had to come up with a talk for the presidential luncheon at the American Society for Ethnohistory meeting in Tulsa. Although scholars still debate the exact nature of ethnohistory, it seemed to me that studying cultural factors that motivate human behaviors should necessarily be part of history. Since I was teaching in a Native American Studies program where we examined the history of encounters between Indians and Europeans, it was impossible not to be conscious of culturally based motivations. Finally, I had come increasingly to question the myths of American history, particularly those centered around Indian women—Pocahontas, Sacagawea, and Doña Marina. Why had they formed liaisons with European men?

It occurred to me at last that at one fell swoop I could deal with issues of race, class, and gender (the holy trinity of the Ethnic Studies Department at Berkeley in the early 1990s). By deconstructing the myths, I could try to reach some understanding of these women and their cultural motivations. The exercise was fascinating. It was certainly not deep scholarly research per se, but it led me to a much broader knowledge of the world of the seventeenth-century Powhatan Confederacy, the saga of Lewis and Clark, and the horrors of the Spanish conquest of the Aztec Empire.

The talk was well received, and my parents, who attended the luncheon, didn't flinch when I described Pocahontas cartwheeling naked down the streets of Jamestown with the English ship's boys. The fact that the article that resulted from the talk seems to be fairly widely used in college courses on topics like gender and intercultural communication is rewarding. If I have succeeded in demonstrating how history can be told from different

viewpoints and how cultural factors are essential in understanding historical actions, I shall have some feeling of accomplishment (although I am sure I will never be able to counter the influence of movies such as Walt Disney's *Pocahontas*).

Indian Women as Cultural Mediators (1992)

Wherever Europeans and native people encountered each other in the New World, cultural ideas and perceptions were at work, and processes of cultural change began to take place. Hernando de Soto and his men encountered the "Lady of Cofitachequi" near the present site of Augusta, Georgia. She arrived for their meeting in a litter draped in white cloth and "borne on the shoulders of men," and she gave de Soto her own string of pearls as a sign of goodwill.¹ Did she intend to welcome him? To appease him with gifts? To encourage him to move on? We have no words from the lady herself about her motives and intentions.

There is an important Indian woman in virtually every major encounter between Europeans and Indians in the New World. As mistresses or wives, they counseled, translated, and guided white men who were entering new territory. While men made treaties and carried on negotiations and waged war, Indian women lived with white men, translated their words, and bore their children. Theirs was the more sustained and enduring contact with new cultural ways, and they gave their men an entrée into the cultures and communities of their own people. In this way, Indian women were the first important mediators of meaning between the cultures of two worlds.

Some of these women have entered the mythology of American history, and the myths have obscured the reality of their situations. Pocahontas continues to lay down her body if not her life to save John Smith and assure the survival of the Jamestown colony. Sacagawea stands pointing west, the leader of the Lewis and Clark expedition.² Explicitly, their actions led finally to the loss of Indian land and to destructive changes in Indian culture. But implicitly, they acted from motives that were determined by their own cultures.

The mythology of Indian women has overwhelmed the complexity of their roles in the history of Indian and white contact. Indian women stand in history as stereotypes such as the hot-blooded Indian princess, à la Pocahontas, or the stolid drudge, the Indian squaw plodding behind her man. They are not real people. The myths of colonialism and manifest destiny

raise questions about their associations with European men. Their roles must be interpreted in two cultures. If American history portrays them as saviors and guides of white men and agents of European colonial expansion, were they explicitly or implicitly betraying their own people? Were they driven by passion, or were they victims of fate, forced to submit to men of a dominant society?³

The voices of Indian women are not heard in the written documents or in the history books. They did not write their own accounts to analyze their own actions. They were, nevertheless, actors in history, and their actions affected its course. But how, if at all, can we ever understand their actions and intentions in what they did?

The notion of authorial intention is currently fashionable in literary theory, and it has spilled over into history. At its heart, it questions how or whether we can understand the intentions of the author of any historical document when cultural context changes over time. Intentionality is particularly problematic when the sources are not written. Native people have written little in their own words, and what there is has been written primarily by men. Women's words are not the stuff of history.⁴

If we are to discover women's intentions in their actions, then the methods of ethnohistorians are particularly appropriate to the study of their history. If women did not explain their actions in documents, we must attempt to re-create the cultural context of their actions and to move beyond the myths that have been woven around their lives. We can discover some clues to intention by examining the cultural context of women's lives. Women, perceived as powerless by European men and voiceless in the historical records, are nevertheless powerful in the roles that they play in their own cultures, and even more powerful in the impact that they have on their husbands or consorts and on the children of those liaisons. We can examine some of the myths surrounding the roles of Indian women to see how complex their roles in intercultural contacts were.

The Indian woman Doña Marina, La Malinche, was crucial in Hernando Cortez's conquest of the Aztec empire. She was presented to Cortez as a captive, one of twenty women the Tabascan people gave him along with other tribute as he was on his march toward the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan. The Tabascan people had obtained her originally as a slave from merchants in Xicalango. She had been given away or sold by her own people in Oluta. She was evidently of high rank in Aztec society, but not high enough to escape a condition akin to slavery. Her value to Cortez was that she spoke

Nahuatl and a dialect of Mayan, and she could communicate with Jeronimo de Aguilar, a Spaniard who had been abandoned in the Yucatan by a previous expedition. He spoke Mayan and Spanish. In a triadic relationship, Marina communicated to Aguilar in Mayan, and he in turn spoke Spanish to Cortez.

Marina also advised Cortez in his overtures to the subject peoples of the Aztec empire, whose alliances ultimately led to his conquest of Tenochtitlan and the fall of the Aztec empire. She learned that the Cholulans intended not to assist but to kill Cortez and his men. This timely warning saved his expedition. Through Marina's linguistic skills, Cortez was able to exploit the fractures among tribes held together only by the military might of the Aztecs.

Did Marina indeed deliberately betray her people and contribute finally to the European conquest of the Indians of the New World? As a woman who had spent her life as a slave, she probably had no sense of place or loyalty to her captors. If she perceived Moctozuma as a cruel emperor, as the subject tribes largely did, then she had reason to aid Cortez in his overthrow of the empire.

If La Malinche acted out of passion (she was also Cortez's mistress), she was never his wife. Cortez gave her in marriage successively to two of his subordinates, although she bore him a son during one of these marriages. If we accept that she was virtually a slave in a state under military subjection to the Aztecs at Tenochtitlan, her actions become clearer. Whatever personal passions drove her we can never know. She was, however, an essential intermediary between Spaniards and native communities. To contemporary Mexican people, her role is particularly problematic, since she is both betrayer of their ancestors and mother, by Cortez, of a new mixed-blood people. From the historical accounts she emerges as an intelligent and articulate woman whose actions, whatever their motivation, had a significant impact on the history of the Americas.⁵

The story of Pocahontas, daughter of Powhatan, is taught to every schoolchild. The perplexing question is, did it really happen? The account of her dramatic rescue of John Smith, leader of the Jamestown colony, comes from his *General History*, published in 1624 and embroidered with many details not present in his earlier writings. Smith, who had been taken captive after killing two members of Powhatan's confederacy, was brought before the chief and feasted; then his head was laid on a large rock, where the Indians prepared to smash it with their clubs. Smith was rescued from this predicament

when Pocahontas got his "head in her armes, and laid her owne upon his to save him from death."⁶

Why? Was she overcome by passion? Smith described her as a girlchild about twelve or thirteen years old; given the nature of hormones, passion was a possible motive. (Might we say that she had a crush on him?) Was she moved by compassion? That option is unlikely, since she came from a culture where torture of captives was accepted and carried out by men and women.⁷ Or was she exercising a prerogative of women in her tribe to choose captives to be adopted into the tribe? The later history of the Southeast is replete with accounts of women who were recognized as leaders.⁸ If "queens" or "squaw sachems" were recognized as rulers, could not Pocahontas as a woman (albeit a very young one) decide the life of a captive, particularly if it was to test her own newly emerging power?

Pocahontas certainly does not disappear from history after this dramatic episode with Smith. She continued to visit the Jamestown colony. In one particularly vivid English account of such a visit, she is described cartwheeling naked through the town square with the ship's boys. In another, she and a group of young women, dressed only in paint and feathers, entertained Smith with a dance.⁹

Pocahontas also became an intermediary between her own people and the English. Powhatan sent her with one of his senior advisors to intercede for the return of some of his men, whom Smith had captured. The episode was evidence of the increasingly tense relations between Powhatan's people and the Jamestown colonists. Meanwhile, Pocahontas continued to visit the colony and to bring it food and supplies. Smith did not understand her motivation. "Were it the policies of her father thus to employ her, or the ordinance of God thus to make her his instrument, or her extraordinary affection for our nation, I know not."¹⁰

Taken in the cultural context of women's power in coastal Algonquian societies, Pocahontas's actions make sense. Having saved Smith's life, she simply continued to take responsibility for it. She was not acting out her father's will, since she would not take presents from Smith for fear that her father would discover her. She was acting out her own power as a woman in her society.¹¹

Pocahontas could not escape the consequences of the cultural contact that was happening around her. The English made her their instrument in 1613 when Samuel Argall, an English captain, lured her aboard his ship and held her hostage pending her father's return of stolen goods, weapons,

and runaway servants. Powhatan finally sent back seven men with broken muskets, at which Pocahontas complained that he valued weapons more than her.

Pocahontas did not return to her father. The English sent her to school to be educated as a Christian. They gave her a new name, Rebecca. Soon after, she was married to John Rolfe, an English tobacco planter. Rolfe described the union as one of love, not lust, as a properly restrained Englishman should do. But beyond the personal feelings of the participants, the marriage was part of a deliberate English strategy to promote the intermixing of the Indian and white populations and to establish peaceful relations. Although Pocahontas and Rolfe consummated the most famous interracial marriage in American history, there were probably forty or fifty others in this period.¹²

The final encounter between Pocahontas and John Smith was in England, where she had gone with Rolfe after their marriage. It is revealing of her thoughts and values, even after some time spent in her husband's world. She declared that she would consider herself Smith's daughter now that she was in his land, as he had declared himself the son of Powhatan when he had entered her father's land. This declaration of kinship is telling. Among her own people, Pocahontas could exercise certain prerogatives toward Smith because he was a stranger. She could take responsibility for his life. In England, where she was the stranger, she offered her life to Smith's care, as she had taken care of him. However much she might have moved in white society, she still saw her relationships in very Indian terms.

The life that Pocahontas offered Smith was a short one. She died at the start of a voyage back to Virginia, leaving behind her a son by John Rolfe and an enduring myth in American history.¹³

Sacagawea is another mythic heroine in American history. She was one of two (or perhaps three) Indian wives of Toussaint Charbonneau, who joined the Lewis and Clark expedition in Montana in 1805.¹⁴ Shoshone by birth, she was captured by Minatarees in her youth, and Charbonneau bought or traded for her and another woman. She gave birth to a son and carried him with her on the expedition. She did not lead it. She recognized certain landmarks in the Bitterroot Mountains and was able to indicate what might lie ahead. When Lewis and Clark encountered a band of Shoshones, she was brought forward to interpret and recognized her brother Cameahwait, their leader. Cameahwait and his people gave the expedition horses and led it part of the way over the mountains to the west.¹⁵

Although Sacagawea returned to her own people, she did not stay with them. She learned at the meeting with the Shoshones that most of her relatives were dead. She went on with the expedition. As a captive and the wife of a white man, she no longer had a place within the social structure of her own tribe, and indeed that structure was largely destroyed. Charbonneau was evidently an abusive husband, but he and the expedition were now Sacagawea's main reference points. Having been removed from her tribe, she could not go back; indeed, she may have chosen freely not to go back.

Sacagawea's role in American history may be symbolic of westward expansion, but her presence in the expedition was important for what it told Indian people. Since Indian tribes did not take women on war parties, she was a sign that Lewis and Clark came in peace. Indeed, Clark wrote that her presence assured the Indians that the expedition's intentions were peaceful. Her importance in history is to show us how she was valued by two cultures: Lewis and Clark needed her as a translator, but the Indian people whom the expedition encountered saw her as a sign of peace.¹⁶

Sacagawea has entered not only the mythology of American history but also the history of one contemporary American Indian reservation. She left the expedition with Charbonneau, and the later historical record notes the death of "Charbonneau's squaw" from "putrid fever" in 1811. John Luttig praised her in death as the most honorable woman at Fort Mandan. Most historians have accepted that statement as a record of Sacagawea's death, but the record also shows that Charbonneau had more than one wife, and it is not clear which one died.

There are stories told on the Wind River Shoshone reservation today that Sacagawea left Charbonneau, went her own way through the West, and finally returned to her people. According to this tradition, she died on the reservation in 1884.¹⁷ If her symbolic role as guide and translator is problematic in its consequences for American Indian people today, her myth lives on in American history and has become an important source of identity for contemporary Shoshones.

Nancy Ward, "beloved woman" of the Cherokees, played most dramatically the role of mediator during the period of turbulent relations between Cherokees and colonists in the latter part of the eighteenth century. She was with her husband when he was killed in a battle against the Creeks at Taliwa in 1755. Picking up his rifle, she fought in his place, and the Cherokees prevailed. Not only was she valiant; she was also the grandniece of Old Hop, a leading man of the Cherokee nation, and niece of Attakullakulla, a skillful

Cherokee diplomat and leader. By personal valor and lineage she was an extraordinary woman.

After her demonstration of bravery, Ward was appointed to the office of *Ghigau*, the head beloved woman, in which role she exercised ceremonial and ritual powers and served as a leader of the “white” (peace) town of Chota, also a “mother” town, a designation of the oldest Cherokee towns. In the traditional dichotomy between war (red) and peace (white), Nancy, in her role as a beloved of Chota—the oldest “white” town—stood as a symbol of peace. In that role she also mediated relations among the Overhill Cherokees, white settlers in the Watauga Valley, and the British and American governments during the Revolutionary War.

After her first husband’s death, Nancy married Bryant Ward, an Irishman and a trader. Her daughter, Betsy Ward, married Joseph Martin, Indian agent for the Virginia colony. Martin, one of the first whites in Cherokee territory, became important in upholding Cherokee land claims.¹⁸ Ward’s daughter Kate married Ellis Harlin, another trader. Joseph Martin maintained a trading post at the Long Island of Holston; it became the major depot for goods moving into the Cherokee country, as well as the site of several treaty negotiations. Martin, Harlin, Isaac Thomas, and other “countrymen” who married Cherokee women were integrated into the tribe. They moved between two worlds, and they gathered military intelligence on the actions of British troops and Cherokee war parties.

Recruited as intelligence agents by the British, Harlin and Thomas gave misleading information about Cherokee war intentions. Sent by Nancy Ward, Harlin warned the white people of the Watauga region about an impending Cherokee attack against them by the dissident Chickamaugas. Nancy intervened to save the life of one white captive, Mrs. Lydia Bean, taken during the Cherokee raid on the Watauga settlement. She also informed the British commander Joseph Campbell about the activities of the Chickamaugas.¹⁹

Nancy Ward was a powerful woman in her own right in Cherokee society, but the Cherokees were faced with the push of white colonists passing through the Cumberland Gap to settle a new land. The Cherokees had been decimated by disease and warfare with whites and among themselves.

Was Nancy Ward a traitor to her people when she informed British military officers of the plans of Cherokee warriors? As a beloved woman and councillor at a traditional Cherokee peace town, she was committed to preserving peace. She spoke eloquently to her male kinsmen and to the Ameri-

cans, who after 1785 pressed the Cherokees for cessions of land. She played her role as it was defined in her own culture—advocate for peace. To that end she protected American settlers and informed British military agents of the hostile intentions of Cherokee men.

As a Cherokee woman, Nancy brought new resources into the Cherokee nation through her marriage and the marriages of her daughters. Betsy Ward’s husband, Joseph Martin, acted as an advocate for Cherokee interests, but ultimately Nancy’s efforts to maintain peace failed, and the white men who entered the Cherokee nation were agents of change rather than protectors of culture.

There are no dramatic women like Nancy Ward among the Choctaws, but they too were participants in cultural change. Levi Perry and Charles Durant married Choctaw women and introduced domesticated cattle into the nation. Nancy and Rebecca Cravat, daughters of a Frenchman and a Choctaw woman, together married Louis LeFlore, a French trader. They were reputedly the nieces of Mushulatubbee, one of the principal chiefs of the Choctaw nation. Greenwood LeFlore, son of one of these marriages, was the chief of the Choctaws who signed the removal treaty of 1830.²⁰

There were many such marriages between Choctaw women and white traders and settlers. Nathaniel Folsom sired twenty-four children by two Choctaw wives. His son David became a leading man and ultimately a chief of the Choctaws in 1826. The mixed-blood leaders of the Choctaws struggled during the 1820s under pressure from the U.S. government for cessions of land in Mississippi. They encouraged missionaries to educate their children and represented forces of change in Choctaw culture, but they also wrote a constitution that they hoped would allow them to live peacefully with their white neighbors. They worked to preserve the Choctaw nation as they had come to know it, and they still considered themselves Choctaws.²¹

In this brief survey of history we can mention only some of the more problematic figures. Mary Musgrove Matthews Bosomsworth was crucial to James Oglethorpe’s establishment of the Georgia colony in 1733. She was the niece of Old Brim, chief of the Creeks, and, like Nancy Ward, was important because of her family connections, but since her father was white, she was sent away from the Creek nation to go to school. Mary persuaded her people to give Oglethorpe land for his colony, and she and her respective husbands, all white, became traders—colonial entrepreneurs of a peculiar sort.²²

We cannot give full attention to Molly Brant, who became the mistress

of William Johnson's household in 1759 and bore him eight children during a relationship that probably began in the early 1750s. Her presence in his household must have given him a special insight into Iroquois culture.²³

There is a growing body of literature on the roles that Indian women played in relations between cultures. The studies of fur trade families by Jennifer S. H. Brown and Sylvia Van Kirk document the importance of Indian women both as laborers and as intermediaries between their own people and white men in the fur trade.²⁴ The offspring of mixed marriages are the next important mediators of cultural change. As products of two cultures, they must find their own places in history.²⁵

If historians do not have the voices of Indian women to listen to, anthropologists have a sense of women's lives and positions in their own societies. If historians despair of intentionality, anthropologists may be able to re-create from historical sources and personal observation the continuity of women's roles and motivations in their own cultures. Out of this joint inquiry we may be able to understand how cultures meet, how they change, and the important role that women play in that process.

Notes

1. Garcilaso de la Vega, *The Florida of the Inca*, trans. and ed. John Grief Varner and Jeannette Johnson Varner (Austin, 1988), 298–99; John R. Swanton, *Final Report of the United States De Soto Expedition Commission*, 76th Cong., 1st sess., 1939, H. Doc. 76 (reissued, Washington DC, 1985), 169–70, 182–83.
2. The supposed place of her birth is marked by a monument near Salmon in eastern Idaho. See Ella E. Clark and Margot Edmonds, *Sacagawea of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1979), 7.
3. A concise and perceptive overview of stereotypes of Indian women in American history is Rayna Green, "The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture," *Massachusetts Review* 16 (1975): 698–714.
4. See David Harlan, "Intellectual History and the Return of Literature," *American Historical Review* 94, no. 2 (1989): 588, 608. James Axtell, in a session at a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute entitled "Myth, Memory, and History," held at the Newberry Library, Chicago, in 1990, maintained that contemporary historians are as distant culturally from their eighteenth-century relatives as they might be from American Indian cultures. See also Kathleen Barry, "The New Historical Synthesis: Women's Biography," *Journal of Women's History* 1, no. 3 (1990): 76.
5. Rachel Phillips provides a perceptive reading of Doña Marina's personal history and her role in the larger history of Spanish-Aztec contacts. See Phillips, "Marina/Malinche: Masks and Shadows," in *Women in Hispanic Literature: Icons and Fallen Idols*, ed. Beth Miller (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1983), 97–114. Nigel Davies is one

- historian who questions Marina's actions, saying, for instance, that the warning about a Cholulan plot against Cortez was an "old wives' tale" and that she did nothing to prevent the death of certain Native leaders who were condemned on false allegations. See Davies, *The Aztecs: A History* (New York, 1975), 238, 252, 288. The most sympathetic account of Marina is found in the accounts of Bernal Diaz del Castillo, *The Bernal Diaz Chronicles*, trans. and ed. Albert Idell (New York, 1956). Pictorial representations of Marina as a large figure positioned close to Cortez are found in Bernardino de Sahagún, *Florentine Codex: Manuscript in Nahuatl of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún*, trans. James O. Anderson and Charles E. Dibble, 12 vols. (Salt Lake City UT, 1950), pt. 12, plates 22, 44, 51.
6. John Smith, *The Complete Works of Captain John Smith (1580–1631)*, ed. Philip L. Barbour, 3 vols. (Chapel Hill NC, 1986), 2:258–60.
 7. Samuel Purchas, *Purchas His Pilgrimage; or, Relations of the World*, 2nd ed. (London, 1614), 767. The account is of the Chickahominy's torturing and killing George Cassen, an Englishman. Given Smith's experience, such ritual killing was culturally accepted.
 8. For examples of female leadership, see Robert Steven Grumet, "Sunksquaws, Shamans, and Tradeswomen: Middle Atlantic Coastal Algonkian Women during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in *Women and Colonization: Anthropological Perspectives*, ed. Mona Etienne and Eleanor Leacock (South Hadley MA, 1980), 43–62; and Martha W. McCartney, "Cockacoeske, Queen of Pamunkey: Diplomat and Suzeraine," in *Powhatan's Mantle: Indians in the Colonial Southeast*, ed. Peter H. Wood, Gregory A. Waselkov, and M. Thomas Hatley (Lincoln NE, 1989), 173–95. The written accounts of women leaders are, of course, postcontact, which might suggest that disruption of traditional male leadership patterns put women into leadership roles because there were no male claimants. The strength of matrilineal kinship patterns, mythological traditions, and women's roles in subsistence activities militate against the idea that women assumed powerful roles simply because men had died off.
 9. William Strachey, *The Historie of Travell into Virginia Britania*, ed. Louis B. Wright and Virginia Freund (London, 1953), 72. Strachey did not arrive at Jamestown until 1610, and it is unclear whether the cartwheel episode occurred before or after the famous rescue. John Smith includes the account of the entertainment. See Smith, *Complete Works*, 1:182–83.
 10. Smith, *Complete Works*, 2:198–99.
 11. Smith, *Complete Works*, 2:198–99.
 12. Ralph Hamor, *A True Discourse of the Present State of Virginia* (1615; rpt., Richmond, Virginia State Library Publications, no. 3, 1957), 53–54.
 13. Smith, *Complete Works*, 2:260–61; Samuel Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus; or, Purchas His Pilgrimes, Contayning a History of the World in Sea Voyages and Land Travells*, 20 vols. (Glasgow, 1905–7), 19:104–6, 117–18; Philip L. Barbour, ed., *The Jamestown Voyages under the First Charter, 1600–1609*, Hakluyt Society Publications, 2nd

- ser., vol. 137 (Cambridge, 1969), 459–62. Stuart E. Brown Jr. summarizes the primary literature in *Pocahontas* (Pocahontas Foundation, 1989).
14. Clark and Edmonds, *Sacagawea*, 13.
 15. Elliott Coues, ed., *History of the Expedition under the Command of Lewis and Clark*, 3 vols. (New York, 1965), 2:546–49.
 16. Harold P. Howard, *Sacagawea* (Norman OK, 1973), 34. See James P. Ronda, *Lewis and Clark among the Indians* (Lincoln NE, 1984), for a succinct summary of the scholarship on Sacagawea.
 17. Clark and Edmonds, *Sacagawea*, 106–7; John Luttig, *Journal of a Fur Trading Expedition on the Upper Missouri, 1812–1813*, ed. Stella M. Drum (New York, 1964). I would like to thank Sally McBeth for her ideas expressed in “Metaphorical Transformations of the Myth, Memory, and History of Sacajawea,” the manuscript of a presentation given at a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute entitled “Myth, Memory, and History,” held at the Newberry Library, Chicago, 1990.
 18. Norma Tucker, “Nancy Ward, Ghighau of the Cherokees,” *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 53 (June 1969): 192, 199. See also Ben Harris McClary, “Nancy Ward, Beloved Woman,” *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 21 (December 1962): 352–64.
 19. Sara Parker, “The Transformation of Cherokee Apalachia” (PhD diss., Department of Ethnic Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 1991). I would like to acknowledge Ms. Parker’s insight that white men married to Indian women brought new resources into tribes rather than taking them away from them. The primary sources on Nancy Ward and Joseph Martin are found in the Draper Papers, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison.
 20. Horatio B. Cushman, *History of the Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Natchez Indians* (New York, 1972), 331–32; Samuel J. Wells, “Choctaw Indians and Jeffersonian Policy” (PhD diss., Department of History, Southern Mississippi University, 1987), 66–67.
 21. Cushman, *History of the Choctaw*, 331–32; American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, *Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Compiled from Documents Laid before the Board, at the Seventeenth Annual Meeting, Which Was Held in Middletown (Con.) Sept. 14, and 15, 1826* (Boston, 1826); Henry S. Halbert, “The Last Indian Council on Noxubee River,” *Publications of the Mississippi Historical Society* 4 (1901): 271–81.
 22. E. Merton Coulter, “Mary Musgrove, ‘Queen of the Creeks’: A Chapter of Early Georgia Troubles,” *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 2, no. 1 (1917): 1–30.
 23. Isabel Thompson Kelsay, *Joseph Brant, 1743–1807* (Syracuse NY, 1984), 68–69; Milton W. Hamilton, *Sir William Johnson: Colonial American, 1715–1763* (Port Washington NY, 1976), 35, 304–5; James Thomas Flexner, *Lord of the Mohawks: A Biography of Sir William Johnson* (Boston, 1959), 319–22.
 24. Jennifer S. H. Brown, *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Company Families in Indian Country* (Vancouver, 1980); Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670–1870* (Norman OK, 1980).
 25. See Jacqueline Peterson and Jennifer S. H. Brown, eds., *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Métis in North America* (Lincoln NE, 1985).

4. Woman as Centre and Symbol in the Emergence of Métis Communities

JENNIFER S. H. BROWN

New Introduction by Jennifer S. H. Brown

The following article began life as a paper presented at a small conference on the Métis in Winnipeg, Manitoba, in 1982. “Métis” is a term well established in Canada, though less well known in the United States. In Canadian popular usage, it is a shorthand way of describing people of mixed Native-European descent who in most cases trace their roots back to unions of Native women with English or French fur traders of the mid-1700s to late 1800s. Thousands of people share that dual heritage. Many descendants, however, have followed paths to other ethnic identities; some retained their maternal First Nations or Indian affiliations if involved with communities that were signing Native treaties, while others moved into mainstream Canadian or U.S. society if opportunities arose. Western Métis commonly descend from people who had opportunities to claim land or equivalent compensation in the form of “Halfbreed” scrip grants in western Canada from the 1880s to the early 1900s (when “Indians” were signing treaties); but many other people across Canada also (and increasingly) identify as Métis based on their dual familial roots and connections. Identity depends on many factors besides “blood” (always a problematic criterion) and genealogy.¹

The years from 1980 to 1982, when this piece was written, were seminal for the Métis in Canada, as well as for Métis studies. In 1982, after extended negotiations both internally and with Great Britain, Canada received its own constitution. The Constitution Act, section 35, recognized three Aboriginal peoples in Canada: Indians, Inuit, and Métis—a major development, although the text did not define “Métis”—understandably, given the many issues that definitions of this term present. Métis studies themselves

Until very recent times, in almost every human society, economic production has been gendered. Certain tasks have been regarded as the domain of women, while other work has been seen as appropriately performed by men. Human beings have no universal agreement concerning what work is properly male and what work is properly female, as the long, squalid history of the “squaw drudge/lazy male” stereotype of Native North American peoples makes sadly clear. But the fact that some work is viewed as male and some as female has shaped human perceptions of themselves (and allowed them to vilify Others) for centuries. The multiple theories suggesting why economic work is gendered, whether they are based on biological explanations or religious authorization, are beside the point in this discussion. What is significant here is that, because economic work is gendered, it is a particularly fruitful avenue for the historian to explore. The economic activities of men and women in a given society, the actual labor they perform, and the social recognition accorded them on the basis of that labor nearly always reveal important but differing components of their lives.

Investigations of the intersections of gender and economic production in Native societies have revealed important information about Native women, often when other sources have been absent or unavailing. As the two articles in this section show, gender relations and economics were structured and transformed in very different ways in eighteenth-century southern New England, as studied by Jean O'Brien, and in the nineteenth-century Wisconsin-Illinois region, as studied by Lucy Eldersveld Murphy. The two authors also creatively utilized what might be called unintentional historical sources—wills and other legal documents, census returns and business records—that were created to serve immediate social needs and unintentionally provide later historians with information.

O'Brien's reconstruction of Native life in eighteenth-century New England focuses on Native women's economic strategies during the century that saw Native peoples quietly and inexorably dispossessed of their land base. O'Brien's research reminds us that Native peoples' attachment to their land was not just sentimental; land was also a source of sustenance and economic security. Its loss was devastating and plunged Native peoples, especially women, into poverty. O'Brien also finds that Native women's experiences of economic dispossession and marginalization were different from men's in large part because of the patriarchal assumptions about women brought by the colonizing English.

The second study reveals a very different reality. Murphy examines the fairly peaceful relations among Sauks, Meskwakis, and Ho-chunks (or Winnebagos) and the small towns of southern Wisconsin that had their origin in and owed their continued existence to the fur trade. Women, both of Native and mixed Native and European descent, were central to maintaining these peaceful and reciprocal relations, Murphy argues, and had worked out ways of incorporating outsiders into their communities over the course of centuries. She also describes how Native peoples attempted to incorporate Anglo-American lead miners into their societies using these same tried-and-true strategies, and considers why these efforts failed.

13. “Divorced” from the Land

*Resistance and Survival of Indian Women
in Eighteenth-Century New England*

JEAN M. O'BRIEN

New Introduction by Jean M. O'Brien

Locating sources that capture pre-twentieth-century American Indian history is difficult enough, but finding documents that illuminate Indian women's lives during this time is an even more formidable challenge. In the case of New England, several accounts offer commentary on Indian women and gender roles in the seventeenth century, filtered through cultural lenses that require careful consideration in order to account for biases. (See excerpt from William Wood, *New England's Prospect*, originally published in 1634.) These ethnographic observations provide snapshots of Indian women's lives at the time of sustained and intensive interaction with the English. As such, they also purportedly capture Indian social and cultural worlds prior to a time when European invasion introduced fundamental transformations in Indian America.

These documents thus provide the means for capturing bygone worlds that shaped Indian women's experiences in New England. Yet too often scholarship focuses exclusively on recapturing the “pre-contact” history of Indian peoples. When I conceived “Divorced” from the Land” (in response to an invitation to present a paper on matrilineality and patrilineality in comparative perspective), I decided to shift instead to the eighteenth century for two basic reasons. First, I could find very little historical or ethno-historical literature that did so. And second, I wanted to foreground the fact of social and cultural change in Indian New England. Although Indian women (and men) dramatically transformed their ways of being in

the world in dialogue with English colonialism, such changes represented creative adaptations that have ensured New England Indian survival into the present. A tendency for observers to assume that Indian culture change constituted a diminishment of Indianness has, in my view, contributed to the notion that Indian peoples—and especially New England Indians—had disappeared, or somehow became less Indian. Such assumptions rob Indian people of the capacity for change and create artificial criteria for Indian people as they continually remake themselves for the future.

After I decided to focus on the eighteenth century, the next challenging step was to locate the sources for illuminating that historical moment. As the English extended their reach over Indian New England, their attention to recording Indian lives diminished, thus considerably thinning the documentary record. Indian women (and men) did continue to appear (albeit less frequently) in county and commonwealth documents in Massachusetts, where my previous work had focused. I had already collected many of these documents, and when I decided to write the article I went back and collected more. (Several of these documents are reproduced or excerpted here.)

In framing my article, I juxtaposed material from the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries to illuminate some of the major changes one might consider when comparing portrayals of Indian women. This comparison provides a way to pose questions about what distinguished their experiences, and sets a context for then focusing on their eighteenth-century experiences. Most of the eighteenth-century documents I used for this article are petitions by or on behalf of Indian women and families to the Massachusetts General Court and probate documents generated when Indians died with estates that were then subsumed within the English legal system. Both sets of documents contain valuable information about social and cultural changes of Indian women and families. They illuminate how gender roles had been transformed, how Indian peoples made a living in the wake of their dispossession, and how they retained aspects of earlier material culture in combination with the adoption of new ways of being in the world that ensured their survival. Yet these documents also require care: virtually all of them were produced because the petitioner or petitioners faced substantial problems that required alleviation, and thus might suggest that all Indians faced dire circumstances at the time. The fact that Indians struggled as the English surrounded and dispossessed them cannot override the equally important fact that Indian people in New England survived.

One final note: this article originally appeared in the volume that followed the conference for which I wrote it.¹ When Colin Calloway asked to reprint it for a volume on Indian survival in New England, I asked him if I could rewrite it. Several things about the first version bothered me, and the rewrite allowed me address those nagging concerns. Today it could use yet another rewrite to reflect the continued development of literature in the field. Such is history.

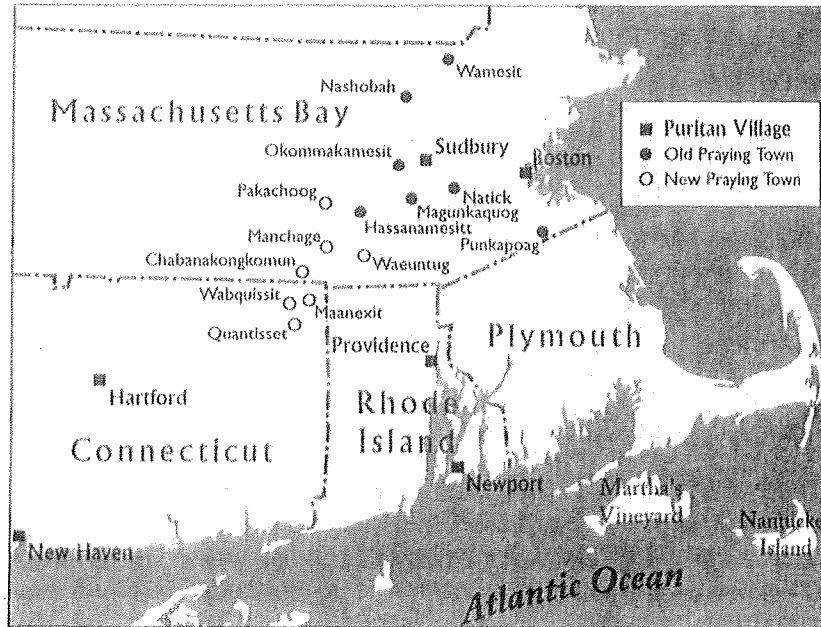
"Divorced" from the Land

*Resistance and Survival of Indian Women
in Eighteenth-Century New England (1997)*

In 1624, Edward Winslow, Governor of Plymouth colony, observed about Native Americans that "[t]he women live a most slavish life; they carry all their burdens, set and dress their corn, gather it in, and seek out for much of their food, beat and make ready the corn to eat and have all household care lying upon them."² Winslow's use of the term "slavish" in this passage is instructive. The portrayal of the Native American woman as "squaw drudge" who toiled endlessly for her "lazier husband" was both a common English analysis of Native American division of labor in the northeastern woodlands and a commentary upon English expectations about gender roles.³ Observers viewed Indian women as "slaves" because, unlike English women, they performed virtually all of the agricultural labor in their societies.⁴ In fact, most labor the English would have regarded as male work was performed by Indian women.

The "squaw drudge" permeated early observations of Native Americans in the Northeast. Two centuries later, different kinds of images of Indian women could be found in local accounts. Consider the following: "The last Indian here was 'Hannah Shiner,' a full-blood who lived with 'Old Toney,' a noble-souled mulatto man . . . Hannah was kind-hearted, a faithful friend, a sharp enemy, a judge of herbs, a weaver of baskets, and a lover of rum."⁵ This description, taken from a nineteenth-century history of Medford, Massachusetts, reflects not just the passage of time but also the extent to which relations, roles, and expectations had changed on both sides of a sustained cultural encounter.

The juxtaposition of these two fundamentally different portrayals reveals crucial changes in the circumstances of Indian women in New England. Four key structural changes differentiate the historical eras from which the



4. Southern New England communities in the early 1670s, reprinted from *Dispossession by Degrees: Indian Land and Identity in Natick, Massachusetts, 1650–1790* by Jean M. O’Brien by permission of the University of Nebraska Press. © 1997 by the University of Nebraska Press.

images come. First, Indian societies that were “tribal” and politically independent prior to intensive colonization became effectively “detrIALIZED” and politically encompassed by the late seventeenth century. By this time, most Indian individuals and families were incorporated into English communities, mostly in small clusters that rendered Indians virtually invisible within the context of the now-dominant New English society. Second, the prosperity of Indian societies, based on diversified agricultural economies and intensive use of seasonally available plant and game resources, was undermined as the English gained possession of nearly all Indian land by the end of the seventeenth century. The central element of the Indian economy was thus eliminated, requiring fundamental changes that resulted in the recasting of Native gender roles. Third, Indian societies that stressed communal values, sharing, and reciprocity were thrust into a market economy with the advent of colonization. Immersion in the market left Indians at the mercy of English legal institutions and affected the shape of Native social welfare practices. And fourth, Indians were quickly rendered a minority population within their own homelands by the astounding success of

the English demographic regime, which was coupled with Indian struggles caused by imported diseases and military encounters. These structural changes compelled Indians to see the landscape in a different way, requiring them to make massive adjustments, and eliciting myriad and contradictory responses.⁶

As they successfully dispossessed and displaced Indians, the heirs of English colonialism seized the power to define the rules governing the social order, and they constructed surviving New England Indians as peculiar and marginal. Local historians underscored the “disappearance” of the Indian population by singling out individuals such as Hannah Shiner as representing the “last survivor” of their “tribe.” Even so, historians used their representations of Indians as peculiar and marginal, as hopelessly “other,” to continue to constitute and affirm an English identity. They presented Indians such as Hannah Shiner as the complement to “Englishness,” thereby reminding themselves of the persistent difference between Indian survivors and themselves. But more than just reinforcing the difference between Indians and themselves, the ways in which they used this binary operated to emphasize English dominance.⁷

The English colonial regime imposed a different landscape, one requiring Indians to transform their relationship to the land. Gender figured prominently in this transformation. The English aimed to “divorce” Indians from their possession of the land in order to establish themselves and English culture in their place. New England Indians’ agricultural, hunting, fishing, and gathering economy was interpreted as wasteful, and the sedentary agriculture pursued by English men was seen as the only proper pursuit for Native men. Yet even as they pursued the larger project of English colonialism (replacing Indians and Indian ways of using the land with English people using the land in English ways), colonists also aimed to convert surviving Indians to English culture. As they separated Indians from possession of virtually all their land, colonists also sought to “divorce” Indian women from their role as agriculturalists, replacing them with male Indians working drastically reduced plots of land to the exclusion of hunting and other older economic pursuits. From the perspective of the English, “divorce” from the land would fulfill the biblical directive to “subdue the earth and multiply” by bringing land into agricultural production to sustain a growing English Christian population. And it would also place Indian women and men in a “proper” relationship to the land. In the most crucial sense, however, the English failed to “divorce” either Indian women or Indian men

from the land. Although in narrow legal terms the English succeeded in imposing their own rules for possessing the land, New England Indians did not monolithically embrace English gender ways. They remained crucially connected to the land that sustained their kinship and visiting networks and their own sense of proper place.⁸

In addressing the transformations accompanying the cultural conflicts between Indians and English colonists, I will focus on the issue of "gendered division of labor" rather than on the important problem of lineality in the northeastern woodlands, which also involved different conceptions of how gender ought to operate. Use of the dichotomous construction of matrilineal/patrilineal obscures much diversity in the ordering of families, reckoning of descent, ordering of power relations, and much more. Because of the paucity of early sources that provide detailed information on social organization, combined with the early occurrence of devastating epidemics throughout the region, there is much we will never know about the "precontact" shape of social organization in the northeastern woodlands. Indian peoples in early New England were concerned overwhelmingly with resisting and surviving English incursions, and the disruptions of epidemics that accompanied early contact certainly must have obscured their previous shape at least to some extent. About all that is evident is that, by the eighteenth century, patrilineal naming practices predominated among Indians; whether this was the case because it had always been so, or because the English imposed these forms on Indians in bureaucratic transactions, is not so clear.⁹

About a gendered division of labor, much more seems to be apparent. Most scholars agree that women performed most agricultural labor (except growing tobacco), built and transported bark or mat wigwams from place to place, manufactured baskets and pottery, gathered shellfish and wild foodstuff, processed hides, made clothing, and raised children. Men also made some household tools and were the principal woodworkers, making canoes and fortifications, for example.¹⁰

By 1700, Native American groups in New England had a long history of encounters with Europeans. Indians reeled from the impact of imported epidemic diseases, with many groups suffering demographic declines on the order of 90 percent. Military conquest followed quickly on the heels of the epidemiological disasters. The last major war in southeastern New England ended in 1676, terminating the political independence of those Native groups who had hitherto avoided encompassment by the English. These events effectively ended the autonomy of Indian groups in that region and rendered

many aspects of the aboriginal economy obsolete through massive displacement and dispossession. Under the cumulative impact of the colonial experience, a great many New England Indians found themselves landless, a diasporic population vulnerable to the institutions of English colonialism.¹¹

Missionary sponsorship had secured land bases for several Indian groups in the seventeenth century as part of English efforts to transform Indian cultures. Here, the English expected Indians to alter their gender roles in conformity with English cultural prerogatives.¹² Indian groups were allowed to retain small plots of land provided they would express responsiveness to missionary messages about cultural change. The English expected Indians to erect compact, English-style towns in order to fix them in particular places, directed men to forego hunting in favor of agricultural duties, and trained women in "household skills," especially spinning and weaving. Indians were encouraged to adopt English work habits, individual ownership of land, English tastes in material culture, and values structured by a market economy. Some Indians experimented with cultural transformations along these lines, but success in the market economy did not follow so easily. Many Indians were landless at the beginning of the eighteenth century, and, as their land was transformed into a commodity, Indian landowners continued to lose land.¹³ Many were encompassed within the flourishing English settlements, finding niches in colonial economies, performing agricultural and nonagricultural labor.

Although some Indians steadfastly resisted English influences on their life-ways, and others struggled within the market economy, still others borrowed extensively from English culture as a means of accommodating to English colonialism. In some senses, Jacob and Leah Chalcom symbolized Indian transformation as conceptualized by the English. Chalcom purchased land, established an English-style farm, and built a frame house in Natick, Massachusetts, an important mission town established seventeen miles southwest of Boston. He was involved actively in the local land market, buying and selling small parcels from time to time as he strove to upgrade his farm. The cultural priorities of this family are visible in their childrearing practices. The Chalcom children were literate, and the daughters were given dowries upon their marriages to local Indian men.¹⁴ After his death, Chalcom's estate included a thirty-acre homelot and "Buildings thereon," plus other lands, an assortment of household goods and husbandry tools, a horse, a cow, and books. After debts against his estate were discharged, fifty-two acres of land remained to be divided among his heirs.¹⁵

The women in Chalcom's family had made corresponding changes in their lifeways, including their separation from agricultural tasks. Leah Chalcom and her widowed daughters, Esther Sooduck and Hepzibeth Peegun, inherited land from their husband and father, respectively. Finding themselves without husbands, they pondered what to do with their inheritance. In 1759 they petitioned the Massachusetts General Court to sell their forty-six acres, arguing that "as your Petitioners [have been] brought up to Household business, [we are] incapable of improving said lands."¹⁶ They requested that their lands be sold and the money be put out to earn interest for their income and support, a strategy adopted by a number of women. The implication here is quite clear: these women were no longer farmers and were thus unable to "improve" the land except insofar as it represented a monetary resource. The mother and daughters recognized that English financial strategies could sustain them and prolong the nurturing functions of land from which they were effectively torn loose. Putting money "at interest" constituted one strategy for women who had maintained clear "legal" connections to the land. Their decision not to use the land for gardening, as English women often did, in part reflected their perception that if they chose to keep the land it would "speedily be exhausted by frequent Law-Suits."¹⁷

The "Household business" to which Leah Chalcom and her daughters referred reflects the efforts of English missionaries to realign Native American gender roles. Biblical imperatives motivated missionaries who aimed to train Indian women in English skills for structuring a household, and to integrate Indian families into the market economy. In 1648, missionary John Eliot wrote that: "[t]he women are desirous to learn to spin, and I have procured Wheels for sundry of them, and they can spin pretty well. They begin to grow industrious, and find something to sell at Market all the year long[.]"¹⁸ Some Indian women continued to pursue these tasks that missionaries had pushed so vigorously in the early years of intensive English-Indian contact. Fifteen percent of inventories of Indian estates from Natick filed between 1741 and 1763 listed spinning wheels.¹⁹ Ruth Thomas, who died in 1758, was described in her probate docket as a weaver; Esther Freeborn and Hannah Lawrence, sisters who both left wills, were described as spinsters.²⁰

Esther Sooduck, also a weaver, died in 1778. Her probate documents vividly evoke the kinds of changes Indian women confronted even though very few accumulated and held onto material goods as successfully as Esther had.²¹ Her house, described as "much out of repair," nonetheless con-

tained an impressive array of furnishings and sat upon thirty acres of land. Included among her belongings were a bed and bedstead, a chest, a trunk, a rug, a table and two chairs, plus knives, forks, and pewter. She read her two old Bibles with "speticals." She owned two spinning wheels as well as baskets and "Baskets Stuf."²² Apparently merged in her economic pursuits were English skills (spinning and weaving) and Native American artisanal production (basket-making).

Native American women displayed transformations in their work habits, material life, aesthetic emphases, and even physical their appearance. Hannah Lawrence owned several articles of clothing when she died in the 1770s, including several gowns and aprons (one of them linen) as well as quilted petticoats and a pair of shoes with buckles.²³ Cloth replaced animal skins; petticoats and gowns were substituted for skirts and leggings. These accommodations were rooted in more than a century of profound cultural change. And in many ways, they represent an *uprooting*, a broken connection: English-style clothing signified the distance women had moved from their former way of life. Eighteenth-century economic adaptations no longer produced the materials for older ways of clothing production, and adopting English style probably reflected not just this reality but also newer Indian tastes.

There were many ways in which Native American women in eighteenth-century New England *were* divorced from the land: the colonial experience reoriented their relationship to the land in tangible and not so tangible ways. English ideals for cultural change aimed to realign the Indians' gendered economy and make room for English people to subdue the land in English ways. For Indian women this meant a stark separation: once the principal producers of the crucial agricultural element of subsistence economies, women were expected to sever the vital connection they had to the soil as its principal cultivators and nurturers. Though the English who wanted to accomplish these changes may not have noticed, their models for transformation went well beyond a simple shift in the gendered organization of labor. On the practical level, knowledge and skills were altered drastically, and the content of material life was dramatically recast. On the ideological level, less visible reverberations can only be imagined in individual and corporate identity, belief systems, and other deeply rooted cultural values. The tensions accompanying these transformations can be glimpsed in one possible explanation for the ultimate failure of Indian men as farmers in a market economy, which suggests that their reluctance to tend crops stemmed from

their view that these "effeminate" pursuits properly remained women's work.²⁴ In refusing English gender ideals, many Indian men resisted this foundational concept of English colonialism.

Leah Chalcom, Esther Sooduck, Hannah Lawrence—all of these women came from one kind of Indian community. They all lived in Indian-dominated towns, their land ownership sanctioned by the English, who conferred "possession" of these reduced plots of land according to English legal principles. At least in this nominal sense, they were beneficiaries of missionary endeavors.²⁵ Although they were relatively successful in emulating English ways, as the eighteenth century unfolded, the slow but steady dispossession of Indian landowners allowed fewer Indians to replicate earlier successes. Other Indians were uprooted utterly almost from the beginning of their contact with the English. They adjusted to English invasion differently, mapping out alternative kinds of lifeways. After the 1660s, for example, "The remnant of the Pocumtuck Confederacy, adopting in part the English costume, had gathered about the English in the valley towns. . . . Here they lived a vagabond life, eking out, as they could, a miserable existence on the outskirts of civilization. . . . So hampered, their stock of venison or beaver, with which to traffic for English comforts, was small, and the baskets and birch brooms made by the squaws ill supplied their place."²⁶

This is a stark outline of the principal difficulties Indians faced in making the transition to landlessness within a society emphasizing the market. With the possibilities for hunting gone, and no land—what remained? Production of Indian crafts constituted one possibility for women, who remained important in the economy and maintained this earlier economic role, which was possible even when landless. In their artisanal production, women continued to cultivate the specialized knowledge required to gather materials for fashioning baskets and other crafts. Their craftwork represented a revealing accommodation to dispossession: reaping basket stuff did not require "possession" of the land. At the same time, in marketing Indian goods, they earned an income and reinforced their "Indianness" in the popular perception.

Craft production by Indian women constituted one of the crucial threads that ran through the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries in New England. Indian women in the eighteenth century were engaged especially in basket making as an economic activity, but other artisanal skills were added as well.²⁷ In 1764, Abigail Moheag attested that she was "64 years of Age and . . . a widow [for] more than fifteen years and hath . . . by

her Industry in the business of making Brooms Baskets and horse Collars; Supported her Self till about two years ago She was taken sick."²⁸ The inventory from Hannah Speen's estate listed "baskets and barks, broombs and broomb-sticks."²⁹ Craftwork, including the production of "new" items like horse collars, moved from the periphery of women's economic activities to the center as Indian women became enmeshed in the market and were no longer engaged in farming. For some women, craft production was fundamentally redefined. No longer one activity in an integrated economy, performed seasonally and for purposes largely internal to the household, artisanal activities became specialized and divorced from seasonal rhythms, and a principal means to get a living.

Wage labor constituted another possibility for Indian women. It remains unclear just what kind of work Indian women were doing, or what it was they received in return. In 1755, the circumstances of some Indian women at Mattakeset were such that "at present they live among White People, and work with them for a living."³⁰ The formula in these kinds of situations may have involved the contribution of unskilled and unspecialized labor, perhaps domestic work, in exchange for small wages or even some degree of basic sustenance. The existence of small clusters of Indians in virtually every Massachusetts town suggests that the lives of English colonists and Indians were intertwined in ways we are only beginning to understand.³¹

Disruption of Native societies extended to every sphere, requiring their constant adjustment. Marginal individuals, that is, those with few relatives or friends, Indian or non-Indian, and little in the way of economic resources, suffered the most. Prior to Indian enmeshment in the market, caretaking and nursing constituted central kinship obligations. During the eighteenth century, as kinship networks thinned, families became fractured, and involvement in the market made prosperity precarious at best. Individuals could no longer count on thick networks of relatives to care for them when they were in need of shelter, sustenance, or support. Nursing and caretaking became commodified and unreliable. Even when an intact family was in place, taking on caretaking obligations in this changed context could spell the economic ruin of a precariously established family. These developments represented the cumulative effect of generations of demographic decline, military conquest, economic disruption, and cultural transformation. Abigail Speen reported to the General Court in 1747 that she had: "by Reason of her great age & infirmities . . . been long and still is Unable to do anything to Support herself, & so having cast herself on Mr. Joseph Graves of Sd Natick

[an Englishman]; She has been kind entertained & Supported at his House now for near two years, & has nothing to recompense Sd Graves with nor to procure for her the Necessaries of Life for the time present & to come."³² This woman had land, and she liquidated the remainder of her estate in order to pay Graves. No doubt he realized that his "investment" was secured by that plot of land she owned in Natick. This replacement of Indian kinship obligations with market-driven social welfare occurred throughout New England and accounted for much dispossession of Indian peoples who might otherwise face legal proceedings for debts they accumulated.³³

Just as Abigail Speen cast herself on Joseph Graves, Indian women cast themselves upon other Indian women, too. What differed in the eighteenth century was that these women were not necessarily relatives, and that nursing or caretaking was often given in exchange for monetary compensation. The administrators of the estate of Elizabeth Paugenit, for example, allowed nearly two pounds to Hannah Awassamug "for nursing."³⁴ Sarah Wamsquan was cared for by Eunice Spywood, among others. Englishman John Jones petitioned the General Court in 1770, setting forth Sarah's dire circumstances and begging: "let something be done that Shall Speedily relieve the poor person that has her—or they will perish together."³⁵ Town authorities did not always countenance such arrangements. In 1765, when "Sarah Short a molatto woman Last from Wrentham [was] Taken in by Esther Sodeck," Natick selectmen feared she would become a town charge and warned her that she should leave the town.³⁶

Banding together just to survive, these women struggled within a radically changing world. Often their situation was complicated by the dramatic transformations accompanying their dispossession, which stretched Indian communities thinly across the landscape to form a network of small clusters of families throughout southeastern New England. One response was to move constantly in search of a niche. As landlessness accelerated throughout the eighteenth century, a pattern of Indian vagrancy emerged: this pattern, accepted by the dominant society as natural, was also an accommodation strategy. Indian women, especially, were described as wandering from place to place, a characteristic that was associated in the public mind particularly with Indians. An Englishman of Dorchester petitioned the General Court in 1753 as follows: "An Indian Woman called Mercy Amerquit, I think Born Somewhere about Cape-Cod, but had no settled Dwellingplace any where, . . . Strolled about from one Town & Place to another, & sometimes she wrought for Persons that wanted her work[. She] came to my House . . . and

desired liberty to tarry a little while, and your Petr condescended, expecting that she would go some other place in a little time (as their manner is) and what work she did for your Petr she was paid for as she earned it."³⁷ It is clear from this passage that English observers expected Indians to "wander." Their semi-sedentary lifeways had always been regarded most simplistically as nomadism. In the eighteenth century this translated into constant movement, "from one Town & Place to another . . . as their manner is." In this case, an arrangement seems to have been negotiated that involved Mercy Amerquit performing labor for wages as well as for her temporary residence with the narrator. He expected her to "go [to] some other place in a little time," and the arrangement was regarded as rather unexceptional. The only reason this relationship was documented at all was because Amerquit died while in the petitioner's residence and he sought to recover money he expended for her burial.

The story of Mercy Amerquit was by no means unique. An Englishman from Roxbury reported to the General Court about sixty-year-old Hannah Comsett, who became ill at his house: "She informs that her Mother was born at Barnstable, she at Scituate, and that for 30 years past she has been [strolling] about from Town to Town getting her living where she could but never lived During that time the space of one year at any Town at any time."³⁸ Though Hannah Comsett's mobility seems rather astounding, there are so many similar stories available that it is certain it was not an aberration.

The mechanisms behind Indian vagrancy were complex. Prior to the arrival of the English, Indian societies in New England reaped abundance from economies that depended upon knowledge about and extensive use of resources and a semi-sedentary lifeway. Scheduled mobility lay at the center of this system. In the eighteenth century, Indian migrations may have been scheduled, but if so, they were motivated by very different priorities, since they could no longer rely on movements governed by independently composed Indian communities to and from places that "belonged" to them in the strict legal sense. Probably kinship ties and some knowledge of labor markets entered into movements, but for women like Mercy and Hannah, there seemed to be nothing particularly patterned about their shifting about. Perhaps it was setting about to track the occasional charitable English colonist that spurred on the solitary and needy Indian women, from whom a different kind of resource might be procured. One important element that differentiated earlier migratory practices from new patterns was their largely individual nature; this new "vagrancy" drew upon older

patterns and places, but was not necessarily kin-group sponsored movement with planned, deliberate ends in mind. At the heart of the problem lay landlessness, whether it had resulted from military conquest in the seventeenth century or from failure in the market economy in the eighteenth. "Divorced" from the land initially when their economic role was redefined along English lines, a much more literal separation had been accomplished for most by the middle of the eighteenth century.

The situation of these women hints at two recurrent themes regarding Indian women in eighteenth-century New England. First, transiency is graphically described in a manner consistent with the emerging problem of landless poverty in New England more generally. The "wandering Indian" had much in common with the "strolling poor,"³⁹ although the fact that the English categorically distinguished between the two offers testimony for their separatist views about race. The problem of Indian women seems to have been compounded, however. The extent to which these are stories of women alone, or mostly alone, is the second theme and it is most striking.

Where were the men? The evidence suggests that, despite the missionary model of settled agriculture performed by men within nuclear families on family farms, transiency also remained characteristic even of landowning Indian men. Most Indian landowners lost what they had over time, and the tendency for Indian men to enter service in two areas (military service and the emerging whaling industry) contributed to a grossly distorted sort of transiency.⁴⁰ As a result of their participation in these activities, Indian men were absent for extended periods of time, engaged in dangerous pursuits that seriously jeopardized their lives and well-being and compromised their ability to function effectively within the English-dominated society. Whaling, in fact, fostered the same sort of debt peonage that proved so devastating in fur trade relationships.⁴¹ These orientations contributed to uncertainty and instability for Indian families and also reduced the number of Indian men available as desirable spouses. Interpretations of the involvement of Indian men in the military and labor at sea have stressed the continuity in skills and culturally determined priorities they offered them.⁴² But some men also abandoned their families to escape their predicaments; evidence may be found in scattered narratives of Indian men "absconding" as difficult circumstances evolved into insurmountable economic and legal problems. Such was the case for Eunice Spywood's husband, who "Some Years Ago Absconded and left her in very distressing Circumstances, and he . . . never returned."⁴³

An important cumulative effect of English colonialism was to reconfig-

ure the relationships among Indian mobility, a gendered division of labor, and household structures. The semi-sedentary Indian economy entailed a gendered mobility that assumed that women and men would be apart for periods of time: men departed central villages for hunting and fishing, leaving women to tend crops and gather wild plant resources near their villages, for example.⁴⁴ But these periods of separation were scheduled, part of the seasonal rhythm of life, and as such they rendered neither women nor men helpless. Newer patterns of male mobility (such as participation in the whaling industry and the military) that drew upon older Indian lifeways frequently left women alone to experience harsher circumstances than before, when kin-based social welfare and flexible marriages had provided them with the means to alleviate their wants.⁴⁵ At least for women like Mercy Amerquit and Hannah Comsett, mobility was circumscribed by virtue of their being separated from men. And whereas whaling and military service may have reformulated earlier patterns of Indian male mobility, allowing men to resist the redefinition of gender in economic and social roles, the wives of these men—women like Eunice Spywood—were defined as "responsibilities" in new ways and experienced far greater hardship as a result of their men's flight. The English nuclear family model thus reconfigured kin responsibilities and marriage, leaving Indian women newly vulnerable to "divorce" in dramatically different ways.

Whatever the underlying motivations, Indians of both sexes experienced hardship as a direct result of participation of Indian men in military service, especially. The social and demographic impact of the Seven Years' War on Indian enclaves in New England was enormous. In 1756, a cluster of Indians at Mattakesett in Pembroke, Massachusetts, pleaded to the General Court "that Several of us [have] in the late Warrs, lost our husbands & Sons, & Some of our Sons [are] yet in Sd Service, & that some of us are old, blind, & bed rid & helpless poor Creatures, Many of us [are] old Women & want help."⁴⁶ Indians of Eastham and Harwich in Barnstable County, Massachusetts, complained that many of their men "Have Died in ye Service & left their Squa & Children in Distressing Circumstances."⁴⁷ In 1761 Ezra Stiles reported that in Portsmouth, Rhode Island, "4 Ind. Boys [had] enlisted in the service . . . only one Boy more in Town, & he [is] about 10 y. old. I can't find . . . any Ind. Men in Town, . . . but several Squaws, perhaps 8 or 10." At Milford, Connecticut, there were twenty male Indians in 1755, at the beginning of the Seven Years' War, but in 1761 "not one: but 3 or 4 Squaws."⁴⁸

Even when they did return, many Indian men were rendered incapable

of working to support themselves or their families as a result of war-related disabilities. Thomas Awassamug complained to the Massachusetts General Court in 1761 that "he having been engaged . . . as a Soldier . . . for more than thirty years past, has indured inexpressible hardships, and fatigues and thereby brought on him the Gout, and many other ailments . . . And [he has] no means of support." Awassamug sought to stir compassion by describing in detail his "deplorable Circumstances," and to clarify his own relationship with the colony by reminding the magistrates that he had "jeopardized his life in so many . . . very dangerous Enterprizes against those of his nation who remain Savage, and in behalf of his friends, the English."⁴⁹ The General Court allowed a small sum to be paid out of the public treasury for his temporary relief.

No comprehensive evidence is available to investigate the precise dynamics of demographic change for Indians in eighteenth-century New England. Several censuses gathered by Stiles in his journeys through the region are suggestive, however. In addition to his more random observations, Stiles compiled detailed lists of residents by household from three Indian communities he visited in 1761 and 1762. In these communities, widows constituted heads of households in proportions ranging from 29 percent (Mashantucket Pequot in Groton, Connecticut) to 52 percent (the "Potenummekuk" Indians in Eastham and Nauset, Massachusetts). These figures suggest that the tribulations outlined above were not idle and unconnected complaints.⁵⁰

One solution to the apparently growing problem of unbalanced sex ratios and insufficient numbers of Indian men was for Indian women to find spouses among free or enslaved African Americans, who occupied similarly marginal positions in New England. The dynamics of intermarriage between Indians and African Americans are difficult to map precisely from the surviving documentary record. Impressionistic evidence does exist. Stiles observed in 1761 that "At Grafton [Massachusetts] . . . I saw the Burying place & Graves of 60 or more Indians. Now not a Male Ind. in the Town, & perh. 5 Squaws who marry Negroes." A nineteenth-century history of Needham, Massachusetts, noted that there was "a colony of negroes, with more or less Indian blood, dwelling along the south shore of Bullard's Pond (Lake Waban)."⁵¹ Clearly, intermarriage did occur, as yet another kind of accommodation on the part of Indian women, representing an important demographic shift for Native populations of the northeast.

Equating "Indianness" with "blood quantum" (the perceived importance of "pure" blood lines) in rigid ways, English observers failed to understand the demographic and cultural changes that were reconfiguring "race" in New

England. Intermarriage, which blurred the picture for those who looked for racial "purity," helped the Native population of New England to survive the devastating consequences of English colonization. Most colonists who noticed Indians just lamented what they saw as an inevitable process of extinction. Some vaguely grasped the complex process of vagrancy and intermarriage that was so central to eighteenth-century accommodations, even if their cultural blinders rendered them incapable of analyzing the changes. In 1797, the minister at Natick observed: "It is difficult to ascertain the complete number of those that are now here, or that belong to this place, as they are so frequently shifting their place of residence, and are intermarried with blacks, and some with whites; and the various shades between these, and those that are descended from them, make it almost impossible to come to any determination about them."⁵² Indians became, like other groups displaced by the colonizing impulse of the English, a diasporic population defined by the complex transformations and dislocations brought about by English colonialism. In the end, the migratory pattern and complexities of intermarriage created an erroneous impression in the minds of English observers that the Native population was simply and inevitably melting away.⁵³

In truth, monumental Indian adjustments spanned the entire colonial period and stretched into the nineteenth century. Both precontact Native American societies in the northeast and early modern European societies were organized according to particular expectations about gender roles. In New England, Indian women were responsible for most agricultural tasks, for gathering wild foods, building houses, most craft production, and child-rearing. Men were warriors, diplomats, hunters, and fishermen, and they aided women in agricultural production by clearing fields. This way of organizing society came into direct conflict with English expectations, and the ability to maintain an economy that perfectly reflected older Native gender roles ran into the hard realities of changing circumstances. The loss of political independence and the massive displacement of Indians within their homelands brought tremendous changes that affected Indian women and men in different ways. Hunting and fishing became marginal, diplomacy became obsolete, and military involvement was transformed into economic activity. Agriculture was enormously altered in technique and organization: it became predominantly if not exclusively a male activity for Indian landowners, and it became a diminishing element of the Indian economy as Indians continued to lose land throughout the eighteenth century.

Although English expectations for change within Indian culture (encapsu-

lated most fully in missionary platforms) called for altering the gendered Indian division of labor, the English did not fully succeed in "divorcing" Indian women (or men) from the land. Even though they quite successfully dispossessed Indians, Indians remained in the homelands that continued to sustain their kin, community, and sense of place. Indian women and men found creative solutions for resisting displacement and surviving as Indian people in a milieu theoretically designed to erase their difference completely.

How does all of this connect to Hannah Shiner? The manner in which she is portrayed in the nineteenth-century account that I began with, compared to how she might have been characterized in the seventeenth century, speaks volumes. This Indian woman is not described generically, as most Indian women were when regarded as members of a tribal unit, but as an individual with an Anglicized name. Her categorization as an Indian is based on the observer's judgment of her (pure) genealogy. And her husband is seen as a "mulatto," a mate who probably could trace some African American heritage. Hannah Shiner was assigned several traits, including two ("judge of herbs" and "weaver of baskets") that were associated in the public imagination with "Indianness," and especially with Indian women. They also suggest trades, or means of support, that had always been female activities. Hannah Shiner symbolizes the tumultuous changes experienced by Native peoples in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century New England. Indian peoples survived the catastrophe of English colonization, and they resisted the erasure of their Indianness. Men and women experienced the fundamental transformations in their lifeways differently. "Divorced" from the land in some respects but, crucially, not in others, many women displayed the characteristics that are visible in this brief description of Hannah Shiner. Apparently accepted and incorporated as an individual member of the community of Medford, Massachusetts, Hannah Shiner represents a particular kind of transformation, though not of the sort English missionaries had in mind. "Marginal" and a bit "exotic," she was portrayed as a bit of "local color," a tangible tie to what seemed to be (but was not) an increasingly distant Indian past. Her configuration by a local historian as such was precisely what Anglo-Americans needed for her to continue to represent the "otherness" necessary for the ongoing construction of their own difference.

Appendix: William Wood's *New England's Prospect*

Published in London in 1634, William Wood's New England's Prospect is regarded as an unusually important early natural history and ethnography by

a writer mired in some obscurity. Likely based on approximately four years of personal observation and crafted in part as promotional literature and justification for colonialism, New England's Prospect found a ready audience in England that resulted in the publication of a second edition the following year.⁵⁴ The following is an excerpt from chapter 19 of Wood's book.⁵⁵

"Of Their Women, Their Dispositions, Employments, Usage by Their Husbands, Their Apparel, and Modesty"

To satisfie the curious eye of women-readers, who otherwise might thinke their sex forgotten, or not worthy a record, let them peruse these few lines, wherein they may see their owne happinesse, if weighed in the womans ballance of these ruder *Indians*, who scorne the tuterings of their wives, or to admit them as their equals, though their qualities and industrious deservings may justly claime the preheminance, and command better usage and more conjugall esteeme, their persons and features being every way correspondent, their qualifications more excellent, being more loving, pittiful, and modest, milde, provident, and laborious than their lazie husbands. Their employments be many: First their building of houses, whose frames are formed like our garden-arbours, something more round, very strong and handsome, covered with close-wrought mats of their owne weaving, which deny entrance to any drop of raine, though it come both fierce and long, neither can the piercing North winde find a crannie, through which he can convey his cooling breath, they be warmer than our *English* houses; at the top is a square hole for the smoakes evacuation, which in rainy weather is covered with a pluver;⁵⁶ these bee such smoakie dwellings, that when there is good fires, they are not able to stand upright, but lie all along under the smoake, never using any stooles or chaires, it being as rare to see an *Indian* sit on a stoole at home, as it is strange to see an *Englishman* sit on his heeles abroad. Their houses are smaller in the Summer, when their families be dispersed, by reason of heate and occasions. In Winter they make some fiftie or threescore foote long, fortie or fiftie men being inmates under one rooffe; and as it their husbands' occasion these poore tectonists⁵⁷ are often troubled like snailles, to carrie their houses on their backs sometime to fishing-places, other times to hunting-places, after that to a planting place, where it abides the longest: an other work is their planting of corne, wherein they exceede our *English* husband-men, keeping it so cleare with their Clamme shell-hoes, as if it were a garden rather than a corne-field, not suffering a choaking weede to advance his audacious head above their infant corne, or an

undermining worme to spoile his spurnes.⁵⁸ Their corne being ripe, they gather it, and drying it hard in the Sunne, convey it to their barnes, which be great holes digged in the ground in forme of a brasse pot, seled with rinds of trees . . . An other of their employments is their Summer proces- sions to get Lobsters for their husbands, wherewith they baite their hookes when they goe a fishing for Basse or Codfish. This is an everyday's walke, be the weather cold or hot, the waters rough or calme, they must dive some- times over head and eares for a Lobster, which often shakes them by their hands with a churlish nippe and bids them adiew. The tide being spent, they trudge home two or three miles, with a hundred weight of Lobsters at their backs, and if none, a hundred scoules meete them at home, and a hungry belly for two dayes after. Their husbands having caught any fish, they bring it in their boates as farre as they can be water, and there leave it; as it was their care to catch it, so it must be their wives paines to fetch it home, or fast: which done, they must dresse it and cooke it, dish it, and present it, see it eaten over their shoulders; and their loggerships⁵⁹ having filled their paunches, their sweete lullabies scramble for their scrappes. In the Summer these *Indian* women when Lobsters be in their plenty and prime, they drie them to keepe for Winter, erecting scaffolds in the hot sun-shine, making fires likewise underneath them, by whose smoake the flies are expelled, till the substance remain hard and drie. In this manner they dry Basse and other fishes without salt, cutting them very thinne to dry suddainley⁶⁰ be- fore the flies spoile them, or the raine moist them, having a speciall care to hang them in their smoakie houses, in the night and dankish weather.

In summer they gather flagges,⁶¹ of which they make Matts for houses, and Hempe and Rushes, with dyeing stuffe of which they make curious bas- kets with intermixed colours and protractures of antique Imagerie: These baskets be of all sizes from a quart to a quarter, in which they carry their luggage. In winter time they are their husbands Caterers, trudging to the Clamm bankes for their belly timber, and their Porters to lugge home their Venison which their lazienesse exposes to the Woolves till they impose it upon their wives shoulders. They likewise sew their husbands shooes, and weave coates of Turkie feathers, besides all their ordinary household drudg- erie which daily lies upon them, so that a bigge bellie hinders no businesse, nor a childebirth takes much time, but the young Infant being greased and sooted, wrapt in a Beaver skin, bound to his good behaviour with his feete up to his bumme, upon a board two foote long and one foote broade, his face exposed to all nipping weather; this little *Pappouse* travells about with

his bare footed mother to paddle in the Icie Clammbankes after three or foure days of age have sealed his passeboard and his mother's recovery.

Appendix: Selections from the Massachusetts Archives

The next six documents can be found in the Massachusetts State Archives at Columbia Point, Boston, the depository of the official records produced and collected by the commonwealth since 1629. All of these documents are found in the collection of documents relating to Indian affairs. The first is from volume 32, document 65.

Petition of Mattekeset Indian Guardians⁶² responding to Memorial of Pa- tience & others

. . . One of them namely Peter Job is but a New Comer there, and with Respect to the Said Patience and her Grandson Caleb and Others that have dwelling Houses there, the Said Guardians Set out to them Such Portions as they Thot Proper after inquiring into their Circumstances and Manner of living by their Neighbours the white people; and which were at the time of it to Their Sattisfaction exprsed to the Guardians from the Indians [own?] Mouths. With Respect to Others of the Subscribers it did not appear to the Said Guardians that they were proper Owners of Land ther. Tho: their Re- lations who were originally Foreigners,⁶³ were Suffer'd by the Sachems⁶⁴ to make Some Improvement there formerly, and Since Decd and their Habita- tions Demolished, and the Petitioners being women, are not in a Capacity to build Houses, and as at present they live among White People, and worke with them for a living.

Samll Bradford

Jonah Edson

Nathaniel Smith, Guardians

Massachusetts Archives, volume 32, document 375.

The Petition of John Robinson of Dorchester in ye County of Suffolk, and Province aforesaid, Gentleman, Humbly, Sheweth,

That an Indian Woman called Mercy Amerquit, I think Born somewhere about Cape-Cod, but had no settled Dwellingplace any where, but strolled about from one Town & Place to another, & sometimes wrought for Per- sons that wanted her work, came to my House in Dorchester aforesaid,

sometime in ye Month of October 1751, & brought with her a young Child of about Two Months old in her arms, and desired liberty to tarry a little while, and your Petr condescended, expecting that she would go to some other place in a little time (as their manner is) and what work she did for your Petr she was paid for as she earned it; But about ye middle of January following, she was taken Sick of a tedious Sickness & very Delirious, That after about 20 Days Sickness she Died, leaving her young Child upon your Petrs Hands; That your Petr was obliged out of meer Humanity as she was in his House; & so extreme bad, to send for a Physician for her, & to provide things for her that were necessary for her in her Sickness, & to nurse her, and also after she Died to Bury her; That your Petr Expended upon her ye Sum of Three Pounds Fifteen Shillings & Ten Pence, as appears by ye following Accompt . . .

[Petition was dismissed by the Council, September 11, 1753]

The following is an excerpt from a petition that complains of the encroachment of Englishmen, especially upon their ancient whaling beaches. Massachusetts Archives, volume 33, document 10.

The Humble Petition of us the Subscribers In Behalf of our Selves and Brethren Indian natives of ye Towns of Eastham and Harwich in ye County of Barnstable and Province Aforesd Humbly Sheweth.

. . . that we were Never more in a Distressing Case [than?] at present: As many of our Nation Have Entred into ye Warr with the English Against ye French and Indians in Alliance with them And many of them Have Died in ye Service & Left their Squa & Children in Distressing Circumstances. And as there is Many Old Crippled Indians among us that stand in Great Need of Relief all Which is under a Greater Necessity of making ye Best Improvements of What Little Lands that are Still Left in our Hands . . .

Isaac James

Joshua Ralph

Joshua Jethro

James Oliver

John Ralph Jen

[?]

Thomas [?]

Samuel [?]

Amos Laraninc

Massachusetts Archives, volume 33, document 106–107

The Petition of Leah Chalcom, Esther Sooduck, and Hepzibeth Peagun, Indian women of Natick in the County of Middlesex

That Your Petitioners being [posses?] of about Forty six acres of land in Said Natick, the fee where of is in themselves: As also of a small right in the Common and undivided lands in said Natick which is of small value; And your Petitioners being brought up to Household business, are incapable of improving Said lands: And their Predecessor/under whome they hold their present possession/ having many Years Ago, Sold Twenty Acres of very valuable land in Said Natick, the title where of having Since failed, Your Petitioners (being Subjected by Law) having paid for the Said lands and Secured the title thereof & the present occupants, and thereby involved themselves in debts to the value of about thirty five pounds Lawful money: And unless they Are impowered to Sell Some of their Lands, to discharge the Same, the whole of their Estate will speedily be exhausted by frequent Law-Suits; And as the [Remaining?] part of their Said Estate would be of More Advantage if Sold and the money at intrest in the hands of their Trustees or the money at intrest in the hands of their Trustees or Guardians, the Intrest thereof /and only that/ to be applyed to their yearly support, as they Shall need the Same—Therefore your Petitioners Pray that Your Excellency and this Honll Court will grant them power to Sell their Said lands already laid out, and their Common Rights, their Said debts being paid, the remainder of ther proceeds to be kept at Intrest for their support as above & Your Petitioners in duty bound Shall Ever Pray [&c]

Natick June 1 1759

Leah Chalcom

Esther Sooduck

Hepzibeth Pegun [their marks]

endorsed by John Jones & Jos. Buckminster, Guardians

granted Oct 17 1759

Massachusetts Archives, volume 33, document 300–301

The Petition of Abigail Moheag of Natick . . . Indian woman

Humbly Sheweth that your Petitioner is 64 years of Age and hath been a widow more than fifteen years and hath no child nor any Relation nearer

than a remote cousen and your Petitioner hath by her Industry in the business of making Brooms Baskets and horse Collars; Supported her Self till about two years ago She was taken Sick of a long fever and hath had weak and Ill turns at times ever Since and is in no wise able to Support her Self and it is Improbable that She ever will: and your Petitioner is now Indebted to the docter and others for the Necessaries of Life four or five Pounds L = M = and your Petitioner hath no house Nor any Sort of Shelter of her own to repair to: but has been and Now is in a Suffering Condition and Stands in Great Need of Relief for She is Entirely Deprived of any Shelter; for her Cousens house where She used to live is taken Down and Carried off and Your Petitioner knows not of any Place where She can Get in if She Should be Sick—

And your petitioner having a free hold in lands in Natick the fee hereof is in her and she is willing to Sell Some Part of it now to Pay her Debts and for her Support and to Build your Petitioner a Small log house about ten or twelve feet Square that She may hav a house of her own where She may work if She be able and lie warm when She is Sick and Not be obliged to travel from one Place to another and Expose her health as heretofore and as your Petitioner is Not able to Say how Much it will take to Pay her Debts already Contracted and to build her Such a house as aforementioned and much More to Say what She Shall Stand in need of for the future: So She does not Pray for liberty to Sell a Certain Number of acres: hoping therefore that this honoured Court Can rely on the fidelity of our Guardians Your Petitioner humbly Prays that this Honoured Court will Grant her Power to Sell So much of her Real Estate as the Guardians Shall think of real necessity for the Purposes above Mentioned: And Your Petitioner as in Duty Bound Shall Ever Pray

Abigail Moheag [her mark]

Natick June ye 4 1764

endorsed John Jones, Jos. Buckminster

granted with Advise & Consent of Guardians

Massachusetts Archive, volume 33, document 513–514

Sir

I am desired by Eunice Spywood to write to you, but I don't know what was done on her Petition, and what she further needs. I cannot indulge her any farther than to Set forth Certain facts that have been heretofore Collected from Sarah Wamp-squan, the pauper mentiond in the Said Eunices Petition. Vizt

That the parents and grandparents of the said Sarah dwelt at Billerica in the County of Middlesex; That her Grand-parents were Sachems and owned that Town and lands adjacent—That her parents came occasionally to Natick when her mother was pregnant with the Said Sarah, and tarrying a few days she was born there, (at that time Natick was not incorporated, nor an English family in it,)—That she Said Sarah was carryed to Woodstock or Pomfret, and kept there till she was seven years old—Then bound to Deacon Braddish of Cambridge, whom she served till she was eighteen—Then went to service with Doctor Dalhone of Boston 2 or 3 years—and then marryed to an Indian belonging to Cape-Cod whose name was Lawrence—he dying, she marryed to Solomon Wampsquan of Natick, who has been dead near 20 years. That her last husband was not a Proprietor in Natick, nor his predecessors:—That this poor woman is in advanced age—one side Dead with the Dead Palsey⁶⁵—uncapable of helping or even feeding herself—She has begged from door to door till about three years ago—when she could not Travel one mile in a day, and could not labour with her hands, which she was willing to do when able, and was honest as far as I know; And as she is also a human being, my heart has been greatly moved for her many a time, in particular in July last, when the Revd mr Badger the minister of Natick, (who had from year to year been exceedingly burthened with her and other poor Indians, who have been cast upon him one way or other) was at the General Assembly praying for the relief of the said Sarah, and at the Same time remonstrating against her being made the Charge of Natick—while mr Badger was thus employed from week to week at his own expense—this poor woman was brought in the night, and put into his necessary-house—in his absence . . . and from thence she was Carryed to this Eunice Spywood's—and has been there ever Since. Upon the whole, the Indians are not able to support her—nor themselves,—and the English of Natick are already Over-Stocked with their own poor, Some of whom I know suffer for want: This poor woman has been supported by this Province—Pray Let Something be done that Shall Speedily relieve the poor person that has her—or they will perish together—I have no expectation that the District of

Natick will pay Eunice Spywoods acct for the time past nor take Care of the Said Sarah Wampsqan for the future: Or if they Should be ordered by this Court, I may not say it will not be legal, but it will be attended by such delays, as will not answer the good intentions of the Legislature, and will prove and inlet to as many other Indians to come, as shall hear of it—And Towns that shall have an Indian in them will be likely to send him when he shall want relief—Sir, I can say no more than this—That I hope the Assembly will revive the Petition of Eunice Spywood—and order her acct to be paid out of ye Province Treasury—I doubt not of the wisdom of the Assembly of which you are a member—and hope you will be directed in this and all your proceedings—as shall most promote the Interest of the publick, and of individuals.

*I am sir, yr friend and Humble servt—John Jones
Dedham April 4 1770*

To Capt Eleazer Kingsbury a member of the Honble House of Representatives in Cambridge

Appendix: Probate Documents of the Middlesex County Court

The following probate documents can be found in the public records of the Middlesex County Court. They relate to the settlement of the estates of two Indian women of Natick, Massachusetts. The first set of documents is a will and attached estate inventory, divided into personal and real property sections, for Hannah Speen. Middlesex County Court, Probate Records, Cambridge MA, #21027, Hannah Speen, Will, 1742.

In the name of God amen. I Hannah Speen of Natick in the County of Middlesex in the Province of Massachusetts Bay in New England widow & Relick of John Speen Late of Sd Natick Deceased, Indian Being weak in Body but of sound & perfect mind & memory; but apprehending myself near to Death; Do Make Constitute & ordain this to be my Last will & Testament; that is to say; first of all I Give & bequeath my immortal soul into the hands of God who gave it, to be justified, sanctified & Saved by the Spirit of God & in the name of Christ; & my Body to Christian & Decent Burial at the discretion of my Executr & as touching such outward Estate as God has given me I will give bequeath & dispose of it in manner of following—that is to say first

Imprimus[:] I Give & Bequeath Unto my well beloved son Joseph Speen & my Beloved Daughter Hannah, all the Yearly Rents & Interest of the Me-guncog Money⁶⁶ which belongs to me, to be Received by them in Equal parts, if sd Joseph be alive & Live to return; but if not I give it all to sd Hannah; & upon Condition she shall dye without Heirs of her Body I give sd Money in Equal parts to my two sons hereafter mentioned. & inasmuch as the sd Joseph and Hannah will (if Living,) be Heirs to all their sd Fathers Estate—therefore

Item[:] I Give & bequeath unto my two sons Samuel Speen & Zachary Speen alias Maynard, all my Lands & Estate which belongs to me in [Natic?] as the only Heir to my Father & Brothers Decd to be Equally Divided between them; to them & their Heirs and assigns forever, they to be put out & brought up, in ye fear of God, at the Discretion of my Executor

Finally I Constitute ordain & appoint my trusty & well beloved friend Isaac Coolidge of Sherborn in sd County of Middlesex to be my Sole Executor of this my Last Will & Testament, desireing & fully inpowering him to see all & every part of it duely Executed according to the true Intent thereof; hereby revoking disannuling & making void all former or other Wills by me made, & Constituting appointing ordaining & Ratifying this to be my Last will & Testament, In Witness whereof I the said Hannah Speen have hereunto sett my hand & seal this twenty six Day of April Anno Domini one thousand seven hundred & forty two & in the fifteenth year of the Reign of his Majesty King George the Second—

Signed sealed, published pronounced

& declared, In the Presense of—

Thomas Russell

Jonathan Lealand

Benjamin Kendall

Hannah Speen [hir mark]

An Inventory of the Estate of Hannah Speen Late of Natick Decd widow taken by us the subscribers being sworn october ye 18th 1742 as was shewn to us by Capt. Isaac Coolidge Executor of her Last will and testament Which is as follows viz:

Imprimus	to books 7s	
	to wearing apparel 18.7.6	1:14
Item	to beding 10-4-0	

	to pewter and brass 1:3:8	
	to earthenware and glass bottles 0:4-9	14:10
	to Iron ware 1-10:0	
	to wooden ware 1:1:6	
	to one old [berthmettle?] skillet 0:4:0	
Item	to baskets and barkes, brombes and brombsticks	1:11:0
	to one knife 1:6	4:7:6
	to two old Chests 1:10:0	
	to six chairs 1:4:0	
Item	wampon ⁶⁷ and suckenhock ⁶⁸ 6:10:0	
	Total	27:2:3

Real Estate

to her Rights in Natick Lands £170 170:0:0

The administr mentions a Sum of money which he has recd for Land Sold belonging to the Deceasd—which he will add to the inventory when the General Court shall have determined what proportion of it he ought to stand chargd with

Thomas Russell

Jonathan Lealand

Benjn Kendall

appraisers

sworn before ye Judge

*Middlesex [?] Octobr 18 1742 mr. Isaac Coolledge the ad-
ministr—presented the forgoing & made Oath that the same
contains a full & proper Inventory of the Estate of the be-
forenamed Decd so far as came to his Hands & Knowledge,
& promised if more Shall appear he would cause the same
to be added.*

Jos. [?] Remington [J prob?]

An Inventory of the Real Estate of Hannah Speen Late of Natick in the County of Middlesex Deceased as the Same was Shewn to us by Isaac Coolledge Esqr and was Taken by us the Subscribers Being Thereunto appointed and Sworn march ye 4th 1744 and is valued as followeth; That is to Say:

Impri To one Lot Lying the ye plantation of Natick aforesd
Containing 84 acres att 5£ pr acer old tenor 420-0-0
To one Lot Containing 43 ½ acers att £3 pr acer 130-10-0

To one Lot Containing 16 ½ acers att 5£ pr acer	82-10-0
To one acer of meadow Land att £18	18-0-0
Item To one half of a Dweling house att £50	50-0-0
	£701-0-0

Natick March ye 16th 1744

Thomas Russell

Jonathan Lealand

Benjamin Kendall

apprisers

*March 18 1744 Major Isaac Coolledge the adminr sworn as
usual before S. Danforth J. [pro. & Reqr?]*

*A second, and much smaller, set of probate documents pertains to the estate of
Esther Sooduck. Middlesex County Court, Probate Records, Cambridge, MA,
#20860, Esther Sooduck, Will, 1778*

Inventory of Esther Sooduck "Late of Natick Indian Woman Deceasd Taken
the 20th: Day may 1778 and as follows Viz

To one Bed L9-0-0 to a rug 15s to one Bedsteld L12	10:7-0
To one Cedar Tub 15s to Small log [?] one Table 16s	11=1-0
To Two Chairs 2s to one Chest 12s one Trunk 10s	1=4-0
To knives and forks 2s to old Puter 1s to one Pot 18s	1=1-0
To one kettle 18s to two old Bibles 3s to Baskets 2s	1=3-0
To Baskets Stuf 1s To one Tramel 3s to fire Shovel Tongs [?]	2=11-0
To one Hamer 3s To Old Iron 2s to one mat 1s to [?]	0=7-0
To one Box and lime 1s to one Glas Bottle 1s	0 2-0
To one Bed board 3s to one Cotton Gownd 72s	3=15-0
To one Spinning Whel 6s to one small [ditto] 16s	1=2-0
To one ax 12s to one Pair Speticals 4s To Brick 10s	1=6-0
To one mug 1s to Six yards Black Calaminco L5-8-0	5=9-0
Total of the Personal Estate	L 30=3-0
To About Thirty Acres of Land and a Small Dwelling House thereon	
	75=0-0
Total of the Real and Personal Estate	105:3-0

Daniel Travis

Notes

For their valuable suggestions in revising the originally published version of this paper, I wish to thank Lisa Bower, Lisa Disch, and Jennifer Pierce.

1. *Gender, Kinship and Power*, ed. Mary Jo Maynes, Ann Waltner, Brigitte Soland, and Ulrike Strasser (New York: Routledge Press, 1996).
2. Quoted in Howard S. Russell, *Indian New England before the Mayflower* (Hanover NH: University Press of New England, 1980), 96.
3. William Wood, *New England's Prospect* (1634), as quoted in *The Indian Peoples of Eastern America: A Documentary History of the Sexes*, ed. James Axtell (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 119. See Rayna Green, "The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture," *Massachusetts Review* 16 (1975): 698–714, for an analysis of Pocahontas as literary convention and national symbol, and how Native American women have been conceptualized according to the dichotomy between "princess" and "squaw."
4. Women's labor accounted for well over half of Indian subsistence in most northeastern woodland cultures. Agricultural production alone contributed approximately 65 percent to the diet. See M. K. Bennet, "The Food Economy of the New England Indians, 1605–1675," *Journal of Political Economy* 63 (1955): 369–97.
5. Charles Brooks, *History of the Town of Medford, Middlesex County, Massachusetts* (Boston: James M. Usher, 1855), 80–81.
6. William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983). James H. Merrell has analyzed these massive structural changes in Indian-English relations by looking at the important shift in whose "customs" governed encounters between peoples. James H. Merrell, "'The Customes of Our Country': Indians and Colonists in Early America," in *Strangers within the Realm: Cultural Margins of the First British Empire*, ed. Bernard Bailyn and Philip D. Morgan (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 117–56.
7. On Indian dispossession and the negotiation of the social order in colonial New England, see Jean M. O'Brien, *Dispossession by Degrees: Indian Land and Identity in Natick, Massachusetts, 1650–1790* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997). On the last survivor trope in New England, see William S. Simmons, *Spirit of the New England Tribes: Indian History and Folklore, 1620–1984* (Hanover NH: University Press of New England, 1986), 3–4. On the forging of distinctive European/colonial identities with reference to Native peoples and imported African slaves, see the studies collected in *Colonial Identity in the Atlantic World, 1500–1800*, ed. Nicholas Canny and Anthony Pagden (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987); Roy Harvey Pearce, *Savagism and Civilization: The Study of the Indian in the American Mind* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1953); and Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier* (Middletown CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1973).
8. On the process of missionization see, for example, James Axtell, *The Invasion*

Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); and O'Brien, *Dispossession by Degrees* (especially ch. 2).

9. Scholars of this region have argued positions with regard to social organization across a wide spectrum: as matrilineal or patrilineal societies, as bilateral, or as some blend of these general rules. Lewis Henry Morgan, "Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity of the Human Family," *Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge*, 218 (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1870), and Lorraine Williams, "A Study of 17th Century Central Community in the Long Island Sound Area" (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1972), are most often cited by those who argue for the matrilineality of southeastern New England groups. William S. Simmons and George F. Aubin, "Narragansett Kinship," *Man in the Northeast* 9 (1975): 210–31, argue for the patrilineal reckoning of political leadership and tribal identity and suggest that exogamous matrilineal clans may have existed to regulate marriage. In general, Kathleen Bragdon has agreed: "Another Tongue Brought In": An Ethno-historical Study of Native Writings in Massachusetts" (Ph.D. diss., Brown University, 1981). Elise Brenner suggests that a bilateral kinship system was in place: "Strategies for Autonomy: An Analysis of Ethnic Mobilization in Seventeenth Century Southern New England" (Ph.D. diss., University of Massachusetts, 1984). Those who argue for patrilineal or a bilateral system focus on the lack of evidence for matrilineality from the seventeenth century. Dean R. Snow, *The Archaeology of New England* (New York: Academic Press, 1980), and William A. Starna, "The Pequots in the Early Seventeenth Century," in *The Pequots in Southern New England: The Fall and Rise of an American Indian Nation*, ed. Laurence M. Hauptman and James D. Wherry (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990), 33–47, have argued that the inconclusive nature of the evidence might signal differences in degree and/or be the result of the chaotic conditions surrounding conquest, which required flexible social responses and at least the periodic appearance of matrilineal or bilateral kinship systems. I am indebted to my research assistant, Margaret Rodgers, for helping me sort out this literature.
10. Robert Steven Grumet, "Sunksquaws, Shamans, and Tradeswomen: Middle Atlantic Coastal Algonkian Women during the 17th and 18th Centuries," in *Women and Colonization: Anthropological Perspectives*, ed. Mona Etienne and Eleanor Leacock (New York: Praeger, 1980), 43–60; Snow, *Archaeology of New England*; Neal Salisbury, *Manitou and Providence: Indians, Europeans, and the Making of New England, 1500–1643* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); and William Cronon, *Changes in the Land*. Debate over gender roles in this region centers on the permeability of the boundaries between women's and men's work, and implications of the meaning of gendered division of labor for the relative power and status of women and men in these societies.
11. See especially Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest* (New York: Norton, 1976); Salisbury, *Manitou and Providence*; Cronon, *Changes in the Land*; and O'Brien, *Dispossession by Degrees*.

12. Axtell, *Invasion Within*; and Theda Perdue, "Southern Indians and the Cult of True Womanhood," in *The Web of Southern Social Relations*, ed. Walter J. Fraser Jr., R. Frank Saunders Jr., and Jon L. Wakelyn (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1985), 35–51.
13. The process of gradual loss of individually owned land in one missionized Indian town is documented in my book *Dispossession by Degrees*.
14. Massachusetts Archives, 31 (1730), doc. 175 [hereafter cited as Mass. Arch., vol. (year), doc.]; and Mass. Arch., 32 (1753), 417–18.
15. Middlesex County Probate Docket no. 4124, Jacob Chalcom, Admin. (1756) [hereafter cited as Middlesex Probates]. For a discussion of the diverse cultural patterns of Indian adjustment to the English, see O'Brien, *Dispossession by Degrees*, especially ch. 5.
16. Mass. Arch., 33 (1759), 106–76.
17. Mass. Arch., 33 (1759), 106–76. On English women and gardening, see Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *Good Wives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England, 1650–1750* (New York: Vintage Books, 1980). On the loss of individual Indian-owned land through legal prosecutions, see O'Brien, *Dispossession by Degrees*.
18. Thomas Shepard, *The Clear Sun-shine of the Gospel Breaking Forth Upon the Indians in New-England* (London: Printed by R. Cotes for John Bellamy, 1648), reprinted in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Collections*, 3d ser., 4 (1834), 59.
19. O'Brien, *Dispossession by Degrees*, ch. 6.
20. Middlesex Probates, 22411, Ruth Thomas, Admin. (1758); Esther Freeborn, Worcester County Probate Docket no. 22322 (1807) [hereafter cited as Worcester Probates]; and Hannah Lawrence, Worcester Probates, 36457 (1774).
21. Probate documents for several hundred Indian estates in Massachusetts were filed throughout the eighteenth century and have been preserved in county court records. Probate procedures seem to have been followed most vigorously when English creditors to Indian estates sought payment. The majority of Indians died intestate; divisions of Indian estates then almost always followed English estate law quite closely, with provisions made for "widow's thirds," a double share given to the eldest son, and equal shares to other children.
22. Esther Sooduck, Middlesex Probates, 20860, Will (1778).
23. Hannah Lawrence, Worcester Probates, 36457 (1774).
24. This is a common theme. See especially Anthony F. C. Wallace's classic work *The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca* (New York: Knopf, 1970), as well as a critique offered by Diane Rothenberg, "The Mothers of the Nation: Seneca Resistance to Quaker Intervention," in Etienne and Leacock, *Women and Colonization*, 63–87.
25. Indian women could obtain title to land as individuals within the landholding system of Massachusetts, but most Indian women gained access to land as wives and children, as heirs to estates. In the process of dividing land in early eighteenth-century Natick, Massachusetts, nineteen individuals were designated proprietors,

- with principal rights to all of the land within the town. One of these was a woman; the rest were men. O'Brien, *Dispossession by Degrees*, ch. 4.
26. George Sheldon, *A History of Deerfield, Massachusetts* (Greenfield MA: E. A. Hall and Co., 1895), 1:71.
27. Ann McMullen and Russell G. Handsman, eds., *A Key into the Language of Wood-splint Baskets* (Washington CT: American Indian Archaeological Institute, 1987).
28. Mass. Arch., 33 (1764), 300.
29. Hannah Speen, Middlesex Probates, 21027, Will (1742).
30. Mass. Arch., 32 (1755), 675–76.
31. See, for example, John A. Sainsbury, "Indian Labor in Early Rhode Island," *New England Quarterly* 48 (1975): 378–93. Sainsbury found that "35.5 percent of all Indians in [Rhode Island] were living with white families in 1774; and if the Indians still living on the Charlestown reservation are excluded, the figure rises to 54 percent." He suspected they were "rent-paying lodgers." (Quotations are from p. 379.) In examining vital records from all over Massachusetts to identify Indians who were connected to the town of Natick, I located at least one Indian in each of 113 towns. Taking nine very distinctive surnames of Natick Indians, I located individuals with the same surnames in twenty towns. O'Brien, *Dispossession by Degrees*, ch. 6.
32. Mass. Arch., 31 (1747), 529. Speen was petitioning the General Court for permission to sell all of her remaining land so that she could reimburse Graves for caretaking. Massachusetts erected a system of oversight for Indian land that required General Court permission in order for Indian individuals to sell land to non-Indians. O'Brien, *Dispossession by Degrees*, ch. 3.
33. O'Brien, *Dispossession by Degrees*, ch. 6.
34. Middlesex Probates, 17057, Elizabeth Paugenit, Will (1755).
35. Mass. Arch., 33 (1770), 513.
36. Natick Town Records, First Book of Records for the Parish of Natick, 1745–1803, Morse Institute, Natick, Massachusetts.
37. Mass. Arch., 32 (1753), 375–76.
38. Mass. Arch., 32 (1751/2), 230.
39. Douglas Lamar Jones, "The Strolling Poor: Transiency in Eighteenth-Century Massachusetts," *Journal of Social History* 8 (1975): 28–54; and Jones, "Poverty and Vagabondage: The Process of Survival in Eighteenth-Century Massachusetts," *New England Historical and Genealogical Society Register* 133 (1979): 243–54.
40. Richard R. Johnson, "The Search for a Usable Indian: An Aspect of the Defense of Colonial New England," *Journal of American History* 64 (1977): 623–51; Daniel Vickers, "The First Whalemen of Nantucket," in *After King Philip's War: Presence and Persistence in Indian New England*, ed. Colin G. Calloway (Hanover NH: University Press of New England, 1997); Laurie Weinstein, "We're Still Living on Our Traditional Homeland: The Wampanoag Legacy in New England," in *Strategies for Survival: American Indians in the Eastern United States*, ed. Frank W. Porter III (Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 1986), 91.

41. Vickers, "The First Whalemen of Nantucket."
42. See especially Johnson, "Search for a Usable Indian"; and Vickers, "First Whalemen of Nantucket."
43. *Mass. Arch.*, 33 (1762), 204.
44. Cronon, *Changes in the Land*.
45. O'Brien, *Dispossession by Degrees*, ch. 6. On English colonialism and the institution of Indian marriage, see Ann Marie Plane, "'The Examination of Sarah Ahaton': The Politics of 'Adultery' in an Indian Town of Seventeenth Century Massachusetts," in *Algonkians of New England: Past and Present*, ed. Peter Benes, The Dublin Seminar for New England Folklife Annual Proceedings, 1991 (Boston: Boston University, 1993), 14–25; and Plane, "Colonizing the Family: Marriage, Household, and Racial Boundaries in Southeastern New England to 1730" (Ph.D. diss., Brandeis University, 1994).
46. *Mass. Arch.*, 32 (1756), 710.
47. *Mass. Arch.*, 33 (1757), 10.
48. Franklin B. Dexter, ed., *Extracts from the Itineraries and Other Miscellanies of Ezra Stiles D.D. LL.D. 1755–1794* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1916), 117, 149.
49. *Mass. Arch.*, 33 (1761), 170.
50. Stiles, *Itineraries* ("Potenummekuk"), 170, ("Nyhantic" in Lyme, Connecticut—47 percent widow-headed households), 130; and Stiles, "Memoir of the Pequots," in *Massachusetts Historical Society, Collections*, 3d ser., 10 (1834), 102–3.
51. Stiles, *Itineraries*, 203; and George Kuhn Clarke, *History of Needham, Massachusetts, 1711–1911* (Cambridge MA: University Press, privately printed, 1912), 558. Determining the degree of intermarriage between Indians, African Americans, and whites is problematic lacking vital records that systematically note the race of the individuals. Even when race is designated in vital records, labels such as "colored" and "mulatto" only indicate that intermarriage had occurred at some time in the past. Clerks did not necessarily use these labels consistently, either. Certainly intermarriage had been occurring between Indians and African Americans over the course of the eighteenth century. Intermarriage with the English was proscribed by legal statute. See Jack D. Forbes, "Mulattoes and People of Color in Anglo-North America: Implications for Black-Indian Relations," *Journal of Ethnic Studies* 12 (1984): 317–62.
52. Stephen Badger, "Historical and Characteristic Traits of the American Indians in General, and Those of Natick in Particular, in a Letter from the Rev. Stephen Badger of Natick, to the Corresponding Secretary," *Massachusetts Historical Society, Collections*, 1st ser., 5 (1790), 43.
53. O'Brien, *Dispossession by Degrees*, ch. 6.
54. "Introduction," by Alden T. Vaughan in William Wood, *New England's Prospect*, edited with an introduction by Alden T. Vaughan (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1977), [1]–14.
55. William Wood, *New England's Prospect: A True, Lively, and Experimentall Descrip-*

- tion of that Part of America, Commonly Called New England: Discovering the State of that Countrie, both as it Stands to our New-Come English Planters; and to the Old Native Inhabitants.* I am grateful to the James Ford Bell Library at the University of Minnesota for providing access to this volume.
56. Not in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, but it clearly refers to the covering over the smoke-hole of a wigwam.
 57. Builders.
 58. Roots.
 59. A derisive word to describe a slow, lazy, or idle person.
 60. Suddenly.
 61. A reed or such-like plant.
 62. English individuals appointed by the commonwealth to protect Indian interests.
 63. Referring to Indians from other locales in New England.
 64. Indian leaders.
 65. Paralysis, probably caused by a stroke.
 66. Interest money earned due to the sale of a parcel of land called Magunkog in the Algonquian language.
 67. Wampum—Indian medium of exchange and diplomatic symbolism, produced out of shells, and adopted by the English as an early medium of exchange.
 68. Probably a bible or a book in the Massachusetts language. My thanks to John Nichols in sorting out this translation.