

'WHAT CHANGE HATH GOD WROUGHT?': HOW GENDER AND THE ENVIRONMENT
SHAPED NEW ENGLAND PRAYING TOWN IDENTITY AND CREATED A
CHRISTIAN INDIAN ELECT

by

KALLIE KOSC

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
The University of Texas at Arlington in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

May 2011

Copyright © by Kallie Kosc 2011

All Rights Reserved

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project could not have been completed without guidance and help from a number of individuals and institutions, both professional and personal. First and foremost, I would like to thank my committee, Dr. David Narrett, Dr. Stephanie Cole, and Dr. Christopher Morris for trusting me to undertake such a complex research topic within a short time frame. Each member spent many hours meticulously reading and responding to my drafts, advising and guiding my research, and challenging me to consider and embrace the ambiguities inherent in historical research. They helped to improve the research, argumentation, and style of this thesis, and for that, I cannot thank them enough.

Conducting research on eighteenth-century Northeastern Native peoples while living in Texas would have been impossible without the generous support of the UT Arlington College of Liberal Arts and Trudy and Ben Termini. The Termini Research Travel Grant allowed me to gain access to archival material that enhanced my research beyond measure. The archivists and support staff at the Massachusetts Historical Society and the Boston Public Library helped me to make efficient use of my time. Barbara Allen and Chief Rick Wilcox of Stockbridge offered me invaluable information about the town and kept their doors open late for a young scholar.

I was lucky enough to have been born into and acquired the world's most supportive family. Thank you to my New England family for couches and beds on which to sleep, and to everyone for showing genuine interest in all of all of my endeavors. Thank you to Dad, Mom, and Dustin for always supporting me in everything I do. Finally, to Greg: I never would have started or finished this project without his never ending encouragement, optimism, and humor.

April 13, 2011

ABSTRACT

'WHAT CHANGE HATH GOD WROUGHT?': HOW GENDER AND THE ENVIRONMENT
SHAPED NEW ENGLAND PRAYING TOWN IDENTITY AND CREATED A
CHRISTIAN INDIAN ELECT

Kallie Kosc M.A.

The University of Texas at Arlington, 2011

Supervising Professor: David Narrett

By the 1780s, Christian Indians from praying towns throughout Southern New England accepted an invitation to reside amongst fellow Christianized Oneida in upstate New York. While all parties agreed to live as one “body” with “one head, one heart, one blood,” tensions quickly arose between these Christian Indians. While the joint communities of Brothertown, New Stockbridge, and Oneida were intended by the inhabitants to be a place where Christianized natives could form a strong unifying force against Anglo land encroachment, conflict emerged over how to live the proper Christian Indian existence. The two most prominent sources of disagreement between these groups centered on differing notions of gender roles within the communities and each groups’ relationship to the environment. This thesis investigates the evolution of these communities’ gender and environmental relations in order to understand their individual claims to Christian Indian superiority. Travel accounts and correspondence of Indian and white missionaries, writings from Christian Indians themselves, and diaries of colonists are analyzed along with land records, maps of environs, and secondary anthropological and environmental studies in order to arrive a more clear understanding of the ramifications of

conversion for native culture, inter-tribal relations, and natives' environments. It is the goal of this thesis to bring to light the gender and environmental complexities inherent in the construction of eighteenth-century Christian Indian identity.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTSiii

ABSTRACT iv

Chapter Page

1. INTRODUCTION..... 1

 1.1 A Note on Methodology and Organization 14

2. CHRISTIAN INDIANS AT HOME: CULTIVATING THE SAVAGE
AND CREATING “WILDERNESS” IN NEW ENGLAND
PRAYING TOWNS..... 18

3. MAIDENS, HELPMEEETS, AND WIDOWS: UNCOVERING CHRISTIAN
INDIAN FEMALES AND NATIVE SPIRITUALITY IN PRAYING
TOWNS OF SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND..... 38

4. RELEASING THE SAVAGE AND BINDING THE FEMALE: CHIRSTIAN
INDIANS IN WAR AND DIPLOMACY..... 62

5. “ONE HEAD, ONE HEART, AND ONE BLOOD”: BREAKING CULTURAL
TIES AND CREATING A CHRISTIAN INDIAN ELECT 82

6. CONCLUSION: NATIVE *AND* CHRISTIAN 102

REFERENCES..... 105

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION 111

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

On May 22, 1793, a young pagan man from the primarily Christianized Native village of Brothertown, New York committed suicide because he was denied access to his Oneida lover by her Christianized father. The young Native man chose to end his life in a rather conspicuous way by removing into the forest, taking a known poisonous substance (muskrat root), and returning to the village to die in front of his Christianized Native neighbors. This “horrid act” of suicide, as white missionary Samuel Kirkland called it, would have been understood by many self-professed Christian Indians as a sinful performance by a proud man who did not “love his own life, or soul.”¹ Less acculturated Iroquoian Natives, however, may have understood the self-poisoning as a form of resistance against Christianity and white life ways as well as a typical act performed by a scorned lover whose soul could still potentially reach the afterlife.² The situation which led the young man to take such drastic measures escalated when the girl’s father (a Christianized Oneida chief), demanded that the man live with his daughter in the Christian fashion by first marrying her within the church. The confrontation between the young pagan man and the Christian father nearly became violent before other members of the community stepped in to break up the fight. The conditions which the girl’s father proposed were apparently too great a sacrifice for the young man, as this confrontation led him to submit his soul to what his Christian neighbors believed would be an eternity in hell. The situation devolved from there as the pagan man’s brothers declared revenge on the girl’s father for killing their brother. A scene of traditional Native politics emerged as the brothers of both men argued over whether or not a revenge killing

¹ For a complete recounting of this story by missionary Samuel Kirkland, see Walter Pilkington, ed. *The Journals of Samuel Kirkland: 18th-century Missionary to the Iroquois, Government Agent, Father of Hamilton College* (Clinton: Hamilton College, 1980), 255-256.

² Most known Iroquoian suicides fall under two categories: poison by muskrat root (*cicuta maculate*) due to love or jealousy and hanging or stabbing due to failure or shame. William N. Fenton, “A Further Note on Iroquois Suicide,” *Ethnohistory* 33, No. 4 (Autumn, 1986), 448, 452-453, 455.

was in order. Ultimately, the brothers of the Oneida chief sought the opinion of Kirkland who sided with the Christian Natives, blaming the pagan man's "wicked heart" for his own death.³

This suicide and subsequent fighting reveal a number of fissures within the Christianized Native communities of Brothertown, New Stockbridge, and the surrounding Oneida settlements. The hard-line stance the girl's family took against the young man may have been a product of the growing antipathy between and amongst Christianized and non-Christianized Natives within these New York communities. But these fissures were more complex than simply a Christian versus non-Christian conflict. The pagan man's spiritual beliefs and environmental knowledge of Native herbal remedies and uses were not uncommon among some self-professed Oneida Christians and attest to the continued presence of Native practices within Christianized Native communities and praying towns. Additionally, the Oneida girl may well have understood her father's actions to regulate her sexual and marital relations as a repudiation of traditional Native practice which typically allowed individual women or the community's elder women to play matchmaker. Therefore, the incident is emblematic of larger issues concerning the role of gender, environmental practices, and Native spirituality in the eighteenth-century conversion and acculturation process. Indeed, the divergence in Native acculturation was at the center of the growing animosity between these Native peoples, which forced Kirkland to observe that "discordant passions, seem to be alive and well" among the communities.⁴

These differences that emerged over gender and environmental adaptations represented in the story of the young man's suicide, as well as the many other recorded disagreements, inform this study of cultural adaptation in eighteenth-century Christianized Native communities of southern New England and New York. The two most prominent sources of disagreement between these groups centered on differing notions of gender roles within the communities and each group's relationship to the environment. The New Stockbridge and Brothertown Indians of southern New England criticized their New York Oneida Brethren for allowing women to carry out

³ William N. Fenton, "A Further Note on Iroquois Suicide," *Ethnohistory* 33, No. 4 (Autumn, 1986), 452-452.

⁴ Pilkington, *Journals of Samuel Kirkland*, 256.

most of the farming labor while the men maintained the hunt. Likewise, the Oneida believed that their “younger brethren” had abandoned traditions such as hunting and Native-style agriculture that were central to maintaining some semblance of a true Native identity.

These issues of land management and food production encompass some of the most significant changes that took place in Christian Indian communities, but these changes were not wholesale, nor did they remain static. In the face of colonial expansion, individual Native groups constantly negotiated and renegotiated their cultural mores in order to keep their communities intact and preserve traditional Native values. Although the Brothertown and New Stockbridge Indians adopted more Anglo life ways than their Oneida neighbors, by 1783, both groups from New England sought to distance themselves from their white missionaries and neighbors. As they asserted their own independence from white society, conflict emerged amongst these groups over gender roles and environmental practices. Amidst these disagreements, the Brothertown and New Stockbridge Indians also began to identify themselves as separate from traditional Native Americans, and ultimately, even other self-proclaimed Christian Indians. Thus, looking at gender and the environment can help us understand how these communities constructed and evolved their own unique Christian Indian identity in relation to non-Christianized Natives, white Christians, and each other.

The conflict that emerged between these New York communities is particularly interesting considering the 1774 agreement between the Oneida and the future Brothertown Indians, stating that they would live together on Oneida territory as one “body” with “one head, one heart, one Blood.”⁵ The American Revolution postponed the coastal New England Indians’ move to Oneida territory, but by the end of the Revolution, the Stockbridge Indians of western Massachusetts also agreed to leave their town and settle among their New England and New York brethren in New York. While the joint communities of Brothertown, New Stockbridge, and Oneida were intended by the inhabitants to be a place where Christianized Natives could form a strong unifying force against Anglo land encroachment, these Native peoples had more in common than just wanting

⁵ As quoted in Hilary Wyss, *Writing Indians: Literacy, Christianity, and Community in Early America*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000.

to assert their own independence away from white society. Algonkian and other Christian Indian New Englanders found important allies in the Oneida of New York. The Oneida, while not as thoroughly acculturated as the New England Natives, accepted missionaries into their villages by the early 1760s. Not only had all of these groups accepted missionaries and started the conversion process, but they were also the only Natives in the Northeast who allied themselves with the colonists during the American Revolution. The Oneida's choice to support the colonists rather than the British caused a serious strain in their relationship with the rest of the Six Nations. By 1783, despite differences in culture and experience between the New York Iroquoian Oneida and the mostly Algonkian New England Indians, these groups recognized enough commonality among each other to create a formal alliance and live together as Christian brethren.

Their reasons for allying with each other are clear, but the process through which various Native New England and New York communities came together requires further explanation. Some historians have suggested that the roots of this larger Christian Indian movement, which led to the 1783 relocation of the New England Indians to Oneida territory, originated in the Great Awakening of the 1730s and 1740s.⁶ In his book, *Red Brethren*, historian David J. Silverman argues that an "Indian revitalization" took place among Christian Indians once they were introduced to evangelicalism.⁷ This movement among Christian Indians, coupled with a growing racial divide between Europeans, Africans, and Indians, created the interconnected community of self-identified Christian Indians throughout New England and into New York.⁸ In order to understand and analyze the cultural evolution of these Christian Indians, it is important to know how and under what circumstances the revitalization occurred, and what, exactly, made these Indians *Christian*.

⁶ Much scholarly attention has been paid to the nativist movements (commonly referred to as the pan-Indian movement) among Native Americans in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This argument for what I consider to be a pan-Christian Indian movement suggests a much needed refocusing on Native agency and self-determination outside of the nativist movements. For a history of the pan-Indian movement, see Gregory Evans Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance: The North American Indian Struggle for Unity, 1745-1815* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992).

⁷ David J. Silverman, *Red Brethren: The Brothertown and Stockbridge Indians and the Problem of Race in Early America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010), 32.

⁸ Silverman makes the case that these factors led to a Christian Indian network among the New England Indians. I will argue that this extended to the Oneida. Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 32-8.

Praying towns were first established in New England in the mid-seventeenth century. The towns were started by white missionaries who sought to “civilize” the local Native population in order to encourage friendly relations and provide a buffer-zone for Anglo settlements (praying towns were typically established further inland from Anglo settlements).⁹ Several Native groups made the decision to move to praying towns or establish praying towns in their existing villages because they saw accepting white missionaries as an opportunity to secure landholdings and learn the English language, which was a valuable skill in an increasingly Anglo-centric world.¹⁰ Through moving to praying towns or accepting white missionaries, Natives armed themselves with the tools they needed to adjust to and survive within the new colonial order that was thrust upon them.

Prerequisites for living in a praying town included an adherence to English life ways relate to dress, agricultural practices, private land ownership, and a Christian education.¹¹ However, not all inhabitants of praying towns professed the Christian faith. In fact, a majority of the Natives never became full members of any church. Praying towns and less formal Christianized community populations were quite heterogeneous. While “praying towns” such as Natick (est. 1650), Mashpee (est. 1670), and Stockbridge (est. 1735) were much more formal and typically kept a full-time missionary and school teacher, Christianized Indian villages along the coasts of Connecticut and Rhode Island (such as Mohegan, Mashantuckett, and Stonington) were less regimented, but also contained self-proclaimed Christians as well as their own Indian churches by the mid-eighteenth century.¹² Likewise, both types of communities contained Natives

⁹ Colin G. Calloway, *The American Revolution in Indian Country: Crisis and Diversity in Native American Communities* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 86; Jean M. O'Brien, *Dispossession by Degrees: Indian Land and Identity in Natick, Massachusetts, 1650-1790* (Cambridge (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 63.

¹⁰ For an analysis of the establishment of one praying town (Mashpee), see David J. Silverman, “The Church in New England Community Life: A View from the Islands and Cape Cod,” in *Reinterpreting New England Indians and the Colonial Experience*, ed. Colin G. Calloway and Neal Salisbury, (Boston: Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 2003), 272-3. Some scholars suggest that Natives also equated the settlers’ success with their practice of Christianity. See Patrick Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 13.

¹¹ Despite efforts to eradicate all Native cultural identity, most Christian Indians in praying towns maintained certain traditions that missionaries were forced to accept. See O’Brien, 48-49, 43-45.

¹² Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 46.

who did not necessarily accept Christianity, but were influenced and changed, like the rest of the community, by the emerging English colonial order.¹³

Each community encountered nearly the same attempts by white missionaries to civilize and Christianize the Natives through physical and academic education. The initial approach to civilizing the Natives was devised by John Eliot in the mid-seventeenth century. Eliot's praying town, Natick, was the first experiment by the English colonists to civilize the local Native population in order to create friends among the so-called savages. Eliot believed that he could transform the Indians so that they and the colonists could be "all one English" and live peacefully together.¹⁴ Transformation was indeed a key part of the conversion process. In his examination of potential Native converts, John Eliot posed the question, "What change hath God wrought in you of late...?"¹⁵ Natives were expected to reform their bodies, minds, and souls through adopting the Christian religion as well as English-style agriculture, dress, and family structure. While Eliot imposed strict laws forbidding certain Native practices, most of Eliot's seventeenth-century praying Indians still lived in wigwams and some even maintained Native dress.¹⁶ After Christian Indians were treated with suspicion and contempt by the colonists during King Phillip's War, it became clear to Indians and English alike that no Indian could ever be fully accepted as an English neighbor. After Natick failed to be the peaceful Christian Indian haven Eliot hoped for, white missionaries started to rethink how best to convert Natives.

As early as the late seventeenth century, the Mayhew family, who started a mission on the island of Martha's Vineyard, allowed more flexibility for their Christian converts. These communities flourished through the mid-eighteenth century. Other missionaries of the eighteenth century became more flexible with their Indian converts as well. The most influential missionaries

¹³ Native life was changed by European colonization within the first century of settlement. Life had already been altered from its pre-Columbian state, but I refer here to an increased adoption of Anglo practices due to further encroachment. For early affects of colonization on Native life, see Cronon, *Changes in the Land*. For the adoption of Anglo agricultural practices, even among unconverted Indians, see David J. Silverman, "We Chuse to Be Bounded: Native American Animal Husbandry in Colonial New England," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 60, no. 3 (July 2003), 511-548.

¹⁴ As quoted in Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 11.

¹⁵ Michael P. Clark, ed. *The Eliot Tracts: With Letters from John Eliot to Thomas Thorowgood and Richard Baxter* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2003), 316.

¹⁶ Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 139-41.

were all Congregationalist Puritans, but many were influenced to greater and lesser extents by evangelism. The Natives of New England were equally influenced by the Great Awakening. Evangelical missionaries and teachings appealed to Natives due to the revival's acceptance of personal spiritual connection with the supernatural. By the 1740s, missionaries were finally able to establish Indian churches and schools among the Narragansett, Niantic, and Mohegan Indians who were notorious for rejecting white missionaries.¹⁷

While eighteenth-century missionaries were typically more lenient than their seventeenth-century predecessors, the goals and methods for civilizing the Indians remained the same. All missionaries stressed the need for Natives to reject former farming and hunting practices in order to adopt English-style farming and husbandry. By the 1750s, missionaries such as John Sergeant, Jr. of Stockbridge, Massachusetts and Eleazar Wheelock of Lebanon, Connecticut began to target children in their civilization efforts. It was believed that the adults were too difficult to convert and that the children would be easier to mold into proper Christians since they theoretically were not as attached to Native habits.¹⁸ Sergeant and Wheelock established schools in or near Christianized Indian communities. Some of the white and Indian students produced by these schools, such as Samuel Kirkland and Samson Occom, even convinced some members of the Iroquois and Delaware Nations to send their children to these Indian schools.¹⁹ While attending school was not compulsory for those living in praying towns, many Native parents (even those outside praying towns) sent their children to places such as Wheelock's Moor's Charity School in Lebanon, Connecticut, so that they could learn to read, write, and help their communities deal with colonists upon the student's return to their parents.²⁰

Although instructing Natives in reading, writing, and catechisms remained a consistent method of conversion throughout the eighteenth century, this method eventually stopped being

¹⁷ Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 43.

¹⁸ Hopkins, *Historical Memoirs*, 82, 94.

¹⁹ Joanna Brooks, ed. *The Collected Writings of Samson Occom, Mohegan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 16-7.

²⁰ White missionaries often sent educated Native American missionaries to Native villages in order to recruit children for the school. For correspondence between white and Native missionaries, see Samson Occom, *The Collected Writings of Samson Occom, Mohegan: Leadership and Literature in Eighteenth-Century Native America*, Joanna Brooks, ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

supported at the end of the century by missionaries such as Gideon Hawley of Mashpee, Massachusetts who believed this type of education was wasted on Natives. Indeed, all missions and missionaries increasingly stressed the importance of domestic over academic learning throughout the eighteenth and into the nineteenth centuries.²¹

While accepting white missionaries into a Native community often entailed a further erosion Native practices, missionaries simultaneously acted as facilitators of an extended network of New England and New York Christian Indians. Eighteenth-century white missionaries seldom stayed in one place. Throughout their training, they often moved to and from various praying towns and Indian villages. For instance Gideon Hawley, who acted as the principle missionary to the Mashpee Indians from 1770 until 1835, started as schoolmaster to the Stockbridge Indians. Eleazar Wheelock and John Sergeant, Sr. were familiar with one another and exchanged Indian students on a regular basis. Wheelock's most prolific white missionary, Samuel Kirkland, ultimately moved to Stockbridge, but continued to conduct missionary journeys into New York until moving there in the 1790s. These missionaries provided a connection between these Native communities that came to identify with one other as Christians and Indians.

The white missionaries' work also produced several influential Native missionaries who further established connections between Native communities. All of these Native men were educated in the 1740s, 50s, and 60s at Wheelock's Moor's Charity School. Wheelock's most successful students included Samson Occom (Mohegan), Joseph Johnson (Mohegan), David Fowler (Montauk), and Samuel Ashpo (Mohegan).²² These men not only orchestrated the removal of the future Brothertown Indians to New York, but through their travels, they brought many otherwise distant communities together. All of these Native men travelled throughout New England and into New York. Samson Occom was perhaps the Christian Indians' greatest ally and voice. While he lived primarily in Connecticut (at Mohegan), he spent considerable time with the

²¹ Gideon Hawley, manuscript letter to Mr. Freeman, 15 November 1802, MHS.

²² Other noteworthy students who did not live long enough to have a substantial impact on the Christian Indian community include Joseph Wooley (Delaware) and Daniel Simon (Narragansett).

New York and Montauk Indians, fostering a Christian connection between them and their New England brethren.²³

As important as these white and Native missionaries were to bringing Christianized Indian communities together, the Great Awakening and individual Indian communities were the most influential factors in the pan-Christian Indian movement. The Natives along the coast of Connecticut and Rhode Island resisted white missionaries longer than other Native communities. The Great Awakening finally provided an opportunity for the Natives of New England to once again reconnect with one another and turn conversion into a tool for Native survival and autonomy.²⁴ Silverman argues that through the teachings of the Great Awakening, Indians began to associate Christianity with Native spirituality which allowed for a more positive view of conversion. For instance, Natives who did not possess the skills to read the bible and write sermons could now fulfill roles as religious leaders in Christianized communities.²⁵ Of course, conversion *did* offer the opportunity to learn how to read, write and maintain legal ownership of the land in the new Anglo-centered world. Although Native agricultural practices and hunting were not entirely lost, the adoption of English agricultural practices became a symbol of commitment to one's community and land.²⁶

By the 1740s, an extended network of Christian Indian communities had emerged. Not only did white and Native missionaries travel between towns and villages, but Natives themselves also moved in order to send their children to certain schools or visit kin. Most of these Christianized Indians attended the same schools as their children (if only for a short time), shared missionaries and school teachers, but dealt with white encroachment and adapted in very different ways. Given the overall similarities and connections between these communities, it is striking that these various groups developed their own particular notions of what it meant to be a Christian Indian. This diversity in cultural adaptations is at the crux of why this pan-Christian

²³ Brooks, *Collected Writings*, 15.

²⁴ Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 48.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 46-7.

²⁶ Silverman, "Bounded," 47.

Indian movement ultimately began to dissolve after only a few years of living together in New York.

In order to understand how and why these communities adapted to conversion and white encroachment differently, and why some acculturated more than others, it is necessary to try to uncover the experience of the average Christian Indian rather than the missionaries who ultimately brought them together. An investigation of white and Native missionaries' writings and correspondence are important for such a study, but the experiences of Native missionaries did not replicate those of the average Christian Indian. Native missionaries were typically much more acculturated than most Christian Indians because they needed to be accepted by their white religious mentors. While Native and white missionaries remain important to a study of Christian Indian identity, it is necessary to go beyond the experiences of these exceptional people and try to understand the lives of average Christian Natives.

While Natives took decisive action in allowing white missionaries into their communities, the conversion process and complete Anglicization were not certain. Factors both within and outside of Native control contributed to the development of complex Christian Indian identities. In looking generally at the Natives in western Massachusetts (Stockbridge), coastal New England (including Martha's Vineyard and Montauk), and New York (Oneida), it becomes clear that various internal and external factors unique to each community aided in constructing separate notions of Christianity and Indianness.

Because changing notions of gender roles and environmental practices constituted the areas considered most important in the civilizing process, these changes were key in how each community understood itself as Christian and Indian. By looking at how Christian Indians retained and adapted traditional culture and beliefs, we will be better able to understand the assimilation process and the centrality of gender and the environment in constructing new Native identities within Anglo society.

Recent historical treatments of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century New England praying towns deal mostly with this issue of acculturation, identity, and land loss among Christian

Indians. Most historians agree that Christian Indians embraced a process of “mixed assimilation” where Natives adapted their own traditions so as to fit those practices and worldviews into new Anglo life ways. White missionaries expected Christian Indians to abandon their former culture, but these Natives were never simply passive victims who accepted European colonization without challenge. Rather, these Natives possessed a great deal of agency in shaping old traditions to fit new circumstances. Most scholars choose to focus on a particular community or activity (such as literacy/writing, agriculture, oratory) to examine and explain this phenomenon. Although their primary sources differ, they all arrive at the same general conclusion that Christian Indians created their own culture and identity by mixing the old with the new.

Of the numerous books and articles that are published about the Christian Indians of Southern New England, most examine the overall political, economic, and – to a lesser degree – social situation that existed in praying towns. Due to this trend, the majority of studies, including those by Collin Calloway, Jean O'Brien, and Patrick Frazier, focus on the role of men in negotiating land deals, treaties, and town leadership.²⁷ Historian Patrick Frazier gives the most in-depth account of life in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, but does not sufficiently explain the process of cultural adaptation to show how the Stockbridge Indians came to define themselves as Christians and Indians.²⁸

Cultural histories of the American colonial period offer the most insight into the process of cultural conflict and acculturation between Natives and Europeans. James Axtell's *The Invasion Within* details this overall process with the greatest precision of any work thus far.²⁹ Other works which look more specifically at the cultural conflict between Indians and New Englanders include

²⁷ See Collin Calloway, *American Revolution in Indian Country: Crisis and Diversity in Native American Communities* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995); James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).

²⁸ Patrick Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992). For another work that looks at the political role of Stockbridge men on the national stage, see James W. Oberly, *A Nation of Statesmen: The Political Culture of the Stockbridge-Munsee Mohicans, 1815-1972* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2005).

²⁹ James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).

Neil Salisbury's *Manitou and Providence*.³⁰ Moving beyond generalities and conflict-driven narratives, David J. Silverman's monograph on the Christian Indians of Martha's Vineyard provides an in-depth analysis of one community's experience with Anglo contact and assimilation.³¹ The most recent scholarship on Native adaptations stresses the significance of language and literacy in Native American (and Christian Indian) power and identity.³² Sandra Gustafson and Lisa Brooks both make convincing arguments that force their audience to rethink Native American agency in the colonial and early national period. While all of these works offer sophisticated analyses of Christian Indian adaptations and identity, most of these studies are either too broad or utilize only specific kinds of primary sources. As a result, they tend to emphasize the male experience and obscure the collaborative nature of identity construction between men *and* women, young and old, literate and non-literate. Few historians offer a thorough analysis of the role of women in Christianized Native communities. Most of these cultural studies only mention Christian Indian females in passing without providing any analysis, thereby obfuscating the complexity of the female experience.

It is impossible to evaluate the changing gender dynamics that existed in Christianized Indian communities without first understanding the role of Native women within these culturally hybridized Native communities. Hilary Wyss, Rachel Wheeler, and Ann Marie Plane are some of the few historians making strides in understanding the role and experience of women in Christian Indian communities. Each historian approaches her subject from a different perspective, highlighting important issues in Christian Indian female life. While Wyss's analysis necessarily centers on men, she gleans important information from the sources about the representations of women and gender in Christian Indian and white missionary writing. Through doing this, Wyss

³⁰ Neil Salisbury, *Manitou and Providence: Indians, Europeans, and the Making of New England, 1500-1643* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984).

³¹ David J. Silverman, *Faith and Boundaries: Colonists, Christianity, and Community among the Wampanoag Indians of Martha's Vineyard, 1600 – 1871* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

³² Lisa Brooks, *The Common Pot: The Recovery of Native Space in the Northeast* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008); Sandra M. Gustafson, *Eloquence is Power: Oratory and Performance in Early America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

allows us to better understand the relationship between language, rhetoric, and gender.³³ Wheeler demonstrates how Native women within Moravian missions used religious practice and spirituality in order to help their communities adapt to the realities of colonial life.³⁴ Plane's legal approach to understanding Indian marriages offers insight into how conversion and Anglicization affected Native family life and sexual relationships.³⁵ These historians' have paved the way for a further investigation of Native female agency in sculpting Christian Indian culture and identity.

While no scholar yet focuses on the significance of gender and the environment in the development of praying town community identities, at least one historian alludes to the significance and the interconnectedness of these two issues for Christian Indians. David Silverman's article on the adoption of animal husbandry in New England praying towns discusses the relationship between old and new agricultural practices and gendered divisions of labor as well as the ways in which women and men were able to retain traditional practices within their new roles.³⁶ This work contributes greatly to our understanding of the centrality of gender and the environment in the everyday lives and cultural identity of Christian Indians. Further, environmental histories of colonial New England, such as William Cronon's *Changes in the Land* and Carolyn Merchant's *Ecological Revolutions*, demonstrate the importance of considering the relationships between land use and gender, how humans think about and interact with the environment, and the constant evolution of and dialectic relationship between nature and culture.

The groundwork which has been laid for studying gender and the environment among Christianized Indians raises a series of important questions. For instance, to what extent did gender roles change in these communities and did a gendered change in food production automatically necessitate a change in other traditions? What was the role of both men and women in facilitating and resisting cultural adaptation? How did Christian Indians' psychological

³³ Hilary Wyss, *Writing Indians: Literacy, Christianity, and Native Community in Early America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000).

³⁴ Rachel Wheeler, *To Live Upon Hope: Mohicans and Missionaries in the Eighteenth-century Northeast* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).

³⁵ Ann Marie Plane, *Colonial Intimacies: Indian Marriage in Early New England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000).

³⁶ David Silverman, "'We Chuse to Be Bounded': Native American Animal Husbandry in Colonial New England," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 60, no. 3 (July 2003): 511-48.

and physical relationship to the environment change after conversion, and what affect did that have on their identity as “Natives”? Did the shift in semi-permanent villages to fixed agricultural towns factor into which practices they were able to maintain and which they had to give up? What happened to these newly adopted/adapted practices when Christian Indians were given the opportunity to leave the confines of praying towns and Christianized communities?

Through addressing these questions, I hope to draw out the role of gender and environmental adaptations in shaping Christian Indian identity. Gender and the environment were central to the conversion process and how each Christian Indian community defined itself. In order to understand how the New England and New York Indians adapted such different notions of gender and environmental relations, it is necessary to look at how these cultural traits evolved over the years throughout each community. This kind of study will help illuminate the role of women in the conversion process and define the extent and limits of human agency – both Native and Anglo – in the acculturation process.

1.1 A Note on Methodology and Organization

Understanding the experiences and thoughts of eighteenth-century Native Americans is easier said than done. Given the limited nature of eighteenth-century documentation on Native Americans, it is important to scrutinize every source. Even though many Christianized Indians spoke English and some became literate, most surviving sources were recorded by Anglo Americans and likely tell us as much if not more about colonial Europeans themselves than about Natives. However bleak recovering an Indian past might seem, attempting this research is a worthwhile endeavor and one can glean important and revealing information if proper precautions are taken. In order to find what historians James and Jeanne Ronda call “lost Indian voices,” most scholars have identified ways in which documents can be read and verified in order to arrive at an analysis that approaches “the truth.”³⁷ Ronda and Ronda suggest that readers must always question the reliability of documents or speeches written or translated by Europeans. In so doing,

³⁷ James Ronda and Jeanne Ronda, “The Death of John Sassamon: An Exploration in Writing New England Indian History,” *American Indian Quarterly* 1, no. 2 (Summer 1974): 100-101.

it is important to distinguish between “facts, probabilities, and propaganda.”³⁸ Wyss notes how white missionaries often read traditional Native practices as part of an emerging Anglo social order. She refers to this process as “reculturation” and makes her audience aware of the facts that can often be hiding behind the fiction or propaganda.³⁹ Similarly, Joyce Chaplin utilizes a conceptual tool she calls “triangulation” in order to arrive at a reasonable hypothesis from available sources. Through triangulation, the researcher corroborates colonial texts with another point of reference (such as another primary source or anthropological study) in order to find consensus and likely draw likely conclusions.⁴⁰

While new questions are being raised and a shift in the debate about Christian Indian identity is being proposed, commonly used primary sources will be analyzed with these pitfalls and methodologies in mind. My focus will rest on the eighteenth-century Christian Indian communities who end up living near one another by the 1780s: Stockbridge, Massachusetts, coastal communities along the Connecticut coast (Mohegan, Mashantucket, Niantic), and the Christianized Natives in Oneida territory. Due the high rate of interaction and travel between New England Christian Indian communities, towns on Martha’s Vineyard, Cape Cod, and eastern Long Island will also be considered where appropriate. The study will focus primarily on the period between the 1730s and 1810s, when many of these communities became Christianized until the joint Christian Indian communities in Oneida territory begin to dissolve. The missionary tracts and diaries of active white missionaries such as Experience Mayhew, John Sergeant, Eleazar Wheelock, and Samuel Kirkland as well as the writings of Native American missionaries such as Samson Occom, David Fowler, and Joseph Johnson will be used in order to understand the evolving situations in these communities throughout the eighteenth century. Published letters written by Christian Indians to their missionaries also reveal anxieties about conversion, concerns for their Native community, and attitudes toward their new life style.

³⁸ Ronda and Ronda, “Writing Indian History,” 94.

³⁹ Wyss, *Writing Indians*, 53.

⁴⁰ Joyce E. Chaplin, *Subject Matter: Technology, the Body, and Science on the Anglo-American Frontier 1500 – 1679* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 27-33.

These sources will be read to illuminate how gender and environmental dynamics within Christian Indian communities changed over time. In order to understand Christian Indian behaviors outside of their villages, it will be important to analyze the diaries and letters of Anglo men who came in contact with these Christian Indian men and women outside of Christianized Native towns. Finally, the letters and other writings of Stockbridge sachem Hendrick Aupaumut will be important for investigating how, by the end of the eighteenth century, Christian Indians defended and defined themselves against other Native and Anglo neighbors.

The following chapters investigate how gender and the environment were negotiated in the colonial spheres that were most important to defining Native and Anglo identity: the home, religion, and war. Before analyzing the evolution of Christian Indian culture and identity, it will be necessary to survey these communities more broadly to get a sense of the conversion process and how Natives Americans of New England came to be “Christian Indians.” Chapter one will give the reader a better sense of the broader eighteenth-century Christian Indian community and how these Natives interacted with one another as well as the colonists with whom they often shared their town space. Chapter two will consider the first arena in which Natives began the “civilization” process: the home. Missionaries sought to “bind” Natives physically and psychologically to well-ordered, private plots of land. The results of this reeducation, however, varied depending upon the human and environmental space that each community occupied. Chapter three investigates the role of women in maintaining Native relationships to the environment through religious practice. By retaining Native roles as caregivers, dreamers and herbalists, women perpetuated the communal spirit and environmental knowledge while establishing a new place of respect for themselves in their Anglicized communities. Chapter four explores how Native traditions often resurfaced when men and women are able to leave their bounded environments to fulfill traditional roles in war and diplomacy. Finally, chapter five looks at the state of the New Stockbridge, Brothertown, and Oneida communities at the outset of their conflict. An analysis of the conflict and each town’s degree of acculturation will explain why the experiment in Christian Indian brotherhood failed, and how the New England communities in particular acquired the

certitude to consider themselves better Natives than traditional Natives, better Christians than whites, and better *Christian Indians* than the Oneida.

CHAPTER 2
CHRISTIAN INDIANS AT HOME: CULTIVATING THE SAVAGE AND CREATING
“WILDERNESS” IN NEW ENGLAND PRAYING TOWNS

In 1796, a report on the state of affairs among the Oneida, New Stockbridge, and Brotherton Indians was submitted to the Board of Commissioners of the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge. The area of largest concern for the society was the extent of agriculture and husbandry among the Indians. The report noted the more “idle” Indians on the reservation, typically characterized as the Oneida, believed “that squaws and hedgehogs, are made to scratch the ground.” This belief explained why most of their men had not adopted Anglo agricultural practices.⁴¹ The perceived lack of industriousness and inefficient land use on the part of the Indians was commonly considered the most significant difference between Native “savages” and the “civilized” white man.⁴² The idea of “cultivating” and “subjugating” the mind and body through working the land in order to attain a civilized Christian state was popular among missionaries and their supporters alike. Jonathan Belcher, a colonial Massachusetts governor, remarked in a letter to John Sergeant, Sr., that “to *civilize* will be the readiest way to *Christianize* them [Indians].”⁴³

This process of civilizing the Native population began with and necessitated a near complete change in gender and environmental relations. It was the goal of missionaries to turn a semi-permanent society into one that was fixed to one location and piece of land. Men would

⁴¹ Jeremy Belknap and Jedidiah Morse, *Report on the Oneida, Stockbridge, and Brotherton Indians, 1796* (New York: Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, 1955), 16. (hereafter referred to as 1796 Report, MHS)

⁴² This logic pervades the literature of the period. When asked by a young Native boy why God made Indians and whites so different (and Indians inferior), missionary John Sergeant, Jr. writes in his journal that the primary difference lay in “tilling and cultivating the earth.” John Sergeant, Jr., John Sergeant journal, 19 August 1791, Society for Propagating the Gospel Among the Indians and Others in North America, Ms. 176, box 1, folder 8, MHS. (hereafter cited as Sergeant Jr. journal).

⁴³ As quoted in Samuel Hopkins, *Historical Memoirs Relating to the Housatonic Indians* (Boston: S. Kneeland, 1753; reprint, New York: William Abbatt, 1911), 55.

have to give up traditional hunting practices, “roaming” away from the settlement, and take up field work, while women were asked to relinquish their nearly universal control over the food supply.⁴⁴ Given that Indians were to be “bounded” within their new praying towns or Indian villages and encouraged to undergo major changes in their quotidian world, home life acted as the nexus of both gendered and environmental negotiations.⁴⁵

Within Puritan ideology, there existed an uneasiness about “untamed” wilderness and its effects on Christians. It was believed that the wilderness was an evil place that tempted Christians to give into their primal instincts and even encouraged idleness.⁴⁶ Puritans often stressed the need to overcome the dangers of wilderness through bringing it under cultivation. By doing so, they not only brought order to an otherwise “wild” landscape, but they also fulfilled their obligation to God to make “improvements” on the earth. Controlling the environment also meant controlling one’s own impulses and body. Thus, by putting bodies to work in the process of cultivating the landscape, Puritans were by extension removing wild temptations, and thus, ensuring their continued civilized state.⁴⁷ Because work and labor were so central to the process of cultivation and civilization, “idleness” was often blamed for the Native’s disinterest in Anglo

⁴⁴ For more on traditional Native customs relating to food production and a gendered division of labor, see chapters 3 and 7 in Kathleen Bragdon, *Native Peoples of Southern New England, 1500 – 1650* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996).

⁴⁵ John Eliot was the first proponent of “binding” Natives to an Anglo environment to encourage their transition into white society. This idea of “binding” or “bounding” consenting Indians to one environment carried through into the missions of the eighteenth century, even if missionaries’ methods departed from Eliot in other ways. For John Eliot and his ideas about Indian conversion, see Jean M. O’Brien, *Dispossession by Degrees: Indian Land and Identity in Natick, Massachusetts, 1650-1790* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 27; Michael P. Clark, ed., *The Eliot Tracts: With Letters from John Eliot to Thomas Thorowgood and Richard Baxter* (Praeger: Westport, 2003), 15. For Eliot’s attempts to make praying towns “utopian enclosures,” see James Hulstun, “John Eliot’s Empirical Millenarianism,” *Representations* 4, (Fall 1983), 131-2.

⁴⁶ James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 151; Carolyn Merchant, *Ecological Revolutions: Nature, Gender, and Science in New England* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 65.

⁴⁷ For more on Puritan relationship to the environment and the act of cultivating the wilderness, see Martha L. Finch, “Civilized Bodies and the ‘Savage’ Environment of Early New Plymouth,” in *A Center of Wonders: The Body in Early America*, Janet Moore Lindman and Michele Lise Tarter, eds. (Cornell University Press, 2001), 43, 47-50.

agricultural practices. Invoking an agricultural discourse, Sergeant Sr. described idleness as a “seed plot of all manner of vice among Indians.”⁴⁸

Part of this untamed wilderness included the Natives that inhabited the uncultivated continent. Natives were seen as being so closely attached to the land that Europeans typically likened Native behaviors to wild plants and animals. Samuel Hopkins, a resident and short-time missionary to the Indians at Stockbridge, likened their traditional modes of agriculture and food consumption to “hungry wolves in the wilderness.”⁴⁹ A descendant of a Stockbridge resident likened the local Indians to trees in the forest. She stated that they would descend into the forest “of which they seemed as much a part as the trees.”⁵⁰ These metaphors and comparisons were not coincidental. By utilizing this discourse, Puritans constantly distanced themselves from Natives by distinguishing between Puritan dominance and control over themselves and the landscape and the “savage” and “wild” nature of Natives.⁵¹ This wild/cultivated, savage/civilized dichotomy is the lens through which Puritan missionaries viewed Native Americans and sought to transition them from one lifestyle to the other.

While Puritans constructed this wild versus tame dichotomy, real differences in worldview existed between colonists and Natives. A useful example is the way each group conceived of their relationship to animals. In the Judeo-Christian tradition there existed a marked distance between humans and animals. Thus, the relationship was marked by human distance from and dominion over all other creatures on the earth. In contrast, Native cosmology and folklore centers on Natives’ descent from animal ancestors. Natives believed animals to be of equal status on the

⁴⁸ Sergeant in Hopkins, *Historical Memoirs*, 151.

⁴⁹ Samuel Hokins, manuscript letter to Andrew Eliot, 30 January 1767, Miscellaneous bound manuscript collection, Ms. N-2196, MHS. (hereafter cited as Misc. manuscript) Even Natives who became missionaries themselves likened unchristianized Natives to beasts. David Fowler repeatedly called the Indians at Conawarohare “dogs” and “hogs” in a letter to Eleazar Wheelock. See James D. McCallum, ed., *Letters of Eleazar Wheelock’s Indians* (Hanover: Dartmouth College Publications, 1932; reprint, Whitefish: Kessinger, 2008), 94.

⁵⁰ Sarah Cabot Sedgwick and Christina Sedgwick Marquand, *Stockbridge: A Chronicle, 1739-1939* (Great Barrington, MA: The Berkshire Courier, 1939), 7.

⁵¹ Joyce Chaplin argues that colonists’ efforts to distance themselves from Natives based on technology/culture/nature begins in the 17th century when war breaks out and colonists become more concerned about their own cultural hybridization. Joyce Chaplin, *Subject Matter: Technology, the Body, and Science on the Anglo-American Frontier, 1500-1676* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 243.

earth and even more intelligent than humans.⁵² Some scholars argue that by the eighteenth century, colonists become more secularized and were more likely to accept human closeness to nature. “Wilderness” became less associated with evil and more with God’s power to provide for his people.⁵³ While this may be true for Anglo society writ-large, Christian Indians were more influenced by men of the church rather than the general population. The use of “wilderness” as a warning to white and Native Christians alike was alive and well in writings of eighteenth-century missionaries.⁵⁴ Because they maintain a negative view of the wilderness and Native attachment to that wilderness, stamping out the “wild” nature in Natives remained the first priority of missionaries.

Eighteenth-century missionaries began to adopt a more work-centered method to civilizing and in turn Christianizing the Natives.⁵⁵ They believed that in order to cultivate Indian minds and souls, they must first cultivate and subdue their bodies. Sergeant Sr. believed that he must “root out their vicious habits” through teaching them new forms of work and land use before any progress could be made toward piety and virtue.⁵⁶ Part of this process entailed dividing Indian land into private property in order to encourage individual, male responsibility for agriculture. General Benjamin Lincoln recalled the process by which missionaries succeeded in bringing “light” to Indian minds. In a letter he stated, “It is impossible to convert them, until they can be impressed with just notions of their own situation, as it regards an exclusive right to the soil.”⁵⁷ Some missionaries even criticized others for attempting to instruct Indians in reading, writing, and biblical knowledge rather than solely agricultural labor. Gideon Hawley, former schoolmaster at Stockbridge and later missionary to the Mashpee Indians, argued that the methods of Sergeant Sr. and Eleazar Wheelock were less effective than his own:

⁵² Merchant, *Ecological Revolutions*, 40, 102, 114.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 104-5.

⁵⁴ References to the dangers of the “wilderness” exist in the journals and letters of John Sergeant, Jr., Samuel Kirkland, and Native missionary Samson Occom, among others.

⁵⁵ For a similar argument laid out here, see Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 162-3.

⁵⁶ Hopkins, *Historical Memoirs*, 108.

⁵⁷ Letter from General Lincoln to the Corresponding Secretary, 29 October 1795, published in *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, Ser. 1, Vol. 5, 9.

To enable a young Indian and give him a will to attend an acre of corn or even a yard of potatoes will be of much more utility to him than to be able to translate Virgil and Cicero. And to teach a young female savage to spin a skaine of yarn, milk a cow or even raise a brood of chickens will do more towards civilization than all the fine learning in such savage at any expence would do.⁵⁸

Although Sergeant did seek to provide literacy training to the young boys who attended his school, the primary goal of his program was to “cultivate humanity” among them by training them in agricultural practices, husbandry, and English home construction. He even conflated the two types of education in likening young Indian boys’ minds to “uncultivated soil” which, once tilled, “wanted more abundant labour.”⁵⁹

Despite the fact that eighteenth-century missionaries sought to completely alter Natives’ traditional life ways, praying towns and Native communities at this time were much less strict than those of John Eliot’s in the seventeenth century. In the town of Natick (the first established praying town), Eliot made many Native traditions and habits, which he considered uncivilized, punishable by law. Using bear or goose grease as an insect repellent and biting bugs and fleas on the skin were banned in the town. Even infractions such as “idleness” or bearing a naked chest were punishable by fines or whippings.⁶⁰ By the eighteenth century, after both Natives and colonists considered Natick a failure, missionaries and their supporters began to accept a more lenient approach to civilization and conversion.⁶¹ Thus, eighteenth-century praying town culture tended to show more evidence of Native traditions and practices than those of the previous century.⁶² Distilling the new beliefs about Native acculturation through a reflection on the Indians at Natick, Reverend Stephen Badger stated that “They seem to be like some plants, that thrive

⁵⁸ Gideon Hawley, manuscript letter to James Freeman, 15 November 1802, Gideon Hawley Letters Collection, Ms. N-1379, MHS.

⁵⁹ Sedgwick and Marquand, *Stockbridge*, 13, 35; Hopkins, *Historical Memoirs*, 126, 151.

⁶⁰ Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 139-41; Dane Morrison, *A Praying People: Massachusetts Acculturation and the Failure of the Puritan Mission, 1600-1690* (New York: Peter Lang, 1998), 72.

⁶¹ Due to Natick’s reputation, Natives at Stockbridge were skeptical of the white missionaries’ intentions and apprehensive about establishing a town. Patrick Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 15-6.

⁶² This is true, but it should be mentioned that even in seventeenth-century Natick, some residents still lived in wigwams. Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 139-41.

best in the shade; if the overgrowth is cut off, they wither and decay...”⁶³ Likewise, Samuel Kirkland believed that “some of their manners must be indulged and even cherished” so as not to “depress their spirits” and keep them from accepting other reforms.⁶⁴ Due to the pervasiveness of this belief, there generally tended to be more flexibility in eighteenth-century Christianized Native communities. However, the degree to which a particular Christian Indian community maintained traditional life ways depended on its proximity to white colonists and, more significantly, on environmental determinants. A number of factors, including missionary influence and changes in the environment, ultimately resulted in various degrees of cultural adaptation and the development of multiple Christian Indian identities within each community.

Specific changes in gender relations and environmental practices depended upon the space in which each community existed. Those who lived further from white encroachment possessed more negotiating power and existed in more of a “middle ground” with their missionaries than did the communities closer to the coast.⁶⁵ This chapter will argue that there was a direct correlation between white proximity, environmental determinants, and an Indian nation’s ability to negotiate cultural mores. Those communities which were further away from white society were more likely to live in an environment which was less affected by European settlement.⁶⁶ Consequently, the less the landscape was changed, the more it allowed Natives to maintain traditional practices of living. These factors resulted not only in varying adoptions of English land use, but also different psychological relationships to the environment and differing notions of gender identity and relationships.

⁶³ Letter from Stephen Badger to the Corresponding Secretary, February 1797, published in *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, Ser. 1, Vol. 5, 42. (hereafter cited as Badger Letter).

⁶⁴ Kirkland journal, 20 May 1791, MHS.

⁶⁵ I have applied the concept of a “middle ground” loosely. Natives further away from white society were able to maintain more traditions (I will argue for environmental and spatial reasons) than those living closer to whites, but the situation in southern New England and New York bear little resemblance to the communities of Indians and French traders in the Great Lakes region where Richard White derives the term. For a discussion of the “middle ground,” see Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

⁶⁶ All land by this time was altered by European introduction of animals, plants, and microbes, but areas further away from larger white settlements did maintain more natural habitation. For more on the environmental impact of European colonization, see William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983).

These changes and negotiations in everyday life took place inside and outside of towns, in fields, forests, houses, and dress. Natives living in Christianized communities found ways to fit old habits into new guises in a variety of ways. Some historians even argue that “fitting” the old into the new did not require a vast alteration in worldview. Despite major differences in attitudes toward animals and conceptions of property, historian David Silverman argues that Natives had their own understanding of “tame” and “wild,” and Native gendered divisions of labor were not so different than European notions. Although Natives did not possess domesticated animals to the extent of Europeans, they did keep some animals near their homes and utilized them in their hunting and farming. Dogs were considered a man’s animal and assisted with male duties which mostly took place outside the home in the form of hunting and fishing. Likewise, hawks were used by women and children in the fields in order to keep smaller birds from disturbing the crop.⁶⁷ Like the Europeans, women were typically considered part of the private or “tame” sphere within Native society while men more often took tasks which required leaving the home. Thus, there existed a spatial separation in gendered work in both cultures.⁶⁸

However, the dichotomy between “tame” and “wild” and “home” and “abroad” was probably not as rigid in Native society as it was among the English. Women would accompany men on long hunting trips and remove with them into the forests to set up sugaring camps.⁶⁹ Silverman points out that the word *netasûog* referred to tame animals, and both men and women possessed *netasûog* “which suggests that the notion of men pasturing sheep and hogs or of women milking cows and caring for chickens, although novel to Indians in a practical sense, could fit comfortably in the Natives’ cosmology.”⁷⁰ Men also regularly helped the women to break the

⁶⁷ David Silverman, “‘We Chuse to Be Bounded’: Native American Animal Husbandry in Colonial New England.” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 60, no. 3 (July 2003): 514, 518-9. See also Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 153.

⁶⁸ Kathleen Bragdon, “Gender as a Social Category in Native Southern New England,” *Ethnohistory* 43, no. 4 (Fall 1996): 575; Bragdon, *Native Peoples*, 85, 123; Silverman, “Bounded,” 518.

⁶⁹ Bragdon, *Native Peoples*, 108; Sedgwick and Marquand, *Stockbridge*, 14; Hopkins, *Historical Memoirs*, 62.

⁷⁰ Silverman, “Bounded,” 519.

fields before planting and assisted in the burning of wooded land by extracting rocks and girdling trees.⁷¹

While it is possible that English practices in some ways fit into Native cosmology, the adoption of Anglo agricultural and home practices changed the way Christian Indians interacted with the environment and each other. Each community negotiated these changes in different ways, but most decisions were influenced by what the land allowed them – or forced them – to do. Both Natives and white missionaries played a role in influencing Christian Indian culture and ultimately affecting change in the environment. These decisions by Natives and methods employed by missionaries had both intended and unanticipated environmental consequences for shaping Christian Indian community and identities. Each of the communities of Brothertown, New Stockbridge, and Oneida underwent various degrees of “cultivation” and exposure to the idea of “wilderness” by the time they settled their respective towns together in New York. An examination of the relationship between the environment and cultural adaptations can assist in understanding how each Christianized community possessed such differing notions of proper gender and environmental relationships.

The ability to utilize familiar environments contributed much to a community’s cultural adaptations. The more a particular town could maintain landholdings and locations near natural resources, the better able it was to maintain traditional practices. Hunting and fishing were activities in which some Christian Indian communities were able to perpetuate tradition and reinforce Native gender roles for a time. While geographic location determined the extent of a community’s reliance on wild game, animals were an important supplement to every Algonkian diet. Accepting a missionary or living in an established praying town – particularly if that area was close to white settlements – usually meant that Natives were compelled to live in one permanent village as opposed to seasonal villages, as was common for pre-contact Algonkians.⁷² For the Mahicans who settled Stockbridge on the banks of the Housatonic River in 1734, the land in

⁷¹ Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 154; Charles C. Willoughby, “Houses and Gardens of the New England Indians,” *American Anthropologist* 8, no. 1 (Jan.-Mar., 1906): 129.

⁷² Bragdon, *Native Peoples*, 61-98.

western Massachusetts was similar to their original land in the Hudson River Valley of upstate New York, therefore most of their primary resources were still at their disposal.

The town of Stockbridge was established within the bounds of the Mahicans' seasonal hunting grounds.⁷³ The town was also placed on the Housatonic River which allowed them a very familiar landscape on which to settle. Hopkins also described the area as being surrounded by forty miles of "wilderness" to the East, twenty miles to the West, and a "great and terrible wilderness" for several hundred miles to the North.⁷⁴ In the first several years of settlement, the Stockbridge Indians utilized the surrounding forests to the fullest extent, leaving the town for long periods of time each fall to establish hunting camps in the spurs on the mountains. They typically hunted or trapped deer, wild turkey, pigeons, moose (in late winter), and bears.⁷⁵ Not only were these animals used as a supplemental food sources, but the Stockbridge Indians continued to use the skins for clothing and on beds and walls inside their wigwams.⁷⁶

Coastal nations such as the Narragansett, Mohegan, Pequot, and Niantic do not appear to have maintained hunting as late as those in Stockbridge due to the distance between their Christianized permanent settlements and their seasonal hunting grounds.⁷⁷ However, residing near the coast allowed men to fish cod, sea bass, salmon and mackerel while women gathered and trapped clams, lobster, oysters, and shellfish.⁷⁸ Even Mohegan missionary Samson Occom

⁷³ Hopkins, *Historical Memoirs*, 14-5; James Ronda and Jeanne Ronda. "'As They Were Faithful': Chief Hendrick Aupaumut and the Struggle of Stockbridge Survival, 1757 – 1830," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 3, no.3 (1979): 44.

⁷⁴ Hopkins, *Historical Memoirs*, 153.

⁷⁵ Ted J. Brasser, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest: Mahican Indian Culture and Cultural Change* (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1974), 5, 31, 33; Willoughby, "Houses and Gardens," 119; H.E. Warfel, "Notes of Some Mammals of Western Massachusetts," *Journal of Mammalogy* 18, no. 1 (February 1937): 83-4.

⁷⁶ Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 17; Brasser, *Mahican Culture*, 5; Dennis Connole, *The Indians of the Nipmuck Country in Southern New England* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2001), 17; Willoughby, "Houses and Gardens," 116.

⁷⁷ Prior to substantial European settlement, Natives living in or near the Connecticut river valley sometimes traveled over forty miles North to reach their winter hunting grounds in the more mountainous areas of the valley. Connole, *Nipmuck Country*, 17.

⁷⁸ While Coastal Estuarine societies typically remained in nearly year-round settlements on estuaries near the coast, Bragdon notes that they may have occasionally traveled into the interior upland to further supplement their diet. Bragdon, *Native Peoples*, 55-69, 77. Connole, *Nipmuck Country*, 17.

enjoyed fishing, even though it remained more of a pastime than a subsistence measure.⁷⁹ Fishing and whaling on Cape Cod and Martha's Vineyard also remained central to Native diets well into the eighteenth century.⁸⁰ Since sea life was so central to these nations' societal structure, having the ability to maintain hunting and fishing norms allowed for some degree of gendered stability throughout the early to mid-eighteenth century. Men also found other ways to fulfill traditional home and familial roles.

Missionaries often complained about Native male tendencies to "wander from place to place, and to make excursions into various parts of the country, and sometimes at no small distance from their proper homes, without anything on hand for their support in their perambulations."⁸¹ One of the critical roles that Native men (and occasionally women) possessed was to maintain kinship ties with various nations in the region. Despite being bound to sedentary villages, nothing kept men from maintaining kinship ties and traveling great distances to fulfill diplomatic roles amongst other nations. So long as they were still able to hunt, fish, and gather, there was no need to make extended preparations as the missionaries thought proper. Further, the few horses and saddles owned by Natives typically remained in male possession (as evidenced by Christian Indian wills) and likely assisted men in traveling these great distances.⁸²

Closer to home, both men and women (including children) in Stockbridge left the village for about six weeks every February or March in order to go sugaring.⁸³ Women erected small wigwams, similar to those they would traditionally fashion for long hunting trips, for the group to reside in while they harvested sap from maple trees. Given the Iroquois' name for Algonkians, *ratirontaks*, meaning "tree eaters," it is likely that sugaring played a significant role in Mahican

⁷⁹ Joanna Brooks, ed., *The Collected Writings of Samson Occom, Mohegan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 12.

⁸⁰ David Silverman, *Faith and Boundaries: Colonists, Christianity, and Community among the Wampanoag Indians of Martha's Vineyard, 1600-1871* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 214.

⁸¹ Badger Letter, 39. In one specific case, a former Stockbridge Indian writes to Eleazar Wheelock and asks if he will keep his sons while he is away visiting family "Near one thousands of miles" away. McCallum, *Letters*, 243.

⁸² Silverman, "Bounded," 536.

⁸³ Brasser, *Mahican Culture*, 33; Hopkins, *Histocial Memoirs*, 62; Sedgwick and Marquand, *Stockbridge*, 14.

tradition. While in camp, they would boil the sap and store the product in birch boxes before returning to the village.⁸⁴

Familial activities and norms were also maintained in the village through home construction. Around 1750, out of the fifty-three Indian homes in Stockbridge, thirty-three of those were traditional wigwams. The Stockbridge Indian population around this time numbered about 218, with more than half officially Baptized and accepted as Christians in the church.⁸⁵ This shows that even though a majority of the Indians professed the Christian religion, many of these Christian Indians still lived in a more traditional Native fashion. Records indicate that those who lived in English-style homes were the more influential members of the community who were likely to receive the first donated materials from missionary societies because of their key role in helping the missionaries to establish the town.⁸⁶ For the rest of the Natives, the lack of substantial monetary assistance and the economic and environmental practicality of wigwam construction likely contributed to the maintenance of traditional homes.

Wigwams were preferred by Natives in Natick because they were known to be warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer than English houses.⁸⁷ For Stockbridge Indians, the wigwam was likely more practical for another reason. With the vast amount of woods closely surrounding the town in the first twenty years of settlement, it would have been easy to gather the materials needed to build a wigwam. Tree saplings were used to construct the skeleton of the wigwam which were then tied together and covered with birch, chesnut, and oak bark. Mats were made of crane legs and Indian hemp or reeds and grasses to cover the insides of the structure.⁸⁸ So long as hunting could be maintained, animal skins could also be used as door coverings or blankets to warm the home.⁸⁹

⁸⁴ A.F. Chamberlain, "The Maple Amongst the Algonkian Tribes," *American Anthropologist* 4, no. 1 (January 1891): 40.

⁸⁵ Hopkins, *Historical Memoirs*, 154.

⁸⁶ Stockbridge land records show that the men who owned homes on their property were some of the Mahican sachems. John Konkapot and Umpachenee were the two most influential leaders in the early years, and they appear frequently in the land records.

⁸⁷ Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 139-41.

⁸⁸ Willoughby, "Houses and Gardens," 120-1.

⁸⁹ Connole, *Nipmuck Country*, 17; Willoughby, "Houses and Gardens," 116.

The space around the home was also a place where Christian Indian women could maintain Indian-style gardens. In traditional Native society, each family tended a garden near its summer home and sometimes worked multiple gardens spanning several miles.⁹⁰ Food staples such as squash and beans could be kept in the garden, as well as medicinal herbs. Having a garden near the home was common even for English women, so missionaries did not equate the existence of a Native woman's garden as being particularly "savage."⁹¹ As late as the 1790s, Hawley even mentions in a letter to a friend the nice garden that one Christian Indian woman, Mary Simon, tended to next to her home.⁹² While these small gardens did not conflict with Puritan gender norms, white missionaries did concern themselves with women still acting as the primary cultivators of crop fields. Hopkins notes that in the early years of the Stockbridge mission, women still carried out all of the work "abroad," meaning, they did nearly all of the outside work.⁹³ Prior the official establishment of these Christianized communities, missionaries and other colonists were vexed by Natives' ability to produce large crop yields at the hand of women without English plows.⁹⁴

These environmental factors allowed for some stability in gender norms for at least the first few decades after praying town establishments.⁹⁵ Towns which were settled around abundant natural resources and further away from larger white populations tended to maintain more traditions and stability in gender roles than those that existed near colonists. Of the Natives who eventually settled together in upstate New York, the Oneida Indians are the best example of this phenomenon. Living further from major white settlements throughout much of the eighteenth-century, the Oneida were able to maintain hunting, fishing and traditional agriculture even as they accepted missionary Samuel Kirkland to live among them by the early 1760s. Kirkland recalled in

⁹⁰ Willoughby, "Houses and Gardens," 129.

⁹¹ Merchant, *Ecological Revolutions*, 169.

⁹² Hawley describes the garden as having corns and beans in it. Hawley, manuscript letter to James Freeman, 19 May 1796, Gideon Hawley Letters Collection, Ms. N-1379, MHS.

⁹³ Hopkins, *Historical Memoirs*, 94.

⁹⁴ Missionaries and the English in general were disgusted and perplexed by how much food Natives could produce without English plows, fertilizers, and fences. Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 154.

⁹⁵ This is even truer of isolated places like Martha's Vineyard and areas on Cape Cod. See Silverman, *Faith and Boundaries*, 9.

his 1780s journals that they still left the village with their children in order to go on hunting and fishing expeditions to “seek the means of subsistence.”⁹⁶ Through their ability to maintain the hunt, the Oneida were also less likely to adopt English-style clothing as they could keep producing animal skins.⁹⁷ After nearly thirty years among the Oneida, Kirkland had yet to convince them to adopt Anglo agricultural practices. As a result, their gendered relationships also appear to lack very little Anglo influence. In the 1780s, women were still influential within Oneida communities and thought to be powerful communicators with supernatural spirits.⁹⁸

The seasons also seemed to affect the progress of civilization among the Christian Indians. Several missionaries made note of how much more difficult it was to keep the Natives under control in the winter than at any other time of year. In mentioning a festival which typically took place in the winter, Hopkins remembered “a rare instance of moderation at that season” when Sergeant organized a special worship to take place on the same evening.⁹⁹ The weather often inhibited missionaries’ own mobility. The harsh winters of the Northeast made many appearances in the journals of many missionaries – particularly those attempting to live among Natives further inland.¹⁰⁰ Due to the snow in winter and cold rain in the early spring, missionaries went weeks at a time without seeing the Natives or holding worship among them. The winter and spring were also times when Natives took to their seasonal camps to hunt and sugar.¹⁰¹ So long as these practices could be maintained and missionaries lived far enough away to allow the weather to prohibit instruction, missionaries possessed only limited influence over Native lifestyle.¹⁰²

However influential the environment proved to be, missionaries attempted a number of measures in order to bring the Natives and their land under permanent English-style cultivation.

⁹⁶ Kirkland journal, 30 September 1787, MHS.

⁹⁷ Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 173-4.

⁹⁸ Kirkland recalls the largest funeral – white or Native – he can remember of an influential Oneida woman. He also speaks at length about a Seneca woman who comes into town to convey her visions to the people. Kirkland Journal, 30 September and 25 October 1787, MHS.

⁹⁹ Hopkins, *Historical Memoirs*, 92.

¹⁰⁰ Kirkland and Sergeant, Jr. mention the harsh weather in many entries throughout their journals. See Kirkland journals, MHS; Sergeant Jr. journals, MHS.

¹⁰¹ Brassler, *Mahican Culture*, 33.

The mobility of Native families, and especially the men, vexed missionaries as much as Natives' perceived idleness. In the 1780s, Kirkland still lamented the Oneida's indifference toward husbandry. He observed that it was "next to impossible to break off entirely from their wandering, idle... life and become husbandmen." He further stated that "this spirit must be encouraged if ever they are to become a people."¹⁰³ About twenty years into the mission at Stockbridge, Timothy Woodbridge mentioned the mission's shortcoming due to the "unsettled condition" of the Natives.¹⁰⁴ Through addressing the seemingly contradictory issues of idleness and mobility, missionaries attempted to transform Native men into husbandmen and Native women into their helpmeets.

The first order of business after establishing a praying town was for the missionaries to distribute English agricultural tools among the Natives. Metal hoes, plows, and axes were donated by the missionary societies in order to encourage "proper" land use.¹⁰⁵ In seeing the lack of interest in changing cultural mores on the part of the older generations, missionaries quickly came to the conclusion that in order to civilize the Natives, they must train the children.¹⁰⁶ In Stockbridge, an Indian boarding school was established in 1741 (only two years after the official establishment of the town) in order to educate young boys in reading, writing, and husbandry and to reorient traditional Native gender roles.¹⁰⁷ Initial efforts began with the boys who practiced agriculture and husbandry on 200 acres of land surrounding the school. After a couple of years, girls were incorporated into the program, though not given the same reading and writing skills as their male counterparts. Young females were seen as key to the conversion of the whole community because they cared for and instructed the children and assisted everyone in the community.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰³ Kirkland journal, 11 August 1787, MHS.

¹⁰⁴ Timothy Woodbridge, manuscript letter to Andrew Oliver, 9 October 1758, Misc. manuscript, MHS. In 1746 or 1747, Hopkins states that the Natives were "more fixed than they used to be," suggesting that Native willingness to adapt was in constant flux. Hopkins, *Historical Memoirs*, 137.

¹⁰⁵ Sedgwick and Marquand, *Stockbridge*, 27.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 35.

¹⁰⁷ Hopkins, *Historical Memoirs*, 94.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 115.

Wheelock's school in Connecticut, Moor's Charity School, became well known throughout New England for both positive and negative reasons. Wheelock sought to educate children through labor and was criticized by Native parents for treating their children as laborers instead of scholars.¹⁰⁹ As in Sergeant's school, girls were more likely to be bound-out to English families than receive any formal schooling. In both cases, children were given English-style clothes and taught farming techniques – lessons that white missionaries hoped would encourage the rest of the community to adopt Anglo practices for themselves. In Stockbridge, boys tended sheep and harvested flax so that the girls could spin thread and manufacture clothing for others in the community.¹¹⁰ Both Wheelock and Sergeant also employed the strategy of bringing in Native children from nations as far away as present-day Ohio and Canada so that the children could return to their villages as Anglo cultural ambassadors.¹¹¹

While missionaries focused much of their efforts on Native children, they did not give up regulating adult actions in praying towns. Besides dividing community land holdings into singular private lots (which effectively disposed Natives of their land by the end of the century), missionaries also encouraged the further partitioning of land through the construction of use-specific buildings.¹¹² Even within their own farms, the colonists “separated their ‘unimproved’ animals and ‘raw’ grains by placing them in barns at some distance from their own ‘improved’ houses.”¹¹³ Missionaries were effective in getting some Natives to adopt the use of outer buildings to separate their home from their work. In land records from 1745, at least one influential Native in Stockbridge, John Konkapot, owned a barn on his property.¹¹⁴ Missionaries

¹⁰⁹ McCallum, *Letters*, 65, 276, 288.

¹¹⁰ Hopkins, *Historical Memoirs*, 151.

¹¹¹ For a breakdown of Native nationalities within Wheelock's school, see McCallum, *Letters*, 297. For a list of Mohawk children in Sergeant's school, see John Sergeant, manuscript of letter to Unknown, 17 December 1753, *Foster Family Autograph Collection*, MHS.

¹¹² A resolution passed in a town meeting in Stockbridge in 1749 ordered “to divide and dispose of their undivided land... for their settlement and improvement.” The resolution also allowed for Natives outside the community to settle on the land so long as they improved the lot. Copy of Stockbridge Council Report, 1749, from the Pittsfield Registry of Deeds, contained in the Stockbridge Indian Collection, Box 1, folder 21, Stockbridge Town Library and Archives, Stockbridge, MA. (hereafter cited as Pittsfield Deeds, SLA)

¹¹³ Merchant, *Ecological Revolutions*, 63.

¹¹⁴ Stockbridge town meeting notes, 1745, Pittsfield Deeds, SLA. Konkapot was likely one of the few to own a barn due to his status within the community and role in bringing his people to Stockbridge.

went so far as to regulate space inside Native homes as well. Some tried to place barriers inside wigwams in order to divide the adults and children in an attempt to prevent the children from seeing sexual intercourse.¹¹⁵

With as much effort as missionaries poured into altering Native life ways through “cultivating” their minds, bodies, and actions, none of the communities willingly adopted all of these practices outright. For a time, the domestication of animals only supplemented their existing diet of corn, beans, squash, and wild game.¹¹⁶ Silverman even argues that among Christian Indians, herds of domesticated animals were more valuable in assisting Native claims to land ownership than as a staple of the Christian Indian diet.¹¹⁷ Only when Anglo land use further altered the environment were Natives forced to relinquish many remaining Native practices.

Both the missionaries’ imposition of European life ways on Natives and Christian Indians’ insistence on maintaining traditional practices worked in concert to alter the landscape in and around praying towns. These environmental alterations resulted in the need for Christian Indians to further modify their hybridized culture in order to adapt to their new environmental realities.¹¹⁸ White encroachment into praying town communities set the stage for future environmental restrictions. The mass clearing of land for Anglo homesteads in and around Christianized Native communities resulted in extensive deforestation and loss of game which limited Native resources. Further, English fencing and damming eventually cut off Native access to fishing, planting fields, and hunting grounds.¹¹⁹

Perhaps the most profound effect deforestation and English land use had on Christian Indians resulted in the loss of hunting. As white settlements moved closer to the interior and cleared more land, the animal population correspondingly dwindled. Over hunting in these areas may have also contributed to the decline of the deer and moose populations. After King Philip’s War ended in 1676, the colonies of Massachusetts and Plymouth both adopted a ban on Indian-

¹¹⁵ Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 169.

¹¹⁶ Silverman, “Bounded,” 540-1. Theodore Steinberg, *Nature Incorporated: The Industrialization and the Waters of New England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) 34-5.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 537.

¹¹⁸ Merchant makes a similar argument in Merchant, *Ecological Revolutions*, 109.

¹¹⁹ Silverman, “Bounded,” 522.

style field burning as a method of clearing land.¹²⁰ With the phasing out of land burning, Natives could no longer use the technique to attract game to the resulting fields of new growth. While the Stockbridge Indians maintained limited hunting practices into mid-century, most other praying towns lost their ability to hunt by 1740.¹²¹

However, after mid-century, hunting became more difficult for even the Stockbridge Indians. By the end of the French and Indian War in 1763, the town of Stockbridge and its surrounding area was cleared of all trees.¹²² The removal or diminishment of the local forests and the disappearance of wild animals worked together to make traditional life in Stockbridge nearly impossible. Without animal hides, Christian Indians were forced to adopt English-style dress.¹²³ Additionally, with the loss of abundant forest and animals, wigwams were probably increasingly hard to construct, which might explain the increased occurrence of English-style homes by 1760.¹²⁴ The saplings used to assemble the wigwams might have been more difficult to come by due to the receding forest and lack of young growth from burned fields. Lining the wigwams with animal hides for warmth also became nearly impossible. The Natives' situation was understood clearly by their neighbors and other colonists who recognized that Natives wished "to increase that natural shelter, and hiding place, for the beasts of the forest ; for without a covering, they cannot be retained...consequently the savage must retire to those lands where they can with more ease obtain a supply." But even this option was not considered feasible by the colonists:

Their new position cannot, however, long avail them ; for civilization and cultivation will make rapid strides, and progress fast towards them ; and they must necessarily make way for such approaches, by following the game...or leave their present pursuits and modes of living, and oppose the cultivator by cultivation.¹²⁵

¹²⁰ The ban was put in place because colonists adopted this practice and burned down timber at an alarming rate. Silverman, "Bounded," 522.

¹²¹ Ronda and Ronda, "As They Were Faithful," 44; Silverman, "Bounded," 40-1.

¹²² Sedgwick and Marquand, *Stockbridge*, 39.

¹²³ Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 172.

¹²⁴ When John Sergeant arrived in Stockbridge in 1735 every family lived in a wigwam. Sedgwick and Marquand, *Stockbridge*, 14. By the 1750s, there were 17 English-style houses. Sedgwick and Marquand, 39. Hopkins, *Historical Memoirs*, 137.

¹²⁵ The loss of game was typically attributed more to what colonists perceived as Native indulgence in over-hunting than the loss of uncultivated land. Letter from General Benjamin Lincoln to the Corresponding Secretary, 29 October 1795, published in *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, Ser. 1, Vol. 5, 9, 11.

The loss of the hunt necessitated a reconceptualization of gender norms in most Christian Indian communities. Hunting implied a certain amount of prestige in Native society, so when men lost the ability to hunt, they were compelled to redefine what it meant to be a Christian Indian man.¹²⁶ Without hunting, men by necessity remained more attached to the home than previously.¹²⁷ Some men accepted Anglo agricultural practices while others still resisted by simply leasing or renting their plots to white neighbors.¹²⁸ Either way, with more men taking to the fields, women were pushed out of that sphere and relocated even further into the home where they possessed arguably less control over the food supply than the men. Between Christian Indian poverty and white desire for more land, many women and young girls were compelled to seek employment in English homes as servants.¹²⁹

While Oneida territory also experienced further white encroachment and dwindling animal life, the Oneida did not feel the same amount of pressure as their New England counterparts. By the 1780s, the Oneida were forced to travel greater distances in order to reach adequate hunting and fishing grounds, but the resources *were* there, and this allowed them to maintain a degree of independence from their white missionaries. Because they were able to maintain these traditions, a renegotiation of gender norms was not necessary. From what can be derived from the records, Native women still maintained some power and influence in Oneida society, even if it was not equal to that of men.¹³⁰

The Oneida were also careful to keep their distance from their white missionaries. While they helped Kirkland and others build English-style houses and fenced the missionary's land, the Oneida did not construct these items for themselves. Likewise, by the early 1770s, the Oneida refused to send their children to Wheelock's or anyone else's boarding school because they found out that their children were more likely to be used as laborers for the English than learn to

¹²⁶ Bragdon, *Native Peoples*, 118.

¹²⁷ Silverman, "Bounded," 522.

¹²⁸ This issue over whether to farm or lease became a source of much conflict in New Stockbridge. 1796 Report, MHS, 8.

¹²⁹ McCallum, *Letters*, 65; Hopkins, *Historical Memoirs*, 82; Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 160.

¹³⁰ See note 98.

speak and write the English language.¹³¹ The Oneida possessed the ability to keep their children from white missionaries in part because they owned the necessary resources to support their communities without much assistance from missionaries. A concern over their Western brethren's opinion of them also loomed heavy over the Oneida.¹³² Therefore, proximity to land resources, whites, and other more traditional Natives played a part in Oneida cultural adaptations.

Within the communities of Brothertown, New Stockbridge, and Oneida, there existed vast differences in gendered work relationships to the environment, but those changes in physical relationships appear to have had an impact on their psychological relationship to the environment as well. Those who adopted more Anglo-cultural practices were more likely to use the European "wilderness" trope in their own writings and ideas about other Natives. Most Native missionaries adopted this idea of a "howling wilderness" populated by "poor Indians," "beasts," or "savages." Native missionaries became very much like their white mentors in that they expressed revulsion at Native eating habits and other modes of living. During his stay in Oneida territory in 1765, Montauk missionary David Fowler stated, "I am oblig'd to eat with Dogs. My Cooks are nasty Hogs; their Cloaths are black and greasy as my Shoes. their hands are dirty as my Feet..."¹³³ Likewise, when residing with the Oneida within the same year, Delaware missionary Joseph Wooley expressed his disgust with his torn and dirty clothes and wrote that he would have perished by now had "providence" not been on his side.¹³⁴ But these were not the only Native missionaries who adopted English/Puritan ways of speaking about the environment and other Native people. A warrior and veteran of the Revolutionary War, Captain Hendrick Aupaumut of Stockbridge and New Stockbridge, used this language in his letters and personal writings during and after his tenure as a United States diplomat to the Western nations during the Northwest Indians Wars (1785-1795). In his account of Mahican history, Aupaumut explained that the

¹³¹ McCallum, *Letters*, 279-86.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 271-2, 282, 286.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 94.

¹³⁴ Walter Pilkington, ed. *The Journals of Samuel Kirkland: 18th-century Missionary to the Iroquois, Government Agent, Father of Hamilton College* (Clinton: Hamilton College, 1980), 17.

Mahicans were once civilized prior to European contact, but they became less civilized in the “wilderness.”¹³⁵

By the time eighteenth-century praying towns were established, the New England landscape had already experienced profound changes in Native plant and animal life.¹³⁶ As white settlements moved closer to praying towns and Christianized Native communities, the landscape continued to change until it no longer supported traditional Native activities. Where the environment and space worked together to limit options, the loss of hunting and female agriculture changed the way Christian Indian men and women interacted with one another. However, other communities were able to stave-off most missionary influence throughout the eighteenth-century because of their environment and the space in which it existed. Missionary efforts proved less effective where the environment allowed Natives room for negotiation.

Even the Oneidas ultimately experienced changes in their communities, but all these various adaptations need not be the sign of a “dying” Indian culture. Despite subsequent removals from Stockbridge and New Stockbridge, these Christian Indians maintain a vibrant and strong community identity.¹³⁷ As historian Lisa Brooks notes, change does not inherently spell death for Indian culture. Rather, in many cases, it symbolizes Natives’ commitment to each other and their communities.¹³⁸ The commitment to community and Native values on the part of women proved to be particularly important for maintaining at least partial traditional Native identity. In communities which were increasingly taking on the characteristics of Anglo society, Native women turned to their new religion in an attempt to find places of influence for themselves and their daughters. It is to women and their role in the conversion process which we now turn.

¹³⁵ Hendrick Aupaumut, “Extract of an Indian History,” published in *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, Ser. 1, Vol. 5, 100.

¹³⁶ For more of the colonial impact on the environment, see Cronon, *Changes in the Land*.

¹³⁷ Stockbridge-Munsee Community Band of Mohican Indians, “Welcome to the Stockbridge-Munsee Community,” Stockbridge Munsee Community, <http://www.mohican-nsn.gov/index.htm> (accessed April 6, 2011).

¹³⁸ Brooks, *The Common Pot: The Recovery of Native Space in the Northeast*, xxxii; Silverman, “Bounded,” 37.

CHAPTER 3

MAIDENS, HELPMEEETS, AND WIDOWS: UNCOVERING CHRISTIAN INDIAN FEMALES AND NATIVE SPIRITUALITY IN PRAYING TOWNS OF SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND

In a 1796 report on the state of Christianity among the Brothertown, New Stockbridge, and Oneida Indians, Jeremy Belknap and Jedidiah Morse noted that far more women than men in each community adhered to Christian doctrine and practices.¹³⁹ Indeed, since the early eighteenth-century, missionaries recognized the importance of women to the conversion process.¹⁴⁰ The lack of scholarship on Christian Indian women in eighteenth-century New England is surprising considering their overwhelming representation as full members of Indian churches.¹⁴¹ However, even the primary sources obscure the role of women in Christianized communities. First, the numbers recorded in the report represent only those women who white missionaries deemed “serious Christians.”¹⁴² Additionally, white missionaries took for granted Native women’s presumed acceptance of Christianity, discounting their spiritual role in preserving Native traditions.

In 1727, New English missionary Experience Mayhew designated Abiah Paaonit one of his truly “religious women,” because she performed her role as a good “Meet-help” to her husband, was chosen by other women to lead them in prayer, and aided the sick and poor in her

¹³⁹ Jeremy Belknap and Jedidiah Morse, *Report on The Oneida, Stockbridge and Brotherton Indians, 1796* (New York: Museum of the American Indian Heye Foundation, 1955), 12-4, 21-2. (hereafter referred to as 1796 Report, MHS).

¹⁴⁰ Most missionaries believed that women accepted Christianity more readily than men. Experience Mayhew, *Indian Converts; Or Some Account Of The Lives And Dying Speeches Of A Considerable Number Of The Christianized Indians Of Martha's Vineyard* (London: 1727; reprint, Whitefish: Kessinger, 2005), 135. Some missionaries also believed that women were powerful opponents to Christianity early on because it was believed that they instilled biases in their children against white missionaries. Gunlög, Fur, *A Nation of Women: Gender and Colonial Encounters Among the Delaware Indians* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 101.

¹⁴¹ There were five times as many women as men in the New Stockbridge church and about six times as many female “serious Christians” among the Oneida. 1796 Report, MHS, 12-3.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 13.

community.¹⁴³ There was only one quality that Paaonit possessed that Mayhew could not reconcile: upon becoming sick, Paaonit walked out into the wilderness and had a vision about her future life in heaven.¹⁴⁴ What Mayhew did not understand, and many scholars also overlook, is that many of the activities in which Christian Indian women engaged, including healing the sick, caring for the community, taking female leadership roles, and experiencing spiritual visions, were part of traditional Native female practice. Indeed, their apparent “passive” acceptance may well have been signs of active female leadership. Historian Hilary Wyss makes the case that although many of the actions of Christian Indian females were interpreted by white missionaries as acceptance of Puritan female values, these women were actually fulfilling traditional Native gender roles.¹⁴⁵ In bringing to light these missionaries’ misconceptions, Wyss paves the way for a more a deeper understanding of the missionary records.

The Native American females who attended Christian boarding schools as young maidens and acted as pious helpmeets and widows as adults did not simply adopt the roles that were presented to them by white missionaries. Through examining contemporary biographic accounts of their lives and the letters they wrote to missionaries, we can see that as girls, they constantly tested their boundaries and resisted Anglo male control over their bodies and conduct. As these girls left boarding schools and reentered praying town society as less-regulated women, they were integral in helping their communities retain certain cultural values and traditions while carving out a place of authority for themselves in a new Christian order.

Aspiring Christian Indian men and women were given all of the farming tools, clothes, and other resources they needed to carry out this virtual revolution in gender roles and environmental relations, so long as they adopted the outward appearances of good Anglo Puritans. Since Christian Indians were compelled to adopt English gender norms, female property ownership and access to education was restricted. As a consequence, Native men appear much more frequently in legal documentation as land owners, local ministers, and even itinerant

¹⁴³ Mayhew, *Indian Converts*, 158.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 160.

¹⁴⁵ Hilary E. Wyss, *Writing Indians: Literacy, Christianity, and Native Community in Early America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000), 64.

missionaries.¹⁴⁶ With several notable exceptions, scholarship on Christian Indians has primarily focused on the role of men in praying town life. This downplaying of female activities and perspectives may skew our overall understanding of Indian agency. Native agency did not simply manifest itself in the political and rhetorical spheres dominated by men, but also female spirituality and commitment to community.

What little we do know about the female experience in praying towns suggests that conversion had both positive and negative consequences for women in Native society. Despite the fact that a gendered hierarchy favoring men existed pre-contact and was simply reinforced by the patriarchal values of colonial law and society, Native women lost their control over family planning, marriage choice, and formal spiritual leadership. Yet they also gained the ability to remain with the community (rather than in isolation) during menses, and the regulation of alcohol in praying towns quelled male drinking and domestic abuse.¹⁴⁷ This essay aims to expand on what little is known of Christian Indian women's role in praying town life and show that even though women were forced to give up certain privileges that were doctrinally contradictory to Puritanism, they found new ways to reassert their power in Christianized Native communities.

Although women arguably lost outward communal authority through the Anglicization and religious conversion of their communities, they were often key players in the conversion process. Conversion often resulted in a limiting of certain Native female rights. The right to ownership of property was perhaps one of the most dramatic shifts in Native life pre- and post-conversion. The inheritance of the sachemship and possession of property were typically matrilineal and matrilocal.¹⁴⁸ Even after conversion, decisions about who would inherit the sachemship rested on the female line, however, with the extension of colonial society, women no longer "owned"

¹⁴⁶ For a discussion of restrictions placed on women in praying towns, Hilary Wyss, "Writing Back to Wheelock: One Young Woman's Response to Colonial Christianity," in *Early Native Literacies in New England: A Documentary and Critical Anthology*, eds. Kristina Bross and Hilary E. Wyss (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2008), 97.

¹⁴⁷ For a brief discussion on the costs and benefits of conversion, see Kathleen Bragdon, "Gender as a Social Category in Native Southern New England," *Ethnohistory* 43, no. 4 (Fall 1996): 574-75.

¹⁴⁸ Kathleen Bragdon, *The Native Peoples of Southern New England, 1500-1600* (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 156-9; Bragdon, "Gender," 77.

property or land.¹⁴⁹ The advent of the legal institution of marriage among Native communities resulted in a consolidation of Native property and female identity under the male partner.¹⁵⁰ With the proliferation of male plow agriculture, women also no longer produced and controlled the food supply as they did in pre-contact societies. While the Feminist-materialist explanation for female loss of power seems to apply within these Christianized Native communities, other factors may have been just as significant in limiting the role of women.¹⁵¹ Because Puritan notions of womanhood centered on the home, women in Christianized Native communities were excluded from diplomatic meetings and Native council fires.¹⁵² The loss of participation in these events meant that women could no longer fulfill their roll as “rememberers” and storytellers of community history.¹⁵³ Puritan notions of womanhood also impugned Native women’s spiritual authority. Within Puritan ideology, women could be considered spiritual equals, but they were also believed to be more easily tempted by evil spirits. Conversely, bad spirits could not possess humans within Native cosmology and evil spirits were never associated with gender, sexuality, or class. Rather, within Native cosmology, women were essential as communicators with the spiritual world through mourning rituals and their regenerative powers.¹⁵⁴ Thus, this new Puritan religious order drastically changed the framework within which women operated in their families and communities. In order to retain some semblance of their former traditions and power, it was necessary syncretize Christianity with Native Cosmology.

¹⁴⁹ Some exceptions appear in the wills of Christian Indians. Upon the death of a relative, women could inherit domesticated animals, houses, and land. Men typically inherited horse, saddles, and oxen. David J. Silverman, “‘We Chuse to Be Bounded’: Native American Animal Husbandry in Colonial New England,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 60, no. 3 (July 2003): 536.

¹⁵⁰ The English notion of *couverture* (translated: “cover”) assumed the creation of “one legal ‘person.’” “The wife’s identity” was subsumed “under that of her husband.” Ann Marie Plane, *Colonial Intimacies: Indian Marriage in Colonial New England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), 68. See also, Wyss, “Writing Back to Wheelock,” 97.

¹⁵¹ For a discussion of Feminist and Materialist theories, see Bragdon, *Native Peoples*, 51.

¹⁵² According to Cotton Mather, the ideal Puritan woman was a comforting mother, meek, deferred to her husband on all matters, and instructed her children in the word of God. Philip F. Gura, *A Glimpse of Zion’s Glory: Puritan Radicalism in New England, 1620-1660* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1984), 275, 309.

¹⁵³ Carolyn Merchant, *Ecological Revolutions: Nature, Gender, and Science in New England* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 110.

¹⁵⁴ Fur, *Nation of Women*, 101, 119; Merchant; *Ecological Revolutions*, 108.

Considering that women were not entrusted with much spiritual authority within the Christian faith, Native women's centrality in the conversion process seems ironic. White missionaries recognized female influence in communities as potential resisters and facilitators of conversion. Missionaries complained that females within Native communities were at times the most resistant to change and instilled in their children biases against white missionaries.¹⁵⁵ Indeed, Native women were fierce defenders of communal values and traditions. Because Native females cared for and instructed children, converting and "civilizing" young females became a key strategy employed by several eighteenth-century missionaries including Sergeant and Wheelock.¹⁵⁶ Despite some missionaries' own biases toward the stubbornness of women in the conversion process, many women in reality sought out praying towns and missionaries in an effort to establish stability within the community. With the further expansion of colonial settlements, the early eighteenth century spawned considerable instability for those Native communities which had not yet converted.¹⁵⁷

Given the importance of women in the process of community conversion, understanding their role in Christianized communities will help us understand how Native traditions, values, and gender roles were negotiated within a Puritan framework. However, the nature of the primary sources renders uncovering female spirituality a difficult task. Much of the surviving record is written by or about Christian Indian men. Of those few remaining documents which relate to women, many are either directly or indirectly written by white missionaries. Narratives of Christian Indians and their communities were often written in order to provide evidence of successful missionary attempts among the Natives in order to procure more funding from philanthropic societies. Even confession narratives were either written by Natives and dictated by white missionaries, or written by a white scribe who took dictation from an interpreter.¹⁵⁸ The only direct connections to Native experience are in the form of letters written by Natives to their missionaries.

¹⁵⁵ Fur, *Nation of Women*, 101.

¹⁵⁶ Hopkins, *Historical Memoirs*, 115.

¹⁵⁷ Fur, *Nation of Women*, 135.

¹⁵⁸ Historian Ann Marie Plane discusses the problems with confession narratives in the introduction of her book *Colonial Intimacies*. Plane, *Colonial Intimacies*, 10.

However, these sources are constructed and expressed in a language that was learned through white missionaries. Therefore, even these sources limit our ability to understand the Native experience because these Natives could only express themselves in a language that was not their own.¹⁵⁹

Despite these road blocks, some resources and tools can be used to arrive at an approximation of the Christian Indian female experience. The two most useful sources are Experience Mayhew's *Indian Converts* (a 1727 biographical account of thirty women from various Christianized communities on Martha's Vineyard) and the written correspondence between Eleazar Wheelock and his Indian students from Moor's Charity School (1760s through the 1770s). Other personal accounts of missionaries such as Samuel Kirkland and John Sergeant, Jr. and Sr. also occasionally describe female actions within towns or reveal their attitudes toward the Native women, both young and old. The letters and confession narratives within Wheelock's papers, however, are the best way to access the everyday experiences of young females in boarding school life and, even if these sources are not exact expressions of the girls who authored or signed the documents. Because sources on young girls and women do not exist for every time period and community, it is necessary to examine those that are available and make connections where possible. As incomplete as this investigation must be, by making connections between towns and across the eighteenth century, we can begin to understand the experiences of Native females, how those experiences changed across time and space, and the ways in which women and girls contributed to spiritual and cultural negotiations within these communities.

Though identifying the most relevant sources is important, a method for reading through the layers of these sources is also needed. In addition to utilizing Joyce Chaplin's "triangulation," Wyss also provides a useful theory through which these sources can be read. In pointing out in the problems inherent in reading sources about Native women authored by white men, Wyss argues that white missionaries often read traditional Native practices as part of an emerging

¹⁵⁹ Twentieth-century Native American artist and activist, Jimmie Durham expresses this concept in many of his writings and artistic works. Jimmie Durham, *A Certain Lack of Coherence: Writings on Art and Cultural Politics* (London: Kala Press, 1993), 3-6; Jimmie Durham, *Caliban Codex*, as reproduced in Laura Mulvey, ed., *Jimmie Durham* (New York: Phaidon, 1995), 80-2, 85-4, 88-9.

Anglo social order. She calls the process “reculturation” and suggests that it is possible to uncover traditional female practice if we understand this tendency by white missionaries.¹⁶⁰ If one keeps this process of “reculturation” in mind while reexamining praying town accounts written by Experience Mayhew and the letters of correspondence of Eleazar Wheelock, one finds many more examples of women actively retaining traditional roles and practices and younger Native girls rejecting certain cultural aspects of boarding school life.¹⁶¹ Rather than simply falling in line and passively adopting the practices and values of Anglo-Christian women, Native girls and women deliberately carved out a place for themselves in praying town societies while carrying over important Native values. Through raising our awareness of “reculturation” and comparing Christian Indian female actions to those of their traditional Native counterparts, we can uncover the significance of women in maintaining Native values and gender roles for their communities.¹⁶²

From examining the sources, we find that young girls attended schools under different circumstances, but often had very similar educational experiences. Some girls, including many in Stockbridge, attended school near their homes. These girls went to school during the day, but lived primarily with their families. Other girls were sent by their families to boarding schools to live for weeks or months at a time in the homes of white colonists. While some girls were able to learn to read and write English, most in praying town communities were bound out into nearby English households (either to live or work as day-laborers), only attending formal classes one day a

¹⁶⁰ Wyss, *Writing Indians*, 53.

¹⁶¹ For this study, I will be drawing my evidence from Mayhew, *Indian Converts*; and James D. McCallum, ed. *Letters of Eleazar Wheelock's Indians* (Hanover: Dartmouth College Publications, 1932; reprint, Whitefish: Kessinger, 2008). While several accounts and memoirs provide insight into praying town life and the Christian Indian experience more generally, these sources from Mayhew and Wheelock offer the most personal information about women and girls. For alternate accounts that render the experiences of women more impenetrable, see Daniel Gookin, “An Historical Account of the Doings and Sufferings of the Christian Indians in New England” (1677). Reprinted in *Archaeologia Americana: Transactions and Collections of the American Antiquarian Society* 2 (1836; reprint, Whitefish: Kessinger, 2010): 423-534; Samuel Hopkins, *Historical Memoirs Relating to the Housatonic Indians* (1753). Reprinted in *Magazine of History with notes and queries*, extra no. 17 (1911); Matthew Mayhew, *The Conquests and triumphs of Grace: Being A Brief Narrative of the Success which the Gospel Hath had among the Indians of Martha's Vineyard* (London, 1695; reprint, Whitefish: Kessinger, 2010).

¹⁶² For referencing traditional Native female roles and practices, I rely heavily on the work of anthropologist Kathleen Bragdon and historian Gunlög Fur. See Bragdon, *The Native Peoples*; Bragdon, “Gender,” 573-592; and Fur, *A Nation of Women*.

week.¹⁶³ Mayhew's account suggests that it was common for Native girls to have negative experiences in English homes. Girls often did not receive the promised level of academic education, though their "domestic education" was never neglected. This lack of academic education was commonly decried among Christian Indians.¹⁶⁴ The Native voices which emerge from the sources make clear the negative opinion most parents had of eighteenth-century missionaries' emphasis on physical rather than academic education. Both Mayhew's and Wheelock's records reveal the popular Native perception that girls were treated more like slaves in English households than students.¹⁶⁵ Unconvinced that the girls were being treated unjustly, the missionaries attributed the girls' negative response to such treatment as part of their "vicious" and "wicked" nature.¹⁶⁶

Most of the girls at Wheelock's Moor's Charity School (1754 – apx.1770) boarding school in New Lebanon, Connecticut, ran away from their adoptive homes after only a few months. Wyss attributes this reaction to what she believes was a difficult adjustment for young girls. Even if these girls were raised by Christian Indian parents, their mothers would have played an active role in their early development.¹⁶⁷ Furthermore, their parents' Christian practices were likely not regulated and overseen in the way religious activities in the girls' adoptive homes and boarding schools would have been. Moving from a home with a strong maternal presence to a boarding school and white household dominated by men was likely a jarring experience for young girls. Thus, it is no wonder so many defied boarding school rules and chose to run away. Wyss argues that within the confines of the boarding school, these girls were forced to define

¹⁶³ As compared to five days a week which was required of Native boys. Wyss, "Writing Back to Wheelock," 97.

¹⁶⁴ See "A Commission for Joseph Johnson" and Letter from Abraham Simon to Eleazar Wheelock, 13 August 1775. Mayhew, *Indian Converts*, 194, 220; Sarah C. Sedgwick and Christina Sedgwick Marquand, *Stockbridge, 1739-1939. A Chronicle* (Great Barrington: The Berkshire Courier, 1939), 56.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*; McCallum, *Letters*, 65.

¹⁶⁶ McCallum, *Letters*, 187, 220.

¹⁶⁷ While most children came from local Christianized Native communities, others were brought in by missionaries from Native villages as far as French Canada. McCallum, *Letters*, 297.

themselves only by what they could not be in Anglo society: property owners, leaders, or outwardly Native.¹⁶⁸

If we deny the inherent “viciousness” and “wickedness” of these girls, we can read their actions as expressions of Native traditionalism and a defiance of Puritan colonial order. Once outside of the English household, they danced and socialized with Native boys, acts that would have been quite normal for adolescent girls in Native society. Indeed, it would not have been uncommon for girls in their early teens to have their first sexual experiences or become brides.¹⁶⁹ As common as these practices might have been for girls raised in non-Christianized or more distant Christianized Native communities, these activities were strictly prohibited for girls in boarding schools. Those who violated this prohibition were forced to sign written confessions of what their missionaries dubbed, “Scandalous Crimes.”¹⁷⁰

On two separate occasions in 1768, Mary Secuter, a Narragansett girl, signed a self-written confession, likely dictated to her by Wheelock. Through Wheelock’s dictation, Secuter confessed, “I went into the School while I was intoxicated with Liquor and there behaved myself in a Lude and very immodest Manner among the School Boys...” The next confession read:

I was guilty of going to the tavern & tarrying there with much rude & vain company till a very unseasonable time of night where was dancing & other rude and unseemly conduct, & in particular drinking too much spirituous liquor whereby I was exposed to commit many gross sins...¹⁷¹

The second of these occasions took place after her public confession of faith, suggesting that the official adoption of Christianity did little to change the desires and actions of Native girls.¹⁷² Similarly, two of Secuter’s contemporaries, Hannah Nonesuch and Sarah Weogs, likely engaged in these activities on more than one occasion. Nonesuch and Weog were caught in a “frolick” with Indian boys and girls where drinking, dancing, and other “rude conduct” transpired. While only the

¹⁶⁸ Wyss, “Writing Back to Wheelock,” 97, 99, 103.

¹⁶⁹ Carolyn Neithammer, *Daughters of the Earth: The Lives and Legends of American Indian Women* (London: Collier MacMillan, 1977), 44-7.

¹⁷⁰ McCallum, *Letters*, 237. Plane, *Colonial Intimacies*, 5.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 237.

¹⁷² Alcoholism among Natives was one of the many legacies of European colonization of North America. The drinking of alcohol to excess has been interpreted by scholars as one of many expressions of resistance to missionaries’ attempted control over Native lives. Wyss, *Writing Indians*, 95.

written confession of Nonesuch exists, a note in Wheelock's records refers to Weog's rustication, or expulsion, from the school. Weog's ultimate re-admittance four years later suggests that behavior such as this was not uncommon, or at least common enough that it could eventually be overlooked. The girls' persistent refusal to live up the standards of "ideal" Puritan maidens forced missionaries to tolerate their behavior in order to maintain student enrollment.¹⁷³

Some girls sought to get themselves dismissed from the school in order to rid themselves of missionary control and return to their families. Not only was Secuter reprimanded for her extracurricular activities, but her marriage choices were determined by her father, her suitor, and Wheelock himself. In traditional Native society, marriage was more fluid than Christian doctrine would allow. Men and women entered into and out of relationships freely, and if anyone arranged marriages, it was most commonly done by mothers and female elders.¹⁷⁴ Yet several letters of correspondence reveal the pre-eminent role men had over Secuter's prospects. Her father initially wrote to Wheelock asking him not to condone a marriage between Mary and Hezekiah Calvin, who was a male student and Indian missionary. Mary later wrote a letter to Wheelock expressing her love of Calvin, but also her hesitancy to marry him despite her parents' support of the marriage.¹⁷⁵ It is unclear whether Mary's parents had a change of heart, or if Mary was unaware of her father's formal request of Wheelock. Due to the vast differences in marriage practices and sexual norms, women were left little room to negotiate within a Puritan-dominated environment. However, Secuter did not succumb entirely to the new societal rules laid before her. Instead, she ultimately decided to end her five year tenure at Moor's Charity School in 1768. She stated in a letter to Wheelock that the reverend was wasting his money on her and that "Ye longer I Stay in

¹⁷³ Missionary acceptance of these behaviors fits well with their eighteenth-century methodology of allowing certain practices to continue so as not to discourage conversion. *Ibid.*, 232.

¹⁷⁴ The term "marriage" is inadequate to describe Native male-female relations. Natives did not conceive of their consensual relationships in the same manner as Christians. Plane, *Colonial Intimacies*, 6; Fur, *Nation of Women*, 108, 135.

¹⁷⁵ Mary also states that she resigned herself to living a single life, though it is not known whether or not she ultimately married. McCallum, *Letters*, 53-4, 67.

ye School ye worse I am...”¹⁷⁶ Apparently, Mary could not simply resign herself to colonial strictures on her private life.¹⁷⁷

Attempting to leave boarding school life by denying the effectiveness of the instruction was a strategy also employed by another one of Wheelock’s female students, Sarah Simon. Simon left the school on several occasions for extended periods of time, and ultimately requested her permanent dismissal within a year after her initial efforts to request leave. Simon was bound out to an English family, and while we cannot know her exact experience there, her requests to leave suggest that she preferred her former life among her Mohegan family.¹⁷⁸ Several of her letters show concern for her widowed mother and request a trip home to visit her.¹⁷⁹ She informed Wheelock in another letter that she was sick and thought the salt water air would help in her recovery (she grew up in a coastal Mohegan village).¹⁸⁰ The increasing desperation with which Simon appealed to Wheelock suggests that he very rarely, if ever, granted her leave to return home. Finally, in a final effort to leave the school permanently, Simon passionately stated to Wheelock that she feared she was no longer a Christian because of her “great many wicked thoughts.” She requested the reverend’s help while at the same time stating “that it will not do me any good; for I have talked with the Dr grant many times....” In her letter, she suggests the ineffectiveness of his teachings and rejects the possibility of becoming a proper maiden.¹⁸¹

Unfortunately, for these girls who resisted the control of their lives and bodies by white missionaries and Puritan societal structures, little is known about their experience after their time at Moor’s Charity School. Although the sources do not allow us to follow the development of Mary Secuter, Hannah Nonesuch, and Sarah Simon, Mayhew’s 1727 account of the Martha’s Vineyard

¹⁷⁶ McCallum, *Letters*, 238.

¹⁷⁷ The experience of women torn between two notions of marriage and sexuality was common, even among the Christian Indians of the seventeenth century. These women struggled to find a place for themselves within Christianized communities, and sometimes ran away to more traditional Native villages to escape the pressure. Plane, *Colonial Intimacies*, 1-5.

¹⁷⁸ Wyss, 100; McCallum, *Letters*, 65.

¹⁷⁹ McCallum, *Letters*, 229.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 228

¹⁸¹ Simon is referring to numerous times in which she sought and received Wheelock’s advice in the past. *Ibid.*, 230.

Christian Indians allows us to see how rebellious girls often developed into what Mayhew considered “pious” women.

Wampanoag females Sarah Peag and Elizabeth Uhquat both defied white Puritan colonial order as young girls in what appear to be typical ways. Peag ran away from her white family, was caught stealing, lying, and was accused by Mayhew of having a “perverse spirit” and “irregular passions.”¹⁸² Peag also adorned her body with what Mayhew considered “costly clothing” and other accoutrements, which displayed the “proud” and “haughty” nature of Native youth.¹⁸³ Uhquat was also bound out to an English family, but rather than run away, she bore two children out of wedlock and was often in “Violation of the seventh Commandment,” or committing adultery.¹⁸⁴ Although these girls fell short of Mayhew’s ideal for Christian maidens, as they grew into women, his estimation took a more favorable turn.¹⁸⁵

After Peag and Uhquat re-entered their praying town communities as women (away from their white masters), they began to accept Christianity and engage in many of the same activities as those “pious women” who Mayhew cites in his account.¹⁸⁶ From that point forward, Mayhew did not see any of their actions as resistance or attempts to subvert authority. Rather, he read their contributions to the community as examples of good Christian charity. Common practices that missionaries attempted to read as examples of Puritan womanhood included helping the poor, assisting the sick, teaching children, and leading group prayer. Mayhew even noted that he encountered more pious women than men.¹⁸⁷ Indeed, many of the thirty Native women he wrote about were considered pious in part because they converted their husbands to Christianity. This observation on Mayhew’s part supports the centrality of women to the conversion process and

¹⁸² Mayhew, *Indian Converts*, 203-4.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 175, 203-4. Natives of high status often wore more adornments than those of a lower status. See Bragdon, 169-70.

¹⁸⁴ Mayhew, *Indian Converts*, 194.

¹⁸⁵ Like all of the men and women he writes about, Mayhew only recognized their contributions to the community and pious nature after their death, never praising contemporary Natives. Another woman who was troubled as a youth lived with the Mayhew family and “drank in excess” before reforming herself. *Ibid.*, 153.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 195-6, 204-7.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 135.

the likelihood that women were at the forefront of helping their communities adapt to Anglo-Christian life ways.

However, these defiant-girls-turned-pious-women did not always act in ways that their missionaries could easily understand. Several of these women had visions and dreams that missionaries were hesitant to accept. Others prayed outside in secret locations – an act that also seemed to puzzle white men. In distinguishing these women as “truly pious,” missionaries were required to confront and reconcile female actions that were more closely related to Native traditions than Christian theology. This was no coincidence. In the process of conversion, women used their newly adopted religion as a tool to regain spiritual authority in religious communities which banned women from positions of leadership.¹⁸⁸ They actively syncretized the similarities and reconciled the differences in Native and Puritan religion, thereby helping their communities maintain Native religious and cultural values while helping themselves retain some degree of power and influence in an Anglo world.

The most troublesome actions for missionaries to accept were women’s use of visions to see the future and make connections to the spiritual world. These activities were problematic because they were related to Mayhew by third parties and did not fit with Puritan notions of a proper religious experience. Although visions were not altogether unheard of in within Puritanism prior to the Great Awakening, they held a tenuous place in Puritan theology. Puritans generally believed that God ceased to reveal himself in visions after the death of Christ and his apostles. Indeed, Cotton Mather believed that “wonders” and visions were the work of Satan. However, by the end of the seventeenth century, positive visions were not uncommon among Puritan ministers and other men, but were still rarely considered evidence of God’s grace when they were experienced by women.¹⁸⁹ Therefore, the occurrence of Native women’s visions, particularly prior

¹⁸⁸ Several scholars employ this idea of Christian Indians utilizing cultural “tools” to recover Native traditions and identity. For language and writing as a cultural tool, see Lisa Brooks, *The Common Pot: The Recovery of Native Space in the Northeast* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008); Sandra M. Gustafson, *Eloquence is Power: oratory & performance in early America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); and Wyss, *Writing Indians*.

¹⁸⁹ Most accounts of women having visions (such as Anne Hutchinson or the young girls in Salem) ended in exile or convictions of witchcraft. Those who condemned Hutchinson’s acts defended their stance with 1

to the Great Awakening, can primarily be attributed to their Native vision traditions rather than the influence of evangelism. Visions were one of the more precarious ways in which women redefined Puritan ideology to fit Native traditions and helped reinvent their new Puritan gender roles.

Visions were more common among both men and women in Native cosmology. Natives often had visions and dreams that were given by Manitou and served as prophecies for the community. These dreams could either be experienced by common people and interpreted by powaws (shamans) or experienced directly by powaws themselves.¹⁹⁰ The youngest of Mayhew's "pious" women to have a spiritual vision was Jedidah Hannit. At the age of seventeen, Hannit retold one of her dreams in which she foresaw a grim future for her fellow Natives. Upon waking, she prayed that she would not live to see her nation's demise. The day after her dream, Hannit fell ill and died a few days later.¹⁹¹ Given her young age and little evidence to suggest that she would have held a place of power in a traditional Native the community, Hannit's dream was likely one of a common member of the community concerned for their collective future. Mayhew qualified the veracity of these dreams and visions because they were told to him through third parties. Despite the fact that Mayhew never lent full credibility to those relaying the stories, Native members of the community obviously believed in the spiritual power of these women.¹⁹²

While Hannit was not from a powerful Native family, most other women who experienced visions were often of high status and could have been powaws themselves in traditional Native society.¹⁹³ Abiah Paaonit was considered to be a good Puritan woman by Mayhew's standards for assisting her Native husband (who happened to be a minister) in daily tasks and giving aid to the poor. But Mayhew's description inadvertently portrays Paaonit as a religious leader in her own right. She was often chosen among other women to pray amongst them when a man was not

Corinthians 14:34 which states, "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak." David D. Hall, *Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgment: Popular Religious Belief in Early New England* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), 62, 71, 75, 86-7, 96-7.

¹⁹⁰ Bragdon, *Native Peoples*, 190-91, 203.

¹⁹¹ Mayhew, *Indian Converts*, 232.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 232.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 176.

present, she instructed other members of the community in matters of religion, and she experienced a particularly interesting vision. While sick, Paaonit travelled outside of her home and saw a vision of light which was “brighter than that of the sun at Noon-day.”¹⁹⁴ Upon looking up at the light, she viewed it as “a Window open in the Heavens,” and thus believed that God favored her because he showed her this light.¹⁹⁵ If Paaonit was a white woman married to the town’s minister, she would likely have known that visions were not typically seen as positive revelations when experienced by women. Considering she was a Native Christian married to the Native town minister, it is perhaps not surprising that she would believe herself to be a vessel for God or Manitou’s message, as this would have been quite normal for a woman in traditional Native society.¹⁹⁶

The adult daughter of one woman, Ammapoo, had a vision that she interpreted as God showing favor to her mother and herself. In the vision, which occurred on her mother’s deathbed, she and her mother were approached by “shining Persons standing in white Raiment” waiting to take Ammapoo on a journey to heaven, a process which Ammapoo referred to as “Ferryman.”¹⁹⁷ Abigail Kesoehaut was also the subject of a vision experienced by a female member of her family. When Kesoehaut fell ill, her sister heard a voice coming from above their home that said to her “Wunnantinneah Kahaanut,” an Algonquin phrase meaning “There is favor now extended.”¹⁹⁸ In both of these cases, women experienced visions confirming God’s favor of themselves and their female relations. These women also interpreted their visions for themselves and incorporated their own conceptions of the world into their newly adopted Puritan lives.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁴ Mayhew, *Indian Converts*, 160.

¹⁹⁵ While it was uncommon for a Christian women to have visions that were considered positive by men of the church, seeing God as represent by light was common in Christian religious visions. Ibid, 160.

¹⁹⁶ The partners of politically or spiritually powerful people were also commonly influential members of the community. Bragdon, “Gender,” 576-7. The Algonquian word for God was “Mannit,” which is very close to Manitou. This suggests religious syncretism between Native cosmology and Christian religion. Mayhew, *Indian Converts*, 263.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 150.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 147.

¹⁹⁹ For other examples of women having visions, see the biographies of Abigal Ahhunnut and Margaret Osooit. Ibid., 164 201.

Through these visions, women maintained certain aspects of Native cosmology, but also asserted their own authority in a new religious order as traditional powaws and Native prophets. While Mayhew did document the occurrence of visions among “pious” women, he expressed discomfort about these visions and never fully gave the visions full recognition as religious experiences. He often stated his “hope” (not conviction) that the women conveying these stories were “pious.” After relaying the vision of Kesoehaut’s sister, Mayhew displayed his tentativeness to accept the vision by asking his audience: “Whether the person that dreamed the Dream now related, ought to take any other notice of it, than she should of any common Dream; or what she should think concerning it?”²⁰⁰ His question confirms the uneasiness with which he relayed the stories and suggests his hesitancy to fully accept women as proper receivers of such supernatural phenomena.²⁰¹ Nevertheless, the regular appearance of female visions and dreams in Mayhew’s account tells us he either did not find them objectionable enough to suppress, or the women did not feel that they needed white missionaries as religious intermediaries. Prior to the Great Awakening, the minister was considered a congregant’s primary intermediary between him/herself and God. Interpreting God’s word or experiencing direct revelations from God was not considered standard practice, particularly for women.²⁰² Not only were women defying Puritan beliefs concerning visions, but they also disregarded the notion that they must only experience the spiritual world through a man. However, by the end of the century, visions were no longer tolerated in Christianized communities.

Another common activity among Christian Indian women (and some men) that Mayhew expressed curiosity toward was their tendency to “go abroad” or go outdoors during times of sickness and times of prayer. Mayhew stated in a footnote that “Our Indians go out much more in times of Sickness than English People do.”²⁰³ Likewise, Samuel Hopkins commented in the

²⁰⁰ Mayhew, *Indian Converts*, 148, 150.

²⁰¹ After relating the vision of “some Christians” who were outside the house of Margaret Osooit, Mayhew writes, “but whether that be a Mistake or not, there is reason to believe that she dy’d well...” Ibid., 201.

²⁰² Philip F. Gura, *A Glimpse of Sion’s Glory: Puritan Radicalism in New England, 1620-1660* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1984), 241.

²⁰³ Ibid., 160.

1750s that the Stockbridge Indians would go out in all kinds of weather, even if they were sick.²⁰⁴ But it would appear that it was not only in sickness that Christianized Natives left the confines of their homes. In most cases, women's visions and "secret prayers" were often experienced outside of the home. Such outside prayer had no correlation in Puritan theology which contended that "The evil of wilderness contrasted with the goodness of salvation."²⁰⁵

Yet, in a majority of Mayhew's accounts of women and young girls, the process of going into the wilderness to pray in secret was quite common. Kesoshtaut practiced and instructed her children in "secret prayer." In Mayhew's account, she would pray "abroad, where she did not expect any would see her..."²⁰⁶ Sarah Peag, a defiant youth, also turned to secret prayer in adulthood and would sometimes "withdraw herself... into a Wood near her Dwelling" and was seen there on one occasion "praying and weeping."²⁰⁷ Seventeen year old Elizabeth Pattompan also practiced secret prayer and was found by her father on one occasion "calling on God" by a water spring near their home.²⁰⁸ By showing his fascination with these activities, Mayhew informs the reader that this practice was both common among Native women and unusual for Puritan spiritual practice.²⁰⁹

In Puritan theology, the "wilderness" was seen as a dangerous and chaotic place, certainly not a suitable area to have a positive religious transaction with God.²¹⁰ Those who were unwillingly thrust into the wilderness through Native captivity had to overcome the "heathenish" behavior that existed there. Surviving such an experience confirmed one's faith in and

²⁰⁴ Hopkins, *Historical Memoirs*, 93.

²⁰⁵ For a discussion of Puritan notions of the wilderness, see Merchant, *Ecological Revolutions*, 100-3.

²⁰⁶ Mayhew, *Indian Converts*, 145.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 204.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 239.

²⁰⁹ For other noteworthy accounts of women and girls engaging in "secret prayer," see the biographies of Martha Cooms, Margaret Osooit, and Jedidah Hannit. *Ibid.*, 187,198, 231.

²¹⁰ For Puritan fears of the "wilderness," see Martha L. Finch, "Civilized Bodies and the 'Savage' Environment of Early New Plymouth," in *A Center of Wonders: The Body in Early America*, Janet Moore Lindman and Michele Lise Tarter, eds. (Cornell University Press, 2001), 43, 47-50. See also, Merchant, *Ecological Revolutions*, 100-3.

dependence upon God.²¹¹ However, in Native cosmology, places where the sky, earth, and water worlds met were considered sacred places (e.g., a spring, mountaintops) and often people who had visions were seen as those who could mediate spiritual messages through different environmental worlds. Women were believed to have connections to the spirit world, in part because of their regenerative power producing offspring.²¹² In cases of visions and secret prayers, Native women altered Puritan notions about the “wilderness” to redefine it as a place where positive religious experiences could take place. Thus, women carried over Native spiritual connections with the environment into a religion that considered the environment to be a dangerous and evil place.

Maintaining a spiritual relationship to the environment can also be seen in accounts of female herbalists and midwives in praying towns.²¹³ Hannah Nohnosoo, the daughter of a sachem, was often called upon to treat the sick in her community through herbal treatments and prayers. Nohnosoo administered herbal treatments to Native and white women to help them conceive and carry children.²¹⁴ Another woman, Hannah Ahhunnut, was often desired by “Persons of her own Sex... to pray with them and for them.” She was also called upon “in their Sickness” and at times of “Women’s Travails.” Mayhew states that when she was called upon during childbirth, “it has been reported that she sometimes had very remarkable Answers.”²¹⁵ Powaws and shamans who administered herbal treatments in Native society were held in very high regard.²¹⁶ These roles could be carried out by men or women, but it was increasingly

²¹¹ For the most famous captivity narrative which utilizes ideas about “wilderness,” see Mary Rowlandson, *Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson* (Minneapolis: Filiquarian Publishing, 2007) 8, 11, 20, 28, 52.

²¹² Bragdon, *Native Peoples*, 192, 196, 204.

²¹³ Although these women were fulfilling traditional *Native* and *Algonkian* roles as healers and midwives, herb women and midwives who utilized herbal treatments existed throughout Europe and elsewhere within the New World. Londa Schiebinger, *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 6, 99, 126-7, 159.

²¹⁴ Mayhew, *Indian Converts*, 165.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 140-1. Herbal remedies and folk knowledge for childbirth were well known among Native women. Gladys Tantaquidgeon, *Folk Medicine of the Delaware and Related Algonkian Indians* (Harrisburg: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 2001), 44-5.

²¹⁶ Tantaquidgeon, *Folk Medicine*, 67.

common for women to take on this role after Christianization.²¹⁷ In Christian Indian communities, it was unlikely that a man holding a high place in the church (as Nohnosoo's husband did) would be able maintain such a role. Puritan ministers were wary of those who cured the sick through means other than prayer because these people inherently challenged the efficacy of prayer as a form of healing.²¹⁸ Women, however, did not hold places of authority in the church and operated outside of its doors for most of their lives. Because of their inability to become ministers and have the authority to heal through prayer, women were more likely to fulfill the role of powaw or shaman in Christianized Native communities.²¹⁹ The fact that Native women were called on by white families to treat certain ailments suggests that the herbal knowledge these women possessed was unknown to Anglo settlers and likely a traditional Native remedy.²²⁰ Men's inability to carry out the role of shaman or powaw, established a new place of authority for women in praying town society as the central figures who maintained spiritual and environmental traditions.²²¹

Kathleen Bragdon suggests that most of the women who took on these roles as teachers, dreamers, and healers were the daughters of sachems or came from families of religious leaders in praying town communities. Other scholars note that many high-ranking Natives in traditional societies often took on leadership roles in praying towns.²²² Indeed, Bragdon argues that

²¹⁷ Bragdon, *Native Peoples*, 178.

²¹⁸ There often existed a tension between ministers and other types of "healers" in Puritan communities. See Hall, *Worlds of Wonder*, 202.

²¹⁹ Wyss also makes this argument. Wyss, *Writing Indians*, 72-3. One notable exception is Samson Occom, who occasionally practiced medicine. Joanna Brooks, ed., *The Collected Writings of Samson Occom, Mohegan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 42.

²²⁰ Knowledge of herbal medicine and the collection plants in "hidden spots" was passed down from mother to daughter on the island of Gay Head until the nineteenth century. David J. Silverman, *Faith and Boundaries: colonists, Christianity, and community among the Wampanoag Indians of Martha's Vineyard, 1600-1871* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 242.

²²¹ Women in nineteenth-century slave communities fulfilled similar roles as herbalists and midwives. Like Native women, black women maintained traditional African herbal remedies and spiritual connections to the supernatural. Both Native and black females were able to practice these traditions due to the perceived overlap with white female roles as caregivers. However, whereas Native women were praised for their behaviors as pious religious women, "white society denied enslaved women the prerogatives of womanhood." Sharla M. Fett, *Working Cures: Healing, Health, and Power in Southern Slave Plantations* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 2-6, 101.

²²² Silverman, *Faith and Boundaries*, 42, 44, 86; Silverman, "Bounded," 530-31.

Christianity may have supported distinctions of social rank in these communities.²²³ The evidence on women in praying towns supports this conclusion, yet we cannot limit our investigation to those of high status. Assanooshque, a respected widow also known as “Old Sarah,” often took in local orphans and entertained the “best quality” Indians who came to town. Mayhew even noted that she was “so observable a Person, that many, both English and Indians, had some Knowledge of her.”²²⁴ Bragdon notes that because Assanooshque was from a prominent Gay Head family, she likely performed the role of a high-ranking female in Native society.²²⁵ Although Assanooshque provides a good example for Bragdon’s argument, there is little evidence to suggest that all of Mayhew’s “pious women” would have held places of authority in traditional native society. The ascension of women from unknown families to the status of well respected religious persons suggests that there was more at work than simply a re-assertion of status. Even poor and destitute women assisted the community in maintaining Native traditions. In some cases, through their adoption of Christianity, lower-status women were able to gain comparable respect for themselves within their communities. Mayhew noted how some of the poorest women in the community maintained their religious practice and assisted others like them. The financially poor Katherine, also known as Wuttontachtunnooh, was known to labor “diligently with her hands” and make baskets to sell to white families. She often used the money she received from the baskets to help feed herself and her neighbors. Because of her piety, Mayhew states that she was held in high regard and often asked to pray among other families, suggesting that within praying town society, traditional Native status could be overcome through proper adoption of Christianity and maintenance of communal values.²²⁶ Likewise, the son of a poor but charitable woman named Momchquannum was able to secure himself a leadership role as a minister of the

²²³ Bragdon, “Gender,” 86.

²²⁴ Mayhew, *Indian Converts*, 142-3.

²²⁵ Bragdon, *Native Peoples*, 175-6; Fur, *Nation of Women*, 21-3.

²²⁶ Mayhew, *Indian Converts*, 170-2.

church, an accomplishment attributed in part to his mother's early conversion and religious instruction.²²⁷

Although mainly elite women in praying town society held positions of status equal to traditional powaws or shamans, *all* women were integral in maintaining Native communal traditions and assisting the community in its transition to Puritan religious life. Most scholars agree that from the first communal agreement to settle in a praying town through the ultimate removal of most Christian Indians from southern New England, these villages maintained a communal spirit.²²⁸ Accounts of women's aid to their communities and of their visions about their collective future demonstrate the key role women played in keeping the communal tradition alive. The ability of women to adapt these traditions and values contributed to the Christian Indians' ability to maintain a community identity separate from their Anglo Christian neighbors and other non-Christian Native Americans.

Although the maintenance of certain cultural traditions and gender norms were carried out through a variety of practices including agriculture, warfare, and leadership systems,²²⁹ religion and religious practice was the prerequisite for receiving the benefits of living in a praying town.²³⁰ Indeed, most changes in Native gender roles and relations to the environment were mediated through Puritan ideology. If these changes were the means by which Natives became "civilized," Puritan ideology informed the missionaries' ideas about the meaning of civilization.

The accounts and records of white missionaries reveal that women led their communities in the conversion process and were at the forefront in retaining traditional Native spiritual and communal values. While women lost many rights and privileges in the structures of Puritan life, they often assumed the leadership roles that their husbands and fathers could no longer hold due to the new role that men played within the church.

²²⁷ Mayhew, *Indian Converts*, 161-2; For other examples of charity shown by poor women, see biographies of Dinah Ahhunnut and Abigail Ahhunnut: *Ibid.*, 138, 163-4.

²²⁸ Gustafson, 101; Wyss, *Writing Indians*, 165-6.

²²⁹ For a study on Native traditions in agricultural practice, see Silverman, "Bounded," 511-48; for Native traditions in political organization, see Patrick Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992).

²³⁰ Benefits included guaranteed land holdings, monetary assistance for supplies and protection against other raiding Natives.

But these women did not simply incorporate old practices within their new religion. Women actively redefined Puritan ideological notions of a dangerous and chaotic “wilderness” by insisting on a positive spiritual connection with the natural world. While activities that dealt with religious experience outdoors were difficult for white missionaries to accept, other female religious practices were not so difficult to reconcile. The traditional role of Native women as caretakers of the village’s elderly, sick, and young fit well into Puritan expectations of womanhood.²³¹ Thus, the actions of these women were central to the process of conversion as well as the process of cultural retention. Through helping to provide their communities with stability during the conversion process, these women became religious and community leaders in their own right.

While Native women played a key role in shaping Christian Indian cultural practices and adaptations throughout the eighteenth century, after the 1720s, there is little evidence to suggest that the Christian Indian women of New England maintained their spiritual visions or roles as “doctresses.”²³² As white society grew closer to these communities and white missionaries became more familiar with Native spirituality, it is possible that visions were no longer tolerated by white missionaries. By the 1780s, only the Oneida, who remained less affected by white encroachment, still incorporated visions and female healers into their spiritual practices. However, missionary Samuel Kirkland made it very clear to the Oneida that visions and dreams were not to be given any credence if they were to accept Christianity.²³³ Despite these instructions and Kirkland’s dismissal of Native herbal remedies, Oneida women and men kept practicing both traditions.²³⁴

The strongest evidence that supports a continuation of traditional female spirituality into Christinized communities comes from the island of Martha’s Vineyard prior to the introduction of

²³¹ Bragdon, *Native Peoples*, 50, 176-78; Fur, *Nation of Women*, 20-22.

²³² Samuel Kirkland Journal, 18 May 1790, *Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge Collection*, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, MA. (hereafter, Kirkland journal, MHS).

²³³ Kirkland diaries, microfilm. 73.

²³⁴ Kirkland journal, 30 September 1787, 9 June 1791, 22 October 1791, MHS.

Christianity among the Stockbridge, Connecticut, and Oneida Indians.²³⁵ Despite this geographic and chronological discrepancy, later evidence from these three areas suggests that the experience of women on Martha's Vineyard was similar to those of the women in later communities. Women from Stockbridge and the Connecticut communities also maintained "Indian gardens" that included small amounts of beans and squash, as well as herbs. While there are no existing accounts of these women acting as "doctresses," the herbs most commonly grown in Native gardens were used for medicinal purposes.²³⁶ Maple, which was commonly harvested by Stockbridge Indians into the mid-eighteenth century, was also used as a cough suppressant.²³⁷ Additionally, knowledge was passed down from generation to generation. The knowledge and continued use of these practices into the early twentieth-century suggests that herbal remedies were not entirely lost after Christianization.²³⁸ Thus, there is a strong likelihood that, even as Native communities became more Anglicized, women still practiced herbal medicine.

Evidence of trouble with Native youth also confirms that the experiences at Martha's Vineyard were characteristic of other locations. The Stockbridge Indians, similar to those along the Connecticut coast and on Martha's Vineyard, were hesitant to send their girls to school. When girls were finally admitted into Sergeant's school, they often ran away soon after their arrival. Girls and boys in Stockbridge also made trouble for the missionaries and school masters, though their activities were not specified like those of Wheelock's students.²³⁹ Even within communities further from white society, the affects of Christianity quickly altered the lives of young women. In the 1780s, one Oneida girl was forbidden to continue her habitation with an unconverted man from

²³⁵ The only overt references to herbal remedies maintained in these areas comes from biographies of Samson Occom who occasionally practiced. Brooks, *Collected Writings*, 42.

²³⁶ Charles C. Willoughby, "Houses and Gardens of the New England Indians," *American Anthropologist* 8, no. 1 (Jan.-Mar., 1906): 129; Merchant, *Ecological Revolutions*, 169. For a list of cultivated and wild herbs and their medicinal uses among Algonkian Indians, see Tantaquidgeon, *Folk Medicine*, 69-77.

²³⁷ "Inner bark taken from the south side of the tree was used in making a cough remedy." Tantaquidgeon, *Folk Medicine*, 69.

²³⁸ Tantaquidgeon, *Folk Medicine*, 67.

²³⁹ It is unclear why Natives were more hesitant to send girls to school than boys. Sedgwick claims that Umpachene (Stockbridge sachem and early convert) stated that the girls did not like to leave the home because of their modesty. While Native women were typically known to be reserved, Native reluctance to send girls to school could have also been due to their importance in raising children and maintaining Native traditions. Sedgwick and Marquand, *Stockbridge*, 28; Hopkins, *Historical Memoirs*, 82, 138; Bragdon, *Native Peoples*, 175-6.

Brothertown. The two were living together until the girl's father, a Christianized Oneida chief, demanded that the young suitor marry his daughter within the church. Like Mary Secuter, this young woman was denied her chosen marital and sexual status due to the changing power structures imposed on her recently Christianized community.²⁴⁰

By the 1780s, the role women played at home and in worship in Brothertown, New Stockbridge, and Oneida had evolved differently within each community. Though women likely shared common experiences in the conversion process, the space and the environment in which they lived often dictated the shape of their new role within their villages. While women were able to maintain some former practices and community values, not all of their traditional female roles fit within a Puritan female framework. Unlike men, women were compelled to jettison their relationships to war and diplomacy. Just as worship and Christian charity offered a space through which women maintained Native identity and traditions, war offered a space for men to fulfill traditional Native masculinity.

²⁴⁰ William N. Fenton, "A Further Note on Iroquois Suicide" Vol. 33, no. 4 (Fall, 1986), 451-2.

CHAPTER 4

RELEASING THE SAVAGE AND BINDING THE FEMALE: CHRISTIAN INDIANS IN WAR AND DIPLOMACY

By 1765, the Native nations living among the English as “Christian Indians” were already viewed by their Western brethren, the Seneca, as less than men. In a speech that helped convince his people to reject Samuel Kirkland as a missionary, one anti-British Seneca chief, Captain Onoongwandekha, expressed his primary concern if his people were to “attend to the Book which was made solely for white people...”²⁴¹ He explained,

It has already ruined many Indian tribes by embracing what is contained in this book... How many remnants of tribes to the *East* are so reduced, that they *pound* sticks to make brooms...The warriors which they boasted of... where are they now? why their grandsons are all become *mere women!* ...if we *change* or renounce our religion... We shall soon loose the spirit of *true men*. The spirit of the brave warrior & the good hunter... We shall be sunk so low as to hoe corn & squashes in the field, chop wood, stoop down and milk cows like *negroes*...²⁴²

For many traditional Natives, the adoption of English agricultural practices negated a Native man’s status as a “brave warrior” or “good hunter,” both qualities which were revered in Native society.²⁴³ Without these roles, men were reduced to “mere women” or “negroes” – people who, in the eighteenth century, typically lacked prestige and the freedom to leave the confines of their homes or villages and represented the antithesis of Native masculinity.²⁴⁴ And yet, Christian Indian men did not see the role of warrior and farmer to be diametrically opposed. As in many cases within cultural hybridization, the men who resided in praying towns or within English settlements reconciled these two seemingly contradictory conceptions of manliness.

²⁴¹ By “the Book,” he referred to the bible. These are the words of Capt. Onoongwandekha as translated and transcribed by Samuel Kirkland in council. Samuel Kirkland diaries, 7 April 1765, P-363 R-5.9, MHS. (hereafter referred to as Kirkland diaries)

²⁴² Emphases are Kirkland’s. Kirkland diaries, 7 April 1765, MHS.

²⁴³ Patrick Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge* (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 16.

²⁴⁴ Women occasionally accompanied men on hunting trips and war parties both pre- and post-contact. There were also fairly well defined male and female spheres in Native society. For a discussion of this, see Kathleen Bragdon, *Native Peoples of Southern New England, 1500 – 1650* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 102-129.

Like fishing, hunting, and maintaining kinship ties, war and diplomacy occupied a central place in Native male identity. All of these activities took place in the male sphere outside the wigwam and village. Christian Indian men often left their praying towns to fulfill these roles, even after they adopted farming and husbandry. Part of maintaining traditional male roles entailed engaging in these activities, but the sheer act of leaving the village was mostly what defined these roles as male.²⁴⁵ It is not surprising then, that Christian Indian men sought to counter their new fixed state by taking opportunities to leave their towns whenever possible. Not only did leaving the town and engaging in these activities offer a chance to fulfill these Native roles, but once outside of the town, Native men left the space that was controlled by white missionaries. When the environment no longer allowed men to engage in external activities such as fishing and hunting, war and diplomacy became increasingly important endeavors for retaining Native space and identity outside of praying towns.

White missionaries, on the other hand, did not always support Native men fighting in wars. In the eyes of the missionaries, war had a number of negative effects on praying towns and the civilization process. John Sergeant, Jr., stated that serving in the military would “amazingly corrupt their morals.”²⁴⁶ Not only did they feel that war induced an undesirable effect on Native morals and conduct, but the ramifications of warfare also led to a depreciation in funding for missionary efforts. Benefactors would often cut-off funding for schools and missionaries because it was commonly believed that as soon as war broke out, Natives would abandon their villages and praying towns.²⁴⁷ However, in the early years at Stockbridge, The Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge made sure to send small gifts to the Stockbridge Indians during King George’s War. Without the assurance that the Stockbridge Indians would ally themselves with the English, the Society felt it necessary to keep good relations with the Stockbridge Indians

²⁴⁵ The most important facets of Native masculinity included activities which were carried out beyond the village: hunting, war, and diplomacy. This contrasted with female activities which took place primarily in the village. Ann M. Little, *Abraham in Arms: War and Gender in Colonial New England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 8, 29.

²⁴⁶ As quoted in Frazier, *Mohicans*, 215.

²⁴⁷ Samuel Hopkins, *Historical Memoirs Relating to the Housatonic Indians*, 1753; reprinted in *Magazine of History*, extra no. 17 (1911), 122; Frazier, *Mohicans*, 205.

who they did not yet trust.²⁴⁸ This was not the case during the American Revolution. The British “New England Company” halted substantial support for Stockbridge and other Christian Indian missionary activities after the outbreak of the Revolution. This decision was no doubt also influenced by the Christian Indians’ choice to ally with the colonists.²⁴⁹

These quick acts of judgment on the part of benefactors stemmed from the perception that Natives were quick to engage in warfare and found delight in killing. Reverend Stephen Badger attributed the high death-rate of Native men to their frequent military service “to which they have been very easily enticed.”²⁵⁰ The Native men of Stockbridge *did* volunteer as minutemen even before Lexington and Concord, but the perception that Natives quickly took every opportunity to fight was inaccurate.²⁵¹ In Native tradition, wars did not begin without long and deliberate considerations of the consequences. Hendrick Aupaumut’s narrative of his visits to treat with the Western nations prior to the Northwest Indian Wars reveal the formality that existed in amassing allies and consulting kindred nations prior to “taking up the hatchet.”²⁵² Even when debating smaller-scale conflicts, elaborate ceremonies took place that considered a powaw’s prophetic visions about the outcome of battle prior to declaring war.²⁵³ This careful consideration was also common among those Christian Indians who allied themselves with the British and then the colonies during the King George’s War, the French and Indian War, and the American Revolution. While they seem to have quickly offered their support, they expressed their reluctance to fight their Native brethren, explaining that “When you Christians are at War You

²⁴⁸ The gifts were sent to maintain good relations because the Society could not pay out their promised funds for the boarding school in Stockbridge. No funds were received for several years due to the outbreak of King George’s War. Frazier, *Mohicans*, 98-99.

²⁴⁹ Frazier also suggests that the Continental Congress did not respond to requests for help from the Christian Indians during the American Revolution because they believed that their money would be better spent treating with Natives who were not already allied with the colonists. Frazier, *Mohicans*, 205.

²⁵⁰ Letter from Stephen Badger to the Corresponding Secretary, February 1797, published in *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, Ser. 1, Vol. 5, 40. (hereafter cited as Badger Letter); Another reason why benefactors were less likely to give to praying towns and Christianized Native communities (particularly Stockbridge) in a time of war was due to their location on the frontier. These places were considered too exposed and too likely to be attacked in war. See Hopkins, *Historical Memoirs*, 122.

²⁵¹ Frazier, *Mohicans*, 194.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, 78. Hendrick Aupaumut, “A Narrative of an Embassy to the Western Indians,” *Historical Society of Pennsylvania Memoirs* 2, pt. I (1827): 76-131.

²⁵³ Bragdon, *Native Peoples*, 225.

make Peace with one another but it is not so with us therefore we depend upon you to take care of us...”²⁵⁴ Likewise, leading up to the American Revolution, the Stockbridge Indians stated that they “had no immediate business with it.”²⁵⁵ Prior to officially allying themselves with the colonists during the American Revolution, the Stockbridge Indians even consulted their brethren, the Mohawk. After several days of speeches – and attempts to convince the Stockbridge Indians to remain neutral – the Mohawk ultimately extended their blessing.²⁵⁶ Choosing to fight against fellow Natives often meant breaking kinship ties that were not easily mended.²⁵⁷ In 1777, a contingent of British-allied Iroquois warriors laid waste to an Oneida village because of the Oneida’s decision to ally with the colonists.²⁵⁸ This reluctance to choose sides stemmed from Christian Indians’ precarious existence in both Indian and white worlds. They were hesitant to make enemies of powerful native nations, but the more immediate danger existed within their own communities. New England colonists who lived within Native communities threatened violence against the Natives if they chose the wrong side. Although Christian Indians did not wish to fight their Native brethren, they were compelled to prove their allegiance to their Christian white neighbors.²⁵⁹

Despite Native reluctance to go to war, Native men were part of a vibrant warrior tradition that was often associated with prestige and influence in the community. Villages or tribes were often headed by two sachems, one for war and one for peace. These “war chiefs,” along with the warriors themselves, made most of the decisions concerning engagement in war, and occasionally started rifts within communities.²⁶⁰ After the French and Indian War, the Oneida experienced a similar split in the village of Old Oneida. When some warriors there disagreed with

²⁵⁴ Shirley Dunn, *The Mohican World, 1680-1750* (Fleishmanns, NY: Purple Mountain Press, 2000), 203.

²⁵⁵ As quoted in Frazier and Calloway. Frazier, *Mohicans*, 195.

²⁵⁶ Thomas Allen, manuscript letter to General Seth Pomeroy, 9 May 1775, Ch. E.7.32, Boston Public Library (BPL), Boston, MA. Thomas Allen was under the impression that the Mohawk would also join the colonists and was unaware that the Mohawk discouraged the Stockbridges from joining a side. See Calloway, *The American Revolution in Indian country: crisis and diversity in Native American communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 94.

²⁵⁷ Dunn, *The Mohican World*, 203.

²⁵⁸ Frazier, *Mohicans*, 218.

²⁵⁹ David J. Silverman, *Red Brethren: The Brothertown and Stockbridge Indians and the Problem of Race in Early America*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010, 110-11. Frazier, *Mohicans*, 76-8.

²⁶⁰ Bragdon, *Native Peoples*, 148-50.

the sachems about oaths of allegiances to the British, they broke off from the village and established the new village of Kanonwalohale. The influence of the warriors was so great that tribal power began to shift from Old Oneida to Kanonwalohale.²⁶¹ The role of the warrior was the epitome of Native masculinity. In his speech concerning the adoption of Christianity, Onoongwandekha was concerned about the emasculation of Native warriors. If Native men gave into English religion and life ways, they would cease to be men, rather, they would be “mere women.”²⁶² It is not surprising then that, after careful consideration, Christian Indian men seized the opportunity to reaffirm their male identity.

These opportunities to fight as a traditional Natives occurred during every major military operation in the eighteenth century.²⁶³ Colonial military men even requested that acculturated Christian Indians utilize Native-style warfare in combat. Anglo encouragement of traditional Native fighting style is at first a puzzling situation. The sole stated purpose of praying towns and missions was to “civilize” the Natives and make them into proper English landholders. English colonists often disparaged Native warfare for its “savage” qualities.²⁶⁴ The use of Indian auxiliaries by all sides in the French and Indian War and the American Revolution was used in propaganda to demonize the opposition. Allying with Natives and utilizing Native tactics such as scalping and ambushing the enemy were considered “barbarous” and gave oppositional forces an excuse to find Indian allies of their own.²⁶⁵ Responding to a surprise attack on Fort Ticonderoga in 1775 British commanding general Thomas Gage stated “we need not be tender of calling upon

²⁶¹ Joseph R. Glatthaar and James Kirby Martin, *Forgotten Allies: the Oneida Indians and the American Revolution* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006), 54-5.

²⁶² Kirkland diaries, 7 April 1765, MHS. Calling a Native man a “woman” or a “dog” was considered the highest insult because these two ideas were synonymous with attachment to the home and servitude, respectively. Little, *Abraham in Arms*, 8, 15, 36. Conversely, Gunlög Fur asserts that referring to a man as a “woman” was no insult at all until the later eighteenth century. Gunlög Fur, *A Nation of Women: Gender and Colonial Encounters Among the Delaware Indians* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 5, 210.

²⁶³ Dunn, *The Mohican World*, 37.

²⁶⁴ The English colonists and Natives both criticized each other’s war tactics. The colonists believed that the Natives’ strategy was “foolhardy” and “barbarous” while the Natives believed that English were “feeble warriors” who retreated after only a few casualties. Little, *Abraham in Arms*, 43.

²⁶⁵ Peter Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors: How Indian War Transformed Early America* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2008), 242-4, 248-9; Frazier, *Mohicans*, 206.

the Savages, as the Rebels have shewn us the Example by bringing as many Indians down against us here as they could collect."²⁶⁶

But this perceived barbarity is exactly what each side wanted to exploit. Not only were Native men skilled fighters, but their fighting style also served as a psychological weapon. On noting the usefulness of having Indian allies during the American Revolution, George Washington wrote that the Natives would "strike no small terror into the British and foreign troops."²⁶⁷ Likewise, upon the arrival of Oneida Indians into the camp at Valley Forge, one soldier wrote, "this will make them [the British] fear for their scalps."²⁶⁸ Everything about Indian warfare frightened Europeans. The suddenness of attack, taking prisoners, scalping, and even their "war whoops" were frightening prospects. The memory and brutality of King Philip's War remained strong among colonists in the eighteenth century.²⁶⁹ Expressing the general sentiment and memory of Indian war, one nineteenth-century descendent of a white Stockbridge family relayed,

The Indian war whoop – a sound once heard never to be forgotten – was the prelude to a multitude of screaming maniacs descending upon a town to demolish it. Life was lived in breathless anticipation of the next blow. For the Indians played their deadly game by rules that no Englishman could understand and always managed to catch the settlers off their guard. Then, as the English gathered themselves together to retaliate and pursue them, the Indians would melt silently and completely back into the forest, of which they seemed as much a part as the trees.²⁷⁰

Despite the desire to root out all Native characteristics within their Christian Indians, it is clear that the British and later the colonists wanted to gain this psychological edge over their opponents.²⁷¹ British officials in the French and Indian War and colonial officials in the Continental Army specifically requested that Natives fight in their traditional style. Many Stockbridge Christian Indians served within the famed "Rogers's Rangers" unit. As rangers, the Natives assisted the British with scouting, ambushing travelling convoys, attacking enemy villages, and taking on the

²⁶⁶ Clarence Edwin Carter, ed., *The Correspondence of General Thomas Gage*, vol. 1 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1931), 403-4.

²⁶⁷ Richard S. Walling, "Nimham's Indian Company of 1778," [americanrevolution.org](http://americanrevolution.org/ind2.html), <http://americanrevolution.org/ind2.html> (accessed 5 December 2009).

²⁶⁸ As quoted in Glatthaar and Martin, *Forgotten Allies*, 207.

²⁶⁹ For more on the memory and legacy of King Phillip's War, see Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Phillip's War and the Origins of American Identity* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998).

²⁷⁰ Sedgwick and Marquand, *Stockbridge*, 7-8.

²⁷¹ Silver discusses the nature of Indian warfare and its effects on Europeans at length in Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors*.

most delicate operations. These Christian Indians were encouraged to dress and paint themselves like traditional Native warriors – a practice that many of Rogers's other white rangers adopted as well.²⁷² In 1777, after the first battle at Saratoga, remaining Oneida and Stockbridge Indians were asked to help “finish off” Burgoyne’s army by scouting, raiding, and taking prisoners and scalps.²⁷³ Army officials had these kinds of activities in mind when they raised Native troops. In June 1776, the Commissioners for transacting Indian Affairs resolved to raise a company of Mahican (Stockbridge) and Connecticut Indians. They concluded that if a sufficient number could not be raised to complete the company “that the Companies be completed with white men living in the vicinity of said *Indians*, and accustomed to the woods.” The resolution further stipulated that the company should not consist of more than one-third white soldiers.²⁷⁴ Colonists desired these Native companies for the skills that they possessed through their familiarity with the landscape and warfare – qualities white missionaries tried to destroy.

In recruiting Natives for the American Revolution, colonists appeared very aware of Native warrior traditions and Native masculine ideals more generally. In attempting to convince Indians from Canada to join forces with the colonists, Ethan Allen sent a revealing letter delivered by a Stockbridge Indian. In the letter, Allen appealed to Native male traditions when he stated that he “[I] have hunted with them [Indians] many times, and know how to shoot and ambush like *Indians*, and am a great hunter.” He continued by telling them that he wished to fight as they do.

my men fight so as *Indians* do, and I want your warriors to join with me and my warriors, like brothers, and ambush the Regulars: if you will, I will give you money, blankets, tomahawks, knives, paint, and any thing that there is in the army, just like brothers; and I will go with you into the woods to scout... I want our brother *Indians* to help us fight; for I know *Indians* are good warriors, and can fight well in the bush.²⁷⁵

Allen’s strategy did not ultimately convince the Canadian Indians, but it did appeal to the Christian Indians who allied themselves with the colonists. Not only did the colonists wish for the Christian

²⁷² Timothy J. Todish, *The Annotated and Illustrated Journals of Major Robert Rogers* (Fleischmanns, NY: Purple Mountain Press, 2002), 50, 315.

²⁷³ Glatthaar and Martin, *Forgotten Allies*, 182.

²⁷⁴ “Meeting of the Commissioners for transacting Indian Affairs in the Northern Department, held at Albany, June 13, 1776,” *American Archives Series 4*, Volume 6, Page 0914.

²⁷⁵ “Letter from Ethan Allen to the Assembly of Connecticut. Letter from Ethan Allen, Colonel of the Green Mountain Boys, to the several Tribes of Indians in Canada, inviting them to join him,” 26 May 1775. *American Archives Series 4*, Volume 2, Page 0713.

Indians to fight like traditional Natives, but the Christian Indians seemed to embrace the prospect. Upon receiving the request of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress to ally with the colonists, Stockbridge Indians consulted with one another for two days. After this period, Solomon Uhhaunauwaunmut, a leading sachem in the community, delivered a speech agreeing to the alliance on one condition, "...if you send for me to fight, that you will let me fight in my own Indian way. I am not used to fight English fashion, therefore you must not expect I can train like your men. Only point out to me where you enemies keep, and that is all I shall want to know."²⁷⁶

Once the decision was made to leave their Christianized communities and engage in war, Christian Indians left much of what made them "civilized" back in their Christianized communities. Being outside of the town and living an unbounded life allowed Native men (and sometimes women) to reconnect with their Native identity and traditions. The best and most detailed example of Christian Indian life outside of the praying towns is recorded in the journals of soldiers, officers, and chaplains who served with the Stockbridge and Connecticut Indians at Cambridge. In 1775, Native behavior at Cambridge demonstrated the degree to which Christian Indians retained gendered Native warfare traditions.

In April 1775, at least fifteen Stockbridge and Connecticut Christian Indians arrived under the command of Captain William Goodrich with the rest of the group arriving a few weeks later.²⁷⁷ The company arrived in traditional dress and war paint as they did in the previous war. Indeed, several of the Stockbridge warriors were veterans of the French and Indian war,²⁷⁸ and due to their age and experience, likely possessed considerable influence among the group, its training, and conduct. While these Native companies remained under the command of Goodrich, Colonel John Paterson, and General Israel Putnum, they remained separated from the regular colonial

²⁷⁶ As quoted in Frazier, *Mohicans*, 198.

²⁷⁷ Many of the Connecticut Indians who attempted to remove to New York in 1775 ended up taking refuge in Stockbridge for the remainder of the war. Many of those men ultimately served alongside the Stockbridge Indians in the war. The number of "Stockbridge" men (which likely included some Connecticut Indians) is roughly estimated between thirty-five and sixty. Oneida warriors likely numbered closer to 100. Of those Connecticut Indians who did not leave their towns, their enlistment numbers are unknown. Calloway, *American Revolution*, 92; Frazier, *Mohicans*, 198; Glatthaar and Martin, *Forgotten Allies*, 192.

²⁷⁸ Frazier, *Mohicans*, 198.

camps and truly acted in their own “Indian way.”²⁷⁹ William Emerson, a chaplain for Paterson’s troops, recorded the closest encounter with the Native encampment:

Last Saturday visited ye Camp or rather Wigwaums of ye Indians...They are permitted to live by themselves in a very thick woods, that belongs to *InmanFarm*. They have some of them got their Squaws & Papooses with them. I had ye Pleasure of sitting down with ‘em at a fine Mess of Clams cooked and eat in ye true genuine Indian Taste. I wish you had been there to see how generously they put their Fingers into ye Dish, and picked our some of ye largest Clams to give to me, & with that a Gust I eat them. Be sure it is the greatest Diversion I have had since I have been in ye camp.²⁸⁰

The excitement conveyed by Emerson suggests how unusual every aspect of the Indian camp seemed to an English colonist. One of the traditions that might have appeared most unusual to the colonists was the presence of the Natives’ women and children in the camp. While military posts often had female “camp followers” in their vicinity, this activity would not have been considered appropriate for proper Christian women, as the missionaries hoped the Native women would become.²⁸¹ However, if one looks at this activity from the Indian perspective, it becomes quite clear why the women came with the men.

When war required extensive travel away from Native villages, women often went with the men to help set up camp and prepare meals. Women were in charge of constructing temporary wigwams, gathering food, and helping to prepare game.²⁸² The fact that wigwams were erected at Inman Farm and the men ate prepared clams, demonstrates that the women were also fulfilling traditional female roles in times of conflict. The dense forest near Inman Farms was a perfect place for women to gather the saplings and bark needed to construct the wigwams. This location also happened to be near a swamp and tributary creek just off the Charles River – a place where the women likely went to gather the clams.²⁸³ Considering that the construction of

²⁷⁹ As quoted in Frazier, *Mohicans*, 198.

²⁸⁰ Amelia Forbes Emerson, ed. *Diaries and letters of William Emerson, 1743-1776, Minister of the Church in Concord, Chaplain in the Revolutionary Army* (Boston: Thomas Todd Company, 1972), 80.

²⁸¹ Holly A. Mayer, *Belonging to the Army: Camp Followers and Community during the American Revolution* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1996), 124-7.

²⁸² Dunn, *Mohicans and Their Land*, 120.

²⁸³ The gathering of clams, oysters, etc was traditionally the role of women. Bragdon, *Native Peoples*, 110. For a map of contemporary environs, see “A plan of Boston in New England with its environs,” (London, 1777), The Library of Congress American Memory Project, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3764b.ar093500>.

wigwams and gathering of clams was a job that women performed, it is clear that traditional divisions of labor and gendered tasks resurfaced outside of praying communities.

The camp location within a thickly wooded area not only makes sense considering the Natives were obviously replicating a traditional war camp, but the fact that Christian Indians of Stockbridge (who, by the 1770s, lived in a completely cleared town) chose to camp there tells us something about their preferences and relationship to the land. Most white soldiers camped among their own and other regiments in cleared spaces of land. Colonial military camps were often segmented by rank and sometimes even included fenced-in areas for livestock.²⁸⁴ The Stockbridge Indians likely could have chosen to set up camp near the rest of their white regiment in order to live more like they did in their Christianized communities. Natives were only asked to perform like traditional warriors in combat, not necessarily in camp. Indeed, Emerson's letter reveals that he was nervous about the Natives not being directly under white supervision when he stated his relief at Col. Paterson's assurance "that they are wholly under his Controul."²⁸⁵ These Christian Indians chose to camp within the forest and include women in the excursion. These choices are a testament to the pervasiveness of their traditional attachments to the land. Even after many years of living in clear and bounded environments among colonists, the Anglo attachment and conception of the land only extended to the boundaries of the praying town.

Other traditionally Native actions were recorded by Joseph Merriam and Paul Lunt. Merriam notes the entrance of the Indians into camp in April and the "speculation" that they caused, but says little else about them until May 2. He describes his day: "Early this morning went to the Colledge yard and attended prayers nothing Remarkable this day but an Indian frolick on the Common with the head Called General Gage."²⁸⁶ Lunt speaks little about the Natives, but does mention their "war whoop" after a chaplain read the troops a manifesto from the Continental

²⁸⁴ Todish, *Robert Rogers*, 80-1.

²⁸⁵ Emerson, *Diaries and letters*, 80.

²⁸⁶ [Joseph Merriam] *Diary of an Unknown soldier at Cambridge, 29 Arpil and 2 May 1775*, Ms. Ch. B12. 72, BPL.

Congress and led the group in prayer.²⁸⁷ While there is little detail to explain exactly what was entailed in this particular “Indian frolick,” there are clues and other evidence to suggest that this was perhaps a traditional pre-war ritual.

Pre-war ceremonies and celebrations were common among Algonkian peoples and other Native Northeastern nations. These ceremonies typically involved an elaborate performance by several members of the tribe, including the powaw.²⁸⁸ We cannot know whether or not anyone in the group acted as a powaw in this “frolick,” but Merriam’s comment that they frolicked “with the head Called General Gage” offers more evidence to suggest this activity had its roots in Native ritual. The heads and limbs of enemy leaders were coveted war trophies among traditional Algonkian people. One seventeenth-century colonist wrote that “if they return conquerors, they carry the heads of their chief enemies that they slay in the wars, it being the custom to cut off their heads, hands, and feet to bear home to their wives and children as true tokens of their renowned victory.”²⁸⁹ General Thomas Gage was indeed the literal and figurative “head” of the enemy as the British commanding general for North America and Governor of Massachusetts at the outset of the war. Though Gage’s image was not entirely tarnished throughout the unrest of the early 1770s, by spring 1775, he became the subject of wide-spread ridicule and false accusations.²⁹⁰ The “head called Gage” with which the Christian Indians frolicked could have been used as a symbolic war trophy in a performance designed to prepare them for battle. While there exists no direct correlation between this “frolick” and any previously recorded Native ritual, the words of Revolutionary War veteran Hendrick Aupaumut reveal the likely correlation in the minds of Christian Indians. In his published narration of his journey to treat with the Western tribes, Aupaumut recalled a “great frolick, according to the custom of the Shawannese” that took place among the nations upon hearing that the “big knives” just killed three Delaware and were

²⁸⁷ “Paul Lunt’s Book: A Journal of Travels from Newburyport to Cambridge and in the Camp,” published in *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society* (February 1872): 195.

²⁸⁸ Bragdon, *Native Peoples*, 225.

²⁸⁹ As quoted in Bragdon, *Native Peoples*, 226.

²⁹⁰ David Hackett Fisher, *Paul Revere’s Ride* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 74-5.

within a one-day walk of their location.²⁹¹ The use of the word “frolick” in both of these cases within the context of war suggests that the Stockbridge Indian frolick at Cambridge was something akin to a traditional Native ceremony.

After Cambridge, many of the colonists’ Christian Indian allies dispersed into several different regiments, serving where they wanted and when they wanted as they did in previous wars. Part of enlisting the help of Indian warriors required that colonial military leaders accept the Natives’ tendency to move about between camps without orders and return home during the fall and winter to help with the harvest and tend to the hunt. In a 1776 letter to George Washington, General Schuyler reported that the Indians left Saratoga to return home in mid-October.²⁹² Likewise, during the French and Indian War, the Stockbridge Indians deserted their positions as Rangers every winter to go hunting.²⁹³ Requests to rejoin the army came in the spring during both wars. In March 1759, the commander of Fort Edward wrote a letter to the Stockbridge Indians, offering a belt of wampum and a full pardon for their desertion if they would return to the fort to assist with the upcoming campaign.²⁹⁴ During the Revolution, Washington also found himself ordering the re-enlistment of Stockbridge Indians after their desertion to attend to the harvest the previous year.²⁹⁵ Due to the “expediency” of the matter, Washington instructed Schuyler to “adopt the most expeditious mode of raising them; giving such of them that choose it, liberty to join the Northern Army, and those that prefer coming here [New York], leave to do it, in case they incline to divide.”²⁹⁶ Although desertion was always common among Christian Indians, their reasons for leaving the service changed over time. During the French and Indian War, many references to the Stockbridge or the Oneida Indians leaving the service cite their winter hunting as the reason.

²⁹¹ Aupaumut, “A Narrative,” 104.

²⁹² “Letter from General Schuyler to General Washington: Supposes that General Carleton will make an attempt on Tyonderoga in a few days, if he has not already, the Militia move up slowly and very reluctantly,” *American Archives Series 5, Volume 2, Page 1206.*

²⁹³ Todish, *Robert Rogers*, 150-1.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 153-4.

²⁹⁵ “Letter from General Schuyler to General Washington: Supposes that General Carleton will make an attempt on Tyonderoga in a few days, if he has not already, the Militia move up slowly and very reluctantly,” *American Archives Series 5, Volume 2, Page 1206.*

²⁹⁶ “Letter from General Washington to General Schuyler,” *American Archives Series 5, Volume 1, Page 0820.*

However, during the Revolution, the presumed reason for the Stockbridge Indians' desertion was attributed to the fall harvest. While traditionally, Native men sometimes heled with the harvest, by the 1770s, husbandry and Anglo agriculture became much more prevalent among Christian Indian men.²⁹⁷ While their consistent desertion and insistence on serving in their own way seems to reveal a maintenance of practices and traditional male identity, upon further investigation, these acts also serve as evidence of some Natives' increased acculturation. Indeed, not all Christian Indian war activities were completely informed by traditional Native techniques. Not only did they adopt the use of muskets in addition to their traditional weaponry, but they also incorporated musket-fire techniques such as delivering the initial fire together in a small formation so as "to maximize the effect of the gunfire."²⁹⁸ These tactics, like so many other cultural adaptations, were simply incorporated into more traditional techniques.²⁹⁹

Christian Indians still manufactured and carried traditional weapons in addition to muskets. Bows and arrows, tomahawks, scalping knives, and clubs were all utilized in eighteenth-century Christian Indian warfare.³⁰⁰ The use of the bow and arrow gave Natives a particular sense of pride because they believed that it required a higher skill level and resulted in greater accuracy than shooting a gun (although they proved themselves as "excellent marksmen" with guns as well).³⁰¹ An ambush usually began with a concentrated musket fire assault from nearby trees followed by hand-to-hand combat with clubs, knives, and tomahawks.³⁰² After one battle, the Oneida played into their image as "savages" by taunting a British prisoner, burying him "up to his neck," and holding "a powwow around him." After the Oneida induced utter horror in the

²⁹⁷ For traditional Native man helping in fields, see Bragdon, *Native Peoples*, 123.

²⁹⁸ Little, *Abraham in Arms*, 52.

²⁹⁹ Catholic Christian Indians fighting for the French took adopting two kinds of warfare to another level when they scalped cows. Todish, *Robert Rogers*, 130.

³⁰⁰ Hessian soldier, Johann von Ewald described these items lying among the dead bodies of several Stockbridge Indians after the Battle of White Plains. Johann von Ewald, *Diary of the American War: a Hessian Journal*, Joseph P. Tustin, ed. and trans. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 145. (hereafter, Ewald, *Hessian Journal*).

³⁰¹ Little, *Abraham in Arms*, 37; Frazier, *Mohicans*, 223.

³⁰² For descriptions of several Christian Indian battles, see Glatthaar and Martin, *Forgotten Allies*, 213-15; Frazier, *Mohicans*, 219-23, Calloway, *American Revolution*, 69-7; Todish, *Robert Rogers*, 167, 171-4, 282; Little, *Abraham in Arms*, 52.

prisoner, they sent him to a jail in Albany.³⁰³ Even when Christian Indians were not planning on harming prisoners, it appears that they enjoyed their perceived role as “savage” warriors by Europeans.

Outside of warfare, Christian Indians – particularly the Stockbridge Indians – played important diplomatic roles for the English colonists during times of conflict. Diplomacy, like war, was an important sphere for asserting Native masculinity through speeches and hospitality.³⁰⁴ The Mahicans prided themselves on their role as “older brother” to the Western and Iroquoian nations. As older brothers, the Mahicans were present at all peace treaties and most Native war councils. Even as the Stockbridge Indians became geographically and culturally more distant from their Western and Iroquoian brethren, they still attended major diplomatic negotiations between Indian nations as well as those between Natives and colonials.³⁰⁵ Anglo colonists did not always understand the Mahican role in diplomacy. When the Stockbridge Indians arrived at the Albany Congress of 1754 and demanded an audience with the Lieutenant Governor, Albany officials nearly sent them away, believing the Stockbridge Indians had no business at the peace talks with the Indians in New York.³⁰⁶ Ultimately, English colonists came to understand the Mahican role in peace negotiations, and utilized them as official arms of colonial diplomacy. Through adopting Anglo life ways and alliances but continually engaging with their more traditional brethren, Stockbridge Indian men made themselves useful to the colonists. Thus, these men did not have to compromise all of their Native male identity in order to maintain their status as Christian Indians.

The most noteworthy eighteenth-century Christian Indian diplomat and American ally was Stockbridge (and later New Stockbridge) resident, Captain Hendrick Aupaumut. After his service as diplomat and warrior in the American Revolution, Aupaumut was called upon by the new United States government to act as a peace envoy to negotiate with the Shawnee, Miami,

³⁰³ Glatthaar and Martin, *Forgotten Allies*, 181.

³⁰⁴ Little, *Abraham in Arms*, 37-8.

³⁰⁵ Aupaumut, “A Narrative,” 77.

³⁰⁶ “Albany Congress Minutes, 1754,” published in *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 5, 9-69, Ser. 3, 33-4, 57-8.

Delaware, and Wyandots, among others. Aupaumut often journeyes to council fires at Niagara and throughout the Ohio territory.³⁰⁷ While his attempts to make peace between the United States and the Western nations proved unsuccessful, Aupaumut maintained his allegiance to the U.S., fighting in the War of 1812 under William Henry Harrison at the battle of Tippecanoe.³⁰⁸

Even though Aupaumut felt as though he was fulfilling his role as a Mahican man, he did not receive recognition of his Native masculinity from all of the Western nations. Many did not trust him because he was negotiating on behalf of the “big knives.” Others mocked his life style, suggesting that if the Western nations gave into the Americans, they too would live “shut up like to[o] many hogs in a pen.”³⁰⁹ None of these insults appear in his published account of his journey to the Western nations. In the published account, Aupaumut appears to garner considerable respect from his traditional brethren, but winning over traditional Natives as an Anglicized Christian Indian proved much harder than his published account asserts.³¹⁰

Although Christian Indian men proved themselves as Native warriors and took pride in maintaining that role, they were met by fierce challengers ready to question the Christianized Natives’ “Indianness.” In July 1791, Hendrick faced perhaps his most outspoken challenger in Molly Brant, an influential Mohawk woman and sister to Joseph Brant, a foremost Iroquois ally of Britain. When questions began to fly in Niagara about whether or not Aupaumut was truly attending the council fire in peace, Brant noted that, if he came in peace, Aupaumut and his brothers “would certainly follow the customs of all nations – they would have some women with them. But now they have none.” Brant pointed to a widespread Native American tradition of bringing women on peaceful journeys to other nations and diplomatic events.³¹¹ After some condescending remarks about Brant’s illusions of greatness, Aupaumut replied “tis true... but I my nation does not follow such custom – especially when I travel thro Indian country – I do not

³⁰⁷ See Aupaumut, “A Narrative”; Hendrick Aupaumut manuscript narratives and letters, P-31, series, I D, Vol. 19, *Timothy Pickering Papers*, MHS.

³⁰⁸ Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 160.

³⁰⁹ Hendrick Aupaumut, Manuscript account of Journey, *Timothy Pickering Papers*, P-31, r-60, MHS.

³¹⁰ Aupaumut, “Short Narration,” 117.

³¹¹ For women as symbols of peace, see Juliana Barr, *Peace Came in the Form of a Woman: Indians and Spaniards in the Texas Borderlands* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 9, 69.

wish that my women should take such tedious journey.”³¹² This idea that a journey would be too dangerous and “tedious” for the women is a direct effect of Aupaumut’s substantial adoption of Christian ideas about proper gender roles, and the “dangerous” environment. While the men and women of New Stockbridge still attempted to hold onto certain traditions, their extent of Christianization and Anglicization ultimately delegitimized them in the eyes of more traditional Natives. Even though they believed themselves to be true Natives, their overall changes in gender roles and relationships to the environment affected their ability to relate to and negotiate with their more traditional counterparts.

While war provided a prime opportunity for men to leave their bounded praying town environments and fulfill their traditional Native male roles as warriors and diplomats, this opportunity did not extend to women. Outside of the events at Cambridge, there is little evidence to suggest that war offered the same opportunity for Native women to fulfill traditional roles. After Stockbridge men returned from Cambridge in July or August of 1775, Solomon Uhuannaunmut delivered a speech to the Commissioners for Transacting Indian Affairs where he requested the services of an additional missionary to tend to the Stockbridge women while the men were away at war.³¹³ It is unclear why the women remained at home rather than in camp with the men after 1775. Did women have a say in this decision, or was the decision made by missionaries and Native men? The available sources do not make this distinction clear. The sources do suggest, however, that women, unlike men, had to mask their traditional roles in order to make them appear less “Native.”

The Albany conference of 1775 offers the only other glance into Christian Indian females engagement in non-domestic wartime activities. Both Oneida and Stockbridge Christian Indian women attended the peace conference in Albany between colonists and area Indian nations. Traditionally, women attended many Native councils, treaties, and ceremonies. In addition to

³¹² Aupaumut, Manuscript account of Journey, MHS.

³¹³ “Answer of the Commissioners to the Speech delivered yesterday by the Indians, Speech of Capt. Solomon, a Chief of the Stockbridge Indians, and Reply of the Commissioners, Treaty concluded, and the Indians informed they would receive their presents tomorrow.” *American Archives Series 4, Volume 3*: 488.

serving as symbols of life and peace, women also participated in ceremonies and councils by singing for guests, serving meals, and occasionally giving speeches of their own.³¹⁴ Through preparing and organizing ceremonial feasts, women played an important role in a sachem's ability to provide a welcome environment for diplomatic guests.³¹⁵ While Christian Indian female presence at the Albany conference suggests that the women were there in a traditional role, their performance at the meeting speaks to the hybridization of their newly negotiated role as symbols of peace. Both Oneida and Stockbridge women sang religious hymns for an audience. One man in attendance commented on the girls in each group. He noted that the Stockbridge girls were "pretty and extremely cleanly," much more so than the Oneida girls, and desired to "make an Acquaintance among them [the Stockbridge girls]." ³¹⁶ While the women did attend the conference, their singing of hymns changed the context in which they performed. The women not only served as symbols of peace, but their performance and appearance was a testament to the "progress" that could be made among Natives. The Oneida girls, with their crude singing and appearance, represented only small strides in Christianization. Conversely, the Stockbridge girls, who "spoke tolerable English" demonstrated Christian Indian "civility" despite the actions of their men on the battlefield.³¹⁷ At Albany, Christian Indian women were able to fulfill traditional female roles by serving as symbols of peace and trust while at the same time, not compromising their status as *Christian* women. Although none of them directly hosted guests or made speeches, they served their diplomatic purpose the only way Anglo society would allow.

English colonists allowed and even encouraged the extension of male masculinity outside of praying towns during times of war. To a certain extent, English colonists even respected male warriors because both Anglo and Native men used the battlefield as a "proving ground" for manhood. Indeed, military success was often a prerequisite for political power among men in

³¹⁴ Fur, *Nation of Women*, 144.

³¹⁵ Little argues that women had little if any influence in decision-making outside of Native villages. I would agree with this statement, however, I will argue that women *did* play a significant *role* in the diplomatic process. Little, *Abraham in Arms*, 29.

³¹⁶ Samuel Alexander Harrison, ed., *Memoir of Lieut. Col. Tench Tilghman: Secretary and aid to Washington* (Albany: J. Munsell, 1876), 95-6. (hereafter, *Tilghman Memoir*)

³¹⁷ *Tilghman Memoir*, 96.

Europe and the Americas. Within both cultures, men were expected to be stoic, proud, and courageous in war.³¹⁸ Men's status as professed Christians also did not conflict with their role as warriors and soldiers. During times of conflict, ministers often infused their sermons with scripture and rhetoric that supported war in the name of religion. Historian Ann Little notes, "Christians were called to defend their faith against the incursions of their enemies."³¹⁹ One 1678 sermon assured New Englanders that "it is no way unbecoming a Christian to learn to be a Souldier, not only a Spiritual Souldier but in the true proper sence of the letter."³²⁰ In the 1760s, Samuel Kirkland even lauded one particularly brutal anti-European Delaware warrior, Squash Cutter, for the warrior's reputation as a "bold and enterprising" man and his ability to speak the English and Seneca languages.³²¹ Likewise, the Stockbridge men who died in a retaliatory ambush at Kingsbridge, New York, were praised for their gallantry in battle. One Hessian soldier wrote that they fought "like brave men" and appeared to have "perished with resolution." He even compared them with his great Teutonic ancestors who defended themselves against the Roman Empire.³²² Although Anglo and other European men criticized Natives for their war tactics, they at least recognized that Native men possessed some claim to manhood.

On the other hand, there was no Anglo equivalent to Native females' role in war and diplomacy. To accompany men at war or on long diplomatic journeys did not fit with Puritan conceptions of womanhood. While colonial women certainly had increased responsibilities to the home, their role in the household and society did not fundamentally change in times of war. A woman showed her support of war through raising children, caring for the household, boycotting products, and producing their own home manufactures. Those women who did accompany men in camp were considered to have no public or private virtue. Some followed their husbands because they had no other means of support. In these instances, women were considered a nuisance because they distracted men and consumed resources. Unlike these women, the Native

³¹⁸ Little, *Abraham in Arms*, 34-5.

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 22.

³²⁰ *Ibid.*, 1.

³²¹ Walter Pilkington, *The Journals of Samuel Kirkland: 18th-century Missionary to the Iroquois, Government Agent, Father of Hamilton College* (Clinton: Hamilton College, 1980), 15.

³²² Ewald, *Hessian Journal*, 145.

women at Cambridge did not rely on the military for their subsistence. Rather, they produced their own food and erected their own shelters. It should be noted that not all English colonial women seen in camps were held in such low regard. The wives of officers and generals visited occasionally visited camps. However, these women were “ladies” who socialized, held dances, and remained separate from the masses of the rest of the army.³²³ The incident at Cambridge appears to be rare moment of unfiltered traditional female expression for Christian Indian women. Although their presence at Albany betrays no English colonial antecedents, their performance at the conference changed the context and meaning of their role in diplomacy. In diplomacy as in worship, women had to adjust Native traditions to fit Anglo expectations of Christian womanhood.

But even as the men maintained some semblance of their Native masculinity, gender norms within Christian Indian communities continued to diverge from traditional Natives’ and became increasingly shaped by Christianization. Christian Indians could leave their praying towns and Christianize communities, but they could not leave behind all of their acculturated Anglo “baggage” at the fence. By the last third of the eighteenth century, men left the battlefield to tend to the harvest while women primarily remained bound to the home and by Anglo-Puritan conceptions of proper womanhood. Due to this shift in gender roles and conception of the environment, Christian Indians lost the respect of traditional Natives.

While white missionaries worked to destroy Native male behaviors and attachments to the land, colonial officials sought to recover and foster these life ways. In the occurrence of war or unrest, so long as the English colonists still needed Christian Indian men, these Natives were offered space outside of praying towns to maintain traditional male roles, kinship ties, and masculine ideals. Native men made many concessions in the process of acculturation, yet by seizing these opportunities, they refused to be bounded completely by white missionaries. But as the boundaries of praying towns and all colonial towns expanded, Christianized Natives were left with little cultural or physical space to occupy. Once Anglo space extended further into praying towns and Indian territory, it became increasingly difficult to fulfill former roles. These pressures

³²³ Mayer, *Belonging to the Army*, 15, 124-7.

forced the Stockbridge and Connecticut Christian Indians to find new boundaries for their towns away from white society. But the variation in degrees of acculturation eventually led to these Christian Indians to seek new space, even away from other Christianized Natives.

CHAPTER 5

“ONE HEAD, ONE HEART, AND ONE BLOOD”: BREAKING CULTURAL TIES AND CREATING A CHRISTIAN INDIAN ELECT

Throughout the tenure of the Christian Indian settlements in New York (1780s – 1820s), white missionaries Samuel Kirkland and John Sergeant, Jr. continued to stress the importance of English-style cultivation and animal husbandry among their congregants. Both men’s sermons often highlighted scriptures that emphasized God’s ownership of the land and the need for all Christians to bring the earth under cultivation. In 1791, Sergeant delivered one sermon, “The earth is the Lord’s,” several times to every community in Oneida territory to remind the Natives of their “obligation to make improvements.”³²⁴ In addition to offering religious instruction on how to live the proper Christian lifestyle, Kirkland and Sergeant often provided instruction in “temporal matters” among all the communities.³²⁵ Both men noted in their journals the extensive amount of time spent “assisting and directing” their “poor people in husbandry.”³²⁶ Indeed, Kirkland wished to further extend his instructions in “civilization” by starting his own boarding school for Native youths.³²⁷ Altering Native gender roles and changing Indian relationships to the environment remained increasingly important as methods to civilize and Christianize Natives into the nineteenth century.³²⁸

Missionaries infused much of their sermons with references to making “improvements” within oneself as well as on the land. Christian Indians were instructed that salvation would be

³²⁴ Sergeant journal, 21, 28 July 1791, MHS.

³²⁵ Kirkland journal, 17 October 1790, MHS.

³²⁶ Kirkland journal, 11, 16 August 1787, MHS.

³²⁷ Pilkington, *Journals of Samuel Kirkland*, 189. Kirkland’s vision for an Indian boarding school ultimately resulted in the establishment to Hamilton College which did not cater exclusively to Native students.

³²⁸ This method was also adopted within Indian boarding schools in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as well. See David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence, University of Kansas Press, 1995); John Bloom, *To Show What and Indian Can Do: Sports and Native American Boarding Schools* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

reached only through reforming themselves and becoming “industrious.” Kirkland constantly elaborated on the Natives’ need to “make your calling and election sure,” by devoting themselves to “religious goodness” and “improvement.”³²⁹ In explaining the Christian “calling” and “election,” Kirkland wrote in his journal:

Observed the *election* was Gods *choosing* and *calling*, bringing the mind *actually* to comply with that to which chosen. But *chosen* and *called* to one and the same thing. How we were to make sure... [I] urged the importance of the Deity, with some inferences by way of improvement.³³⁰

In order to be sure of their status within the elect, Christian Indians believed they were called upon by God in order to reform themselves through improving the land. These concepts were so deeply ingrained in sermons and lessons and so familiar to Natives, that methods of cultivation and relationships between genders became central to how Christian Indians identified themselves as members of a “chosen” group of people and defined themselves in relation to whites and other Natives.³³¹

During the mid-to-late eighteenth century, Iroquois converts, especially the Oneida, and New England Natives were all instructed by missionaries who attended the same schools and generally practiced the same kind of evangelical Congregationalism. Due to this consistency, they were all familiar with Anglo-Christian notions of land use and the importance of agricultural reform to the conversion process. However, given their vastly different experiences throughout the eighteenth century, each group of self-professing Christian Indians adapted religious ideals in different ways. Although the Oneida, Brothertown, and New Stockbridge Indians all agreed to live together as “Christian Brethren” with “one head, one heart, and one blood” in order to improve their lot and stave off white encroachment, each community possessed different ideas about how best to live as Christians and Indians.³³² Despite this outpouring of Native and Christian

³²⁹ Walter Pilkington, *Journals of Samuel Kirkland: 18th-century Missionary to the Iroquois, Government Agent, Father of Hamilton College* (Clinton: Hamilton College, 1980), 132.

³³⁰ Pilkington, *The Journals of Samuel Kirkland*, 173.

³³¹ David J. Silverman, *Red Brethren: The Brothertown and Stockbridge Indians and the Problem of Race in Early America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010), 89-91.

³³² The Indians’ name for Brothertown even contained the root word “conncuk” which translated to “commons.” David Silverman makes the case for similar goals among the communities, but different approaches on how to achieve those goals. Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 96; For a quote from the treaty, see

brotherhood among the recently established New York communities, by 1790, Kirkland observed that “There is not a single village, or tribe, or nation in this vicinity, where there is not a great difference of opinions respecting both their temporal & religious concerns.”³³³ These divisions between and even within the communities concerned missionaries and Native leaders alike and ultimately led to the dissolution of the Christian Indian haven.

The initial push for the New England Indians to relocate came from Christian Indian leaders such as Samson Occom and David Fowler. By the 1760s, the Christian Indian communities around Long Island Sound and Rhode Island faced considerable population loss from their participation in the French and Indian and Revolutionary wars. Throughout the 1760s and 1770s, these Native peoples also experienced increasingly aggressive white land encroachment.³³⁴ These coastal Natives often looked to missionary Eleazar Wheelock for assistance in such matters. However, by the late 1760s, Wheelock and Native missionary Samson Occom parted ways because Occom not long supported Wheelock’s emphasis on practical rather than scholarly education. Occom also criticized Wheelock for allowing more whites than Natives into Moor’s Charity School. In 1770, Wheelock relocated Moor’s Charity to Hanover, New Hampshire, and began admitting many more white than Native students.³³⁵ After these incidents, Christian Indians came to the conclusion that it was nearly impossible for Natives and Europeans to live peaceably among each other.³³⁶ After this realization, Occom and Fowler, who acted as itinerant missionaries to the Oneida in the 1760s, looked to their recently Christianized Iroquois brethren for assistance. Oneida territory offered the ideal location for Christian Indians. Oneida communities were able maintain relative peace during the French and Indian War as well as Pontiac’s uprising, and were still distant from large white settlements.

James Dow McCallum, *Letters of Eleazar Wheelock’s Indians* (Hanover: Dartmouth College Publications, 1932); reprint, Whitefish: Kessinger, 2008, 157-72.

³³³ Kirkland journal, 13 October 1790, MHS.

³³⁴ Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 70.

³³⁵ Wheelock’s school in Hanover became Dartmouth College. Joanna Brooks, *The Collected Writings of Samson Occom, Mohegan: Leadership and Literature in Eighteenth-Century Native America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 21. For a list of Moor’s Charity School/Dartmouth College Native graduates from 1743-1779, see McCallum, *Letters*, 293-7.

³³⁶ Occom came to realize that no matter how “civilized” a Native became, s/he would also be considered of a lower status than Europeans. Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 70.

Additionally, by the time these coastal Christian Indians were ready to relocate, the Oneida had received missionaries and agricultural training for nearly a decade.³³⁷

The Oneida also found advantages in inviting the Christian Indians of New England to live among them. Oneida warriors without formal clan titles who possessed little influence in their villages were most likely to adopt Christianity and want to see its proliferation throughout the area.³³⁸ Additionally, the Oneida saw the need to increase border security to quell the advancement of white settlement into the area. Inviting the New England Indians to live along the edges of their territory encouraged Christian Native ties and protected the land against white squatters.³³⁹ In 1774, the Oneida granted six square miles of land to the future Brothertown Indians, and just one year later, the first wave of Connecticut and Montauk Indians began their migration to New York.³⁴⁰ However, their progress halted with the outbreak of the American Revolution. Those who remained behind in Connecticut did so due to intimidation from local whites who prodded them to prove their loyalty by joining the local militia units. Those who left New England for New York were welcomed by threats from neighboring Seneca to declare allegiance to the Iroquois and British.³⁴¹ Most of the soon-to-be Brothertown Indians fled the region and took refuge among the Stockbridge Indians in Western Massachusetts. There they served in the local militia and later in the Continental Army alongside the Stockbridge Indians.³⁴²

The French and Indian war also motivated the Stockbridge Indians to consider a removal. White fears of local Native uprisings served to increase tensions during the 1750s and 1760s. These fears manifested themselves in threats to the Stockbridge Indians and resulted in the killing of one Mahican and the desecration of a Mahican grave. After war's end, whites flooded

³³⁷ While Anglicization had already begun to take hold in Oneida territory, it was to a much lesser degree than New England Native communities. A vast majority of the homes in Oneida territory were wigwams, and there were only rare instances of plow agriculture in most villages. Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 94.

³³⁸ Christianity often challenged the authority of sachems and powaws. Native leaders of lesser influence tended to gravitate toward praying towns and Christianity since the mid seventeenth century. Patrick Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 4-6, 9; Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 94-5.

³³⁹ Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 96-7.

³⁴⁰ Brooks, *Collected Writings*, 25.

³⁴¹ Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 110-1.

³⁴² Calloway, *American Revolution*, 92; Frazier, *Mohicans*, 198; Glatthaar and Martin, *Forgotten Allies*, 192.

the area in greater numbers than before. Like the Connecticut Indians, the Stockbridges had a difficult time holding onto their lands after the war due to population loss and poverty.³⁴³ By the 1770s, the Stockbridge Indians accepted an offer by the future Brothertown Indians to settle alongside them in Oneida territory. The Connecticut and Stockbridge Indians resumed their removal at the close of the war in 1783 and continued the exodus until 1789.³⁴⁴

Unfortunately, white encroachment followed the Stockbridge and Brothertown Indians to Oneida country. By 1785, as a partial result of the Treaty of Fort Herkimer, the Oneida's territory was reduced by 250 thousand acres around Oneida Lake. Due to this massive loss of land, the Oneida attempted to reduce the original holdings deeded to their New England brethren.³⁴⁵ After some initial conflict over how much land to allot each group, the communities settled into their respective areas, living relatively close to one another. Within Oneida territory, there existed just over 600 men, women, and children primarily Oneidas or Tuscaroras who were scattered in small villages throughout the reservation. The most prominent Oneida towns were Kanonwalohale and Old Oneida. The town of New Stockbridge, settled by the Mahicans and other inhabitants of the original Stockbridge, consisted of about 300 Natives settled on a six mile square plot of land on the Oneida reservation's southern border. Brothertown consisted of approximately 150 Native men, women, and children from Mohegan, Narragansett, Montauk, Niantic, Farmington, Mashantucket (Groton), and Pawcatuck (Stonington).³⁴⁶ Brothertown laid just to the East of New Stockbridge and consisted of a three mile by two mile tract of land.³⁴⁷ New Stockbridge and Brothertown were situated right next to one another, each roughly twelve miles South of the Christianized Oneida village, Kanonwalohale.³⁴⁸

³⁴³ A raid in Hoosick, New York by a band of French-allied Natives prompted a scalp bounty which led to the one white Stockbridge resident unearthing a Mahican's remains and taking its scalp. Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 74-5.

³⁴⁴ Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), XX.

³⁴⁵ Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 127-9.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 110.

³⁴⁷ Jeremy Belknap and Jedidiah Morse, *Report on The Oneida, Stockbridge and Brotherton Indians*, 1796 (Indian Notes And Monographs) No. 54 (New York: Museum of the American Indian Heye Foundation) 1955, 6. (hereafter referred to as 1796 Report, MHS).

³⁴⁸ For a rough estimation of town distances, see Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 42; 1796 Report, MHS, 6.

The missionaries who tended to these towns split much of their time between the three or four main Christianized communities (Old Oneida, Kanonwalohale, New Stockbridge, and Brothertown), but often gave sermons in surrounding villages as well. While each missionary undertook a good deal of travelling, Kirkland and Sergeant both maintained permanent residences in or near particular towns. Kirkland stayed primarily among the Oneida, often providing services to the Natives at Kanonwalohale, Old Oneida and Oriskany, but also ministered to the New Stockbridge and Brothertown Indians on a regular basis.³⁴⁹ Sergeant travelled back and forth between Stockbridge and New Stockbridge until his move to Oneida territory in 1796.³⁵⁰ Sergeant also switched posts with Kirkland on occasion, typically per Kirkland's request. Brothertown was often visited by these two white missionaries, but was primarily cared for by Occom, Fowler, and other Christianized Indians trained in Wheelock's Moor's Charity School.³⁵¹

Converted Natives also visited neighboring towns on a regular basis to attend church services or receive the sacrament if no one in the community was able to conduct such meetings.³⁵² Sermons were commonly given in both Native and English tongue to accommodate the Stockbridge Indians who were not all accustomed to Native speech, or simply not familiar with Iroquoian languages.³⁵³ Hymnal singing was favored by all Christian Indians, and a mixed group of congregants sang the same songs together, even in different languages.³⁵⁴

Despite their ability to come together to attend church services, not all of the inhabitants of these communities professed the Christian religion, and out of those who did, very few of them were recognized by white missionaries as full members of the church.³⁵⁵ In his travels, Kirkland

³⁴⁹ Kirkland mentions his travels between Oneida villages and the New England Indian settlements throughout his journals. Pilkington, *Journals of Samuel Kirkland*.

³⁵⁰ Sedgwick, *Chronicle*, 92.

³⁵¹ Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 59; Brooks, *Collected Writings*, 24.

³⁵² Journals of both Sergeant and Kirkland reveal the frequency with which Natives from neighboring communities visited them at community meeting houses and their homes. See Pilkington, *Journals of Samuel Kirkland*; Sergeant journals, MHS.

³⁵³ *Ibid.*, 127.

³⁵⁴ Pilkington, *Journals of Samuel Kirkland*, 128.

³⁵⁵ Most Natives in praying town and Christianized communities did not belong to a given church as full members. See Stockbridge list of church members prior to 1759. "Name of Church Members," copy of

often worried about the state of Native souls in certain towns, and believed that some Indians innately had more “humanity” than others.³⁵⁶ Kirkland began drawing these distinctions between the Christian Indians as early as 1789. These observations often occurred when Kirkland contrasted the Stockbridge and Brothertown Indians with the Oneida. He expressed more concern for some Oneida communities that harbored strong allegiances to the “Pagan Party.” Various political and religious groups existed in all the towns, but Kirkland reserved most of his concern for the Oneida villages. Kirkland’s heightened concern for some of these communities foreshadows the conflicts that emerged between the Natives themselves.³⁵⁷

By 1791, factionalism, white land encroachment, and degradation in the surrounding environment allowed some Christian Indians to believe that “heaven and earth... [are] against us.”³⁵⁸ Collectively, the communities strove for the same goal to live together peacefully away from white influence, but each group had their own ideas about how best to achieve these goals and live the proper Native-Christian existence. Historian David Silverman asserts that these communities’ conflicting identities were wrapped up in the issue of land use – whether to maintain current subsistence practices and lease excess land to whites, or to adopt plough agriculture and husbandry in order to comply with white notions of rightful property ownership.³⁵⁹ This appears to be true, but at the heart of these conflicts over land lay significant differences in gender and environmental adaptations.

By the time these communities lived together in the late eighteenth century, major differences in cultural adaptations were accentuated when placed in relief next to one another. Geographic and cultural space played a key role in determining how each community or region of communities developed. However, these adaptations and identities were still not entirely fixed and underwent changes through the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

published list, *Stockbridge Indian Study Collection*, Stockbridge Town Library and Archives, Stockbridge, Massachusetts.

³⁵⁶ Kirkland Journals, 170.

³⁵⁷ This explains why Kirkland requested to swap places with Sergeant on several occasions. Sergeant journal, Sergeant journals, 27 July 1791, MHS.

³⁵⁸ Quote by Samson Occom in Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 125.

³⁵⁹ Silverman, 130 -32.

After the American Revolution it became increasingly difficult for the Oneida to maintain traditional hunting and agricultural practices that they had thus far retained even through Christianization. The Oneida territory around Fort Stanwix was largely burned and destroyed during the course of the war. After the close of the conflict, white encroachment led to deforestation and a lack of access to key hunting and fishing grounds.³⁶⁰ Although maintaining old subsistence practices became increasingly difficult, the Oneida simply adjusted their hunting routine to accommodate the environmental and spatial change. According to the Kirkland, the Oneida villages were often abandoned for weeks at a time, several times a year, in order to find hunting grounds, and even to find plentiful sources of fish.³⁶¹ Originally, the Oneida only needed to travel between five and ten miles to find plentiful sources of fish and game. By 1760, they were already forced to travel in excess of 60 miles or more to reach hunting grounds.³⁶² Oneida already extended Kirkland stated that they left to go “to their fishing quarter” or “into the woods.”³⁶³ On other occasions, some villages would be abandoned completely if a harvest did not yield enough to last the Oneida through the winter.³⁶⁴ Ultimately many Oneida sold or leased their remaining hunting lands to repay debts. According to a 1796 report on the state of the Oneida Christian Indians, their loss of land did little to encourage male plough agriculture among them. The report stated that they were “still roving” in search of provisions.³⁶⁵

After visiting the Oneida, those writing the report claimed that Oneida men despised farming and believed that “labor in cultivating the earth is degrading to the character of man, ‘who... was made for war and hunting and holding ‘councils,’ and that squaws and hedgehogs, are made to scratch the ground.”³⁶⁶ As a consequence, the report claimed that only two or three families in all of Oneida territory adopted proper Christian agriculture, although that number is

³⁶⁰ Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 115, 132.

³⁶¹ Fishing expeditions did not typically require a community to abandon their town for an extended period of time. This is a testament to the growing scarcity of the animal populations. Kirkland journal, 30 September 1787; Pilkington, *Journals of Samuel Kirkland*, 128, 133, 160, 180, 266; 1796 Report, MHS, 23.

³⁶² Joseph R. Glatthaar, and James Kirby Martin, *Forgotten Allies: the Oneida Indians and the American Revolution* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006), 62.

³⁶³ Kirkland journal, 16, 30 September 1787, MHS.

³⁶⁴ Kirkland journal.

³⁶⁵ 1796 Report, MHS, 17.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 15, 17, 23.

likely much higher considering the two men's unfamiliarity with the Oneida.³⁶⁷ But missionary sources do corroborate the assertion that most Oneida families planted only corn, beans, potatoes, and the field work was carried out primarily by women³⁶⁸

The situation in New Stockbridge and Brothertown was quite different. Both towns distributed their land to individuals who claimed private ownership of the land.³⁶⁹ In New Stockbridge, it was reported that two-thirds of the men and nine-tenths of the women were "industrious," meaning that they maintained a proper English home and adhered to English farming practices, with neatly aligned fences separating fields of flax, Indian corn, wheat, and livestock. Stockbridge Indians were also more likely to purchase their clothing, suggesting that hunting was no longer heavily utilized to supplement their English textiles.³⁷⁰ The Natives of New Stockbridge also erected a saw mill and smith's shop for the manufacture of tools. Christian Indian women in the town became weavers of woolen and linen cloths due to increase in sheep raising and flax cultivation.³⁷¹

These differences in relationships with the land also appear to have permeated each community's retention of Native herbal remedies. Herbal treatments make an appearance in several of Kirkland's journal accounts. Although he dismissed Indian herbal remedies as a form of "art" that attempted to conjure evil spirits, Kirkland took several "Indian doses" on his travels around Oneida territory when his own medical supplies were not available. Herbal remedies for the treatment of rheumatism and dysentery both worked for Kirkland, even if he did not fully believe in their effectiveness.³⁷² However, it does not appear that Native remedies for all ailments were known or maintained in every Oneida community. Kirkland provided medicine for a sick

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 22-3.

³⁶⁸ Kirkland describes Oneida harvests and expressed his loss of patience when trying to get the Oneida to adopt English agriculture and husbandry. Kirkland journal, 15 October 1790, MHS.

³⁶⁹ The Oneida agreed to divide their lands similarly, but there apparently was no evidence to suggest that this took place. 1796 Report, MHS, 29.

³⁷⁰ There is also little evidence to suggest that the Stockbridge or Brothertown Indians maintained the hunt to the degree of their Oneida neighbors. 1796 Report, MHS, 21-2.

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 25. Sergeant's daughter established the "Society for Promoting Good Morals, Industry, Manufactures among Women" at New Stockbridge. This society acted as a school and likely assisted in teaching many women and girls to weave. Sedgwick, *Stockbridge*, 92.

³⁷² Kirkland journal, 30 September 1787 and 9 June 1791, MHS.

family at Oriskany, suggesting that there may not have been a shaman or healer in every village.³⁷³

Among the more anglicized New Stockbridge and Brothertown Indians, Occom was the only individual who is known to have practiced herbal medicine. There do not exist any accounts of missionaries receiving herbal remedies in Brothertown or New Stockbridge. This could suggest that men and women in these communities no longer took on roles as healers by the end of the eighteenth century (for religious or environmental reasons) or that Occom solely provided these services for both Brothertown and New Stockbridge. Either way, the retention of herbal knowledge does not appear to have been as strong in the New England Indians' settlements as it was among the Oneida.

All of the Christian Indian communities in New York adapted Christianity and the Anglo-Christian lifestyle into their Native world views. Religious syncretism existed everywhere to a certain extent, but some communities retained Native cosmology as the dominant influence in their religion. Kirkland knew that in order to win Natives over to Christianity, he must consent to allowing some Native traditions to continue.³⁷⁴ However, this did not mean that he – or any other Protestant missionary – allowed easy admission into the church. Full membership was still very difficult to attain, and the overwhelming majority of Natives never became full members.³⁷⁵ Kirkland would also only baptize Native children if one of the parents held church membership.³⁷⁶ For this reason, many self-proclaimed Christian Indians traveled to French missions in order to have their children baptized at birth. Kirkland complained that Catholicism required less work on the part of the Natives to reform themselves, and that is why they were inclined to visit French missions and have their children baptized there.³⁷⁷

³⁷³ Kirkland journal, 18 May 1790, MHS.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 20 May 1790.

³⁷⁵ The 1796 report indicates that Kirkland only considered twenty-four women and four men among the 200 Oneida to be “serious Christians.” Only about six or seven Oneida children were baptized every year. 1796 Report, MHS, 13.

³⁷⁶ 1796 Report, MHS, 13.

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 11.

Kirkland was not the only missionary to complain about the habits of the Oneida Indians. Sergeant also noted that the Oneida had many misunderstandings about Christianity and Christian living.³⁷⁸ This is likely because the Oneida held a stronger attachment to former Native traditions and remained closer to their non-Christian Iroquois kin than the New England Indians. In the 1790s, many Christian Oneidas became influenced by Iroquois prophets who mixed Native spirituality with Christian morality.³⁷⁹ The Oneida were caught between two worlds more drastically than their New England brethren. When faced with harsh criticism from both Natives and Anglo-Americans, other Iroquois communities, particularly among the Seneca, experienced similar religious revivals that drew from both Christianity and Native cosmology.³⁸⁰ Additionally, there was also a larger non-Christian population among the Oneida. "Pagan" Oneidas believed that "the Great Spirit gave the white man a plough, and the red man a bow and arrow, and sent them into the world by different paths, each to get his living in his own way."³⁸¹ Even the New England Indians were criticized for some of their unique religious thought. The Stockbridge and Brothertown Indians started to believe that they were cursed by the Great Spirit or God for the sins of their forefathers. While this was a commonly held belief among even the most pious and Anglicized Christian Indians, Kirkland did not condone this line of thinking. Rather, he criticized the idea as merely an excuse to not work hard at improving their lot.³⁸²

In order to be accepted by white missionaries, Natives had to adopt Christian notions of the world and the environment. Not only would a true Christian never accept Native herbal science as legitimate remedies, but he or she also kept the environment at an ordered distance, understanding the dangers of the "wilderness." In 1804, a Native man sat for questioning by Sergeant in order to be considered for membership in the church at New Stockbridge. Upon asking about his progress in prayer, the man answered in the affirmative, stating that he knew his

³⁷⁸ Sergeant journals, 5 June 1791, MHS.

³⁷⁹ Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 155.

³⁸⁰ Anthony F.C. Wallace, *The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970), 164, 184, 239, 240-3.

³⁸¹ 1796 Report, MHS, 17.

³⁸² Those who professed Christianity believed that they were punished because of their forefather's pagan past, those who were non-Christian believed that they were cursed because their ancestors had abandoned ancient traditions. Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 140-2.

prayers were beginning to work because he recently went on a journey and was “delivered without sin.”³⁸³ Most Christian Indians in New Stockbridge and Brothertown adopted this line of thinking. Hendrick Aupaumut, New Stockbridge sachem, often wrote of his concerns travelling into the wilderness and the likelihood of joining the “Idols of Heathens” when doing so.³⁸⁴ Upon leaving for the first removal to Oneida, Christian Indian and missionary Joseph Johnson called on the future Brothertown Indians to “preach the gospel to every creature” and “Behold this north america, once a howling wilderness, a barren wilderness, now blossom like a rose.”³⁸⁵

There is a marked difference between the avid agriculturalists touting these ideas about mastering and resisting the temptations of the environment and those of the Pagan Party who “address[ed] their devotions to the wind- others to the clouds and thunder,” or “rocks and mountains.”³⁸⁶ Although these two examples come from opposite ends of the spectrum (Native missionaries and self-proclaimed pagans), they demonstrate the differences in experience leading up to the settlement of the New York communities. These differences are worth noting in light of Christianized Oneida beliefs, which fell somewhere between these two extremes.

While Christianized Oneida communities did accept missionaries, attend services, and make initial efforts to adopt husbandry and plough agriculture, they were heavily influenced by their non-Christian brethren and maintained a conception of supernatural power. The 1796 report stated

notwithstanding their opportunities for religious improvement, [The Oneida] are still influenced in a great degree by their old mythology. They are universally firm believers in witchcraft and invisible agency. They pay great regard to dreams and omens, and attribute the most common events to causes with which there can be no natural connection.³⁸⁷

As early as 1787, an Oneida chief informed Kirkland that “ancient superstition in witchcraft had revived among them & prevailed to so great a degree notwithstanding their instructs &

³⁸³ Sergeant journals, 21 July 1804, MHS.

³⁸⁴ Hendrick Aupaumut, copy of manuscript letter to Reverend Peter Thatcher, 28 July 1795, Stockbridge Indian Collection, Stockbridge Town Library and Archives, Stockbridge, Massachusetts.

³⁸⁵ As quoted in Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 96.

³⁸⁶ 1796 Report, MHS, 9.

³⁸⁷ 1796 Report, MHS, 10.

professions of belief in the Christian religion.”³⁸⁸ Historian Anthony Wallace suggests that witchcraft and renewed interests in the supernatural were symptomatic of Native communities under stress. Around the 1780s and into the early 1800s, many Iroquois communities experienced further depopulation, a loss of environmental resources, and often, community self-loathing. Facing criticism and pressure from both whites and other Natives, those Native communities living geographically and culturally between two worlds were eager to find answers to their problems. Native peoples in desperate situations were attracted to Native prophets who offered repentance and salvation for sinners through a revival of Native rituals and practices.³⁸⁹

While it is clear that many Christian Indian women (and some men) in New England had visions in the first half of the eighteenth century, visions were no longer tolerated as legitimate forms of Christian expression for Natives, as evidenced in Kirkland’s journals. In 1787, an older Native woman was thought by the Oneidas to possess supernatural powers through poisoning people with her “incantations” as a large owl or running with “incredible swiftness in the appearance of a fox.”³⁹⁰ Elder Oneida men also openly expressed their visions as warnings for the grandchildren to return to the old ways of their fathers.³⁹¹ On several occasions, Kirkland felt obliged to instruct his congregants to not pay “any regard to their dreams or conjurers on such occasions.”³⁹²

Even though Kirkland disapproved of these visions and dismissed the use of Native herbal remedies, Christianized Oneida continued practice these traditions anyway.³⁹³ Similar to the Martha’s Vineyard Indians of the early eighteenth-century, Oneida women appear to have garnered power or respect from their communities through medicinal capabilities and religious piety. Without as much pressure from white society and missionaries, Oneida women had more room to assert some degree of authority. In addition to the prominent “doctresses” which healed

³⁸⁸ Kirkland journal, 30 September 1787, MHS.

³⁸⁹ Wallace, *Death and Rebirth of the Seneca*, 163, 184, 201, 239, 251.

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 30 September 1787.

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 11 June and 22 October 1791.

³⁹² Pilkington, *Journals of Samuel Kirkland*, 73.

³⁹³ It makes sense that they retained visions since, like Martha’s Vineyard Indians, the Oneida developed Christianity away from most whites. It is possible that Kirkland did not accept these visions because he was intimately familiar with Oneida spiritual practices.

Kirkland on a number of occasions, there is evidence to suggest that women were held in very high regard among the Oneida. For example, Kirkland recorded the funerals of at least two Christianized Oneida women of “flawless character” that he believed to be the most well-attended funerals he had ever witnessed. Many Natives from all over Oneida territory attend the funeral of one woman. Kirkland observed that he had never seen such “decency or solemnity” among them.³⁹⁴ Oneida women also still attended council meetings and treaties. At nearly every political or diplomatic meeting with the Oneidas, Kirkland noted the presence of their “chief women” or “head women.”³⁹⁵ Oneida children were still considered to belong to their mothers rather than their fathers. Even if the father was a respected Christian Indian, the woman or the woman’s family would care for the child in the event of a parental death.³⁹⁶ For Oneida women, there were a number of ways in which they could gain respect and authority within their communities while facilitating conversion and retaining Native traditions.

There were not as many outlets for achieving power and respect among the Stockbridge and Brothertown women. Power seems to have emanated more from their Christian piety and standing within the church rather than through a continuation of Native practices and female roles. These women were more likely to be church members who were respected by white missionaries for their superior morals and piety in comparison to Native men. However, these women did assert their power and gain respect from fellow community members as well. Mary Doxtater, a New Stockbridge woman, started a spinning and weaving school for girls and publically spoke out against the selling or leasing of New Stockbridge lands to white settlers. Her reason for not wanting to sell lands betrayed her Anglo-inspired sentiments toward the environment when she stated that “if they sell their land, & remove into the wilderness, they fear that they will remain savages forever.”³⁹⁷ Likewise, within the context of an Anglo-Christian setting, there is at least one example of a Brothertown woman speaking at a religious meeting.³⁹⁸

³⁹⁴ Kirkland journal, 25 October 1787 and 21 April 1790, MHS.

³⁹⁵ Pilkington, *Journals of Samuel Kirkland*, 144-5, 292.

³⁹⁶ 1796 Report, MHS, 13.

³⁹⁷ As quoted in Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 150.

³⁹⁸ Pilkington, *Journals of Samuel Kirkland*, 268.

Through channeling their authority through the church and Anglo-Puritan sentiments, these women found ways to help their communities adapt to Anglo society while also helping them to survive land encroachment intact.

For women in New Stockbridge and Brothertown, these examples suggest that women still asserted female communal authority within their communities. Interestingly, there is less evidence to demonstrate female assertions of power within Stockbridge and the Connecticut coastal communities prior to their removal to New York. Perhaps these communities in New York allowed more room for women once they were out from under strict colonial pressures to uphold Anglo patriarchy. Whatever the case may be, even Christianized Native women held some degree of respect and authority in their New York communities.

Given the differences within and among these communities, it is easy to understand the cultural strain that formed only a few years into the settlement. Each community shaped its identity from its experiences with Christianity and conversion over the past thirty to sixty years. These cultural adaptations became so deeply ingrained in ways of living and conceiving of the world that it was impossible to reconcile conflicting notions of what it meant to be a Christian Indian.

These divisions became so pronounced that missionaries, both Native and white, took it upon themselves to incorporate lessons of peaceful living into their sermons and religious meetings. Kirkland recorded in his journal, "I have made it an object of my constant & anxious attention in every village, when I visited them, to hold up the necessity of an accommodating and peace-making spirit."³⁹⁹ Around this same time, Sergeant was approached by several Indians within New Stockbridge who asked him "whether everything is to be given up for the sake of peace with our neighbor?" To which Sergeant replied, "Truth is more valuable than peace therefore in every case it is not to be given up."⁴⁰⁰ This question and statement highlights the desperation felt by Christian Indians and the stubbornness with which they clung to their adapted traditions and identities.

³⁹⁹ Kirkland journal, 13 October 1790, MHS.

⁴⁰⁰ Sergeant journals, 3 June 1791.

Critical exchanges between groups were varied, but all of the accusations centered on the others' relationship to the land, gendered divisions of labor, and general acculturation. The Oneidas compared the Brothertown Indians to greedy white settlers because the Brothertown Indians requested more land than on the reservation than the Oneida wanted to give.⁴⁰¹ Some Oneida Indians who embraced a hybrid Native-Christian religion even accused the Brothertown and New Stockbridge Indians of being "white lackeys" for their strict adherence to white religion and life style.⁴⁰² The report from 1796 concluded that "The Oneidas affect to despise their neighbors of Stockbridge and Brotherton for their attention to agriculture, but they are obliged to buy their corn and meat of them."⁴⁰³ This tense relationship was a two-way street.

New Stockbridge had strict liquor laws due to a desire to encourage the entire community to abstain from liquor. The Oneidas, who did not place such formal restrictions on their people, therefore, were seen as a bad influence on Christian morals.⁴⁰⁴ The Christian Indians of Stockbridge and Brothertown generally saw the habits of the Oneidas as lazy and savage. New Stockbridge sachem, Hendrick Aupaumut believed that "roving" men (i.e., men who were not sedentary agriculturalists) were a bad influence on children.⁴⁰⁵ Additionally, the new Stockbridge Indians believed that the Oneida's visions and supernatural beliefs were brought on by Satan.⁴⁰⁶ But these renunciations of pagan-like beliefs did not come from the New England Indians alone. Among the more strict adherents to Christian doctrine from the Oneida territory was Agwelondongwas, or "Good Peter," who resided in Old Oneida. Good Peter summed up the attitudes of all more anglicized Christian Indians when he stated that there were only two kinds of men and causes of conflicts in the world – those of "Christ & the devil."⁴⁰⁷ Through Good Peter's

⁴⁰¹ Silverman, 129-30.

⁴⁰² Silverman, 155-6.

⁴⁰³ 1796 Report, MHS, 23.

⁴⁰⁴ 1796 Report, MHS, 20. Although Oneida villages did not have formal laws forbidding the consumption of alcohol, both Christian and Pagan leaders denounced the activity and encouraged their people to remain sober.

⁴⁰⁵ Hendrick Aupaumut's "Indian History" in Electa Jones, *Stockbridge: Past and Present* (Springfield: Samuel Bowles & Company, 1854), 20.

⁴⁰⁶ Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 155.

⁴⁰⁷ Kirkland journal, 1 October 1791, MHS.

words, we begin to see the creation of a dichotomy between what he and many New England Indians believed to be true Christian Indians and merely savages.

This idea that some Christian Indians were better and more Christian than others came to fruition in the writing of Hendrick Aupaumut. Aupaumut's "History of the Muh-heak-kon-nuk People" describes his people's superiority over other Natives and white Christians. Aupaumut excused his ancestors' former savagery by stating that they only "apostatized" after a great famine. Aupaumut further revealed his Anglo-Puritan notions of the environment when he stated that Natives became less civilized once they "dispersed themselves throughout... the wilderness."⁴⁰⁸

Not only did New England Christian Indians like Aupaumut and Samson Occom believe that they were better than other Natives, they also came to the conclusion that they were better Christians than whites.⁴⁰⁹ By the 1770s, Christian Indians stopped referring to their European missionaries and neighbors as "Christians." Rather, they referred to them only as "whites."⁴¹⁰ Christian Indians came to identify Europeans as liars and hypocrites for not living by the Christian principles they professed. Occom even stated that "heathens possess more humanity than whites."⁴¹¹ One question from an anonymous New Stockbridge Indian points to Christian Indian perceptions of white Christian hypocrisy. The man asked "whether a hypocrite is not in a more dangerous situation than a sinner? What is meaning of the scripture, he that eateth & drinketh unworthily, eateth & drinketh damnation to himself?"⁴¹² The man reveals his concern with hypocrisy and suggests the likelihood of white damnation in the afterlife.

Aupaumut's history takes the idea of Christian Indian superiority a step further when he asserts that the Mahicans possessed an innately Christian past and were always better upholders of Christian principles than whites. He stated that

⁴⁰⁸ Aupaumut, "Indian History," 15.

⁴⁰⁹ New Stockbridge Christian Indian leader John Metoxen also claimed Indians were more religious and possessed better manners than whites. Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 178-9.

⁴¹⁰ Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 112.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, 138.

⁴¹² Kirkland journal, 3 June 1791, MHS.

Our ancestors before they ever enjoyed Gospel revelation acknowledged one Supreme Being ... the author of all things in heaven and on earth and governs all events; and he is good to all his creatures. They also believed that there is an evil one... that excites... persons to tell a lie – angry, fight, hate, steal, to commit murder, and to be envious.⁴¹³

Aupaumut further elaborates on the ancient teachings that his people passed down to their children. These teachings were “communicated to them by the Good Spirit” and strongly reflected the ten commandments of the Old Testament. These teachings emphasized neighborly love, an opposition to stealing and lying, and honoring one’s parents.⁴¹⁴ This ancient Indian monotheism is not known outside of Aupaumut’s writing and appears highly influenced by a mixture of Christianity and Native communal values.⁴¹⁵

This history, taken with other statements about their Oneida neighbors and white Christians suggests that the Christian Indians of New England (and especially those of New Stockbridge) believed in their innate superiority. Indeed, upon their removal to Brothertown and New Stockbridge, the New England Indians saw Oneida territory as their new Israel, and called upon God to guide them through the “wilderness” and help them to fulfill their destiny to proselytize to Natives and live apart from corrupt whites.⁴¹⁶ Occom wrote a hymn about the New England Indians’ journey into Oneida territory:

*Honor'd parents fare you well,
My Jesus doth me call,
I leave you here with God until
I meet you once for all.
My due affections I'll forsake,
My parents and their house,
And to the wilderness betake,
To pay the Lord my vows.
...Then thro' the wilderness I'll run
Preaching the gospel free;
O be not anxious for your son,
The Lord will comfort me.⁴¹⁷*

⁴¹³ Aupaumut, “Indian History,” 18.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid., 18-20.

⁴¹⁵ Jeanne and James P. Ronda also make this argument. See James P. and Jeanne Ronda. “‘As They Were Faithful’: Chief Hendrick Aupaumut and the Struggle of Stockbridge Survival, 1757 – 1830,” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 3.3 (1979), 45. It should be noted that Aupaumut has gendered his ancient “Good Spirit,” whereas traditional Native spirits or powers were never gendered.

⁴¹⁶ Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 89-91.

⁴¹⁷ As quoted in Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 90-1.

With their Congregationalist background, it is clear that the New England Indians were likely familiar with the idea of predestination and embraced the idea during times of uncertainty.

While the New England Christian Indians may have been the only Christianized Natives to think of themselves as God's chosen people, the Oneida Indians also believed in their own superiority. After initial refusals to split Oneida into distinct Pagan and Christian communities, the Pagan Party finally consented to the move in 1805 in order to protect their own integrity as Natives. These self-proclaimed pagans, like their Christian neighbors, ultimately came to the conclusion that to live among the opposition (in this case, the Christians) would inhibit their ability to retain their true "Indianness."⁴¹⁸ Some formerly Christianized Natives even turned to the Iroquois prophets who practiced their own hybridized Native and Christian religion, rejecting the Christian Indian assertion that an Anglo-Christian lifestyle led to community uplift.⁴¹⁹

Due to the significant changes that occurred in these communities leading up to their consolidation in New York, parting ways over cultural disagreements was all but certain. Each community saw the importance of expressing their own "sense of self" amidst white encroachment, but each faction found different ways of expressing their recently adopted Christian Indian identity.⁴²⁰ These competing identities did not allow Natives on the Oneida reservation to live in peace among each other. Rather, each faction thought that breaking ties with one another was the best way to preserve their individual communities.

In 1791, Sergeant recorded in his journal an anonymous question by a Native man. Sergeant was asked if it was "Possible to live peaceably with all men?"⁴²¹ The apparent answer to that question would not reveal itself for about another thirty years when the Natives living together in Oneida territory finally parted ways and dispersed across the country. A large part of this dispersal was the result of rapid white encroachment beginning in 1796, but the way the groups divided reveals their decision to part ways not only with advancing whites, but also with other Natives – Christian and otherwise.

⁴¹⁸ Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 155, 203.

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 155.

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*, 156.

⁴²¹ Sergeant journal, 5 June 1791, MHS.

Some of the Oneida chose to stay behind on their reservation, but their ability to remain on their land was quickly diminishing as deforestation and poverty took its toll.⁴²²

Most among the Pagan Party and the followers of the Iroquois prophets removed to Canada in the nineteenth century. Some of the more Christianized Oneida (those sharing the beliefs of Good Peter) chose to remove to Wisconsin with the Stockbridge and Brothertown Indians.

Although these Christian Indians who removed to Wisconsin thought of themselves as superior to whites and Natives, it is significant that they chose to live among the Western tribes that were culturally less similar to themselves than white society.⁴²³ After nearly a century of cultural adaptations, the Christian Indians of Southern New England, and some of their Oneida brethren, still utilized their kinship ties among their “savage” Western brethren. Despite this continued connection to other non-Christian Native brethren, Christian Indians once again clashed with non-Christian Natives, creating new divisions, and new removals.⁴²⁴

⁴²² 1796 Report, 37, MHS.

⁴²³ Silverman, 151.

⁴²⁴ Some Christian Indians who felt that white encroachment corrupted their Native and Christian morality too much, ultimately removed to Kansas. Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 207.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION: NATIVE AND CHRISTIAN

“He sighs to return to his friends, but there he meets with the most bitter mortification. He is neither a white man nor an Indian, as he had no character with us he has none with them.”
Jeremy Belknap and Jedidiah Morse, *Report on The Oneida, Stockbridge and Brotherton Indians*

The above quote by Jeremy Belknap and Jedidiah Morse suggests that Native culture underwent wholesale cultural change, and was therefore bereft of any Anglo or Native characteristics.⁴²⁵ The experience of average Christian Indians demonstrates how they constructed their own unique identity and culture, separate from whites and other Natives. However, Christian Indians drew from both Native and Anglo traditions to create their own world view and practices. Through their adjustments to home life, religion, and war, Christian Indians constructed an identity that was both Native and Christian.

Gender and environmental relations around the home were among the first cultural negotiations. While many Christian Indians (particularly those living in close proximity to white settlers) adopted Anglo agricultural practices (by choice or necessity), Native gendered spheres remained somewhat consistent. Women remained attached to the home or village, while men were responsible for activities outside the domestic sphere. Men began to tend to crops more often than women, but change in modes of production did not necessitate a complete adoption of Anglo culture. Many of those Native families who conformed to European standards of land usage still lived in wigwams and engaged in traditional Native warfare.

While gendered changes in food production *did* make Native communities more likely to adopt other Anglo ideas, such as a dangerous “wilderness,” Christian Indian women helped to maintain certain spiritual and practical connections to the environment. Through the process of fostering traditional practices, women carved out a space for themselves in an Anglo-Puritan

⁴²⁵ Jeremy Belknap and Jedidiah Morse, *Report on The Oneida, Stockbridge and Brotherton Indians*, 1796 (Indian Notes And Monographs) No. 54 (New York: Museum of the American Indian Heye Foundation) 1955, 12-4, 21-2. (hereafter referred to as 1796 Report, MHS).

world that did not accept female leadership or spiritual power. The role of women in maintaining Native spiritual and physical connections to the environment was not only pronounced in Christian Indian society, but also in nativist movements. In Native revivals, men were much more likely to emphasize a rejection of white tools and practices while women typically called attention to the need to return to former relationships with the environment.⁴²⁶ This continuity across movements highlights the importance of the environment in maintaining Native identity.

After the early eighteenth century, visions in nature, or anywhere else for that matter, were not longer tolerated by white missionaries. Kirkland's opinions and teachings likely represent those of most mid to late eighteenth-century white missionaries, suggesting that visions were quelled in areas where whites obtained spatial dominance. While this decrease in tolerance may have led to fewer women (and men) engaging in such activities, it is noteworthy that some of the Christianized Oneida still maintained these practices and beliefs, even after declaring themselves Christians. Their distance from white society coupled with the colonists' policy of *Realpolitik* along the New York frontier gave the Oneida the cultural upper-hand, resulting in a maintenance of certain Native spiritual traditions.

Environmental relationships were an important part of Native identity. Those who adopted the "wilderness" trope and integrated Anglo agricultural practices into their daily lives were less likely to engage in environmental spirituality and more likely to replace positive images of nature with negative ones. Adopting these physical and psychological connections to the environment changed the way Christian Indians interacted with other Natives, as evidenced in Aupaumut's rejection of female diplomacy. Although these new environmental notions delegitimized the Christian Indians in the minds of other Natives, Christian Indians conceived of themselves as the true Natives. For Christian Indian men, maintaining their Indianness centered more on community survival and proving their ability to fight like Natives rather than maintaining a gender balance at diplomatic meetings.

⁴²⁶ Gunlog Für, *A Nation of Women: Gender and Colonial Encounters Among the Delaware Indians* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 207.

Of course the environment itself also contributed to a community's ability to maintain cultural traditions. Changing community locations and white encroachment played a large role in altering the environment to which Christian Indians had grown accustomed. Environmental alterations necessitated new changes and adaptations that were not necessarily intended by whites or Natives.

Spatial locations also had a lot to do with cultural adaptations and the development of identity. War provided opportunity for Christian Indians to leave Christianized communities and fulfill part of their traditional Native masculinity. This Native male role was important for Christian Indian men to identify themselves as Natives and gain the respect of more traditional Western tribes.⁴²⁷ Once outside of their communities, Christian Indians maintained some of their traditional gender roles and played up their Indianness when among other Native nations.

Even though the New England Indians thoroughly acculturated themselves to white society, they still felt the need to remove themselves from close proximities to white settlements in order to survive as a community and fulfill their destiny as Christian Indians. The Christian Indians of New England arrived in the Oneida "Promised Land" only to find that they had grown apart from their Christian brethren. These New England Indians saw themselves as separate and superior to other Natives and white Christians, but that did not mean, as Belknap and Morse assert, that they were "neither a white man nor an Indian." Christian Indians did not conceive of Anglo-Puritan life ways and "Indianness" as being diametrically opposed. Rather, they created their own version of what a true Christian should be: a Native with an unflinching commitment to community survival.

⁴²⁷ Hendrick Aupaumut, "Extract of an Indian History," published in *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, Ser. 1, Vol. 5, 102.

REFERENCES

Primary Sources

- Aupaumut, Hendrick. "History of the Muhheakunnuk Indians." *First Annual Report for the American Society of Oromoting the Civilization and General Improvement of the Indians Tribes of the United States*. New Haven, 1824.
- . "A Short Narration of My Last Journey to the Western Contry." 1791. *Historical Society of Pennsylvania Memoirs*, vol. 2, pt. I. 1827. 76-131.
- Brooks, Joanna, ed. *The Collected Writings of Samson Occom, Mohegan*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Bragdon, Kathleen and Ives Goddard. *Native Writings in Massachusetts*. Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1988.
- Bross, Kristina and Hilary E. Wyss, eds. *Early Native Literacies in New England: A Documentary and Critical Anthology*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2008.
- Calloway, Colin G. *The World Turned Upside Down: Indian Voices from Early America*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's Press, 1994.
- Carter, Clarence Edwin, ed., *The Correspondence of General Thomas Gage*, Vol. 1. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1931.
- Chapman, George Thomas. *Sketches of the alumni of Dartmouth College: from the first graduation in 1771 to the present time, with a brief history of the institution*. Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1867.
- Clark, Michael P., ed. *Eliot Tracts: With Letters from John Eliot to Thomas Thorowgood and Richard Baxter*. Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2003.
- Dearborn, Henry. *Journal of the Expedition against Quebec, 1775, under Col. Benedict Arnold*. Ms. G. 33. 10. Boston Public Library. Boston, MA.
- Emerson, Amelia Forbes, ed. *Diaries and letters of William Emerson, 1743-1776, Minister of the Church in Concord, Chaplain in the Revolutionary Army*. Boston: Thomas Todd Company, 1972.
- Ewald, Johann. *Diary of the American War: A Hessian Journal*. Joseph P. Tustin, trans. and ed. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979.
- French, Allen, ed. *A British fusilier in revolutionary Boston; being the diary of Lieutenant Frederick Mackenzie, Adjustant of the Royal Welch Fusiliers, January 5-April 30, 1775*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1926.
- Gideon Hawley Letters. Ms. N-1379. Massachusetts Historical Society. Boston, MA.

- Gookin, Daniel. "An Historical Account of the Doings and Sufferings of the Christian Indians in New England." 1677. Reprinted in *Archaeologia Americana: Transactions and Collections of the American Antiquarian Society* 2 (1836); reprint, Whitefish: Kessinger, 2010.
- Harrison, Samuel Alexander, ed., *Memoir of Lieut. Col. Tench Tilghman: Secretary and aid to Washington*. Albany: J. Munsell, 1876.
- Hopkins, Samuel, *Historical Memoirs Relating to the Housatonic Indians*. 1753. Reprinted in *Magazine of History with notes and queries*, extra no. 17 (1911).
- Mayhew, Experience. *Indian Converts; Or Some Account Of The Lives And Dying Speeches Of A Considerable Number Of The Christianized Indians Of Martha's Vineyard*. London, 1727; reprint, Whitefish: Kessinger, 2005.
- Mayhew, Matthew. *The Conquests and triumphs of Grace: Being A Brief Narrative of the Success which the Gospel Hath had among the Indians of Martha's Vineyard*. London, 1695; reprint, Whitefish: Kessinger, 2010.
- McCallum, James D., ed. *Letters of Eleazar Wheelock's Indians*. Hanover: Dartmouth College Publications, 1932; reprint, Whitefish: Kessinger, 2008.
- Merriam, Joseph. *Diary of an Unknown soldier at Cambridge, 1775*. Ms. Ch. B12. 72. Boston Public Library. Boston, MA.
- Murray, Laura J., ed. *To do good to my Indian brethren: The Writings of Joseph Johnson, 1751-1776*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998.
- Peyer, Bernd, ed. *American Indian Nonfiction: An Anthology of Writings, 1760s – 1930s*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007.
- Sedgwick Family Papers. Ms. N-851. Massachusetts Historical Society. Boston, MA.
- Simcoe, J.G. *Simcoe's Military Journal*. New York: Bartlett & Welford, 1844.
- Society for Propagating the Gospel Among the Indians and Others in North America. Ms. 176. Massachusetts Historical Society. Boston, MA.
- Stockbridge Indian Collection. HC 1973.001. Stockbridge Town Library and Archives. Stockbridge, MA.
- Timothy Pickering papers. P-31, 69 reels. Massachusetts Historical Society. Boston, MA.
- Wheelock, Eleazar. *A Plain And Faithful Narrative Of The Original Design, Rise, Progress And Present State Of The Indian Charity School At Lebanon, Connecticut*, 1763; reprint, Whitefish: Kessinger, 2010.
- Wheelock, Eleazar. *A Continuation Of The Narrative Of The Indian Charity School: Begun In Lebanon, In Connecticut*, 1775; reprint, Whitefish: Kessinger, 2010.

Secondary Sources

- Axtell, James. *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.
- Barr, Juliana. *Peace Came in the Form of a Woman: Indians and Spaniards in the Texas Borderlands*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007.
- Bragdon, Kathleen. "Gender as a Social Category in Native Southern New England." *Ethnohistory* 43, no. 4 (Fall 1996): 573-592.
- . *Native Peoples of Southern New England, 1500 – 1650*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996.
- Brooks, Lisa. *The Common Pot: The Recovery of Native Space in the Northeast*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008.
- Brasser, Ted J. *Riding on the Frontier's Crest: Mahican Indian Culture and Cultural Change*. Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1974.
- Calloway, Colin G, and Neal Salisbury, eds. *Reinterpreting New England Indians and the Colonial Experience. Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts; Vol. 71*. Boston: Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 2003.
- Calloway, Colin G. *The American Revolution in Indian Country: Crisis and Diversity in Native American Communities*. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- . *The Shawnees and the War for America*. New York: Viking, 2007.
- Chaplin, Joyce E. *Subject Matter: Technology, the Body, and Science on the Anglo-American Frontier, 1500 – 1679*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001.
- Cronon, William. *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1983.
- Den Ouden, Amy E. *Beyond Conquest: Native Peoples and the Struggle for History in New England*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005.
- Dowd, Gregory Evan. *A Spirited Resistance: The North American Indian Struggle for Unity, 1745-1815*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992.
- Dunn, Shirley. *The Mohican World, 1680-1750*. Fleischmanns: Purple Mountain Press, 2000.
- Fenton, William N. "A Further Note on Iroquois Suicide." *Ethnohistory* 33, no. 4 (Autumn, 1986): 448-457.
- Fett, Sharla M. *Working Cures: Healing, Health, and Power in Southern Slave Plantations*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002.
- Fisher, David Hackett. *Paul Revere's Ride*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Frazier, Patrick. *The Mohicans of Stockbridge*. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1992.

- Fur, Gunlög. *A Nation of Women: Gender and Colonial Encounters Among the Delaware Indians*. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009.
- Glatthaar, Joseph R. and James Kirby Martin, *Forgotten Allies: the Oneida Indians and the American Revolution*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2006.
- Gura, Philip F. *A Glimpse of Sion's Glory: Puritan Radicalism in New England, 1620-1660*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1984.
- Gustafson, Sandra M. *Eloquence is Power: Oratory and Performance in Early America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000.
- Hulstun, James. "John Eliot's Empirical Millenarianism." *Representations* 4 (Fall 1983): 128-153.
- Jones, Electa. *Stockbridge Past and Present: Or, the Records of an Old Mission Station*. Springfield: Samuel Bowles and Company, 1854.
- Little, Ann M. *Abraham in Arms: War and Gender in Colonial New England*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007.
- Mandell, Daniel R. *Behind the Frontier: Indians in Eighteenth-Century Eastern Massachusetts*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996.
- . *Tribe, Race, History: Native Americans in Southern New England, 1780-1880*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008.
- Martin, Joel, and Mark A. Nicholas, eds. *Native Americans, Christianity, and the Reshaping of the American Religious Landscape*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010.
- Mayer, Holly A. *Belonging to the Army: Camp Followers and Community during the American Revolution*. Columbia, University of South Carolina Press, 1996.
- Merchant, Carolyn. *Ecological Revolutions: Nature, Gender, and Science in New England*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989.
- Miles, Lion G. "The Red Man Dispossessed: The Williams Family and the Alienation of Indian Land in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, 1736-1818." *The New England Quarterly* 67, no. 1 (March, 1994): 46-76.
- Mochon, Marion Johnson. "Stockbridge-Munsee Cultural Adaptations: 'Assimilated Indians'." *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 112, no. 3 (June 21, 1968): 182-219.
- Morrison, Dane. *A Praying People: Massachusetts Acculturation and the Failure of the Puritan Mission, 1600-1690*. New York: Peter Lang, 1998.
- Niethamer, Carolyn. *Daughters of the Earth: The Lives and Legends of American Indian Women*. New York: Collier Books, 1977.
- O'Brien, Jean. *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians out of Existence in New England*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010.

- Plane, Ann Marie. *Colonial Intimacies: Indian Marriage in Early New England*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000.
- Quintal, George. *Patriots of Color: 'A Peculiar Beauty and Merit' African Americans and Native Americans at Bunker Hill*. Boston: Division of Cultural Resources, 2004.
- Ronda, James and Jeanne Ronda. "'As They Were Faithful': Chief Hendrick Aupaumut and the Struggle of Stockbridge Survival, 1757 – 1830." *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 3.3 (1979): 43-55.
- . "The Death of John Sassamon: An Exploration in Writing New England Indian History." *American Indian Quarterly* 1, no. 2 (Summer 1974): 91-102.
- Neil Salisbury, *Manitou and Providence: Indians, Europeans, and the Making of New England, 1500-1643*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1984.
- Sanday, Peggy. *Female power and male dominance: On the origins of sexual inequality*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981.
- Schiebinger, Londa. *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004.
- Silver, Peter. *Our Savage Neighbors: How Indian War Transformed Early America*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2008.
- Silverman, David J. *Red Brethren: The Brothertown and Stockbridge Indians and the Problem of Race in Early America*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010.
- . *Faith and Boundaries: Colonists, Christianity, and Community among the Wampanoag Indians of Martha's Vineyard, 1600 – 1871*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- . "'We Chuse to Be Bounded': Native American Animal Husbandry in Colonial New England." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 60, no. 3 (July 2003): 511-548.
- Simmons, William Scranton. *Spirit of the New England Tribes: Indian history and folklore, 1620-1984*. Hanover: University Press of New England, 1986.
- Steinberg, Theodore. *Nature Incorporated: The Industrialization and the Waters of New England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Szasz, Margaret Connell. *Between Indian and White Worlds: The Cultural Broker*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994.
- Taylor, Alan. "Captain Hendrick Aupaumut: The Dilemmas of an Intercultural Broker." *Ethnohistory* 43, no. 3 (Summer 1996): 431-457.
- Todish, Timothy J. *The Annotated and Illustrated Journals of Major Robert Rogers*. Fleischmanns: Purple Mountain Press, 2002.
- Wallace, Anthony F.C. *The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970.

Warfel, H.E., "Notes of Some Mammals of Western Massachusetts," *Journal of Mammalogy*, Vol. 18, no. 1 (February 1937).

Wheeler, Rachel. "Hendrick Aupaumut: Christian-Mahican Prophet." *Journal of the Early Republic* 25, no. 2 (Summer 2005): 187-220.

---. *To Live Upon Hope: Mohicans and Missionaries in the Eighteenth-century Northeast*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008.

White, Richard. *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Willoughby, Charles C. "Houses and Gardens of the New England Indians." *American Anthropologist* Vol. 8, no. 1 (Jan. – Mar., 1906): 115-132.

Wyss, Hilary. *Writing Indians: Literacy, Christianity, and Native Community in Early America*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Kallie Kosc received her Honors Bachelor of Arts Degree in History with a minor in Art History from the University of Texas at Arlington in 2008. She graduated through the university's Honors College by completing an undergraduate thesis entitled, "Cultural Threads: Weaving the Scots-Irish into the Fabric of Colonial Texas." Her foundations and research interest in cultural history continued into her graduate work at UT – Arlington as she focused primarily on cultural transfer between Native peoples and Europeans as well as environmental and gender history.