1 · The Mohegans

Before english contact, the Mohegans of Connecticut—certainly one of the most widely recognized of the New England tribes today (thanks, in no small part, to the Mohegan Sun Casino)—were closely tied to the Pequot Tribe, having migrated with them from the upper Hudson River Valley some time around 1500. They split from the Pequots under the leadership of their sachem Uncas, who brought the Mohegans into alliance with the English colonists against the Pequots in the infamous Pequot War of 1637. Throughout the 1630s and 1640s, using his English allies to reinforce his position against neighboring tribes, Uncas led his people against the Narragansetts. During King Philip's War, from 1675 to 1676, the Mohegans, who remained loyal to the English, suffered significant losses. By the time of Uncas's death in 1683, substantial portions of Mohegan land had been sold or leased to colonists, and the tribe was struggling to survive. Even so, today Uncas is remembered as an extraordinary leader who dedicated his life to protecting his people against encroachment and establishing the importance of the Mohegans, or "Wolf People," as a distinct group.

By the mid-eighteenth century, the tribe was divided over a series of issues related to succession and land use. Much to the resentment of many Mohegans, the colonial Connecticut government was using a heavy hand to direct tribal affairs. In 1769 the tribe refused to accept as sachem Ben Uncas III, who was backed by the colonial government. They preferred no sachem to one not only assigned to them by outsiders but also seemingly inclined to sell off Mohegan lands. The tribe was embroiled in a series of disputes related to lands that had been put under the protection of the family of John Mason. Mason, a local colonist, had tried to protect Mohegan interests before he finally turned over the deed to Mohegan land to the government of Connecticut. It was in this tumultuous mid-century period that Samson Occom converted to Christianity and sought out the spiritual and intellectual support of the Reverend Eleazar Wheelock. Eventually becoming an ordained minister and a fierce advocate for the rights of his people, Occom was one of the founders of the Brotherton Community in upstate New York.

Despite the significant reduction in its population throughout the nineteenth century, the Mohegan Nation is today a vibrant, federally recognized tribe whose community centers on the Mohegan Church, a structure built in

1831 to maintain the land base of the Mohegan people and to celebrate their commitment to Christianity as a means of preserving their Mohegan identity. Among those who were central to this effort was Occom's sister, Lucy Tantaquidgeon. In 1931, John, Harold, and Gladys Tantaquidgeon established the Tantaquidgeon Indian Museum down the road from the church. It still stands today as a community resource celebrating what Melissa Tantaquidgeon Zobel has called "the lasting of the Mohegans."[1]

Suggested Reading

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Oberg, Michael Leroy. *Uncas: First of the Mohegans*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2003.

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1. See Fawcett [Melissa Tantaquidgeon Zobel], *Lasting of Mohegans*.

Figure 1-1. Letter of Instruction from Oanhekoe, sachem of the Mohegan Indians, 14 July 1703. (By permission of the Honorable Michael Willoughby and the University of Nottingham Department of Manuscripts and Special Collections.)

MSC37/1

Letter of Instruction from Uncheko
Sachem of the Mohegan Indians in New
England, Dated the 14th July 1703
To Mr Nicholas Hallam of Connecticut in the
Indian Language.
The Interpretation is as follows.

My Loving Neighbour, Mr Nicholas Hallam,
I am informd you are bound for Old
England. I do request you to make me
& my Condition known to the Great Q. Anne
& to her Noble Council, First of Our
Hereditary Right to ye Soyll & Royaltys
of our Dominion & Territorys before
the English came into ye Country, insomuch
that all due Loyalty & Obedience by
your People is not conferrd on us by the
English, but by ye Gods, who gave us a
Token as an Earnest & pledge of our
Happy Reign here, & also (as our Old
Seers Construed) a more ample Reign in ye
other Region: Wherefore the Gods had
sent to that Royall Family one of
their own Tobacco pipes, which strange
Wonderment was taken upon the Beach
at Seabrook, or thereabouts, it being
like Ivory, with two Stemms & the Bowl
in ye Middle. This Strange Pipe, not
made by man, is kept Choicer than
Gold from Generation to Generation.
It animates all the Royall Society with
a full perswasion that ye said Token is
Sufficient Evidence that they shall

Sett amongst ye Gods in the Long Hunting-
house & there Smoak Tobacco, as the
highest point of Honor & Dignity, & where
there will be great feasting of Fatt
Bear, Deer, & Moose, all Joy & Myrth
to welcom their Entertainment &c.
Also in ye Reign of King Charles the
Second of Blessed Memory, his Majesty
sent us a Token viz. a Bible & a
Sword, which present we thankfully
accepted, & keep them in ye Treasury
as choice & we do ye aforesaid Gods Pipe,
hoping it may be a Safeguard & a
Shield to Defend us, & we in process of
Time may reap great Benefitt thereby,
& attain to ye Knowledg of the true
& Living God. But of late I meet
with great Discouragements & know not
what will become of our People by reason
of Oppression. The Court of Hertford
I Understand have given all my planting
& Hunting Land away to Colchester &
to New London. So that if I obtain
not Relief from ye Great Queens Maty
my People will be in Temptation to
Scatter from me, & flee to the Eastward
Indians, the French's Friends, & the
English's Enimys. Pray Sr remember
my Love & Service to ye Great Queen
Anne

Letter of Instruction from Oanhekoe, Sachem of the Mohegan Indians in New England, 14 July 1703

Oweneco

The letter is in black ink written on two sheets of folio (6 inches by 12 inches). The writing is fluent and regular, with abbreviations and orthographic conventions that suggest a familiarity with such forms. Oweneco's "mark" at the end appears to be drawn in the same hand or by someone equally confident with a pen.

To Mr. Nicholas Hallam of Connecticut,[2] in the Indian Language.
The Interpretation is as follows:

My Loving Neighbour, Mr Nicholas Hallam,

I am informd you are bound for Old England. Lett me request you to make me & my Condition known to the Great Q. Anne[3] & to her Noble Council,[4] first of our Hereditary Right to ye Soyll and Royalltys of our Dominion & Territorys before the English came into ye Country, insomuch that all due Loyallty & Obedience by our people is not conferrd on us by the English, but by ye Gods, who gave us a Token as an Earnest & pledge of our Happy Reign here, & allso (as our Old Seers Construed) a more ample Reign in ye othe[r] region: Wherefore the Gods had Sent to that Royall Family[5] one of their own Tobacco pipes, which strange wonderment was taken upon the Beach at Seabrook,[6] or thereabouts, it being like Ivory, with two Stemms to the Boll in ye Middle. This Strange Pipe, not made by man, is kept Choicer than Gold from Generation to Generation. It Animates all the Royall Society[7] with a full perswasion that ye

2. Nicholas Hallam and his brother John were prominent local figures who had already challenged the powers of the Connecticut courts and appealed to the Privy Council over their mother's will.

3. The reference is to the queen of England (1665–1714).

4. Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council was—and still is—the most important body of advisors to the monarch.

5. As sachem, or leader, and son of the influential figure Uncas, Oweneco presents his family as the equivalent to the hereditary monarchy of England. The early colonists began this convention of treating sachems as equivalent to kings or sovereigns and referring to them as such.

6. One of the first white settlements in the area, it was usually referred to as Saybrook.

7. See note 5.

Said Token is Sufficient Evidence that they shall Sitt amongst ye Gods in the Long Hunting-house[8] & there Smook Tobacco, as the highest point of Honor and Dignity, & where there will be great ffeasting of Fatt Bear, Deer, & Moose, all Joy and Myrth to wellcom their Entertainment &c.

Also in ye Reign of King Charles the Second of Blessed Memory,[9] his Majesty sent us a Token, vizt. A Bible & a Sword, which present we thankfully accepted, & keep them in ye Treasury as choice as we do ye aforesaid Gods Pipe, hoping it may be a Safeguard & a Shield to defend us, and we in process of Time may reap great Benefitt thereby and attain to ye Knowledge of the true & Living God. But of late I meet with great Descouragements, & know not what will become of our People by reason of Oppression. The Court of Hertford[10] I understand have given all my planting & Hunting Land away to Colchester & to New London. So that if I Obtain not Relief from ye Great Queens Ma[jes]ty my People will be in Temptation to Scatter from me, & to flee to the Eastward Indians,[11] the ffrench's ffriends, & the English's Enimys. Pray Sir remember my Love and Service to ye Great Queen Anne & he[r] Noble Council.

July 14th 1703

Oanhekoe [His mark]

The true Interpretation of Oanhekoe's Grievance & Narration, by me John Stanton[12] Interpreter Gent[leman]

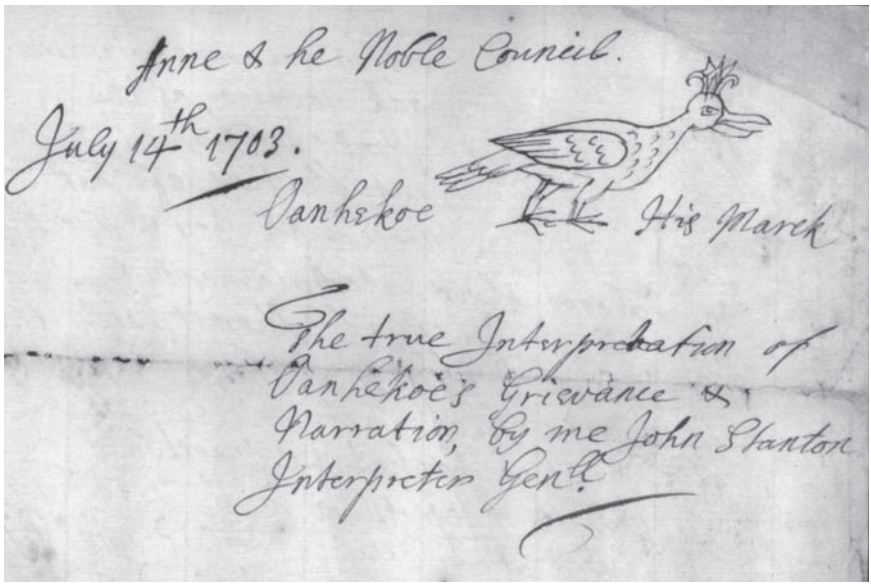
8. Oweneco is envisaging the afterlife as a more comfortable version of earthly life. Algonquian Indians built dwellings with a frame made from bent young trees and roofed with bark and grasses, often housing more than one family.

9. The reference is to the king of England (1630–85).

10. Hertford, Colchester, and New London were developing townships. The many individual agreements between their members and the Indians resulted in a morass of conflicting legal claims. The local courts were based on English law, and the colony of Connecticut as a whole was under a charter from the English Crown. Complications arose when the independence that the colony believed it was granted under this charter conflicted with the larger authority of the Crown to contend with foreign nations, including Indian tribes. Consequently, Oweneco appeals to the queen and the Privy Council as the final authority above the local courts. Confusing matters was the fact that he and others made many private land deals while acting as sovereign head of state.

11. Queen Anne's War (1702–13), one episode in the long-running rivalry between the French and English as colonial powers, saw attacks in Maine by Abenakis and Iroquois, abetted by the French.

12. John Stanton (1614–1713) was a prominent citizen and the son of the well-known interpreter Thomas Stanton.


Anne & he Noble Council.
July 14th 1703.
Oanhekoe His Marck
The true Interpretation of
Oanhekoe's Grievance &
Narration, by me John Stanton
Interpreter Genll

Letter of Instruction from Oanhekoe, Sachem of the Mohegan Indians, 14 July 1703

DAVID MURRAY

This letter, which was designed to play a part in a political process, raises interesting questions about the representation of Indian views under circumstances in which English is the language of legal and political power and the unequal power relationships between white people and Indians have been exacerbated and perpetuated by language differences. Since written English was—and still is—the means of access to virtually all areas of influence and power, Indians who lacked English skills and literacy depended on white intermediaries or facilitators to be heard or to have any political agency in their dealings with the increasingly dominant white settlers and their governments. These intermediaries (some Indians and people of mixed blood also acquired the skills to assume this role) had their own agendas, which are often difficult to disentangle from those of the people for whom they were speaking. A missionary, for instance, may have wanted to enhance the Christian sentiments of the dying Indian whose deathbed statements he recorded and published. A translator may have subtly adapted Indian ideas to European perceptions in an effort to present them in an understandable way. In some cases, of course, Indian state-

ments and agreements were simply fabricated, but even in cases involving the most honest and benevolent intentions, the act of "speaking for" brought with it the limitations and contradictions of the paternalistic and protective stance that successive white authorities adopted. The stance entailed the assumption that Indians needed help not just in expressing their views in English but also in knowing what they really wanted and where their best interests truly lay. Since much of the early Indian writing and self-representation that has survived is inevitably the result of such paternalistic intervention, it is the—usually invisible and often underestimated—role of the facilitators that must be considered and that has become of increasing significance for critics and historians.

With Indian views historically silenced or misrepresented, there is an understandably increasing desire to identify an authentic Native "voice" in Indian texts of the past. Because of the problems outlined here, however, it is crucial to pay careful attention to the many processes of production of any Indian text. These texts can range from an actual written piece that is entirely authored and authorized by a literate English-speaking Indian to an account constructed through processes of translation, editing, and rewriting over which the Indian speaker has no control. The question then becomes whose text it is and how we are to read it. Increasing awareness that texts of all sorts can benefit from the kind of rhetorical and stylistic analysis and inquiry formerly afforded only to literary texts has allowed (1) a wider range of materials to be treated critically and (2) the question of whether or to what degree a piece of writing is "by" a particular Indian to be explored more productively and less subjectively.[13]

This particular letter, ostensibly from the Mohegan sachem Oanhekoe (or Oweneco, as it is often written) to his neighbor Nicholas Hallam, allows us to identify quite explicitly some of the elements of its creation. Some additional historical context will also help us to weight these elements in deciding to what degree the letter can actually be considered Oweneco's. First of all, the letter acknowledges the presence of a translator, "John Stanton Interpreter, Gent[leman]," a well-known and trusted figure, whose name appears listed as interpreter in the records of many meetings and transactions. Second, it gives evidence of the presence of a white facilitator or intermediary, Nicholas Hallam (described as a neighbor), who will take the letter to London and present a petition to the Privy Council on behalf of the Mohegans. The role of such intermediaries was, of course, sometimes that of honest broker. In other instances, however, although their actions were allegedly performed on behalf of

13. To some extent, Arnold Krupat's work on autobiography pioneered the necessary critical skepticism about authorship and production. For later discussions, see D. Murray, *Forked Tongues*, and Wyss, *Writing Indians*. For a more general discussion of the problems of identifying suppressed voices, see J. C. Scott, *Domination*.

and in the name of Indians and were supported by written statements allegedly authored by Indians, neither the actions nor the written statements were clear to the Indians at the time.

Although the letter is addressed by Oweneco to Hallam, it is clearly designed not as a means of communication between the two but as a message for a third party. This is a formal convention, which can be considered a way of authorizing Hallam to make Oweneco's case. When we consider that Hallam may well have initiated and even written the letter, however, it takes on the strange characteristic of a letter written to himself. In any case, what we have is a document that we may suppose to have originated through Hallam's suggestion. Perhaps he proposed that he take to London a letter from Oweneco explaining his grievance and authorizing Hallam to make his case (a letter that is presumably phrased and written by or with the translator Stanton). Somewhere in this process Oweneco spoke in Mohegan, but we do not know when this occurred or what he said. In what sense, then, is the letter Oweneco's? The ultimate sign of authenticity for documents is, of course, the signature or mark (I return to this later), but the larger questions are to what degree in such situations we can identify the presence or voice of an individual Indian and what means we can employ to do so.

One method is to find out as much as we can about the circumstances surrounding the production of the letter, so let us begin this effort with some context. Oweneco, the son of the famous Mohegan sachem Uncas, inherited the lands and powers of his father along with many complex relationships with his white neighbors. In negotiating the changing political situation after the Pequot War and King Philip's War, during which Indian property and rights were whittled away, Uncas and his heirs found it necessary—in fact, indispensable—not only to trade and sell land to white settlers but also to seek the protection of well-disposed white neighbors. This situation hinders our ability to weigh the proportions of paternalism or coercion involved. Not surprisingly, historians have disagreed over the motives of the key figures,[14] several of whom—most notably John Mason (of Pequot massacre fame, or infamy), his descendants, and the missionary James Fitch—were given, or took, control of the land on behalf of Uncas and later Oweneco.

One major problem for the Mohegans was how to ensure their fair treatment under the law. Without knowledge of English, they could never be sure of fair representation, even by their allies. As the Mohegans' lawyer pointed out,

14. Francis Jennings (*The Invasion of America*) was one of the first to question the motives and the language of the colonizers. For a very useful account of the background politics of the period, see St. Jean, "Inventing Guardianship."

the English "had the penning" of all their documents and no doubt "took care to express matters favorably for their own interest."[15] In the case of Oweneco, this general problem was exacerbated by his weakness for alcohol, under the influence of which he was prone to put his signature to documents that he later regretted having signed. The Mohegans persistently complained of his irresponsible behavior when he was drunk. According to records, he rewarded two men who rescued him from drowning while he was inebriated by giving them land. At one point he even assigned his rights to members of the Mason family, whom he trusted, to prevent being exploited in the future. Here again, of course, we must remember that all his recorded statements come via the same processes of mediation, so the line between abuse of his trust and paternalistic protection may not always be clear. Nevertheless, Oweneco seems to have both actively sought the protection of his interests by certain white figures and experienced exploitation by whites. His behavior remained problematic, and he seems to have ended his life as somewhat of a vagrant.

Oweneco's letter is interesting historically because, although it deals with one particular dispute between the colonists and the Mohegans, it appeals to the larger authority of the Crown. The Mason family was eventually unable to prevent the actions of the Connecticut General Court and the governor, who took power over those areas of land reserved for Mohegans under earlier agreements. Thus, a decision was made, perhaps by Mason or Hallam (the bearer of the letter to London), to draw up a petition to Queen Anne and her Privy Council. The letter would be the authority and justification for Hallam to represent the views of Oweneco and the Mohegans. When Hallam appeared before the Privy Council in December 1703, however, there is mention only of his presenting a memorial, which made the Mohegan case in almost the same language as the letter (not a surprising circumstance, since it is likely that he composed some of each). Later he submitted a detailed affidavit, and eventually a commission was formed, which decided in favor of the Mohegans. This action, which reasserted the power of the Crown over that of the colonial governments, was an important one in the ensuing and long-running Mohegan land controversy. It can also be viewed as having a larger historical significance in that it set the pattern not only for later disputes between the states and the federal government but also for the role of the Crown in Canadian legal disputes over Native rights. For our purposes, however— to avoid neglecting Oweneco in our account of the larger narrative and thereby repeating the historical neglect of the Indian actors themselves—Oweneco himself must be the focus.

15. Quoted in St. Jean, "Inventing Guardianship," 374.

In order to explore the actual role of Oweneco in the letter, it is worth examining just what the letter does. In language and style of address, it adopts the conventional English forms of courtesy and formality, appearing to be clearly addressed over the head of Hallam to the Queen and Privy Council. The point of the complaint really appears only in the final few sentences, which also contain the very clear warning that if the grievances are not redressed, Oweneco will be unable to command the loyalty of his people. Oweneco's people, he warns, will defect to the eastern Indians, who are (as he pointedly reminds Queen Anne via Hallam) allies of the French and enemies of the English. Self-interest, in addition to justice, is suggested—with perhaps a touch of a threat—as a reason for action by the Crown.

If the main political point of the letter becomes apparent only at the end, then what is the purpose of the rest of the letter? The first part takes pains to establish the relationship between Oweneco as sachem and the monarch in England; it is carefully balanced between an assertion of his own status and a polite recognition of the ultimate powers of the Queen. The first and crucial claim is of Oweneco's hereditary right to his lands—a right that precedes any recognition of his rights under the English Crown ("not conferrd on us by the English, but by ye Gods"). Most interesting here is the *way* he demonstrates his credentials and rights—by the display of objects and their related stories. The "Token" of his rights to land and power is a pipe of sacred origins, given to express the generosity of the gods to the Mohegan royal family, now and in the future, when they will sit feasting on "Fatt Bear, Deer, & Moose." It is one of the gods' "own" pipes, a "strange wonderment" found on the beach and "not made by man," and it has been kept "Choicer than Gold from Generation to Generation." The possession of this object and the relation of its origin are crucial credentials in establishing Oweneco's legitimacy in Indian eyes. Oweneco then moves on to demonstrate his legitimacy in English eyes by invoking an existing political alliance, or at least a connection, with Charles II, which he does through the parallel method of using an object and a story. The Bible and sword presented by Charles (the importance of which, like that of the pipe, lies in their origins and symbolic significance) are explicitly associated with the pipe. The Mohegans "keep them in ye treasury as choice as we do ye aforesaid Gods Pipe." Established here is a parity that falls short of the subservience that might be expected, and by the same token the "Gods" coexist with "the true & Living God" of the Christians, to whom the Mohegans may be brought "in process of Time."

Altogether, some two-thirds of the letter is taken up in this establishment of credentials. This, I believe, is extremely significant in our estimation of the degree to which the letter is by Oweneco and the degree to which it is by

Hallam or others. I would argue that the presence, indeed the dominance, of this Indian form of validation reflects Oweneco's input. Hallam would have had a much clearer sense of the need to put forth the grievance clearly and early, as is confirmed in the Privy Council records. There is no mention of the actual presentation of Oweneco's letter; the petition that Hallam presents on behalf of the Indians is very close to the wording of the last part of the letter, but it omits the content of the first part altogether. Hallam's statement that the Mohegans have "acknowledged the Kings and Queens of England as their Sovereigns, and have been ever ready to pay all due Obedience and to yield Subjection to them"[16] is not quite the same as the parity suggested in the letter. In addition, Hallam presents a moving account of the desperate situation of the Mohegan people that goes beyond the diplomatic niceties; he describes encountering fifty or sixty Mohegans, driven from their land, in the snow, "in a very poor and naked Condition, many of them crying lamentably."[17] This can be seen as part of a larger pattern, continued over the centuries, of presenting the Indians as objects of pity rather than—as the tone of the letter conveys—as equals demanding no more than their rights.

The final significant element of the letter is the signature or mark. The convention of requiring a mark by those who were unable to write reflects the importance of proving the physical presence and agreement of the person in whose name the text is written. Clearly, however, even this convention is subject to abuse, since those who cannot read do not know for certain the content of the document to which they put their mark.[18] Because of Oweneco's importance as sachem and his close involvement with white people, a number of letters and deeds bear his mark. It is interesting to compare them with the mark that appears on this letter. In general, the marks of signatories in the Northeast seem to be pictorial representations. John De Forest, who describes the marks as "totems,"[19] provides a number of examples, including marks by Oweneco. Here, as in most of the marks by Oweneco that I have seen, we have a bird drawn in rudimentary form. Each bird is different, as the examples in Figure 1-2 indicate.

But when we look at the letter under examination, we see a mark that

16. Hallam, Memorial Relating to the Complaints of the Mohegan Indians.

17. Hallam, Affidavit.

18. In some cases this issue is recognized in phrases such as this: "The above written Instruction was distinctly read over to the several Indians subscribing, and they carefully understood the same before signing" (Penobscot Indians, Letter to Joseph Dudley, 1713.).

19. *History of the Indians*, 163, 494. The word *totem*, which has a complex history, is taken from forms of the word used by the Chippewa to describe family or residence groups, and the visual aspect of the word seems to have been secondary to that sense. It is not clear that all marks, even in Algonquian groups, were totemic.

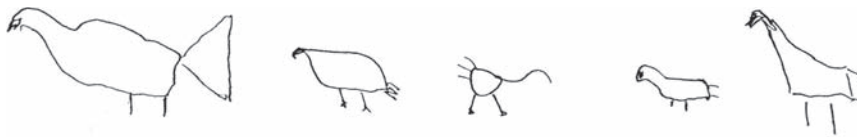


Figure 1-2. Oweneco's marks

consists of an altogether different creature, one drawn with great aplomb and topped with what seems to be a crown! We can, therefore assume, I think, that this mark is the work of the writer of the letter rather than the work of Oweneco, which suggests that the letter may be a contemporary copy of an original to which Oweneco put his usual simple mark. Another possibility is that this is the original but that the writer decided it would be better to have a rather more "royal" signature for presentation to the queen.[20]

In what sense, then, can we say that this is Oweneco's letter? As I have argued, the weight given to Indian rather than European forms of establishing credentials together with the assumption of equal sovereignty (both of which are absent from Hallam's petition) suggest Oweneco's own agenda, an agenda that was followed by the actual producers of the written text. Even so, we can make only an informed estimate of Oweneco's role. In this particular case, we do not even have Oweneco's mark, which—misleading though it can often be as evidence of full authorship—is usually seen as the indisputable trace of physical presence. We have, instead, a copy of a lost original, which would itself have been ambiguous evidence of Oweneco's authorship and understanding.

We might be reminded of Gary Snyder's *Myths and Texts*, a series of poems dealing with Indian myths and the texts created from them. Near the end, after encountering what we take to be Coyote's voice, we find the word *signed* followed by an empty bracket, where we would expect his mark or signature. Like the trickster Coyote, the actual presence and voice of this particular Mohegan Indian may ultimately elude us. Nevertheless, we have seen possibilities for marshaling evidence about forms of expression, along with historical evidence, to make informed estimations about where this voice may, and may not, be found.

20. This copy of the letter found its way, at a later date, into the hands of a member of the English aristocratic Willoughby family, in whose papers (lodged at the University of Nottingham) it was located; it seems to have been collected as a mere oddity (Nottingham, Mi C 37/1). I have been unable to locate either an original from which this version may have been copied or any other version or copy.

Diary, 1773

Joseph Johnson

This diary is currently housed in the Manuscripts and Archives Division of the New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.[21] Measuring 4.5 inches by 7.125 inches (11.5 centimeters by 18 centimeters), the diary consists of seven sheets of paper sewn down the middle with brown thread, forming fourteen pages. It is attached to Johnson's farewell sermon to the Farmington Indians, which he delivered on his last day at Farmington (1 February 1773). The diary and the sermon are sewn together with white thread; this may have occurred at a later date, since the first page of the sermon is considerably worn.

The handwriting of the diary is very regular, with entries running the full length of the paper, leaving no margins on the page. Johnson occasionally separates entries with an extended horizontal line. The first page of the diary is quite worn, especially at the bottom; the diary is stained throughout and occasionally marked with inkblots and smudging, but there are virtually no revisions or alterations to the text of the diary. As is typical of a daily record, the handwriting, spacing, and even heaviness of the ink vary somewhat among the entries.

Wendsday, the 18th of November, AD 1772

Notwithstanding the good Entertainments with which I was Entertained the Evening past, they asked me only Seven pence. It is about Sunrise, So I go. This morn, I Crosed the Hartford ferry just before nine. I payd only one Copper for my ferrage. I Breakfasted at the house of the Revd Mr Patten Son in law of the Revd Doctr Wheelock. I was recieved very kindly by him, and his wife, as if I was one of the family.[22]

I tarryed in Hartford about 1 hour and an half, then I Sat out for to vizit the Farmington Indians. I went 3 Miles. There I was much at a stand whether to

21. The diary is reprinted by permission of the Manuscripts and Archives Division, the New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations. This edition is drawn from L. Murray, *To Do Good*, with permission of University of Massachusetts Press. Punctuation absent at the ends of sentences has been inserted, some internal punctuation has been deleted, and lowercased first words of sentences have been capitalized. Words have not been altered, inserted, or deleted. For full editorial practice, see ibid., 8–9; and for more complete annotation, ibid., 151–67.

22. The Reverend William Patten (1738–75) was the husband of Ruth, Eleazar Wheelock's stepdaughter.

call at Famington or no, as my design was to go to the Mohawk Country. There I Stood at a Stand some time. At last [. . .][23] Came 3 men. I enqured of them, whether it was much out of the way, to go by Farmington, to go at Canaan, through Norfolk. They told me, that now it was the nighest way I could go from here. So I concluded to go by Farmington, the more because I was desired by the Rev[d] Samson Occom. So here I [. . .]I dined Seven miles from Hartford at a Tavern, where much people were Exerciseing in a Military way. I arrived at Farmington about 3 in the afternoon, dined again, at one Elijah Wiempy's.[24] I desired the Indians to meet together, that I might read the Rev[d] Samson Occoms Sermon, Preached at the [. . .] of Moses Paul who was Executed the Second . . . of Septe[. . .] 1772 at N[. . .].[25]

This afternoon I spent, that is the remainder at the house of Elijah Wiempey. This Evening Several Indians assembled themselves together at the house of Thomas Occurrum. I read the Sermon, which M[r] Occom Preacht, at the Execution of Moses Paul; they heard with much Solmnity, after that we Sang, after that I spoke little of the goodness of God to all his Creatures, to us in a Perticular manner. Than I Acquainted them of a Proposal, which M[r] Occom proposed Concerning my keeping a School amongst them if the School was void of a Teacher. They all rejoiced, to think of the Proposal. They Continued asking me if I could Content myself with them, so after we had Prayed; we Concluded the ensueing Day to go their overseer, to get his Approbation and to Confirm all. So we retired, much satisfyed, in the Exercises of our Meeting, to our several homes. This evening, I tarry at Elijah Wimpeys.

Thirdsay, the 19[th] of November, AD 1772

I spent chief of this day in walking about the fields of Elijah Wiempy's. This Evening was Examined by their Overseer, Rev[d] Timothy Pitkin,[26] preaching at the town of Farmington, and he said I was Capable of the bussiness. I read, & wrote, before several. Some of the headmen of the Indian tribe was present.

23. Ellipses in brackets signify illegible text.

24. Elijah Wimpey (1734–ca. 1802), who was married to Jerusha, was a veteran of the French and Indian War; he later became a trustee of Brotherton, New York.

25. The last line of the first page of the diary, which is without a cover, is worn off, as are various words toward the bottom of the page. Occom's sermon at the execution of Moses Paul, from the text "For the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23), went through many editions after its initial 1772 publication in New Haven; see also Johnson's letter to Moses Paul, published in March 1772 (reprinted in L. Murray, *To Do Good*, 141–46).

26. The Reverend Timothy Pitkin (1727–1812) served as Farmington's minister from 1752 to 1785.

Fryday, the 20th of November, AD 1772

This morn, I wrote for the tribe a Letter to the Revd Samson Occom.

This day had Convenient Opportunity to send Letters to my Native home. Sent two. One I wrote here, the other, at the house of the Revd Mr Timothy Pitkins. I sent for my [Vester?], I tarried in the town till after Sun set. Than I returned to the house of Elijah Wiempey, whire I at present reside.

Saturday, the 21st of November, AD 1772

Nothing to the Purpose this day. In the latter Part, I went a guning, kill'd one fowl.

The First Lords Day from Home
Sunday, the 22d of November, AD 1772

Went to hear Mr. Pitkin. The after part of the day he preach't from Hebrews XII.14, follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man Shall See the Lord.

Monday, the 23d of November, AD 1772

This morning Opened a School in Farmington, among the Indian tribe. Had 9 Indian Children. At Even, I went over to the town, to See Mr Culver. I returned to Elijah's.

Tuesday, the 24th of November, AD 1772

This day had 10 Indian Children.

Wendsday, the 25th of November, AD 1772

This day had 11 Indian Children, and one English lad, Named Simeon Barny. This day afternoon I recieved a Letter from the Revd. Mr. Samson Occom & from Jacob Fowler Schoolmaster at Grotton.[27]

Thirsdday, the 26th of November, AD 1772

Kept School as Ussual, nothing remarkable.

27. Jacob Fowler (Montauk, 1750–87?) had been a fellow student of Johnson's at Eleazar Wheelock's school.

Fryday, the 27th of November, AD 1772

Kept School as Ussual. At Evening held a Meeting at the house of Samuel Adams, a Singing Meeting.[28] At the close we Concluded to have A singing Meeting twice in a week, that is, Tuesday night, and Fryday night, also we agreed further to spend Some time for Publick worship together, and we appointed, and Set apart, the Sabbath Evenings for that purpose, that is to Sing, pray, and give a word of Exhortation or Spend Some part of it in Reading some books of Edification.

Saturday, the 28th of November, AD 1772

Kept the school in the forepart of the day, in the after part, went over to the Town. Got Paper.

Sabbath Day, the 29th of November, AD 1772

I spent Chief of the time in reading. Very stormy indeed. This Evening, we meet together at the house of Thomas Occurrums. We sang, Prayed, & Conversed about Approaching Death, and the Consequences, if we die Christless, and the great happiness if we have an Interest in Him, which alone Can make us have any Pleasing thoughts of Death, Judgment, & a happy Eternity. Before we parted, I heard several of the grown Persons read, both Sex, Married and Single. I tarried at Elijahs. 2nd Sunday.

Monday, the 30th of November, AD 1772

This day had 16 Scholars, of which 3 were English. This day I left Elijah Wiempys, and board at the house of Solomon Mossucks.[29]

Tuesday, the 1st Day of December, AD 1772

Kept School as Ussual. At Even, we had a singing meeting, which was attended with much Earnestness; had a very full Assembly.

Concluded with Prayer as Ussual.

Wendsday, the 2d of December, AD 1772

Kept School as Ussual. After I had dismissed the children, I sat in the School house Some time. About dusk one of the chiefs of this town, and one of the young men, brought a Stragling man to me, and desired me to Examine him.

28. Samuel Adams (1734–ca. 1800) was the son of Adam, a Quinnipiac. Samuel was married to Hannah Squamp (Wangunk) and had served in the army in 1756 and 1762. His son Solomon married Olive Occom, Samson's daughter.

29. Solomon Mossuck (1723–1802) and his wife, Eunice, both church members, were the parents of Daniel, who attended Wheelock's school and later fought in the American Revolution.

I thought myself not Capable, not knowing the Customs of People Enough. However I did my best, and upon Examination, he enform'd us that he was a Spanish Indian, and was a Servant man to one Mr Durfy of Stonington in this Government, and he further told us, that before he Came away, his Master abused him very much, and gave him leave to go away, not telling him when to return, and it was with much difficulty, we got So much Inteligence from him. We took several methods, Sometime intreating, at another threatening, for he Seem'd to be somewhat delirious, or in other words Crazy. But I did my uttermost Endeavour that he should not be abused, as it seemed to me that all there design, was to make a sport of him. But I remembered Joseph & his brethren, how Joseph Said, for I fear God, do this.[30] And I remembered Our Saviour, when he was brought before Pilate, he answered not a word. My heart was arous'd with Compassion towards the Pitifull Object, and as I had Considerable Influence in this Place I endeavour'd to use it, for his safety. And after we had Examined him, at the school house, alone, he was led to another place, whire another of the chiefs dwelt. There I Spoke boldly, on his behalf, and desired them to require no further Inteligence from him, and use him as becoming rational Creatures or Christians. For my part I must be gone, So[?] I went out, & they Said they would not abuse him, and would harken to all my advice, & words. As Soon as I went out I got about 2 rods from the house, one of the chiefs followed me, and Said, I'll go with you. So he accompanied me, to the place I went, and he Conversed all the way, as we walked. He told me, that he was very intimate with my father in time of war. He exprest much Regard for him, and Said he was My fathers waiter, and told of Several Engagements, where he accompanied my father. He gave my father, the Tittle of Captain in all his Discourse,[31] and after all he acquainted me most freely the Special regards he had for me also, and assurd me that I had more that loved me now, truely than Ever I had my life time before. He said that all was well pleased that I made a Stop here to Spend the winter with them, and many Expressions of Love He Shewed me, till we returnd. Also he told me, what they had privately talked Concerning me, what they proposed to do if I would Comply, &c. &c. &c. One thing I intend to remember for time to Come, about 3 Cows

30. "And Joseph said unto them the third day, This do, and Live: for I fear God" (Gen. 42:18). When Joseph's brethren came to him to buy corn in time of famine, they did not recognize the brother they had sold into exile out of jealousy. Eventually, Joseph forgave them and invited them to live with him.

31. Johnson's father, also named Joseph, served for the British in the French and Indian War. In 1757 he was given a special commission to choose and lead twenty-six Indian scouts in an investigation of Lake George; he was promoted to sergeant in 1758. For a letter he wrote to his wife, see L. Murray, *To Do Good*, 25–26.

and worth nothing, took her out of the mire, had nothing but Jacknife, &c. &c. &c.[32]

Thirsday, the 3d day of December, AD 1772

This morning after we had tended family worship, I made 3 gamuts or Singing Books, that is, Cut them out, & sewed them together. I began to write down the rules in one. The indians are all desireous of haveing Gamuts, but I am in Continual hurry. Nevertheless, I purpose to furnish them with Singing books as Soon as time will admit.[33] I just dismissed my Scholars who was very regular the day past, and Several Seem to be in Earnest, to learn. I cant help but take Special notice of Indians in this town, and therefore I enter few lines, here, that for time to Come I may look & remember.

I confess that the Lord has prospered my ways, and guided my doubtfull Steps hitherto. Here he has brought me, and placed me amidst a strang Nation, and he has given me favour in their Eyes. I have been used with much Respects in the Several places whire I have been, but much more here. I fear more than belongs to me, but God grant me Grace in my heart, that I may Serve him So much the more here.

Our Custom in the school is to Pray morning & Evening. This Even, I talked to my Scholars before we Sang about our duty to god, and Sat before them the rewards of God to those that Serve him, & Love Him, & so on. Spoke of the Day of Judgment, & the Transactions of that day, as is made known to us by the word of God. They atten'd with great solemnity, and reverence. So we sang, Prayed, & then dismissed them. But now it is almost dusk, alone now I think of Mohegan. Friend my mind runs all over Mohegan as I used to, when I personally was there—but I end hoping in due time to be there once more.

It is too dark for me to write much more, but I believe I Can read my own writing. I am as Ussual, the Mohegan Indian, now keeping a School among the Indians at Farmington, in good health, & Endeavouring to use it for the good of my fellow Indians, &c. &c. &c.

32. The handwriting here is very unclear, as is the sense. The story about the three cows may be a parable to illustrate the chiefs' plans for Johnson, or it may be a story about Johnson's father's ingenuity and kindness.

33. Published gamuts, or musical instruction books, must have been expensive enough that it was worth Johnson's time to make them by hand. Examples of the genre with which Johnson might have been familiar are William Tansur's *American Harmony* (1769) and *A New and Complete Introduction to the Grounds and Rules of Musick* (1764).

Fryday, the 4th Day of December, AD 1772

Last Evening I went to the house of Mr Wodsworth[34] & Solomon Mossock accompanied me. There I spent the Evening, heard his daughters Sing Several Tunes, and Sang Some at there desire, myself. Very pleasant Evening.

This morning Something airish, kept School as ussual, now it is noon, I have just now dismissed the Scholars. Before School I wrote down the Musical Characters. I bord now at Solomon Mossocks, & must go to dinner. Thus much for the forenoon. This evening held a singing meeting at the house of Thomas Occurrum. Several indians convened together and Some white People. Held the meeting something late. After Prayers we seperated.

Saturday, the 5th Day of December, AD 1772

Very pleasant. Rose very early, wrote Considerable before School in My gamut, the first part. Now I am in health, in Continual hurry, my time is fully employed in one sort of exercise or another. Neither do I forget home.

I make it my bussiness on Saturday, always to Catachize the Children, or Scholars, old & young, of both Sex, also Converse about things Eternal, of God, Christ, and the holy Spirit, of things beyound the Grave, &c. Spent chief of this afternoon in writing, and in drawing lines, for my gamut. This evening is very pleasant. I went abroad.

Spent the Evening with Elijah Wiempy. Drank tea, &c. After I left him, I went in to the house of Landlord Wodsworth, & delivered him his Singing Book, & he desired me to set down and warm me. I tarried a Short Space. So I went to my lodging.

Sabbath Day, the 6th of December, AD 1772

Very pleasant indeed. I went to meeting, the forepart of the day. I sat below, and the Preacher Preach't from these words.

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the Life, no man cometh unto the father but by me. St. John XIV.6. The way blocked up by Sin made accessable now by Christ, in His Life, in His Doctrine, in His example, in his Obedience, in his Death, in His resurection, in His Exaltation, & in His Intersession.

In the afterpart of the Day, the preacher preach't from these words and grive not the holy Spirit of god, whireby ye are Sealed unto the day of Redemption—

34. William Wadsworth was a Tunxis overseer in 1768, and Hezekiah Wadsworth was overseer in 1776. Johnson refers to "Landlord Wodsworth" in his next entry—an interesting title given that the Tunxis had challenged William Wadsworth's claim to land in 1738.

By reason of grieving the Spirit we are given up to ourselves, & ripen for quick destruction. He laid down several ways how we grieved Gods Spirit—

Spoke in great Earnest all the day long, a faithfull Servant of Jesus Christ.

At Evening we held a Conferance at the house of Thomas Occurrums. Had a very Solemn Time, many tears Shead. Some Said they valued Such meetings more than other, that is the singing meetings. After prayers with which we did Conclude, I heard Several read, grown Persons, married persons, to the number of ten, and it is my Custom every Sabbath evening to hear them read the word of God . . . tend prayers, Sing, Converse, and read Some book for our Edification, & Exhortation . . .

Monday, the 7th of December, AD 1772

Began to prick out some tunes in my gamut. Kept School as Ussual.

Tuesday, the 8th of December, AD 1772

Still prick't out more Tunes, & kept School as Ussual. This Evening held a Singing School at the house of Samuel Addams.

Wendsday, the 9th of December, AD 1772

Prick't out as usual & kept School.
I came to Samuel Adams on Monday and am to board here 1 week. Monday night I was over to the Town, & the white people had a Singing Meeting.

Thirsday, the 10 of December, AD 1772

Prick't out Tunes as Ussual, & kept School.

Fryday, the 11th of December, AD 1772

Did as Ussual, kept School, Prick't out.

Saturday, the 12th of December, AD 1772

Kept School as Usual. Catachised the children, gave them warning to keep the Sabbath, in the fear of God, & dismised by Prayer. I Spent most part of this after noon in finishing My Gamut. About Sun 3 Quaters of an hour high I went out in the woods for little diversion or rather for Recreation and I killed one Squiral. This Evening I went to Mr Wodsworths and Spent the Evening there, Singing, Conversing, &c. &c. So Ends the week.

The Lords Day, Decmber 13th, AD 1772

This morning went to the Town to meeting. Mr Pitkin Preached from these words but as for me and my house I will serve the Lord. Spok chiefly to heads

of families, and urged family Prayers, morning & Evening, & keep up Strict government in thir houses.

In the after part of the day, he preached from these words. But thou, when thou prayest, enter in to thy Closet, and when thou hast Shut thy door, pray to thy father which is in Secret, and thy father which Seeth in Secret, Shall reward thee openly. Exhorted one & all to Secret prayer and to neglect it upon their peril, both morning & evening, and other proper times when in a Suitable frame.

And further he Said tho all those that keep up Duties, both Publick, & Secret prayer are not True Christians, yet those that live in intire neglect of prayer are Certain no Christians, and told in to have Stated time for our private retirement, & let no friend, or Bussiness hinder us, & much more.

Monday, the 14th of December, AD 1772

Began another Gamut for Samual Adams. Last night had a Conferanc, held it at the house of Samuel Adams. Very Serious one, I hope. I went to Chearlses this Evening to board the week.[35] Kept School as Usual, &c. &c.

Tuesday, the 15th of December, AD 1772

Last night I was over to the town, & was at the house of the Revd Pitkin—& [also?] two different Shops. Ricieved two Psalters for the use of the School.

Gave one to Sarah Robins, the daughter of Hanah Robins.[36] Something Cold, but very pleasant for the time of the year—almost nine. Just done breakfast. I am in good State of health. [At?] night I ricieved Couple of Letters from Groton, one from Mr Jacob Fowler Schoolmaster there, & the other from the two Daughters of Mr Samson Paukanop Deacon there, all which I love most tenderly, and desire to See, perhaps more than I do my family amongst the Scattered Indian Towns, or Tribes, I fear more than my only Sister.[37] So I end hoping in due time to see all well. However, I hope if never in this world, we may by the grace of our Lord meet together before him in his blesed presence, never more to Seperate, but live, love, praise together to all Eternity, which may god Grant of his infinite, free, Soveriegn mercy may be our happy portion. Through Jesus Christ our Lord and blessed Redeemer who ever liveth. Amen & Amen, &c. &c.

35. Charles Wimpey, the son of Elijah, was allotted land at Brotherton in 1804.

36. In May 1777, Ruth and Hannah Robbins owned nine acres of land at Farmington between them.

37. Samson Pauquenup (or Poquiantup) was Samson Occom's cousin. His daughter Esther was married to Jacob Fowler's brother David; two of her sisters, probably unmarried at this time, were Eunice and Prudence. Johnson's sister Amy, who had also studied at Wheelock's school, was married to Joseph Cuish from Niantic (see L. Murray, *To Do Good*, 25–26, 131–35).

So I depart and must go to my Calling, or to School—

After School I wrote more to the two Daughters of Sampson Pauquenup. This Evening held a Singing School at the house of Samuel Adams.

Broke up Considerable late. Looks likely for storm.

Wendsday, the 16th of December, AD 1772

Continued my Letter to the girls. It Snowed little, the night past, looks very likely for Storm. So I must go. Just as I finished the Business of the forenoon, it began to rain very hard. Tarried some time after the exercises were over, at lenght ventered out.

Now I am here at the house of Charl[. . .] Came here on Monday, 14th Instant. This Evening Pricked out Several Tunes for Samuel Adams.

Thirsday, the 17th of December, AD 1772

Very pleasant after a Storm[38]—Sun rises fair—this morn before breakfast I wrote from the original, an Extract from the girls Letter—after y^t^ went to the School—Dismissed at 12—began soon—Scholars behaved very well During the School time, but when we Came to dismiss by Prayer to God—I charged them to be Silent—Solemn Considering to whome we was Praying—as they had several times before been disorderly in time of worship—I threatend them and warned them faithfully Sundry times before. So at this time also—So after our minds were Composed we Prayed—but after Prayer—I was Enformed that 3 different Persons had been Disorderly—Alas how to be freed from the unwellcome task I Could not see So forth with I ordered them one by one begining at the Eldest—to the Younger So faithfully I made them a Sad Example of Disobeying the School Orders.

Hoping from my heart—as this is the first—So may it be last in this School so long as I Continue here—

I Spoke freely to all the rest—that they a warning take—for I assure them that I will no Distinction make—

And what was inflicted on these 3 at this time was very lite—Their Names are—Elijah Wiempy Jun^r^.—and Luke Mossock—& Lucy Mossock[39]—So now I am about to Prick out more Tunes for Samuel Adams—

Well I remember home—O mohegan O Mohegan—the time is long before

38. Because Johnson's unusual use of dashes in the following passage suits the outpouring of emotion and the rhythm of speech, the punctuation has not been adjusted. Joanna Brooks (*American Lazarus*, 69) has identified here two full verses from Isaac Watts's hymn "My Soul Come Meditate the Day" and adapted portions of Psalm 137.

39. Elijah Wimpey Jr. (1765–ca. 1812) married Elizabeth Peters and stayed at Brotherton until his death. Luke and Lucy would be children of Solomon and Eunice.

I Shall be walking my wonted places which are on thee—once there I was but perhaps never again, but Still I remember thee—in you is lodged my father & Mother Dear—and my Beloved Sisters—and brothers—

Keep them in thy womb O Mohegan, till thou dost hear the Voice of God—O Mohegan give up thy Dead—then no longer Prisoners Shall they be unto thee—the joyfull hour is Approaching. My Soul Come Meditate the Day and think how near it stands when you must leave—this house of Clay—and fly to Unknown Lands.—Hast my beloved fetch my Soul up to thy blest aboad fly for my Spirit Longs to see—my Saviour—and my *God*—Mohegan is a lonsome place, oft have I sighed—but sighed in vain—desired, but desired in vain—Cast down—but no one to Comfort me—in destress—no one to relieve me—no friend to open my heart and vent my Sorrows—I opened my mouth to the open air—and told the Stones my Sorrow. Thus o Mohegan have you treated me—and thinkest thou—I can forget thee—or thy inhabitants—thinkest thou—or thine inhabiters that I am desireing to be on thee or with them—far far from me be such a thought—but Still there is a precious few in thee, which Causes my mind often to Meditate of thee—Perhaps in due time I may once more Come on thy borders—but first I have to go, to distant Lands; and far Country—and Differant Nations I have to walk through—before I see thee. Thus O Mohegan I must bid you farewell, and Shut the door of my Heart against thee—for I have a truer friend—to entertain in My Heart—So good night—

Spent chief of this Evening in Pricking out Tunes—for Samuel Adams.

Fryday, the 18th of Dcember, AD 1772

This Evening held a Singing meeting at the House Elijah Wiempy. As I was going I met Hunters returning 4 in Number—Poor luck. Soloman Dideson, any of the Company. This Evening considerable Stormy—and Dark. Got home before any to Chearlses—there Slept—1772.

Saturday, 19th of December, AD 1772

Kept School as Ussual. Of Dismission I went to Chearlses at diner after that I went to Elijah's, borrowed his Gun Powder and Shot. Than I went into the woods. Chearls & Elijah Junr. accompanied me and one Ca[. . .] I Shot twice killed two Squirrels Chearls one Squirrel, and that all the Game. As we returned we came to Eijahs again. Tarried a Short time, & in that Time Came Joseph Sunsaman, of Grotton[40] and I was much pleased to see him. Tarried a small time. Then Charles & I went home.

40. Joseph Sunsaman (Cinnamon, Senshemon) was a prominent Pequot Christian; he later moved to Brotherton.

Sunday, 20th of December, AD 1772

This morn I Saw in my first wakings, in my drowsiness, as it were the likeness of a lamb that had been Slain. Stand in at the foot of my Couch, and these words Seem to be set home upon my heart. He was Oppressed—and he was Afflicted, yet he oppend not his Mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the Slaughter, and as a Sheep before her Shearers is dumb, So he openeth not his Mouth. Isaiah LIII.7. Also, in Revelations V.6 and in the midst of the Elders Stood a Lamb as it had been Slain. What think you, who ever, here after may peruse these Lines—I am Joseph Johnson who do you think was the Subject of my Meditation—or the Object on whom my Soul Delighted—or what impression think you, was left upon my heart? I felt love glow in an ardent manner in my heart. To whome do you think? Methinks one might guise I awoke in some Uncommon Surprize. So I did—no sonner I awoke but got directly up—and Dressed me and followed the Blessed Lamb out, and there I worshiped him. It was Jesus Christ, who was the subject of My firt Meditation, and the only Object of my Love, & in whom my Soul truly Delighted—who left an Impression Upon my heart which Caused my heart to glow in love to him Even to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the World, who once was Slain, but now Ever Liveth. Now give me leave to join my Voice with the Voice of the Elders—and Angels which are round about the throne, Who are saying with a loud Voice, worthy is the Lamb that was Slain; to recieve power, and riches, and wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and glory, and Blessing. Amen & Amen. 1772.

Sunday, 20th of December, AD 1772. Far.

Joseph Sunsaman with one Mezen Cam in while we were Eatin Breakfast.[41] Also Robert Ashpo arrived here lat Night toward day.[42] Held a Meeting in the fore part of the Day at the house of Thomas Curricomb. Stormy day. After part we assembled our selves at the house of Sam Addams, again in the Evening at Samuel Adamses. They Seemed to be Earnest. Robert, & Joseph Sunsaman Carried on the Meeting.

Monday, 21st of December, AD 1772

Kept School as Ussual. At Even went to the Town. Got 6 Testaments for the Indians. Left Chearlses, and went to board at Elijahs again, my first Residence.

41. People by this name lived in Groton, Mohegan, and (evidently) Farmington.
42. Robert Ashpo was brother to Samuel, a well-known Mohegan preacher.

Tuesday, 22d of December, AD 1772

Kept School as Ussual. At Even held a Singing Meeting at Adamses. Here I Slept or rather tarried. I pricked out a Singing Book for Adams and sat up alas[?] all Night, the day Star 3 Quarter of high [?].

Wendsday, 23d of Dcember, AD 1772

Began Another Gamut for Hannah Robbins. Kept Scholl as Usual, at Even tarried at Hannah Robbins.

Thirdsday, 24th of December, AD 1772

After Breakfast went to school. Was Invited to go to Dinner to one Solomon Mossocks. So at noon I went. This Evening Slept at Elijahs Desputed of Hell. Some Snow fell this Evening.

Fryday, 25th of December, AD 1772

Kept School as Usual. Between School Prick't out several Tunes after that read Isaac Frasiers Life.[43] Drank Tea at Andrews.[44] This Evening held a Singing meeting at Adams was Invited to go home with one Solomon Mossock to keep a Christmas, and also by Elijah, but finally I was persuaded to tarry with Samuel Adams.

Saturday, 26th of December, 1772

Last Evening Slept with Samuel Adams. Held a Discourse about Several things as we lay—on Regeneration, New birth, Many Called but few Chosen, the Prayers of the Wicked are an Abomination, Tares and the Wheat must grow to gether Untill the Harvest, &c.[45] And Severel other things of Consequence—of

43. "The notorious" Isaac Frasier (1740–68) managed to set fire to the jail when imprisoned for thirty-odd counts of burglary. While his trial for burning the jail was pending, he escaped from another jail and committed several more thefts. His deathbed account was both sensational and moralistic (see Frasier, *The Notorious Isaac Frasier*).

44. Andrew Curricom (or Corcomp [b. 1747]) was married to Abigail, and at this time they had two small daughters. He lived at Stockbridge, Massachusetts, during the Revolutionary War.

45. Thomas Kendall, a missionary at Caughnawaga between 1772 and 1774, taught the same parable to a Mohawk man. Kendall's anxiety about his missionary role is a far cry from Johnson's and Adams's easy conversation in bed: "Conversed with Philups & read unto him the 14 Chap. of Mathew concerning the tares & Wheat. Was obliged to in explaining it unto him to use the word wild Persnip instead of tares as he could not understand tares. The other their Land is full of it & likewise their wheat in their feilds. I chose this chapter to shew to him that their was no Purgatory that the Bible New of none, and all the while held the bible before me as a shield as it were & recited him to pasages in old testament where it began with thus Saith the Lord, here, atend, harken diligently &c." (Kendall, *Diary*, entry of 4 August).

grieving the Spirit of God of True Conviction of the different sorts of Concern, but one right, of Death Judgment, & Eternity. So before day fell a Sleep.

This morn after Breakfast went to School, very Cold. Went through the Exercises reading, spelling, & Catachising, Exhorting, & dismissed with Prayer. Begins to Snow. Went to Elijahs. The Snow is turned into Rain. So I End for this Day.

From 26th of December 1772 to the 28th of January 1773. Very Short Account

After I tarried 1 week at Elijahs, I tarried a week at Andrews. On Tuesday 29th of December 1772, I hurt my leg. Ran again a Stick at Even. After I tarried a week at Andrews, I went to live with Meazen. I tarried untill Wendsday the 15th of January 1773. At Even My leg, being much Swelled I was advised to go to Hannahs house, the Sister of Elijah, and they made a Poultice, and put on the Same Evening. On Saturday the 8th of January, I Sent a few lines to Doctr. Timothy Hosmer, and he Sent a few Directions, Bathing, Poulticing, and Diet, abstaining from Spirituous Liquors, &c. &c.[46] On Tuesday Evening 11th of January 1773, was appointed for a Singing Meeting, but Robert Asppoo Came, and Carried on the Meeting.

At the Lords Day, 16th of January, 1773, I got so well as that I went to meeting. Very Cold indeed, walked going, rid coming. On Sunday, the 16th of January 1773 at noon I went to Doctr. Hosmers and he dressed my Leg, and gave me Salve. When I got home. (i.e.) to Hannahs house my leg began to be very painfull, and Swelled Some. I laid down. This Evening had a meeting. On Monday 17th of January, 1773, Came to Samuel Adams, and Tarried 1 week. After that I purposed to tarry at Mossocks but Samual Adams persuaded me to tarry another week with him. Monday 24th of January, AD 1773, at Even I went to pay Thomas Corcamp a Vissit. Sang Some. Afterward returned to S. Ad.

Tuesday Evening held a Singing Meeting at Adams house, very agreable Meeting. Wendsday 27th 1773 finished Susannahs Gamut, the Eighth Gamut I Made.[47]

Now it is the 29th of January, 1773, Fryday. Well in heath, but Sore leg yet, from 29th December, 1772.

46. Timothy Hosmer was active as a Son of Liberty and an army surgeon during the American Revolution, after which he moved to Genessee County.

47. Susannah Cronick and Susannah Squinnomow were among those who petitioned to sell their lands at Farmington in 1777.

30th of January, AD 1773, Saturday

This day I have kept School 10 weeks. This day Came the Indians for to see what Proficiency their Children made in the 10 Weeks Past. Sang, before Prayers Elijah Prayed in the morning. After Prayer Began to read. The Children look very Promising. The Hearts of Parants were not litle Effected to See their Children Stand in order, like a row of willow young Tender, and fair, Beside a Pleasant fountain, or a living Stream. Much Pleasing to See the Children Earnest to learn. It is my meat and Drink to teach Such Children. For my Part I never Saw Indians So much desireous of Learning. I have been Diffirent Parts of this Continent, among diffirent Tribes of the Natives, Scattered up and Down but I Challenge all Indian Schools and School masters, to Show me the order of their Schools, English or English or Indian. (I mean all [. . .] I have been Acquainted as yet.) My Challange is this, that they Excel this School in Manners, & Proficiency Considering the time, as well as the age of the Schollars, that they have been Under my Care. Also I challenge Schoolmasters to bring the Severel Tribes among which, Perhaps, they have resided for, not only 10 weeks, but 10 Months and Perhaps 10 years, and more against this Tribe, with whome I have resided 10 weeks. My Challenge is this that they Excell this Tribe in Singing, the Musical Art, if you tribes Can attend that Part of Solemn, worship with Deacency.

Joseph Johnson's Diary, Farmington, Connecticut, 18 November 1772 to 1 February 1773

LAURA J. MURRAY

Joseph Johnson's two diaries from the early 1770s are remarkable and apparently unique documents. Unlike Johnson's other writings, mostly pleas for money or support from white patrons, the diaries seem to have been primarily designed for Johnson's own eyes and conscience. They provide a rich portrait of the texture of daily life in small New England Native communities: the comings and goings, the labor, the sociability, and the nature of Christian worship. In the "Indian towns" of Mohegan and Farmington in this period, white preachers were not the most important promoters of either literacy or Christianity. More

This essay is developed from sections of Laura J. Murray, ed., *To Do Good to My Indian Brethren: The Writings of Joseph Johnson, 1751–1776* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998), with permission from University of Massachusetts Press.

commonly, groups of Native Americans prayed, sang, read, and wrote together regularly in their homes, and Aboriginal community thus conceived became the foundation for an emigration movement to Brotherton, New York. The diaries of Johnson, who was a leader of this project, provide a surprisingly intimate portrait of the strivings and the doubts of a young man who was learning to assume a position of responsibility among his "brethren."

Joseph Johnson was born to Joseph and Betty Johnson, both Mohegans, at Mohegan, Connecticut, near Norwich, in 1751. Johnson's father died fighting for the British in the French and Indian War, whereupon Betty Johnson sent seven-year-old Joseph to the Reverend Eleazar Wheelock's Indian Charity School at Lebanon, just down the road. Although young Joseph already had some familiarity with Christian worship and the English language, Wheelock's school must have been a sobering experience. Wheelock drilled his pupils in humility with respect to both earthly and heavenly superiors as earnestly as he drilled them in reading and writing—and in the hours remaining they were sent out to earn their keep at neighboring farms. Still, the school's proximity to Mohegan permitted Johnson and some of his classmates to visit home from time to time, and at least one of Joseph's sisters also attended Wheelock's school. Although Johnson left Mohegan at a tender age, he was by no means severed from his home.[48]

At age fifteen, Johnson was sent west of Albany, New York, to teach school to the Oneidas. Although Wheelock had established his school in New England, his goal was to train missionary workers there for the conversion of the Iroquois. Accordingly, Johnson taught at Oneida for two and a half winters, under the supervision of the missionary Samuel Kirkland, suffering the recalcitrance of his students, the cold and hunger, and the vigorous demands of his white supervisors. During this time, he wrote many dutiful and despairing letters to Wheelock. In 1769 he quit amid charges of drunkenness and misconduct. For the next two years, Johnson—staying well out of Wheelock's watchful view—worked as a schoolteacher in Providence, Rhode Island, and then signed on to a whaling ship. On 9 October 1771, the very day he stepped off the ship in Providence, he began a "Memorandum" in a small notebook whose last page would not be filled until 7 March 1772. In the early entries of this diary, we are kept in suspense about Johnson's lost belongings and his Newport romance. We see his return home to Mohegan echoed regularly in later diary entries when, for example, Johnson notes, "This Day is 6 weeks since I came home."[49]

48. For more biographical information and annotation, see L. Murray, *To Do Good*, 25–29 and 50–54.

49. Ibid., 119.

We learn how Johnson and his family supported themselves: husking corn, clearing land, killing hogs, making spoons and brooms. We follow Johnson's medical treatment for a disease he does not name, and we watch him move from furtive romantic longing to fervent devotion to God. We see the patterns of visiting among Native Christians in neighboring villages. If Christianity provided a fabric of sociability, however, it also made severe demands on its practitioners, and in entry after entry Johnson struggles with his depravity in the face of God.

Johnson's second diary (reprinted in full herein), which was kept at Farmington, Connecticut, through the winter of 1772–73, is quite different from the first diary in substance and tone. The Farmington Johnson was no longer primarily a sinner on the verge of rebirth or relapse; he was a religious and community leader. Whereas in the earlier diary Johnson emphasizes his own unworthiness and God's vengeful judgment (he describes himself in a letter from around that time as "a child in the knowledge of Jesus my Lord, and a babe in Understanding"),[50] in the second diary he is calmly thankful that God "has brought me, and placed me amidst a strang Nation, and he has given me favour in their Eyes." In the Farmington diary, Johnson worries more about alienation from his home community at Mohegan than about alienation from God.

When Johnson left Mohegan in November 1772, he was bound for upstate New York. As he recorded at the beginning of his new diary, however, Providence intervened on the road just past Hartford and offered him a chance to take a leadership role among the Native people at Farmington:

> I went 3 Miles. There I was much at a stand whether to call at Famington or no, as my design was to go to the Mohawk Country. There I Stood at a Stand some time. At last [. . .] Came 3 men. I enqured of them, whether it was much out of the way, to go by Farmington, to go at Canaan, through Norfolk. They told me, that now it was the nighest way I could go from here. So I concluded to go by Farmington, the more because I was desired by the Rev[d] Samson Occom.

As Johnson waits at the crossroads for a sign about which road to take, three men come along, as in a parable or *Pilgrim's Progress*, and provide him with a sign that directs him to take leadership among his neighbors rather than wander on alone. The staging at the opening of the diary suggests that when he took the road to Farmington, home to a Native American community including people of Tunxis, Quinnipiac, and Mattabeeset or Wangunck descent, Johnson was suddenly invested with a sense of purpose and responsibility. He also continued to see himself as a humble and sometimes abject apprentice to

50. Johnson to "all Enquiring friends," n.d., quoted in ibid., 178.

Samson Occom, however.[51] Occom had initially proposed that Johnson teach at Farmington, and Johnson's public reading of Occom's published sermon at the execution of Moses Paul (a Pequot convicted of murder) served as the first phase of Johnson's audition for the position. "They all rejoiced" to hear Occom's idea, and the next day Johnson "read, & wrote, before several," including the Indian overseer the Reverend Timothy Pitkin and "some of the headmen of the Indian tribe." This performance of literacy validated Johnson for both white and Aboriginal authority figures. Indeed, Johnson's skills in interpreting, reproducing, and performing the written word underpinned all his work at Farmington. The job he took on resembled that of a young Samson Occom among the Montauketts in the 1750s: He "kept School . . . and Carried on the Religious Meetings as often as ever, and attended the Sick and their Funerals, and did What Writings they wanted, and often Sat as a Judge to reconcile and Decide their Matters between them, and had Visiters of Indians from all Quarters."[52]

Johnson's diary depicts a small but closely knit community. The census in 1774 counted only twelve men, fourteen women, and seventeen children at Indian Neck, in a bend of the Farmington River, and if these numbers are remotely accurate, all the Aboriginal people at Farmington would have been active Christians.[53] Teaching, leading worship, singing, collecting and making books, hunting, and boarding with one family after another at weekly intervals, Johnson lived on intimate terms with his hosts, as one particularly evocative diary entry demonstrates:

> Last Evening Slept with Samuel Adams. Held a Discourse about Several things as we lay—on Regeneration, New birth, Many Called but few Chosen, the Prayers of the Wicked are an Abomination, Tares and the Wheat must grow to gether Untill the Harvest, &c. And Severel other things of Consequence—of grieving the Spirit of God of True Conviction of the different sorts of Concern, but one right, of Death Judgment, & Eternity. So before day fell a Sleep.

At the tender age of twenty-one, Johnson rather reveled in the fact that he stood as a man of some "Considerable Influence in this Place." After all, he had spent most of his life thus far under the scrutiny and direction of Eleazar

51. For more on Johnson's relationship with Occom during this period, see Johnson's letters to Occom in ibid., especially 180–81, 182–85, 192–93, and 200–201.

52. Quoted in Blodgett, *Samson Occom*, 45–46.

53. *Collections*, 117. In 1761 Ezra Stiles met an Indian woman from Farmington who told him that there were only three men and six married Indian women at Farmington and that Pitkin was their sachem; however, Stiles's informant in 1767 reported that ten or twelve families lived there (Dexter, *Extracts*, 136, 269). On Farmington more generally, see L. Murray, *To Do Good*, 298 n. 10, and Feder, *Avaricious Humour*.

Wheelock, Samuel Kirkland, or Samson Occom. When a chief and a young man brought a "Stragling man" into the schoolhouse, Johnson "Spoke boldly, on his behalf, and desired them to require no further Inteligence from him, and use him as becoming rational Creatures or Christians." Johnson apparently left the building to add finality to his words—and it worked: "So[?] I went out," he recalled, "& they Said they would not abuse him, and would harken to all my advice, & words." On this occasion, as he records it in his diary, Johnson explicitly patterned his leadership behaviour on the scriptures: "I remembered Joseph & his brethren," he writes, "how Joseph Said, for I fear God, do this. And I remembered Our Saviour, when he was brought before Pilate, he answered not a word. My heart was arous'd with Compassion." Some of Johnson's authority at Farmington seems also to have come from the fact that one of the Farmington Chiefs "was very intimate with [Johnson's] father in time of war." As Johnson left the schoolhouse after the "Stragling man" incident, this chief hastened after him. "He gave my father, the Tittle of Captain in all his Discourse," wrote Johnson, "and after all he acquainted me most freely the Special regards he had for me also, and assurd me that I had more that loved me now, truely than Ever I had my life time before." Johnson, who had barely known his father, was clearly very moved by these professions of affection, connection, and trust.

A little more than a week after Johnson's arrival, his flock "Concluded to have A singing Meeting twice in a week, that is, Tuesday night, and Fryday night, also we agreed further to spend Some time for Publick worship together, and we appointed, and Set apart, the Sabbath Evenings for that purpose, that is to Sing, pray, and give a word of Exhortation or Spend Some part of it in Reading some books of Edification." In order to support this style of worship, Johnson embarked on the project of producing instructional music books, or "gamuts." On 3 December, he made three—"that is, Cut them out, & sewed them together." Then, he says, "I began to write down the rules in one." Johnson was probably essentially copying a printed gamut in his possession, but his books also contained tunes. Following an evening at the home of "Landlord Wodsworth [Wadsworth]," where he "heard his daughters Sing Several Tunes, and Sang Some at there desire, [him]self," Johnson made a gamut for this family. Since unlike many of the Indians in the town, the Wadsworths certainly could have afforded to buy a gamut, Johnson's gesture suggests that they were engaged by his repertoire. All together, Johnson made eight gamuts for the men and women of his circle.

For Johnson, however, hymns ran deeper than sharing material with others. Overcome with homesickness for Mohegan, Johnson turned to hymns to express himself. As Joanna Brooks has pointed out, the following passage contains

two full verses from Isaac Watts's hymn "My Soul Come Meditate the Day" and adapts portions of Psalm 137, with "Mohegan" standing in for "Jerusalem":[54]

> Well I remember home—O mohegan O Mohegan—the time is long before I Shall be walking my wonted places which are on thee—once there I was but perhaps never again, but Still I remember thee—in you is lodged my father & Mother Dear—and my Beloved Sisters—and brothers—
>
> Keep them in thy womb O Mohegan, till thou dost hear the Voice of God—O Mohegan give up thy Dead—then no longer Prisoners Shall they be unto thee—the joyfull hour is Approaching. My Soul Come Meditate the Day and think how near it stands when you must leave—this house of Clay—and fly to Unknown Lands.—Hast my beloved fetch my Soul up to thy blest aboad fly for my Spirit Longs to see—my Saviour—and my *God*—Mohegan is a lonsome place, oft have I sighed—but sighed in vain—desired, but desired in vain—Cast down—but no one to Comfort me—in destress—no one to relieve me—no friend to open my heart and vent my Sorrows—I opened my mouth to the open air—and told the Stones my Sorrow.

Hymns had permeated Johnson's emotional core. We do not know why he felt that he had to leave Mohegan—perhaps he left in disgrace, or perhaps political tensions forced him to leave—but it is noteworthy that his language of family and nation is also the language of hymns.

Johnson's reticence about the cause of his exile from Mohegan may be frustrating, but it is characteristic of most diaries. Diarists rarely explain that which is obvious to them. Moreover, there is another dimension to this silence: Johnson's most personal writing—his diaries—would not have been understood as private, so he almost certainly chose to remain silent about sensitive personal or political issues. He claims that he keeps a record of his work so "that for time to Come [he] may look & remember" his promising students. Many missionaries in eighteenth-century New England, however, kept journals at the demand of the missionary societies that paid their salaries. Although we have no direct evidence that Johnson was required to keep a diary for his employer or possible benefactor, the fact that he concludes his writing with grand claims of his successes in the field evokes the genre of the diary-as-missionary-report:

> I have been Diffirent Parts of this Continent, among diffirent Tribes of the Natives, Scattered up and Down but I Challenge all Indian Schools and School masters, to Show me the order of their Schools, English or . . . Indian . . . that they Excel this School in Manners, & Proficiency Considering the time, as well as the age of the Schollars, that they have been Under my Care.

54. J. Brooks, *American Lazarus*, 69.

It appears that Johnson also used his diary as practice for writing letters to potential benefactors or practice for oral exhortation. He signs his name at the end of one homesick entry as if he were writing a letter: "I am as Ussual, the Mohegan Indian, now keeping a School among the Indians at Farmington, in good health, & Endeavouring to use it for the good of my fellow Indians, &c. &c. &c." On another occasion, he reports a dream of a lamb at the foot of his bed and asks:

> What think you, who ever, here after may peruse these Lines—I am Joseph Johnson who do you think was the Subject of my Meditation—or the Object on whom my Soul Delighted—or what impression think you, was left upon my heart? I felt love glow in an ardent manner in my heart. To whome do you think? Methinks one might guise I awoke in some Uncommon Surprize, So I did—no sonner I awoke but got directly up—and Dressed me and followed the Blessed Lamb out, and there I worshiped him. It was Jesus Christ, who was the subject of My firt Meditation, and the only Object of my Love, & in whom my Soul truly Delighted.

It is quite startling to come across this direct address—"What think you, who ever, here after may peruse these Lines"—and to think that perhaps Johnson imagined unknown readers, even perhaps from sometime in the future, to inquire into the "Object on whom [his] Soul Delighted." Reading this passage eerily puts us in the position of Johnson's eager students or exacting mentors.

It is not clear why Johnson left his Farmington position after only ten weeks. In a letter to Samson Occom dated a week after the last diary entry in December 1772, Johnson reported plans to go to Oneida, to Dartmouth College, and to Boston "upon Some Bussiness for this Tribe."[55] By early April, he was back teaching at Farmington again, and it appears that he stayed there for another year, all the while petitioning Eleazar Wheelock, Andrew Oliver of the New England Company, and the governor of Connecticut for funds to support the school. It would seem, therefore, that he left because the tribe or its overseer could no longer pay his salary; there is no indication of conflict or dissatisfaction on either side.

The diary is bound with a portion of Johnson's farewell sermon, which offers a taste of another, primarily oral, genre in which Johnson was fluent. Rather than explicate a particular text, the sermon ranges through Christ's life, telling a story—one that, although Johnson expects will be familiar to his audience, he deems worthy of repetition. The tissue of the New Testament quotations in the sermon is held together and made immediate by Johnson's exhortations

55. Quoted in L. Murray, *To Do Good*, 181.

to his listeners to "hear" and "Behold" the final events of Christ's life. The occasion of Johnson's own departure would certainly have intensified the emotional impact of the sermon. Johnson begins by urging the people to "attend diligently, and hearken what a Departing friend has to say to you, before he depart, and you See his face no more, nor hear his Voice Sounding amongst you as Usual, Either Exhorting or weeping or making melody to God." In a flight of language reminiscent of the New Testament, Johnson reminds his brethren, "No more will you See his [Johnson's] tears of Compassion, and Sorrow, flowing from his pitying Eye, no more Entering your houses, seting at your tables, no more will he rest his weary head upon your Pillows." In this context, Johnson later asks his audience to "hear what a depearting Lord Says unto his Beloved deciples, to Comfort them, and he Says unto them, Never the less, I tell you the truth, it is Expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not Come unto you. But if I depart I will Send him, unto you."[56]

It is suggestive to read this sermon in the context of the plans being made, during these months, by several groups of Christian Indians from Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Long Island to emigrate to Oneida land in upstate New York. Six weeks after Johnson preached his farewell sermon at Farmington, representatives of the "seven Tribes" met at Mohegan and committed to the emigration. Although Occom served as the primary political and religious leader of the resettlement, Johnson was its major practical facilitator. We may speculate that at the time of his first departure from Farmington he was already bolstering his confidence, and others' confidence in him, by ventriloquizing Christ and by assuring his listeners, "It is Expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not Come unto you." This assumption of Christ's role may seem arrogant; however, to the Christian itinerant, subsuming one's life into that of Christ was the ultimate act of humility.[57] The men and women of Farmington would have heard this echo, and it appears to have resonated truly for many of them. In April, when he was teaching once again at Farmington, Johnson wrote a letter to Occom declaring, "Were all the School masters used with the Same respects and tenderness as I have been, and Still am used, how chearfully would they spend their time."[58]

56. Ibid., 165, and manuscript diary, NYPL.

57. In a sermon to the Oneidas, David Avery, a white student of Wheelock's, compared himself overtly to Christ, stating that his parting words were like the dying words of Christ (Avery, "Valedictory Address"). In a sermon written on 23 May 1774, Johnson developed an allegory between the life of the Old Testament Joseph and the life of Jesus (Occom Papers, Connecticut Historical Society), and in a letter to the New York Congress, 5 July 1775, Johnson compared himself to "Joseph of old" (L. Murray, *To Do Good*, 267). Thus, he may even have conceived an elaborate set of Old and New Testament allegorical relationships.

58. Ibid., 200.

In October, Johnson wrote a letter, signed by eight men from Farmington, to "All Our Indian Brethren," urging them to remember the commitments to emigration that they had made in the spring and requesting that they send representatives to see the land and make formal arrangements with the Oneidas. The letter assures, "Our kind Women sends a word of Encouragement, and Says that they will make little yoke hegg [dried corn] to give to the travelers."[59] Through 1774 and 1775, having written many letters of appeal and traveled extensively, Johnson secured a deed for land near Oneida and persuaded both white and Native people of the importance of the emigration plan. All the while, he was trying to prepare himself more fully for the ministry and struggling to support himself and his family (he had married Occom's daughter Tabitha in December 1773). Preparations for the emigration became more and more difficult as the discontents of the American colonies developed into full-blown war against Britain; during this time Johnson worked hard to assure both the British and the Americans that it was in their interest to let him travel back and forth between New England and New York. Sometime in this chaotic period, Johnson died, at the age of 25; we do not know where or why. By way of obituary, all that remains is a comment from another of Wheelock's former students: "The Churches this way who had a taste of Mr Johnson's ministerial Gifts feel for the public in the loss of that zealous, pious and very promising Indian Preacher."[60]

The other emigrants persisted in their plans. Although the first group of Brotherton settlers was forced back to Massachusetts and Connecticut to wait out the Revolutionary War, they ventured west again in 1785. In his documentation of the founding of the town, Occom noted that Elijah Wimpey of Farmington was one of the town's first trustees and Andrew Acorrocomb, another Farmington man, one of its first fence viewers.[61] Johnson would have been pleased with the fruits of his months of labor and Christian fellowship at Farmington.

59. Ibid.

60. McClure, Letter to Eleazar Wheelock.

61. Quoted in L. Murray, *To Do Good*, 308. Towns often appointed fence viewers to adjudicate boundary disputes.

Mohegan Wood-splint Basket

The Mohegan *manu'da*, or basket, pictured here is in the collection of the Connecticut Historical Society. It is 12 inches wide, 17 inches long, and 11 inches high. It is rectangular in shape, with sides that curve slightly inward. The rim is double reinforced and single wrapped, creating a sturdy durable frame. The cover is slightly concave, perhaps from age, with sharply defined corners. The warp and weft of the splits are of medium width. The basket is decorated on three sides in Mohegan pink and green, and it is fully lined with pages from an 1817 Hartford, Connecticut, newspaper.

Figure 1-3. Mohegan Painted Wood-splint Storage Basket. (Courtesy of the Connecticut Historical Society, A-1853, Hartford.)

The Cultural Work of a Mohegan Painted Basket

STEPHANIE FITZGERALD

> In steed of shelves, they have severall baskets, wherin they put all their householdstuff: they have some great bags or sacks made of Hempe, which will hold five or sixe bushells.
>
> —Roger Williams
> *A Key into the Language of America*

The Mohegan word for painting, *wuskuswang*, is the same word used for writing, inducting painted baskets in a long textual tradition that includes decorative birch bark etching, beadwork, wampum belts, and the written word. These practices comprise systems of signification that were and are read as texts. Because they do not conform to Western conceptions of writing, they have been dismissed, ignored, and largely excluded from the historical record, thus obscuring the long history of Native texts and textualities. Most scholarship on Native decorated artifacts has focused on material aspects. More recently, Hertha Dawn Wong has argued for texts such as pictographic signatures, painted plains tipis, and winter counts as forms of precontact autobiographical narratives.[62]

To consider early Native painted wood-splint baskets as texts is to decenter or problematize current critical conceptions of early Native literacies and textualities. What would a history of Native print culture look like if it included three-dimensional texts such as baskets or tipis? How does the inclusion of forms previously not considered texts change conceptions of literacy and communicative practices? How do we begin to read a basket's narrative? This essay undertakes the project of opening a theoretical discourse that will work toward a paradigm for reading alternative Native textualities.

Indians made baskets and other woven objects long before European and other settlers reached American shores, and they continue these cultural practices to this day. The baskets and other objects are often covered with symbolic designs containing insightful readings into the particular culture from which they originate. According to the specific cultural context, the designs may take the form of figures, geometric shapes, or floral patterns. Baskets, which were and still are ceremonial and utilitarian objects used for transportation and storage of items, prayer ceremonies, and traditional games, function as com-

62. Wong, *Sending My Heart Back*.

municative devices. In sum, by touching every aspect of daily Native life, both past and present, basketry is imbued with cultural and spiritual power.[63]

Both the variety of design patterns and symbols on Mohegan baskets of the early nineteenth century and Mohegan cultural memory support the theory that basket patterns were used as communicative or narrative devices.[64] In 1995 a heavily decorated Mohegan elm bark box was repatriated from the Peabody and Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts. Upon seeing a photograph of the box, tribal elder Gladys Tantaquidgeon recalled it as looking "like the one from Oneida."[65] Further research determined that the box had been sent by minister Samson Occom from the Mohegan community in Brothertown to his sister Lucy at Mohegan as a record of the journey. Bearing inscriptions of the Trail of Life and Path of the Sun design patterns, the box embodies the continuity of Mohegan cultural traditions and identity in a time of tremendous change.

The decoding of the text of a basket requires shifting from a Western to a Native perspective and situating both the basket and its text within a specific tribal context. Size, form, style, and varying degrees of decoration all play a role in the making of the meaning and function. Mohegan people made several different kinds of wood-splint *manu'dag*, or baskets. They range from carrying baskets with handles to small sewing baskets and decorative wall pockets to coarse draining baskets and the typical rectangular covered storage basket such as the basket in Figure 1-3.Wood-splint basket making was not a solitary effort; it was one that involved contributions of labor from within the community. The selection of an appropriate log, the soaking process, the separation of the wood rings, and the preparation of the splints are all required before the actual weaving of a basket can begin.[66] The weaving of Mohegan baskets was generally a communal winter activity. It was performed by women to the accompaniment of stories and songs, which in turn become part of the basket, joining together two traditions, oral and textual.[67] Once a ready supply of baskets was completed, they were sold door to door by their makers or by family members on routes that often covered the entire length and breadth of New England.

63. See, for example, Porter, *The Art of Native American Basketry*, and Mowatt, Morphy, and Dransart, *Basketmakers*.

64. McMullen, "Woodsplint Basketry Decoration," 114.

65. Fawcett and Tantaquidgeon, "Symbolic Motifs," 135.

66. For a more detailed explanation of the basket making process, see Tantaquidgeon, "Basketry Designs," 43–33, and Richmond, "Schaghticoke Basket-Making," 130.

67. Frank Speck and Jesse Moses provide a brief account of Mohegan communal basket making in "Some Mohegan-Pequot Legends," 183. Native men did not become involved in the weaving of baskets until the later part of the nineteenth century, when economic conditions forced them to seek new avenues of entry into the cash economy. See Turnbaugh and Turnbaugh, "Weaving the Woods," 90.

Many of these basket sellers, noted for characteristics ranging from wit to storytelling to musicianship, became legendary figures in the communities they visited.

Few late nineteenth-century northeastern Native baskets were signed by their makers (a practice that is culturally Western).[68] The narrative that unfolds in the textual surface of a basket is not an individual creation; it belongs to the tribal community. Authorship, then, is communal rather than individual, and the resulting narrative belongs to the community as a whole.

The Mohegan covered *manu'da*, or basket, pictured here is lined with an 1817 Hartford, Connecticut, newspaper, thereby fixing the date of the basket at 1817 or earlier. Newspaper linings were common practice during the nineteenth century.[69] Laurel Thatcher Ulrich has considered a similar covered storage basket—probably Mahican or Schagticoke, based on its distinctive construction and design—lined with pages from the *Rutland* (Vermont) *Herald* dated from 1821 to 1822. Placed by the owner of the basket, using a wheat paste compound, the paper lining protects the contents against not only the rough inner surface of the wood splints but also dust and insects.[70] Ultimately, the newspaper linings are intended not as a means of communication but as protection for the basket contents. To read the Mohegan narrative of the basket, we must make a critical move that elides the Western print symbolic system in favor of traditional Mohegan communicative practices: We must turn to its surface.

The basket is decorated on three sides, painted free hand in Mohegan pink (a mixture of red and white lead) and green, using a handmade twig brush. The design pattern consists of traditional Mohegan symbols: three four-domed medallions and a linked chain of stylized leaves, strawberries, dots, and trellises. The chain forms a triangular-shaped stockade around the green center medallion, which is outlined in a series of pink dots, with a pair of pink spirals flanking the top dome. Below, the medallion is enclosed by two green leaves outlined in Mohegan pink with green dots. On either side of the stockade are two additional four-domed medallions painted in the opposite color scheme: Mohegan pink with pairs of green spirals flanking the top domes. The entire front wall of the basket is framed by a chain of alternating half domes in Mohegan pink and green.

68. Circa 1870, one basket maker marked several baskets with the initials "J.H.S." A number of other baskets have been attributed to this individual through, for example, distinctive construction techniques (see McMullen, "Woodsplint Basketry Decoration").

69. The earliest known example of a newspaper-lined wood-splint basket is a Mohegan basket that was lined with an 1808 Hartford, Connecticut, newspaper. As Laurel Thatcher Ulrich points out, other baskets from this period were lined with religious publications dating to the 1820s (see Ulrich, *The Age of Homespun*, 352).

70. See ibid., 342.

The designs are not only aesthetically pleasing but also deeply culturally significant. The artistic renderings displayed on the basket are representations of both the abundant natural landscape and the Mohegan cosmology. As the Mohegan elder Gladys Tantaquidgeon explains, "To the Mohegan, designs and life are more than simple representations of nature. There is a spiritual force that flows through all things, and if these symbols are true representations of that force, this spirit should be expressed in the designs."[71] Thus, Mohegan basket design patterns contain spiritual connotations that serve to reinforce their aesthetic value and provide meaning for those who can read the basket text. For example, one prominent Mohegan design, the Trail of Life symbol, explains the "east-to-west passage of spirits," following the path of the sun.[72] The significance of these two cardinal directions is found in other aspects of Mohegan life, such as the eastern- and western-facing openings in the ceremonial arbor.

A spiritual force is present in this Mohegan *manu'da*. One of the primary symbols of the basket, perhaps the most important symbol found in Mohegan culture, is the four-domed medallion. It is thought to represent the four directions, or four cardinal points, as well as the interrelationship of the soul, earth, and universe.[73] Through the use of this symbol, the basket pattern offers a view into traditional Mohegan belief and cosmology. The stylized leaves and strawberries represent not only the Mohegan land but also the plant beings and the food and medicine they provide, which signifies the interdependent relationship between the people and the land. The dot element represents the Mohegan people. The trail design that encloses the central medallion may symbolize the Trail of Life or the Path of the Sun. Together, the symbols and designs of the basket text create a narrative for the reader to decode.

In an analysis of similar basket designs, Ann McMullen has suggested that the inscribed texts are political commentaries on the move to Brothertown by a faction of the Mohegan Tribe, spanning the years from the 1770s to the 1820s. "The message," she writes, "was that people would lose their Mohegan identity when they left the tribal lands."[74] Any text is open to multiple readings, but this particular analysis reflects a non-Native bias. I offer here an alternative rooted in traditional Mohegan cosmology.

Mohegan oral tradition holds that "the People" came from the East, over a desert, and then crossed "the great fresh water." Forced out by their enemies, the Mohawks, they eventually moved on to the eastern side of the Connecticut

71. Fawcett and Tantaquidgeon, "Symbolic Motifs," 99.
72. Fawcett, *Medicine Trail*, 41.
73. Tanataquidgeon, "Basketry Designs," 24.
74. McMullen, "Woodsplint Basketry Decoration," 123.

River, the site of the present-day Mohegan Nation.[75] I read the design pattern of this basket as a possible retelling of the Mohegan original migration story. The combination of traditional symbols such as the Trail of Life pattern with the four-domed medallions creates a fusion of Mohegan history and cosmology. It is no cause for wonder that a basket of this era might depict the migration story. In 1775, some forty-two years before the confirmed date of the basket, Samson Occom, the Mohegan minister and tribal elder, led a group of Mohegans and Long Island Indians to create a settlement at Brotherton, New York, to escape both white influence and white infringement on Indian lands. This move, like the later move from New York to Wisconsin in the 1820s, caused factionalism within the Mohegan community. Mohegan history, in the tradition of most Indian nations, is one of migrations and removals. Thus, this basket bears witness to the particular cultural and historical moment that it inhabits.

The basket represents multiple layers of meaning on several different levels. As a material object, it possesses a utilitarian function. For the non-Native, it is also a Mohegan cultural artifact. Through its utilitarian function, it serves to reinscribe Mohegan history and cosmology into everyday life. As a gendered cultural form, the basket is the embodiment of the role of women in passing on not only the basket-weaving tradition but cultural knowledge as well. Finally, as a text, the basket assumes primacy over its newspaper lining, reducing it to a utilitarian function devoid of communicative practice.

75. Speck and Moses gathered at least two versions of the Mohegan migration story from tribal members in the early part of the twentieth century (see "Native Tribes and Dialects of Connecticut," 216–17).

Temperance and Morality Sermon

Samson Occom

This eight-page undated sermon[76] appears in a hand-sewn booklet whose pages measure 6.5 inches by 8 inches. Occom writes on both sides of the page and leaves virtually no margin. The manuscript begins *in medias res* and breaks off before its conclusion; it is missing at least the first two pages and the last page. The extant middle section is reprinted here. The sermon can be found in the Occom Papers, Index # 79998, folder 26 (microfilm pp. 398–402), Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Conn. This sermon is reprinted by kind permission of the Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, Conn.[77]

[. . .]whe{n} he drowned his Reason he loses all that Time and he is fit for no Service at all, either for himself, for his Family,{[and?]}[78] for his Country, and how much more is he unfit to Serve God, —And yet, (to astonishment) he is just fit to Se{r}ve the Devil, Yea Drink itself is the Service of the Devil, and

76. The notes in this edition are based on a collaborative edition I produced with several of my graduate students at the University of St. Thomas (Occom, "Temperance and Morality Sermon," ed. Bouwman et al.), available online at the Early Americas Digital Archive, http://www.mith2.umd.edu/eada/ (Ralph Bauer, site editor). I am especially indebted to Margret Aldrich, Nicole Brudos Ferrara, Keri Henkel, Sara Hoffman, and Marilyn Paulson for their research on Cook's voyages, on syphilis, and on the deity Cauktuntooct.

77. I have used a very light hand in editing this sermon. Square brackets, [ ], indicate missing words that I have inserted for readability; square brackets with an enclosure followed by a question mark indicate an uncertain reading of a word or letter. Curly brackets, { }, indicate interlineations, which Occom sometimes indicated with a caret and sometimes simply wrote above the line. (He also wrote carets for which he neglected to write interlineations.) I have included the carets where they appeared in the original. Like most writing of the time period, Occom's capitalizations are varied and frequent by today's standards. Complicating matters is the fact that many lower and uppercase characters, particularly his "C," "G," "A," and "S," are similar in appearance. Capitalization versus lowercasing was therefore often a judgment call on my part. Occom's punctuation is sparing, and he often finishes sentences with a comma, a dash, or a comma-dash combination; frequently, if the sentence finishes at the end of a line, he uses no punctuation. I have inserted punctuation (in square brackets) sparingly and for readability only. Occom's spelling remains intact, except where I have—once again for readability—silently changed the old English "f" to "s" and occasionally altered spelling in square brackets. I have silently emended repeated words, crossed-out words, and words broken at the ends of lines (Occom tended to write to the very end of the line and to break words in odd places to make the most efficient use of the page).

78. Occom includes a strange mark here that looks somewhat like his shorthand for "and."

This fits him for all manner of Service to the old [Geeny?],[79] and ma{n}y has undone thimself{es},[80] and their families by Drunkness, —and this Practice is Condemn'd by all Consciencd People, and it is in the Power of mankind to break off from this acursed Sin if they will, and they know it, it is in Vain to Say I Cant Help it, and it is a folly to blame the Devil[;] does the Devil Cary the Man to Tavern and there Call for the Liquor for him, and does [he] ^ {take} the Cup, and pour down in his Throat, and does the Devil pay for the Liquor, and does he repeatedly Call for Drink and keep pouring of ^[it] in his Thr[oa]{t} till he has made him Drunk; if this is the Case then the man is Clear of Sin and Blaim, and the Devil is Guilty of ^ {that} Sin, —But let us See a little farther does not the Drunkard Use that natural Power & understanding Which god has given him in his persute after Strong Drink? dont he think and Consider Where he can get Liquor, and when he has found a Place in his mind, he will [?][81] use them Leg, which ^ {god has} giveen him, and direct his Course to the Place where he expects to get Liquor, and when he is got there, he will [use] that ^ {tongue} and Speech, which God ^ {has} given him, and Call for Liquor, and when it is granted; he takes [the?][82] Cup with his own Hands, and he pours it down in his ^ {own} Throat and he Uses the power of Swallowing, and Swallows down his Liquor and he will repeatedly Call, and pour down the Liquor till he has Transformd himself, from a Rational Man to worse than a Natural fool.—Now is it not in the Power of this Man to break off from this Course of Life—I am persuaded he Can, —Such a man that will Contrive and follow all ways, to get Strong Drink, and take Pleasure in it, is properly a Drunkard, —a man may be ^ {over}taken Some Times, but if he is asham{d} of it, and Repent of it, is not a Drunkard, —[83]

Let us Trace another Practice, which is Universal, among the People Calld Civilized Nations; That Cursing {s?}wearing and Profaining the Name of god; it is so common amongst all Sorts of People, that it is become Innocent and inofensive, but let it be never So Common, it is of the Same Nature as it ever was, it is the most ^ daring, ^ {Heaven & God Provoking} Sin that man is Capable

79. The word looks like "Geeby" or "Geeny"; the "n" appears to have been overwritten with a "b." Brooks reads this word as "Greedy" (Occom, *Collected Writings*, 226).

80. The "t" at the beginning of this word and the "es" at the end (to transform the word from "himself" to "themselves") appear to have been added later. It also appears that "their" was originally "his" and was later overwritten.

81. A word here appears to have run off the end of the line; one letter, perhaps a "y" for "yet," is partly visible.

82. The bottom of this page of the original is torn.

83. Because—except in two cases noted later—Occom used all the white space available on the page, there are no paragraph breaks in the original text. None of his text is indented. I have inserted paragraph breaks for readability, where Occom clearly changes subjects.

of Commiting, and it is the most ^ {un}profitable Sin, it neither Cloathes the Body nor feeds it, Why is a rational man so in Love with Such Language is it ^ {so} Comely, is it decent, is, it graceful, is it Credible is it manly, is it gentteel, is it Godly, and Chistian Like, Why no, I think every Considerate Person must Say no, ^ {by} no ^ {means},—well, then it must be, uncomely, indecent disgraceful uncredible inhuman ungenteel, ungodly unchrstian, unholy, Yea ^ {in} thruth, it is {everything [sinful?]} Devilish, and Hellish Language, it is from the Bottumless Pit and it is fit for ^ {no} Creature but Devils, and I Verily believe the Devils dont Cuse and Sware and Profane the Name of god, as mankind does; It is Amazing to hear, how expert the White People are in Swaring, Men Women and Children, of all ages Ranks and Degrees, it Seems to be a mother Tongue with them, or are there Schools where they go to Learn this Language? Now, is it in the Power of Man to leave of Swaring, or is it not? I am glad there is no Such Language among the Indians, it is not because, that it {is} incable of it, ^ {But} it is Horred, they will not Use Such Language.—I will tell ^ {you} amazing Truth among them, they have ^ {very} Great Veneration for the Name of the great god, in their perfect Heathenism they Calld god, Cauktuntooct,[84] which Signifies Supream Independent Power, and they had Such Regard for this Name, they woud not Suffer their Children to mention that Name, they Say it was too great for Children to Mention—and in the Evening when it is Time to go to Bed, an old man (who is apoited for that purpose), will go round the Town, with a loud Voice, Calling upon the young People and Children to desist making Noise and go to Sleep, and not to Disturbe god, Now how is it amonst those that are Call'd Christians; {dont ye hear ye [Christians?]}[85] Don't you think these Heathen Indians will rise up against ^ {you} at the last Day not only for this Sin, but for many others also—Yea, don't they Testify against you now in this Life, —But you will reply and Say: are they so Clear of Sin as to rise up against us; no by no means; but you have learnt them many of the Sins they are Guilty of, and they are Ignorant Heathens, and You are Christians, and have [had?] all Learning, and great knowledge, and ^ {therefore} you ought to go before them in all Holy Conversation and Godliness—But in Stead of that, I am af{r}aid you Lead them {in} the Downward Road in all manner of abominations;

And {many} Diseases, Eupopians Brought into this Country, that the Natives were intirely Ignorant before, Such as what they Call in Genteel Lan-

84. Or possibly it reads *Cauhtuntooct*. One of the great Narragansett deities, Cautantowwit was known as the creator and ruler of humans. He was thought to be generally benevolent, and he gave humans their first bean and corn seeds to grow (Simmons, *Spirit of the New England Tribes*, 38–39, 41).

85. If this is the word *Christian*, it is abbreviated—it is only four or five letters long.

guage, Venerial Disease, in Common Language French Pox.[86] Captain Cook in {his} Voige Round the World, Says that there was a Vesel in a ^ {Place} Called Otaheite,[87] about fifteen ^ {months} before him, and had left that a Cursed {common} disease among the poor Indians, which they were utterly Ignorant of before; The Captain was so Honest ^ {as} to Say If hee Could have learnt their Specific[88] for the Venereal Disease, if ^ {such} they have it would have been of great advantage to us, for when hee left the Island it ^ {had] been Contracted by more than half the People on Board the Ship, but he was not quite so Honest as to Say whether he had it himself—Vol. 1: 146: p [.] This was only return{'g} the Compliment, and they ^ {had} no Room to Complain, and it was only giving back what they had receivd from the Europians and I Suppose there {was} no difficulty in returning it,[89]—But Since we have begun ^ {upon} this Practice which is Called, Whoredome, let us take notice of {it} a little, I Suppose it is Universal among all Nations, and it is Universally Condemnd by Rational People, it is abominable, inhuman and Beastly Practice, and it is more abonable when it is Supported and Countenanced by polite, Learned, and Christian People, but some will Say or Ask, who allows Such Practice, the Eng[lish] how many Baudy or Whore Houses are there in that Nation, and I Suppose it is just so among the French, these are Calld Christian Nations and the most Learned Nations in the World at this Age of the World; and I never heard of any Such House amongst the Indians in this ^ {great} Continent; Certainly Common Sense Condemns such Practices and the Heavenly Artilery is leaveld against it and the Thunders of Mount Sinai are Roaring against it, Yet men will persist in it, —The grand Question occurs again, is man a Rational Man, unable to turn from this detestable, Filthy, Shameful, and Beastly Practice? Or Can he desist, and become a Chaste Creature? I immagine to hear an Answere Universaly from all Rational Men, Saying, O! Yes O! Yes, we [can.]

86. The "French Pox" is syphilis, a contagious sexually transmitted disease that had, at the time, no cure. There is some debate as to how Native American populations became infected with syphilis; one theory is that sailors on Columbus's ships brought a form of the disease to the Americas, which then mutated into a more potent strain to which Europeans had no resistance and made its way back to Europe (Andreski, *Syphilis*, 7).

87. Otaheite is Tahiti.

88. "Specific" means "remedy" or "cure."

89. Upon landing in Tahiti during his first voyage around the world (1768–71), Captain James Cook had his men checked by the ship's physician to make sure they were free from venereal disease. When Cook's men came down with syphilis after visiting Tahiti, no one was quite sure where the disease originated. One theory is that the French, who were on the island a short time before Cook, exposed the islanders to syphilis (see, for example, Cook, *Journal of a Voyage*, 57, *Journal During his First Voyage*, 76–77; Withey, *Voyages of Discovery*, 101–3). In the previous sentence, Occom seems to be referring to a specific volume of Cook's journals; I have been unable to locate the edition to which he refers.

Why don't he trun then, it is because he will not—he C{h}uses to go to Hell in his own way, and if he will, who can he Blame?—Mariage is Lawful, and Honorable, but god will Judge Whore Mongers and all Adulterous [90]

Another Practice which is very previlent everywhere amongst all Nations and all Sorts of People [is] Contention, Quarriling, and Fighting, there is Scarcely any ^ [thing] else, but Whispering, Backbiting and Defaming one another—this Breeds Quarrliling, & Wars[.] Certainly this is unbecoming Rational Creatures, it [is] Condemn'd by the Light of Nature, and it is utterly Condemnd by Scripture, and it is what we don't like from our fellow men, and if we dont like it, why should we give it to our fellow men, and if we dont like Such Treatment, and can blame others for it, then we must believe, it is in their Power, to treat us and their fellow men better, well, if they Can, then Certainly we Can too; and ^ {why} don't we do it; I have took a particular ^ {notice} of the words Speaking against one another; Speeking again{st?} another must mean, belying ^ {one another}, If I Speak the Truth about my Neighbour, I don't Speak against him but for him, to make this plain let us take tow Neighbours; one, is everyway agreable to his Neighbours, he is kind, benevolen{t} loving, obliging, just and Honest in all his dealing, with his Neighbours, he is a man of Truth, and uses no bad Language, he do{es} not defame his Neighbours, —now if I shoud till of his real Charac{ter} woud that be Speaking against him, why no by no means, it is Sea^{p}king for him; but if I Shoud give him Contrary Characters, that is Speaking ^ {against} him, because I dont give him his True Character.—But the other Neighbour is right to the reverse, he is every ^ {way} disagreea[ble?] to his Neighbours, he is Moross and Cross, unkind Turbellent, he Cheats in his Dealings all he can he Curses and Swares, Defames his Neighbour[s?] and Sets his Neighbours by the Ears, Sews the Seeds of Discords, and he will lie for a Copper as for nothing, —now upon Ocation, If I shoud call his true Character, will that ^ {be} Speaking against him? I think not, but if I shoud Say that he is a Clever kind just and Honest man, I shoud Say that of him, which he is not, and therefore I Should Speake against him in so saying, Dont you think so?—there is another way of Speaking against my Neighbour, that is, when I See my fellow Creature take a miss Step, and directly, I ^ {take the} ocation, to blaze it abroad, and exaggerate the matter, and make it Seven Times worse than it really is; this {is} Speaking against my Neighbour, in a Very bad Sense; it is discovering his Nakedness to the world, Ham like Concerning his Father, for which he was Severly Curst by

90. The end of this line, unlike most others in the text, contains a couple of words' worth of blank space, as if Occom meant to write in more later, or perhaps this blank space was intended to indicate a pause or end of paragraph.

his Father[91]—Now is it not in the Power of men to Treat one another better? I think they Can, and if they dont, then they ^ {are} under blame, —[92]

Love is everywhere Commend[ed] and Command[ed] [in?] the Holy Scriptures, and it is Certainly Beutiful and agreable amongst Rational Creatures, and it is in our Power naturally to Love and to be kind to one another; and it is the Strength of a Kingdom and Nation to live in Peace and in Love, it is the Beauty of a State, City Town or Family to dw[ell] together in Love, Peace, and Unity—The Scripture commands People to Provoke one another to Love and to good works—But I think in these Days, People in general are Provoking one another to Hatred & to Evil Works[.?] if it is in our Power to hate one another, then there is equal Power to Love one another & if [we] don't Love one another, then we are Self Condemn'd it is very Natural for mankind [to] Love to be lovd, and usd well, Well let us Practice that Rule upon our fellow men{Well Well},[93]—I might go on mentioning ^ {many} Practices amongst the Children of men, but what has been said is quite Sufficient to Lead the minds of men, to Consider the Conduct of their fellow men, and also their own Conduct, —It is very Common amongst all Nations, and amongst {*}[94] all orders, Ranks and Degrees of men; and amongst all ages, both men Women and Children to find Fault with each other {yea it is [?][95] unfit not to find falt},—and it is Very well that {with one another} we can See so far, [Th?]is must lay a foundation for us to see our own Conduct; and this makes it very plain, that we all ^ [have] Power to do well, and if our Conduct has been bad; we believe, it is in our Natu[r?]al ^ [power] to do better,—it is a Universal Doctrine, and it [is] the [Provo?]king of all, that have any understanding to their fellow men, to do well, or to do better, this is the Universal Creed of all mankind; From hence [ar]ises this Dayly Preaching,—The Kings of the [ea]rth woud have their Subjects do well or better, [th]e People woud have their Kings do well, all that have any Power and Authority over the People woud have them do well, the People find fault with their Ruler; and woud have [him] do better, the Minsters of the

91. Ham, son of Noah, saw and reported his father's drunken nakedness; for this disrespect, Noah cursed him (Gen. 9:22–27).

92. Occom leaves enough room for a word or two at the end of this line; perhaps it is meant as a paragraph break.

93. "Well, Well" appears under "well, Well" in the previous sentences. The words do not appear to be an insert (they have no logical place for insertion) as much as a reminder of emphasis—perhaps a reminder to play on the multiple meanings of the word *well*.

94. An asterisk appears to have been written beneath the dash after "Conduct."

95. Between "is" and "unfit" is a small notation, perhaps shorthand, which looks somewhat like an uppercase cursive "L." I have been unable to match this symbol with those listed in shorthand texts; it resembles Mason's shorthand for "conceived," but it may also be Occom's own symbol.

gospel exhort their People to do [be]tter, [an]d the People woud have their Ministers [??][96] better. Husbands woud have the[ir]. . . .[97]

Samson Occom and the Sermonic Tradition

HEATHER BOUWMAN

Anyone who is familiar with Samson Occom today knows him primarily for two pieces of writing: his sermon preached at the execution of a fellow Native, Moses Paul (1772), and a brief narrative of his life (written circa 1768, it was not published in his lifetime). These are his only writings selected for reprinting in the most commonly used anthologies of American literature.[98] Yet Occom wrote widely, mastering several different genres; among his extant works are diaries, speeches, hymns, a history of the Montaukett people, an herbal medicine booklet, two short autobiographical accounts, political writings, numerous letters, and some twenty sermons.[99] Occom was up to his elbows in the written word. For this reason I suggest that we take our studies beyond his two commonly anthologized texts, to review a wider array of his writings, and consider what studying his unpublished works adds to our picture of Occom. What new insights can we gain from studying the Temperance and Morality sermon (included here)? How can Occom's personal history; the literary, social, and historical contexts of the sermon; and theoretical perspectives be brought to bear on this narrative? In what ways can various kinds of extratextual knowledge help unlock the sermon to readers and expose the sorts of literacy in which Occom was engaged?

We may find that the context in which Occom writes opens new windows on the content of his sermon. When Occom penned this sermon, he was experiencing some of the more difficult years of his life and some of the best of his publishing career. Although we cannot specify the exact date of the sermon, we can pinpoint it as written after 1771 (the conclusion of Captain Cook's first voyage, which is mentioned in the sermon), and most likely before 1775 (the conclu-

96. Three words appear to be missing here.

97. The text runs to the bottom of the page and cuts off; there was clearly at least one more page to this manuscript, but it is missing.

98. See *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, vol. A; *The Heath Anthology of American Literature*, vol. A; *Harper American Literature*, vol. 1; Castillo and Schweitzer, *Literatures of Colonial America*; and Mulford, Vietto, and Winans, *Early American Writings*.

99. Reprinted in Joanna Brooks (Occom, *Collected Writings*).

sion of his second voyage, which is not mentioned in the sermon); the sermon was almost certainly delivered before the conclusion of the Revolutionary War, since it refers to white colonists as the "English" rather than as the "Americans." Briefly, these are the issues that Occom faced at the time: After successfully touring England from 1765 to 1768 to raise funds for the Indian Charity School of Eleazar Wheelock (his former teacher and current mentor), Occom returned to find that Wheelock did not have a second high-profile assignment in store for him. Rather, Wheelock wanted Occom to become a missionary to the Onondagas in New York, and when Occom refused (citing concerns about his health and the well-being of his growing family),[100] Wheelock charged him with being prideful. For his part, Occom strongly criticized Wheelock's use of the substantial funds he had raised in England for Indian education, charging Wheelock with funneling the funds into white education. He and Wheelock exchanged sharp words, culminating in Occom's famous 1771 letter in which he writes that his "alma mater" has become too "alba mater"—too white. To make matters worse, Occom had lingering personal problems: his struggles with illness beginning in 1768 and continuing at least through 1773;[101] the death of his son Aaron in 1771; and the continuing effects of a lawsuit in which he had participated in the 1760s. (The "Mason affair" a lawsuit over Mohegan land, alienated Occom from some of his white supporters and some of his fellow Mohegans and most likely cost him preaching and teaching opportunities and financial support.)

One of his biggest professional hurdles during this time was that (beginning in March 1769) he was being charged with drunkenness, mostly by Wheelock, his old mentor, whose motivation may have been professional jealousy and racism. Over a two-year period, Wheelock wrote several letters leveling these accusations. The letters were addressed to Occom as well as to prominent supporters (including George Whitefield, the famous English preacher, and John Thornton, the secretary of the English missionary society that financed both Occom and Wheelock). At first Occom denied any drunken behavior, and then, in a surprising switch, he confessed an act of drunkenness to his presbytery. In late 1769, after investigating Occom's report of the incident, the

100. Wheelock was supposed to watch over Occom's family while he was in England, but he had let them go poor and hungry. Moreover, as William Love explains, Wheelock's son Ralph had offended the Onondagas deeply with his patronizing and high-handed tactics when he had visited them in the 1760s, and Occom may have opposed the idea of cleaning up Ralph's mess (Love, *Samson Occom*, 161).

101. Love writes that Occom began a long struggle with illness in 1768 (ibid., 162). Occom discusses his health in general terms in some of his letters—for example, in a letter of October 1772 (reprinted in *Collected Writings*, 101) and in his letter to Susannah Wheatley in September 1773 (*Collected Writings*, 106).

presbytery concluded that Occom had not, in fact, been drunk. Meanwhile, Wheelock continued to claim that Occom was engaging in drunken behavior; he even wrote to Occom's English supporters in 1771 to suggest that they discontinue their financial support of Occom. Although the charges were never proved (even with Occom's confession, he was absolved of any blame), they followed him all his life. Even during the Brothertown years (beginning in 1785),[102] people gossiped that Occom had a drinking problem, perpetuating the rumors that had begun with Wheelock's original charges. (It is perhaps important to note here that—amid bitter disagreements and accusations about the drunkenness charges, Wheelock's use of the English funds, Occom's refusal to become a missionary to the Onondagas, and Wheelock's perception of Occom's pride—Wheelock and Occom apparently ended their correspondence in 1774. There is no record of any further correspondence between them.)

Of course, many of Occom's personal problems led to financial problems. Because of his participation in the Mason lawsuit and his trip to England (both of which his Boston financial supporters had reacted to with disapproval), perhaps because of the drinking charges, and certainly because of his break with Wheelock, Occom struggled to make a living. During this period, his only employment was as an itinerant preacher, living hand-to-mouth, and "tilling his lands" for support (as Wheelock put it in 1769).[103] Beginning in 1772, his financial burdens were somewhat relieved when he once again received support from the English Trust),[104] but Occom did not have a permanent position as preacher or teacher during this period, and funding was always undependable.

In the Temperance and Morality sermon reprinted here, it is conceivable that Occom's references to drinking and to talking against a neighbor may have not only held personal resonance but also served as a kind of public defense, a way for Occom to argue his side of the issue: What does it mean to be drunk? What does it mean to speak critically of a neighbor (or mentor)? Also significant, however, is that these sermon passages show Occom participating in and extending what was already a life being lived in print. Occom's battles with Wheelock and his part in the Mason controversy both took place in written documents; the charges of drunkenness and the resolution of these charges also took place in writing. Significantly, during what were certainly bleak years

102. In 1785, after years of planning, Occom helped a group of Indians from the "Seven Tribes"—the towns of Charlestown, Farmington, Groton, Mohegan, Montauk, Niantic, and Stonington—move to the less crowded western side of New York state, where they established the town of Brothertown. Occom paid lengthy visits to the town each summer, returning to his family at Mohegan for the winter months; he finally moved to Brothertown permanently in 1789.

103. Quoted in Love, *Samson Occom*, 156.

104. Blodgett, *Samson Occom*, 146.

for Occom personally, he made his publishing debut: His well-known sermon on the execution of Moses Paul, often cited as the first text written by a Native American specifically for publication, came out in 1772. Then in 1774 he published the first edition of his hymnbook, which contained several hymns that he authored. These were his most successful and productive publishing years. Occom was taking his place in the world of print, a world that, in a sense, had already authored him as the "Indian preacher" who had toured England and as the "Mohegan preacher" who had been Wheelock's most successful student.

Even during these difficult years (perhaps especially so), Occom's public life was a life of print, and in his writing he shapes this life with a good knowledge of how print conventions work. Although many of Occom's sermons were apparently never written out in full—Occom worked from notes and (often fairly sparse) outlines—the Temperance and Morality sermon, a rare exception, is fully scripted (although the opening and closing pages have since been lost). Occom was, by all reports, a gifted impromptu speaker; in this case, however, he opted to rely on the power of the pen. This sermon, unlike his transitory extemporaneous sermons, has the longevity of the written word, a power with which Occom was certainly well acquainted after his letter-borne arguments with Wheelock, his paperbound legal battles, and his own successful sermon publication. The Temperance and Morality sermon is a document that, by its very existence, recognizes and participates in the power of print.

Yet the document is, in many ways, also an oral document. The sermon, collected in the Samson Occom Papers at the Connecticut Historical Society, appears to be not a "fair copy" but a first draft, with insertions and corrections throughout. Occom wrote quickly, using dashes, for the most part, to show end punctuation or (especially at the end of a line) omitting end punctuation altogether. The entire eight pages of preserved text are contained in one long paragraph that contains little white space; Occom was apparently trying to conserve paper. Although Occom often preached using notes or outlines, of the seventeen to twenty Occom sermons owned by the Connecticut Historical Society (depending on how the fragments are counted),[105] most are written out (a few are in outline or partial outline form). Occom preached frequently, sometimes as often as several times a week, and he probably reused his written sermons; he also most likely did a great deal of extemporaneous preaching. Although his journals suggest that most of his preaching was exegetical, several of the sermons at the Connecticut Historical Society contain social criticism. Perhaps Occom decided to write out the Temperance and Morality sermon and other sermons of social critique because he was concerned about perfecting

105. Brooks counts twenty sermons. See Occom, *Collected Sermons*.

the wording, or perhaps he had a strong interest in preserving these sermons for posterity.[106] Perhaps the Temperance and Morality sermon was delivered often, or perhaps it was delivered to an important group of supporters—all good reasons to write it out and take the time to edit it.[107]

Internal evidence suggests that the sermon is addressed to a mixed or white audience; it shows Occom's awareness of his audience and his appeal to racially diverse listeners. The Moses Paul sermon, so often cited as a marvel of preaching before a mixed audience, was not by any stretch of the imagination the only sermon (or even one of only a few sermons) that Occom preached before a mixed group. Occom's diaries from 1774 to 1775, for example,[108] indicate that he addressed a wide range of people in his journeys as an itinerant preacher. Of the sixty-one days represented in the diary,[109] Occom preaches at least thirty-seven times (and possibly another five or six times where it is difficult to determine whether he is preaching or simply momentarily addressing the crowd). Of these preaching experiences, he specifically notes addressing white crowds on three occasions: At Stockbridge he preaches "first to the English, and Just before night to the Indians"; at Fort Stanwix he preaches "all Day to the Whites"; and at the Hollow he preaches at "the House of . . . a young Dutchman," where he "had a great Number of People."[110] In many other instances, he specifies having preached to mixed congregations—or, at least, to audi-

106. Some of Occom's sermons that include social critique are fully scripted, but so are some of his exegetical sermons. We can only speculate why he would write out one sermon and not another. Two important factors, of course, would have been adequate time and access to paper—neither of which were in large supply in Occom's often itinerant life. It is possible that he wrote out sermons more frequently when he was at home than when he was traveling.

107. I was caught in a dilemma between editing Occom's text for clarity (making it as accessible as possible) and editing it for accuracy (making it as true to the source as possible). Generally, I would argue for accuracy—for as "literal" a transcription of the text as possible. In a work in which the author himself (I am certain) would clean up the writing before heading to the press, in which it is clear that the text is a rough draft that the author did not, in its present form, intend for publication, however, I waver. Would I publish Mark Twain's rough first draft of *Huckleberry Finn* as *the* novel? If I did, would I expect readers to see Twain's full genius in the writing? What would I want them to get out of reading the book in its rough form? In Occom's case, I hope that readers find the text itself compelling, and I hope that they remember the oral nature of the text as they analyze and (inevitably) evaluate it.

108. Occom may have kept diaries consistently throughout his life, but the only diaries that have been preserved are partial and pertain primarily to his travels; he writes very little about his home life. Although there are occasional detailed and evocative entries on weddings, dreams, visits with friends, and the like, for the most part, the diaries function as travel and preaching records. Many of Occom's journals (and letters) are included in Blodgett, *Samson Occom*; Love, *Samson Occom*; and Richardson, *Indian Preacher*. J. Brooks has recently edited an outstanding and much-needed comprehensive collection of Occom's writings (*Collected Writings*).

109. July 8–August 14, 1774, and December 22, 1774–February 9, 1775. Reprinted in Occom, *Collected Writings*.

110. Ibid., 275, 277, 280.

ences that, although not always identified racially, appear to be mixed. At New Lebanon, for example, he preaches to a group that includes "governor Franklin and a gentleman from the west Indies and others and Some Ladies,"[111] and on several occasions he notes that he preached to Indian audiences with white missionaries present. He preaches to many different kinds of people, including a "Seven Day Baptist" with a Moravian wife, friends and acquaintances including the "good Doctor Tarbell," a "Baptist Brother," a "multoe man,"[112] and at the homes of both Indians and white colonists. Most of the time he does not feel the need to specify the race of his listeners (presumably because the diaries are not intended for publication and he does not need the personal reminder—or perhaps simply because he considers the race of his audience unimportant).

This pattern of preaching to mixed audiences (racially, nationally, and denominationally) continues throughout Occom's life. In the diaries of his travels around Brothertown, New York, from 1785 to 1787,[113] Occom notes that he preached before white audiences (of various nationalities), mixed white/Indian audiences, and mixed Indian audiences (Brothertown Indians, Stockbridge Indians, Oneidas, and others); he writes that at one wedding at least ten languages were spoken.[114] The Temperance and Morality sermon, like the Moses Paul sermon, shows that Occom used his position as an Indian preacher to address various constituencies in his mixed audiences. Several critics have discussed Occom's tactical use of multiple audiences in the Moses Paul sermon,[115] but it is important to note that it was not unusual for Occom to address white listeners. Rather, this was part of a larger pattern—evident throughout his sermons—of playing to multiple audiences and addressing white constituents as well as Indian constituents in complex and multilayered ways.

It would be useful to ask how Occom's criticisms both critique and play into white Christian sermonic traditions: In other words, what kind of "literacy" does he achieve in the sermon form? In the Temperance and Morality sermon, as in many of his other sermons, Occom has a savvy grasp of how to address multiple audiences. While he preaches to one constituency (white people who swear, for example), other constituencies are listening. A multifaceted audience is always implicit in sermons: The preacher may address a particular kind of sinner or a particular subset of his congregation, but everyone listens to and can presumably learn from all parts of the sermon—at the least, each person

111. Ibid., 276.

112. Ibid., 278, 276, 280, 282.

113. Occom, *Collected Writings*, 301–85.

114. Ibid., 381.

115. See, for example, M. Elliott, "This Indian Bait," and D. Murray, *Forked Tongues*, for two excellent discussions of Occom's use of multiple audiences.

can develop an understanding of the sins of others and the roles of others. In addition to addressing multiple audiences, Occom understands that the interaction between preacher and congregant is one of solidarity as well as one of authority. Occom's critique of white listeners suggests a bond with them: By speaking to white audience members as "you," he suggests that they are there, part of the family/congregation, listening to his sermon. The purpose of a sermon is to address those who have come to be saved (or those who are already saved but need help along the path to heaven). Whereas you might talk *about* the unsaved, hell-bound sinners of the world, you would talk *to* those who wish to repent, to improve. Thus, we have Jonathan Edwards's famous *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God* (which was addressed to those who were not yet saved but who wished to be) and Occom's sermon preached at the hanging of Moses Paul (which was addressed in part to Moses Paul, who had reportedly asked Occom to come preach, presumably for the purpose of being saved before his death). The context of the sermon—especially the unpublished sermon—is a church, a so-called family of God composed of actual and potential converts. By addressing white members of this family, Occom indicates at least some solidarity with them.

Of course, he also indicates criticism, as is evident in the text, not only in its many references to English sinners but also (and particularly) in its contrast of English sin with pagan (pre-Christian) Indian goodness (there is no swearing in Indian language; there are no whorehouses in the precontact Americas). In criticizing his listeners, Occom participates in the long-standing preaching practice of pointing out sins and calling sinners to repent. But in putting forth pagan Indians as exemplars of virtue worthy of imitation, Occom veers from the traditional practice of putting forth Christ or the ancient church as worthy of imitation. Here pagans are models that the sinning white listeners should emulate. In this sermon, Occom criticizes white culture as the breeding ground for swearing, venereal disease, and prostitution. Two characteristics of these passages stand out to me: (1) how Occom plays with language (swearing as a "mother tongue," the "genteel language" of "venereal disease"), his delicious sense of irony mobilizing the passages to make their social critique, and (2) the social critique itself, which throughout the sermon is anything but subtle. Whereas critics have uncovered the subtle criticisms implicit in the Moses Paul sermon—criticisms sometimes so subtle that we may wonder if they really exist—the Temperance and Morality sermon opts for a bold attack.

One point of note, then, in this sermon, especially as it compares with the Moses Paul sermon, is how strongly Occom speaks his criticisms of white colonists. Referencing Homi Bhabha's writings on mimicry, David Murray writes of Occom's "forked tongue" in the Moses Paul sermon, in which the colonized

is like but not *quite* like the colonizer, responding not with total agreement to the colonial agenda but with (as Bhabha writes elsewhere) "sly civility."[116] Whereas the Moses Paul sermon fits quite well into Bhabha's notion of sly civility, however, and suggests that the speaker can offer a criticism of the colonist through his very acceptance (or appearance of acceptance) of the colonists' terms (Christianity, civilization, reason, and so on), the Temperance and Morality sermon states at several points that Indian culture is simply better than white culture. There is, in the swearing and adultery sections of the sermon, in particular, no real attempt at either slyness or civility. Rather, Occom speaks blatant criticisms of white people, and he does so to their faces ("you" are sinners, he tells them).

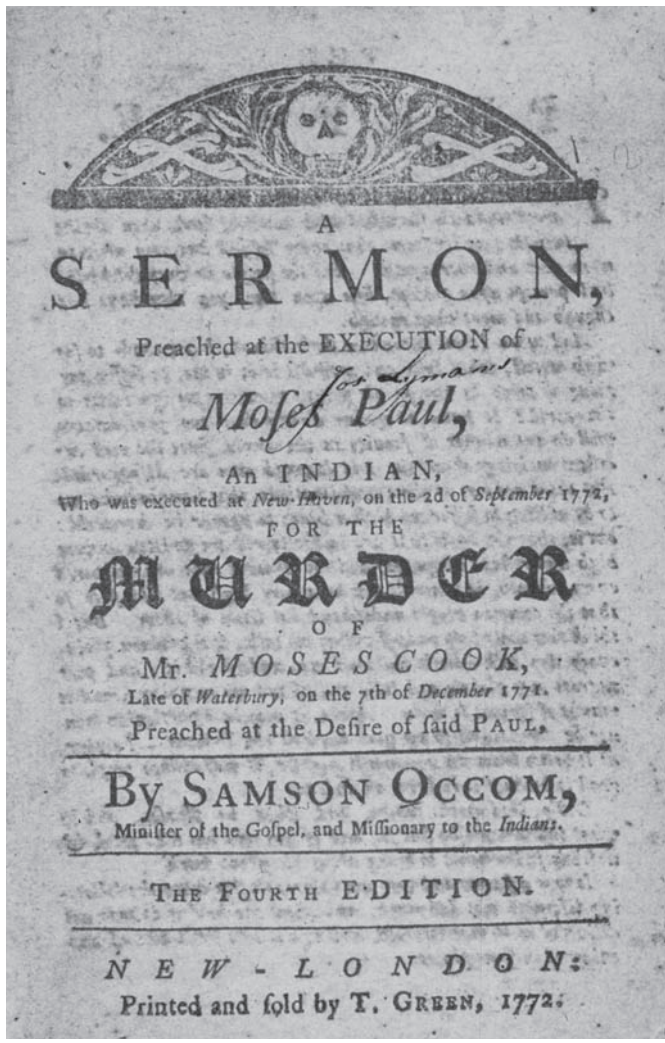
The Temperance and Morality sermon thus suggests layers of colonial discourse. Classic postcolonial theories—particularly those theories arising from discussions of (Asian) Indian or African literature—overlook the fact that, at the time of Occom's writings, his white listeners may very well have viewed themselves as the "colonized": unrepresented and deserted by the European English, constantly seen as the backward, hick little brother at political and social gatherings, taxed without due representation. Christian Indians—by now often living in their own, not-quite-traditional-Indian, not-quite-white communities—would have viewed themselves as political, cultural, and religious entities different from those of traditional Indians, a different layer in the colonial strata. Traditional, pre-Christian Indians, referred to in this sermon in quite positive ways but unlikely to be part of the audience hearing the sermon (and never addressed as "you"), constitute yet another layer. When Occom sets up a comparison between colonists ("English" and "French") and Indians (who, he says, never knew either swearing or whorehouses), he underscores a real set of problems in colonial American discourse: There are no "Americans" as yet, and there are no precontact Indians whom Occom can talk about on a first-hand basis. He is forced to create: For the colonists, he creates as stand-ins the worldly "English gentleman" and the "French explorer" figures; his criticisms of them are aimed at "you," his white listeners. Contrasting these sinning colonists, he offers not Christian Indians (who presumably know English and thus English swear words and who have at least a theoretical knowledge of the existence of whorehouses) but precontact pagan Indians. The historically real Christian Indian (and, one might argue, the historically real colonist) does not appear in this text; that figure is supplanted by the pre-Christian Indian of Occom's imagination (and by the English gentleman and French explorer); the only Christian Indian in the text, it seems, is the narrator. In this sermon,

116. Bhabha, "Sly Civility."

the figures who appear (the English gentleman, the French explorer, the pagan Indian) are created for rhetorical purposes and suggest that Occom is making the Other even more "other" (English or French, pagan) to provide his contrast and thus his critique.

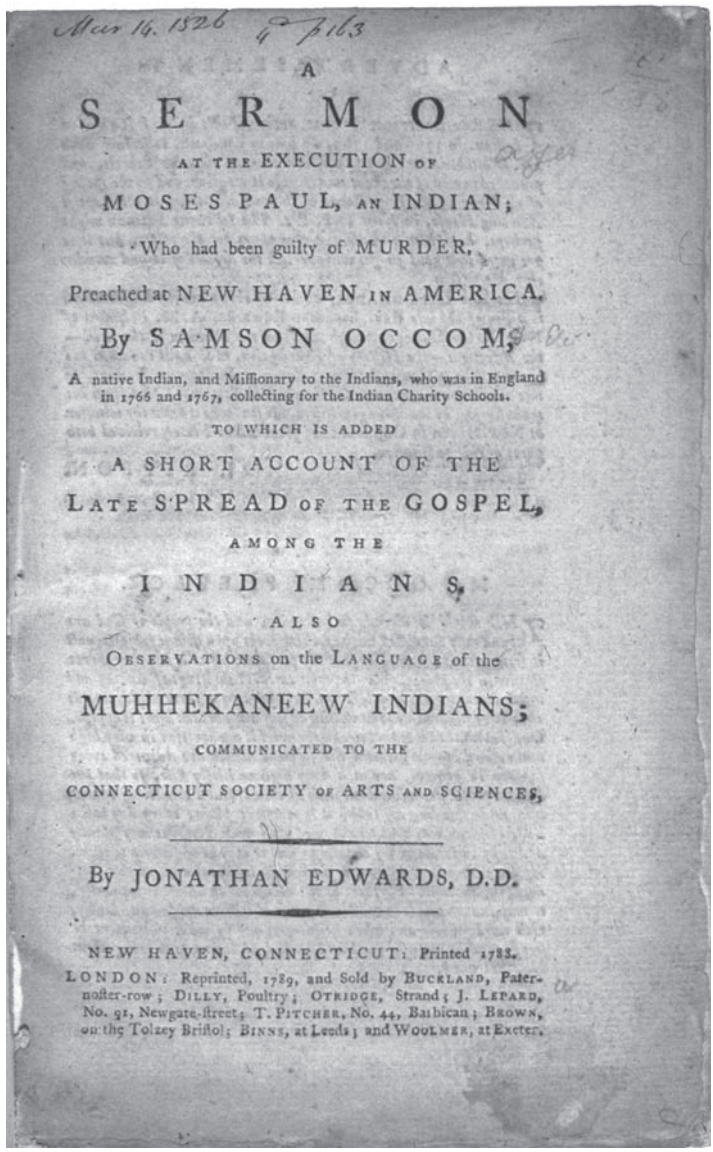
The Temperance and Morality sermon is not a sermon about sameness, not a sermon that offers sly civility or mimicry; rather, it is a sermon that declares difference and uses the creation of that difference as a mode of critique. Occom's sermon shows his deep knowledge of the sermonic form and his ability to negotiate that form in order to address multiple audiences. Perhaps even more important is how, through the sermon itself, Occom participates in ongoing print debates about his life and how he is defined. Moreover, it is evident that Occom evinces a kind of cultural literacy in his creation of difference and his mobilizing of it to argue, in a Christian sermon, for a new way of envisioning sinners and goodness and a new way of envisioning colonists and Indians.

Title Pages from Samson Occom's *Sermon Preached at the Execution of Moses Paul*



A
SERMON,
Preached at the EXECUTION of
Moſes Paul,
An INDIAN,
Who was executed at *New-Haven*, on the 2d of *September* 1772,
FOR THE
MURDER
OF
Mr. *MOSES COOK*,
Late of *Waterbury*, on the 7th of *December* 1771.
Preached at the Deſire of ſaid PAUL.
By SAMSON OCCOM,
Miniſter of the Goſpel, and Miſſionary to the *Indians*.
THE FOURTH EDITION.
NEW-LONDON:
Printed and ſold by T. GREEN, 1772.

Figure 1-4. Title page from Samson Occom's *Sermon at the Execution of Moses Paul, an Indian*, 4th ed., 1772. (Courtesy of the Edward E. Ayer Collection, The Newberry Library, Chicago.)



Mar 14. 1826 4° p163

A

SERMON

AT THE EXECUTION OF

MOSES PAUL, AN INDIAN;

Who had been guilty of MURDER,

Preached at NEW HAVEN IN AMERICA.

By SAMSON OCCOM,

A native Indian, and Missionary to the Indians, who was in England in 1766 and 1767, collecting for the Indian Charity Schools.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE

LATE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL,

AMONG THE

INDIANS,

ALSO

OBSERVATIONS on the LANGUAGE of the

MUHHEKANEEW INDIANS;

COMMUNICATED TO THE

CONNECTICUT SOCIETY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES,

By JONATHAN EDWARDS, D.D.

NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT: Printed 1788.

LONDON: Reprinted, 1789, and Sold by BUCKLAND, Paternoster-row; DILLY, Poultry; OTRIDGE, Strand; J. LEPARD, No. 91, Newgate-street; T. PITCHER, No. 44, Barbican; BROWN, on the Tolzey Briſtol; BINNS, at Leeds; and WOOLMER, at Exeter.

Figure 1-5. Title page from Samson Occom's *Sermon at the Execution of Moses Paul, an Indian,* 1789. (Courtesy of the Edward E. Ayer Collection, The Newberry Library, Chicago.)


Lydia Ann Woodward

A

SERMON

PREACHED BY

SAMSON OCCOM,

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL, AND MISSIONARY TO THE INDIANS

AT THE EXECUTION OF

MOSES PAUL,

AN INDIAN:

WHO WAS EXECUTED AT NEW-HAVEN, SEPTEMBER 2, 1772, FOR THE MURDER OF *MOSES COOK*, LATE OF WATERBURY, ON THE SEVENTH OF DECEMBER, 1771; PREACHED AT THE DESIRE OF SAID PAUL.

TENTH EDITION.

BENNINGTON:

PRINTED FOR WILLIAM WATSON.

Figure 1-6. Title page from Samson Occom's *Sermon at the Execution of Moses Paul, an Indian,* 10th ed. (By permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University.)

Samson Occom and Native Print Literacy

PHILLIP H. ROUND

Of all the Native literacies discussed in this volume, perhaps none has been more often misrepresented or misunderstood than print literacy. To some degree, that misunderstanding lies in the definition of print literacy itself. Unlike simple literacy, often tracked in historical records by signature evidence, print literacy encompasses a broader array of cultural skills—the ability to understand and manipulate the meanings of different typographic fonts, to interpret and to employ illustrations, and to navigate the physical properties of printed texts. Well into the nineteenth century, Native Americans were considered "an unlettered people,"[117] yet several northeastern tribal communities had been engaged in reading and writing books since the seventeenth century.

Samson Occom lived at the center of this emerging world of Native print literacy in eighteenth-century New England. From the time he picked up his first primer until his death in 1792, Occom was, in many ways, a man of the book. His 1766 portrait, which was painted in England at the request of Lord Huntington, portrays him seated at a table with his right hand outstretched on an open Bible in front of a bookcase full of beautifully bound volumes. Occom himself bound books to supplement his income, and his diary is full of references to books that he purchased, was given, had borrowed, or had recommended.[118]

Occom's famous Personal Narrative, one of the earliest autobiographical sketches written by an American Indian in English, focuses on the challenges and opportunities that print literacy posed for the Mohegan convert. Penned in December 1765, while Occom sat in Boston disconsolately awaiting the departure of a ship for England, the Personal Narrative presents the author's life as a rebuttal to the charges of those who publicly questioned whether he was fit to be a minister. As was usual for a Native convert, such interrogation was most often directed toward his "Indianness." "Some say I cant talk Indian," Occom lamented to Wheelock. "Others say I cant read."[119] In what would become a familiar story for American Indians engaged in Euro-American literacy,

117. This is the phrase used by Supreme Court Justice John McLean in his concurring opinion for *Worcester v. Georgia* in 1832. Although that finding supported Cherokee tribal sovereignty, McLean's language continues the Marshall court's policy of characterizing the Cherokee as uncivilized and in a state of "pupilage" (Chief Justice John Marshall's words).

118. Love, *Samson Occom*, 148–50.

119. Letter to Eleazar Wheelock, 6 December 1765, reprinted in J. Brooks, *Collected Writings of Samson Occom*, 74.

Occom's ethnicity was at the center of the conflict. Yet the words he used to describe the attack on his character are telling: They focus on literacy—both Native language and European print—as an index of Occom's identity.

Occom's response to these charges is equally revealing. Rather than answer them publicly—or ignore them completely—he penned an autobiography. Writing an autobiographical sketch, even in the "privacy" of manuscript, was a way for Occom to face "the world." The public arena in which he found himself, at the age of forty-three, demanded of him an accounting of his education and upbringing, even though he had been ministering to Native converts since the age of twenty-seven and had been ordained in 1758. Although, he says, he began his life "a Heathen in Mmoyanheeunnuck," by the age of seventeen, Occom "began to think about religion," and he "began to learn to read."[120] At age nineteen, he went to live with Wheelock, and there he spent three years "learning." Occom ends his first draft at this point, with a desire for Christian conversion realized through a weekly course in "reading." Literacy, faith, and identity become inextricably intertwined in his simple page-long declaration of a "true account" of his education. Occom's story is paradigmatic of a whole generation of literate, Christian Native converts, for whom both vernacular and English print literacy framed their public utterances, a generation in which tribal oral traditions and European manuscript culture offered spaces for resistance and self-fashioning.

Recent scholarship on the history of the book has begun to recognize the centrality of print literacy to "the contact between the representatives of a literate European culture and those of a wholly oral indigenous one."[121] D. W. McKenzie, one of the founders of modern Anglo-American book studies, observes that the history of the book provides a theoretical framework for moving from simple questions of textual authority "to those of dissemination and readership as matters of economic and political motive." Such questions are paramount in the case of non-Europeans colonized by Europeans because of the central role played by "oral, manuscript, and printed texts in determining the right of indigenous peoples subjected to European colonization and to the commercial and cultural impositions of the powerful technologies of print." Viewing Native literacy through the lens of book history also better prepares us to recognize "the continuing reciprocities of speech and print in the evolution of [Indian] texts."[122]

Yet this "reciprocity" was neither evenhanded nor equal for Native Ameri-

120. Autobiographical Narrative, First Draft, 28 November 1765, reprinted in ibid., 51–52.
121. McKenzie, *Bibliography and Sociology of Texts*, 79.
122. Ibid., 1, 5, 130.

cans. As Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson have observed, "The language of writing, the means of publication—publishing house, editor, distribution markets . . . are associated with the colonizer's domination." Indian books and manuscripts find themselves immersed in what Philippe Lejune has succinctly described as "the vicious circle imposed by the market of cultural goods."[123] In this vein, literary scholar Laura Donaldson does well to caution, "English alphabetic writing has become so thoroughly naturalized that its function as a colonial technology has remained obscure." Donaldson argues that "writing worked alongside these more overt weapons of conquest" to "re-configure aboriginal cultures and bodies in ways functional for Euramerican imperialism."[124]

Armed with a heightened awareness of the role of literacy in New World colonization and exploitive colonial practices, we must still come to terms with recent literary studies such as Hilary Wyss's *Writing Indians*, which clearly demonstrates "the crucial role of literacy in forming colonial Native subjectivity."[125] In order to reposition Native print literacy in this complex array of European colonialism and Native agency, we must examine the earliest examples of Native print literacy from the point of view of European colonial practices and the complexities of colonial Native subjectivities.

By the last decades of the seventeenth century, for example, Massachusett-speaking converts had gained a literacy rate of almost 30 percent in Native-language syllabary texts. In communities such as Mashpee, Natick, and Gays Head, printed and written texts in Massachusett were "produced in the normal course of conducting the daily affairs of the Indian communities." The documents that have survived from the period mark uses of writing and print that swing from the sacred to the secular, the public to the personal. Deeds are most common, but among the records that Ives Goddard and Kathleen Bragdon have catalogued are also "records of town meetings, . . . depositions, wills, petitions, letters, notes, arrest warrants, a power-of-attorney, a notice of banns, . . . [and] marginalia in books."[126]

The table of contents from the 1685 edition of *Mamusse wunneetupanatamwe up biblum God* (The Holy Bible in Massachusett) exemplifies the complex weave of Native ideas and language with European concepts and print that constituted early Native literacy. The *Indian Bible* (as it is known in most scholarship) is justly famous for being the first Bible printed in North America, but when viewed as an expression of Native print literacy, it also reveals how, as Kristina Bross has observed, "the vernacular Bible made Indian readers

123. Smith and Watson, *Women, Autobiography, Theory*, 47; *On Autobiography*, 197.
124. Donaldson, "Writing the Talking Stick," 47.
125. Wyss, *Writing Indians*, 6.
126. Goddard and Bragdon, *Native Writings*, xvii.

possible."[127] The word *Book* in the italicized headings in the table of contents, like the word *God* on its title page, is left untranslated. This interpenetration of English and Massachusett, and the untranslatable state of such words—like the discovery of European books among the traditional grave goods in Algonquian burial sites in the Northeast—suggests a complex intermingling of European and Native, English and vernacular modes of signification.

Similarly, the text itself, as an article of production and consumption, has long been viewed as the sole work of John Eliot and a colonial and Christian imposition from "outside" Native societies. Yet to see the *Indian Bible* this way is, as Bross points out, to erase "the participation of the praying Indians in its production."[128] Recent works by Kristina Bross, Hilary Wyss, and Jill Lepore have pointed to the centrality of Native participants such as James Printer, who functioned (in the words of Wyss) "as cultural half-breeds inhabiting that dangerous no-man's-land between identifiable cultural positions."[129]

Thus, profound anxiety was also woven into this new possibility of print literacy for many Indian readers, and the marginalia penned in Massachusett in many extant copies of the *Indian Bible* show that vernacular print provided both a protected space for self-expression and affirmation of community and at the same time sheltered doubts and self-loathing. Some converts wrote proudly, "This is my hand," and "this book is right," as they interacted with print for the first time. Others, however, found the experience daunting. "I do not like very much to read," one Native reader wrote, "for I am too pitiful in this world."[130]

Native vernacular print was also partly integrated into the larger ongoing cultural project in the colonies that Patricia Crain has labeled "the alphabetization of America."[131] The *Indian Primer* (published in Boston in 1720)[132] exemplifies how vernacular print guided Native readers toward the more subtle forms of literacy entailed in typography. As a text that owed its existence to European education manuals such as *The New England Primer*, the *Indian Primer* exhibited to its pupils an array of alphabets in roman, italic, and black letter type on its opening pages. The facing page "translation" not only showed Native readers how to form letters in the Massachusett syllabary to match their English semantic equivalents; it also showed them how to shape the typographic tone of the utterance to master European typographic convention. In this way,

127. Bross, *Dry Bones*, 68.
128. Ibid., 54.
129. Wyss, *Writing Indians*, 12. See also Lepore, *The Name of War*.
130. Quoted in Goddard and Bragdon, *Native Writings*, 439.
131. Crain, *Story of A*, 4.
132. See E. Mayhew, *Indian Primer*.

the *Indian Primer* served as a disciplinary educational technology, "introducing the alphabet into a nonalphabetized culture and to a nonprint audience."[133]

Taken together, Native language texts such as the *Primer* and manuscript and printed works and marginalia such as those described and catalogued by Goddard and Bragdon, found meaning in Massachusett communities as they supplemented and extended existing cultural values. In societies where "skilled speech and status were interrelated," written and printed rhetorical style and formal protocols were practiced as extensions of these modes of sociability. Bragdon finds that in Native New England, "writing was inherently social, and that reading and writing were 'inextricably' linked to speech." These works, "not merely remnants of the oral mode that survived into writing," describe a print literacy that embodies "the ongoing sociability and orality of literacy among the Massachusett speaking people."[134]

By the time Occom began to study with Wheelock in 1753, there was also a growing body of English-language primers, spellers, and devotional manuals that were directed at Native peoples. Occom's diary recounts how many of these books shaped his emerging skills as a writer and orator. He asked his English patrons to send copies of Benjamin Keach's *Tropologia* (1681) to other Native ministers, for he considered it "the best Book for the Instruction of the Indians of Humane Composure [he] ever saw."[135] He also recommended Alexander Cruden's *A Complete Concordance to the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament* (London, 1738) and was given Matthew Poole's *Annotations upon the Holy Bible* (1683) by one of Wheelock's correspondents. In his own library, Occom held works such as Thomas Horton's *Forty-six Sermons* (London, 1674) and a 1685 edition of Eliot's *Indian Bible*.

Armed with these print sources and practiced in catchizing his Indian students in the Mohegan language, Occom developed a public speaking style that was becoming well known and was much sought after in the early 1770s. By 1772, when he was asked to deliver an execution sermon for a fellow Native American who had been convicted of murder, Occom was probably the most famous English-language Indian orator in North America. After he delivered his sermon, Occom was immediately asked to publish it—a common practice for many Euro-American ministers after they had delivered a particularly noteworthy public sermon or address. Like his public performances, Occom's first published work turned on the sensational prospect of an Indian convert

133. Crain, *Story of A*, 42.

134. Goddard and Bragdon, *Native Writings*, 122, 123.

135. Letter to Andrew Gifford, 19 October 1772, reprinted in J. Brooks, *Collected Writings of Samson Occom*, 101.

speaking to another Indian on the evils of drink. Soon, however, it became much more than that. The resulting publication attained status as not only a milestone in the history of American Indian print literacy, as the first book published by a Native author, but also an important watershed in the history of American religious publishing, with nineteen editions subsequently published in both the colonies and England.

Occom's *Sermon at the Execution of Moses Paul*, first published by Timothy Green in New London, Connecticut, in 1772, marks a crucial point at which the varied experiences of Native people in the Northeast coalesced with European print to produce the first "Indian" book. As we have seen, Occom's foray into Anglo-American print culture did not come out of nowhere, and a close reading of the physical properties of this text shows that the technology of movable type was becoming, for many Native people, an integral part of the larger practices of cultural literacies explored in the other chapters of this anthology. The title page of an early edition of Occom's *Sermon at the Execution of Moses Paul* (Figure 1-4) announces its subject through not only its content but also its typography. The death's head motif at the top of the page locates the pamphlet in an established Puritan literary genre: the execution sermon, a genre that plays an essential role in what David Hall has called the region's "Protestant vernacular."[136] The words *Sermon*, *Moses Paul*, and *Murder* leap from the page, because the typography imparts to each word a special meaning beyond its semantic signification. Black letter type sets off *Murder* from the rest of the page in a gothic effort to sensationalize the pamphlet. Although the modern reader might prefer to think that Occom's "Indian" identity sold this work to popular readers, the typography of the title page does little to support that idea. Murder, after all, will sell out. Occom's title page sets up his sermon to be what Hall has termed a "steady seller,"[137] an irresistible blend of prurience and piety.

Only the Introduction, which follows the title page, exposes the author's vexed relationship (ethnic, political, racial) to a material object that has effectively signaled its own authority and sensationality (read: "steady-sellerness") in typographical ways. Here Occom writes, "'The world is already full of books. . . . What folly and madness it is in me to suffer anything of mine to appear in print, to expose my ignorance to the world.' Yet in spite of this hesitation and doubt, Occom's text goes on (both in material form and rhetorical structure) in exemplary execution sermon style, with typography—especially italic type—underscoring crucial points in the orally delivered address to add

136. Hall, *Worlds of Wonder*, 5.
137. Ibid., 48–52.

emphasis and immediacy to the printed work. When, for example, Occom addresses his fellow Native Americans directly ("my poor kindred"),[138] the type is set off in italic, as is his later apostrophe to Paul himself.

In addition to the way the sermon is set on the page, the text exposes the role that print played in forging social relationships between Indian converts and Anglo-American Christians in early America. Marginal notations written here and there in this copy of the 1772 edition and title page autographs show how such texts were disseminated, who read them, and how readers reacted to them. Joseph Lyman, a Connecticut cleric and supporter of missionary work among the Indians, owned this edition. In its final pages (not pictured here), there is a telling handwritten exclamation that brackets the printed text: *Amabam Audiebam* (O Everlasting Love! O Hearken unto this Everlasting!).[139] The reader's marginal interjection suggests the powerful interactive response that even the printed text could engender in late eighteenth-century readers.

Evidence drawn from outside the printed work suggests that it also enjoyed popularity among Native American Christian converts. In Farmington, Connecticut, in 1772, Joseph Johnson convened a group of fellow Christians "that [he] might read the Revd. Samson Occoms Sermon."[140] The work so affected Johnson that he wrote and published his own response, *Letter from J—h J—n . . . to Moses Paul* (1772). Later, when he was on a missionary trip to the Mohawk, Johnson again gathered a group together to hear him read the sermon. Johnson's diary notation suggests that perhaps this reading was at the request of the Mohawk community: "I being desired to make a short stop here, in order to read unto these Indians the Sermon."[141] On the basis of his reading and the "exercises" that followed, the community asked Johnson to stay the winter and teach the children.

By the final decades of the eighteenth century, print was fairly common in Indian communities from the Five Nations in the North to the "Civilized Tribes" of the Southeast. In 1798, for example, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel reported that it had circulated more than 300 volumes to Native converts and others within its jurisdiction. Of these, 38 were Bibles, 84 were testaments, and the rest were divided between 150 spelling books and 85 primers.[142] Occom's and Johnson's letters suggest that there was an even greater demand for good-quality print among Native converts than the society could supply. More than once, Johnson and Occom pled for small-print-run

138. J. Brooks, *Collected Writings of Samson Occom*, 192.
139. This copy of the sermon is part of the Ayer Collection at the Newberry Library in Chicago.
140. Quoted in L. Murray, *To Do Good*, 151.
141. Quoted in ibid., 187.
142. Thacher, Brief Account, 3.

favors—"half a Dozen of Smal Quarto Bibles, With good Paint and Papers and Binding"[143]—that might carry a fledgling Christian community through its first tentative stages of formation. By 1808, when Abiel Holmes delivered his sermon and report to the society, some fourteen thousand books had been distributed in the District of Maine alone over the previous five years. Among the Bibles, testaments, and hymnals, there were two thousand primers and spelling books.[144]

Long after the death of its author, Occom's sermon was republished, offering readers in the nineteenth century new meanings—for the death of Moses Paul and for Indian identity. The nineteen editions printed from 1772 through the first half of the nineteenth century, offered publishers and booksellers many opportunities to exploit Occom's popularity for their own purposes. In 1789 a New England publisher produced an edition of the *Sermon* that appended Jonathan Edwards Jr.'s treatise on Indian languages (Figure 1-5). In this case, Occom's work enables that of Edwards, in some ways passing the authority of the "Indian" authenticity of the first text onto the second, white-authored work.

In 1810 a reprint of Occom's *Sermon* appeared in Bennington, Vermont. Its title page illustration (Figure 1-6) undercuts the authority of the Indian author by employing the parodic image of a mountebank, or zany—that festive and theatrical jester-like character who, as Crain notes in her study of American alphabetic literacy, "descends from the commedia dell'arte *zanni*, the artful scheming, and bumbling clown."[145] It is not clear from this engraving whether Moses Paul or Occom is the object of the satire, but since "scholars and pedagogues are the mainstay" of this tradition and since this figure began to appear regularly in nineteenth-century primers in association with the education of children, it seems possible that the Bennington edition attempts to turn Occom's learning and literacy against the Native people as a mere parroting performance of white literate practices.

Toward the end of his life, in 1785, Occom moved to Oneida country in upstate New York. His first act upon resettlement was to write to the missionary society requesting many "necessaries" that the community was lacking. His request signals the continuing importance of books to Native Christian communities in the late eighteenth century: "Our most Humble Petition and Request is, this once, to help us a little, in our settling, in this wilderness, we extreamly want a grist mill and saaw mill and we [are] very destitute of all

143. Letter to Robert Keen,September 1768, reprinted in J. Brooks, *Collected Writings of Samson Occom*, 83.

144. Holmes, *Discourse*.

145. Crain, *Story of A*, 76.

manner of Husbandry tools and we should be glad and thankfull for a little Liberary."[146] From this "little liberary" and others like it across Indian country at the dawn of the nineteenth century, American Indian authorship, political agency, and tribal histories flourished in a new medium of print that combined the long-standing traditions of the Native ancestors with pressed type on a paper page.

146. Brotherton Tribe letter to U.S. Congress [1785?], reprinted in J. Brooks, *Collected Writings of Samson Occom*, 148–50.