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Surprising Metamorphoses: Transformations of Race in Early American Literatures

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ABSTRACT

Surprising Metamorphoses: Transformations of Race in Early American Literatures

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"Surprising Metamorphoses: Transformations of Race in Early American Literatures," analyzes early American literary representations of race within the context of contemporaneous belief systems. Contrasting sharply with subsequent periods, much late eighteenth-century thought conceptualized race as an external, mutable bodily condition that could change over time. Identifying how this thinking informs a symbolics at work in literature, this dissertation argues that the notion of transformable race structures how early American literary texts depict the production of racial identities. In comparative chapters on Samson Occom and Phillis Wheatley, Benjamin Franklin and Hendrick Aupaumut, J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur and John Marrant, and Royall Tyler, this dissertation demonstrates how these authors use language emphasizing the potential malleability of physical features—what I call a symbolics of metamorphosis—to portray the production of racial identities. While many critical race studies of nineteenth- and twentieth-century American cultural production show how racial identities develop in opposition to each other, this project examines the cultural logic by which they take form through one's potential to metamorphose from one race into another. To prevent scholars from anachronistically reading later understandings of race back onto these earlier texts, this dissertation posits a historically-specific, transformational model of critical race theory that rewrites the way we understand racial formation in early American literatures.

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In memory of

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whose example inspired me to do this

and

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whose presence each day made it possible

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Chapter 1

Surprising Metamorphoses

When Henry Moss arrived in Philadelphia in 1796, he appeared to be undergoing what historian John Sweet calls "one of the strangest metamorphoses possible in eighteenth-century America" (272). A black man who had lived most of his life in Virginia, Moss appeared to be turning white. The way that his dark skin seemed to be giving way to light splotches fascinated some of the most significant figures in early American science and politics: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Samuel Stanhope Smith, Benjamin Rush, and Benjamin Smith Barton, among others. Over the course of approximately twenty years, Moss was subjected to bizarre experiments such as the blistering of his skin to determine where his "color" resided. He also put himself on display in various U.S. cities, where onlookers flocked to get a first-hand peek at the black man who was becoming white.[1] In 1789, John Bobey, a West Indian who was relocated to London as a child in the 1770s, captured public attention because of his striking multihued appearance. A portrait of Bobey was sent to the Library Company of Philadelphia (see fig. 1), and German natural historian Johann Friedrich Blumenbach commented on him in his 1795 On the Natural Varieties of Mankind (Sweet 277). Still earlier, Maria Sabine captured the imagination of natural philosophers. Born in 1736 in New Spain, she too had light patches on her dark skin, and the Comte Georges-Louis Leclerc de Buffon included her case and portrait in his 1777 Histoire Naturelle (Sweet 276).[2]

Although by the early nineteenth century people such as Moss, Bobey, and Sabine were considered fantastic anomalies rather than legitimate objects of scientific inquiry and debate, in the eighteenth century, they were seen as "products of systematic transformation that could be explained and reliably replicated" (Melish 6). At the close of the eighteenth century, the

Figure 1 "Primrose: The Celebrated Piebald Boy."

From Joanne Melish, Disowning Slavery: Graduation Emancipation and "Race" in New England, 1780--1860. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1998.

"phenomenon of people of color who seemed to be turning white became a matter of intellectual concern and public interest," and attention to them had been increasing for several years (Sweet 274). As Sweet points out, the Marine Sabine case helped lead to Buffon's famous analysis "that this remarkable birth might be due to the degenerative effects of the American climate on African bodies," and, moreover, "that if there were cases of blacks becoming white, it was only logical to assume that there were whites becoming black" (276). While Buffon stopped short of specifically applying his theory of degeneration to Europeans relocated to the so-called New World, Abbé Raynal, an especially fervent adherent to Buffon's propositions, extended the theory and made the explicit claim (Jordan 479).

In so doing, Buffon and Raynal fanned the flame of the debate over how the many "varieties" of the one "species" of humankind came into existence—a discussion made all the more pressing for colonists who had not only immigrated to America but also recently had broken political ties with the mother country. In the midst of declaring independence, fighting the Revolutionary War, and penning the Constitution, many founding fathers also debated how Africans and Native Americans came to look the way they did. They also wondered whether or not these peoples would ever, in the American environment or with the assistance of European cultural practices, become white. Implicitly, if secondarily, they also troubled over what effect the New World environment might have on themselves and other white settlers (Parrish 102). Several issues were at stake in this broad-ranging debate. Foremost, how *did* humankind's different "varieties" come into being? If all humans shared an identical origin and environmental factors over time influenced their external characteristics, what would happen when people from different geographic areas began to migrate *en masse* to new locations? Specifically, if the New

World influenced the appearance of indigenous people of America and if transported Africans might become white, would it be possible that whites might become something else?

As these questions suggest, racial thought at the close of the eighteenth century differed radically from that of subsequent periods. Many early Americans saw race as an external bodily trait incrementally produced by environmental factors and continuously subject to change.[3] In this intellectual climate, the concept of race as a biological category had yet to emerge. Instead, many debated the extent to which both physical and cultural conditions influenced racial features; thus, race was largely considered to be mutable. Not every early American believed that exposure to the hot sun would make a white person into a "Negro" over the course of a few weeks. However, many subscribed to the idea that the body, its racial features, and racial identity itself were always in flux and had to be consistently maintained; this belief informed a broad cultural logic about racial construction. Most people thought that the body's racial features were formed from extended exposure to environmental elements, might be impacted by various modes of living, and could change over time. While historians for many years have documented various aspects of what I refer to as a notion of transformable race, literary critics have yet to consider the far-reaching implications this concept of race has for our reading of early American literatures.[4] This study aims to do just that.

"Surprising Metamorphoses: Transformations of Race in Early American Literatures" analyzes early American literary representations of race within the context of contemporaneous systems of thought. Identifying how late eighteenth-century racial thinking informs a symbolics at work in literature, I argue that the notion of transformable race structures how early American literary texts depict the production of racial identities. In comparative chapters on Samson Occom and Phillis Wheatley, Benjamin Franklin and Hendrick Aupaumut, J. Hector St. John de

Crèvecoeur and John Marrant, and Royall Tyler, I demonstrate how these authors use language emphasizing the potential malleability of physical features—what I call a symbolics of metamorphosis—to portray the process of racial formation. I use the term symbolics to emphasize the way these writers insistently return to the trope of metamorphosis to depict the production of racial identity. I show how these literatures marshaled or questioned aspects of thinking about race (such as natural-historical, nativist, environmentalist, and theories of social influence that I describe below) unique to their time period and location. I take my title from Crèvecoeur, who describes the "surprising metamorphosis" Americans undergo, as I will demonstrate in chapter 4, as a racial transformation.

Thinking Race in Early America

During the late-eighteenth century, various ways of thinking about race circulated in the United States. In what follows, I trace the outlines of several (sometimes overlapping) systems of thought that contextualize the close readings of literary texts that constitute the subsequent chapters. First I will describe natural history and nativism, two conflicting accounts of the creation of humankind and, therefore, explanations of racial difference. Then I will discuss how natural-historical ideas influenced the ways U.S. leaders discussed racial identity in the Americas, specifically their theories of environmentalism and social influence. While most early American studies scholarship neglects to consider these ways of thinking together, this dissertation newly juxtaposes them to provide a much richer understanding of the rhetorics early American writers could draw upon in their depictions of racial identity.

Throughout the eighteenth century, natural philosophers sought to categorize all plant and animal life: depending upon a classification of external characteristics, they subdivided the

human species into different varieties and then debated the causes of these "varieties."[5] During this time, two hugely important and popular works of natural history reoriented how Europeans and Anglo-Americans thought about differences among humans. In 1735, Swedish naturalist Carl von Linné (Linnaeus) first published System Naturae, one of the earliest attempts to classify nature. System Naturae drew upon similarities in appearance in plants, animals, and humans to impose taxonomic order on all of visible life.[6] Linnaeus viewed people as flexible according to their environment or interbreeding (Jordan 216-222; Dain 9-13); while species were fixed, varieties, according to historian Audrey Smedley, "reflected changes caused by such external factors as climate, temperature, and other geographical features" (163). Compatible with the Biblical monogenetic story of Adam and Eve, Linnaeus' account attributed differences among varieties to these "external factors."

Building upon but also countering aspects of Linnaeus' work, in 1749 Buffon began publishing his Histoire Naturelle. Buffon's work is remembered most famously for claiming that the New World's cold and unhealthy environment could sustain only underdeveloped savages while the Old World nourished Europe's rich and civilized culture. While basing his differently classified system on reproduction, Buffon generally agreed with Linnaeus that the differences among the varieties of persons could be attributed to the effects that the environment had on the human form over time. In addition to food, soil, air, and geography, Buffon claimed that climate was the biggest cause of bodily difference; he also believed that a group's cultural habits and customs could affect their physical body (Smedley 166). As Buffon wrote,

> From every circumstance may we obtain a proof, that mankind are not composed of species essentially different from each other; that, on the contrary, there was originally but one species, which, after being multiplied and diffused over the whole surface of the

> earth, underwent divers changes from the influence of the climate, food, mode of living, epidermal distempers, and the intermixture of individuals, more or less resembling each other . . . (4:351).

Both Linneaus and Buffon and their burgeoning field of thought, staying true to the Judeo-Christian creation story, attributed surface distinctions among men to external forces that act *upon* one's body, rather than only to inherent and fixed differences lodged *within* one's body.[7] The transformation of varieties of men from the assumed original whiteness resulted from surface changes to the body.

Analyzing racial classification in England in the 1700s, Roxann Wheeler elaborates how this natural-historical thinking influenced Britons' "racialization of the body politic." According to Wheeler, during the last part of the century, four-stages theory (which differentiated among peoples according to their "states of civilization") was being replaced by natural-historical understandings of the racialized body as the main way to delimit variances among humans (7).[8] Arguing that "humoral/climate theory" influenced both four-stages thinking and natural history, Wheeler emphasizes the particularly "elastic" understandings of race at this time, in terms of rubrics used to outline racial difference. As she explains, most Britons conceptualized Adam and Eve as white. Thus, if they followed monogenetic thought, they reasoned that all other peoples on the globe transformed physically as they moved to different parts of the world and interacted with various climates. Only in the "last quarter of the eighteenth century," did skin color become "the primary signifier of human difference." Wheeler tells us that

> climate theory was the secular rationale for various skin colors, behaviors, and abilities. The linchpin to understanding most eighteenth-century pronouncements about the body's appearance is climate. Positing that all bodies (minds, emotions, and the like) responded

> similarly to the environment, climate theory also suggested that some environments were better than others for enabling humans to fulfill their potential . . . Comprehending the profound respect Europeans granted climate accounts for their superficial and malleable beliefs about skin color and race during the eighteenth century. (21)

Classical humoral theory conceived of the body as porous, acted upon by the four humors (blood, bile, phlegm, and choler) that influenced the body's "complexion," a term indicating both skin color and temperament or disposition. Wheeler notes that skin color had yet to become a "'deep' concept" because it retained its linkage to this ancient thinking (27). Furthermore, the work of Buffon and Linnaeus helped establish complexion as "a significant visible human difference" (30). As Nicholas Hudson makes clear, toward the conclusion of the eighteenth century, notions of "varieties" of men were being replaced by "race."

Enlightenment natural philosophers, however, were not alone in positing truths regarding the creation of humankind and the distinctions among red, black, and white peoples. Whereas natural philosophy posited the body's change in appearance over time, those who are now known as "nativist" Indians claimed original difference that resulted from separate creations. Describing what he calls "the Indians' Great Awakening" from 1745-1775, historian Gregory Dowd contends that this "militant, pan-Indian religious movement" was "a widespread, often divisive, yet intertribal movement . . . spreading the truly radical message that Indians were one people" (Spirited Resistance 19, xix).[9]

Amongst the tribes of the Susquehanna and Ohio Valley regions, various Native Americans reported learning from the Master of Life that Native, whites, and Africans were created separately. They also became aware that they should practice entirely discrete religions: Christianity was for Europeans exclusively, since God did not give the Bible to the Indian or to

the black man (SR 30). Of the many separatist spiritual leaders detailing this type of vision, the Delaware prophet Neolin became the one most recognized by British colonists by the 1760s. Neolin's message had several implications: Indians should not partake of European culture (including alcohol and religion), they should evict white settlers from their lands, and they should return to their own traditional Native customs (Richter 193-98).

Neolin's teachings and the larger nativist movement also articulated a "new theory of polygenesis" that emphasized Indian unity and Anglo-American impurity. This "Indian theory of separate creation" demanded that Natives eschew all European practices to maintain sacred power and the balance of the universe (SR 21). Daniel Richter contends that nativist thought implied

> that the Bible with its accounts of creation and salvation were "true," but only for the Europeans for whom it was intended; that Native creation stories and modes of spirituality were equally true and revealed what the Master of Life expected of them; that the mixing of European and Indian ways was the source of Native peoples' current problems; and—the key insight of all—that Indians were a single people with common interest that transcended national rivalries. Thus, in the same period that diverse colonists of varied European backgrounds were discovering in North America their first glimmerings of a "White" racial identity, nativist Indians perhaps even more compellingly discovered that they were "Red." (181)

As Dowd claims, "there was no single Indian outlook but at least two major contending viewpoints" at this time (SR xxiii). Nativist Indians greatly differed from what he terms "accommodationist" Indians, those who "often cooperated with, although they were rarely controlled by, the imperial powers" (SR xxi). Dowd explains that the "notion of separate

creation gave legitimacy to the Indians' way of life" (SR 30). Thus, when accommodationist Indians would convert to Christianity or maintain close relationships with Anglo-Americans, nativist Indians would accuse them of "abomination" (SR 31). As we shall see, although nativist thought was most prominent in the Susquehanna and Ohio Valley areas, its powerful and much-circulated argument for separate creations impacted how Native Americans anywhere in Indian country could discuss racial difference.

By the time of the American Revolution, natural history and nativism, these two fairly well-established explanations of racial difference, framed how American colonists confronted the issue of race in the New World. Perhaps it is not surprising that the natural-historical theories of Linneaus and Buffon influenced many Anglo-Americans. Indeed, in White Over Black, Winthrop Jordan explains how what he terms "environmentalist" thinking arose in tandem with revolutionary and republican politics of the late eighteenth century, and he outlines the implications for debates about race's potential changeability.[10] Environmentalism—a manner of thinking that conceived all men as essentially equal but affected by their different environments—became "an engine in the hands of republicans asserting their independence from the Old World" (270). Indeed, "[t]he environmentalist mode of thought presupposed that the differences among men were circumstantial, that they were alterable, and that the core of the human nature was everywhere, as Benjamin Rush put it, 'the same'" (289).

After the Revolution, Americans had to find a way to acknowledge their English heritage and also to assert that they were "not Englishmen." The environment provided a perfect answer to this dilemma. U.S. citizens had established a new government, but they also turned to their natural surroundings to argue for the exceptionalism of their new national identity. The American environment would make them truly different from their English ancestors, even if the

Revolution had not done so fully. Henceforth, because of their location in the New World, they would be particularly American (Jordan 335-6).[11]

In this context, Buffon's claims about the New World helped prompt Thomas Jefferson's impassioned response about the continent's physical attributes in his Notes on the State of Virginia (circulated privately in manuscript before being published in France in 1784, in London in 1787, and in the US in 1788). Jefferson argues for the nurturing quality of the American environment by refuting Buffon's allegations about Native Americans. He also advances his "suspicion only" that "the blacks, whether originally a distinct race, or made distinct by time and circumstances, are inferior to the whites in the endowments both of body and mind" (192-3). According to Jordan, "Jefferson seemed unable to push the logic of environmentalism very far; in fact he stopped at just the point where that logic made a case for Negro inferiority" (437).[12]

Others in scientific circles felt differently. In 1787, Samuel Stanhope Smith published An Essay on the Causes of the Variety of Complexion and Figure in the Human Species, what Jordan calls "the first major American study of the races of mankind" (486).[13] Like Jefferson, Smith held that transplanted Europeans would not degenerate in the New World. However, writing from a monogenetic Christian perspective, Smith argued for the shared origin of *all* mankind and attributed changes in man's countenance to the influences over time of *both* the climate and what he called one's "state of society" and "habits of living" (Smith 93). For Smith, these social practices and cultural habits included "diet, clothing, lodging, manners, government, arts, religion, agricultural improvements, commercial pursuits, habits of thinking, and ideas of all kinds naturally arising out of this state" (109).

Smith's inclusion of physical environs as an influence on race was not new. However, his emphasis on civilization specifically responded to the racial questions posed by the mass

immigration to the Americas. Contemporaries largely understood Smith to claim that if Africans displaced to the New World were put in favorable conditions, they would eventually come to resemble whites (Jordan 515). As Jordan explains, "[t]he state of society and mode of living, [Smith] proclaimed, powerfully affected the human complexion" (514). Although he felt that facial features were more malleable than skin tone, "he never closed the door on the possibility that America was going to whiten black men" (Jordan 516). Not all American natural historians were convinced, but Smith's theses profoundly influenced the likes of Benjamin Rush and others. While there was much debate over Smith's assertion, "the notion that environmental influences could cause Negroes gradually to become less Negroid was by no means ridiculous or scientifically disreputable" (Jordan 516).

The natural historians who explored these lines of thinking did not limit their conversations to enslaved Africans. They also applied these environmentalist claims to Native Americans. Ever since the first contact between whites and Natives, colonists had to account for what they felt was the radical difference between themselves and various indigenous groups. Late eighteenth-century environmentalism provided a counterintuitive way to account for that distinction: fundamentally similar to whites, North American Indians were different only because of the circumstances in which they had lived.[14] Unlike Africans, however, whom some Anglo-Americans felt would "whiten up" as a result of climatic and other environmental changes, Indians were expected to become more like whites specifically through their adoption of white social practices and cultural habits (Sheehan 41).

The implication of these competing claims about the changeability of Africans and Native Americans, of course, caused white natural historians to ponder what might happen to European bodies in the new American environment (Parrish 77-102). As historian Kariann

Yokota argues, "[b]eing so closely identified with the 'colored' people who lived in their midst created a perceived need for a distinction between white, civilized Americans, and the so-called savage Americans such as Indians and Africans. . . . What unified [American defenses against degeneration theories], however, was a reliance upon the link between American 'whiteness' and the materiality of civilization" (218). Samuel Stanhope Smith argued that Americans kept from degenerating *not* because of a favorable New World climate *but rather* because of "their high degree of civilization" (Yokota 222). While most natural historians had stressed the role of climate in developing lighter or darker races, Smith emphasized that "physical features also were influenced by . . . such things as 'manners' and 'language,' and for Europeans, entailed the 'arts of civilization'" (223). While climate theory implied that European whites migrating to the New World might become savage and perhaps darker, Smith claimed that cultural practices would help them maintain their civilized status and ostensibly lighter skin tone. In other words, even if relocated Europeans could not transport their Old World climate and natural surroundings with them to the New World, they could take their culture. Smith also hypothesized that even if whites were to degenerate, they would never completely resemble the Indian in physical appearance because of their civilization and because their "features" were originally formed in the climate of Europe (Yokota 224). As Yokota points out, this clearly paranoid "hope" was "produced in a post-colonial moment of insecurity and vulnerability" (227).[15]

The way that some Americans emphasized the state of society as an agent in the production of physical racialized features differs from the way Britons understood society to function in relationship to racialization in Britain for much of the eighteenth century. Wheeler documents how British culture largely measured differences between humans through beliefs

about *either* physical characteristics (which were coming to be read as signifying "race") *or* the state of society. However, toward the end of the century and particularly in the U.S., physicality and society were complexly linked in terms of producing and/or signifying "race" (Sheehan 1-44). The British four-stages theory viewed "civilization" mainly as a way to *delineate* human difference. But for Anglo-Americans trying to establish a nation-state while living in the same geographic environment as Native Americans, "civilization" and society came to be considered an agent in—either a *cause of* or a *safeguard against*—the process of degeneration.[16]

Thus, early Americans understood society at times to be an active agent in the production—rather than mainly in the description—of human difference. Furthermore, it came to occupy a paradoxical place in the cultural imaginary. It was thought *to influence* physical characteristics as an environmental factor itself and simultaneously *to be influenced by* environmental factors (such as climate and geography) in the same way as physical characteristics. Therefore, society could become both the cause of one's degeneration and the resulting proof of it.[17]

Against Anachronism

At its most basic level, this project demonstrates that literary scholars must understand the aforementioned ways that early Americans thought about race in order to analyze how these ideas shaped their literatures. The rhetorical practices of the writers examined here have gone unnoticed because these cultural and intellectual histories have not been sufficiently studied by either critical race scholars or early American literary critics. Indeed, these disparate discourses must be brought together to give us a better understanding of the complexity of eighteenth-

century racial thinking. Because of the engagement cultural production has had with the creation of scientific knowledge, ignoring these earlier ideas about the body has limited our view of the complex way authors engage with contemporaneous views about race.

Thus, the contours of late eighteenth-century racial thought—with its emphasis on the debated mutability of the racialized body—necessitate a reworking of critical race studies frameworks to make them historically specific and, thus, better suited for analyzing early American processes of racialization. Many critical race studies of nineteenth- and twentieth-century American cultural production by scholars such as Toni Morrison, Eric Lott, and David Roediger show how racial identities develop in opposition to each other.[18] In contrast, this study of late eighteenth-century literature examines the cultural logic by which such identities take form through one's potential to metamorphose from one race into another. To prevent us from anachronistically reading later understandings of race back onto these earlier texts, I posit a historically-specific, transformational model of critical race theory that refigures our understanding of racialization in early American literatures.[19]

Conceiving of race in an earlier, transformative way rather than a later, oppositional one typifies, I want to suggest, Sandra Gustafson's claim that early American studies can examine "the disjunction between an established theoretical model and the archive offered by colonial America" with "the potential to create new paradigms" ("Historisizing" 310). Making clear the distinction between eighteenth-century and later processes of racialization operative in American literatures, this dissertation develops a new theory of racial formation to help us interpret those cultural productions. If literary scholars have come to think of the constitution of identities in part as the reiteration of recognizable acts, we must also understand that those acts can vary widely over time. While it is embedded with the historical contextualization of late eighteenth-

century racial thought, this transformational model presents critical race studies with a new way of conceptualizing racial formation.

Symbolics of Metamorphosis

The general epistemological understanding of human difference that I sketched above structured how any author could write about race in this time period. However, each of these early American figures engaged with different aspects of the notion of transformable race. As I explore in the following chapters, writers responded in various ways to these contemporaneous ideas about what might influence characteristics that were coming to be read as "race." In chapter 2, I show how Mohegan minister Samson Occom and African-American slave poet Phillis Wheatley engage the late eighteenth-century cultural logic of transformable race to depict how racial identity comes into being. I examine how their writings utilize religious and natural-historical discourses to depict the production of racialized physical features and to illustrate how beliefs about racialization necessarily impact religious and aesthetic epistemologies.

Both these Christians of color draw upon widely-accepted protestant religious thinking about the body and about the distinctions among humankind's varieties in their portrayals of racialization. I argue that Occom's "Short Narrative" (1768) and A Sermon, Preached at the Execution of Moses Paul, an Indian (1772) use contemporaneous beliefs about the status of the "red" Indian body to take issue with the contradictions in colonialists' religious viewpoints. I then show how Wheatley's Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral (1773) combines mythological with natural-historical beliefs about the generation of poetic genius and skin pigmentation to characterize the black poet not as a surprising oddity but rather as an expected

likelihood. I demonstrate how both Occom and Wheatley characterize the process of "becoming colored" as part of a divine plan.

Reading the work of Benjamin Franklin and Mohican Hendrick Aupaumut, my third chapter shows how these two U.S. diplomats explore the extent to which one's mode of living might influence racial identity. I argue that Franklin and Aupaumut both unsettle relationships between particular states of society and the production of race. Furthermore, each focuses on the relationship between racial and political identity.

In his Autobiography (written from 1771-1790), Franklin both questions and validates the idea that one's habits might impact his racial status. Aupaumut, in "A Short narration of my last Journey to the western Contry [sic]" (1792) uses the notion of "one color"—a common concept in eighteenth-century Native American diplomacy—to advance a unique theory about what constitutes racial alliance. For him, race does not result from various modes of life (as many white natural historians thought), nor does it spring from separate creations (as nativist Indians held). Rather, he depicts "color" as a part of one's past and identity that can be mobilized politically, even if members of a group do not agree on what "race" itself is. Neither Franklin nor Aupaumut, I argue, depicts race as an innate physical trait nor as a consistently pliable characteristic, as many in the eighteenth-century suspected it could be.

In contrast to Franklin and Aupaumut, J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur and John Marrant invest both social practices and the natural environment with the power to cause drastic racial change, what Crèvecoeur's Farmer James calls a "surprising metamorphosis." Indeed, if Occom and Wheatley both explore how one comes to be raced, Crèvecoeur and Marrant examine situations where a character changes from the race he "is" into something else. My fourth chapter analyzes how Crèvecoeur's Letters from an American Farmer (1782) and Marrant's A

Narrative of the Lord's Wonderful Dealings with John Marrant, a Black (1785) feature the protagonists' journeys among American Indian tribes. These two texts consider how an adopted way of life can influence one's racial identity, and they depict race as a condition one manages to sustain. I demonstrate how these texts explore the possibilities of transformable race by imagining the result of a long stay among Native Americans.

I contend that Letters examines how whites might transform racially in America and that Marrant's Narrative portrays a picture of an African-American "becoming" Native American. I argue that these texts demand a reconsideration of how cultural critics currently understand the concept of passing—a later postulation of how the external body could fail to display one's "true" trace. Instead, the concept of racial transformation is key to understanding fully these notions of disguise. I show how these scenes of racial metamorphosis imagine the process of becoming the racial other, not merely like the other.

In the final chapter, I demonstrate how Royall Tyler's The Algerine Captive (1797) marks the slow change from Enlightenment conceptions of an external, flexible race to later beliefs about internal and fixed racial difference. While working as a physician on a slave ship, Dr. Updike Underhill's sympathetic identification with African slaves "blackens" his soul in a metaphorical interior racial metamorphosis that immediately precedes his capture by North Africans. I argue that Tyler uses eighteenth-century theories of sentiment to portray racial difference moving into the body's corporeal interior. Because his cross-racial sympathy is closely linked to his enslavement, Underhill represses that identification upon his return to the U.S. in order to reinstate his citizenship status. The narrative depicts that the white citizen can transform into the rhetorically internally-raced slave; however, it simultaneously denies white-black affective identification and the abolitionist sentiment to which it gives rise.

Reading early American literary representations of race within the historical context of varying belief systems, this study identifies how authors use symbolics of metamorphosis to depict the production of racial identity. To do so, it brings together discourses around race that early American scholars previously studied only in isolation. Additionally, by considering unexpected pairs of writers, this dissertation demonstrates how authors writing in a vast range of genres and from radically different subject positions engage in cross-racial conversations regarding early American racial formation. Assembling these different voices while maintaining the historical and cultural specificity for each, this study shows that these writers do not always agree and that racial thinking does not necessarily line up according to racial groupings.

This dissertation also posits an historically-specific model of critical race theory to understand racial formation in early American literary and cultural production. By emphasizing the transformable aspect of race, this project completely reorients the way we understand early American racialization. Further, although critical race studies has importantly pried apart "scientific" from social understandings of race, this study shows how these discourses develop in tandem. Therefore, it illustrates how scientific and cultural understandings of race impact each other *and* how they have changed over time. Resisting the substitution of our own assumptions for those of other eras, this work consequently helps us not only to understand better the nuances of early American culture but also to reach a more meaningful assessment of our own.

Chapter 2

Becoming Colored in Occom and Wheatley's Early America

"[C]olour, whatever be its cause, be it bile, or the influence of the sun, the air, or the climate, is, at all events, an adventitious and easily changeable thing, and can never constitute a diversity of species."
~Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, On the Natural Variety of Mankind (1775)

"Historians want to write histories of biology in the eighteenth century;
but they do not realize that biology did not exist then, and that the pattern of knowledge that has been familiar to us for a hundred and fifty years is not valid for a previous period. And that, if biology was unknown, there was a very simple reason for it: that life itself did not exist. All that existed were living beings, which were viewed through a grid of knowledge constituted by *natural history*."
~Michel Foucault, The Order of Things (1970)

In the preface material to Phillis Wheatley's 1773 Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral, her owner John Wheatley attests to his slave's prodigious literacy by referring to a letter she sent to Native American minister Samson Occom. "As to her Writing," John states, "her own curiosity led her to it; and this she learnt in so short a Time, that in the Year 1765, she wrote a Letter to the Rev. Mr. Occom, the *Indian* Minister . . ." John Wheatley's statement launched a two-centuries-old critical tradition of often referring to—but seldom examining—the literary affiliation between "America's two most famous non-whites [of the] time" (Grimstead 388). Indeed, Wheatley's famous diatribe against slavery in her 1774 letter to Occom has become a cornerstone of Wheatley scholarship illustrating her poetry's anti-slavery sentiment. However, even as Wheatley and Occom scholars frequently cite Wheatley's caustic statement—"How well the cry for Liberty, and the reverse Disposition for the exercise of oppressive Power over others agree,—I humbly think it does not require the Penetration of a Philosopher to determine" (Connecticut Gazette 3)[20]—very few juxtapose the work of these key early American writers of color. In contrast, this chapter compares how they conceptualized the process of "becoming colored" in colonial America.

In what follows, I argue that these writers engage with contemporaneous debates about how environmental factors alter the surface of the human body and that they do so to depict the production of racial difference—*both* the formation of professedly impressionable physical features *and* the ways those attributes signify in systems of racialization. Drawing upon the idea that racial characteristics were produced over time since the original creation, Occom and Wheatley use a symbolics of metamorphosis to explore the construction of racial categories in ways particular to early America. Figuring centrally in how Occom and Wheatley characterize racial formation is a notion of transformable race, a sense of the external mutability of the racialized body. For Occom, the beliefs his Anglo and Native American contemporaries held about the status of the "red" Indian enable him to challenge colonial society's contradictory Christian epistemology in his 1768 "A Short Narrative of my Life" and his 1772 A Sermon, Preached at the Execution of Moses Paul, an Indian. In Poems, Wheatley fuses ancient mythological beliefs and natural-historical axioms about the production of poetic genius and dark skin to characterize the black poet as an inevitable outcome rather than an anomalous exception. Furthermore, she points to how the practice of slavery mobilizes blackness as a category of identity in order to underwrite its own system of forced labor.

Protestant religious thinking about the body and the distinctions among humankind's varieties informs how these writers portray racialization. Marshaling certain aspects of monogenetic natural history that validated Christian creationism, Occom and Wheatley represent the process of "becoming colored" as a Godly-inspired design. It is one that establishes universality throughout and simultaneously variegates beautifully the vast diversity of humankind. Thus, to misread the variation of God's peoples as a signifier of irreparable difference is to sin.

However, while they rely upon religious doctrine to portray the constitution of racial identities, their engagements with processes of racialization diverge from one another. Able to travel extensively and sermonize authoritatively among multiple Native tribes, Occom and his writings are necessarily contextualized by the widely diverse indigenous religious traditions and practices with which he came in contact—both Christian and what we now term "nativist" beliefs. He demonstrates that how both Christian and nativist customs account for racial difference force religious whites to evaluate their epistemological worldview. Although also drawing on a Christian and natural-historical understanding of racial difference, Wheatley—infamously forced to prove that a female black slave could indeed write poetry—utilizes changing beliefs about the effect of the African climate to intervene in debates about race, science, and aesthetics. Recovering these distinctions unearths the breadth of approaches to theorizing racial difference that Native and African-Americans in 1770s British North America could and did take.

"I was Born a Heathen": Recontextualizing Occom's Life

While most Occom biographies focus on his position within colonial missions, this chapter takes what Joanna Brooks calls an "indigenist" perspective ("Indian World" 33). Attending to the differences between white and Native worlds *and* to the diversities within late eighteenth-century Indian country, it recognizes how other historical occurrences affected his life and work. Situating Occom's history within Native American worldviews and the discipline of natural history demonstrates how debates about the potential transformation of the Indian body pervaded Native American and British colonial culture.[21] Given the fairly recent "discoveries" made by natural historians who invented and then classified the species of "man" into different

varieties, great tensions existed between the orthodox Christian origin story of Adam and Eve so recently underwritten by this "natural" history and what have come to be called "nativist" beliefs about *separate* red-white creations. Occom's narrative and sermon intervene in these debates, not by posing an alternate theory, but by considering the implications of competing ways to account for racial difference. Occom's work explores how the Indian body comes to be seen as and considered "red."

Occom was born on an unknown day in 1723 into the Mohegan tribe in southeastern Connecticut. Believed to be a descendant of the famous chief Uncas, Occom experienced what LaVonne Brown Ruoff terms a "traditional" Mohegan upbringing (75). Growing up in a wigwam, Occom remained largely unaffected by British society until he converted to Christianity during the Great Awakening.[22] After his conversion, Occom remained active in tribal life; in 1742, sachem Ben Uncas II appointed Occom one of twelve Mohegan councilors. Occom later studied under Congregationalist Eleazar Wheelock and spent 1761-63 intermittently preaching to the Oneida tribe of the Iroquois Confederacy.[23]

However, the Christian Great Awakening was not the only spiritual revival sweeping Indian country in the eighteenth century to which Occom was exposed. Indeed, the nativist spiritual movement also inevitably inflected Occom's missionary work among the easternmost Iroquois tribe, although most biographical studies of Occom do not draw an explicit connection between Occom's Christian ministry and nativism.[24] As I explained in chapter one, "the Indians' Great Awakening," taught that Native, whites, and Africans were created separately (Dowd, SR 21).[25] As Dan Richter explains, nativist thought implied a pan-Indian identity. If Europeans were coming to think of themselves as "'White,'" nativist Indians conceived of themselves as 'Red'" (181).

The nativist "doctrine of separate creations" of the Indians' Great Awakening underwrote what is now known as Pontiac's War (Richter 193).[26] While the majority of this violence took place within the Ohio Valley, the effect of nativism and the war spread into the Great Lakes region, affecting the six tribes of the Iroquois Confederacy, including the Oneidas with whom Occom worked during this time.[27] Panic caused by the rebellion reached areas located between the Oneidas of New York and the Mohegans of Connecticut.[28] The news of Pontiac's rebellion spread through both Indian country and British colonial territory.

From 1761-63, Occom made three trips to the Oneidas during the beginning of the rapid spread of nativist thought. Although, as biographer William Love notes, Occom's diaries say frustratingly little about the tribes he visited (38), his notoriety amongst the Six Nations and his periodic unease amongst the confederacy are well-recorded.[29] Occom's missionary work among the Oneida finally ended in 1763 as a result of the outbreak of the Pontiac War (J. Brooks, Collected Writings 70; Love 98). Furthermore, as Mohegan tribal historian Melissa (Fawcett) Tantaquidgeon Zobel attests, the widespread anti-Indian sentiment resulting from Pontiac's rebellion contributed to the decision that Occom should raise missionary funds abroad rather than in the colonies (17). Thus, when Occom left Oneida, we can assume he would have understood the tenets of this non-Christian indigenous religious movement.[30] While the war effort eventually collapsed, prophetic nativism remained alive and well (SR 36).

As I discussed in chapter one, Enlightenment natural philosophy, like nativism, also advanced theories about humankind's creation and different "varieties." By the time Occom raised money throughout England for the Moor Indian Charity School, both Linnaeus and Buffon had attributed flexible surface characteristics among men to external factors (such as climate, temperature, food, and mode of living) that acted *upon*—rather than fixed differences lodged

within—one's body.[31] As Roxann Wheeler has shown, these natural histories were influenced by Biblical monogenism (14-33). While nativism claimed that separate creations caused racial difference, natural philosophy attributed the development of humankind's varieties to surface changes to the body, a theorem on which both Occom and Wheatley drew.

Just as natural history considered how literal bodily transformation produced Natives' "human difference," Occom's teacher, Eleazar Wheelock, conceptualized Native American conversion as a metaphorical bodily transformation. Ethnohistorian James Axtell shows that Wheelock thought that his students' conversion process necessarily involved making them culturally white and therefore suitable for becoming proper British subjects. Axtell writes that Wheelock entered into his Christianizing mission "with a driving vision of tawny souls blanched by the Bible" ("Wheelock's" 176). If Wheelock saw the conversion process as metaphorically whitening Indians, some Christians believed in its literal effects. Many New England whites debated whether religious conversion would cause racial transformation and "so strongly associated Christianity with whiteness that they imagined Indian and African converts physically changing color" (Sweet 142).[32] Thus, Occom lived in a world infused with possibilities of physical or figural metamorphoses of the Indian body—a topic that structures Occom's work in heretofore unacknowledged ways.

When Occom returned home from England, he entered what biographer William Love calls the "Dark Days at Mohegan" (152). Despite his promises, Wheelock had neglected Occom's family in his absence, had decided to move the Indian School from Connecticut to New Hampshire, and had chosen to educate more white than Indian students. Occom's relationship with Wheelock began its famous deterioration. The Boston Commissioners, one of the missionary societies that had supported Occom's ministry, began to spread rumors contesting his

"authenticity" as an Indian and recent Christian convert (Peyer 74).[33] To respond to this hearsay and to protest the fact that he had received less funds than white missionaries engaged in identical work, Occom sat down on Sept. 17, 1768, to pen an appropriate response in what has come to be known as his "Short Narrative."[34] Recontextualizing Occom's text within this much wider history, we find Occom hinging his entire narrative on its last word: so.

To Make the Indian "So"

During the Great Awakening, evangelicals like George Whitefield and Jonathan Edwards converted large numbers of Africans and Native Americans, ostensibly following Christian theology's primary concern with the state of one's soul, despite the supposed status of one's racialized body.[35] Occom's "Short Narrative," however, emphasizes the link between physicality and spirituality (unlike many religious autobiographies).[36] It also shows that while Christian missionaries might profess to care only about the Indian's soul, how they register inherent difference in the body undermines their own beliefs, especially in the validity of their Biblical creation story and its implied theories of "racial" difference. Occom's "Short Narrative" queries how "Indianness" comes to be displayed on the body and how this characteristic begins to be read as "race." If Occom in part composed his narrative to dispute the Boston Commissioners' accusations of Indian "inauthenticity," he counters these reports less by detailing autobiographical facts and more by querying what it means to be an "authentic" Indian.

At a key point in his narrative, Occom points out that although the Boston Commissioners begrudgingly grant him money to sustain his mission a bit longer, he receives less than his missionary peers. He claims that "these Same Gentlemen, gave a young Missionary, a Single man *one Hundred Pounds* for one year, and fifty Pounds for an Interpreter,

and thirty Pounds for an Introducer; so it Cost them one Hundred & Eighty Pounds in one Single Year, and they Sent too where there was no Need of a Missionary" (57-8). Occom contrasts this with his own tasks: "Now You See What difference they made between ^me^ and other Missionaries; they gave me 180 Pounds for 12 years Service, which they gave for one years Service in another Mission -- In my Service (I speak like a fool, but I am Constraind) I was my own Interpreter. I was both a School master and Minister to the Indians, yea I was their Ear, Eye & Hand, as Well as Mouth" (58).[37] Occom then poses the rhetorical question, "what can be the Reason? that they used me after ^this^ manner . . ." He answers his own question by relating a short anecdote:

> I Cant think of any thing, but this as a Poor Indian Boy Said, Who was Bound out to an English Family, and he Usd to Drive Plow for a young man, and he Whipt and Beat him allmost every Day, and the young man found fault with him, and Complaind of him to his master and the poor Boy was Calld to answere for him^self^ before his master,--and he was askd, what it was he did, that he was So Complaind of and beat almost every Day; he Said, he did not know, but he Supposd it was because he could not ^drive^ any better; but says he, I Drive as well as I know ^how^; and at other Times he Beats me, because he is of a mind to beat me, but Says he, I believe he Beats me for the most of the Time "because I am an Indian". (58)

After Occom uses this story to show that whites base their actions toward the boy (and, by implication, Occom himself) on the fact that he is an Indian, he concludes his "Short Narrative":

> So I am ready to Say, they have usd thus, because I Cant Instruct the Indians so well as other Missionaries, but I Can asure *them* I have endeavourd to teach them as well as I

> know how—but I must Say, I believe it is because I am poor Indian. I Can't help that God has made me So; I did not make my self So. – (58)

Occom draws the distinction between what he is "ready to Say"—that the commissioners treat him differently because they suspect that he cannot draw as many converts as other missionaries—and what he "must Say"—that he endures discrimination from the white Boston Commissioners because he is an Indian.[38] The closing paragraph then shifts the emphasis from Occom's own stated suspicions about why he receives this treatment to the Boston Commissioners' undecidability about what to do with an Indian and what an Indian, exactly, *is*.

Here, Occom draws attention to the contradictory nature of the Boston Commissioners' beliefs about the Indian, especially in light of how nativist doctrine, Christian creation theology, and natural history account for the production of radical difference. The phrase "God has made me so" raises many questions, since the very issue of God's creation of the Indian was one of the most hotly debated topics of the period. Occom's use of *so* instead of *one*, underscores not the *fact* of the Indian (e.g., I am poor Indian; God has made me *one*) but rather the *condition* of the Indian (e.g., I am poor Indian; God has made me *so*).[39] The phrase states that God created him, but its construction begs the question: what exactly is *the condition* of the "poor Indian" that God has made? Is the state of the Indian, on the one hand, that of a body that carries inherent difference since creation or is it a body that mutates and changes over time? To ask the question a different way, is the Indian body able to undergo various types of transformative processes that produce what then becomes read as "difference?"

How the commissioners define "so," according to what they believe about the status of the Indian, necessarily dictates one of two implications for their religious epistemology. If one follows the Biblical creation story, where all humankind descends from Adam and Eve, then one

must understand the Indian body as changeable and attribute any contrasts among humans, as most natural historians did, to changes wrought by the environment. However, if one believes that the Indian is unchangeable, then he must have been irreparably different since his creation. If one holds this belief about Indian distinction (as the actions of the Boston Commissioners seem to suggest), then one's stance resonates with radical nativism that claimed separate Indian-white creations. By posing this choice, Occom's narrative not only highlights the hypocrisy of the Boston Commissioners paying a white missionary more money for less work; it demonstrates that if the commission treats Indians as inherently different when its espoused religion claims that they share the same creation, it compromises its entire belief system and values.

By juxtaposing "God has made me So" with "I did not make my self so," Occom's narrative implies that his treatment from the Boston Commissioners results less from what he has done in his life than from what they believe about how God created him. If the commissioners think that Indian bodies cannot and have not transformed over time from their initial shared creation with whites, then what Occom has done in converting to Christianity and abandoning his "heathenistic" ways matters very little. Occom's final paragraph places as much emphasis on white belief about the Indian body. Therefore, the rhetorical structure of the "Short Narrative" performs exactly the same engagement with white readers that Occom describes with the Boston Commissioners: what he actually does matters only insofar as how it is interpreted through their beliefs about the creation of the Indian.[40] This does not privilege white thought above all else, but rather muses on the processes of signification and interpretation of the racialized body within Christian discourse. Unashamed of being an Indian, Occom demonstrates that the problem centers on how the Boston Commissioners must decide on and act accordingly upon what they think *being an Indian means*.

Therefore, when Occom says "Now you See what difference they made between me and other missionaries" (58), he does not just discuss "making *a* difference" in terms of discrepancies in pay. He alludes to the way that the Boston Commissioners choose to interpret the signification of the body. In other words, the "difference they made" has less to do with how surface characteristics come to be on the body and more to do with how the commissioners choose to interpret these traits—their power works to "produce" signs (skin color, physical features) that they then believe signify in a certain way. It is not just that they made "a" difference—i.e., treating dissimilarly the Indian and the white missionaries. It is that they *made difference*, by their own production of a certain kind of distinction.[41] Occom not only queries the various explanations for how red people "became red" (how the Indian body has transformed since its Adamic creation), but also how difference itself (how those "changes" might signify) is made.[42] Occom shows how the British Commissioners' entire Christian faith and racial ideological system are implicated in the beliefs they hold about the status of the Indian body.

Dis-figuring the Image of God

The issue of the Indian body recurs as a central concern for Occom four years later when he gave what would become one of the era's most famous sermons.[43] In June 1772, Moses Paul, a Native American recently convicted of murdering the white Moses Cook after being thrown out of a tavern for being drunk, solicited Occom to "preach to me upon [the execution]." Paul cited the fact that "we are of the same nation" (qtd. in Chamberlain 445).[44] Occom agreed, and by the time he stood in front of the congregation a little over a month later, the atmosphere was a racialized one: Occom was the first American Indian to deliver the execution sermon of another

Native American *and* the details of Paul's crime and trial made racial difference the key component.

Moses Paul protested his conviction by arguing that the jurors' preconceived assumptions about drunken Indians caused them to misinterpret the evidence presented about that night (Chamberlain 437). Because all British subjects were guaranteed equal treatment before the law, the court "ignored Paul's status as a racial subject" by relegating difference to the private sphere and constituting him "as a legal subject only" (Chamberlain 437). However, when convicted of capital murder, Paul's appeal petition asked the judges to consider if the court's refusal to recognize racial difference publicly could actually ensure justice (437). As Chamberlain claims, Paul "propose[d] that racial difference may have created the gap between the testimony of the witnesses and the conclusions of the jury" (438). Paul contended that because he acted in self-defense, he should be charged with manslaughter, not capital murder. Chamberlain sums up the importance of the jurors' preconceptions: "If the court attributed to Paul not agency but savagery, however, the circumstances of the killing would be irrelevant, for degrees of intentionality apply only to rational beings. If all Indians are savages, then all killings of whites by Indians are savage murders—despite extenuating factors" (438). Paul pointed to how the jurors' views, particularly shaped by racial ideology, held more sway that what he considered the factual evidence of the case.

When Occom then delivered Moses Paul's execution sermon on a blustery September day, it had all the trappings of a noteworthy event.[45] Additionally, the fact that a few years earlier Wheelock had charged Occom with drunkenness himself (Nelson, "Racial Self" 48) made Indian drinking a tricky topic for Occom to negotiate. A teeming audience of local clergymen, British colonists, Native Americans, and the convicted murderer himself packed into New

Haven's First Congregational Church.[46] Before Occom could even draw breath to preach in a situation equally momentous and delicate, many questions hung in the air. How would the internationally famous Indian preacher address the convicted Wampanoag Indian and the racially-mixed crowd? Would he chastise his fellow Natives for their savage and drunken nature or denounce the enduring nativist movement? Would Wheelock's past accusation of Occom's own rumored intemperance affect how he could address inebriation? And perhaps most importantly for the condemned Moses Paul on the last morning of his life, would Occom allude to Paul's opinion that white-held assumptions about "drunken Indians" influenced the judgment against him?

In the sermon, Occom quotes Dr. Isaac Watts' The Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament:

> *See the vain race of mortals move,*
>
> *Like shadows o'er the plain,*
>
> *They rage and strive, desire and love,*
>
> *But all the noise is vain.* (6)

Here, the only "race" of which Watts and Occom speak is that "of mortals," not whites, Indians, or Africans.[47] How "race" becomes a defining feature between rather than of mortals suffuses the rest of the sermon. Occom considers bodily transformations related to religious experience. Also, by implicitly exploring the question of how Native Americans "became red" since their original creation—as Wheatley will examine the process of "becoming black"—the sermon considers the implications of potential answers.[48]

Occom begins by stressing the universally transformative qualities of sin—rather than contemplating how Christian conversion might "whiten" Native Americans—and emphasizing

the separation of the soul from the body. However, near the sermon's conclusion, he uses physical metaphorics to emphasize the status of the Indian body. As we shall see, arguing that alcohol makes Indians irrational and "dis-figures" men from the "image of God," he makes the production of racial difference a spiritual issue. By reframing debates on the Indian's "degeneration," Occom leads his audience to consider the compatibility of Christian thinking with belief in the drunken Indian stereotype and implies that Paul's sentencing might be wrong.

In the sermon, Occom emphasizes how sin identically affects every person.[49] He claims that "[a]s long as sin is cherished, death is chosen; and this seems to be the woful case of mankind of all nations, . . . vice and immorality, and floods of iniquity are abounding every where amongst all nations, and all orders and ranks of men, and in every sect of people" (7). Occom also intimates that all men are cursed because of their link to Adam.

> And it seems all the enjoyments of men in this world are also poisoned with sin: for God said to Adam after he had sinned, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake, in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life." By this we plainly see that every thing that grows out of the ground is cursed, and all creatures that God hath made for man are cursed also; and whatever God curses is a cursed thing indeed. (11-12)

The natural-historical theory that the New World's feeble environment led to the degeneration of the red man is incidental to Occom's claim that *all* men who live on *all* ground are cursed specifically because of their Adamic ancestry. Occom uses and reworks the language of natural history and its environmentalist claims, here to emphasize original sin. Any "degeneration" that might have happened to the Native American in the New World environment pales in comparison to man's feeding on the cursed ground's harvests.

In contrast to nativists, Occom stresses commonality among all earthly men. Occom explicitly talks about the length of eternity as "the same unexhausted duration" that "must be the unavoidable portion of all impenitent sinners, . . . Negroes, Indians, English, or of what nation soever, all that die in their sins, must go to hell together; for the wages of sin is death" (17). Regardless of what surface physical changes the environment might have wrought since Adam's day, Occom envisions a world created at once by a single God; when one dies, he ascends or descends into the afterlife according only to his salvation status.[50]

In Occom's sermon, religious corporeal transformation is no longer something exclusively wrought on red bodies. If many whites focus on how religious conversion might—metaphorically or literally—lighten red Indians, Occom shows how sin transforms all humankind by becoming an agent of bodily transformation. He declares that "[i]t was sin that transformed the very angels in heaven, into devils . . . If it had not been for sin, there never would have been such a thing as hell or devil, death or misery" (8). He here implies that each body, including those of angels, holds the potential to mutate. Even if natural-philosophical theories of degeneration argue that Native Americans did worsen from their "original state" as white, sin renders more intense change. Occom claims that

> man is a most unruly and ungovernable creature, and is become as the wild ass's colt . . . he is more like the devil than any creature we can think of: and I think it is not going beyond the word of God, to say man is the most devilish creature in the world. . . . Thus every unconverted soul is a child of the devil, sin has made them so. (11)

As a transformative cause, sin turns man into beast. "Sin has made him beastly and devilish; yea, he is sunk beneath the beasts, and is worse than the ravenous beasts of the wilderness" (10). Therefore, Indians are not "naturally" devils; devils are men (or even angels) made so by sin.

In addition to articulating how sin affects all humankind, Occom discusses death, or the "separation between soul and body" (15). At the "cessation of natural life, there is an end of all the enjoyments of this life; there is no more joy nor sorrow; no more hope nor fear, as to the body." However, he adds, "the poor departed soul must take up its lodging in sorrow, wo and misery, . . . where a multitude of frightful deformed devils dwell, and the damned ghosts of Adam's race; . . . where poor guilty naked souls will be tormented with exquisite torments . . ." (15-16). Because one is of "Adam's race," the soul departs for heaven or hell, regardless of earthly racial categories. Rearticulating the way "poor" and "naked" were "terms essential to New England's racial discourse" (Elliott 234), Occom uses them to describe all damned souls—not just Indian ones.[51]

Given Occom's sermonizing on the universality of souls and the soul's split from the body, why does the sermon then radically shift to emphasizing physicality? After articulating the equality of souls, why does Occom address Paul and his fellow Indians "according to the flesh" (28)? I'd like to suggest that this switch to bodily metaphorics—not incompatible with the preaching on the state of one's soul—enables Occom to render the status of the Indian and the production of racial difference specifically religious concerns and to dispute the drunken Indian stereotype Moses Paul felt so detrimentally informed his conviction.

Occom, referring to his fellow Indians as "my brethren and kindred according to the flesh" (28), uses a phrase with a seemingly paradoxical signification. His metaphors of the flesh mark his simultaneous inclusion within both a Christian metaphysical brotherhood and an Indian physical brotherhood. This expression states that the commonality among his fellow Natives is located not in the soul but simply in the body. However, this language also signifies his membership in the metaphysical body of Christ, partly because it paraphrases the Biblical

Apostle Paul's recurring employment of the same phrase. Occom's use of this Pauline construction calls attention to Paul's position in his own cross-cultural ministry, which necessarily inflects Occom's own.[52] In Romans 9:2-5, Paul's letter to the Jewish-gentile congregation in Rome laments the fate of his unconverted Jewish brethren: "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: Who are Israelites; . . . Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came . . ."[53] Like Occom, Paul uses the phrase to accentuate his relationship with both fellow Jews (expressed as being "of the flesh") and fellow Christian believers (Jews *and* gentiles joined together "in the spirit"). This metaphor demonstrates simultaneously Occom's physical relation with Indians as opposed to whites and his spiritual relationship with all "varieties" of Christians.[54]

Addressing Moses Paul directly, Occom refocuses the sermon from individuals' souls to the specificity of his and Moses Paul's bodies and ambiguously mediates between Christian and nativist thought.[55] Occom says, "*My poor unhappy Brother* MOSES, As it was your own desire that I should preach to you this last discourse, so I shall speak plainly to you.—You are the bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh. You are an Indian, a despised creature; but you have despised yourself; yea you have despised God more . . ." (21). By quoting Genesis 2:23 ("you are the bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh"), Occom marks his simultaneous inclusion within the Christian community and also his exclusive bodily relationship to other Indians. His use of the familiar locution from the Adam and Eve story is conspicuously ambiguous. Its origin in Genesis authorizes the monogenetic creation story. However, because it emphasizes a shared, exclusive Indian origin by signaling the uniqueness of *Indian* flesh, it simultaneously resonates with nativism. This "one flesh" status of Indians poses for Occom's audience one of two

mutually exclusive interpretations. In one, the radically nativist idea claims a separate Indian creation. Alternately, Occom's phrase alludes to how the Apostle Paul addresses the Jews as "brethren according to the flesh," thus emphasizing a spiritual brotherhood with everyone while retaining a special kinship with Indians.

However, given the conflicted status of Indian "flesh" in natural-historical and nativist thought at the eighteenth century's end, Occom's employment of bodily metaphorics reverberates through religious and scientific discourses in a way that Paul's did not. The sermon's audience could indeed take the phrase to mean that Indians have a completely separate flesh from whites, thus endorsing nativist thought. However, if one follows the Biblical creation story, one must attribute human difference to changes wrought by the environment—as most natural historians did. In this case, Occom's use of "flesh" denotes a specific type of relation but not an inherent distinction. Holding that Indians and whites do share the same creation, Occom's sermon suggests that physical differences among people must arise from environmental factors. The characteristics of Indian flesh reflect this influence on the body rather than signify God-ordained difference. Occom's uncanny quotation begs the creation question and requires his audience members to contemplate, according to their religious beliefs, to what degree they are all bones of one another's bones and flesh of one another's flesh.[56]

Occom then depicts a heaven where converted Indian souls exist with those of other believers, regardless of earth-bound differences. Occom tells Moses Paul that

> O, what a joyful day would it be if you would now openly believe in and receive the Lord Jesus Christ; . . . it would cause the angels to come down from the realms above, and wait hovering about your gallows, ready to convey your soul to the heavenly mansions, there to . . . join the heavenly choirs in singing the songs of Moses and the Lamb: there to set

> down forever with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God's glory; . . . and there shall you forever admire the astonishing and amazing and infinite mercy of God in Christ Jesus. . . (25-26)

Occom clearly depicts a heaven where converted Indian souls exist with those of all other believers who have gone before. If the convicted murderer so chooses, he can that day reside among several Judeo-Christian forebears: Moses, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Jesus himself. For Occom, there is no separate creation and no irreparable difference when it comes to peoples' souls.

In the last portion of the sermon Occom chastises "the Indians, my bretheren and kindred according to the flesh" (28)—who were likely seated in the church gallery (Chamberlain 447)—for being susceptible to "the sin of drunkenness." Here he highlights how alcohol *makes* them exhibit the traits that Paul's jurors assume are natural: drunkenness, irrationality, and brutality. He declares that "it is this sin . . . that has stript us of every desirable comfort in this life; by this we are poor, miserable and wretched; by this sin we have no name nor credit in the world among polite nations; for this sin we are despised in the world . . ." (28-29). Occom argues that the Indians' inherent nature does not make them bad; rather, "by" this sin of alcohol, Indians have become irrational and savage. Occom continues, "when we are intoxicated with strong drink, we drown our rational powers, by which we are distinguished from the brutal creation . . ." (29). Occom points out that Indian drinkers "have brought [them]selves" into this "miserable condition" (31).[57]

Furthermore, the Indian becomes the drunken savage as a result of a transformation that happens to *all* God-created men when they drink.

> My poor kindred, do consider what a dreadful abominable sin drunkenness is. God made us men, and we chuse to be beast and devils; God made us rational creatures, and we chuse to be fools. Do consider further, and behold a drunkard, and see how he looks, when he has drowned his reason; how deformed and shameful does he appear? He disfigures every part of him, both soul and body, which was made after the image of God. (29-30)

Created in the "image of God," man—both Indian and white—disfigures his soul and body by drinking. For Occom, all men have degenerated from God's perfect form. Any bodily difference, racial or otherwise, occurs after creation. With this example, Occom reframes transformation in natural history from theories of Indian degeneration to the degeneration of all. He reconceptualizes corporeal transformation in religious thought from conversion's "whitening" of Indians to sin's disfiguration of everyone.[58]

While Occom's sermon functions in a disciplinary capacity by chastising Indian drinking habits, it also critisizes whites engaged in similar behaviors. Suggesting that Cook bears some responsibility for the drunken brawl, Occom gives theological validity to Paul's contention regarding the stereotype of the drunken Indian:

> Again, a man in drunkenness is in all manner of dangers, he may be kill'd by his fellow-men, by wild beasts, and tame beasts; he may fall into the fire, into the water, or into a ditch; or he may fall down as he walks along, and break his bones or his neck; and he may cut him-self with edge-tools. . . . *I believe you know the truth of what I have just now said*, many of you by sad experience; yet you will go on still in your drunkenness. (30, emphasis added)

In this striking quotation, Occom demonstrates that drinking alcohol turns one *not* into a murderer *but rather* into a murder victim. "[A] man in drunkenness" might be killed or may cause his own demise. Given Paul's claim that the drunk Cook instigated the fight, Occom intimates that Cook may have had much to do with his own death. Like the ambiguity arising from the coincidence of the perpetrator's and victim's identical first names, this passage's subtle shift in agency leaves the question unanswered: to which drunken Moses does Occom allude?

Following this daring potential reassignment of blame, Occom blasts that "we find in sacred writ, a wo denounced against men, who put their bottles to their neighbours mouth to make them drunk, that they may see their nakedness: and no doubt there are such devilish men now in our days" (31). While alcohol may "drown the rational powers" of the Indian and have the potential to "disfigure" him, these devilish figures are white men who distribute alcohol to their Indian neighbors. Occom does not limit the potential and danger of transformation to the Indian. Here, white men's own metamorphoses into devils lead to Indian drinking, Cook's demise, and Paul's immediately impending execution.

Furthermore, Occom gives degeneration a new twist: if Indians have degenerated, they have fallen not from Adamic whiteness but from the perfect "image of God," and whites have played a crucial role in this process. One of the most pressing issues of the late eighteenth-century concerned why Indians had not "progressed" to high civilizations. Natural history attributed this to environmental influences (Pearce 86). Thus, it is not only important, as scholars point out, that Occom relates Indian drinking to white distribution.[59] If alcohol is one of the substances believed by many to affect bodily change, then liquor from whites actually helps *cause* this degeneration. If white Christians follow natural history's monogenetic explanation for the Indian's bodily difference (and then contradictorily insist on reading ontological distinction

from that difference), then they must accept their own role in this transformative disfiguration of the Indian.

How Occom's sermon makes the Indian body one of its focal points is both ingenious and grotesque. With all attention focused on Paul's body hanging from the pillory, whites and Indians alike had to consider not only Paul's corpse but also—because of Occom's sermon—the way that ideologies about the Indian body might have contributed to his death.[60] Following Christian doctrine, Native Americans have a valid ancestral claim to Adam and Eve. Therefore, God did make them rational; if not, then nativism's claim of separate red-white creations must be correct. Occom rhetorically leads his audience members to make a strategic choice: if they claim that Christianity holds true, then the drunken Indian stereotype is wrong; conversely, if the stereotype is right, then Christian theology is untrue. Occom puts his audience of Christian believers in a position to question this stereotype and the role it played in Paul's trial. By raising the question of the status of the Indian body, noting how whites contribute to the "dis-figured" state of the drunken Indian, and implying that Paul might not be guilty of the specific crime of which he was convicted, Occom's sermon opens up spaces of contestation that complicate its disciplinary function.

"To Make a Poet Black"

Samson Occom was not the only Christian of color in the early 1770s whose writings addressed the production of racial difference by concentrating on the status of raced bodies. Beginning with its frontispiece, Wheatley's Poems (see fig. 2) brings together changeable bodies with issues of race and poetic inspiration.[61] Analyzing the poet's left hand raised thoughtfully to her cheek and her darkened visage, literary critic Astrid Franke locates the famous Wheatley

Figure 2 Frontispiece, Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral, Phillis Wheatley. London: A. Bell, 1773. From Eighteenth Century Collections Online.

portrait within the "iconography of melancholy," because it displays "a mournful reflexivity proceeding from the insights of the religious convert and poetic genius" (227).[62] However, Franke contends, unlike other melancholic poet figures depicted with faces darkened by strategically drawn shadows,

> [Wheatley's] darkness invokes the traditional physiological understanding that a melancholy temperament was caused by an excess of black bile. Giving a figurative meaning a surprising literal turn, then, the portrait and the portrayed are at once part of a long and vital history and yet also something entirely novel. To put it another way, the unprecedented public depiction of a black female poet is moderated by familiar iconographic elements that encourage Wheatley's readers to view her within a longstanding cultural tradition. (229)

This African poet was not only mournfully contemplative but also "really" darkened as a corollary to her "melanchol(ic) temperament" (229); Wheatley's "literal" darkness connects poetic inspiration and the production of black skin—crucially (but unremarked upon by Franke) because of natural-historical conceptions of a malleable body made darker through extended exposure to the sun.[63] The visual depiction of a poet physiologically blackened and made melancholic by an excess of black bile therefore asks: what exactly is the linkage between blackness and poetic inspiration? Furthermore, given the suggestive frontispiece, how does Wheatley's poetry depict this specific relationship?

A 1774 London Monthly Review anonymous review of Poems addresses these issues:[64]

> If we believed, with the ancient mythologists, that genius is the offspring of the sun, we should rather wonder that the sable race have not yet been more distinguished by it, than express our surprise at a single instance. The experience of the world, however,

> has left to this part of mythology but little probability for its support; and indeed, it appears to be wrong in its first principles. A proximity to the sun, far from heightening the powers of the mind, appears to enfeeble them, in proportion as it enervates the faculties of the body. Thus we find the topical (sic) regions remarkable for nothing but the sloth and languor of their inhabitants, their lascivious disposition and deadness to invention. The country that gave birth to Alexander and Aristotle . . . was Macedonia, naturally a cold and ungenial region. Homer and Hesiod breathed the cool and temperate air of the Meles, and the poets and heroes of Greece and Rome had no very intimate commerce with the sun.
>
> The poems written by this young negro bear no endemial marks of solar fire or spirit. They are merely imitative; and, indeed, most of these people have a turn for imitation, though they have little or none for invention. (qtd. in Robinson, Critical Essays 30)

Prefacing a generally positive review, this author attempts to disprove the "ancient mythology" that the sun produces artistic genius by drawing upon eighteenth-century environmentalist beliefs that the hot African climate resulted in the undesirable characteristics of the "Negro," including the enervation of his/her mind (Gates, "Figures" 63-68). For this reviewer, the sun produces "sloth" and "imitation" in the "topical regions" rather than genius; Alexander, Aristotle, Homer, Hesiod, and Greco-Roman poets all hailed from "cold and ungenial" locales.

That the reviewer calls upon eighteenth-century natural history to disprove the classical correlation between the sun and poetic genius might seem odd to twenty-first-century readers, but it clearly carried cultural resonance for contemporaneous ones. As Eric Slauter notes, unlike other literary reviews that were indexed by author's name or book's title, the London Monthly

Review listed this as "MIND, the powers of, not enlightened in those climates that are most exposed to the action of the sun" (91).[65] What the reviewer feels is the irreconcilable tension between these two historically successive logics culminates in his central claim: that "[t]he poems written by this young negro bear no endemial marks of solar fire or spirit." While eighteenth-century climate theory claimed exactly that Africans received their blackness from extended subjection to the sun and Poems' frontispiece depicted a black African poet clearly bearing a "mark" precisely endemic of this exposure, for the reviewer, her poetry itself *did not* bear any kind of similar "mark."

Poems, however, contradicts just that stance. If Occom discounts the association whites draw between whiteness and Christianity, Wheatley challenges the disassociation this reviewer makes between blackness and poetics. She draws upon beliefs about exposure to the sun from both ancient mythology and eighteenth-century natural philosophy to depict the existence of the black poet not as a surprising oddity but rather as an expected likelihood. Her poetry brings together two beliefs about the sun's influence: first, the mythological notion that the sun produces genius (emphasized by the association of poetic creation with Apollo, god of the sun, poetry, and music); and second, the natural-historical claim that the sun triggered the body to exhibit blackness on the skin.[66] Wheatley praises blackness as one of God's providential works and links her race with poesy, even though environmentalism desired to separate them. She draws upon the accepted theorem that the sun causes blackness while eschewing its negative associations; she thus recouples the association ancients held among the sun, blackness, and creativity while retaining the eighteenth-century scientific validity of sun-produced darkness.[67] For Wheatley, blackness is one of many Godly colors spread throughout creation, not necessarily a binary opposite to whiteness. For her, it also is not an organizing factor in the way that slavery

utilizes blackness as an ontological identity category in the social world. Wheatley's choice to write in a neoclassical vein—rather than being an "imitative" gesture—enables her to utilize this mythological belief in sun-inspired poetics.[68] Although Countee Cullen would marvel at why God would choose "To make a poet black, and bid him sing!", Wheatley's poetry intertwines mythology and natural history to render blackness and poetic genius as correlative results of the same solar cause.[69]

Wheatley's poetry actively engages eighteenth-century discourses on science, racialization, and poetics. From Thomas Jefferson to Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Wheatley's interlocutors have debated (and/or analyzed Wheatley's contemporaries' beliefs about) the incompatibility of blackness and poetic genius and then evaluated the degree to which the quality of Wheatley's poetry might be used to support either side in this argument.[70] This focus on the contested incompatibility of blackness and poetics has obscured a crucial point. Wheatley's poetry—not just an object of study—voices its own theoretical intervention in this aesthetic and scientific debate: the sun correlatively produces both poetic genius and dark skin tones, but when the slave trade renders blackness a racial category that then undergirds human bondage, it prohibits poetic production.[71] In this schema, the sun produces poetic genius and dark skin tones in harmonious tandem, but the use of blackness to undergird slavery results in a gothic nightmare.[72]

Like Occom, Wheatley rethinks how human difference—specifically blackness—is used to cohere an ontological identity category, here to justify slavery. For her, blackness is one of God's "beauteous dies" until the system of slavery makes it signify in an oppressively racialized way. As we shall see, Wheatley connects "excessive" sunlight to her "race[‘s]" "abhor[ed] life" under the "length'ned chain," suggesting that divinely-bestowed blackness becomes problematic

only when it is linked directly to slavery. Rejecting slave apologetics based upon the assumption that blacks could labor longest under the hot sun, Wheatley links only poetic production to the sun, not slave labor; furthermore, she reworks the implications of natural history to argue that the sun inspires—not enervates—the mind. Wheatley highlights the figuration of blackness as a racialized category and instead characterizes it as one of many colors spread throughout the natural world, depicting the process of "becoming colored" as part of God's plan to vary the progeny of a single creation.

Dyeing Scenes

"To MAECENAS" and "On IMAGINATION" illustrate the poet's dependence on the sun for her poetry. Greek mythology, from which Wheatley and her neoclassical eighteenth-century predecessors like Alexander Pope extensively drew, linked poetic genius with the sun in the figure of Phoebus Apollo.[73] As John Shields points out, allusions to the sun god and Aurora, the goddess of the dawn, "always appear in close association with [Wheatley's] quest for poetic inspiration" ("Classicism" 100).[74]

In "To MAECENAS," the piece that opens Poems, the poetic voice addresses the Roman patron of letters. Associating poetic inspiration with fire, the poet asks him, "What felt those poets but you feel the same? / Does not your soul possess the sacred flame?" (3-4). The poet laments, in seeming self-deprecation, her paucity of such inspiration:

> And the same ardors in my soul should burn:
> Then should my song in bolder notes arise,
> And all my numbers pleasingly surprize;
> But here I sit, and mourn a grov'ling mind

That fain would mount, and ride upon the wind. (26-30)

While the poet notes that she lacks Maecenas' fire, she intimates that it certainly belongs to Terence, who Wheatley footnotes "was *African* by birth."[75] The poet inquires why the Muses have shown "this partial grace, / To one alone of *Afric's* sable race;" (39-40), but then insinuates that she too shares in the poetic flame. As many scholars point out, following what must be interpreted as feigned modesty, the speaker characterizes herself appropriating the power to create verse: "While blooming wreaths around they temples spread, / I'll snatch a laurel from thine honour'd head, / While you indulgent smile upon the deed" (45-47).[76] The poem describes the scene of poetic creation: "While *Phoebus* reigns above the starry train, / While bright *Aurora* purples o'er the main" (50-51).[77] In the final couplet, the poet-persona characterizes Maecenas' own support of her poetry as a stream of sunlight: "Then grant, *Maecenas*, thy paternal rays, / Hear me propitious, and defend my lays" (54-55). Here, Wheatley characterizes poetic inspiration as fire, notes the presence of Apollo and Aurora at the site of poetic creation, and renders her own imaginary patron as a sun-figure himself.

Similarly, "On IMAGINATION" connects the sun's heat with poetic creation by illustrating that imagination—even in producing a warm scene—itself necessitates heat to raise the poet's "fire." Imagination, "[s]oaring through air to find the bright abode," seems to hold the power to overcome the coldest of weather:

Though *Winter* frowns to *Fancy's* raptur'd eyes
The fields may flourish, and gay scenes arise;
The frozen deeps may break their iron bands,
And bid their waters murmur o'er the sands.
Fair *Flora* may resume her fragrant reign,

And with her flow'ry riches deck the plain; (23-29)

Here, the heat of imagination can prevail over winter by envisioning a rejuvenated natural world, which overflows with water, flowers, and life. Later, the poet explicitly connects imagination with the sun:

Fancy might now her silken pinions try
To rise from earth, and sweep th' expanse on high;
From *Tithon's* bed now might *Aurora* rise,
Her cheeks all glowing with celestial dies,
While a pure stream of light o'erflowers the skies. (41-44)

The poet characterizes fancy as the goddess of the dawn, whose very cheeks are colored with "die" (a point to which I will return) when she rises to suffuse the sky with light.

However, toward the end of the poem, the poet reverses the thematic of imagination trumping cold weather:

The monarch of the day I might behold,
And all the mountains tipt with radiant gold,
But I reluctant leave the pleasing views,
Which *Fancy* dresses to delight the *Muse*;
Winter austere forbids me to aspire,
And northern tempests damp the rising fire;
They chill the tides of *Fancy's* flowing sea,
Cease then, my song, cease the unequal lay. (46-53)

Why would the speaker, after lauding imagination's power to picture a bountiful, warm earth, allow winter to be the final influence?[78] Emphasizing the effect winter—not necessarily

imagination itself—has on the poet, these lines underscore the position of a writer whose poetic fire comes from the sun. While the imagination might be able to picture such a fecund, halcyon scene (indicated by the stanza's many *may*'s), the poet finds herself "forbid[den]" by the austere winter from activating imagination to do so. Imagination and poetic inspiration, even with their ability to envision such heat, are predicated upon the poet being always already located *in* that very warmth.

A seeming aside Wheatley makes in "On IMAGINATION" illustrates the link between the sun and blackness. The couplet "From *Tithon's* bed now might *Aurora* rise, / Her cheeks all glowing with celestial dies," (43-44) describes the goddess of the dawn rising from her lover's bed; the "dies" that glowingly color her cheeks are also the same "celestial" beams that radiate from her. "Dies" attracts the reader's attention partly because of its significant placement: it ends the middle line in the only tercet embedded in a poem otherwise consisting of heroic couplets. While literary scholars have noted Wheatley's use of "die" (an obsolete form of dye) in "On Being Brought from AFRICA to AMERICA," they have paid virtually *no attention* to the racialized trope of "die" in other parts of her oeuvre. Wheatley uses die or dye elsewhere in Poems, explicitly praising the sun for producing so much "color" throughout God's works.

Like eighteenth-century natural historians, Wheatley portrays the human body as a malleable and amorphous mass to which God's influence gives shape, and she claims God's existence by pointing to his role in producing humankind's varieties.[79] Wheatley signifies on this idea in "On Being Brought" where the second half of the octave reads:

> Some view our sable race with scornful eye,
> "Their colour is a diabolic die."
> Remember, *Christians*, *Negroes*, black as *Cain*,

May be refin'd, and join th' angelic train. (5-8)

Numerous scholars aptly argue how Wheatley's final couplet ambiguously identifies "Christians" and "Negroes" as overlapping groups, both of whom are "black" with sin and might end up in a heaven together.[80] However, Wheatley also renders blackness specifically as a "die"—something that alters a preexisting state. Here, Wheatley's "sable race" *becomes* black through a dark dyeing. Reflecting environmentalist accounts of sun-produced skin pigmentation, Wheatley depicts race taking form through a Godly-ordained bodily transformation. Wheatley's quotation marks and mocking tone intimate that she does not view blackness as "diabolic" (Erkkila, Mixed Bloods 233-4). Her use of the concept—so clearly racialized here—suggests this same connotation when she returns to the word elsewhere.[81] If whites understand blackness as a "die" of a specifically "diabolic" nature, Wheatley transvalues and celebrates the dyes bestowed throughout nature by God, which she then associates with the sun, blackness, and poetic inspiration.[82]

In "Thoughts on the WORKS of PROVIDENCE," Wheatley ostensibly praises God's life-giving sun around which the earth travels, but a nightmare ruptures the poem's praise. It illustrates the racialization of blackness and calls forth but not produce the unspeakable name of slavery. Wheatley lauds God's works by focusing on the sun's centrality:

Ador'd for ever be the God unseen,
Which round the sun revolves this vast machine,
Though to his eye its mass a point appears:
Ador'd the God that whirls surroundings spheres.
Which first ordain'd that mighty *Sol* should reign
The peerless monarch of th' ethereal train:

Of miles twice forty millions is his height,
And yet his radiance dazzles mortal sight
So far beneath—from him th' extended earth
Vigour derives, and ev'ry flow'ry birth: (11-20)

In this panegyric, the earth abounds with Providence's works as God actively rotates the universe around "mighty *Sol*."[83] In this last couplet, Wheatley's husbandry metaphor links "ev'ry flow'ry birth" to the "vigour" derived from the sun.

However, the next twelve-line stanza qualifies Wheatley's celebration of God, creation, solar influence, and the spread of celestial dyes. Here, an excess of light takes a gothic turn when sun-produced blackness leads to life in chains.

Creation smiles in various beauty gay,
While day to night, and night succeeds to day:
That *Wisdom*, which attends *Jehovah's* ways,
Shines most conspicuous in the solar rays:
Without them, destitute of heat and light,
This world would be in the reign of endless night:
In their excess how would our race complain,
Abhorring life! how hate its length'ned chain! (29-36)

The poet renders a terrifying picture of the skewed balance of this sun-centered universe.[84] A single couplet signals the eternal darkness that would ensue without solar power. However, for six lines, the speaker paints a gothic picture filled *not* with dark shadows *but instead* with an overabundance of sunlight. "Our race," of course, signifies doubly here: not only would the "human race" suffer from extensive sunlight but also Wheatley's own "race," those that suffer

under the "length'ned chain" would suffer because of their blackness. They endure said experience precisely because of this "excess" heat. Although the sun inspires poetic labor for Wheatley, slave apologists argued that Africans were best suited for agrarian slave labor in the hot sun, replacing more theologically-based rationales (Jordan 525).[85] Therein lies the delicate balance of the sun that should not be tipped to "excess;" what Wheatley uses to legitimize her own poetic creation, others use to justify slavery. For her, blackness—one of God's many "dies"—does not carry horrible connotations; rather, slavery diseases the land.[86]

> From air adust what numerous ills would rise?
> What dire contagion taint the burning skies?
> What pestilential vapours, fraught with death,
> Would rise, and overspread the lands beneath? (37-40)

The sun-produced "dies," linked to skin, are lauded as God's works. But these "ills" arise from an atmosphere "adust," a word the Oxford English Dictionary defines as "Brown, as if scorched . . . by the sun" and "Applied to a supposed state of the body and its humors, . . . its alleged symptoms being dryness of the body, heat, thirst, black or burnt colour of the blood, . . . atrabilious or 'melancholic' complexion." This adjective serves as a conceptual nexus connecting the sun's surfeit, the body's reaction to its environment, melancholic complexion, and black bile. Blackness becomes problematic only when the excess of the sun is linked directly to "our race" and its hated life under the chain. The poem questions three times what the disease might be, but the answer of slavery itself remains unspoken.

The nightmare subsiding, the speaker finds equilibrium in a balanced world, where the sun spreads Godly-inspired color throughout the skies and earth below.

> Hail, smiling morn, that from the orient main

Ascending dost adorn the heav'nly plain!

So rich, so various are thy beauteous dies,

That spread throughout all the circuit of the skies,

That, full of thee, my soul in rapture soars,

And thy great God, the cause of all adores. (41-46)

Drawing upon her earlier use of "die" to signify dark skin, Wheatley intimates that she herself is infused with the same kind of "die," since she is "full of thee," and soaring through God's beautifully tinted sky. Blackness here is one God-made color among many. This divine—rather than diabolic—die imbued throughout the poet herself makes her one of the "adored" "works of providence." Only in "excess," an interepellative system that racializes that very blackness by turning it into a principle of social organization, does it result in the nightmare of slavery.

The poem then points out, much in the vein of the natural-historical beliefs of Wheatley's day, that God's earth helps give rise to the different types of life that populate it:

But see the sons of vegetation rise,

And spread their leafy banners to the skies.

All-wise Almighty providence we trace

In trees, and plants, and all the flow'ry race;

As clear as in the nobler frame of man,

All lovely copies of the Maker's plan. (69-74)

Just as Occom emphasizes God's influence on Adam's descendants, Wheatley here gestures toward a theory of monogenism. What begins as an agrarian metaphor quickly becomes anthropomorphized. Vegetation becomes sons, and God's beauty throughout all the flora is just

as "self-evident" in the "nobler frame of man." Every "copy" of God's "plan"—including the original Adam—is just as "lovely" as the other.

Like "On the WORKS of PROVIDENCE," "An HYMN to the MORNING" begins and ends as an ostensible praise poem for the rising sun in the figure of Aurora. Each dawn, the sun comes up to bring the earth to life, inspiring both the poet and birds to sing songs of praise. However, the sun that produces both color and poetic fervor can become too strong, forcing the poet to seek refuge in the surrounding groves. The poet opens the ode with a standard invocation to the muses:

> ATTEND my lays, ye ever honour'd nine,
> Assist my labours, and my strains refine;
> In smoothest numbers pour the notes along,
> For bright *Aurora* now demands my song. (1-4)

However, where the sun in other poems inspires poetic fervor, here Wheatley subtly shifts the tone of this relationship from one of inspiration to one of injunction.[87] As the poem progresses, the poet suddenly hides from the excess of the sun. Now a "demand[ing]" figure, Aurora short-circuits the poetic creation in what becomes—as in "PROVIDENCE"—a scene of scorching light. The praise poem contains within it a problem of irresolvable difference. The ways that the sun produces both poetry and blackness manifest no tension in Wheatley's poetry. However, in these gothic scenes of extreme fluorescence, slavery forces blackness to signify within a racial system, thus becoming the defining feature of New World slavery.

In "MORNING," Aurora simultaneously produces poetry and color, and in the second stanza, the sun commands the song not only of Wheatley but also of morning birds, suggesting their analogous positions:

Aurora hail, and all the thousands dies,

Which deck thy progress through the vaulted skies:

The morn awakes, and wide extends her rays,

On ev'ry leaf the gentle zephyr plays;

Harmonious lays the feather'd race resume,

Dart the bright eye, and shake the painted plume. (5-10)

Through this figure of the "painted" birds singing their "[h]armonious lays"—echoing the poet's own "lays" in the first stanza—Wheatley again addresses how the sun produces beautiful color throughout vegetation, animals, and humans. Abruptly, however, this scene gives way to another version of the bright nightmare;[88] the poet cries out:

Ye shady groves, your verdant gloom display

To shield your poet from the burning day:

Calliope awake the sacred lyre,

While thy fair sisters fan the pleasing fire:

The bow'rs, the gales, the variegated skies

In all their pleasures in my bosom rise. (11-12)

Within the gothic rupture, the poet seeks the balance for poetic creation. Even in the midst of the scorching sun, she calls out to Calliope, the muse of epic poetry, for her "pleasing fire" to color the "variegated skies" and to carry the poet to her song's end.

Mirroring the journey from freedom through the Middle Passage to slavery, in this move from inspirited ode to coerced song, the poet's self-celebrated blackness becomes the burden that underwrites enslavement rather than the solar corollary to her own poesy. This shift from free poetic creation to forced labor terminates poetic inspiration:

See in the east th' illustrious king of day!

His rising radiance drives the shades away—

But Oh! I feel his fervid beams too strong,

And scarce begun, concludes th' abortive song. (17-20)

Unlike the poem "PROVIDENCE," the poetic voice cannot find a restorative equilibrium. The poem stops, performing its own constitutive termination. Although Wheatley often does characterize the positive "light" of Christian knowledge driving the "shadows" of ignorance away, here the sun—the "illustrious king of day"—becomes a negative force that, like the fluorescent gothic scenes of slavery, "concludes th' abortive song."

However, of all Wheatley's poems, the epyllion, "NIOBE in Distress for her Children slain by APOLLO," most poignantly illustrates the tension resulting from both a beneficent and retributive figure of the sun. Describing the blessings and drawbacks of the sun, Wheatley's poem displays the paradox that while the sun produces blackness and poetic genius in tandem, blackness deployed as difference in a racialized system of slavery forecloses poetic production. Here, both the problems and promises of racial transformation condense around the metamorphosis of Niobe. In Wheatley's translation of Ovid, based in part on Wilson's painting (see fig. 3),[89] when Thebans worship the goddess Latona, Niobe brags that while Latona may have birthed Apollo and Artemis, Niobe herself deserves more praise for having fourteen children. Different from Ovid's version, Wheatley's poem makes Niobe a sympathetic rebellious figure (Shields, American Aeneas 266) and highlights Apollo as a vengeful force. The sun makes Niobe's daughters most beautiful (and makes the poet so lyrical) and ultimately kills them (and terminates the poetic process).

Figure 3 Richard Wilson's *Niobe*, engraving 1761 by William Wollett.
From W. G. Constable, Richard Wilson, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1953.

Wheatley describes the beauty of the children as an attribute of the sun's effect on them:

> Seven sprightly sons the royal bed adorn,
> Seven daughters beauteous as the op'ning morn,
> As when *Aurora* fills the ravish'd sight,
> And decks the orient realms with rosy light
> From their bright eyes the living splendors play,
> Nor can beholders bear the flashing ray. (23-28)

The sun imbues the children with their beauty, but—much as in the bright gothic scenes—others cannot witness their too-brilliant attractiveness.[90] Their sun-kissed beauty actually precipitates their demise:

> Wherever, *Niobe*, thou turn'st thine eyes,
> New beauties kindle, and new joys arise!
> But thou had'st far the happier mother prov'd,
> If this fair offspring had been less belov'd:
> What if their charms exceed *Aurora's* teint,
> No words could tell them, and no pencil paint,
> Thy love too vehement hastens to destroy
> Each blooming maid, and each celestial boy. (29-36)

Niobe's love of them, which leads to her disastrous boast, causes their untimely death.

In addition to associating the sun with beauty, Wheatley's revisions also emphasize Apollo's retaliatory role. While Ovid's Niobe story is only slightly demarcated from the rest of his epic, Wheatley's poem bears a title that emphasizes "APOLLO('s)" slaying just as much as

"NIOBE('s)" distress. Once Niobe utters "'What if indignant she decrease my train / More than *Latona's* number will remain?'" (81-82), Latona orders her son Apollo, "'…Wrap her own sons for her blaspheming breath, / *Apollo!* wrap them in the shades of death'" (99-100). Furthermore, as Shields notes ("Classicism" 110), Wheatley adds the couplet, "With clouds incompass'd glorious *Phoebus* stands; / The feather'd vengeance quiv'ring in his hands" (107-8). Apollo's influence on the shade of the targeted bodies figures centrally in Wheatley's version. The painting also features this ambivalent rendering of sun figurations: while the sun breaks through the stormy clouds to shine down, it only highlights the massacre happening below. While the sun pushes through the clouds, Apollo stands to the side, dispensing his fatal arrows. One by one, Apollo shoots each of Niobe's sons. Afterwards, "On each pale corse the wretched mother spread / Lay overwhelm'd with grief, and kiss'd her dead" (177-8). Seeing her sons' whitened dead bodies stretched across the ground, Niobe defiantly continues her boast: "'Tho'd I unhappy mourn these children slain, / Yet greater numbers to my lot remain'" (187-8). As a result, Apollo kills each additional daughter.

Wheatley's poem ends with (and the painting depicts) Niobe surrounded by her dead children—or, one should note, it ends where Poems leads its readers to believe Wheatley intended to conclude. A final stanza is appended with the note that "This Verse to the End is the Work of another Hand" (59). Here, "another Hand" carries Ovid's version of the story to completion, and Niobe slowly turns into a white marble statue from which mournful tears flow. As a poem that continues Wheatley's meditation on the influence of the sun on both poetic genius and blackness and the sun's "excess" resulting in the disease of slavery and the termination of poetic creation, it makes perfect sense that the poem's ending should come under the most undecideable scrutiny.

We may never know whether Wheatley or someone else composed these final lines. But we do know that this possibility of collaboration was the precise concern that the signed prefatory material and John Wheatley's allusion to her Occom letter, both testimonials to Wheatley's authorial authenticity, attempted to assuage.[91] In this final (and unattributable) stanza, the vexed status of the poem's miscegenational authorial collaboration points toward the infamous "Attestation" and reference to Wheatley's Occom letter in Poems's preface material. Likewise, the figure of Niobe, on the verge of metamorphosing into a frozen, white, ever-crying melancholic statue becomes an uncanny doppelganger for the productive, blackened, writing melancholic Wheatley depicted in the frontispiece. Because Wheatley revises Ovid's version by *not* depicting Niobe as a stone statue, this pair of figures, with their potential to be stymied by the sun's "excesses," be it scorching heat or Apollo's wrath, suggests how Wheatley's entire volume dances on the verge—precisely where Wheatley leaves Niobe—of being made black and productive by the sun or of being entirely "frozen" by solar excesses. Poems characterizes race not as bodily truth but as a potentially dangerous process of transformation.

Thus, by using a symbolics of metamorphosis—by drawing upon contemporaneous religious and scientific beliefs about malleable physical attributes to explore how the body displays characteristics that are then read—Occom and Wheatley figure "race" as a transformable, rather than oppositional, element. By mining Christian and natural-historical explanations for where color comes from, they are then able to refigure what "blackness" and "redness" might mean. Attention to how Occom and Wheatley depict these cultural processes of racialization reveals how they not only challenge the ontology of racial identities in their own ways, but also hold Christianity accountable for its monogenetic explanation of racial difference (for Occom) and theorize the relationship between color and aesthetics (for Wheatley). Thus, re-

recognizing the notion of transformable race rewrites our interpretations of Occom and Wheatley's work and enables us to appreciate anew the process of becoming colored in their early America.

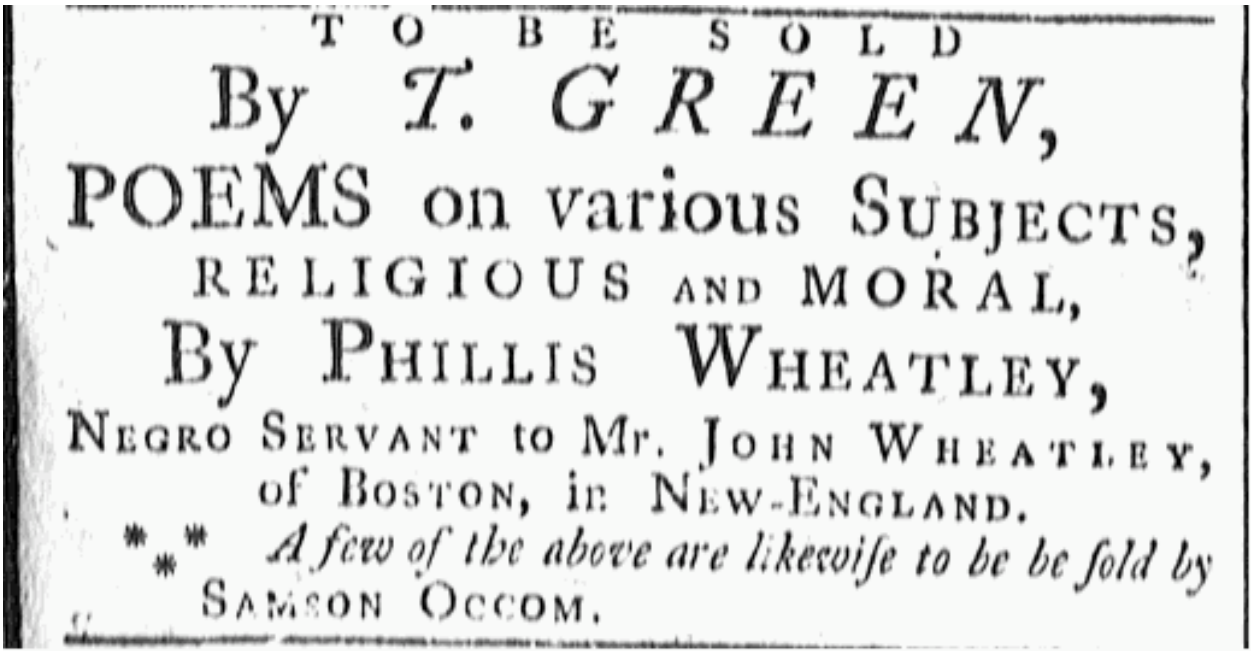
Coda: Final Letters and Complications

The late eighteenth-century letter exchange between Samson Occom and Phillis Wheatley constitutes one of the most curious epistolary relationships in American literary history, particularly the way their letter writing involved Wheatley's owner, Susanna.[92] Both Wheatley's master and an important contact in Occom's network of evangelical patrons, Susanna sporadically exchanged letters with Occom during the 1760s and 1770s, the exact time both he and Wheatley composed their texts and their own letters to each other. The triangulation of this oft-noted literary friendship between Wheatley and Occom through Susanna reveals the complexity of the connections among the anti-slavery but financially dependent minister, the enslaved but devout black poet, and the religiously beneficent but slave-owning white society mistress.

Between the 1765 and 1774 letters that Wheatley sent Occom, he wrote two letters to Susanna that suggest the constraints around his relationship to these two female Bostonians. On March 5, 1771, in a long letter detailing the trials of an indigent itinerant minister, Occom signs his letter to Susanna, "I am, most kind madam / *your most unworthy and most obliged Humble Servant / Samson Occom*" (97). To this he appends the following note: "Please to remember ^me^ to Phillis and the rest of your Servants. Pray Madam, what harm woud it be to Send Phillis to her Native Country as a Female Preacher to her kindred, you know Quaker Women are alow'd to preach, and why not others, in an Extraordinary Case—" (97).

This ingratiating letter to Wheatley's slaveowners certainly reframes our conception of Occom's "friendship" with Wheatley. While strategically humbling himself to Susanna in order to obtain her endorsement for additional missionary funds, Occom has little room to make strong anti-slavery claims like those he would send to Wheatley herself three years later (following Susanna's death and Wheatley's emancipation).[93] Furthermore, while he terms himself, Wheatley, and the other Wheatley domestics as "servants," his relegation of Wheatley to the footnote of his letter to her mistress illustrates the power dynamics of their relationship—even as it ostensibly seeks to level them. Two years later, right before Susanna's death, Occom wrote her that "I want Much to hear from your Dear Son and Phillis" (106). Asking Susanna to "remember" him to Wheatley's owner, whom Occom terms "Dear Mr. Wheatley," Occom sends Susanna his "grateful respect." This differs greatly from his letter to Phillis a mere five months later when he claims, "It has been very fashionable for [Christian ministers] to keep Negroe Slaves, which I think is inconsistent with their character and function" (qtd. in Robinson 44). While talking specifically about the clergy, Occom's sentiment certainly includes those who profess Christian beliefs only to prohibit "True Liberty" for their own slaves.

This is not to vilify Occom for being unable to transcend the racialized letter-writing conventions of the day. Rather, it is to point out that we can only think of his relationship to Wheatley as a friendship as Jacques Derrida describes such relationships: as located complexly outside the model of an idealized egalitarian fraternalism and structured by hierarchical differences in race, class, and gender (Politics of Friendship). Indeed, as this July 17, 1774, New-London Gazette advertisement shows (see fig. 4), Occom helped Wheatley's cause by selling her Poems alongside, as Robinson notes, his own 1774 A Choice Collection of Hymns ("Wheatley and Her Boston" 43). Although we do not yet know exactly how Wheatley's famous



TO BE SOLD
By T. GREEN,
POEMS on various SUBJECTS,
RELIGIOUS AND MORAL,
By PHILLIS WHEATLEY,
NEGRO SERVANT to Mr. JOHN WHEATLEY,
of BOSTON, in NEW-ENGLAND.
*** *A few of the above are likewise to be be sold by*
SAMSON OCCOM.

Figure 4 The New-London Gazette, June 17, 1774, page 1.
Early American Newspapers Online.

letter made its way into over ten colonial newspapers, we can almost certainly assume that this "free advertising" could not have hurt either author's respective book sales. The interest in each other's writing that began through Susanna continued, although in a much different tenor, after her death.

Within this intricate and mediated epistolary friendship, we find not only Wheatley's most blatant statement against slavery but also a use of natural rights language that reframes how scholars must look at the Declaration of Independence. In the 1774 letter, written two years before Thomas Jefferson and his committee would attempt to write the U.S. nation-state into being, Wheatley already uses a language of rights that anticipates that Jefferson's efforts would prove futile.[94] She writes to Occom,

> I . . . am greatly satisfied with your Reasons respecting the Negroes, and think highly reasonable what you offer in Vindication of their natural Rights: Those that invade them cannot be insensible that the divine Light is chasing away the thick Darkness which broods over the Land of Africa; . . .[Order reveals] the glorious Dispensation of civil and religious Liberty, which are so inseparably united, that there is little or no Enjoyment of one without the other: Otherwise, perhaps, the Israelites had been less solicitous for their Freedom from Egyptian Slavery; . . . God has implanted a Principle, which we call Love of Freedom; it is impatient of Oppression, and pants for Deliverance; . . . the same Principle lives in us. (Connecticut Gazette; and the Universal Intelligencer, 11 March 1774, 3)

Jefferson's many revisions as he attempts to begin the Declaration of Independence using the same type of language of natural rights, liberty, and slavery prove what Wheatley predicts: that liberty and slavery could not be made to agree. For as often as the comments of Thomas

Jefferson have been used to frame literary discussions of Phillis Wheatley, here Wheatley's letter regarding slavery reframes readings of his document and the birth of the U.S. nation-state that it enacted. Furthermore, this conceptualization of race in the work of Samson Occom and Phillis Wheatley must in the next chapter recontextualize how we think about the production of political entities and their relationship to theories of environmentalism that collided in late eighteenth-century Philadelphia and in the works of two U.S. diplomats, Benjamin Franklin and Hendrick Aupaumut.

Chapter 3

Political Bodies: Benjamin Franklin, Hendrick Aupaumut, and the Production of Racial Identity

"The state of society comprehends diet, clothing, lodging, manners, habits, face of the country, objects of science, religion, interests, passions and ideas of all kinds, infinite in number and variety. If each of these causes be admitted to make, as undoubtedly they do, a small variation on the human countenance, the different combinations and results of whole must necessarily be very great; and combined with the effects of climate will be adequate to account for all the varieties we find among mankind."
~Samuel Stanhope Smith,
An Essay on the Causes of the Variety of Complexion and Figure in the Human Species (1787)

"They told me that the great God first made three men and three women, viz.: the Indian, the negro, and the white man. That the white man was the youngest brother, and therefore the white people ought not to think themselves better than the Indians. That God gave the white man a book, and told him that he must worship him by that; but gave none either to the Indian or negro, and therefore it could not be right for them to have a book, or be any way concerned with that way of worship. And, furthermore, they understood that the white people were contriving a method to deprive them of their country in those parts, as they had done by the sea-side, and to make slaves of them and their children as they did of the negroes . . . "
~John Brainerd on the Delaware Indians, "The Indians' Theory of Races,"
in a letter to Rev. Ebenezer Pemberton (1751)
[qtd. in Life of John Brainerd, by Rev. Thomas Brainerd (1865)]

In the 1770s, Samson Occom and Phillis Wheatley drew upon Protestant religious beliefs to depict racial identity coming into being. In contrast, two late eighteenth-century diplomats, Benjamin Franklin and Hendrick Aupaumut, engaged with the political aspects of the notion of transformable race. These two men, while living much of their lives away from the first U.S. capital, composed letter-narratives that they sent back to Philadelphia. Not as odd a couple as they may initially seem, Franklin and Aupaumut share striking similarities along with particular differences. Both men were emissaries employed by the fledgling U.S. government in an attempt to stymie violent combat. One was sent east to the British colonial metropole to smooth over breaks in the imperial relationship and later to France to form a partnership with a beneficial ally; the other traveled west to negotiate with hostile Native American tribes confederated together past the western border of the new nation-state. One—a white British colonial and then American national—received citizenship status and self-consciously modeled American citizenship in his writings. The other, a Mohican Native American only concerned with

citizenship in his own tribal nation, had to cajole the federal government to pay him for his military service. One's book, what we have come to know as Franklin's Autobiography, is hyper-canonical; the other's text, that which Aupaumut entitled "A Short narration of my last Journey to the western Contry," was published through surreptitious means without Aupaumut's knowledge and remains relatively unknown today.

Franklin and Aupaumut both wrote in a moment when debates about racial identity had come to have political implications. As I explained in chapter one, various groups debated the extent to which race was influenced by environmental factors, particularly what natural historian Samuel Stanhope Smith in this chapter's first epigraph calls the "state of society." As we have seen, many natural philosophers discussed how the environment and "mode of living" could shape racial identity. Native Americans were also divided on their explanation of the different varieties of mankind. Generally, Christianized Indians shared the monogenetic view that humanity sprang from a unified origin and over time grew to display various racial characteristics, while nativist Indians—including the Delawares quoted by John Brainerd in this chapter's second epigraph—claimed *separate* creations and races (Dowd, SR 30).[95] As we shall see, although the belief in different origins specifically espoused by the militant nativist Indians in the Ohio Valley was a minority viewpoint among most Native Americans east of the Mississippi River, it became a powerful notion with which anyone discussing race in Indian Country would have to reckon.[96]

Both Franklin and Aupaumut responded to these contemporaneous ideas about what might or might not produce characteristics that were coming to read as "race." But if many New World thinkers had an investment in thinking about society as an agent in producing "race," then Franklin and Aupaumut, to different ends, troubled the idea that one's "mode of living" could

help form racial characteristics and identity. This chapter argues that Franklin and Aupaumut tend to unlink strict relationships between various social practices and the production of race. The discourse of transformable race structures how they could write about racial identity, even when they do not directly engage in the debates about its origin. Both diplomats who negotiate among these various disagreeing groups, neither Franklin nor Aupaumut *explicitly* argue whether the environment, modes of living, or separate creations cause the differences among races. Instead, I argue, both focus on race as a category in relationship to evolving political identities. For Franklin and Aupaumut, the formation of political bodies such as a nation-state or a pan-tribal confederacy connects complexly to the racialization of physical bodies.

In the Autobiography, Franklin both mocks and lends a certain validity to notions of how practices, or what natural historians would have called modes of life, might influence race. He then defines American whiteness in uneasy and unstable relationship to both African-Americans and Native Americans. Franklin's American can "be like" either of these subjectivities without ever fully "transforming into" them. At the level of grammar and punctuation of the text, Aupaumut's "Short Narration" raises similar issues about political and linguistic representation, race, and the establishment of political entities. In his treaty negotiations with western tribes that he sent to the U.S. government, Aupaumut evokes the concept of "one col[o]r;" color either can consolidate a political alliance or, under different conditions, be separated into multiple ones. Neither Franklin nor Aupaumut characterizes race as something physically internalized—as later nineteenth-century race science would do—nor as what we have come to consider "essentialist." And yet, for them, race is not necessarily as transformable in the ways that some in the eighteenth century alternately thought, hoped, and feared it might be. This chapter juxtaposes Franklin and Aupaumut—two writers who, in many senses, were outliers of mainstream racial

thinking—to throw into relief the way each draws from and reconfigures various popular conceptions of race.

You are what you eat; or, Practice makes perfect

Benjamin Franklin was not as disturbed as Thomas Jefferson was by Comte Georges-Louis Leclerc de Buffon's allegation that the American environment negatively impacted plant and animal life in the New World. Jefferson openly addressed Buffon's claims in Notes on the State of Virginia, and he arranged to have a large, North American moose sent across the Atlantic to Buffon in Paris (Yokota 214; I. Cohen 86). By contrast, Benjamin Franklin was less aggressive about disproving Buffon's claim, later extended by the Abbé Raynal (I. Cohen 73-88).[97] When Jefferson raised the subject years later with Franklin, he shared a telling story:

> [Franklin] had a party to dine with him one day at Passy, of whom one half were Americans, the other half French, and among the last was the Abbé [Raynal]. During the dinner he got on his favorite theory of the degeneracy of animals, and even of man, in America, and urged it with his usual eloquence. The Doctor at length noticing the accidental stature and position of his guests, at table, "Come," says he, "M. l'Abbé, let us try this question by the fact before us. We are here one half Americans, and one half French, and it happens that the Americans have placed themselves on one side of the table, and our French friends are on the other. Let both parties rise, and we will see on which side nature has degenerated." It happened that his American guests were . . . of the finest stature and form; while those of the other side were remarkably diminutive, and the Abbé himself particularly, was a mere shrimp. He parried the appeal, however, by a

> complimentary admission of exceptions, among which the Doctor himself was a conspicuous one. (Jefferson, personal letter; reprinted in The Complete Jefferson, 894)

Franklin was not as preoccupied nor directly involved with the degeneration dispute as Jefferson, but this story provides a glimpse of his reaction to Buffon and Raynal's claims. Historian Gilbert Chinard conjectures that perhaps Franklin held a relative silence about the degeneracy debates while in France because of his ambassadorial endeavors, claiming that "[i]t does not appear from any direct evidence that, before going to Paris, he was particularly disturbed by the aspersions thrown by Buffon on the climate of America, and he was too skillful a diplomat to engage in public discussions and controversies with the French philosophers. His long experience in dealing with public opinion had convinced him that positive affirmations are better than elaborate denials, and that facts spoke louder than theories" (40).[98] Franklin's diplomatic position required that he engage these debates obliquely.

Even if Franklin did not respond openly to the French natural historians' assertions, his Autobiography engages discourses relating to society, cultural practices, and the body that necessarily were racialized in his historical moment. Betsy Erkkila has written convincingly about Franklin's "revolutionary body," emphasizing that "for all of Franklin's efforts to subject the body to regimes of discipline and control, his Autobiography is grounded in a reconceptualization of the self as fleshly, worldly, fluid, and ungodly" ("Revolutionary Body" 718). As we shall see, although it is unclear where Franklin came down in the discussions about what constituted the distinctions among white, black, and red peoples, several of his programs to regulate diet and habits are pertinent to contemporaneous debates about racial formation.[99] In the Autobiography, Franklin puts forth several "programs for perfection" that in his historical moment easily would have been viewed as social practices that influence one's degeneration and

race, only to qualify them ironically at every turn. He thus both presents and then prises apart strict relationships between practices and "race."

In the first section of Franklin's Autobiography, written in 1771 ostensibly as a letter to his son, several anecdotes about Franklin's diet irreverently engage contemporaneous conversations about degeneration, complexion, and natural-historical classification schemes. At this time, Franklin did not yet advocate a colonial split from Great Britain. Rather, he worked to resolve tensions between the colonials and the crown, and he valued his own British identity. The narrative opens with a detailed genealogy of the Franklin family in England, leading Christopher Looby to note that Franklin's "mode of direct paternal address, and the pronounced emphasis on ancestry, together constituted an assertion of the power and value of genealogical continuity" (102).

At this time, Franklin considered himself an Englishman who just happened to live in America. Much to his dismay, despite the fact that immigration to the Americas had been taking place for over a century, many people in the metropole held tightly to misconceptions about life in the New World. They harbored fears that its climate would cause them to lose their Englishness (Parrish 1-17, 77-102; Dupperman 215) and that Anglo-Americans had "dark skin, like Africans" (Lemay, Life 296). Numerous Americans protested this characterization, but Leo Lemay claims that "no colonial American objected so strongly or so often to the prejudice against America as Franklin" (Life 297). Franklin clearly had a vested interest in showing that Englishmen could live in the New World while retaining their Englishness. Furthermore, when Franklin began writing his memoir at age sixty-five, he was viewed as an exemplary colonial—one who clearly had not degenerated since his youth.

In one of the most noted examples of Franklin's plans for improvement, he relates his endeavor and eventual failure to maintain a diet free of flesh and fish, and this scene reverberates with the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century emphasis on maintaining one's national constitution and natural complexion. Franklin declares that "[w]hen about 16 Years of Age, I happen'd to meet with a Book written by one Tryon, recommending a Vegetable Diet."[100] Franklin began "refusing to eat Flesh" and became "acquainted with Tryon's Manner of preparing some of his Dishes, such as Boiling Potatoes, or Rice, making Hasty Pudding, & a few others" (A 580). Unlike the other pressman, young Franklin appears to embody perfect "Temperance in Eating & Drinking" (A 581).

Literary scholars have generally overlooked how Franklin draws on Thomas Tryon's 1683 The Way to Health, Long Life, and Happiness, or A Discourse of Temperance, partially subtitled and the particular nature of all things requisite for the life of man as all sorts of meats, drinks, air, exercise &c., with special directions how to use each of them to the best advantage of the body and mind. A "well-known English dietary crank" (Chapin 74), Tryon frames his well-known treatise as an instruction manual on how to regulate what he calls "the four grand Qualities" from which "the four Complexions" proceed.[101] In outlining these complexions—"Cholerick," "Phlegmatick," "Sanguine," and "Melancholy"—Tryon describes what only after the eighteenth century came to be distinguished as the separate traits of physical characteristics and temperament (Roxann Wheeler 2). Tryon details what persons of each complexion should eat and do in order to enhance the desirable qualities of that complexion, which Tryon felt was mutable. The ends to Tryon's means have an explicitly national bias: God produces food in each geographic region that suits people in that location; Englishmen should avoid aliment from other—and consequently, unsuitable—areas. Because Englishmen differ from "the People of

[the East and West Indies] . . . in their *Complexions*, *Constitutions*, *Religions*, *Inclinations*, *Governments*, *Shapes* and *Languages*" (161), people should eat food produced in their own locale.[102]

Tryon asserts that "Natives of [the East and West Indies]" sparingly eat their own fruit, spices, and wine, while Englishmen tend to overindulge, "which is one main cause why our *English* are so unhealthy when they travel and live in such hot Countries." This leads to a situation wherein "their Bodies and Nature do much alter and change, when they alter the Climate; and not only our *Bodies*, but also our *Dispositions* and *Inclinations* are thereby much changed. Therefore," he writes, "all People ought strictly to observe such degrees of *Temperance*" (167). While Tryon's distinctions display a national rather than an explicitly racial predilection, he does state that "[t]he *Salnitral and Seminary Virtues* of the Earth, varying also in the predominant Qualities from ours, there being a concurrence in all Countries and Climates between the Influences and Operations of the *heavenly Bodies*, and the *earthy*; whence it comes to pass, that the people of the *South* are *black*, and the *Northern white*; . . . Therefore the Herbs, Drugs and Fruits that are brought forth in those remoter Regions, are not *Homogenial* to our Bodies" (425).

In Tryon's text, these mostly "unraced" complexions are used to describe Englishmen, but by the time Franklin cited Tryon, he himself considered complexion to be racialized and to describe the different "varieties" of humankind. In his 1751 "Observations Concerning the Increase of Mankind, Peopling of Countries, &c," Franklin asks "Why should *Pennsylvania*, founded by the *English*, become a Colony of *Aliens*, who will shortly be so numerous as to Germanize us instead of our Anglifying them, and will never adopt our Language or Customs, any more than they can acquire *our Complexion*" (374, last emphasis added).[103] For Franklin,

the Germans have "what we call a swarthy Complexion . . . the *Saxons* only excepted, who with the *English*, make the principal Body of White People on the Face of the Earth" (374). Englishmen in both Britain and America share this white complexion, something most Germans can never claim. While Franklin problematically wishes the number of "Blacks and Tawneys" in America would decrease to allow the increase of "the lovely White and Red," he also admits that "[b]ut perhaps I am too partial to the Complexion of my Country, for such Kind of Partiality is natural to Mankind" (374).[104]

Franklin's use of "complexion" as a term associated with the varieties of humankind was part of a larger cultural shift, partly a result of Linnaeus's explicit racialization of the four complexions, his dividing the human population into, as Steven Gould puts it, "[f]our geographic regions, four humors, four races" (67). Under the Linnaean system, Europeans had the sanguine complexion; Native Americans were choleric; Asians, melancholic; and Africans, phlegmatic. For the sanguine complexion, Tryon advises that "a little Intemperance either in Meats, Drinks or Labour, will disorder them; therefore they ought *above all People* to observe and keep themselves within the bounds of Sobriety . . . They are to forbear all sorts of Meats and Drinks" (20, emphasis added). These "Meats and Drinks" are what Franklin most emphatically and, at the same time, sardonically addresses. In citing Tryon's diet guidelines, Franklin seems to endorse a program regulating one's diet in order to maintain his complexion, natural character, and—when read through eighteenth-century Linnaean categories—race.

But Franklin rarely is that straightforward. Later in the narrative, he tells how he failed to follow Tryon's instructions on his "first Voyage from Boston." When the fishermen net a catch of cod, Franklin states that "[h]itherto I had stuck to my Resolution of not eating animal Food; and on this Occasion, I consider'd with my Master Tryon, the taking every Fish as a kind of

unprovok'd Murder" (A 598-9). Tryon prohibits the eating of fish and flesh, claiming that "savages" take part in this violent process (253). Franklin hesitates, but when he realizes that each fish's stomach holds another previously-eaten fish, he rationalizes that he can be excused for joining the feast. "So I din'd upon Cod very heartily and continu'd to eat with other People, returning only now & then occasionally to a vegetable Diet. So convenient a thing it is to be a *reasonable Creature*, since it enables one to find or make a Reason for every thing one has a mind to do" (A 599). Scholars have aptly characterized this scene as "a contribution to the long history of the debate on reason versus the passions" (Lemay, Life 216) and an example of where "Reason" and "Principle" "themselves become instruments of the appetitive body" (Erkkila, "Revolutionary Body" 722). However, because Franklin evokes and then fails to keep Tryon's dietary program, the scene also enters into discussions about what maintains one's bodily complexion and national status.

Franklin's use of Tryon therefore cuts both ways: it cites Tryon's program as authoritative only to confound the associations Tryon draws between national (and later racial) character, wellness, and nutrition. Because Franklin's stature as an influential Anglo-American scientist and diplomat was so well-known at the time of his writing, the fact that he had not lost his national or racial status by living in America or by failing to keep Tryon's diet becomes part of the anecdotal humor.

Franklin again advances and then ironically undercuts a program for social habits in the second portion of his narrative, written in Passy, France, in 1784.[105] His list of virtues, tables for maintaining them, and the speckled axe allegory are also related to these larger conversations about what might make one white, civilized, or even American. Here Franklin shifts from writing to his own son to modeling the proto-typical "American" for what Benjamin Vaughn's

interpolated letter calls "*a rising* people" (A 634). Perhaps following Vaughn's advice to "invite all wise men to become like yourself" (A 635), Franklin lays out his "bold and arduous Project of arriving at moral Perfection" (A 643). Certainly, the virtues Franklin planned to embody—including silence, resolution, sincerity, and tranquility—encompass a broader schema of practices than those considered by dietary advisors and natural philosophers to affect complexion and "race." However, those such as temperance, industry, moderation, cleanliness, and chastity certainly do fall under that rubric. Franklin's table of virtues lies within a self-regulatory tradition that encompassed Tryon's Way to Health, early modern English and Scottish histories that connect "the causes and effects of shifts in national character" to "changes in diet, habitat, and climate" (Feerick 48), and U.S. natural historians who emphasized the "state of society."[106]

Franklin, though, admits his shortcomings in all thirteen categories, wearing out his "little Book" from marking and erasing his faults. Nevertheless, Franklin depicts his relative victory of improving himself while not achieving perfection. He likens himself to the man who, wanting a bright axe but unwilling to expend the effort to make it so, decides that "*I think I like a speckled Axe best*" (A 650). Franklin regrets his imperfection but feels that "the Endeavour made a better and a happier Man than I otherwise should have been" (A 651). Franklin writes in the third person that "[t]o Temperance he ascribes his long-continu'd Health, & what is still left to him of a good Constitution" (A 651). Like his references to Tryon's prescribed diet, Franklin's tables gesture in two directions at once: the outlandishness of constantly keeping tables and vigilantly monitoring one's behaviors pokes fun at those who connect cultural habits to the maintenance of national or racial character. At the same time, Franklin credits his program for making him into the model (white) American he presents to his readers.[107]

The second section's emphasis on virtue, self-regulation, and perfection intersects with debates about degeneration and race, and Franklin burlesques the debate by mockingly taking part in it. He subtly satirizes both French natural historians who claim New World degeneration and American natural philosophers who counter those assertions by positing a causal connection between social practices and racial identity. But nevertheless, by giving these practices some credit in maintaining his "Constitution," this entire parody is part and parcel of how Franklin proposes—and, on some level, one thinks quite sincerely—that new citizens should become like his model "American." Franklin upsets the relationship between whiteness and American national identity—and race and national identity more broadly—only to suggest their connection at the same time.

The Racial Contours of American Whiteness

While Franklin's failed programs for improvement confound contemporaneous notions that whiteness is produced or maintained by social practices, in the Autobiography, the category whiteness takes shape in an uneasy and unstable relationship to racial others. Franklin depicts black and Native subjectivities in order to sketch the outline of what would come to be known as the "new American," a citizen who was somehow analogous to but still dissimilar from the British, Native Americans, and African-Americans. Challenging claims that whites would degenerate in the New World, when the Franklinian character "takes on" traits of or is rhetorically associated with other races, he does not "become them." Throughout his narrative, Franklin's autobiographical character both identifies with and disavows black slaves and Native Americans. Tracing out the way Franklin's text positions black and red bodies within the new

national landscape shows how both slaves and Indians played a crucial role in the formation of national identity that his text puts forth.

Given the contemporaneous contexts of race-based slavery, relationships between parents and children, and connections between the mother country and its colonies, Franklin's story of running away from home and indenture to his brother becomes a site of conflicted racialized associations. Franklin identifies with runaway slaves and servants and also with those trying to establish an enduring political social order. Franklin's narration of his escape from his sibling's printing house in Boston collapses two allegorical readings popularized in the revolutionary rhetoric of America's early national period. First, because Franklin's father arranged for young Benjamin to serve as his brother's apprentice, Franklin's departure can be read as a story of a young man making a break from his family as he matures into his own authoritative agent. Franklin indicates, however, that his relationship with his brother could not be reduced to that between two siblings. He points out that "[t]ho' a Brother, he considered himself as my Master, ... my Brother was passionate & had often beaten me, which I took extreamly amiss;* and thinking my Apprenticeship very tedious, I was continually wishing for some Opportunity of shortening it, which at length offered in a manner unexpected" (A 583-4).

The short anecdote also resembles that of a slave escaping from his master. As David Waldstreicher points out, when Franklin runs away from his brother's shop, the "stealing of his own labor" in order to "make the self-made man" resembles stories of other eighteenth-century runaways printed in fugitive slave advertisements (6-7). Furthermore, in his 1770 "A Conversation on Slavery," a dialogue between an Englishman, an American, and a Scotchman about the contradiction of slavery and the contemporary struggle for liberty in the colonies, Franklin contradictorily associates racialized slavery and non-racialized forced labor. He

incriminates British and Scottish participation in various forms of slavery, giving a definition of slavery that closely resembles the Autobiography's runaway. In order to implicate Scottish mine owners in slavery involving their "*own* [white] *Countrymen*," Franklin's American advances a race-free definition of slavery that includes one who is "stolen, taken by Force, or bought . . . compelled to serve the Taker . . . is bound to obey . . . is subject to severe Punishments for small Offences, to enormous Whippings, and even Death, for absconding from his Service, or for Disobedience to Orders. I imagine such a Man is a Slave to all Intends and Purposes" (646).[108] Nevertheless, the American conjures up the notion of blackface to allege that the Scotchman's greatest sin is his enslavement of his own citizens, claiming that Scottish mine workers

> have no more Liberty to leave [the coal mines] than our Negroes have to leave their Master's Plantation. If having black Faces, indeed, subjected Men to the Condition of slavery, you might have some small Pretence for keeping the poor Colliers in that Condition: But remember, that under the Smut their Skin is *white*, that they are *honest good People*, and at the same Time are *your own countrymen*! (645)

The American conjectures that perhaps "having a black Face" does not justify one's enslavement, but he never decides the issue. Instead, he implies that the whiteness of the Scottish mine workers should free them from occupying the subject positions of slaves. The logic implies that while not all persons with "black Face[s]" are slaves, all slaves are—or perhaps should be—black. Nevertheless, in his definition of slavery (which emphasizes the passivity of a body that is purchased, forced to work, and subject to beating), the issue of race drops out completely. For the American, even when race is not an integral component of his definition of slavery, stories of coerced labor can clearly signify blackness.

This short newspaper piece evinces Franklin's recognition that during a period when, as David Roediger points out, the labor of both black slaves and white servants was "virtually interchangeable," stories of forced servitude of white servants could resonate quite closely with that of black slaves (25).[109] Thus, for eighteenth-century readers, Franklin's short story of a young white laborer would register on several metaphorical levels—the child leaving the family, the colonies dissociating from the mother country, the apprentice fleeing the master, and the black slave escaping the slave owner.[110]

Instead of resolutely endorsing his break away from his family and apprenticeship, however, Franklin presents a conflicted account. On the one hand, Franklin adds this footnote to the description of his brother's "passionate" beatings: "*I fancy his harsh & tyrannical Treatment of me, might be a means of impressing me with that Aversion to arbitrary Power that has stuck to me thro' my whole Life" (A 584). Franklin apparently champions his youthful action "to assert [his] Freedom" (A 585) and makes indirect reference to the British Parliament that many colonists felt exercised a similar type of "arbitrary Power."

On the other hand, Franklin qualifies the action he took as a young man by positing that "[i]t was not fair in me to take this Advantage, and this I therefore reckon one of the first Errata of my life: But the Unfairness of it weigh'd little with me, when under the Impressions of Resentment, for the Blows his Passion too often urg'd him to bestow upon me. Tho' He was otherwise not an ill-natur'd Man: Perhaps I was too saucy & provoking—" (A 585). While Franklin initially endorses his assertion of freedom against tyrannical power, he then tempers that recommendation by declaring his action a mistake.

Mostly written in 1771 when Franklin labored to reconcile the mounting tensions between Great Britain and the American colonies (Erkkila, "Revolutionary Body" 719), the story

suggests not an unqualified aversion to colonialism as such but rather to the misuse of "arbitrary" power by Franklin's brother and, by extension, Great Britain. Franklin's editorial interjections complicate his revolutionary rhetoric, providing his readers different potential readings of the allegorical story.[111] Indeed, both the footnote and the statement that "I therefore reckon [this] one of the First Errata of my Life" were roughly contemporaneous "columnar additions" in Franklin's double-bookkeeping style of his manuscript (Genetic Text, eds. Lemay and Zall 18-20). Franklin's impulse to footnote and reflect upon his anecdote registers his ambivalence over modifying existing socio-political structures and determining when power, whether that of a slave master or royal monarch, is legitimate or merely "arbitrary." The short tale can be viewed as Franklin's first step toward becoming the model self-made man, but the scene can be read as both an inspirational escape narrative and also a morality tale to masters and royal sovereigns. Franklin depicts this scene both as a blunder and as the foundation for his later success.[112]

Although Franklin's anecdote of escape from his brother is closely related to slaves' stories of flight from race-based slavery, the notion of blackness itself surfaces much more explicitly later in the text. In a scene where Franklin dines at the home of Pennsylvania Governor Robert Morris,

> [Governor Morris] told us Jokingly that he much admir'd the Idea of Sancho Panza, who when it was propos'd to give him a Government, requested it might be a Government of *Blacks*, as then, if he could not agree with his People he might sell them. One of his Friends who sat next me, says, 'Franklin, why do you continue to side with these damn'd Quakers? had not you better sell them? the Proprietor would give you a good Price.' The Governor, says I, has not yet *black'd* them enough. He had indeed labor'd hard to

> blacken the Assembly in all his Messages, but they wip'd off his Coloring as fast as he laid it on, and plac'd it in return thick upon his own Face; so that finding he was likely to be negrify'd himself, he as well as Mr. Hamilton, grew tir'd of the Contest, and quitted the Government. (A 693)

This passage alludes to the antagonistic relationship between the Pennsylvania governor and the Quakers, who refused to fight in the Seven Years' War and who were often rhetorically associated with black slaves because of their abolitionist beliefs. It also refers to a passage in Cervantes' Don Quixote where Sancho Panza becomes aware that he can sell the "blacks" that he governs.[113]

Franklin blithely reprimands the governor and his friend for their reliance on rhetorics of blackness and servitude, but he does so in a manner that also depends upon those same problematics. Franklin's retort to the Governor's friend relies upon the interconnections of rhetorical and figurative blackness, but it does not directly attend to its underlying logic. Instead it addresses the dynamics of intra-Assembly negotiations. Here, Franklin proves himself agile in turning around a statement offensive to him because it castigates Pennsylvanians generally (and Quakers more specifically) and because it implicitly endorses the institution of slavery.[114] The governor—by wishing for a "Government of *Blacks*" that he could sell rather than govern—associates physical blackness, slavery, and non-citizenship. The governor's friend then links rhetorical blackness to the Quakers. But Franklin even further plays upon how *blackness* signifies across the discourses of slavery, race, physicality, and morality when he links a blackened reputation ("[t]he Governor has not yet *black'd* them enough) with physical blackface ("wip'd off his Colouring"). Franklin ends the joke where the governor began it: when the governer finds his own status blackened by the assembly ("negrify'd himself") he "quit[s] the

Government." If other early American scientists investigated the changeability of the literal color of one's skin, Franklin here concerns himself with the fluidity of metaphorical blackness as it relates to one's political status. Franklin's wit makes explicit the overlap between a blackened character and racial blackness to show how the governor's association with a racially blackened reputation excludes him from civic participation.

However, Franklin's familiarity with the multiple rhetorical uses of blackness nevertheless depends on the link between rhetorical and physical blackness and non-citizenship. He makes fun of Morris and his friend for using the metaphor of black slavery to denigrate the oppositional Quakers. Trumping the outlandishness of their metaphorical language by suggesting the Governor himself has become blackened and run out of state government, Franklin parodies their use of this type of language. This evinces Franklin's disapproval of their flippant comparison of slavery to governance, slaves to constituents, and governors to masters. But, he does not challenge the implicit equations on which this joke turns: that one cannot be part of government unless he is white. Unresolved is the question of whether or not blacks could become legitimate citizens because here blackness is unequivocally equated with non-citizenship status. Franklin's retort both rebukes and invokes this way of thinking about and defining white citizenship.[115]

Native Americans also figure ambiguously in Franklin writing on citizenship in the Autobiography. Franklin aligns colonists with them, and against the British, but he also contrasts Native Americans with the ideal American.[116] As Erkkila suggests, the third section of the Autobiography can be seen in deep conversation with the events of the Constitutional founding and therefore has implications for Franklin's conceptualization of savage and unruly behavior in the new nation. This section recounts Franklin's involvement during the 1750s with

Pennsylvania-Native American relations and the Seven Years' War. As a Pennsylvania representative, Franklin worked alongside the British to form strategic alliances with certain indigenous groups and to secure the western Pennsylvania border for white settlers against attacks. Franklin describes a crucial time in Indian-white affairs as both the French and British empires tried to deploy various tribes against one another in an attempt to acquire Native land.[117] In August, 1788, Franklin began writing this section that narrates the 1750s. At this time, the Americans had won the Revolutionary War, but the conflicts over the establishment of borders between whites and Native Americans and over the political formation of the new nation still remained to be fully settled. In fact, Franklin served as a delegate to the 1787 Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, and he resumed work on his Autobiography shortly after all states ratified the Constitution. Given the historical context of its composition, the third section illustrates some of Franklin's concerns over the establishment of the nation-state through his depictions of Native Americans.

Franklin renders his most denigrating portrait of Native Americans at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, where he and other elected representatives traveled in 1753 to negotiate a treaty with the Ohio Indians—many of the same tribes with whom Aupaumut would negotiate nearly forty years later. The British previously had solicited them to join the coalition they already enjoyed with the Iroquois, because they suspected that if the Ohio Indians sided with the French, the Iroquois would soon follow. However, the British-Iroquois alliance failed to supply aid to the Ohio Indians when the French army attacked them at Pickawillany. Only when the French army began to advance toward the Ohio River did Pennsylvania belatedly provide support and offer condolences for the warriors lost in the attack by sending Franklin's delegation to Carlisle (White 232-6).

Eliding this historical background, Franklin's account focuses on how the Indians get drunk with rum, and it notes how he and his other council members bribe them to stay sober during the treaty meetings with a promise of later alcohol distribution. After the treaty is reached, as Franklin notes, to "mutual Satisfaction," the agreed-upon rum is given to the Indians. That night,

> hearing a great Noise among them, the Commissioners walk'd out to see what was the Matter. We found they had made a great Bonfire in the Middle of the Square. They were all drunk Men and Women, quarrelling and fighting. Their dark-colour'd Bodies, half naked, seen only in the gloomy Light of the Bonfire, running after and beating one another with Firebrands, accompanied by their horrid Yellings, form'd a Scene the most resembling our Ideas of Hell that could well be imagin'd. There was no appeasing the Tumult, and we retired to our Lodging. At Midnight a Number of them came thundering at our Door, demanding more Rum; of which we took no Notice. (A 681-2)

The next day, three of the Indian elders make their apologies to Franklin's group, claiming the rum instigated their behavior. They declare that the "great Spirit" who created rum did so for the "INDIANS TO GET DRUNK WITH" (A 682).

In Franklin's passage, the Indians are worthy of official state negotiation, but they also evoke trepidation in rational whites because of their difficulty with alcohol.[118] In other interactions with state leaders, Franklin utilizes alcohol to assist in brokering an agreement. For instance, he secures eighteen canons from New York Governor Clinton only after a dinner with "great Drinking of Madeira Wine" (A 672), and he advises the Presbyterian minister Mr. Beatty to administer rum to soldiers only after prayer meetings, in order to increase attendance (A 708-9). In relation to these two passages which bracket the rum-induced bonfire scene, Franklin

implies that, like the governor of New York and the white soldiers, the Indians are just another group with whom bargaining talks can be productively lubricated with a bit of alcohol.

However, Franklin also adds that "indeed if it be the Design of Providence to extirpate these Savages in order to make room for Cultivators of the Earth, it seems not improbable that Rum may be the appointed Means. It has already annihilated all the Tribes who formerly inhabited the Seacoast" (A 682). Here, Franklin seems to claim that rum makes the Indian both like and unlike the white man, easing negotiations but still influencing the red man differently. While Tryon wrote that alcohol most affected the sanguine complexion, Franklin paints a scene wherein it wreaks more havoc among Native tribes. The Native American body is radically different from that of the white men whom Franklin portrays drinking and, simultaneously, closely similar to the "sanguine" Anglo who, according to Tryon, is so susceptible to alcohol's effects.[119] For Franklin, rum not only turns Indians into demon-like creatures from hell. It also "annihilate[s]" tribes, and Franklin displaces the blame for the annihilation of Indian tribes from the white settlers to the alcohol itself. As historian Richard White points out, when Franklin and his associates met with the Miami and Wyandot Indians "to perform the necessary ceremonies of condolence," they were "bewildered by the necessary protocol" (235). This leads one to believe that this scene can be read less as an accurate anthropological account of Native American practices and more as Franklin's own perspective on the Indians' "tumultuous" behavior.[120]

At other times, however, Franklin presents Native American practices as those to be emulated by white Americans in an effort to define themselves against the British.[121] Toward the end of his narrative, Franklin equivocally associates himself with Native Americans in the protection of white settlers. During the Seven Years' War, Franklin works with British Major-General Edward Braddock, supplying him with wagons to use in his 1755 march against the

French at Fort Duquesne. In the Autobiography, Franklin advises Braddock against his plans to hike to Duquesne and then to Niagara, arguing that an Indian ambush could surprise and fatally wound his ranks. Franklin writes that Braddock "smil'd at my Ignorance, & reply'd, 'these Savages may indeed be a formidable Enemy to your raw American Militia; but, upon the King's regular & disciplin'd Troops, Sir, it is impossible they should make any Impression'" (A 701). As Erkkila makes clear, Braddock's comments align Franklin and other white Americans with the Indians; ignorant, raw, irregular, and undisciplined, their bodies show no dissimilarity from that of the red man ("Revolutionary Body" 734). When the march ends in the slaughter of two-thirds of Braddock's men, Franklin comments ironically that "[t]his whole Transaction gave us Americans the first suspicion that our exalted Ideas of the Prowess of British Regulars had not been well founded" (A 702).[122] In this scene, Franklin finds himself and his countrymen associated more with the Indians they purportedly fight against—since the British hold a mean opinion "of both Americans and Indians" (A 700)—than the British with whom they collaborate. Franklin's comment suggests that like "these Savages," the "raw American militia" could indeed defeat the British forces, enabling them to found the new nation. Importantly, Franklin's "savages" play a constitutive role here in the formation of American identity against that of the British.

Hendrick Aupaumut: Becoming the "Front Door"

Like Benjamin Franklin, Mohican Hendrick Aupaumut was hired as an emissary by the government to negotiate with Native American tribes, and his narration gives further insight into various ideas about early American racial formation. In the fall of 1787, the year before Franklin began the third section of the Autobiography, Aupaumut and eight other New Stockbridge

Indians (also known as "Mohicans") petitioned Samson Occom to be their permanent minister precisely because he was "red." Formerly of Massachusetts, these New Stockbridge Indians had decided to follow the lead of Occom's own Mohegan tribe by removing onto a tract of Oneida land.[123] The tribe relocated to New Stockbridge, located six miles from the Mohegan Brotherton settlement in what would become upstate New York.[124] The "Muhheacunnuk Tribes" declare to Occom that "we believe that this God has raised you up as an Ambassador into this wilderness upon this purpose, that you might be the first instrument or means to stir up your own Nation to try embrace the whole Religion . . ." (rpt. in Blodgett, 196-7). They claim that "a Number of us cheerfully agreed to begin to pursue what we believe to be our Duty since we have felt and experience the great goodness of God—for raising and fiting one of our own Collour—to be instrumental to build up the Cause and the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ—" (197). The language of the request—that their new minister be "one of our own Collour"— places Aupaumut and his fellow Mohicans squarely within a number of discursive formations. While historian Richard White notes that the phrase "loomed so large in Indian speeches of the period" (492), Aupaumut later uses it in a particularly contextualized instance—to a confederated alliance of nativist and accommodationist Indians, recorded in a journal to be sent to U.S. government officials—to comment on a number of related issues: linguistic and political representation, the nature of racial identity, and the constitution of political alliances.

Heeding the New Stockbridge request, Occom split his ministry between Brotherton and New Stockbridge, where Aupaumut translated his sermons to other Mohicans (Love 266). Mohican life at Oneida was unstable, however, as white settlers continued to encroach upon Native lands, and the tense relationship between the Mohicans and their Oneida hosts began to worsen. Aupaumut started seeking out ways to secure other areas where both the Brotherton and

New Stockbridge Indians could remove (Taylor 433; Love 316-19). Aupaumut took advantage of the opportunity to serve as a U.S. emissary to the collection of tribes forming in the Ohio Valley in opposition to the United States. Aupaumut hoped to ingratiate the fledgling government to his tribe by delivering a message of peace to the confederation and to secure a new Mohican home by renewing ancient kinship ties with these western tribes. In 1792, he traveled to present-day Defiance, Ohio, to engage in treaty negotiations (Taylor 433). His record of these travels, which he titled "A Short narration of my last Journey to the western Contry," was sent to U.S. government officials in Philadelphia (and was published thirty-five years later in the 1827 edition of the Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania).

In considering Aupaumut's text, I trace the historical context of these 1792 negotiations to illustrate how the complexity of the racialized alliances greatly exceed a reductive red-white characterization. I then analyze the mode of production underlying Aupaumut's published text, specifically the imperialist framework within which his narration was published by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Some of the purported "mistakes" in Aupaumut's manuscript incisively perform in grammatical (mis)usage the racialized problematics of linguistic and political representation, narration, and the establishment of political entities. The basic question these "errors" raise—how race plays a role in constituting political alliances—frames my discussion of "color" in Aupaumut's "Short Narration." Aupaumut implies that the notion of "one color" can either cohere a political alliance or break apart into several separate ones. Lastly, I show how Aupaumut's "History (of the Muh-he-ka-ne-ok Indians)," a text roughly contemporaneous with the "Short Narration," intervenes into theories about how social practices can influence the production of physical features that then signify race.[125] For Aupaumut,

articulating tribal and national collectives has everything to do with confronting different and clashing ideas about race and the body.

As a Mohican growing up at the Protestant Stockbridge Mission, Aupaumut was no stranger to red-white interactions. He began to practice Christianity as a youth and, along with several other Mohicans, enlisted in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War (Taylor 436). He was commended and promoted to Captain by General George Washington (Calloway, American Revolution 96-100). After the war, the Mohican soldiers felt they did not receive appropriate compensation for their service and continued to solicit the government for their wages. As I mentioned above, when encouraged by the New England tribes already in the process of removing to Oneida territory, the Stockbridge tribes followed suit.

As the Stockbridge Indians were making a life for themselves at New Stockbridge in the waning years of the eighteenth century, the new government was retooling its official policy toward Indian tribes to attempt to guarantee peaceful but steady white encroachment onto Native lands.[126] The U.S. government did so because the disagreement between the Americans and Native tribes over whether the tribes allied with the British during the Revolution should be considered subjugated peoples whose lands were ceded to the U.S. had led to much bloody fighting on the "frontier" immediately following the war.[127] By the late 1780s, federal officials adopted a more coherent federal Indian policy to avoid what they felt would be a damaging Indian war and to curtail aggressive, advancing white backwoods settlers unlikely to follow federal dictates.[128] The government, believing that the Native American held great capacity for change and would become more "white" if coerced into adopting white cultural practices, also sought to assimilate Natives into white society so that their land could be more easily obtained (Merrell 204).[129]

At the same time, a confederacy of Native tribes led by the Miamis, Shawnees, and Delawares was forming in the Ohio Valley in explicit and possibly violent resistance to white backcountry settlers, as well as to the U.S. government more generally.[130] Before and then again after this brief time period, many of these western tribes (what, as I explained in chapter one, Gregory Dowd has termed "nativist" in part because of their militant beliefs in separate red-white-black creations and return to tribal practices) strongly disapproved of more "accommodationist" tribes (those more willing to adopt white cultural practices and to negotiate with whites themselves).[131] However, in the 1790s, many of these groups came together to build a vibrant and threatening affront to the United States. As historian Collin Calloway states, "[h]eaded by the Miamis, the Shawnees, and the Delawares, the western confederacy continued to develop and . . . combined with the Six Nations and other tribes to present the United States with the most formidable array of Indian power mustered in united opposition" (Crown 45-6).

In this precarious moment, what historians White and Helen Tanner have shown to be a most significant period in the history of white-Native relations, Aupaumut was one of several Native leaders to jockey for position as the main Native negotiator enjoined by the federal government to propose peace with these western tribes (Taylor 433). Captain Aupaumut strategized to ensure that his tribe continued to be considered by the new government as the "front door" to Indian country, a metaphor that denotes its prized role as intermediary between the more western Native tribes and the U.S. government (Taylor 437). Shortly after Benjamin Franklin died, Aupaumut traveled to Philadelphia, and he was selected by Washington for this important position (Gustafson, Eloquence 260). Once endorsed by the U.S. to carry the "message of peace" to the Indian confederacy, Aupaumut went to the "Glaize," the area of land where the confederacy met, with the future of Indian country and the new U.S. nation-state

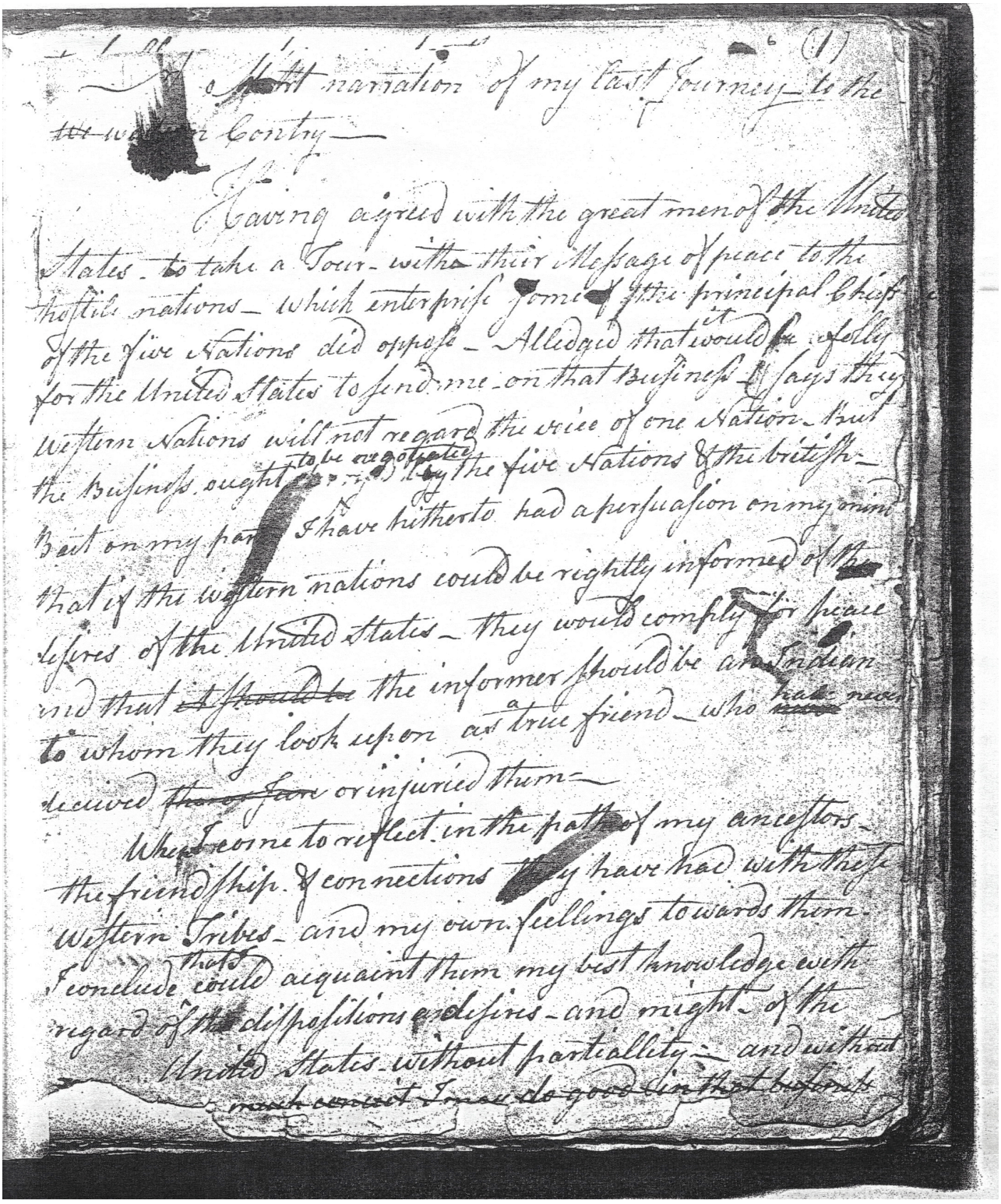
riding on his diplomacy.[132] Because of the present-day contentious debate about Native tribal sovereignty, the journal Aupaumut kept as record of the talks and sent back to the U.S. government serves as a crucial piece of evidence. By soliciting the confederacy to negotiate a peace treaty, the United States did engage with indigenous groups as independent *political* entities that, as Maureen Konkle has demonstrated, shows a recognition of Native tribes as sovereign nations (1-41). In this conflicted international and imperial theatre of the Ohio Valley, Aupaumut's "Short Narration" stands as one of the essential pieces of historical literature in which the dynamics of race, body, tribe, and nation were worked out in the last decade of the eighteenth century.

"These white people was": Unediting Aupaumut's "Short Narration"

Aupaumut begins his detailed record of the intertribal treaty negotiations transcribed for U.S. government officials by writing:

> Having agreed with the great men of the United States, to take a tour, with their message of peace to the hostile nations—which enterprise some of the principal chiefs of the Five Nations did oppose—alledged that it would be folly for the United States to send me on that business . . . But on my part, I have hitherto had a persuasion on my mind, that if the Western Nations could be rightly informed of the desires of the United States, they would comply for peace, and that the informer should be an Indian to whom they look upon as a true friend, who has never deceived or injuried (sic) them. (see fig. 5)

Aupaumut sent his manuscript to Colonel Timothy Pickering to counteract rumors that he did not fulfill his duty when working with the western tribes (Gustafson, Eloquence 260). The text, however, was not printed until 1827 when Philadelphia antiquarian Benjamin Coates obtained



narration of my last Journey to the
[illegible] Country

Having agreed with the great men of the United
States to take a Tour with their Message of peace to the
hostile nations which enterprise some of the principal Chiefs
of the five Nations did oppose Alledged that would be folly
for the United States to send me on that business & says they
Western Nations will not regard the voice of one Nation But
the Business ought to be negotiated by the five Nations & the British
Best on my part I have hitherto had a persuasion on my mind
that if the western nations could be rightly informed of the
desires of the United States they would comply for peace
and that the informer should be an Indian
to whom they look upon as a true friend who has never
deceived them or injuried them

When I come to reflect in the path of my ancestors
the friendship & connections they have had with these
Western Tribes and my own feelings towards them
I conclude could acquaint them my best knowledge with
regard of the dispositions & desires and might of the
United States without partiallity and without
much concern I may do good in that behalf

Figure 5 Hendrick Aupaumut's manuscript, page 1.

the manuscript, presented it to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and published it in the Society's Memoirs. While English-literate Aupaumut composed his manuscript without a transcriber, his text was edited according to a certain set of standards and published without his input, permission, or even knowledge (Taylor 431-2). The particular valences involved in the production of this printed text call for an analysis of the "mode of the production of the text"—one that Arnold Krupat insists is of vital import in Native American literary criticism.[133] Considering several of Aupaumut's supposed "errors" in punctuation and grammar makes visible structures of knowledge that govern the editorial practice of the 1827 editors of his "Narration." While distinct from Franklin's "errata," Aupaumut's "errors" also command attention not because they are wrong per se, but because of what they illustrate. Analyzing the editorial practices used with Aupaumut's text shows how these "mistakes" raise issues about political representation, nation-formation, and the role of race in consolidating political entities.

Textual critics like Jerome McGann and D.F. McKenzie have shown how all printed texts, as products of a social world, are made collaboratively; the "Short Narration" evinces the imperial nature of how the editors produced the printed text from Aupaumut's manuscript. Following Leah Marcus, my reading "unedits" the Memoir text to interpret elements of Aupaumut's manuscript that are omitted from the printed version without reconstructing an authoritative original licensed by a restrictive notion of the "author." As Marcus writes, "No single version of a literary work . . . can offer us the fond dream of unmediated access to an author or to his or her era; the more aware we are of the processes of mediation to which a given edition has been subject, the less likely we are to be caught up in a constricting hermeneutic knot by which the shaping hand of the editor is mistaken for the intent of the author, or for some lost, 'perfect' version of the author's creation" (3).[134] Focusing on what Marcus calls "the process of

mediation" rather than an ephemeral "authorial intent," I here highlight a textual *practice* rather than a textual *presence* in an attempt to strike a balance between a post-structuralist notion of authorship and attention to the historical circumstances surrounding this particular Native American writer.

When Aupaumut's text appeared in print in the 1827 Memoirs, the men who wrote its prefatory material obsessed almost as much over the correctness of Aupaumut's grammar, spelling, and punctuation, as they did his Indian "authenticity." Dr. Coates writes:

> The narrative is freely interlined with corrections in grammar and expression; not indeed sufficient to render it perfectly admissible as an English composition, but appearing to have been aimed at the more obvious faults. These are, in fact, precisely such as we might naturally anticipate, in the writings of one who had received an English education at a good school, but who had been so long accustomed to an entirely different system of grammar, that he was not able to render himself quite familiar with the use of our idioms. Thus, particles are omitted, the singular and plural numbers confounded &c (64-65).

Colonel Timothy Pickering, a former American Indian commissioner who worked directly with Aupaumut (Taylor 431), attests to the authenticity of the text and Aupaumut's own legitimacy as an Indian, in part *because of* its "errors": "I have no doubt of the authenticity of this manuscript—that it was written by Hendrick himself. The handwriting appears to be the same with specimens I have formerly seen, that were written by him, and distinguished by similar incorrectnesses" (75).

Historicizing both Coates and Pickering's 1827 remarks help make apparent the various investments embedded within them. In the early national period, while calls for language standardization abounded and different guidelines seemed to replace the next set of

requirements, common practice and the standards to which it was supposed to adhere were constantly in flux.[135] Given this state of the language, Coates's and Pickering's comments seem to impose retroactively a more clearly standardized sense of the language than would have obtained in the early 1790s. Their statements assume that these agreed-upon rules of language constitute the only correct way to communicate in English.[136]

However, examples of "mistakes" from Aupaumut's manuscript reveal a much more complex situation. Looking at both the manuscript and printed text indicates what might be recovered from Aupaumut's work. Granted, it was common practice for printers in the late eighteenth century to punctuate a text when they printed it (McKitterick 200-203), and many dashes, commas, and periods are silently "corrected" here.[137] However, to take one example, the exchange of wampum belts—a figure that we are not trained to think about as "punctuation"—interrupts the manuscript in an important manner that seems to be silenced in the printed text.

Wampum belts themselves worked as records of treaty meetings, and their exchange signified the contractual relationship among parties. Wampum encoded communication in their colorful designs, and the exchange of the belts themselves conveyed different messages: acceptance, understanding, or sometimes rejection of a speaker's words. Indeed, Calloway writes, "[s]peakers *punctuated* their words by handing wampum belts across the council fire" (New Worlds 129, emphasis added). Calloway does not suggest that wampum belts worked exactly like marks of punctuation, but his comment is suggestive for conceiving the exchange of wampum belts as a certain type of punctuation. For example, in figure 6, the trading of wampum demarcates small speeches embedded within a speech and the different positions that the orator occupies. Here, a warrior from the Seven Nations of Canada addresses the assembled group. In each smaller speech, he delivers the message of a specific nation within his own confederacy; the

wampum exchange marks how he moves from being the "representative" of his entire confederacy (in the frame of his longer speech) to being merely a "messenger" for different nations within that confederacy. It is as if the exchange of wampum belts marks some sort of change in person—from narrating in the first person plural to the third. In the printed version, the lines disappear and the wampum belt exchange is absorbed into the transcription itself (see fig. 7).

A second example underscores the doubly performative nature of Aupaumut's text. The manuscript not only records the ceremonial aspect of the intricate nature of intertribal diplomacy; it also re-performs it, as a speech act, for the white government officials in Philadelphia who eventually received this text. In figure 8, a Delaware sachem applies oil to Aupaumut's feet as a part of a ritual. In the upper left hand corner, the text reads: "I now wash your legs and wipe them clean, and I pull all briers which stick on your legs and feet—and then I take the nicest weesqui, which contains the pure oil, and put the same on your legs and feet that you may feel easy." Underneath, two sentences appear side by side. The text on the left reads: "Then they arose and shake our hands, to confirm their friendship to us." The right: "This is all I have to say—four white strings of wampum 3 feet long delivered." The text on the left functions as a kind of stage direction; its placement on the page indicates that it is not part of the sachem's actual speech. On the right, the "four white strings of wampum 3 feet long delivered" similarly is not spoken by the sachem; instead, much like a period, it marks the end of the sachem's words, just as the "stage directions" indicate the ritual's conclusion. Text that serves as a type of stage direction, direct quotation, and punctuation and marks the simultaneity of all three in the manuscript become flattened out and are made sequential in the printed version (see fig. 9). Here the text reads: "This is all I have to say—four strings of wampum 3 feet long delivered. Then

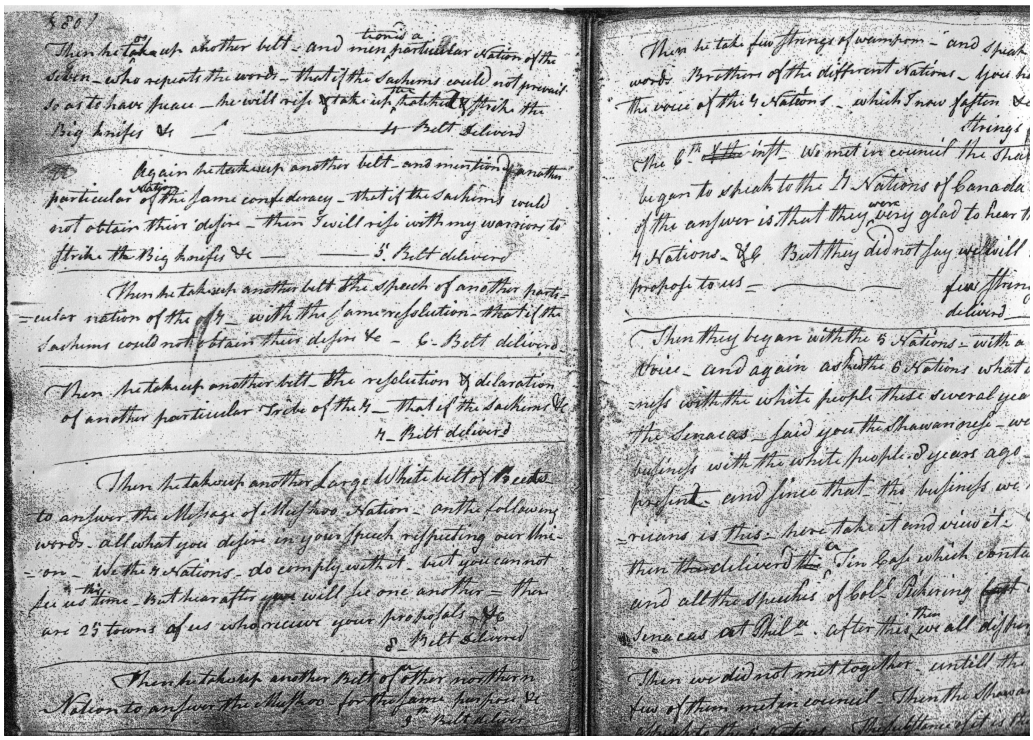
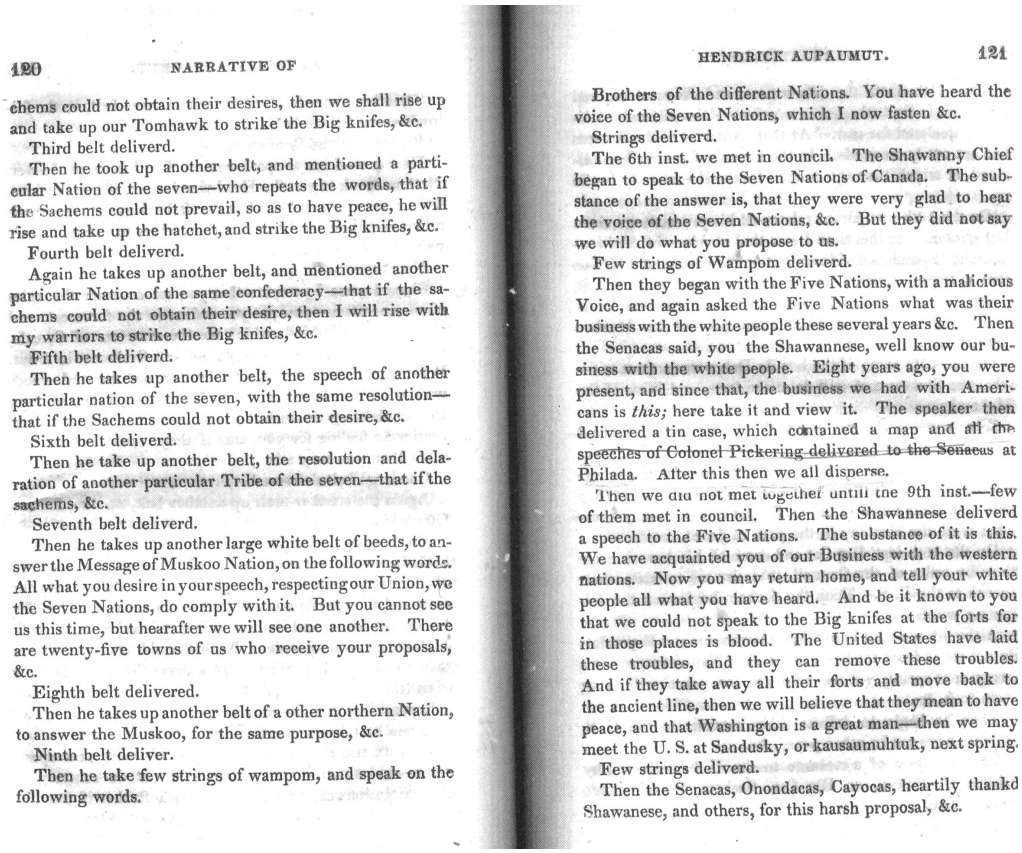


Figure 6 Hendrick Aupaumut's manuscript, pages 80-81.



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chems could not obtain their desires, then we shall rise up and take up our Tomhawk to strike the Big knifes, &c.

Third belt deliverd.

Then he took up another belt, and mentioned a particular Nation of the seven—who repeats the words, that if the Sachems could not prevail, so as to have peace, he will rise and take up the hatchet, and strike the Big knifes, &c.

Fourth belt deliverd.

Again he takes up another belt, and mentioned another particular Nation of the same confederacy—that if the sachems could not obtain their desire, then I will rise with my warriors to strike the Big knifes, &c.

Fifth belt deliverd.

Then he takes up another belt, the speech of another particular nation of the seven, with the same resolution—that if the Sachems could not obtain their desire, &c.

Sixth belt deliverd.

Then he take up another belt, the resolution and delaration of another particular Tribe of the seven—that if the sachems, &c.

Seventh belt deliverd.

Then he takes up another large white belt of beeds, to answer the Message of Muskoo Nation, on the following words. All what you desire in your speech, respecting our Union, we the Seven Nations, do comply with it. But you cannot see us this time, but hearafter we will see one another. There are twenty-five towns of us who receive your proposals, &c.

Eighth belt delivered.

Then he takes up another belt of a other northern Nation, to answer the Muskoo, for the same purpose, &c.

Ninth belt deliver.

Then he take few strings of wampom, and speak on the following words.

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Brothers of the different Nations. You have heard the voice of the Seven Nations, which I now fasten &c.

Strings deliverd.

The 6th inst. we met in council. The Shawanny Chief began to speak to the Seven Nations of Canada. The substance of the answer is, that they were very glad to hear the voice of the Seven Nations, &c. But they did not say we will do what you propose to us.

Few strings of Wampom deliverd.

Then they began with the Five Nations, with a malicious Voice, and again asked the Five Nations what was their business with the white people these several years &c. Then the Senacas said, you the Shawannese, well know our business with the white people. Eight years ago, you were present, and since that, the business we had with Americans is *this;* here take it and view it. The speaker then delivered a tin case, which contained a map and all the ~~speeches of Colonel Pickering delivered to the Senacas~~ at Philada. After this then we all disperse.

Then we did not met together until the 9th inst.—few of them met in council. Then the Shawannese deliverd a speech to the Five Nations. The substance of it is this. We have acquainted you of our Business with the western nations. Now you may return home, and tell your white people all what you have heard. And be it known to you that we could not speak to the Big knifes at the forts for in those places is blood. The United States have laid these troubles, and they can remove these troubles. And if they take away all their forts and move back to the ancient line, then we will believe that they mean to have peace, and that Washington is a great man—then we may meet the U. S. at Sandusky, or kausaumuhtuk, next spring.

Few strings deliverd.

Then the Senacas, Onondacas, Cayocas, heartily thankd Shawanese, and others, for this harsh proposal, &c.

Figure 7 Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, pages 120-1.

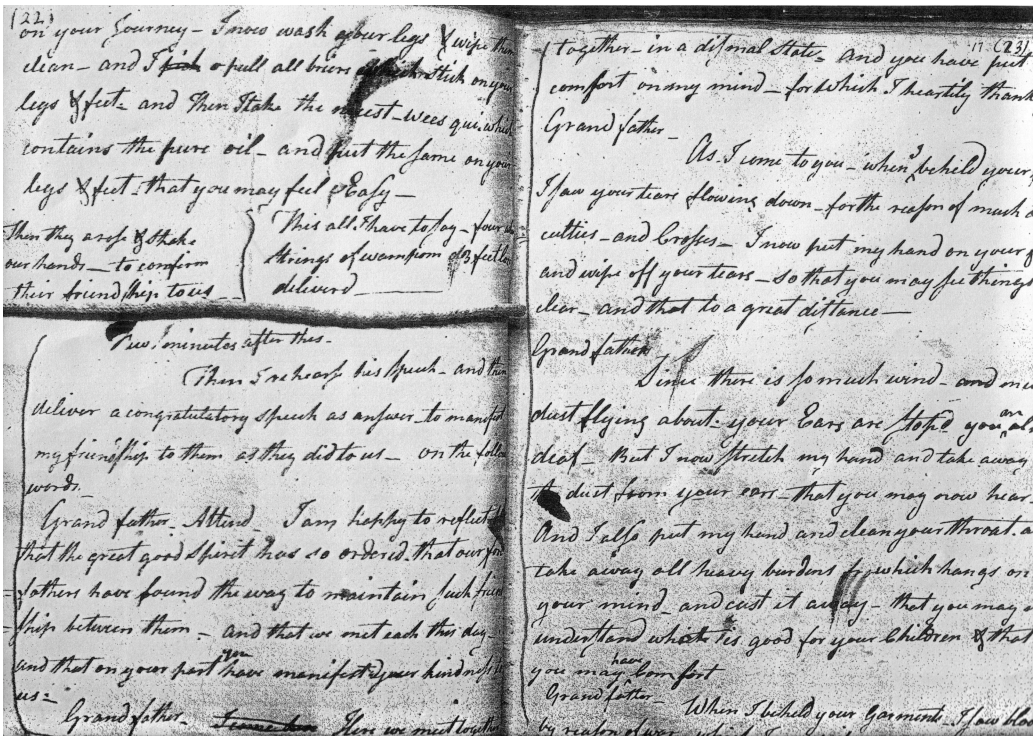
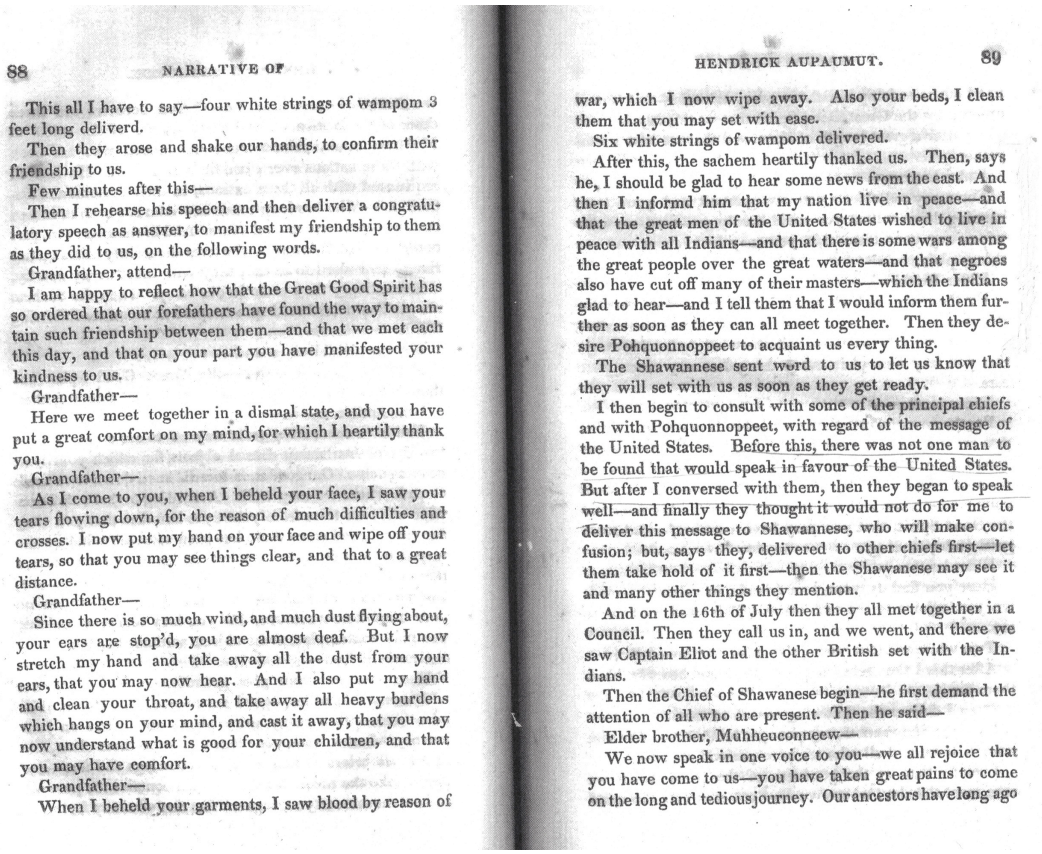


Figure 8 Hendrick Aupaumut's Manuscript, pages 22-23.



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This all I have to say—four white strings of wampom 3 feet long deliverd.

Then they arose and shake our hands, to confirm their friendship to us.

Few minutes after this—

Then I rehearse his speech and then deliver a congratulatory speech as answer, to manifest my friendship to them as they did to us, on the following words.

Grandfather, attend—

I am happy to reflect how that the Great Good Spirit has so ordered that our forefathers have found the way to maintain such friendship between them—and that we met each this day, and that on your part you have manifested your kindness to us.

Grandfather—

Here we meet together in a dismal state, and you have put a great comfort on my mind, for which I heartily thank you.

Grandfather—

As I come to you, when I beheld your face, I saw your tears flowing down, for the reason of much difficulties and crosses. I now put my hand on your face and wipe off your tears, so that you may see things clear, and that to a great distance.

Grandfather—

Since there is so much wind, and much dust flying about, your ears are stop'd, you are almost deaf. But I now stretch my hand and take away all the dust from your ears, that you may now hear. And I also put my hand and clean your throat, and take away all heavy burdens which hangs on your mind, and cast it away, that you may now understand what is good for your children, and that you may have comfort.

Grandfather—

When I beheld your garments, I saw blood by reason of

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war, which I now wipe away. Also your beds, I clean them that you may set with ease.

Six white strings of wampom delivered.

After this, the sachem heartily thanked us. Then, says he, I should be glad to hear some news from the east. And then I informd him that my nation live in peace—and that the great men of the United States wished to live in peace with all Indians—and that there is some wars among the great people over the great waters—and that negroes also have cut off many of their masters—which the Indians glad to hear—and I tell them that I would inform them further as soon as they can all meet together. Then they desire Pohquonnoppeet to acquaint us every thing.

The Shawannese sent word to us to let us know that they will set with us as soon as they get ready.

I then begin to consult with some of the principal chiefs and with Pohquonnoppeet, with regard of the message of the United States. Before this, there was not one man to be found that would speak in favour of the United States. But after I conversed with them, then they began to speak well—and finally they thought it would not do for me to deliver this message to Shawannese, who will make confusion; but, says they, delivered to other chiefs first—let them take hold of it first—then the Shawanese may see it and many other things they mention.

And on the 16th of July then they all met together in a Council. Then they call us in, and we went, and there we saw Captain Eliot and the other British set with the Indians.

Then the Chief of Shawanese begin—he first demand the attention of all who are present. Then he said—

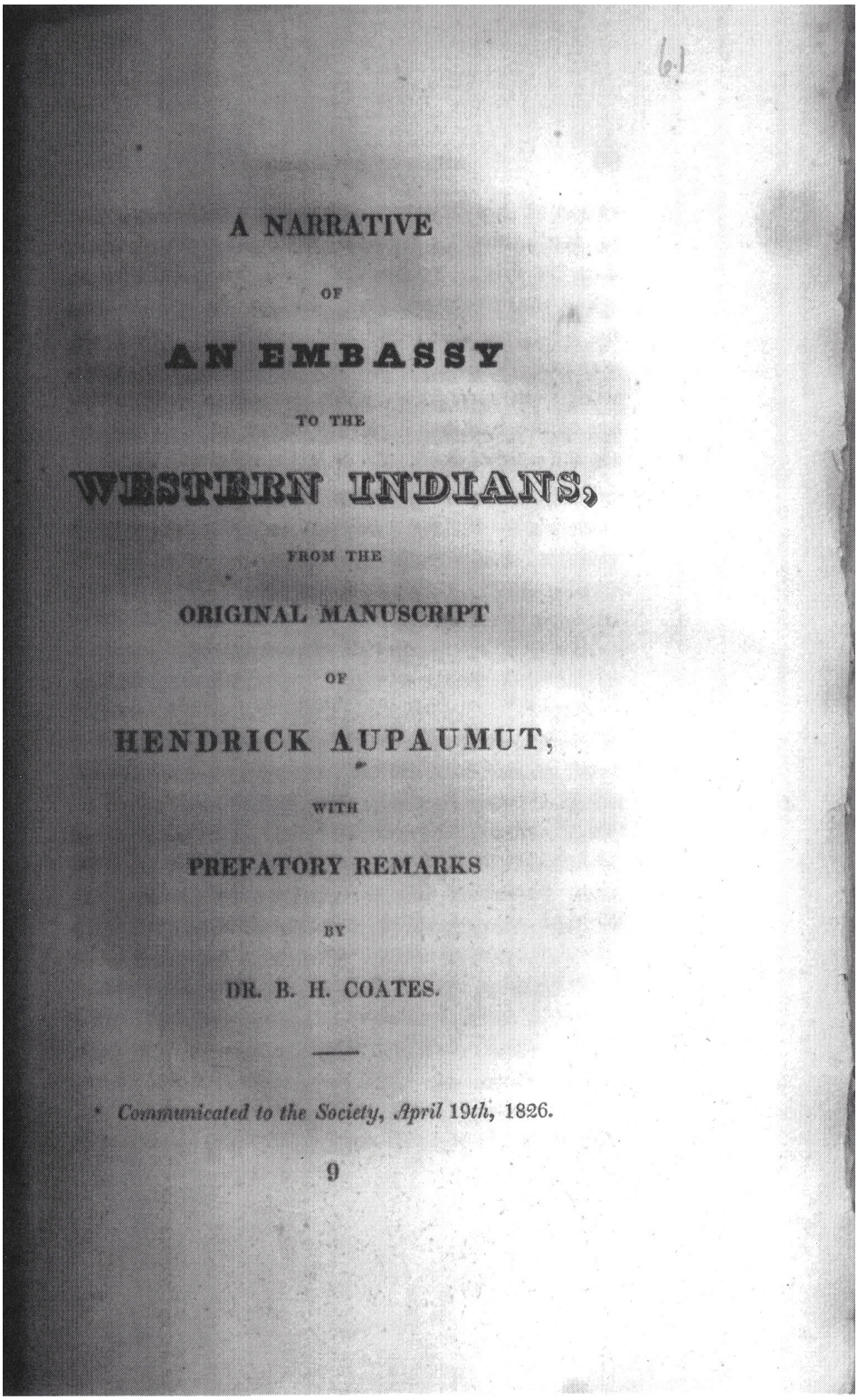
Elder brother, Muhheuconnecew—

We now speak in one voice to you—we all rejoice that you have come to us—you have taken great pains to come on the long and tedious journey. Our ancestors have long ago

Figure 9 Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, pages 88-89.

they arose and shake our hands, to confirm their friendship to us" (88). The change edits out the crucial performative aspects of the treaty negotiations and Aupaumut's recording of them, what Matt Cohen's forthcoming work would call a Native "publication event," precisely *because* of its performative element.

Omitting wampum exchanges as a type of punctuation produces a certain kind of printed work. In the move from manuscript to print, this text, a bricolage of journal, autoethnography, and ritual performance, takes on the form of a story. In other words, it goes from being a *narration*—the word Aupaumut uses to describe his text (see fig. 5) and what the OED calls "a thing narrated or recounted"—to being a *narrative*—what the Memoirs calls the text (see fig. 10) and what the OED defines as "an account of a series of events, facts, etc., given in order and with the establishing of connections between them." The editors' methodological structures discipline the text in a determinate way. Just as the compositional breaks in Franklin's Autobiography are so crucial for understanding how changing historical circumstances impacted each of the four sections, this text's incongruity and its "incoherence" make it so valuable. The places where the government officials and editors *cannot* understand the writing on the page are just as important as where they *can*.[138] Furthermore, the text's *disruption* of narrative form is one of its key components: Aupaumut's work disrupts the narrative of smooth diplomacy, the narrative of U.S. nation-building, and the narrative of the dying and vanishing Native. In contradistinction to James Fenimore Cooper's historical romance, published just one year prior to "Short Narration," this text testified to the persistence of the Mohican nation.[139] It also evinces the existence of different signifying systems that might not be seamlessly congruent.[140] This becomes especially important with Aupaumut since he was positioned among Native groups variously aligned according to their extent of white "accommodation"—all the while recording this interaction for



A NARRATIVE

OF

AN EMBASSY

TO THE

WESTERN INDIANS,

FROM THE

ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT

OF

HENDRICK AUPAUMUT,

WITH

PREFATORY REMARKS

BY

DR. B. H. COATES.

Communicated to the Society, April 19th, 1826.

9

Figure 10 Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, page 61.

whites—as two exemplary "mistakes" that raise the questions of race, body, and political alliance will show.

After lengthy negotiations, Aupaumut records his oft-used argument to persuade the confederated tribes to comply with the U.S. "terms of peace." The Indians argue that "[t]he white people have taken all our lands from us, from time to time, until this time, and that they will continue the same way, &c" (126). They add that "the United States could not govern the hostile Big knifes—and that they the Big knifes, will always have war with the Indians" (127). Aupaumut replies that "it has been too much so, because these white people was (sic) governed by one Law, the Law of the great King of England; and by that Law they could hold our lands, in spite of our dissatisfaction; . . . But now they have new Laws their own, and by these Laws Indians cannot be deceived as usual, &c" (126).

Aupaumut's arresting clause, "these white people was," might tempt one to assume that this Native American had yet to master the English language and had constructed a sentence with flawed subject-verb agreement. How could *people* be both singular (denoted by the number of the verb *was*) and plural (denoted by the number of the demonstrative adjective *these*)? However, by raising this very question, Aupaumut's locution astutely explores some of the most vexing concerns of early America. First, he articulates that what was once a singular white "people" under the Law of the King became separated into the two groups of the British and the Americans. Second, the tension in the subject-verb agreement performs the very problem faced by the new nation-state: how could the *many* former white British subjects ever become *one* people under this new Law? What would be the process of becoming "*E Pluribus Unum*" actually look like? The problem of the early nation is embedded in the grammatical "problem" of this clause.

Similar grammatical "mistakes" raise related questions concerning both linguistic and political representation. In arguing that the U.S. could be trusted, Aupaumut states that "the United Sachems will not speak wrong. . . . Because out of 30,000 men, they chuse one men to attend in their great Council Fire—and such men must be very honest and wise, and they will do Justice to all people &c." Like *people*, *men* seems to operate as both singular (as modified by "one") and plural (as denoted by "they"); again, this "incorrect" grammar captures the essence of the shift from a government located in the singular body of the King to one in which the singular elected body is composed of *many* men. Reporting on the U.S. government's response to news that the Seven Nations would attend the "great Council on Miamie" in order "to endeavour to bring the hostile Indians to peace," Aupaumut relates that "the great man of the United States reply and declared that they highly approve of that intention" (79). The government officials are multiple, and they are one; Washington (or any other representative) may speak singularly, but he embodies the voice of many. Aupaumut does as well. He begins his presentation of the "message of peace" by stating: "Brothers attend—We the 15 sachems of the United States will now in one voice speak to you . . ." (93).[141]

This phrase—"We the 15 sachems of the United States"—also raises issues of singular-plural representation and the tensions inherent in U.S. federalism. As Sandra Gustafson points out, this phrase alludes to the U.S. federal union (Eloquence 262), but its logic makes for anything but a straightforward translation. The "15 sachems" could refer to the fifteen states joined together in the 1792 nation or perhaps even the fifteen governors that head each individual state. However, because the message of peace came from the federal government in Philadelphia—not from a meeting of the state governors—the term "sachem" refers to an embodied personage who does not exist. There is a slippage between sachem-as-body and state-

as-abstracted political entity. If "sachem" corresponds to "state," it refers not to an embodied elected official who leads his state, but to a group of men from each state who conduct its business at the federal level. By raising the question of exactly who is speaking for whom, this (mis)translation does not just point to the very real problem the federal government had in controlling state governmental efforts to push onto Native lands (Prucha 35-40). It also performs a kind of catachresis: while the fifteen states, as represented in their numerous federal representatives and/or President, might have sent a message of peace, there is no direct referent to fifteen *individual* people—be they sachems or governors—that composed the message. "15 sachems" operates according to the same logic embedded in Aupaumut's characterization of a simultaneously singular and plural body of federal representatives: even when each state is represented at the federal level by many men, they speak the one voice of the state, just as one sachem (or council of sachems) does for his tribe. An example of what Jacques Rancière might term a "disagreement" between two epistemologies—rather than a simple "mistake"—the locution points to the complexity of negotiating among political alliances that might be organized according to somewhat similar—but not completely congruent—systems, a problematic made all the more apparent when considering how different conceptions of "race" work to consolidate political alliances.

"Of our own colar": Racing Political Alliances

Aupaumut proposes peace to the western Indian nations by arguing that the founding of the U.S. nation-state severs whiteness into two different national identities—American and British—while whiteness nevertheless forms the exclusive contours of both. Aupaumut, while himself embodying a synthesized Native identity and underscoring his shared Native "color"

with those Indians of the confederated tribes, strategically describes Philadelphia as the site where "whiteness" is bifurcated. The contrast he ultimately draws between the Americans and the British—based on his claim that there are two different *kinds* of whites as illustrated by their political alliances—necessarily complicates the logic of the "racial" identity and tribal relationships he cites in order to gain credence with the western nations. Aupaumut's narration also demonstrates while the Indians' common "color" may help form this Indian unity, divergent beliefs about what *color* means always threaten to break the confederacy apart.[142]

Aupaumut legitimates his engagement with the Western Confederacy by embodying and performing a specific type of Native identity. Citing what was coming to be considered at that time "racial" correspondence, Aupaumut repeatedly emphasizes the similarity between himself and the alliance by citing their "one colar" (77). Indeed, even the message Aupaumut delivers from the U.S. underscores the fact that their chosen diplomat is one of "your own colar" (93). But as straightforward as this assertion of commonality in "color" may seem to be, Aupaumut entered contested ground among these Native groups about what it meant to "be red" during this fraught time period, one characterized by red-white fighting and by competing understandings of race among various Native Americans.

The Western Nations confederated in the Ohio Valley, primarily led by British-allied Miami, Shawnee, and Delaware leaders, joined in a coalition with Indians who held widely different views on what it might mean to be an Indian. As I explained in chapter one, the Shawnee and Delaware tribes were what Gregory Dowd has termed "nativist" because of their adherence to "traditional" tribal customs. They, eschewed all white cultural practices that they felt corrupted their people's Nativeness. They also believed that the Master of Life ordained separate red-white creations for the various races (SR 30). Richter and Dowd both show how

nativists claimed distinct origins for red, white, and black peoples. Further, nativists felt "that Indians were a single people with common interests that transcended national rivalries" (Richter 181).[143] While the nativist violence arising from what Dowd calls the "Indian Great Awakening" had subsided by Aupaumut's visit in the 1790s, both the Shawnee and Delaware were by and large considered nativists.[144]

While in the late 1760s and 1770s nativists considered the mostly accommodationist-leaning Six Nations Iroquois as "'Slaves of the White People'" (qtd. in Dowd, SR 43), in the early 1790s, "accommodation and nativism worked together in the movement for Indian unity" (SR 21). Although they had fought bitterly in the past, other accommodationist tribes participated alongside the nativists against whites despite their differing rationales. "The cooperation of nativism and accommodation," Dowd writes, "rested upon a dual means to a mutual end: the united Indian defense of both land and political autonomy" (SR 91). These tribes put aside their differences to take a unified stand against the "Big Knives," the name they used for white frontier settlers who, ignoring the dictates of the fledgling federal government, continually pushed across the Ohio River into Indian country (Prucha 35-40, Rachel Wheeler 207).

Although cooperating during the time of the confederacy, nativists held differing views from accommodationist Indians, including parts of the Iroquois Confederacy and the (Catholic) Seven Nations of Canada (Tanner 31). However, as Nancy Shoemaker points out, tribes other than those identified strictly as "nativist" also saw literal body color as a way for them to self-identify during the late 1700s, and clearly the diplomatic tactic of citing color helps establish commonality among Aupaumut, the relatively "accommodationist" tribes, and the nativist

Shawnee and Delaware. Primarily analyzing the discourses of the Iroquois and Cherokee, Shoemaker writes:

> Ideas about what constituted Indian and European identities hardened into a new reality in the eighteenth century as multiply diverse peoples sifted through and fixed on their own distinguishing characteristics as compared with others. The British may have enjoyed denigrating the French, but they also saw the French as fellow Europeans, Christians, and whites. The Iroquois and Cherokees may have spent much of the eighteenth century fighting each other, but by the century's end, they had come to see themselves as people with a common heritage and common interests, joining together primarily by their antagonism to Euro-Americans. (12)

Shoemaker claims that even before the 1740 publication of Linnaeus's System Naturae, Indians in the southeast "were claiming the category 'red' for themselves in the arena of Indian-European diplomacy" (130).

Therefore, by the time that Aupaumut arrived at the western nations and used the seemingly simplistic term "color," the various tribes agreed that it alluded to "redness" as an identifying common trait. But what being of the "same colar" actually *meant* to the diverse indigenous groups was anything but an uncomplicated issue. Most accommodationist Indians saw "color" as signifying a common "Indian" identity, but nativists went even further in considering "color" as evidence of separate red-white creations. However, the Christianized Aupaumut, more aligned with the accommodationist tribes, most likely did not considering it a sign of separate creations, as that contradicted the Christian claim to monogenesis (Rachel Wheeler 189).[145] Aupaumut prepared a report to be sent back to Philadelphia where prominent white political leaders and men of science debated what produced bodily color and what that

color then signified, but he also entered into *Native* debates over the cause and signification of "color."

Citing the "one colar" he shares with the western tribes in the 1790s, however, is not the only sense in which Aupaumut embodies and performs a composite Indian identity. While visiting the western tribes, Aupaumut rehearses past tribal relationships between his tribe and those he visits (Wyss 111-12). Importantly, Taylor contends that Aupaumut's tribe should rightfully be termed "Mohican" rather than "Mahican." Taylor points out that as a result of historical and political circumstances, the Mahican, Wappinger, and Housatonic tribes merged together, resulting in a "partially reinvented, culturally synthetic, and ethnically and geographical diverse people" (432) of which Aupaumut considered himself a part.[146] As Taylor's analysis makes clear, Aupaumut's tribal identity fused together various but related Native peoples, and this was the position from which he negotiated with the western tribes.

Given Aupaumut's position and background, we must return to his ultimate argument for peace. The Indians contend that white people have stolen and will continue to steal Native lands, especially the "Big knifes" that the U.S. cannot control. As noted earlier, Aupaumut replies that "it has been too much so, because these white people was (sic) governed by one Law, the Law of the great King of England; and by that Law they hold our lands, in spite of our dissatisfaction; and we were to fond of their liquors. But now they have new Laws their own, and by these Laws Indians cannot be deceived as usual, &c" (126). He goes on to emphasize that "the great men of the United States" are not like frontier settlers of the past, "[e]specially since they have their Liberty—they begin with new things" (127), different from the British who do not endeavor to assist the Native tribes. Aupaumut concludes his rationale:

> The reason the Big knifes are so bad, is this because they have run away from their own country of different States, because they were very mischievous, such as thieves and robbers and murderes (sic)—and their laws are so strict these people could not live there without being often punished; therefore they run off in this contry and become lawless. They have lived such a distance from the United States, that in these several years the Law could not reached them because they would run in the woods, and no body could find them. But at length the people of the United States settle among them, and the Law now binds them . . . (128)

Richard White characterizes Aupaumut's argument as part of a "struggle over image" of the Americans as either compassionate like George Washington or, conversely, maraudering like the Big Knives (456-9). However, the racialized aspects of Aupaumut's argument make it more nuanced than what White suggests.

In his articulation, Aupaumut attributes the "white people['s]" deception of the Native Americans to their governance by Great Britain and identifies the process whereby whites, instead of being a coherent group, become metaphorically separated into the irresponsible British and benevolent Americans which, most importantly for him, carries vast implications for how they will engage with tribal peoples. The grammatically incorrect clause "these white people was" raises the question of how the many former British subjects might be united as "one" people and answers it, counterintuitively: even as whiteness is severed into two mutually exclusive groups of the British and the Americans, it is precisely the whiteness that U.S. citizens share that unites them as a group. This is true not only in a cultural sense; the 1790 Naturalization Law, passed just two years before Aupaumut's mission, limited national citizenship naturalization to "free white persons" and reconstituted whiteness in a legal sense.

Furthermore, Aupaumut argues for *increased* white settlement close to the Ohio River in order to enforce law on the Big Knives who had been living "such a distance from the United States, that in these several years the Law could not reached them because they would run in the woods . . ." (128). A geographically-bound nation-state with a border between the Natives and whites is emphasized less than a critical mass of U.S. citizens living on the frontier who transport this new national "Law" with them as they relocate. Paradoxically, Aupaumut intimates that the more one kind of white settlers (law-abiding U.S. citizens) relocate closer, the less likely another set of white settlers (Big Knives) will continue moving westward. However, as Gustafson and Hillary Wyss correctly have pointed out, Aupaumut himself had been the victim of Euro-American settlers' deception, and his own tribe had been displaced by white expansion. Gustafson and Wyss, along with Taylor, contend that Aupaumut was fully aware of his conflicted and complicit position as an "intercultural broker" as he even comments in the text upon his own past grievances with whites—which he withholds from telling the western tribes (128). Concurring with these readings, I see Aupaumut as neither fully "subversive" nor a "willing accommodationist" (Wyss 122). I read Aupaumut's bifurcation of "whiteness" into two nationalities not as a transparent and full description of what he knew to be true but rather an important and instructive speech act of his own. In other words, by making this argument—to the western Indians in their tribal councils and to the U.S. government through his report—Aupaumut hopes to help create law-bound, U.S. citizens who could possibly live with Native Americans in peace as they moved westward from Philadelphia.

Despite rhetorically using "color" to legitimize himself and to establish a racial correspondence with the confederated tribes, Aupaumut argues that the new U.S. nation necessitates significant differences among those whose shared "color" is white—even as color is

the unifying concept for both groups. The difference he draws between the Americans and the British necessarily complicates the logic of the "racial" identity and tribal relationships he embodies, performs, and cites in order to gain credence with the western nations. How could it be, then, that "whiteness" splits apart into two distinct political units while "redness" synthesizes not only Aupaumut's combined Mohican Stockbridge Indians but also the political alliance of the Western Nations? Ultimately, the answer lies in how Aupaumut reworks aspects of American environmentalist theory by intimating that social factors and cultural practices do not influence racial characteristics in a one-to-one relationship. He also shows that race and racial correspondence, rather than being a pre-determining factor in how political alliances might cohere, only sutures together various peoples into political entities if mobilized in such a manner. In his speech act—directed toward both the nativist-led confederation to whom he spoke it *and* the U.S. governmental officials to whom he would send the record of it—Aupaumut's utilization of the logic of "color" does not completely align with either nativist Indians or U.S. officials hoping to make the Native "more white" through cultural practice (Merrell 204).[147]

In terms of speaking to the confederated tribes, Aupaumut's use of "color" points to the basis of the tribes' alliance while simultaneously suggesting a fundamental fracture that this performed racial identity seeks to cover over. Not all Native Americans agreed with the nativists that their red "color" signaled their essential difference and separate creations from whites. "Color" may consolidate this group, but the difference in opinion over what that means is an unresolved tension ever waiting to rupture the delicate sense of Indian unity itself. If, at his dinner at Passy, Franklin raised but did not aggressively press the degeneration issue because of his diplomatic mission, Aupaumut also only gestures toward how the concept of "color" simultaneously has the potential to stabilize or disrupt the grounds of pan-Indian discussion.

Therefore, Aupaumut's reference to "color" calls attention to an ostensibly shared physical characteristic with the nativists *and* to the fact that their opinions on the production and meaning of that characteristic were something that they did not share at all.[148]

Aupaumut's use of "color" also complexly engages with contemporaneous natural-historical debates about the production of race and its role in the structuring of political entities. While much of the natural-historical belief in the U.S. context claimed that social practices could influence physical characteristics that then signified "race," Aupaumut dismisses this causal connection. For him, while the establishment of the new U.S. government divides whiteness into the two collectives, both Americans and Britons are still considered "white," especially since their race is the consolidating factor for their nation-state. Likewise, despite radical differences in governmental structure, social practices, and religious beliefs among himself and the various tribes assembled at Defiance, they are still of the same "color."

Society may not influence racial characteristics for Aupaumut, but "color" must be performed, maintained, and cited for it to be a cohesive element for political alliance. For instance, the Americans were able to split off from the British despite the fact that they are all of "one color," but that same reconstituted American whiteness binds the new U.S. citizens together under the Law—and once they settle among the Big Knives, they will be able to enforce the law on them, too. Indeed, when asked whether his "nation would accept the plan of Union" (100) of the confederated tribes, Aupaumut responds that he is actually "maintain[ing] a Union," an old one forged by both tribes' ancestors. As Wyss points out, this helps legitimate Aupaumut as already a part of the Native assembly instead of an outsider used by the Americans (105-6). Significantly, too, it underscores how Aupaumut characterizes the relationship between race and political alliance, rather than being predetermined along racial lines, as constantly in flux.

A "Democratical" Government: Society and Aupaumut's "History"

Around the same time that Aupaumut composed his "Narration," he also wrote a history of his own Muhheakunnuk Indian tribe that was reprinted in various versions in the early nineteenth century.[149] As Wyss notes, Aupaumut's "History" likely was written for a white audience since the preservation of tribal knowledge through oral transmission would not have necessitated a written record (117). In his "History," Aupaumut surprisingly claims that his tribal ancestors practiced aspects of Christianity before encountering white missionaries, utilized certain Anglo-American farming techniques prior to having tools, and governed themselves by a "democratical" government before the establishment of the U.S. nation-state. Scholars such as Rachel Wheeler, Taylor, Wyss, and Gustafson attribute what they view as "invented tradition" (Taylor 441) into which Aupaumut projects Christianity as part of Aupaumut's efforts to frame "accommodation to European religion, education, and agriculture [as] the only avenue for native American survival" (Gustafson, Eloquence 258). For these scholars, in other words, Aupaumut rewrites Mohican history in such a way that white acculturation offers a return to Native practices, an enhancement—rather than a loss—of Mohican identity.

But Aupaumut's history also works on a broader level by unsettling natural-historical and even nativist beliefs about the relationship between cultural practices and the production of race. He writes a history in which Mohicans are already participating in practices generally coded as "white" but presents the Mohicans as fully embodying a Native identity. In so doing, it is not so much that he recodes these practices as "Native," but rather that he strips them of their racialized tenor. Cultural critics who focus exclusively on how, in their view, Aupaumut encouraged Natives to "emulat[e] white ways" (Ronda 44) neglect the way he recodes these practices in his history. If white natural historians wanted to claim that "civilizing" the Indians would make

them culturally and physically more "white," Aupaumut shows that despite having participated in "white" cultural practices, the Mohicans remain Native. Aupaumut also responds to nativists who try to rid themselves physically of any "white ways": in Aupaumut's view, these things do not make one any "less" of a Native. In these examples, Aupaumut—much like Franklin—unsettles the relationship many white scientists *and* militant nativists wanted to maintain between society, cultural practices, and race. The ancestral Mohican Indians in his "History" are not degenerated "savages," nor are they replicas of white Anglo colonists.

Aupaumut's historical Mohicans take part in "white" cultural practices prior to being taught to do so by whites who "[i]nstead of taking Indian lives and Indian lands, then, . . . proposed to take Indian culture and Indian lands" by making Indians white (Merrell 204). These ancestors practice a religion that does not claim to be Christian, per se, but does worship a single God that Aupaumut links to Christianity: "Our ancestors, before they ever enjoyed Gospel revelation acknowledged one Supreme Being who dwells above, whom they styled Waun-theet Mon-nit-tow, or the Great, Good Spirit, the other of all things in heaven and on earth and governs all events; and he is good to all his creatures" (18).

Furthermore, in addition to hunting, these ancestors utilize white agricultural practices before being cajoled to do so by whites: "As our fathers had no art of manufacturing any sort of metal, they had no implements of husbandry, therefore were not able to cultivate their lands but little—that of planting shammonon, or Indian corn, beans, and little squashes, which was chiefly left under the management of women, and old men who are incapable of hunting, and little boys" (15). Even this "but little" aspect of farming frustrates any acculturation project aimed at "civilizing" Natives in order to gain their lands: these Indians, Aupaumut demonstrates, already use these techniques and remain Indians nonetheless.

In addition to religious and agricultural issues, Aupaumut takes up the governmental structure of his tribe. He writes that:

> Our ancestors' Government was a Democratical. They had Wi-gow-wauw, or Chief Sachem, successively, as well as other nations had, chosen by the nation, whom they looked upon as conductor and promoter of their general welfare, and rendered him obedience as long as he behaved himself agreeably to the office of a Sachem. And this office was hereditary by the lineage of a female's offspring, but not on man's line, but on woman's part. That is—when Wi-gow-wauw is fallen by death, one of his Nephews, (if he has any) will be appointed to succeed his Uncle as a Sachem, and not any of his sons. (20)

Aupaumut's description of his tribe's governmental structure as "Democratical" has implications for how society works with race and evinces a keen understanding the new U.S. governmental structure. On the one hand, Aupaumut seeks to highlight the electoral aspect of Mohican politics, a process so prized by new U.S. citizens. On the other, he does not obscure the fact that the "appointment" procedure is not free from considerations of heredity. By calling this electoral method "Democratical," clearly alluding to the structure of the U.S. government, Aupaumut again suggests how two similar but not necessarily seamlessly compatible systems allude to each other. Nevertheless, the fact that some type of exclusive lineage—that of propertied white males—constituted the eligibility of political leaders makes the Americans' democracy oddly resemble that of the Mohicans. As opposed to the term republican, democratic at this time still was associated generally with the potential unruliness of the "mob," especially in context of the French and Haitian Revolutions (of which Aupaumut was aware).[150] Thus, like the American

democracy, the radicalism of the Mohican "democratical" government is tempered by the fact that only select individuals could hold its highest office.

Even as he outlines what appear to be Mohican traditions such as passing communal values onto their children through daily lessons and keeping the "bag" and "pipe of peace," Aupaumut continues to imply likenesses between his ancestral Mohicans and the new Americans. Like the U.S. President, the Mohican Sachem is advised by a council of elected "Counselors," "not gotten by hereditary," whose job it is to "consult with their Sachems in promoting peace and happiness for their people." Just as the U.S. government consists of many states, the Nation is comprised of "three clans or tribes." For the Mohicans, the "Bear Tribe formerly considered as the head of the other tribes and claims the title of hereditary office of Sachem. Yet," Aupaumut continues, "they ever united as one family" (22).

Aupaumut also relates that when the Mohicans defeated the Miami in war, they maintained a civil—not despotic—relationship with them. Although the conquered Miami nation "offered obedience" and "a large tract of land" to the Mohicans, Aupaumut attests that since "our forefathers loved not superiority over their fellow Indians, or using authority as tyrants over any nation, they only accepted the present given to them out of friendship, remembering that it may in time to come, our children some occasion or other would come live there" (17). The Mohicans, like the Americans, loathe tyranny; they only accept the "present" of land to save it as an alternative homeland if they ever should, or—as Aupaumut's white readers would have known—when they did lose their land by "some occasion or other." Ultimately, if whites seek to recreate the Mohican Indians in their own image, Aupaumut frustrates that project by presenting the Mohican tribe as an uncanny doppelganger of the young nation-state, where what Anglos might consider "white" cultural practices *will not* make the Natives more "white,"

either culturally or physically. They will only make the Mohicans be what they have always been.

Reading the work of Benjamin Franklin alongside Hendrick Aupaumut points up a counter-intuitive fact about early American discussions about "race": supporters of various racial theories *do not* necessarily line up according to racial divisions. Instead, we find a number of surprising intellectual bedfellows. For instance, Jefferson—with his "suspicion only" that blacks might have sprung from separate creations—shares much in common with Neolin, a militant nativist who preached separate creations to all Native Americans. Likewise, Samson Occom and Samuel Stanhope Smith, two faithful Christian apologists for monogenesis, suggest that the varieties of humankind sprung from their species' shared origin. And while Franklin and Aupaumut were not friends, acquaintances, or even interlocutors, they similarly challenged links between modes of living and the production of race—be it Tryon's prescribed diet or Washington's advocated agriculture—and instead focused on race as a category in relationship to political identities.

Two emissaries who strategically measured their engagement with debates over transformable race because of their diplomatic missions, both troubled the necessarily racialized connotation to various practices. As we shall see, their texts contrast with others, particularly Letters from an American Farmer by J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur and A Narrative of the Lord's Wonderful Dealings with John Marrant, a Black by John Marrant. Working according to a different logic than either Franklin's Autobiography or Aupaumut's "Short Narration," these two texts explore how persons who take on the cultural practices of another race actually become—and not just "pass as"—the racial "Other."

Chapter 4

Becoming the Other in Crèvecoeur and Marrant's Charleston

During the 1780s, two vastly different texts—a series of fictional letters composed by a French naturalized British subject and an Indian captivity narrative written by a black freeman—both explored what it might be like to live among Native Americans. J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur's Letters from an American Farmer (1782) and John Marrant's A Narrative of the Lord's Wonderful Dealings with John Marrant, a Black (1785) feature the main character's actual or contemplated sojourn among American Indian tribes. In Letters' bleak final epistle, Crèvecoeur's narrator Farmer James considers how he might relocate his family among nearby Natives without his children becoming "perfectly Indianized" (213). In similar fashion, in his autobiographical narrative, Marrant chronicles his captivity by the southeastern Cherokee tribe. His accommodation to the Cherokee way of life renders him unrecognizable to most of his family once he returns home. Both these texts consider one of the most pressing questions of their days: what exactly would happen to white Europeans and black Africans who came to or were forced to come to the New World, where they would live among the peoples indigenous to the North American landscape? Considering how these two protagonists become (or fear becoming) Indians from adopting a certain way of life, we must ask: If we unearth the mutable aspects of race as they were debated at the turn of the eighteenth century, how do we understand these texts anew? Furthermore, if these writers depict race as something transformable, do we need a new hermeneutic model to understand these scenes of "masquerade" and adaptation?

In what follows, I argue that both Crèvecoeur's Letters from an American Farmer and Marrant's Narrative depict race as a condition one manages to sustain rather than a fixed or immutable bodily fact. Both texts explore the possibilities of racial transformation by imagining

the outcome of an extended stay among Indians and by contemplating what metamorphoses might be available for black men in what was becoming the U.S. South. As I will show, Letters examines both the positive and negative potential of whites altering racially in the New World, a process Farmer James metaphorically links to the caged Negro that he observes in Charleston, South Carolina. Marrant's Narrative offers up a picture of black transformation, not of an African-American "becoming white" (as in the Henry Moss case discussed in chapter one), but rather of a black man "becoming" Native American. Letters and the Narrative consider how an adopted "mode of life" can affect one's racial identity.

Both these texts necessitate a reworking of the way cultural critics currently understand notions of racial masquerade and what Philip Deloria calls "playing Indian." As I shall explain, the concept of passing is not a sufficient way to comprehend these scenes of transformation. This later conceptualization of how the external body might—or might not—display one's "true" race would not have been meaningful at this time. Rather, the concept of racial transformation underpins early American literary depictions of how one's racial appearance begins to change into that of another. Thus, these scenes of racial metamorphosis imagine the process of *becoming the racial other*, not merely *like* the other.

Maintaining Race, Rethinking Passing

Eighteenth-century conceptions of race force us to rethink "passing" as a way to understand the crossing of racial boundaries. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century definitions of race deemed it an internal rather than an external phenomenon.[151] As a wealth of critical literature—in addition to famous passing scenes in the fiction of Stowe, Chesnutt, Twain, and Larsen—attests, "passing" depends on both "an optical economy of identity" (Amy Robinson

719) and a posited racial interior.[152] It only works in a system that simultaneously assumes a direct correspondence between exterior markings of race and the inner, biologized "truth" about race *and also* conjectures that sometimes these external characteristics do not reliably indicate an individual's interiority—a situation that Amy Robinson calls "the false promise of the visible as an epistemological guarantee" (716). For example, when Clare Kendry passes for white in Nella Larsen's Passing (1929), society assumes that her appearance will signal what race she actually "is." Clare passes, of course, because her skin does not indicate her "true" black race. In this framework, the exterior body ceases to signify its "interior" in a trusted, dependable way. In other words, people presume that one's body represents what one "really is" on the "inside."[153]

By contrast, in the late eighteenth century, one's appearance signals what one "is" at the moment—not internally, but rather just "in fact." Within this thinking, for instance, if one lives in Africa and acquires dark skin from exposure to the sun, one "is" black. If one lives in America and develops a tawny complexion, then one "is" red. If one's light coloring forms from living in Europe, then one "is" white. While certainly these examples are oversimplified—as I discussed in chapter one, debates abounded on how exactly the races (or "varieties") of humankind formed—the belief that one's true race emanated from one's interior was far from a foregone conclusion at this historical moment. Instead, if many people largely understood their race to be a reflection of their exterior circumstances (both of environment and culture), then they considered race not an inner truth that might or might not be displayed faithfully on the body. Rather, most early Americans envisioned racial identity as a place one maintained on a spectrum of racial states. Because one might morph from one status to another, potential changeability constituted a central aspect of race. These examples points up a heretofore unrecognized *temporal* component to racial formation in early America. Because of beliefs

about the plasticity of one's body, race is less a statement about what one "is" consistently but rather what one remains, presumably, only temporarily. Rather than a "truth" that might be displayed on the body, racial identity is a *condition that one manages to sustain*.

While scenes of dress-up and disguise certainly occur before the nineteenth century, "passing" and "transformation" differ greatly as hermeuetics to understand these moments. Because of the perceived mutable characteristics of "race," these acts that are later considered "passing" function much differently in early American literatures. What I call scenes of metamorphosis depict characters' emulation of another race—not as a temporary simulation *of* that race—but as a possible bodily transformation *into* it.

Although both the passing and the transformation frameworks should be understood as performative models of identity, I want to emphasize how each is undergirded by a different set of assumptions about the body and racial identity. In her extension of Judith Butler's theoretical work, performance scholar Elin Diamond highlights Butler's emphasis on the repetition of recognizable acts that constitute identity. As Diamond puts it, "[w]hen being is de-essentialized, when gender and even race are understood as fictional ontologies, modes of expression without true substance, the idea of performance comes to the fore" (5). Exploring how Butler further develops her early notion of performativity along the lines of Derrida's citationality, Diamond notes how Butler "deconstructively elaborates a temporality of reiteration as that which instantiates gender, sex, and even the body's material presence" (5). Thus, as I outlined above, narratives of passing not only demonstrate how one's exterior does not signify one's interior in a trusted way (as nineteenth-century conceptions of the body would understand it). These narratives also show race itself to be performative because they illustrate how that supposed "racial interior" is itself a produced fiction of ontology. Therefore, one can certainly point out

that even within the passing framework, to act as the racial Other is in some (especially philosophical) senses to be the racial other.

However, Butler herself points to how citational models must be thought differently in various historical epochs. As she writes, "regulatory schemas are not timeless structures, but historically revisable criteria of intelligibility which produce and vanquish bodies that matter" (14).[154] Following Butler, I want to stress how some citational acts that constitute one's identity were, in the eighteenth century, *also* believed to affect materially a person's body. These acts (such as living in a certain place, speaking in a particular manner, or practicing the culture of a specific group) did constitute race in the manner Butler and Diamond describe. However, many in the eighteenth century thought that these practices could impact the physical body itself, which was then interpreted through a "regulatory schema" as a sign of racial identity. Furthermore, I argue, it is this exact understanding—that these practices are both constitutive acts (in a philosophical sense) *and* acts that produce a very physical consequence—that makes necessary this new model of subjectivity for eighteenth-century racial formation.[155]

Thus, this notion of transformable race forces a rethinking of how cultural critics have understood acts of dressing as an Indian. Philip Deloria has convincingly shown how white Anglos from the Revolution to the Cold War have engaged in "playing Indian" in order to form white American national identities.[156] Analyzing the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Shari Huhndorf demonstrates how whites' "going native" partially results from the "widespread conviction that adopting some vision of native life in a more permanent way is necessary to regenerate and to maintain European-American racial and national identities" (8). In both these accounts, one crosses a boundary line to pretend briefly to be the Other, while keeping, as Deloria says, the "*real* 'me' underneath" (7)—all in the service of constituting whiteness.[157]

However, as we shall see, both Crèvecoeur and Marrant depict a process where one does not merely cross over to try on another identity but rather engages in the means of *becoming* an Indian. These authors define one's racial identity not in binary opposition to the other, but through its potential to become the other. It is this process that Farmer James calls the "surprising metamorphosis."

Becoming an American Race

Letters from an American Farmer advances a particular version of transformable race by depicting the racial metamorphosis of the European in the British colonies, but this notion of fluid race is at times coupled with a contradictory, more internal sense of race. Throughout the text, Farmer James subscribes to the tenet that one's environment impacts one's body and, ultimately, one's racial identity. When he describes the "new American" who undergoes a "surprising metamorphosis" (69) after his immigration across the Atlantic, Crèvecoeur's narrator depicts this alteration as specifically racialized. However, this concept of transformable race exists at times in uneasy tension with a sense of race as less flexible. Furthermore, each time James revisits this notion of racial transformation, he tempers his celebration of it. James is terrified of the possible Indianization of his own family. As we shall see, his racial fear of becoming savage is linked to his political fear of a radical separation from Great Britain. He also suggests that the white man's potential to form a "new race" (70) in the Americas is predicated upon black slaves' blood and sweat, which literally saturate the ground that enables the white man's metamorphosis. The story of Farmer James presents a conflicted account of how racial formation might play out in America.[158]

Here, we come to understand the "new American" as more a racialized—and less a nationalized—personage.[159] Indeed, as I shall show, the "new American" is not a fully-formed figure for what was actually an embryonic nation-state, but rather a racialized persona that, serving as pre-condition for the formation of an American national identity, evidences the intertwined relationship of natural history, race, and nation. The idea of a cultural melting pot so often attributed to Crèvecoeur does not only "melt" men into a new race[160]—this new race is also particularly nourished by the ground on which it resides. It is not at all incidental that James uses the term *race* to describe the "new American."[161] While European natural historians posed the question of what would happen to white immigrants in America, James tweaks the terms of this debate. If the white European must necessarily alter when he relocates to British America, James depicts this "surprising metamorphosis" as a change—not to American savagery—but to American whiteness. Further, as I shall show, the most peculiar thing about this American identity is that it results from a radical change *but nevertheless* allows one to retain his Old World nationality, in part because James does not use the term "American" strictly as a national descriptor.

Crèvecoeur's opening dedication to the Abbé Raynal frames Letters from an American Farmer as a fictional exploration of the natural-historical and racial claims that Raynal advanced about life in the Americas in his *Histoire philosophique et politique des établissements et du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes* (Philosophical and Political History of the Settlements and Trade of the Europeans in the East and West Indies, 1770).[162] This French natural historian, as I explored in chapter one, famously extended Buffon's thesis about the degeneration of animal species in the New World (Jordan 479). Raynal's suggestion that whites would also degenerate and become savages in the American environment sparked international

debate, prompting North American scientists to concern themselves with his theories. As Letters' 1782 British edition's advertisement claims, the letters "contain much authentic information little known on this side of the Atlantic: they cannot therefore fail of being highly interesting to the people of England at a time when everybody's attention is directed toward the affairs of America" (35).[163] Given that Letters' early audience consisted mostly of European readers who largely assumed that the North American climate would degenerate white men, Crèvecoeur's dedication decidedly frames the text within the transatlantic debates about racialization in the Americas.[164]

Crèvecoeur deals with Raynal's ideas about the Americas in a conflicted manner.[165] As much as Crèvecoeur might agree with the premise of Raynal's theories that the environment determines the man, his narrator at the outset advances an outcome much different from Raynal's. Initially, where Raynal envisions degeneration and savagery, Farmer James imagines an idealized new race of Americans. But, as we shall see, this vision of one's white-American racial identity being influenced by his surroundings comes under enormous pressure when late in the text James dreads the very real possibility that he might become an Indian.[166] In other words, despite repudiating Raynal's claims in the beginning, James rearticulates them in the end.[167]

Farmer James advances a natural-historical—specifically environmentalist—perspective throughout the text.[168] While past critics have attributed this language to either a belief in Lockean or physiocratic philosophy, I argue that placing it in the context of early American debates about how external factors can influence the body illustrates how Crèvecoeur theorizes race.[169] With feigned simplicity, James claims to be a "perfect stranger" to "scientific rules" (49), but his language leads us to believe otherwise. Describing the "back settlers," James claims that "[i]t is with men as it is with the plants and animals that grow and live in the forests; they are

entirely different from those that live in the plains" (76). In his ruminations on Nantucket, James writes that "[i]f New Garden exceeds this settlement by the softness of its climate, the fecundity of its soil, and a greater variety of produce from less labour, it does not breed men equally hardy" (147). Furthermore, because different types of peoples are best suited for their indigenous habitats, Nantucketeers are not tempted to move to more "pleasing scenes." As James writes, "the same magical power of habit and custom which makes the Laplander, the Siberian, the Hottentot, prefer their climates, their occupations and their soil to more beneficial situations leads these good people to think that no other spot on the globe is so analogous to their inclinations as Nantucket" (148).

Later, a "Russian gentleman" who visits famed botanist "John Bertram" (John Bartram) articulates a similar vision. He suggests that "either nature or the climate seems to be more favourable [in Pennsylvania] to the arts and sciences than to any other American province" (187). Although not mentioning racial classification specifically, the Russian and Mr. Bertram discuss the plant classification system of Carl von Linné. Linnaeus—not incidentally—was one of the first eighteenth-century natural historians to posit, as I discussed in chapter one, that the varieties of humankind arose from the way that different corners of the globe helped shape the corporeal surface.[170] While these examples may not speak directly of the environment producing certain physical characteristics that are then read as one's "race," this discourse that links nature, climate, and surroundings is nevertheless coincident with the rhetoric used to describe how the environment impacts one's body and racial identity (Regis 127-30).[171]

Such sentiments are echoed when Farmer James declares in Letter III that "men are like plants." James speaks in simile here, but natural historians considered and classified both men *and* vegetation in a similar manner. For them, just as plants are native to certain areas, particular

types of people are formed through their interaction with specific geographic regions. Migration—both voluntary and forced—presented the problem of what would happen to European whites and African blacks relocated among the indigenous peoples of the Americas.

In "What is an American?", Farmer James suggests that European whites undergo a change that is racial in nature—making them markedly different from their European forebears but, importantly, still white. The American people, he writes, "are a mixture of English, Scotch, Irish, French, Dutch, Germans, and Swedes. From this promiscuous breed, that race now called Americans have arisen" (68). Certainly, this "new race" comes from "that strange mixture of blood" (69) of all these white Europeans, an early articulation of America as the "melting pot."[172] However, the race "arise(s)" *also* because of its location on American soil. Given Crèvecoeur's knowledge of the language and theories of natural-historical racial formation, his use of plant imagery is not merely a rhetorical trope, but also a scientific observation meant literally. This was the type of language natural historians used to describe the development of both vegetative and human life. In America, James attests, "Everything has tended to regenerate them: new laws, a new mode of living, a new social system; here they are become men: in Europe they were as so many useless plants, wanting vegetative mould and refreshing showers; they withered, and were mowed down by want, hunger, and war; but now, by the power of transplantation, like all other plants they have taken root and flourished!" (68-69).[173] James describes a two-part process. "[I]ndividuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men," but this race is also formed through "being received in the broad lap of our great Alma Mater" (70). Here, Mother Earth is the "nurturing Mother."[174]

Although Letters has been claimed by contemporary literary critics as a nationalistic text, the new "American" of which James speaks is decidedly *not* a U.S. citizen, as many might think

of the term American today.[175] I contend that James describes the "American" as a racialized condition (rather than a designation of nationality, as this concept is commonly understood in the twenty-first century[176]) that serves as the prerequisite for the national consciousness that was developing at the time Crèvecoeur was writing. As Benedict Anderson points out, Englishmen in the metropole considered American creoles—British nationals born in the Americas—"*irremediably*" inferior because of their births in "a savage hemisphere" (60). Because its "climate and 'ecology' had a constitutive impact on culture and character," this locale rendered him "different from, and inferior to, the metropolitan" (60). James reclaims the New World landscape as a beneficent environment in which to grow these new Americans who, for him, remain British subjects.

Nevertheless, as Anderson makes clear, this "difference" between the creole and metropolitan—one, I contend, that James racializes here—serves as the basis of a "creole nationalism" that was developing in the colonies and leading to a specific nation-state identity.[177] This racialized "American" identity plays a constitutive role in the way that a specifically "national" identity was coming to be, but it is not a fully-formed nation-state identity, as we have previously assumed it to be. This "surprising metamorphosis" arises from being located in the new surroundings, encompassing both the natural habitat and the mode of living, which includes laws, government, and industry. "Americans," James writes, "were once scattered all over Europe; here they are incorporated into one of the finest systems of population which has ever appeared, and which will hereafter become distinct by the power of the different climates they inhabit" (70). James, as we shall see in the last letter, does not advocate a break from England. Americanness is a racial identity that arises organically from the ground that makes possible a

national identity that was coming into being—but not a national identity constituted by an unnatural rupture from the mother country.[178]

If Letters' European audience fears that white men decline in the New World, James describes the American environment changing people racially, but making them into a distinctive, improved, and still light-skinned American race. Yet the text considers the possibility that one *could* be darkened and degenerated in the colonies. James admits as much in this same letter. He writes that if "British America . . . does not afford that variety of tinges and gradations which may be observed in Europe, we have colours peculiar to ourselves. For instance, it is natural to conceive that those who live near the sea must be very different from those who live in the woods; the intermediate space will afford a separate and distinct class" (70-71). James follows this with an oft-quoted passage where his environmentalist language reaches its apex: "Men are like plants; the goodness and flavour of the fruit proceeds from the peculiar soil and exposition in which they grow. We are nothing but what we derive from the air we breathe, the climate we inhabit, the government we obey, the system of religion we profess, and the nature of our employment" (71).

When James tries to describe the "back settlers," he concedes that "[t]he manners of the Indian natives are respectable compared with this European medley. . . . they grow up a mongrel breed, half civilized, half savage, except nature stamps on them some constitutitional propensities" (77). The settlers' "breed" seems to be both inherited and impacted by nature's "stamp." "Eating of wild meat, whatever you may think, tends to alter their temper, though all the proof I can adduce is that I have seen it . . ." (77). This diet, along with a lack in religious community, leads to the decline of the backwoods settlers. "Is it, then," James ask, "surprising to see men thus situated, immersed in great and heavy labours, degenerate a little?" (77).

Although he starts out to show Raynal and all of Europe how America can support a white race—and indeed form its own version of whiteness through intermarriage and environmental influence—he ends up acknowledging that the surroundings can transform the white man into the Native.[179] James further notes that "our bad people are those who are half cultivators and half hunters; and the worst of them are those who have degenerated altogether into the hunting state. As the old ploughmen and new men of the woods, as Europeans and new-made Indians, they contract the vices of both; they adopt the moroseness and ferocity of a native, without his mildness or even his industry at home" (78). James concludes that "as soon as men cease to remain at home and begin to lead an erratic life, let them be either tawny or white, they cease to be [religion's] disciples" (78). Some back-settlers are affected more than others, depending on the "nation or province [to which] they belong," but they are always pictured in—and defined by—the process of moving from one racial state to another.

This idea of "contracting vices" and contagion returns in James' final letter. Here, he and his family are hemmed in by the violence of the Revolutionary War. Because James abstains from choosing sides in the revolution, he seeks to flee what he deems the madness of the conflict. He decides to retreat into "the great forest of Nature" to join a peaceful American Indian tribe, relishing the fact that his family will reside among "inhabitants [who] live with more ease, decency, and peace" (211). He hopes that his family's "mutual affection for each other will in this great transmutation become the strongest link of our new society, will afford us every joy we can receive on a foreign soil . . ." (211).[180] However, describing these Natives as "a people whom Nature has stamped with such different characteristics" (211), James begins to wonder if Nature will impress him and his family with these very same traits.

The language of metamorphosis recurs in this letter, an epistle that is a litany of anxieties punctuated with reassurances about racial change. If James begins Letters by celebrating how America's Nature would impact European bodies, here he agonizes that those impressionable bodies could just as easily turn dark. For, as he begrudgingly admitted earlier, if the backwoods settlers might degenerate, what is to keep him and his family from doing the same? He recounts stories of white parents whose children were returned to them after enduring Indian captivity. These parents, James laments, often "found them so perfectly Indianized that many knew them no longer" (213). Even adult captives, he concedes, choose to stay with Indian tribes once they are set free. "It cannot be, therefore, so bad as we generally conceive it to be; there must be in their social bond something singularly captivating and far superior to anything to be boasted of among us; for thousands of Europeans are Indians, and we have no examples of even one of those aborigines having from choice become Europeans!" (214).[181] James worries that his children might become so "thoroughly naturalized to this wild course of life" (214) that they would never "return[] to the manners and customs of their parents" (219).

But although James admits that Natives may not be as bad as they seem, he plans ways to forestall what he considers his impending racial transformation. To keep his children from being "seize[d]" with the "imperceptible charm of Indian education," James plans "to employ them in the labour of the fields" (219). Because hunting and eating game produce "this strange effect" of "becoming wild," James says he will keep his family "busy in tilling the earth" (220). If Benjamin Franklin and Hendrick Aupaumut tend to dismiss the effect one's mode of living has on one's race, Crèvecoeur and, as we shall see, Marrant, depict scenes where one's practices help determine it.

Despite his "respect" for the "inoffensive society of these people," James confesses that "the strongest prejudices would make me abhor any alliance with them in blood, disagreeable no doubt to Nature's intentions, which have strongly divided us by so many indelible characters" (222). Thus, he endeavors to bring a suitor for his daughter along with them. James couples a flexible understanding of racial identity with a sense of it "in [the] blood" (222). Here twenty-first century readers find an uncannily familiar understanding of race as a biological state produced by and inherited from one's parents' conjugal union. Indeed, it is this sense of race that we find in later American literature, such as when Cooper's Natty Bumppo (self-described as a "man without a cross") denigrates inter-racial sex and the consequent mixed-raced progeny it produces. However, we should not let this more recognizable sense of race "in the blood" obscure how James—albeit contradictorily and ambivalently—sometimes intertwines these two different ways of conceptualizing racial difference.[182] For James, racial identity is not influenced solely by intermarriage and the crossing of bloodlines. Otherwise, he would not keep obsessing over how his family's move might change them. Although he professes that Nature marks people with "indelible characteristics," he nevertheless suspects that the "divide" between whites and Natives may not be so strong after all.[183] He writes that "[t]hus shall we metamorphose ourselves from neat, decent, opulent planters . . . into a still simpler people divested of everything beside hope, food, and the raiment of the woods: abandoning the large framed house to dwell under the wigwam, and the featherbed to lie on the mat or bear's skin" (222). Here James seems to be content with this type of metamorphosis, but the racial reasoning he uses earlier—that men degenerate after eating "wild meat" and living in Nature (77)—returns.

Because James closes his letter before removing his family among this Native tribe, his readers never know what ultimately transpires. The Revolution exerts such pressure on James

that he compulsively worries over becoming "lost in the anticipation of the various circumstances attending this proposed metamorphosis!" (225). The logic of transformable race that underwrites Europeans becoming American in the first half of Letters necessarily demands that—according to the same reasoning—backwoods settlers and James himself will probably *become* Natives when living *as* Natives. Both the possibilities and dangers inherent in this potential racial metamorphosis is linked to the violence of the Revolutionary War; James' dread of the underside of racial transformation (ie, becoming savage) connects to his reluctance to embrace the patriots' break with the mother country—a linkage vividly highlighted here.

Since the European becomes American and backwoods settlers become Natives in part due to the influence of the American natural environment, it is of particular importance that James suspiciously "naturalizes" the existence of slavery in the New World. In his ninth letter, he grapples with agrarian slave labor in the U.S. South. As Dana Nelson points out, James blames the fact of slavery on "Nature" itself (National Manhood 8-9). Here, his use of nature denotes both human disposition (with its "inclinations" and "propensities") and the physical landscape ("fruitful soil"). In his ninth letter, James encounters a slave caged above the ground outside of Charleston. Nature—which heretofore had supported the magnificence found in America—is unable to ward off the evil of slavery.[184] Lamenting the peculiar institution, James exclaims, "Strange order of things! Oh, Nature, where are thou? Are not these blacks thy children as well as we?" (169). As numerous critics have noted, nature in this letter differs distinctively from the way in which James characterizes it in his other letters.[185] Indeed, it disappoints men, for "[i]f Nature has given us a fruitful soil to inhabit, she has refused us such inclinations and propensities as would afford us the full enjoyment of it" (174).

James revises his earlier optimism, chastising his reader and himself by asking, "Where do you conceive, then, that nature intended we should be happy?" (177). As Nelson writes,

> James now orates on 'the history of the earth' and in a fascinating twist of logic . . . is able actually to conclude that it is the very cruelty of Nature that creates slavery, allowing white Americans—barbarously or benignly—to enslave black Africans. . . . His 'general review of human nature' thus confirms indeed that all men are slaves, that slavery is but relative, that human tyranny and the practice of slavery are ordained by Nature. And Nature here is something that can be objectively recorded by impartial observers but not challenged. (9)

James naturalizes what is a *social* institution in order to abnegate himself from agency and responsibility.

James does so in both his attribution of slavery to human nature and his incorporation of it into the landscape. The way in which he characterizes nature and slavery here is inextricably linked to the way he writes about nature and the New World transformation available for white Europeans in his third letter. Indeed, he metaphorically connects slavery to how the environment affects man. In James imagery, slaves' bodies become part of the landscape and quite literally feed the earth. He writes that "no one thinks with compassion of those showers of sweat and of tears which from the bodies of Africans daily drop and moisten the ground they till" (168). The American environment is enabled by the fluids of black labor that saturate the earth. Thus, within James' logic, if the American natural landscape enables a New World transformation for white American men who are "like plants," its transformable qualities are made possible by

black slave bodies.[186] In other words, if, in Letter III, the ground enables the European's racial transformation in the British colonies, then the practice of slavery makes this possible.

For James, the way that slave labor relates to New World transformation is materialized when traveling through the woods outside Charleston. On his way to dine with friends, James encounters the "shocking spectacle" of a perishing black slave suspended in a cage, where "large birds of prey" have "picked out his eyes" (178). This scene presents a predicament that the text and that Farmer James cannot seem to resolve. If the New World landscape enables the transformation of Europeans to Americans, the tortured slave, curiously caged above the ground, is restricted from receiving the same kind of nourishment. While the land can help transmute different Old World nationalities, it cannot accommodate the black slave who must hang, fixed and racially immutable above the soil. Metaphorically, he is incapable of becoming anything other than what he already is: simply a dying "Negro" (178).[187]

The image of the suspended cage is striking, not least because flesh-eating birds feeding on the slave's dying body obscure him from view. The cage, hanging in the air, literalizes the way that the black slave does not benefit from being "rooted" in the supporting American environment *even as* his very body nurtures it.[188] Just like the sweat and tears from numerous slaves that steeped the earth, here, the slave's "blood slowly dropped and tinged the ground beneath" (178). Far from a minor detail, this aspect of the slave's captivity reveals the gothic underpinnings of an American nature: slavery's human parasitism is literalized. The decomposing flesh and blood of the black slave feeds the natural landscape which supports the plant-like white men who seek natural "American" transformations, but the sweat, tears, and blood of black slaves enters the ground and ironically also become part of the environment that can darken whites in the New World. In James' world, nature, at once, fails to eliminate the

system of slavery while its own nurturing and transformative capabilities are enabled by James' naturalized version of that very same system. In James depiction, the American metamorphosis available for European men is predicated on the suspension and fixity of the black "Negro."

John Marrant Becoming Cherokee

John Marrant paints a very different picture. In his Narrative of the Lord's Wonderful Dealings with John Marrant, a Black (1785), the wilderness outside of Charleston becomes the precise place where black men might experience a libratory racial metamorphosis. Marrant's Narrative chronicles his childhood as a free black in British North America, his Christian conversion, his capture by a Cherokee tribe, and his acculturation to life within the Indian nation. When Marrant later returns to his family in full Cherokee attire, he remains virtually unrecognized. As I will show, Marrant bases his racial transformation on two rubrics: first, a natural-historical belief that adopting another people's "mode of life" would make a person into one of those peoples; and second, the Cherokee conception that living with, being incorporated into, and assuming the cultural accoutrements of the tribe turns one into a Native. Marrant's overlaying of these two epistemologies makes his act not one of "passing" as something he is not, but rather "transforming" into something that he has become. If Crèvecoeur's Letters investigate the conflicted ways that racial transformation might play out in America, Marrant's Narrative raises questions about how his alteration occurs. Is it according to a natural-historical paradigm? Or could it happen according to a Native epistemology, or some combination of the two? In addition to these questions, Marrant's depiction of his "becoming Indian" in Charleston

just before the outbreak of the U.S. Revolutionary War distances him from any nascent white or "American" identity and allows him to associate himself with the British.

Like Letters from an American Farmer, Marrant's Narrative was one of the most popular books of the 1780s. Becoming one of the top three captivity narratives in early America, it went into six editions in three years (Costanzo 96).[189] While their narrative structures are quite different, both texts imagine life among a Native tribe and envision Charleston's potential as a site of black transformation. However, while Crèvecoeur depicts the town as a literal place of fixity for black men, Marrant figures it as a space of transformation. In addition, while Farmer James fears "Indianization" and plots against it, Marrant portrays it as the natural, logical, and even desired result of a prolonged stay among the Indians. Furthermore, the Narrative has a level of tribal specificity that Letters lacks in its last epistle. Readers do not know if James contemplates removal to a Delaware tribe in western Pennsylvania or the New York Oneidas, the tribe into which Crèvecoeur himself was adopted (Regis 110).[190] In contrast, Marrant illustrates particular aspects of the Cherokee worldview when recounting his return from their tribe to "civilization."

Narrative relates the story of young John Marrant, a free black born in New York who relocates to South Carolina with his mother. Both a conversion story and a captivity narrative, Marrant's text tells a seemingly simple account. Although he "intended [that he] should be put apprentice to some trade" (49), he instead decides to train as a musician. He makes a good living playing at local events, leading to his "drinking in iniquity like water," and becoming "a slave to every vice suited to [his] nature and to [his] years" (50).[191] One night while en route to "play for some Gentlemen," Marrant comes upon a "large meeting house." His friend persuades him to interrupt the preaching (what Marrant calls "a crazy man hallooing in there") by blowing his

French-horn (51). Just as Marrant raises the horn to his mouth, the "crazy man"—the notable Rev. George Whitefield himself—calls out, "'PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD, O ISRAEL'" (51). Feeling that Whitefield looks "directly upon [him], and pointing with his finger," Marrant is overcome, falling "both speechless and senseless near half an hour" (51). After being carried home, Marrant remains ill for three days until a minister sent by Whitefield converts Marrant to Christianity, thereby restoring his health.

When Marrant returns to his mother's home outside of Charleston, he describes how his family maltreats him because of his new-found religiosity. Their behavior toward him persuades Marrant "to go from home altogether" (56). Taking his Bible and an Isaac Watts' hymnbook along with him, Marrant heads off into the wilderness. Despite his troubles traveling in the back country, Marrant testifies that "the Lord Jesus Christ was very present, and that comforted me through the whole" (58). One day while walking through the woods, an "Indian hunter" stops him to ask if he knows how far he has wandered from home. Marrant informs him how he "was supported by the Lord" during his travel, even though the Indian can't see this god. Then, the hunter shockingly reveals that he knows Marrant and his relatives from his time spent trading "skins" in Charleston. Marrant does not want to return to his family and is convinced to travel along with his new acquaintance. By the time they arrive at "a large Indian town, belonging to the Cherokee nation," Marrant has "acquired a fuller knowledge of the Indian tongue" (59).

Once in the town, the tribe separates Marrant from his fellow traveler and demands that he account for his presence there or be put to death. Failing to provide a satisfactory answer, Marrant is jailed, and his execution set for the next day. He is inspired to pray aloud in the Cherokee language, which, as he writes, "wonderfully affect[s] the people" (61). His invocation also converts the executioner, who immediately takes him to the king, where Marrant's

presentation of his Bible and his testimony converts the king's daughter.[192] As Marrant did after hearing Whitefield's sermon, she suffers "bodily weakness," and the king threatens to kill Marrant if he cannot cure her. Marrant does so, and as a result of his subsequent prayer, a "great change [takes] place among the people; the king's house [becomes] God's house." The king and his fellow Natives convert to Christianity, and at this exact moment Marrant becomes "treated like a prince." He "assume[s] the habit of the country, and [dresses] much like the king . . ." (64).

Experiencing such success converting the Cherokee, Marrant takes up itinerant preaching among the Creek, Choctow, and Chickasaw tribes. He notes that "[w]hen they recollect, that the white people drove them from the American shores, they are full of resentment. These nations have often united, and murdered all the white people in the back settlements which they could lay hold of, men, women and children" (64). As critics Brooks and Saillant point out, Marrant "link[s] Indian raids against white settlers to colonization and the usurpation of tribal lands" (39), and, as we shall see, this linkage foreshadows the reception Marrant surprisingly receives as he makes his way toward Charleston. When he returns again to the Cherokee, he realizes he would like to go home to see his relatives. Initially frowning on this request, the king finally acquiesces. Marrant travels with Indian escorts much of the way, but he treks the final seventy miles to "the back settlements of the white people" (65) alone and unhindered.

Then a strange thing happens. When Marrant comes upon a family eating dinner, they become frightened and run away. Undeterred and seemingly unsurprised by their fear, he proceeds to eat their meal *and only afterwards* endeavors to "see what was become of the family" (65). When a young girl sees him, she "faint[s] away" for "upwards of an hour" (65). Finally, Marrant coaxes them to come back to the house, and he finally reveals to the reader what

triggers their terror: "My dress was purely in the Indian stile; the skins of wild beasts composed my garments; my head was set out in the savage manner, with a long pendant down my back[,] a sash round my middle, without breeches, and a tomohawk by my side" (65). Then, despite his savage appearance and odd behavior of feasting on the supper of people who had been scared away from their own table, Marrant gathers several families together for "prayer on the Sabbath days" (65). The black wanderer has become the Indian preacher.

As Marrant continues home, he runs into extended family members who do not recognize him. His uncle, refusing him lodging, relates how Marrant's mother was grieving the loss of her son. An "old school fellow" tells how he thought his former friend had been "torn in pieces by the wild beasts" (66), since Marrant's relatives had found a mutilated carcass in the woods. When Marrant finally arrives at his mother's house, he recounts that the "singularity of my dress drew every body's eyes upon me, yet none knew me" (66). Unrecognized by his mother and older siblings, only Marrant's youngest sister "recollect[s]" him. After being chastised for claiming that the "wild man" is her brother, she asks him directly. When he answers yes, Marrant writes that "[t]hus the dead was brought to life again; thus the lost was found" (67).

Numerous literary critics have noted how various scenes in Marrant's narrative are typologically patterned on several Biblical stories: that of Jesus, Daniel, Lazarus, Paul, John the Baptist, and, perhaps most significantly in the reunion scene, Joseph.[193] However, the typological relationship between Marrant's Narrative and the Biblical story of Joseph is not as straightforward as it first seems. While Marrant convincingly has been placed in religious contexts by a number of able scholars, I suggest that this focus obscures a deeper understanding of the interaction Marrant chronicles between himself and the Cherokee tribe.[194] By contrast, my approach foregrounds his Cherokee captivity, his time spent among the various Southeastern

tribes, and his learning of Cherokee ways.[195] Marrant's repeated emphasis on the Cherokee dress he wears upon reentry into "civilized" society is not only a typological allusion to Joseph but also a reference to Cherokee understandings of how one might transform from being "black" to "Native."[196]

As ethnohistorian Theda Perdue has argued, eighteenth-century Cherokee culture did not think of what contemporaneous whites considered racial identity as being located solely in the body. Because the Cherokee had a matrilineal culture, the children of white traders and Cherokee women always stayed with their mother's family to be raised according to their customs, and mothers had complete authority over their children's schooling (Racial 35). These offspring usually grew up in their indigenous culture and remained with the Cherokee tribe, regardless of whether their fathers stayed (although, according to Perdue, many actually did). While white society termed these descendants "mixed-blood" or "half-breeds," the Cherokees just thought of them as "Indian" (Racial 25).

Furthermore, as Perdue argues, the Cherokee willingly adopted many non-Natives into their tribes and "attempted to convert [captive African Americans and whites] who remained with them into Indians."[197] With the Cherokee, once one was adopted into a clan system, took on Native practices, and became initiated into the tribe, in their eyes, one *became* Cherokee. Perdue explains that "[f]rom the Native perspective . . . Europeans who were adopted, literally became Cherokee and Creek respectively because they became relatives . . ." (Racial 9). (The same could be said of African-Americans who were lucky enough, as I will explore below, to be adopted into the tribe [Racial 4-11].)

As both Dowd and Perdue explicate, ritual plays a key role in how non-Natives can be brought into (specifically nativist) tribes. "To become a full person, to become one of the

people, the captive underwent the rituals of adoption" (SR 13), which could include stripping, bathing, and painting the non-Native-*cum*-Native. As Perdue puts it, "native nations enjoyed both political and cultural sovereignty in the eighteenth century, and they incorporated foreigners into their societies on their own terms and for their own purposes" (Racial 2). As she contends, "though ritual, Indians transformed people . . . into harmonious members of the new community" (Racial 11). This custom was also practiced by other tribes, including the Iroquois, as Nancy Shoemaker writes, "[i]n adopting war captives, the Iroquois put Indians and Europeans through the same ritual process: stripped them of their clothes and gave them a new pair of moccasins to wear. Here, transfers in clothing accomplished the transformation to a new identity" (136).

While white natural historians suspected that exposure to a Native "mode of living" could change one's racial characteristics, some Indians felt that racial change could occur by rituals of incorporation, which included "donning clothing or similar products of culture" (Shoemaker 137). Because the Cherokee attributed humankind's racial variations to separate origins (Shoemaker 138-9; Perdue, Racial Construction 77), they, unlike natural historians, did not credit environmentalism with causing racial transmutations. Instead, for them, through adoption rituals, a sartorial change signals a refashioning of racial identity.[198]

However, Marrant's Narrative brings these two ideas together when he describes his integration into Cherokee society: "A great change took place among the people . . . [I] had perfect liberty, and was treated like a prince. . . . I remained nine weeks in the king's palace, praising God day and night: I was never out but three days all the time. I had assumed the habit of the country, and was dressed much like the king . . . Here I learnt to speak their tongue in the highest stile" (120). Marrant's ritualistic change in clothes is simultaneous with his integration

into the family. He dresses "like the king" and is accepted into the family as a son ("like a prince"). Furthermore, in Marrant's description habit serves as the conceptual nexus linking together ideas about dress, repeated practices, and the constitution of the body. The Oxford English Dictionary tells us that "habit" means "fashion or mode of apparel" or "dress," and here Marrant certainly describes his raiment. However, habit also denotes "custom" or "usage," even to the point of "a settled disposition or tendency to act in a certain way, esp. one acquired by frequent repetition of the same act until it becomes almost or quite involuntary; a settled practice." Also containing this meaning, Marrant's use of habit links it to the "modes of living" or social practices that many natural historians thought could affect one's racial status (in addition to indicating one's "habitation"). Lastly, and most strikingly, habit also refers to one's "bodily condition or constitution" and "the outer part, surface, or external appearance of the body." Each of these three ideas is embedded and mutually imbricated in the etymology of the word habit. Thus, when Marrant says that he "assumed the habit of the country," he indicates that he dressed like the Cherokee, that he practiced their "mode of living" (such as learning their language), and that he took on the constitution or appearance of the Cherokee body.

The reference to Cherokee clothing differentiates Marrant's return from that of the Biblical Joseph in this key respect. Like Marrant, Joseph receives a new set of clothes from the Pharaoh as a sign of his acceptance into the Egyptian community. However, when Joseph's brothers unwittingly reunite with him in Egypt, the Genesis narrator does not comment upon *why* they cannot recognize him; nor does it mention that Joseph wears particularly obfuscating clothing. In contrast, Marrant's scene with the frightened family actually withholds the fact of his Cherokee garb, only to reveal it strikingly at the anecdote's conclusion.

Ethnohistorian James Axtell writes that white men taken into Native tribes could become Indianized to the point where it could be "difficult to distinguish" between the Native and white man. As Axtell points out, quoting natural historian Samuel Stanhope Smith's An Essay on the Causes of the Variety of Complexion and Figure in the Human Species, this "reinforced the environmentalism of the time, which held that white men 'who have incorporated themselves with any of [the Indian] tribes' soon acquire 'a great resemblance to the savages, not only in their manners, but in their colour and the expression of the countenance'" ("White Indians" 195). Furthermore, as Axtell points out elsewhere, "[W]hen the evangelizing trader Alexander Long told the Cherokees that their religious beliefs were all false, the Indians replied that the fault was not theirs because they did not have the ability to learn from reading and writing. 'If we had,' their spokesman said, perhaps with a hint of sarcasm, 'we should be as wise as you … and could do and make all things as you do: [such] as making guns and power and bullets and cloth … and peradventure the great god of the English would cause us to turn white as you are'" ("Power of Print" 306). While certainly the Cherokee were poking fun at the Englishman's assumption of superiority, the joke turns on the idea that one's race—for whatever reason—could possibly undergo change. Given this, Marrant's transformation takes place in part according to this natural-historical rubric but also continually emphasizes the Cherokee way of understanding his racial transformation. These two systems of thought, though different, both concern themselves with the external appearance that is transformed and thus makes a new me—rather than one identity laid over another and/or passing as something else that differs from one's "racial interior."

Marrant's Narrative also differs importantly from Joseph's story because, unlike Joseph, Marrant is never sold into slavery. This fact would have struck eighteenth-century readers, as

the Cherokee tribe was known to sell captured blacks and later to adopt the system of race-based slavery themselves.[199] As Perdue writes, "[t]he illicit market in African American slaves meant that no person of color was safe on the frontier" (Racial Construction 6). And yet, Marrant *was* safe, in part because the hunter he first meets recognizes him as a free black from Charleston and also because the grateful king welcomes Marrant into the tribe. Never in danger of being sold into slavery by the Cherokee, Marrant's incorporation is central to his narrative.[200]

This close affiliation between Marrant and the Cherokee and his sartorial alteration undergone in the wilderness frames the homecoming scenes toward the end of the Narrative. Because some Native Americans considered this change of clothes to be partly constitutive of identity, the garb does not disguise the "'real' me underneath," as Deloria might say. Rather, what we might call the "transformed" me is *produced through* the wearing of the new clothes.

This "transformed" Marrant is, counterintuitively, both recognizable and completely unknowable. Even as Marrant draws on two separate racial epistemologies, he does so unevenly. His appearance as an Indian or as a black man works differently for various people he encounters. Being in the "Indian stile" renders him unrecognizable to his friends and most of his family; however, his youngest sister identifies him immediately. If Marrant challenges his readers to take seriously the Cherokee understanding of the constitution of racial identity (and how it might keep one's old friends from knowing him), he also suggests that the transformation he undergoes does not replace the person he previously was. Like Crèvecoeur, Marrant depicts racial transformation in the North American landscape as a conflicted process.

Marrant also indicates that racial transformation can be temporary. He leads his readers to believe that he reverts to his former life, removes his Cherokee regalia, and returns to being what the Narrative's title page emphasizes: "JOHN MARRANT, *A BLACK*" (reprinted in

Saillant and Brooks 54).[201] He begins preaching, including to slaves on the Jenkins plantation in Cumbee, and is impressed into service for the British forces at "the commencement of the American troubles" (68). He participates in the British siege of Charleston unharmed (Potkay and Burr 68). Furthermore, when the British commander General Clinton rides into town, he is accompanied by Marrant's "old royal benefactor and convert, the king of the Cherokee Indians," who immediately knows Marrant and dismounts to greet him in the street.[202] While Marrant's relatives do not recognize him in his Indian dress, his sister and the king know him regardless of his dress and racial status.

Marrant conjoins these incongruent ways of thinking about race, racial constitution, and racial transformation. Even as his alteration takes place according to these different rubrics, the Narrative importantly defines race as always in motion, a potentially temporary state to be maintained, rather than a new identity laid over another one. This quality of his "surprising metamorphosis"—like Crèvecoeur's example—illustrates himself "becoming" Indian according to the Cherokee epistemology, rather than merely pretending to be Native. Furthermore, his association with Cherokees and transformation into an Indian does not ultimately produce a white American identity, as in the examples of Deloria and Huhndorf. Rather, the tableaux of Marrant greeting the king of the Cherokee (who mostly sided with the British during the war) and British commander in the midst of a city under the control of the English characterizes Marrant as a black man associated closely with the British empire.[203] In the end, Marrant depicts a world in which various ways of racial transformation can be considered equally valid. The Narrative simultaneously records and enacts different ways to conceptualize the racial transformation for black men outside of Charleston.

The walks that the main characters in Crèvecoeur's Letters and Marrant's Narrative take in the wilderness outside Charleston both uncannily interrupt well-laid dinner plans. In these complementary scenes, each author depicts quite differently the potential of a black man to transform racially, even as both explore the possibilities of late eighteenth-century transformable race in North America. Relatedly, the texts present contrasting views of Charleston. In Letters, although its slave-holding practices morally degrade Charleston, James' caged Negro scene metaphorically depicts slave resistance contained above the South Carolinian ground in the figure of the caged black man.[204] In contrast, the Narrative alludes to black radicalism associated with Charleston, particularly the free and escaped blacks who joined the British forces during the Revolutionary War, assisted in the 1780 siege of Charleston, and later evacuated from the new U.S. nation-state.[205]

Despite this difference, however, both texts offer conflicted accounts of how racial transformation might occur in Charleston in particular and British North America in general. Excavating the models underwriting the transformations these texts portray allows us to appreciate how they are concerned with racial change and how that concern is in complex relationship with the articulation of a new, American national identity. Crèvecoeur's Letters concludes with James fearing the looming break from England. Marrant's Narrative features Marrant, the Cherokee king, and General Clinton cheerfully gathering together in the middle of a British-controlled Charleston. If anything, both Letters and Narrative illustrate the American Revolution from perspectives particularly dis-identified with the emerging American nation-state (for Marrant) and not yet seamlessly congruent with it (for Crèvecoeur).

The concluding chapter of this dissertation will take up Royall Tyler's The Algerine Captive. If Crèvecoeur's Letters and Marrant's Narrative can be understood best through late

eighteenth-century conceptions of an external, flexible race, The Algerine Captive marks the change between this and later beliefs about internal and fixed racial differences. Reading its scenes of vexed racial transformation provides a vantage point from which to reflect on the racial epistemologies of the eighteenth century and to begin to analyze the shift to those of the nineteenth.

Chapter 5

Interiorizing Racial Metamorphosis: The Algerine Captive and the Language of Sympathy

In the last fifteen years of the eighteenth century, the interactions between the new United States and what were then known as the Barbary States—Tripoli, Algiers, and Tunis—captivated the American reading public. The white citizens of the American slave-holding republic were outraged that North African pirates commandeered U.S. ships in the Mediterranean Ocean, captured U.S. sailors, and enslaved them in Africa. Americans pressed federal leaders for a resolution to this tense situation, and much depended upon its outcome. Politicians in the U.S. debated whether paying the ransom demanded by the Muslim captors or engaging in a costly war might bankrupt the federal coffers. They also conjectured about how they might be able to engage in international commerce when it carried such risk. But this was not all that was at stake. Because of still-lingering environmentalist understandings of the racialization of the body, white Americans at home wondered what might happen to their fellow countrymen if they remained in North Africa for too long. As historian Joanne Pope Melish asks,

> Under radically different conditions, enslaved in a tropical climate by a "savage" people of color, could free white Americans become . . . something else? Slaves? And how profound and permanent would such a change be? Was whiteness part of some stable, essential nature, or did the conditions of their existence have the power to transform the "nature" of Americans and Europeans too, as Buffon and [Samuel Stanhope] Smith suggested? (150)

The previous chapters of this dissertation have analyzed early American texts that explore what might happen to Europeans and Africans when they relocate to the New World. This final

chapter examines a novel that imagines what could transpire when a white American is forced to live in Africa.

Royall Tyler's The Algerine Captive or, The Life and Adventures of Doctor Updike Underhill (1797), a fictional Barbary captivity story claiming to be an authentic narrative, depicts what may occur if a white, United States male citizen were to undergo an unwilling racial alteration. Part farce and part historical fiction, the narrative chronicles the story of Dr. Updike Underhill. The travels of this buffoonish New Englander take him through the recently-formed United States, to England and West Africa as a surgeon on a slave ship, to Algiers as a slave himself, and back to the U.S. as a free man. In this chapter, I argue that The Algerine Captive registers a shift in the understanding of race from a malleable feature of a person's exterior to a trait lodged within one's corporeal interior.[206] As I will show, Tyler uses eighteenth-century theories of sentiment and the language of sympathy to illustrate racial difference moving "inside" the body. In the novel, Dr. Underhill's profound sympathetic identification with African slaves "blackens" his soul in a metaphorical interior racial metamorphosis. Because his cross-racial sympathy rhetorically alters his racial interior and is linked to his capture by the Algerines, Underhill, upon his return to freedom, disavows that identification and his prior abolitionist tendencies in order to reclaim his white U.S. citizenship. While the text envisions that the white citizen can transform into the metaphorically internally-raced slave through cross-racial compassion, the narrative guarantees firmly grounded white U.S. citizenship only inasmuch as it can deny white-black affective identification and the abolitionist sentiment it causes.

History of the Algerian Captive Crisis

As the recent flurry of scholarly activity on Barbary captivity narratives is quick to point out, the twenty-first century engagement of the United States with various Muslim states has a long history with its origins in the post-Revolutionary era. These early events served as both source and context for Tyler's 1797 novel. In The Cultural Roots of American Islamicism, Timothy Marr ably demonstrates how early and antebellum Americans used depictions of Islam to help forge their own national identity and moral legitimacy within a global framework. Drawing on Edward Said's groundbreaking Orientalism, Marr examines how Americans deployed a wide array of orientalist images of Islam in the early national period. Marr gives specific attention to a "series of conflicts with the Islamic world" that were crucial to this era, starting with the tensions with Algiers in 1785 (22).[207]

Beginning in the seventeenth century, Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli interfered with European trade in the Mediterranean Sea, capturing sailors and demanding ransom for their return. Toward the latter part of the eighteenth century, the British government's practice of paying tributes to the leaders of North Africa protected imperial ships from pirating. However, when the U.S. officially won its independence from Britain in 1783, the mother country's protection evaporated, leaving American ships vulnerable to attack. To make matters worse, many Americans felt that Great Britain publicized the news of America's self-rule to the Barbary States to encourage them to assault U.S. vessels. As Marr points out, because of the young nation's inexperience, this entire episode highlighted the relative weakness of the United States in international affairs (32).

For the next decade, Barbary pirates captured U.S. ships, took their sailors captive, and pressed many of them into slavery. Stateside, Americans held events to raise money, increased awareness, and petitioned the government to force an end to this North African practice (Marr 30). As Robert Allison argues, the Algerian situation and American responses shed light on the vexed position in which U.S. citizens found themselves: protesting slavery abroad while practicing it at home (87-106). After much negotiation, the U.S. signed a treaty on July 12, 1796, that freed the Algerian captives (Marr 33). This resolution, Marr explains, caused Americans deep humiliation, as the U.S. ended up paying ransom for the captives and giving lavish gifts to North African officials. This on-going spectacle engrossed American readers, and captivity narratives both true and fictionalized flooded the popular press. And although this particular set of captives regained their freedom, U.S.-North African interaction and the public interest it engendered showed no signs of attenuation. Published just a year after the 1796 treaty, The Algerine Captive found a reading public primed for its tale of travel, capture, and eventual liberation.

The Algerine Captive and the Sciences of Race

Although important, the publicity of the Barbary captivity crisis was not the only historical discourse to which The Algerine Captive responds. Although it is often overlooked by literary critics, Tyler's novel also indexes several competing theories of American race science. Throughout, the narrative draws upon Biblical, natural-historical, and polygenetic explanations for racial difference in its multiple depictions of racial formation. The appearance of these various strands of racial thought demonstrates the novel's placement within multiple epistemological regimes. The novel illustrates not an abrupt shift from an eighteenth-century

conceptualization of race to a nineteenth-century one but rather the slow and disjointed manner in which one way of thinking was coming to replace another.

Using Biblical imagery that had taken on a racialized connotation in early American culture, Tyler's narrator twice depicts scenes that illustrate a monogenetic explanation of the differences among races. While detailing his New England ancestral background, Underhill describes an absurd charge of "adultery" leveled at his forbear, John Underhill, for staring too long at a married woman in church. Here, Tyler lampoons Puritan zealousness and Underhill's naïve earnestness in relating the incident. More important, however, is Underhill's justification of the anecdote's inclusion in his narrative. "I would rather," he claims, "like the sons of Noah, go backwards and cast a garment over our fathers' nakedness; but the impartiality of a historian . . . will excuse me to the candid (sic)" (18). Underhill alludes to the Biblical scene in which Noah's son Ham witnesses Noah's "nakedness" when he lay in a drunken stupor in his tent. Unlike Ham, brothers Shem and Japeth avert their eyes and cover their father with a blanket. When Noah awakens, he curses Ham and his descendants for not turning away from the scene (Genesis 9). As intellectual historian Thomas Gossett explains, American slave apologists claimed that Africans were descendants of Ham to justify the system of racial slavery (5). Though absent from the original Biblical account, this association emerged later and was a commonly understood aspect of the "curse of Ham" by the eighteenth century.[208]

Underhill ostensibly uses this example to characterize himself as an "impartial" historian, but it also places him in the position of Ham, the son who unabashedly looked upon his father's embarrassing situation. In doing so, Underhill hints at his own link to blackness, foreshadowing the pivotal blackening scene to come later in the text.[209] He also draws upon a Biblical explanation for the existence of different races. Although the story of Ham is not frequently

discussed in terms of its implications for theories of monogenism, the structure of the anecdote supports it. If, as Christian slave apologists claimed, Africans are descendents of Ham, then all races could trace their familial lineage through Ham and Noah back to Adam and Eve.

Later, when contemplating his service as physician aboard a slave ship, Underhill again invokes monogenism to condemn (his own) inhumane treatment of Africans:

> I cannot reflect on this transaction yet without shuddering. I have deplored my conduct with tears of anguish; and, I pray a merciful God, the common parent of the great family of the universe, who hath made of one flesh and one blood all nations of the earth, that the miseries, the insults, and cruel woundings, I afterwards received, when a slave myself, may expiate for the inhumanity, I was necessitated to exercise, towards these MY BRETHREN OF THE HUMAN RACE. (96)

In the same manner as Samson Occom and Phillis Wheatley, Underhill points to humankind's common origin. Like Occom, Underhill uses the "one flesh and one blood" language from the Biblical account of creation in Genesis, and, like Wheatley, he envisions God as a "common parent" of humankind who "made" each individual "nation" from one, original flesh. It necessarily follows from this thinking that the various "races" within the one human race developed after their shared creation. Underhill even plays upon the multiple meanings of the term race, using it here to denote the whole of humanity and preferring the term nation to denote the differences among humankind.[210]

Natural history, a "scientific" way of thinking that was itself underwritten by theories of monogenism, appears in Tyler's text as well. When Underhill travels through Cambridge, he stops to inspect the museum at Harvard College. He is surprised to find "curiosities of all countries," except the United States. When he inquires about American "specimens," he finds a

hodge-podge of underwhelming pieces, including a gourd shell, a stuffed duck, and a "miniature birch canoe, containing two or three rag aboriginals with paddles, cut from a shingle" (60). Upon seeing this clichéd Native American diorama, Underhill nurses his wounded national pride. He laments that "I felt then for the reputation of the first seminary of our land. Suppose a Raynal or a Buffon should visit us; repair to the museum of the university, eagerly inquiring after the natural productions and original antiquities of our country, what must be the sensations of the respectable rulers of the college, to be obliged to produce, to them, these wretched, bauble specimens" (60-61).

As I described in chapter one, the mere mention of Raynal and Buffon in this historical moment alludes to the heated debate between them and American natural philosophers like Thomas Jefferson over the effect the New World environment would have on both its Native and newly-arrived European populations. Gesturing toward this well-known scientific dispute, Underhill alludes to the underpinnings of this racial debate: if humankind descended from one ancestor and the effects of the environment produced differences among humans, what kind of effect would the American environment have on its inhabitants? Sandwiched between several of Underhill's foolhardy encounters, this scene gently mocks Underhill's mildly histrionic mortification, and it illustrates how the novel is informed by these multiple theories of racialization.[211]

Indeed, Tyler had demonstrated his awareness of various accounts of racial difference a year earlier in a 1796 entry in the "Colon & Spondee" series, a satirical newspaper column he coauthored with fellow Federalist, Joseph Dennie (Carson 87). Posing as an "Indian editor," Tyler composes an essay on the topic of race. "'The creatures,' Tyler's Indian editorializes, 'are whitened by disease, like the decaying leaves of the woods'" (qtd. in Gardner 29). As Jared

Gardner points out, Tyler probably satirizes Benjamin Rush's theory (first presented at the America Philosophical Society in 1792) that blackness was a form of leprosy (29). One of the most influential and well-known early environmentalist thinkers, Rush argued that since blackness was a disease, it could be cured by freeing Africans from slavery and moving them to comfortable and humane surroundings (Jordan 286-7).

However, even with its multiple references to natural-historical and Biblical monogenetic thought, The Algerine Captive also alludes to nascent theories of polygenism that were beginning to gain credence in scientific circles. When he begins his training in medicine, Underhill notes that he studies the works of John Hunter, among others. As Gardner attests, this British physician and anthropologist, "whose carefully hierarchized 'gradation of skulls' provided a foundation for several theorists on race" (42), laid the groundwork for later race theorists who would expand upon this "evidence" to argue for separate creations. Scientists such as Georges Cuvier, George Morton, Dr. Josiah Nott, and George R. Gliddon would draw upon such scientific research to show what they saw as the utter alterity and distinction of the races, an argument that would develop into full-blown scientific racism in the nineteenth century (Wiegman 51-55). The work of Hunter and like-minded scientists would provide one of the first steps to conceiving of race as something not merely residing on the surface of the body, but as a trait emanating outward from the body's interior.

Thus, in the waning years of the eighteenth century, scientific models began to conceptualize racial "truth" as something located within the body. This shift in thinking provoked new cultural anxieties: If racial truth was an interior phenomenon, where was it located inside the body and what did it look like? Furthermore, what did one's outside look like? And perhaps most importantly, if racial truth resided inside where it could not be seen (and

might not be indicated by one's skin), how would people know who was "really" black or "really" white? As I will show in the next section, The Algerine Captive brings together the discourses of race science and sympathy to explore the problems that arise when race begins to be conceptualized as located on the "inside."

Turning Black on the Inside

Considering the role of sentiment in The Algerine Captive, twentieth-century literary critic James R. Lewis praises the novel for steering clear of maudlin, emotional scenes in its efforts to condemn slavery.

> The only worthwhile piece of literature to emerge out of the Barbary conflict, Royall Tyler's The Algerine Captive, was untainted by the cult of sentimentality. The author's refusal either to engage in sensationalism or to employ the conventions of romantic heroism makes it difficult to classify. Tyler does, however, have an axe to grind against slavery, although the principal target of his critique is Anglo-American rather than North African slavery. (80)

In marked contrast to Lewis, I argue that Tyler *does* engage eighteenth-century theories of sentiment and that his use of sympathetic exchange serves key purposes in the novel. First, Tyler employs the language of sympathy to illustrate the late eighteenth-century shift in thinking about race from an exterior feature to an interior trait of the body. When Underhill extends sympathy to the black slaves, they state that God has placed "a *black* soul" inside a "*white* body" (101, emphasis in original). Thus, the novel imagines that this cross-racial sympathetic identification can potentially cause a metaphorical racial transformation—but that this rhetorical blackening takes place not on the surface of the skin, but rather "within the body." As I shall explain, the

novel closely associates Underhill's racial sympathy with his enslavement, thus characterizing such sympathetic identification as a dangerous threat to one's own freedom. Furthermore, while Underhill's enslavement initially gives rise to his impassioned profession of abolitionism, in the end, he forgets his promises of anti-slavery activism and instead focuses on reclaiming his citizenship in the slave-holding U.S.

Underhill first encounters slaves on his trip to a "Southern State," where he accompanies a friend to church. As the congregation waits for the service to begin, they observe the parson make his belated arrival. "[T]he absence of his negro boy, who was to ferry him over" causes the parson's tardiness. Switch in hand, the minister strikes "the back and head of the faulty slave, all the way from the water to the church door; accompanying every stroke with suitable language" (80). Making his way to the pulpit, the parson preaches "an animated discourse, of eleven minutes, upon the practical duties of religion, from these words, remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy" (80). After such a display, the whole congregation makes their way to the horse track, where the parson serves as both bookie and finish-line judge for the races.

Appalled, Underhill remarks that "[t]he whole of this extraordinary scene was novel to me. Besides, a certain staple of New England I had with me, called conscience, made my situation, in even the passive part I bore in it, so awkward and uneasy, that I could not refrain from observing to my friend my surprise at the parson's conduct, in chastising his servant immediately before divine service" (80). After his friend defends the parson, swearing that he himself would have just "killed the black rascal" for causing his tardiness, Underhill closes the scene by emphasizing the profane language used by both the parson and his friend. As Underhill notes, this encounter with the violence of slavery is indeed "novel;" the word both characterizes Underhill's first experience with slavery and comments upon the text's own status as a literary

artifact that explores these very issues. Here, Underhill is duly shocked but focuses more on the perpetrator's language and less on his action or even the experience of the slave himself.

A later scene in which Underhill witnesses the horrors of slavery stands in stark contrast. His inability to find stable work as a physician forces him to seek employment as a surgeon on a ship. Although it is unclear whether Underhill understands that the vessel is a slave ship, he finds happiness in securing a job. Once aboard the significantly-named *Sympathy*, Underhill realizes the extent of the slave trade's dehumanization. The traders' conversations about "the purchase of human beings, with the same indifference, and nearly in the same language, as if they were contracting for so many head of cattle or swine, shocked [Underhill] exceedingly" (94). In striking sentimental language, Underhill laments various tableaus of slavery.

> But, when I suffered my imagination to rove to the habitation of these victims to this infamous, cruel commerce, and fancied that I saw the peaceful husbandman dragged from his native farm; the fond husband torn from the embraces of his beloved wife; the mother, from her babes; the tender child, from the arms of its parents and all the tender, endearing ties of natural and social affection rended by the hand of avaricious violence, my heart sunk within me. (94-95)

Underhill suggests that he unknowingly enlisted and now certainly regrets boarding the slaver: "When the captain kindly inquired of me how many slaves I thought my privilege in the ship entitled me to transport, for my adventure, I rejected my privilege, with horrour; and declared I would sooner suffer servitude than purchase a slave" (95). Underhill's feelings toward the slaves single him out from all the other white men on the ship. As we shall see, his statement—that he would rather be a slave than buy one—ultimately proves to be prophetic.

Underhill records his moral revelation about the degradation of slavery and his efforts to assuage the suffering of the captives. He describes quite specifically the circumstances of the slave ship, which has led scholars to conjecture that Tyler drew extensively on black slave narratives published during this time period (Davidson 299). Recoiling at the conditions in the ship's hold, Underhill informs the captain "that it was impracticable to stow fifty more persons between decks, without endangering health and life" (99). However, Underhill attests, "[i]t was in vain I remonstrated to the captain. In vain I enforced the necessity of more commodious births (sic), and a more free influx of air for the slaves. In vain I represented, that these miserable people had been used to the vegetable diet, and pure air of a country life" (99). The captain suspects Underhill's compassion is a reaction to the slaves' plight. "He observed that he did not doubt my skill, and would be bound by my advice, as to the health of those on board his ship, when he found I was actuated by the interest of the owners; but, he feared, that I was now moved by some *yankee nonsense about humanity*" (99, emphasis in original). However, when above sixty percent of the slaves becomes ill, Underhill convinces the captain to land the ship on the African coast in order that the sick may be taken ashore and restored to health.[212]

The slaves recover quickly. Underhill relates that they "looked on me as the source of this sudden transition from the filth and rigour of the ship, to the cleanliness and kindness of the shore. Their gratitude was excessive" (100). The captives gather berries for Underhill in appreciation. Underhill writes that "[o]ur linguist has told me, he has often heard them, behind the bushes, praying to their God for my prosperity, and asking him with earnestness, why he put my good *black* soul into a *white* body" (101, emphasis in original). As scholars have noted, here the novel ironically inverts the traditional moral association between blackness as evil and whiteness as virtuous.[213] For these slaves, whiteness—not blackness—represents wickedness.

However, in addition, the slaves perceive Underhill's soul as black because of his intense sympathetic identification with them.

The black slaves can perceive Underhill's soul as black because, as scholars of eighteenth-century sentiment make clear, sympathy at this time was understood to be a phenomenon of one's interior. As Julia Stern explains, in Adam Smith's description of the "dialetic of sympathy" in his Theory of Moral Sentiments (1759), Smith contends that "the object of compassion and the viewing subject *exchange interiorities*" (Plight of Feeling 24, my emphasis). Stern further describes Smith's "mirror of sympathy": "By attempting to imagine the predicament of the other, the compassionate subject circulates fellow feeling back to the suffering object, who then reflects it back to the subject again" (Plight of Feeling 24). Drawing on this understanding and using the language of sympathy, the novel stages Underhill's empathetic encounter as an imagined exchange of interiorities with the black slaves. The slaves themselves recognize Underhill's black interior because, following Smith's theory, it is reflected back to themselves. Although "fellow feeling" does not have a color per se, the black slaves use racialized language to characterize Underhill's consideration for them. By asking why God "put [Underhill's] *black* soul *into* a *white* body" (101, middle emphasis added), the slaves crucially conceptualize Underhill's empathy toward them as something raced and *inside* the body. The black slaves' description of Underhill's kindness towards them finds perfect expression in this envisioned exchange of a metaphorically black interior.[214]

Furthermore, as Christopher Castiglia points out, Adam Smith's notion of sympathy also provided a language for whites to visualize themselves as internally black. According to this logic of sentiment, Castiglia explains, "[r]acial difference persists . . . as differentiated *interior states* requiring different nationalism and social agency . . . White reformers took on blackness,

not on the surface of the skin, but as a suffering interior" (34, my emphasis). Although Castiglia specifically describes radical abolitionists, this logic also applies to Underhill's experience with the black slaves.

But, one may ask, what does Underhill's metaphorical black soul have to do with his actual racial status? And furthermore, what does this internal blackness have to do with his enslavement by the "Mahometans"? This scene depicts a sympathetic identification that is symbolized by a metaphorical blackening "on the inside." This location of blackness is crucial because it is in this historical moment that the discourse of race science—in addition to the discourse of sympathy—posits a bodily interior that can be raced. As Robyn Wiegman attests, at this time, "the theoretical assumptions on which race is apprehended undergo a profound rearticulation" (22).[215] Wiegman explains that "comparative anatomy begins to break with the assurance of the visible to craft interior space, to open the body to the possibilities of subterranean and invisible truths and meanings . . . . Natural history, in other words, was replaced by biology and in this, race was situated as potentially more than skin deep" (30). Drawing on Foucault, Wiegman attests that the shift from natural philosophy to biology "assigned to 'man' a new sphere of specificity, the racial determinations wrought through this sphere produced not simply the constancy of race as an unchanging, biological feature, but an inherent and incontrovertible difference of which skin was only the most visible indication" (31). The incident in which Underhill becomes represented as inwardly black is certainly about his emotional exchange with enslaved Africans. However, because the language of sympathy perfectly intersects here with evolving theories of racialization, the scene also speaks to the changing of "location" of racial difference.

Underhill's soul is metaphorically blackened because of his sympathetic identification with the black slaves. However, because theories of both sympathy and race science imagine a racialized interior, the novel raises the uneasy question of whether Underhill's internal, metaphorical blackness should also be considered his racial "truth" because it is located "inside" his body, despite the fact that this may not be indicated by his skin. In this way, the novel explores the possibility that the racialization of one's interior could change and, furthermore, that there might be a problematic slippage between one's internal racial "essence" and one's external bodily appearance.

It is important, then, to consider how the novel associates Underhill's sympathetic identification and internal blackness with his subsequent enslavement. The novel distinguishes Underhill as the only white man aboard the *Sympathy* who actually extends sympathy to the black slaves. The day after the slaves note his black soul, Barbary pirates chase off the *Sympathy* and capture Underhill and one black slave still on shore.[216] The solitary white man left to treat the slaves, Underhill is the only white man forced to become one. The text singles Underhill out for enslavement because he extends compassion to the slaves. Since many of the "white slave narratives" based on Barbary captivity had already established the narrative of whites being taken captive by racial "Others," The Algerine Captive, with Underhill's rhetorical blackening scene, is not only ironizing U.S. white-black slavery by illustrating its inverse in North Africa. The novel specifically links Underhill's empathy and his internal blackness with his enslavement in order to illustrate not just the dangers of whites enduring enslavement but also the hazards of whites experiencing intense compassion for black slaves in their own country. If Underhill's sentiment toward the black slaves results in his internal, metaphorical blackness, the novel literalizes that blackness insomuch that the consequence of that blackening is enslavement.

Thus, this punishment teaches Underhill a lesson about sympathetically identifying with slaves. The scene depicts the disciplining of Underhill's sympathies and, as we shall see, his political allegiances, and it dramatizes the cultural anxiety arising around trying to determine what race one "really" is.

Underhill experiences racial metamorphosis, not on his external body as his contemporary environmentalists might have anticipated, but within his body's interior. If J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur and John Marrant portray racial transmutation happening externally, for Tyler the racial change takes place internally, while externally Underhill remains visibly the "same." Furthermore, the novel shows Underhill's soul being metaphorically blackened in the same historical moment that race science was beginning to literalize blackness "on the inside." On the one hand, this incident illustrates the shift Wiegman describes where the "truth" of race moves inside; on the other, it still makes use of eighteenth-century theories of racialization that assumed one's racial status to be a reaction to circumstances. Thus, Underhill's narrative straddles—rather than rests on either side of—what Foucault characterizes as an epistemological chasm that opens up between classical and modern "epistemes of knowledge."[217]

My repositioning of Tyler in this slow and piecemeal transition between racial epistemologies troubles the way critics have tended to assume a fixed sense of whiteness in the novel. Joanne Pope Melish claims that in the fictional encounters that Barbary captivity narratives stage between environmental theory and the constancy of race, racial fixity wins out. These narratives, Melish attests,

> proclaimed the whiteness and virtue of true republicans—northern, free, white citizens—to be innate and inherited, as was the slavishness and dependency of people of color. . . . In every case the answers challenged environmental theory, proposing a radically

> different conception of human difference: that whiteness and citizenship, savagery and servility were innate characteristics; that there was indeed an immutable human nature that was not subject to substantial change by external experience—a fixed nature to which the somatic or physiognomic could after all provide reliable cues. (161)

Melish is correct in that Tyler does ostensibly remain white, and racial truth is imagined to be inside the body. However, the stability of this whiteness is not quite as assured as she claims. Underhill's sympathetic identification with the black slaves metaphorically racializes him internally; the racial metamorphosis occurs, but this time, it takes place subcutaneously.

Furthermore, if cross-racial compassionate interchange works imperfectly (because the white spectator can never understand *exactly* and thus empathize with the black sufferer's situation), Underhill's sympathetic identification is imperfect because it works all too well. Within the logic of the novel, Underhill so intensely sympathizes with Africans that he literally takes the enslaved position of an African who is a slave onboard the *Sympathy*. When they are both taken captive by the Algerines, the African enjoys freedom while Underhill is enslaved. Underhill's profusion of compassion complicates the racial logic of his former western world: dark Africans of various backgrounds experience personal autonomy while Underhill, whose U.S. citizenship and external whiteness is rendered useless, finds himself in chains. Before, this "affectionate Negro" had slept "at [Underhill's] feet" (104). Later, when Underhill is "thrust into a dirty hole" on the Algerine vessel, a mysterious hand reaches through the hatchway to present him "a cloth, dripping with cold water, in which a small quantity of boiled rice was wrapped" (106). When Underhill receives the same nourishment the next day, he begs to see his "benefactor" and discovers the tearful "face of the grateful African, who was taken with [him]"

(106). These characters not only imaginatively exchange interiors; they completely trade subject positions.

Underhill's prior sympathetic identification with Africans, coupled with his gratitude toward this particular slave, causes abolitionist sentiment to well up in him:

> Is this, exclaimed I, one of these men, whom we are taught to vilify as beneath the human species, who brings me sustenance, perhaps at the risk of his life, who shares his morsel with one of those barbarous men, who had recently torn him from all he held dear, and whose base companions are now transporting his darling son to a grievous slavery? Grant me, I ejaculated, once more to taste the freedom of my native country, and every moment of my life shall be dedicated to preaching against this detestable commerce. I will fly to our fellow citizens in the southern states; I will, on my knees, conjure them, in the name of humanity, to abolish a trafic (sic), which causes it to bleed in every pore. If they are deaf to the pleadings of nature, I will conjure them, for the sake of consistency, to cease to deprive their fellow creatures of freedom, which their writers, their orators, representatives, senators, and even their constitutions of government, have declared to be the unalienable birth right of man. (106)

Underhill's dangerous sympathy leads to his internal, metaphorical racial metamorphosis and change of subject positions. This man's compassion toward Underhill results in this kind treatment. Both these outcomes furthermore cause Underhill to vow to fight for the end of slavery. This illustrates, one might be led to believe, a perfect example of sympathetic exchange resulting in social action. However, as we shall see, upon his eventual return to freedom in the U.S., Underhill's easily-made promises evaporate in the face of his desire to preserve the very nation-state that engages in this "detestable commerce."

Bathing with the Balm of Mecca

The way that Underhill's racial metamorphosis scene registers two roughly historically successive conceptions of race is restaged during his captivity in North Africa. Exhausted from forced manual labor, Underhill decides to take advantage of a policy particular to North African slavery: Muslim captors frequently would evangelize their bondsmen and even free them if they converted to Islam. Enticed at "[t]he prospect of some alleviation from labour, and perhaps a curiosity to hear what could be said in favour of so detestably ridiculous a system" (127), Underhill agrees to meet with the Mollah. Before the meeting, however, Underhill undergoes a ritual cleansing process, the description of which speaks volumes about his racial status:

> Immediately upon my entering these sacred walls, I was carried to a warm bath, into which I was immediately plunged; while my attendants, as if emulous to cleanse me from all the filth of errour, rubbed me so hard with their hands and flesh brushes, that I verily thought they would have flayed me. While I was relaxed with the tepid, I was suddenly plunged into a contiguous cold bath. I confess I apprehended dangerous consequences, from so sudden a check of such violent perspiration; but I arose from the cold bath highly invigorated.* I was then anointed in all parts, which had been exposed to the sun with a preparation of a gum, called the balm of Mecca. This application excited a very uneasy sensation, similar to the stroke of the water pepper, to which "the liberal shepherds give a grosser name." In twenty four hours, the sun browned cuticle peeled off, and left my face, hands, legs, and neck as fair as a child's of six months old. This balm the Algerine ladies procure at a great expense, and use it as a cosmetic to heighten their beauty. (128-29)

Underhill notes that after his bath, he is dressed in "the clothes of the country" and "my hands and feet were tinged yellow: which colour, they said, denoted purity of intention" (129). After this bizarre whitening-then-yellowing process, Underhill emerges ready to meet the Mollah.

It first appears that Underhill's bath simply remedies the effects of the sun. But in the eighteenth century, a sunburn is never just a sunburn. When describing the movement from the hot to the cold bath, Underhill footnotes that this strange process is also practiced by "the Indian of North America." With a "process founded on similar principles," the Indian "patient . . . was confined in a low hut . . . which had been previously heated by fire" before being carried to "the next stream, and plunged frequently through the ice into the coldest water" (129). "This process," Underhill documents, "ever produced pristine health and vigour" (129). Underhill compares North African and Native American practices, and he does so in the context of the bathing scene that ostensibly impacts racial identity by erasing a sunburn. Thus, this juxtaposition of these two rituals gestures toward a belief in the eighteenth century that Native Americans, upon acquiring a darkened skin tone from exposure to the sun, retained that color long-term and even passed it down to their children.[218]

James Adair, in his widely-read History of the American Indians (1775), articulates the specifics of this theory:

> [T]he parching winds, and hot sun-beams, beating upon their naked bodies, in their various gradations of life, necessarily tarnish their skins with the tawny red colour. Add to this, their constant anointing themselves with bear's oil, or grease, mixt with a certain red root, which, by a peculiar property, is able alone, in a few years time, to produce the Indian colour in those who are white born, and who have even advanced to maturity.

> These metamorphoses I have often seen. . . . We may easily conclude then, what a fixt change of colour such a constant method of life would produce: for the colour being once thoroughly established, nature would, as it were, forget herself, not to beget her own likeness. (67)

Writing to "overthrow" developing theories of the "separate races of man," Adair labors to show how the Indian's "colour" results entirely from environmental factors (66). The sun does not just tint the skin temporarily; here, it permanently alters it. And, as Adair claims, once it is "thoroughly established," it "beget(s)" itself. For many eighteenth-century readers of Tyler's scene, then, Underhill's "sun browned cuticle" would have carried racialized connotations, especially when linked to American Indians. Furthermore, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, "cuticle" denotes the "epidermis" or "scarf-skin." Scarf-skin is the exact term natural historians like Thomas Jefferson and Samuel Stanhope Smith used to attempt to identify the "layer of skin" in which one's color resided.[219]

It is unclear exactly how Underhill becomes white again, and readers are not told for certain if his skin was brown temporarily or not. Underhill first suggests that the scrubbing of the attendants, nearly "flay(ing)" him, exfoliates the top layer of his skin. However, he additionally mentions the "balm of Mecca," which itself seems to help slough off Underhill's outer layer *and also* to whiten it. The balm, a "cosmetic" used by "the Algerine ladies . . . to heighten their beauty" makes Underhill's "face, hands, legs, and neck as fair as a child's" (129).[220] The difference between scrubbing off the outer skin to reveal the white skin beneath or dying the brown skin white may seem like a negligible one. However, its very ambiguity illustrates—like the metaphorical blackening of Underhill's interior—how the novel draws upon two epistemic understandings of racial difference as an outer or an inner phenomenon. Perhaps

Underhill's manual labor in the sun has caused only surface changes to his body; his outer brown cuticle is removed to reveal the white skin beneath it. Or, perchance his exposure to drastically different circumstances (from a moderate to a sweltering climate, from a civilized to a "savage" society) has begun to inflect his racial identity, a process that can only be reversed by dying his skin white (and then yellow). Literary critics such as Philip Gould, Malini Schueller, and Jacob Berman rightly note the "uncannily and significantly protean" nature of Underhill's racial identity in this scene (P. Gould 113), but they generally overlook the undecidability regarding the different epistemologies through which that identity takes form.[221] Like the earlier sympathetic racial metamorphosis scene, Underhill manages to retain his whiteness, but the fixity of his race—or even the epistemological frameworks readers might use to understand it—is anything but definitive.

Unfinished Business

Although the analogies between black slaves in the United States and white slaves in North Africa pepper the text, Underhill's narrative ultimately does not end with a condemnation of the practice of slavery but rather with a celebration of restored white citizenship. Increasingly throughout the novel, Underhill positions the enlightened U.S. citizen as opposite not to the black chattel slave but rather to the white slave held by the Orientalized, Islamic "Other." He asks the reader, "Let those of our fellow citizens, who set at nought the rich blessings of our federal union, go like me to a land of slavery, and they will then learn how to appreciate the value of our free government" (124). In a sense, he himself becomes the contrast by which U.S. citizens realize their own freedom.[222] Describing an altercation with his master, Underhill directly addresses his citizen-readers: "Judge you, my gallant, freeborn fellow citizens, you, who

rejoice daily in our federal strength and independence, what were my sensations. I threw down my spade with disdain, and retired from my work, lowering indignation upon my insulting oppressor" (123). Underhill reacts negatively to his treatment as a slave because he had once lived as a free citizen. As he later states explicitly, his enslavement makes him appreciate and understand American liberty. "A slave myself," he writes, "I have learned to appreciate the blessings of freedom. May my countrymen ever preserve and transmit to their posterity that liberty, which they have bled to obtain" (145).

After lengthy discussions with the Mollah, Underhill refuses religious conversion and emancipation, but a Portuguese rescue mission eventually returns him to freedom. Upon release from Algerian slavery, Underhill realizes his love for his U.S. citizenship and the importance of national union, as the status of his whiteness destabilized in international travel is reinstated once he is safely relocated within U.S. boundaries. Despite what critics such as Benilde Montgomery have claimed, his enslavement does *not* motivate him to challenge the unjust system of institutional slavery ("White Captives"). Indeed, what had become a main concern for Underhill while performing his duties as a slave ship physician drops out of the conclusion of the novel. Describing his return, Underhill writes that "I had been degraded to a slave, and was now advanced to a citizen of the freest country in the universe. I had been lost to my parents, friends, and country; and now found, in the embraces and congratulations of the former, and the rights and protection of the latter, a rich compensation for all past miseries" (225). Underhill has come full circle, from citizen to slave and back again. However, he forgets his promise that if he were "to taste the freedom of my native country," he would dedicate "every moment of [his] life . . . to preaching against this detestable commerce" and to press citizens "to cease to deprive their

fellow creatures of freedom, which their writers, their orators, representatives, senators, and even their constitutions of government, have declared to be the unalienable birth right of man" (106).

Instead, when Underhill lays out his future plans, abolitionist activity is noticeably absent. Underhill decides "[t]o contribute cheerfully to the support of our excellent government, which I have learnt to adore, in schools of despotism; and thus secure to myself the enviable character of an useful physician, a good father and worthy FEDERAL citizen" (225). In the closing sentence of his narrative, Underhill beseeches his fellow Americans, not to abolish slavery, but to consolidate the nation-state. "Our first object is union among ourselves. For to no nation besides the United States can that antient (sic) saying be more emphatically applied; BY UNITING WE STAND, BY DIVIDING WE FALL" (226).

By becoming a federalist, Underhill works through the paradox of American history, as stated years ago by historian Edmund Morgan: in a country founded on liberty and freedom, the citizens continually enslave others (American Slavery). Because of this contradiction, for instance, Thomas Jefferson somehow had to reconcile his dual role as slavemaster and leader of a "free" country. But because Underhill was not a slave owner but a slave himself, this paradox manifests itself and is resolved quite differently. The sympathetic identification between Underhill and the black slaves depicts his internal metaphorical blackening, which the novel closely associates with his enslavement. This experience initially provokes abolitionist sentiment, but ultimately Underhill's time as a slave disciplines him instead to cherish his citizenship and nation-state unity that provides it. In the end, Underhill chooses to advocate for federalism rather than abolitionism to foreclose the possibility of a return to slavery because, for him, a strong nation can provide the "rights and protection" that will ensure he remains "a citizen

of the freest country in the universe" (205). Thus, Underhill's experience of slavery—what enables him to learn this "lesson" about valuing citizenship—is *exactly* what he must repress because it also gives rise to abolitionism and the possibility of sectional conflict. Underhill does *not* "fly to [his] fellow citizens in the southern states" to beg them "for the sake of consistency" to end slavery. On the contrary, he does nothing. Both for Underhill in the novel and, as we know, for the U.S. citizenry in this historical moment, the contradiction of black slavery and its ongoing horrors in the free country were denied, repressed, and forgotten in order to keep the fragile unity of the nation-state—and the citizenship that it ensured—secure. At the novel's conclusion, Underhill focuses on how American citizenship continues to be endangered because, for him, it is threatened not only from outside the nation-state (from North African white slavery) but also from within it (by the potential split between North and South over slavery and by the disagreement between Federalist and Anti-Federalists). Within the logic of the novel, this is one reason why a former slave such as Underhill becomes a federalist instead of an abolitionist.

Because his cross-racial sympathetic identification metaphorically transformed his racial interior and coincided with his enslavement and disenfranchisement at the hands of the Algerines, Underhill disallows that identification and those abolitionist tendencies in order to guarantee his reclaimed white U.S. citizenship. The critical imperative becomes not freeing the black slave but rather denying the slave's problematic status within the nation. Michael Rogin usefully analyzes the way that spectacle and collective amnesia function to allow the American republic to forget certain examples of how race and gender underpin imperial politics. He writes that "[p]olitical amnesia works . . . not simply through burying history but also through representing the return of the repressed" (106). His insight applies here; perhaps it is through Underhill's hyper-representation of racialized slavery that allows him simply to forget black

African-Americans still enslaved in the "united" country he celebrates at the conclusion of the novel.[223] If, as Underhill claims, "[o]ur first object is union among ourselves," The Algerine Captive suggests that sympathetic identification must be reserved for Underhill and his fellow white citizens only. Indeed, object not only signifies Underhill's goal. It also denotes, as in Adam Smith's theory, the correct object with which a subject should sympathetically identify: white citizens, not black slaves.

It seems fitting that this dissertation come to a close, then, with the unfinished business at the conclusion of Tyler's novel. The Algerine Captive charts the move between eighteenth-century and later beliefs about internal versus external, and flexible versus fixed racial differences. It supplies a vantage point from which to reflect on the racial epistemologies at the close of one century and to consider how they were altering at the beginning of the next. However, at the same time, the narrative shows how even as conceptualizations about what constitutes race were beginning to change, as citizens increasingly worried over how they could correctly identify a racial status if its "truth" moved "inside," the centrality of race itself as a national issue and concern remained constant. At the conclusion of this novel, the national blight of American slavery is left to fester. The black slave's status in both the narrative and the nation remains unresolved.

[1] For more on Henry Moss, see Sweet 272-286. See also Melish 137-150; Jordan 521-525; and Dain 1-39.

[2] For more instances of this phenomenon, see Sweet 275-286; Melish 137-150; and Jordan 521-3. The American Philosophical Society, founded by Benjamin Franklin in 1745, was at the center of debates over this type of racial transformation. Here, Samuel Stanhope Smith first presented in 1785 what would become his Essay on the Causes of the Variety of Complexion and Figure in the Human Species, and in 1792 Benjamin Rush introduced his primary arguments later published in the APS Transactions as "Observations Intended to Favour a Supposition That the Black Color (As It Is Called) of the Negroes Is Derived from the Leprosy." Also here in 1784, Dr. John Morgan exhibited two African-American men who had undergone a mysterious "whitening" process, and in 1795 Benjamin Smith Barton discussed the famous Henry Moss.

[3] This notion was certainly a contested one, since debates abounded on how exactly the varieties of humankind formed, but the belief that one's "true" race emanated from her interior was not a foregone conclusion at this historical moment. On the diversity of eighteenth-century racial thought, including the contrasting viewpoints of Thomas Jefferson, Samuel Stanhope Smith, nativist Indians, and others, see Jordan 216-565; Dain 1-39; Sheehan 1-116; Horsman 98-115; Berkhofer 38-44; Pearce 91-100; Shoemaker 125-140; Sweet; Yokota; Dowd, Spirited Resistance; and Richter 179-201.

[4] I use the term "transformable race" to refer to the sense that racialized bodies were mutable. For historical accounts of this type of thinking, see footnote 3. My project builds upon important prior work in early American literary studies. For an excavation of how eighteenth-century Britons variously delineated human difference, see Roxann Wheeler. On eighteenth-century Enlightenment discourses on race, see Eze; Gates, Figures in Black; and Parrish. For how literary texts enact the establishment of the "white nation" on the exclusion of blacks, Natives, and others, see landmark literary studies by Stern, The Plight of Feeling; Nelson, The Word in Black and White and National Manhood; Gardner; and Goddu.

[5] On the role of natural history in "racializing" human difference in the eighteenth century, see Eze 1-10; Roxann Wheeler 1-48; Dain 1-39; Smedley 152-204; Gates, Figures 61-79; Parrish 77-102; and Jordan 216-565.

[6] Linneaus published thirteen editions of his work during 1735-1770. In his 1758 edition, Linnaeus divided the category of *Homo sapien* into *ferus, americanus, europaeus, asiaticus*, *afer*, and *monstrosus*. As several historians of race point out, Linnaeus did not necessarily hierarchize his divisions according to the Great Chain of Being. However, Linnaeus did feel that all mankind developed from an original whiteness into the different "varieties," establishing whiteness as the original standard. Furthermore, according to historian Audrey Smedley, Linnaeus believed that "[s]pecies were distinct primordial forms dating from creation that remained essentially the same throughout all time, but varieties were clusters within a species that had acquired superficial changes in appearance" (163).

[7] For more on the shift from natural history (and its emphasis on the visible surface of the body) to comparative anatomy (and its opening up of the body's interior space) toward the end of the eighteenth century, see Foucault, The Order of Things; and Wiegman 21-42.

[8] As Roxann Wheeler explains, four-stages theory came out of Scottish common sense philosophy. Four-stage theorists looked not at skin color per se but at "socioeconomic factors" in order to establish a hierarchy that privileged white Europeans. These four stages included primitive societies, shepherd-based societies, agriculturally-based societies, and commercial civilization (35). But, as Wheeler points out, while natural history increasingly emphasized the body, four-stages theory was "keeping alive" an emphasis on cultural conceptions. Also, an idea of polygenesis was beginning to emerge, though still a "minority theory" among European intellectuals. Ultimately, these different paradigms could be "mutually reinforcing or at odds" (37). For more on racial epistemologies during the prior early modern period, see Hall.

[9] For more on this nativist movement and the war it helped inspire, see Dowd, Spirited Resistance and War Under Heaven; Richter 179-201; Cave 11-44; and Nash, Red, White, and Black 258-264. Further references to Spirited Resistance will be cited parenthetically as SR; War Under Heaven, as WUH.

[10] I follow Winthrop Jordan's use of the term environmentalism, in the sense that one's surroundings help dictate one's racial characteristics. See Jordan, 286-90, 513-25, and passim. Growing out of natural-historical thought, this clearly connects to a broader sense of environmentalism, where the milieu impacts many aspects of humankind.

[11] The dialogue about the environment's ability to produce change in physical and cultural characteristics took on an increased import due to both a scientific curiosity and an investment in the republican project. As Sweet puts it, "[a]t this time, human nature became central to theories of republican citizenship, the significance of emerging national boundaries, and more subtle ways in which physical appearances might manifest invisible qualities of mind" (274). Jordan elaborates that "[r]epublican scholarship was anxious to advance the study of natural philosophy and especially to explain to hostile or uncomprehending Europeans the nature of men and of nature in America. In an era of nation-building, the character—perhaps even the complexion—of the American population was bound to come under consideration" (264). Jordan also links this with the "question for a national identity": "the prevailing view that Americans were Englishmen remodeled by New World conditions tended to throw the whole question of the Negro's Americanness into the lap of the American environment, where natural philosophers pondered it cautiously and arrived at strange conclusions" (341).

[12] For more on the Jefferson-Buffon debate, see Jordan 475-81; Erkkila, Mixed Bloods 37-61; Sheehan 66-88; Pearce 91-100; Yokota; Dain 14-19, 26-39; Gardner 17-21; and Berkhofer 42-44.

[13] For more on Smith, see Jordan 442-4, 486-8; and Dain 40-80.

[14] See Sheehan 1-116; Horsman 98-115; Pearce 76-104; Berkhofer 38-44; and Merrell. Robert Berkhofer notes how environmentalism became a more common explanation for Indian difference during the Enlightenment: "A minor line of reasoning [prior to the Enlightenment] focused upon the effects of climate and physical environment to explain the varieties of lifestyles, but this hypothesis was not generally accepted until the eighteenth century, when new assumptions about social process provided a revitalized context for applying this old theme in Western thought to Native Americans" (37). Alden Vaughan claims a shift in perception of the Indian from being basically similar to white peoples to being radically different from them happened during the Revolutionary period. See Vaughan, "From White Man to Redskin."

[15] This moment, of course, was "post-colonial" only for the enfranchised white citizens who had declared their independence from England, not enslaved Africans nor indigenous peoples dealing with white encroachment on their lands.

[16] While Roxann Wheeler does point out that "[c]ivil society could also enhance color's mutability" (4), she emphasizes how skin color and civil society operated for the majority of the eighteenth century as two axes (which she notes could be "mutually informing"). In the New World context, society was thought not only to inform rubrics of skin color but also to influence skin color itself.

[17] This might be, in part, because of the influence of both four-stages theory and degeneration theories on Smith and Scottish common sense philosophy on other American environmentalist thinkers. See Roxann Wheeler 251-2; Pearce 82-100; and Dain 23-4, 42-43.

[18] For how racialized identifies form in opposition to each other in later periods, see also Deloria, Huhndorf, Kim, JanMohamed, and Dyer.

[19] As Sandra Gustafson points out in a recent roundtable on "Historicizing Race in Early American Studies," literary critics have studied race in early America since Richard Slotkin's 1973 Regeneration through Violence (309). Major early Americanist works on race include Nelson, The Word in Black and White and National Manhood;

Bassard; J. Brooks, American Lazarus; Gardner; P. Gould; Kazanjian; Shuffelton; and Wyss. However, scholarship has not yet fully considered the substantial impact environmentalist thinking had on early American writings. Although other early Americanists have productively debated the fluidity of categories used to delineate racial difference, here I emphasize discourses about the ostensible mutability of the racialized body itself.

[20] The Connecticut Gazette published the letter as "a Specimen of her Ingenuity," placing the Wheatley-Occom relationship in a debate about "authenticity." The letter appeared in over ten New England newspapers in March and April of that year. See Robinson, "Wheatley and Her Boston" 44. See also Silverman.

[21] Situating Occom's work in this way has its drawbacks; certainly, an execution sermon, natural-historical studies, and nativist visions transcribed on animal skin are not the same "kinds" of texts comprised of identical types of ideas. However, partly because of this very disjuncture and the problem of never translating these ideas into the *exact* same idiom, I suggest we must bring these things into conversation. Necessary to destabilize any one type of "gaze," comparison of these different thought systems results in inevitable incommensurability. My thinking here is informed by Jacques Rancière's notion of "dis-agreement" and Ronald Judy's "unfungible local value." Ed White also approaches this "familiar problem of conceptual translation, whereby Native American concepts are distorted by European parallels," which is "exacerbated by the connotations of each side of the (false) equation" (759). See Rancière; Judy; and White, "Invisible Tagkanysough."

[22] On black and Indian participation in the Great Awakening and its effect on the tensions between Old Lights and New Lights, the evangelical movement at large, and the inability of eighteenth-century evangelists to craft a theological approach to race, see J. Brooks, American Lazarus 21-49.

[23] The full-length studies by William DeLoss Love and Harold Blodgett are generally considered to be the most definitive—if at times problematically antiquated—Occom biographies. For more on Occom's life, see Peyer 54-116; J. Brooks, "Indian World" and American Lazarus 51-63; Wyss 123-53; Gustafson, Eloquence 90-101; Weaver 50-53; and Ruoff.

[24] For more on Occom's trip to Iroquoia, see L. Brooks.

[25] See footnote 9.

[26] Religion was one of many factors that led to Pontiac's War. For more on the various influences of the rebellion, see Dowd, War Under Heaven.

[27] The Iroquois Confederacy, or Six Nations, consisted of the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca, and Tuscarora tribes. Different tribes had various levels and kinds of active involvement in the conflict. For instance, an Onondaga "received revelation critical of the Anglo-Americans and laced with separation theology on the eve of Pontiac's War," and Senecas actually took part in the violent uprising in 1763 (SR 35). Eventually the rest of the generally accommodationist Iroquois tribes subdued the more militant and nativist-leaning Seneca (SR 37). Dowd elsewhere notes that "[b]y the spring of 1763 Neolin had achieved intertribal influence, even among the Six Nations. Genesee Senecas attended to his message, only to be chided by league authorities for admiring 'Wizards'" (WUH 101). While the more eastwardly-located Oneidas didn't actively engage in the conflict, they were well-aware of its existence.

[28] Dowd writes that the "chill of terror went beyond the backcountry" to far east areas like Philadelphia and Orange County, New York, where the sound of gunfire from colonial hunters inadvertently caused almost five hundred families to flea the area in fear of Indian attack. Also, rumors of an Iroquois Confederacy uprising pervaded New York. See Dowd, WUH 142-47. Eventually, while the majority of the violence was quelled by the British military response, Pontiac continued to struggle against the British for two more years. See Nash, Red, White, and Black 262-3.

[29] A November 25, 1761, letter to Rev. George Whitefield from Occom's teacher, Eleazar Wheelock, details that "[n]umbers from distant nations came to hear [Occom], and some seemed really desirous to understand and know the truths which most nearly concerned them" (qtd. in Love 92). In a September 16, 1762, letter to Whitefield, Wheelock writes that "[t]he Boys and Girls which I expected from Onoyada were detained by their Parents on account of a Rumor, & Suspicion of War just commencing between them and the Nations back of them and in such a case they said they did not chuse to have their Children at such a distance from them, but perhaps they were Suspicious that they should be obliged to Joyn those Nations against the English." Wheelock also related that Occom had also recently written him that "he was apprehensive he must return before the Time appointed—that he lived in fear of being killd, tho' the Indians had promised him in case a war should break out, they would send him under a Sufficient Guard, down as far as the English Settlements" (qtd. in Love 96). Although it is unclear whether Occom's fears were fueled by the Six Nations' involvement in the Seven Years' War or outbreaks of the nativist movement, his concerns demonstrate his knowledge about Oneida intertribal affairs.

[30] While we lack an extant document where Occom records an encounter with nativism, his writings demonstrate familiarity with indigenous tribal religions and customs. See "Account" (50), "When He Drowned" (227), and Journal 5 (263). He is also aware of intertribal political affairs in New York and the Ohio Valley. See Journal 4 (261-2) and letter to Wheelock (67). See also L. Brooks on Occom's travels among the Six Nations. Interestingly, Occom's beliefs on land rights converged somewhat with that of the nativists. When he returned to Mohegan, he got involved in the struggle to secure their tribal land from the British government. For more on what is sometimes known as the "Mason Controversy," see Love 119-29; Peyer 72-74; and Blodgett 74-77.

[31] When Occom visited England, Europeans were fascinated with "'Red Indians'" (Szasz, Introduction xxi). Occom preached sermons to packed churches, was introduced to the Earl of Dartmouth and the Countess of Huntingdon by George Whitefield, and was shown about Court. Occom even had a limited engagement with the King. His visit was so well known, in fact, that Occom records in his diary that "—this Evening I heard, the Stage Players, had been Mimicking of me in their Plays" (Journal 6, 272). For more on the politics of "playing Indian" in a variety of contexts, see Deloria and Roach. By the time he and fellow traveler Nathaniel Whitaker returned home, Occom had raised over £12,000 for Wheelock and had become a transatlantic religious figure. For more on Occom's trip to England, see Richardson. See also Love 130-151.

[32] If this transformation did not happen in one's lifetime, it was imagined to occur in the afterlife. As Sweet has shown, eighteenth-century New England whites had contradictory views about whether religious conversion would cause racial transformation, holding a deep ambivalence about how Native Americans and Africans might or might not "become" white—culturally, religiously, and physically. As more people of color became members of the church, they were increasingly and paradoxically marked as different because white colonists "learned to draw new lines of difference" (106), erasing "ethnic" differences, but inventing "racial" identities (106). Sweet details how the conversion of Indians and blacks ironically caused settlers to draw "new lines of exclusion," supplanting a "potentially *mutable* form of difference—culture—with the more stubborn, essentialist notion of race" (110; 108). While his important point about how Christian conversion reinforced racial difference is well-taken, Sweet overemphasizes the supposed "essentialism" of race—a highly disputable notion in this time period. Nevertheless, he crucially articulates that Christianity did not necessarily establish equality within New England culture, arguing that the more Occom and Wheatley became acculturated to British culture, the more they were scripted as exceptions to the Indian and African-American rule. See Sweet 102-44.

[33] The Commissioners also had opposed Occom's trip to England partly because they had supported Occom's education and wanted more credit for it (Love 134).

[34] Bernd Peyer claims that "Occom undoubtedly had every intention of reaching the general public with his autobiographical sketch" because it is written in a twenty-six page notebook separate from his other journals, contains genre traits of salvationist literature, is subdivided into sections, and has been edited. Peyer suspects that Occom's angry diatribe kept Wheelock and the missionary societies from circulating it (Tutor'd Mind 89-90). The sketch was first published as "A Short Narrative of My Life" in Peyer's 1982 anthology, The Elders Wrote.

[35] Joanna Brooks, however, convincingly argues that the majority of white eighteenth-century ministers actually "failed to develop a clear theological outlook on race or to enlarge on the potentially progressive energies of revivalism" (American Lazarus 24).

[36] In detailing his early life and conversion, Occom dwells very little on his emotional or intellectual response to missionaries' messages. His record of conversion avers that "it pleased the Ld, as I humbly hope, to Bless and Accompany ^with^ Divine Influences, to the Conviction and Saving Conversion of a Number of us; Amongst which, I was one that was Imprest with the things, ~~Which~~ we had heard" (53). By noting his reaction with the word "Imprest," Occom renders the effect that the sermons had on him as a physical change stamped or imprinted upon him *and* foreshadows how his body would be put into service for the Lord. See also Elrod on how Occom's narrative differs from other Great Awakening spiritual autobiographies by focusing "on the material circumstances resulting from the racist treatment he experienced" rather than "the interior self in its spiritual progression" by comparing it to Jonathan Edwards' "Personal Narrative" (136).

[37] Elrod and Keely McCarthy read Occom's insertion "(I speak like a fool, but I am Constrained)" as an allusion to Paul's similar comment in his second letter to the Corinthians that "I speak as a fool" (II Corinthians 11:23). Dana Nelson links it to the "structural hegemony of colonialism" that will always render Occom "foolish" precisely because he is "constrained" within that system. See Elrod 141-2; McCarthy 364; and Nelson, "Racial Self" 58-59.

[38] Almost all critical interpretations of Occom's piece read this final paragraph by pointing out the tension created by what Occom writes he "*must* Say" as opposed to what he is "*ready* to Say." See Elrod 143; McCarthy 265; Gustafson, Eloquence 96-97; and D. Murray 54. On the "communitism" of this paragraph, see Weaver 52.

[39] The Oxford English Dictionary gives one meaning of "so": "Representing a word or phrase already employed: Of that nature or description; of or in that condition, etc." Critical accounts that credit Occom's use of "poor" here to a critique of colonial missions overlook Occom's emphasis on God's involvement in the making of the "poor Indian." Nelson sees Occom "asking his readers to see the 'poor Indian' as the *result* of the colonial missionary project," showing how the project and the economic structure needs these Indians "for their own furtherance" (61). Laura Stevens claims that colonial missionary texts used the word "poor" to denote a "figure worthy of pity" in describing Indians to elicit a sympathetic response from British readers that they could then exploit; thus, the idea of the "poor Indian" became a representation peddled by these colonial societies in order to underwrite their own missions. Stevens contends that Occom uses the term ironically, showing not his own lack of religion and culture to be solved by missionary efforts but rather "revealing the abysmal treatment that such pity rationalized." She states that "[a]s he revised the trope of the 'poor Indian' to expose the hypocrisy of his would-be benefactors, Occom revealed the processes by which pity, under the auspices of the word poor, can be linked to the very sorts of treatment that would seem to inspire it in the first place" (21). Both these readings neglect how Occom here focuses not on the commissioners, but rather on God and how he "makes" the Indian. I do agree with Stevens that Occom ironizes the phrase "poor Indian" as one who deserves pity from the missionaries themselves because it begs the question of what he means when he claims that God has made him that way. The emphasis returns to how the missionaries define the condition of the "poor Indian" as God's creation. If the "poor Indian" is one who has not yet and therefore needs to receive the missionary society's benevolence for conversion, then that Indian must have shared a creation with the white man. The opposite view—that he was created separately and necessitated his own religion—would clearly undermine the very missionary project and religious belief system on which it is based.

[40] McCarthy makes a somewhat similar argument about "make" by claiming that "'I did not make my self so' is not a confession bemoaning his state. He shows that his Indianness is a problem only because whites make it so." However, McCarthy emphasizes Occom as an "object of [white] prejudice" and his "position as 'despised'" rather than his creation (366). Mike Elliott argues a similar point: "In his final sentence, Occom declares, 'I did not make my self so.' Yet his liminal position required him to make and remake himself continually in order to fashion his multiplicity into a permanent presence" (249). Both Elliott and McCarthy read "make my self so" in a Franklinian, self-made sense, pointing out how the narrative testifies to the way Occom actually did "make" himself in a certain way. In contrast, I read "make my self so" in a creationism sense. For another reading that considers God's role in this "making," see Elrod 146.

[41] According to the Oxford English Dictionary, difference contains both senses. First, it can mean "[a] discrimination or distinction viewed as conceived by the subject rather than as existing in the objects. Now only in phr. *to make a difference*: to distinguish, discriminate, act or treat differently." It also can mean "[t]he condition, quality, or fact of being different, or not the same in quality or in essence; dissimilarity, distinction, diversity; the relation of non-agreement or non-identity *between* two or more things, disagreement." My reading here is influenced by Foucault's claim that power "produces reality[,] . . . domains of objects[,] and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production" (194). As the body is subjected to regimes of power, signs are produced, read, and interpreted. Foucault writes that "the examination is the technique by which power, instead of emitting the signs of its potency, instead of imposing its mark on its subjects, holds them in a mechanism of objectification. In this space of domination, disciplinary power manifests its potency, essentially, by arranging objects. The examination is, as it were, the ceremony of this objectification" (187). See Foucault, Discipline and Punish. I am grateful to Jay Grossman for his insight into how Foucauldian notions of power operate within Puritan cultures, especially during the infamous witch trial examinations.

[42] Occom's narrative implies that the "difference" between whites and Indians could be accounted for by two mutually exclusive theses. On the one hand, following the monogenetic story recently undergirded by natural philosophy, the Indian has transformed over time from his shared Adamic creation with whites to his current state. In this view, environmental factors produce the "difference" between Indians and whites, which is then made to signify in a certain way. In other words, this distinction is that which the Boston Commissioners themselves "make," not an inherent one placed there by God. On the other hand, if the Indian body is unable to metamorphose, then this "difference" is God-made; more closely aligned with radical nativist beliefs, this stance contradicts the Edenic creation story. By linking missionary officials' beliefs about the status of the Indian body to Christian epistemology, Occom makes it an expressly *spiritual* issue: if the commissioners discount the Edenic creation story (and how it accounts for difference between the varieties of men), then they accept as true a racial epistemology utterly irreconcilable to Biblical authority.

[43] Possibly because it chastised Indian drinking, the printed version was wildly popular with both Native and white readers and appeared in nineteen different editions in thirty-five years (Love 174-5), making Occom one of the most published authors in 1771-80 (Colonial 518). As it turns out, Occom delivered what is considered to be a fairly standard execution sermon. Ronald Bosco outlines the typical traits of the execution sermon in colonial New England and describes them as a "primary vehicle for social comment even more than for doctrinal investigation" (162). Most scholars who examine the sermon's text comment upon either the degree to which Occom reworks traditional notions of Protestant religion to produce a distinctive Indian Christianity or how he criticizes various colonial practices of white society. A notable exception is Sandra Gustafson, who argues that Occom's particular use of the "performance semiotic of speech and text" revises notions about the "'savage' speaker." See Bosco; and Gustafson, Eloquence 90-101.

[44] According to Chamberlain, the manuscript originally read: "And considering that we are of the same nation and tribe," with "and tribe" marked through. Chamberlain reads this as proof that Moses Paul was not Mohegan, despite some evidence to the contrary. Furthermore, it indicates a pan-Indian identity to which Paul refers, even if he and Occom are of different tribes. See Chamberlain 445.

[45] The August 21, 1772, Connecticut Journal and the New-Haven Post-Boy had advertised that "[t]he Rev. Samson Occom, (one of the Mohegan Tribe of Indians) has engaged to deliver a Discourse previous to the execution of Moses Paul" (3). Paul might have been encouraged by William Samuel Johnson, Paul's appeal lawyer, who probably knew of Occom from his involvement in Mohegan land claims. Furthermore, a letter from Occom's associate, Mohegan Joseph Johnson, might have influenced him. The letter, published April 1772, is considered the first publication by a North American Indian; Occom's sermon was second. Preaching an execution sermon was a prestigious honor; further, Chamberlain claims, the minister chosen for this particularly notorious occasion "could expect a congregation of several thousand in attendance and . . . an immediate and popular publication" (444). See Chamberlain 442-45.

[46] For more on the events of this day, see Chamberlain; Peyer 91-95; Blodgett 139-44; Love 169-74; and Gustafson, Eloquence 97-101.

[47] For how the term race changed during the eighteenth century, see Hudson; and Roxann Wheeler 31.

[48] Occom notes in his preface that "[i]t was a stormy and very uncomfortable day, when the following discourse was delivered, and about one half of it was not delivered, as it was written, and now it is a little altered and enlarged in some places." As imperfect a "true record" of the "original" sermon the printed edition may be, I nevertheless want to consider it within the context of its actual delivery, given that the transcript of the first performance is unrecoverable.

[49] Several scholars note Occom's stress on the universality of sin. See Stevens 174; Elliott 234; Gustafson, Eloquence 97-98; Chamberlain 448; and Ruoff 78-79.

[50] Here I purposefully use the masculine pronoun. Occom seems to consider the abstracted Native American as inherently male. In one of the few times that he mentions women in the sermon, he chastises specifically female drinking practices.

[51] Elliott makes a similar point about how Occom uses these terms to describe "the lowly state of 'man'" (233).

[52] Like Occom, Paul was what historian Margaret Szasz would term a "cultural intermediary" ("Samson Occom," 61). The Jewish Paul grew up a Roman citizen in Greek culture. Known as Saul and a member of the strict Pharisee sect, he brutally persecuted Jews who converted to Christianity until his own Christian conversion. He then went by the Greek name Paul and was charged to preach specifically to the gentiles. Jews often considered the non-Jewish gentiles to be inferior, and other proselytizing apostles like Peter had previously ignored them. Both Paul and Occom are located in a conflicted position among contentious groups. Given tensions between gentiles and Jews, Paul's ministry required delicate negotiation. For other ways that Occom employs Pauline theology in his writing, see McCarthy 364; Elrod 141-42; J. Brooks, American Lazarus 72; and Gustafson, Eloquence 99-100.

[53] Paul uses "according to the flesh" to differentiate Abraham ("our father, as pertaining to the flesh" Romans 4:1) from, one assumes, God, the spiritual father. Paul's expression connotes the kinship among those with Jewish heritage, which was still not to be superseded by the relationship with the spiritual Father and brethren.

[54] Much of Paul's letter deals with the sensitive issue of how the message of God's redemption is directed "to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16). In his letter, Paul walks a delicate line: God's message, intended first for God's chosen people, also is meant to invite everyone to join the metaphysical body of Christ. Paul continually emphasizes the openness of God's message: "[G]lory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God" (Romans 2:10-11). Paul and Occom both stress the universal availability of God's kingdom but speak to different constituencies within that group. As Occom does with his Indian auditors, Paul regrets some of his fellow Jews' specific resistance to Christian conversion. In addition, Paul's consideration of physicality and spirituality inflects how he uses the flesh metaphor to talk about nationality and race. In Romans 8, Paul contrasts living life according to the spirit and not by way of the flesh; he focuses on spiritual concerns rather than those of the flesh, which is primarily linked to sinful nature. However, this sense of a sinful flesh contrasts sharply with Paul's later use of the body to highlight his Jewish heritage and to lament the way Jews were not converting to Christianity. Here, a tension exists in the way fleshy materiality works in religion. On the one hand, Paul aligns it with a sinful nature, but on the other, he uses it to identify specifically with Jews. The flesh is something that should be denied and also something that constitutes the relations among people. Although "St. Paul" himself shows up in Occom's sermon as an example of living "the life of the soul," Occom draws on Paul's corporeal metaphors to denote his kinship to other Natives.

[55] Occom's bodily metaphorics resonate in multiple racialized discourses even at this date. Although Pontiac's rebellion had not realized the goals he had set for it, nativist thinking still circulated in Indian country. In fact, the

execution took place at the height of Shawnee nativism. See Dowd, SR 41. Furthermore, because Moses Paul served the Connecticut Regiment that fought against Pontiac's forces (Chamberlain 419), he himself probably would have been familiar with nativist beliefs.

[56] Occom often uses the Christian creation story to talk about race. He challenges Christian slaveholders that "if you can prove it from the Bible that Negroes are not the Race of Adam, then you may keep them as Slaves. Otherwise you have no more right to keep them as slaves as they have to keep you as Slaves" (206). See "Thou Shalt Love Thy Neighbor." In the sermon "To all the Indians in this Boundless Continent," Occom details the Adam and Eve creation story. This sermon also signals simultaneously the special relation Natives have among themselves and the universality shared among all humans. Occom addresses it to "all the Indians" . . . "my Brethren the Bone of my Bone and Flesh of my Flesh" (196). He claims the lineage of all humankind to Adam and Eve, "this one man and woman, is the Father and Mother of all Nations of the Whole World" (197).

[57] Other scholars also note Occom's emphasis on alcohol's role in influencing Indian behavior. See Elliott 235; Gustafson, Eloquence 97; and Stevens 175.

[58] Occom refigures humankind's "degeneration" as an effect of sin through his sermonic ouerve. See "Saying What Ye Think of Christ" (175); "Cry Aloud, Spare Not I" (211); and "Cry Aloud, Spare Not II" (215).

[59] See Peyer 95; Stevens 176; D. Murray 47; Weaver 53; and Elliott 235.

[60] For more on the theatricality of executions, see Conquergood.

[61] This was "the first portrait of a black with a name to be painted in America" (Kaplan 178). Most Wheatley scholars conjecture that Scipio Moorhead (probable subject of Wheatley's poem "To S.M. a young African Painter, on feeing his Works"), artist and black servant to Rev. John Moorhead (the subject of "An ELEGY, To Miss. Mary Moorhead, on the DEATH of her Father, *The Rev. Mr.* JOHN MOORHEAD"), drew Wheatley's likeness in Boston. Wheatley then transported it with her when she traveled to England in May, 1773 (Robinson, "Wheatley and Her Boston" 31-33). For more on black author frontispiece portraits, specifically their link to notions of authenticity, see Casmier-Paz.

[62] For more on Wheatley's engagement with sentiment, see Ellison 114-22. On mourning and Wheatley's elegies, see Cavitch 186-93; and Wertheimer 62-78.

[63] Franke attributes the selection of the pose to the Countess; the similarity between the Wheatley portrait and one of Selina herself "suggests that the Countess wanted to present Wheatley as her black double" (227). However, since we lack conclusive evidence, one could just as likely hypothesize that perhaps Wheatley herself suggested the pose to Scipio Moorhead or that it resulted as a collaboration between them. For more on natural-historical theories, including that about exposure to the sun, see Roxann Wheeler 1-48; Dain 1-39; Smedley 152-204; Gates, Figures 61-79; Parrish 77-102; and Jordan 216-565.

[64] Eric Slauter attributes the review to Dr. John Langhore. See Slauter 91.

[65] Mason points out that "[t]his was a major review that month (not in the 'Monthly Catalogue'), approximately one and one-half pages long," in a crucially important review magazine of the day. See Mason, "On the Reputation" 25.

[66] While the notion about the sun's influence on blackness dates back to the Hebrew Bible, in eighteenth-century natural philosophy, it accrued a "scientific" validity (Dain 6-7), used by some natural historians to account for the development of human difference since the Edenic creation. See also Hall on the mobilization of this idea in early modern England.

[67] Roxann Wheeler explains that humoral/climate theory underwent a shift between ancient writers in the Mediterranean region and seventeenth- and eighteenth-century British writers. Ancient thought believed that

southern zones like Africa produced "intellectual and creative people. Their black complexions signified this array of qualities" (23). In this schema, white Britons were considered "dull-witted" laborers who excelled in the mechanical and manual arts. Peoples in the Mediterranean region enjoyed the perfect mix of the two. In later British writing, either the northern regions no longer had these negative connotations *or* Britain itself was conceived as part of the temperate zone. Additionally, Africans—still blackened by the sun—were considered to be lazy and enfeebled. See Roxann Wheeler 21-28.

[68] On the critical history of discussing Wheatley's alleged imitation versus ironic appropriation, see Slauter 104-5. Furthermore, this analysis moves away from the seemingly pervasive "assimilative versus subversive" critical dichotomy characterizing much Wheatley scholarship. On the debate over Wheatley's accommodation versus subversion, see Reising 76-84; Kendrick, "Re-membering America;" and Gates, Trials.

[69] Scholars have attributed Wheatley's sun metaphorics to Christian imagery, African sun worship, classical mythology, or Enlightenment philosophy. Grimstead notes that "Africa was also the sun's chosen residence . . . and eighteenth-century science interpreted dark skins as direct reflection of people's closeness to the sun" (364), although he does not use this connection to read her poetry. For views on Wheatley's sun imagery, see Shields, "Phillis Wheatley's Use of Classicism;" Erkkila, Mixed Bloods 77-88; Reising 73-115; Robinson, "Wheatley and Her Boston;" and Jennings.

[70] Jefferson, well-versed in these theories, utterly misses Wheatley's implication that the sun makes her black *and* poetic. Gates chronicles how scientists debated the "Negro's" intelligence and pointed to Wheatley's poetry as evidence. See Jefferson, Notes 189; and Gates, Figures 61-79.

[71] Reading Wheatley's poetry in this way provides new insight into how she transvalues light/dark metaphorics. Where her readers in the past have either attributed her sometimes negative connotations attached to "dark" metaphors to a Christian and/or Enlightenment tradition, I argue that it gives us insight into her particular conception of life as a black poet. Important exceptions are Robert Kendrick and Russell Reising. Reising argues that Wheatley's "trafficking in whiteness" periodically reverses traditional values of black and white. See Reising 73-115. Kendrick sees this reversal in terms of signifying(g) and the sublime. See also Kendrick "Snatching a Laurel" and "Re-membering America."

[72] On the relation between slavery and the gothic, see Goddu.

[73] Also leader of the nine muses, Apollo has often been associated with poetic inspiration. This is particularly so in Ovid's Metamorphosis, where his pursuit of Daphne leads to her transformation into the laurel tree, which holds symbolic meaning of poetic genius.

[74] Shields calls Wheatley's sun imagery "the central image pattern of her entire body of work" ("Classicism" 102-3). In "Phillis Wheatley's Struggle for Freedom in Her Poetry and Prose," Shields quantifies his earlier claim: "The Latin name for dawn, 'Aurora,' appears nine times in Wheatley's poetry; she repeats the Greek names for the sun, 'Apollo' and 'Phoebus,' seven and twelve times, respectively, and uses the Latin 'Sol' twice. The word 'sun,' a classical name for it, or such a phrase as 'light of day' occurs in almost all of her fifty-five extant poems. Such regularity is certainly unusual if not unique in the work of poets from any age" (241).

[75] For more on the significance of Terence, see Bennett.

[76] See for instance Erkkila, Mixed Bloods 82; Foster 40; Franke 245-46; Bennett 68; Warson; and Shields, "Subversion."

[77] Shields also notes the presence of Apollo and Aurora here. See Shields, "Classicism" 100.

[78] This very question has prompted a number of different scholarly explanations. Reising claims it is the overpowering of imagination by the impact of slavery, figured in Wheatley's poem as the winter. Erkkila calls it

"the damp and chill of white northern oppression" (86). For a related reading, see Shields, American Aeneas 245. Like me, Franke has a more literal reading; she attributes the sudden "return to a somber mood" to melancholy, perhaps caused by the cold weather (244). Ellison locates it in Atlantic slavery. See Reising 73-115; Erkkila, Mixed Bloods; Franke; and Ellison 114-22.

[79] For instance, in "To the Rev. Dr. THOMAS AMORY," Wheatley accounts for God's existence by citing his influence on shaping the human form and setting the planets in their courses: "As if the clay without the potter's aid / Should rise in various forms, and shapes self-made, / Or worlds above with orb o'er orb profound / Self-mov'd could run the everlasting round" (17-20). Although it is unclear whether Wheatley studied the works of her contemporaneous scientists, many of them most certainly read hers, and she engaged them in oblique ways. Most famously, Thomas Jefferson cited her in his scientific "assertion only" that whites may have enjoyed a separate creation from blacks (Notes 189), and Gilbert Imlay responds to Jefferson via recourse to Wheatley in his scientific rebuttal (Mason, "Reputation" 30). Benjamin Franklin read Wheatley's works and visited her while she was in London (Robinson, "Phillis Wheatley and Her Boston" 36), and Wheatley's 1779 proposals for her second collection of poems shows that she planned to dedicate the volume to him (Robinson, "Phillis Wheatley and Her Boston" 56). Benjamin Rush cited her in his 1773 Address to the Inhabitants of British Settlements in America, upon Slave Keeping, and Robinson suggests that Wheatley's husband, John Peters, sold her manuscripts to Rush's son James Rush, who had an avid interest in Africa-Americana (Robinson, "Phillis Wheatley and Her Boston" 66). In the concluding pieces of Poems, "A REBUS, by *I.B*." and "An ANSWER to the *Rebus*, by the Author of these POEMS," Wheatley most likely engages with James Bowdoin, a scientist and politician, and one of the signatories of Poems' infamous prefatory "Attestation" (Shuffelton 78; Gates, Trials 11-12). Voltaire cited Wheatley in 1774 to counter Baron Constant de Rebecq's claim that there was so such thing as a black poet (Carretta, Introduction, Wheatley xv), and Johan Blumenbach also "wrote favorably of her poems" (Robinson, Introduction 1). Lastly, in one of her most famous poems addressed "To the University of CAMBRIDGE, in NEW-ENGLAND," Wheatley admonishes the students, who she calls "ye sons of science" (10) and "Ye blooming plants of human race divine" (29), which Dain links to "natural classification" (8).

[80] See Gates, Figures 61-79; McBride 103-119; Erkkila, Mixed Bloods 77-88; Scheik; Bennett; Kendrick, "Re-membering America;" O'Neal; Watson; Levernier; Balkun; and Reising 73-115. See also Bassard, who argues that Wheatley's ventriloquism of a white-centered viewpoint about Africans in the poem's sixth line shows her understanding of white viewpoints of blackness (39).

[81] Kendrick makes a similar observation, calling Wheatley's use of "die" in "Works of PROVIDENCE" a "reply of sorts to the voice in 'On Being Brought from Africa to America . . . '" ("Re-membering America" 85).

[82] Wheatley's religious theorization of blackness challenges other theological explanations, such as the story of Ham. Citing how God's cursed Ham when he looked upon his father Moses' nakedness, some slave apologists interpreted the curse of Ham to be a justification for slavery. Abolitionists argued that this curse had no link to blackness. For more on Ham, see , see Smedley 154, 212, 224; Gossett 5; and Dain 126-7.

[83] Shields sees Wheatley's use of sun imagery here as a synthesis of classical allusions, Christian elements, and aspects of African sun worship. Jennings contends that Wheatley's sun imagery "reach(es) far back into ancient Africa" (74). See Shields, "Classicism;" and Jennings.

[84] For a related point, see Kendrick, "Re-membering America" 85. Grimstead notes the "ideal . . . Newtonian balance, specifically tied to enough but not too much sun" (367).

[85] Rev. George Whitefield himself partially justified slavery by his belief that Africans were more able "to support the hot sun" (Willard 247; 255). For more on Wheatley and Whitefield's ownership of slaves, see Willard.

[86] Similarly, in a cluster of four poems ostensibly on "health" ("ODE to NEPTUNE. On Mrs. W—'s Voyage to England," "To a LADY on her coming to North-America with her Son, for the Recovery of her Health," "To a GENTLEMAN on his Voyage to *Great-Britain* for the Recovery of his Health," and "A Farewel to AMERICA. To

Mrs. S.W."), Wheatley uses the topic of slavery to rework the strand of environmentalist thought that argued that certain climates were better for one's health. In this hierarchy, the North American climate was better than tropical regions, while Europe's climate was considered best. For how these poems enable Wheatley to reinscribe the slave trade, see Bassard 47-57. For how the 1772 Somerset decision (understood by many to undermine slavery by denying slaveowners the right to remove their slaves to the colonies with them) resulted in Wheatley's association of London with restorative health and Jamaica with the disease of slavery, see Carretta, Introduction, Wheatley xxix-xxxi. See also Shields "Subversion of Classical Stylistics;" and Wilcox.

[87] Reising reads this Aurora figure as a reference to Susanna Wheatley, who paraded Wheatley throughout polite Boston, requesting that her slave poet perform for her circle of female friends and public authority figures. See Reising 103. He associates the sun with whiteness, which "obliterates the . . . African American poet who would aspire to linguistic and cultural competence in an environment where she is quite clearly marginalized" (104). See also Grimstead on the poem's "mutability of light and dark" (368).

[88] For a reading that links this to the sublime, see Kendrick "Snatching a Laurel." Shields links the poem to Africa (American Aeneas 238-9).

[89] Scholars contend that Wheatley most likely saw William Wollett's engraving of Richard Wilson's *Niobe* (Slauter 114).

[90] Wheatley interpolates this epic simile (Shields, "Classicism" 109); Ovid did not relate the daughters' beauty to the productions of the sun.

[91] Scholars conjecture that the final stanza could be by Mary Wheatley or perhaps that Nathanial Wheatley, Joseph Sewall, Samuel Cooper, or Mather Byles influenced it (Shields, American Aeneas 294). Whoever might have written this final stanza, it leads one to believe that part of the anxiety around Wheatley's writing was not whether she had the ability to write it but that she composed it *alone*. In other words, in addition to "judging" Wheatley to be "qualified to write them," the prefatory Attestation also mediates worries over miscegenetic authorial collaboration and, perhaps, fears over the female collaboration of Susanna and Phillis.

[92] Biographical work on Wheatley's writing career includes Vincent Carretta, Introduction, Wheatley; Foster 50-52; Grimstead; Robinson, "Wheatley and Her Boston;" and Shields, "Phillis Wheatley's Struggle." For the most thorough history of the publication of Poems and Susanna's intimate involvement in this process, see Robinson, "Wheatley and Her Boston" and "On Phillis Wheatley's Poetry."

[93] Occom made his critique of slave-holding ministers in a 1774 letter to Wheatley. According to Robinson, in 1773, Occom had stayed in the Wheatley household while he was the guest speaker at John Moorhead's Presbyterian Church. This is the same John Moorhead to whom Scipio Moorhead was a black servant. See Robinson, "Wheatley and Her Boston" 13, 31.

[94] She also deploys light and dark metaphors here that many Christians used to symbolize the presence and absence of a Christian God, respectively. Wheatley does so to argue that black slaves who enjoy the "religious Liberty" to convert to Christianity should also experience "civil Liberty."

[95] Even a sense of "red" identity resulted in various ways from colonial contact. See Dowd 23-46; Richter 179-87; and Shoemaker 126-40.

[96] This specific form of nativist thought among the Ohio Valley Indians, of course, does not begin to account for the distinctive origin stories of numbers of Native American tribes.

[97] For more on Jefferson's and Franklin's respective responses to the degeneration controversy, see Chinard; I. Cohen 72-88; and Waldstreicher 214-6. Jim Egan argues that Franklin's preface to Alexander Dalrymple's 1771 A Plan for Benefiting the New Zealanders responds to "America's supposed degeneracy as an attempt to fashion a

theory of identity rather than a theory of *American* identity" (207). Egan claims that Franklin "substitutes 'exchange' for 'climate' as the determining factor in collective identity" (207). See Egan. For how Franklin portrays Native Americans in terms of four-stages theory in "Remarks Concerning the Savages of North America," see Mulford, "Commerce of Civility."

[98] One of these "positive affirmations" could include Franklin's "Information to Those Who Would Remove to America," a document (written in 1782 and published the same year Franklin wrote the second section of his Autobiography) that strives to correct "mistaken Ideas & Expectations of what is to be obtained [in America]" (235). The essay claims that "[f]rom the salubrity of the Air, the Healthiness of the Climate, the Plenty of good Provisions, and the Encouragement to early Marriages, by the certainty of Subsistance in cultivating the Earth, the Increase of Inhabitants by natural Generation is very rapid in America, and becomes still more so by the Accession of Strangers" (238). While not a direct reply to degenerationists' claims like Jefferson's contemporaneous Notes, Franklin's essay and his famous dinner at Passy indicate the subtlety of his involvement with these debates.

[99] Historian Joyce Chaplin claims that over the course of his life, Franklin "never made up his mind about human difference" (83). Chaplin charts Franklin's developing thought on these issues, claiming that he at times asserted that all humans were inherently the same, while at others he conjectured that Indians' bodies were fundamentally different from the white man's. However, later in life he began to think that difference was not inherent or reflected a natural inferiority. See 82-83; 180-2. David Waldstreicher emphasizes the strategic nature of shifts in Franklin's views on slavery and black capacity for achievement. See 192-209.

[100] The Autobiography, 580. Further references to The Autobiography will be cited parenthetically as A.

[101] Because of his aversion to violence inflicted on living things, Tryon was also anti-slavery when few people were, although, as Chaplin points out, "it took time for Tryon's larger moral program to surface in any of Franklin's thinking" (75). See also Waldstreicher 66-7.

[102] "The wonderful and wise Creator," Tryon writes, "hath endued every Country and Climate with such a permanent Nature, even in the beginning, as bring forth *Herbs*, *Fruits* and *Grains*, which are proper and most agreeable to the Natures and Constitutions of the People born in that place" (161).

[103] This document itself eventually influenced Buffon to alter his assumptions about "the climate and soil of America" (Fender 340; Chinard 36).

[104] Here, "Blacks and Tawneys" are Africans, and "Red" means Native American. For more on the racial logics of this Franklin essay, see Waldstreicher 136-139; Fender; and Morgan, Franklin 72-80.

[105] This happened to be the same year that Jefferson brought his Notes manuscript with him to Paris for private circulation (Cohen 73) and that Dr. John Morgan displayed at the American Philosophical Society two African-American men who were undergoing a mysterious "whitening" process (Jordan 521-2).

[106] As Jean Feerick points out, Hector Boetius' "Description of Scotland," "charts a genealogical break stemming from bad diet and bad daily practice: the Scots through proximity to their English ancestors came to 'learne also their manners,' and so to lose themselves" (49-50). For Boetius, both dietary and sexual abstinence "produced bodies that are 'more hard of constitution . . . to beare off the cold blasts, to watch better, and absteine long,' and making them 'bold, nimble, and thereto more skilfull in the warres'" (49). Several of these histories also displayed a high suspicion of "leisured activities" instead of work (54).

[107] As Erkkila notes, this version of Franklin-as-model-American was a far cry from "the cosmopolitan and elite body of Franklin who drank, flirted, and flourished in France in the 1780s" (728). Furthermore, she links the difference between the Franklin who credits his success to his program and the Franklin who abandons it for a "speckled Axe" to a narrative split "between the moral idealism of the [nation's] founding and an uneasiness with the lofty ideals and abstractions of the Revolution" ("Revolutionary Body" 729).

[108] David Roediger reads Franklin's description of slavery as an example of eighteenth-century rhetoric that characteristically depicts slavery without direct references to race. Roediger argues that the notion of whiteness and the privileges thereof became fused with the working class only *after* the Revolution established economic and political independence for white males but not black slaves. Because Franklin articulated this explication during what Roediger terms the "prehistory of the white worker" and included all persons toiling under brutal labor conditions, it illustrates Roediger's point that at this juncture in U.S. history, whiteness and independence were not fully united, nor blackness and servitude. Roediger writes that "Franklin's definition, a rare direct connection by an (albeit prosperous) white artisan of economic dependency and slavery, covered not only Black slavery but also indentured servitude and even the apprenticeship Franklin himself had served." See Roediger 19-31.

[109] On the labor alliances between blacks and whites in seventeenth-century Virginia, see Edmund Morgan, American Slavery, American Freedom. Rhetorically speaking, Franklin's narrative resonates with slave narratives by Britton Hammon and Frederick Douglass. Franklin escapes the brutal beatings of his master, passes for a young man avoiding the ramifications of getting "a naughty Girl with Child," (A, 585-6), and travels by commercial vessel to his freedom in New York and then to Philadelphia. He begins a new life after relocating to a distant location, analogous to the ways in which Hammon forges his life in both Jamaica and then England. Franklin's narrative utilizes similar tropes of enslavement, abuse, escape, and passing that call to mind not only the condition of indentured servants and apprentices but also black slaves. See Hammon; and Douglass. See also Zafar, "Franklinian Douglass."

[110] Gary Nash notes that at the outbreak of the Revolution, numerous antislavery opinions were based upon the same natural rights and religious morality arguments that buttressed the colonists' struggle to separate from Great Britain, and many African-Americans in the colonies appropriated these arguments in agitating for their own rights and freedoms. By conflating the two revolutionary tropes of the child separating from the parent and the slave breaking away from the master into one story, Franklin's short tale inextricably links the paradox of slavery and liberty in the colonies with the proposed separation of the colonies and the formation of a new nation. See Nash, Race and Revolution 3-23.

[111] For a related reading on the undecidability of this scene, see Waldstreicher 46-7. Waldstreicher footnotes that "*[s]aucy*, of course, was a term often used for children, slaves, and servants in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, and by employing it Franklin reveals the ambiguity of what in fact constituted tyranny or arbitrary power in such cases" (255).

[112] Other literary scholars have read this early portion of Franklin's Autobiography in terms of his familial and colonial situation. Erkkila calls attention to the historical perspective with which Franklin composes his narrative and views the story as representing "a transformation in the relations of father and son, master and apprentice, minister and parishioner, government and subject that anticipates even as it is shaped by the revolutionary impulses that would lead to the break with England in 1776" (720). Mitchell Breitwieser deemphasizes the role of Franklin's father, concentrating rather on his brother James' "excessive usurped authority" (245), likening Franklin's relationship with James to that of the colonies' to the English Parliament and its improper appropriation of the power of the English king. Breitwieser believes that framed as a struggle between two brothers, Franklin's less-than-revolutionary story "allows him to represent himself as correcting an unnatural abuse of power rather than as rebelling against natural authority" (246). Looby contends that Franklin's Autobiography is organized around his allegorical relationship to his father and reads it as an "Oedipal drama," where Franklin, like the new nation, struggles both to rebel against patriarchal power and to reinscribe that same power in order to structure a post-Revolutionary society. See Erkkila, "Revolutionary Body" 720-1; Breitwieser 245-8; and Looby 99-144.

[113] This brief exchange appears in the third section of Franklin's narrative, which Franklin began composing in 1788 after he had helped pen the Declaration (1776), witnessed the Revolutionary War, become President of the Pennsylvania Society for the Abolition of Slavery (1787), and attended the Constitutional Convention (1787). For an extensive treatment of Franklin's changing views on slavery and black capacity for achievement, his begrudging

acquiescence to an anti-slavery stance, his involvement in the Declaration and Constitution, and his late-in-life abolitionist activities, see Waldstreicher.

[114] For a related point about how Franklin turns the humor of this joke against the governor and how "blackness" signifies in various registers, see Waldstreicher 145-9.

[115] Taken in context, this short scene where the rhetorical blackness of a sullied reputation interconnects with racial blackness partakes of 1780s debates over race, embodiment, and political representation because whiteness becomes the metaphor for and unstable prerequisite for citizenship. If, as Roediger argues, post-Revolutionary freedom extended to many white men connected whiteness with independence, Franklin's story exemplifies how one's ownership of himself by virtue of whiteness helps legitimate one as a republican citizen, relying on a rhetoric that equates blackness with disruptive behavior. It is of historical significance to note how Franklin was disgraced in front of the Privy Council in London in 1774, himself unwillingly "blackened" by Alexander Wedderburn who compared him to "the bloody African" (235) and later in writing by Peter Oliver who associated Franklin with the "black" Art of "forcing the Press often to speak the Thing that was not" and who said he possessed a character "which a Savage would blush at" (240). See "Benjamin Vaughan's Account" and Origins & Progress of the American Revolution, reprinted in Benjamin Franklin's Autobiography, eds. J. A. Leo Lemay and P. M. Zall.

[116] Surprisingly few literary scholars have commented upon Franklin's portrayals of Native Americans. In writing about Franklin's Narrative of the Late Massacres, Carla Mulford argues that Franklin does not, in fact, exhibit sympathy for the attacked Native Americans depicted in his brief 1764 pamphlet but rather links Christian with capitalist values that allows humane treatment of the Indians to be aligned with protecting the white man's commercial interests. Offering a more sympathetic reading of Franklin, Michael Warner contends that Franklin's "Remarks Concerning the Savages of North-America" actually addresses the manner of politeness rather than any innate nature of the Indians themselves. Warmer views Franklin as cognizant of the "cultural relativism" between the white man and the Native American, "dissolv[ing] the distinction between savagism and civilization" (79). Mulford reads "Remarks" as Franklin's portrayal of Native Americans in terms of four-stages theory. These readings of Franklin, while not addressing the Autobiography specifically, gesture toward the complex ways that Franklin writes about Native Americans. See Mulford, "*Caritas* and Capital" and "Commerce of Civility;" and Warner, "Savage Franklin."

[117] During this time, the French and British empires fought for control over the land of the Ohio Valley, which historian Richard White points out was considered the "key to the continent." Both sides felt that the domination of this territory would carry international implications for the land in Canada, Louisiana, the French Caribbean, and Spanish Mexico. See White 223.

[118] Franklin's passage also infantilizes the Indians just as it considers them worthy of government negotiations. Assuming the role of a foreboding father figure, Franklin "strictly forbad the selling any Liquor to them" and notes how they "misbehav'd" (A 681). Carla Mulford observes a similar tendency in the A Narrative of the Late Massacres. She writes that "the conception of Anglo-American paternalism is invoked as a model for the protection the state can provide the individual. The rhetoric plays upon the conceptual commonplace . . . that figured Indians as children and the English king and his proprietary or royal representative in America as 'great' or 'good' fathers" (350). Mulford claims that this paternalism and tendency to equate and then denigrate Indians does not portray them as identical to the white man. "A Narrative of the Late Massacres is, I find, premised upon a rhetoric that at once seems to locate Native Americans in a moral sphere equal to whites while ultimately placing them in a social position subordinate to white colonists" ("*Caritas* and Capital" 355). This reinscription of the Native Americans in a paternalistic system speaks to a post-Revolutionary urge to stifle any sort of rebellion against the nation lately articulated by the founding fathers. Looby sees this as a central tenet of the Autobiography, specifically in terms of Franklin's relationship with his father. "Franklin's initial rebellion against his father's authority, and then his eventually imitation of his father's role, figure in the Autobiography as a model that he proposed not only to other individuals, but also to the nation that had recently founded itself in a revolution against the authority of British institutions and now needed to establish institutions of its own" (100).

[119] Chaplin claims that Franklin viewed Indian bodies "as significantly weaker than rum-resistance whites" (332).

[120] Franklin composed this portion of his text just a month after the final ratification of the Constitution, and in its historical context, the scene signals Franklin's apprehension of internal dissensions within the newly-formed nation that must be controlled. In the speech that Franklin delivered at the conclusion of the Constitutional Convention in September, 1787, he repetitively suggests that although an individual may see "errors" in the document, he should surrender that critique in order that the assembly may act "unanimously in recommending this Constitution" (401). He even decides to "sacrifice" his own criticisms for the "public good." Because he believes that a form of government can only be as good as the people it governs, he worries over what Erkkila calls the "excess of corruption in the people" ("Revolutionary Body" 731) and about the control of displeased citizens who might revolt against the U.S. government. In fact, such a riot as Franklin anticipated occurred on December 26, 1787, in Carlisle, located in strong Anti-Federalist territory. Immediately after Pennsylvania ratified the Constitution, a small group of victorious Federalists attempted to stage a demonstration there. Although the Federalists brought with them a canon and barrels for a bonfire, the Anti-Federalists overtook the town square and burned a copy of the Constitution in the fire, shouting protests against Pennsylvania legislators who voted for its ratification. The following day, the Federalists were able to proceed with their celebration (Brunhouse 210). Resonating eerily with Franklin's description of the Ohio Indian treaty negotiations, this account locates Carlisle as a place of dissension that threatens the nation's founding on the basis of unanimous consent. Written a year after this riot occurred, Franklin's scene can be read as replacement of so-called savage Indians for the savage behavior of the Anti-Federalists during the Constitutional debates occurring nationally. Indeed, as Chaplin points out, "Franklin had forgotten what he had actually written about the incident in 1753: that the fault lay with the traders who plied the Indians with liquor, threatening all the careful diplomacy" (331). Franklin's mis-remembering of the encounter and his original recording of it is a particularly striking one. Just as protestors of the 1773 Boston Tea Party seized upon the notion of Indian-ness to register their malcontent toward British imperial policy, in this scene, the savage Indians double for the behavior of the Anti-Federalists who protested the newly established federal government. This "savageness" of the Anti-Federalists, then, is exactly the type of oppositional behavior that Franklin condemns as a threat to the nation in speaking to the Constitutional Convention. For more on how Indian disguise helps produce (white) American national identity, specifically in the Boston Tea Party, see Deloria 10-37.

[121] On how Franklin "played the role of the savage" in his diplomatic visit to France in the 1770s and 1780s, see Warner, "Savage Franklin" 83-4.

[122] This triangulation of American, British, and Native American over combat strategies stands in contrast to Franklin's earlier bifurcation of these strategies as Indian and European. "Every Indian is a Hunter;" he writes "and as their Manner of making War, *viz*. by Skulking, Surprising and Killing particular Persons and Families, is just the same as their Manner of Hunting, only changing the Object, Every Indian is a disciplin'd Soldier. Soldiers of this Kind are always wanted in the Colonies in an Indian War; for the *European* Military Discipline is of little Use in these Woods" (445). See Franklin, letter to James Parker.

[123] As we shall explore in more detail later, ethnohistorian Alan Taylor argues that Aupaumut's people should be called "Stockbridge" or "Mohican" (rather than "Mahican") Indians. On the removal of the Mohegan Indians to Brotherton and the Mohican/Stockbridge Indians to New Stockbridge, see L. Murray 168-77; Wyss 123-153; Love 207-230; Taylor; and Blodgett 169-99.

[124] For an excellent account of Hendrick Aupaumut's personal and tribal history, see Taylor. See also Ronda and Ronda; and Rachel Wheeler. For more on Mohican tribal history, see Braser; Frazier; and Dunn. On Stockbridge Indian service in the war, see Calloway, American Revolution 85-107; and Tanner. For more on the relationship between Occom, Aupaumut, and their respective tribes, see Love 231-246; and Blodgett 169-214. At this historical moment, in addition to Occom's tribe removing from Mohegan to Brotherton (1774-1776/7) and the Stockbridges relocating to New Stockbridge in Oneida territory in 1783-85, the American Revolutionary War had been fought and won by the patriot-rebels. In the same year when the Mohicans penned their letter to Occom (1787), the Constitutional Convention was meeting in Philadelphia to write the Constitution (May-Sept. 1787) while "discussion [was breaking] out" on the origin and division of the races of mankind due to the publication of

Jefferson's Notes (1787/8) and Smith's An Essay on the Causes of the Variety of Complexion and Figure in the Human Species (1787) (Jordan 486).

[125] Aupaumut's "History" exists only as "copied" in three nineteenth century texts. The most complete version appears in Electra Jones, Stockbridge, Past and Present. For more on the text's print history, see Wyss 184.

[126] For more on Washington and early national federal Indian policy, see Prucha; Merrell; White 413-68; and Sword. The U.S. government wrote and ratified its new Constitution (1787-88), established Philadelphia as the country's first national capital (1790), and passed the Naturalization Law (1790) during this time period.

[127] When the 1783 Peace of Paris that Franklin negotiated had officially ended the Revolutionary War and established the Mississippi River as the western boundary line between the new nation and Indian Country, the U.S. government had begun to claim Native lands "by right of conquest," viewing the tribes as subjugated and conquered peoples since they had allied themselves with the British (Calloway, Crown 5). (The 1783 Peace of Paris boundary line replaced the Royal Proclamation of 1763 boundary line of the Appalachian Mountains and the 1768 Treaty of Fort Stanwix line of the Ohio River, to which the western tribes had agreed [Prucha 13-20].) In the Peace of Paris, the British government had made no mention of the Indian tribes that had fought with them and ceded much of Indian country to the U.S.; accordingly, the U.S. government treated the Native tribes that had fought on the side of the British as "vanquished people(s)" (Calloway, Crown 8). By contrast, viewing themselves as sovereign entities strategically engaged in a war not of their own making, Native American tribes hotly disputed this designation. In their view, they had simply defended their own ancestral homelands, fully expecting "that their sacrifices and achievements would earn them lasting gratitude and protection from George III" (Calloway, Crown 7). No Indian tribes participated in the negotiation of the Peace of Paris. Although they had fought alongside the British, many western tribes in the Ohio Valley did *not* view themselves as subjugated peoples.

[128] For more on the history of the establishment of this boundary line and its implications for white-red relations, see Prucha, 26-50; Merrell; Taylor; Richter 223-35; White 413-68; and Calloway, Crown 3-23.

[129] Merrell demonstrates how early environmentalist beliefs about Indians' shared humanity with whites and potential convertibility undergirded the U.S. shift to a policy of assimilation. Even if these government officials did not believe Indians would physically "become white" through the adoption of these practices, the influence of this belief on federal Indian policy signals the way that environmentalist thinking, broadly conceived, became imbricated in transnational politics during this period.

[130] On the historical context of the frontier wars and the 1792 negotiations, see Tanner; Taylor; and White 413-468. See also Sword; Downes; Cave 45-63; and Kelsay 458-482.

[131] The term "accommodationist"—coined by historians trying to understand this time period rather than the Native Americans themselves—should not be taken to mean that these tribes always acquiesced to white demands. While Hendrick Aupaumut's Mohican Indians might have served alongside whites in the Revolutionary War, the "accommodationist" Natives affiliated with the confederacy were adamantly opposed to the new government.

[132] For more on "the Glaize," see Tanner.

[133] While Krupat's problematic theses on the collaborative nature of what he calls Indian autobiographies—those told orally by an indigenous person to a white transcriber—has been criticized for their assumptions about Indian "authenticity," I take his concerns to be applicable here. See Krupat, For Those Whom Come After 1-27.

[134] Although Marcus speaks most immediately about early modern texts and twentieth-century editors, I find her comments to be instructive here. See Marcus.

[135] Paul Longmore makes clear that some of the earliest colonial efforts "to copy metropolitan English linguistic norms [was] in order to attain cultural legitimacy within the British Empire" (279). Focusing on the early national

period, David Simpson and E. Jennifer Monaghan demonstrate that during and after the nation's founding the desire on the part of Noah Webster and others to standardize language sprang from a wish to break culturally free from the mother country; stabilizing the language went hand-in-hand with stabilizing the nation. See Longmore; Simpson 3-4; and Monaghan 116.

[136] For an informative introduction to the subfield of linguistics dedicated to looking at the cultural assumptions embedded in different grammars and how "grammar is thick with cultural meaning" (3), see Enfield.

[137] For a provocative reconceptualization of the relationship between manuscript and print, see McKitterick.

[138] In stark contrast to Aupaumut's text, the Autobiography's complex textual history has been much studied. On the details of Franklin's text's publication, see Genetic Text (eds. Lemay and Zall); Seavey; Shurr; and Fichtelberg. For readings of how Franklin's interrupted composition impacts readings of the Autobiography, see Erkkila, "Revolutionary Body;" and Looby 99-144.

[139] On how Cooper confuses the Mohegan, Mahican, and Mohican tribes, see L. Murray 3-5; and Oberg.

[140] As the respective work of Gary Tomlinson and Ed White on Aztec and on Algonkian cultural production suggests, the epistemological structures of the transcribers and recorders of Native cultural production and experiences can often obscure certain aspects of Native cultures while revealing others. Loosening what Tomlinson calls the "conceptual constraints" that might be imposed on Native cultural production in transcriptions, recordings, and, I would add, printing and editing offers a way to recover knowledge systems otherwise embedded in colonialist epistemology. Not trying to locate an original Indian presence somehow lost in the act of transcription, Tomlinson demonstrates how scholars can be attuned to these moments of incongruence, allowing us to think anew about the move from manuscript to print as a kind of performative translation or transcription in an original way in Native American studies. See Tomlinson on Spanish recordings of Aztec songs. For a repudiation of Stephen Greenblatt's "Invisible Bullets" thesis on Thomas Harriot's A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia by recovering an "Algonkian counterethnography," see White, "Invisible Tagkanysough." Excavating this kaleidoscopic component of Aupaumut's text freshly juxtaposes concerns of print cultures scholarship with those of Native American studies. While Native American studies has long analyzed translations (either between languages or epistemologies) and the (sometimes suspect) transcription of oral stories, an examination of the possibly imperial valences of the move from an English-language manuscript produced by a Native American to a printed text edited without his knowledge or input is relatively new. The printing of this text, then, becomes a kind of cross-cultural translation or performance that should be analyzed—not for the degree to which it offers unmediated access to an "author"—but for the work it does in its own production. McKenzie and McGann have demonstrated, respectively, the manner in which print forms "effect meaning" (13) and the "social nature of literary production" (125). Emphasizing what McKenzie calls "the sociology of texts," their work shifts from locating authority in an author to thinking through how each printed text is produced and to analyzing the "social institution" (McGann 44) in which a printed work is produced, and its "relations of production" (54) of publication. While Coates considered Aupaumut's text "some direct expression of the feelings and opinions of the sons of the forest themselves" (63), approaching Aupaumut's work in these bibliographic terms allows for the agency of the writer who put pen to page without recapitulating Coates' nostalgic reach back to an authoritative, "authentic" Native author—whose editors might "contaminate" his authorial intent.

[141] For more on this dynamic of "speaking for" and "voicing" as it relates to early American culture and politics, see Gustafson, Eloquence; Looby; and Fliegelman, introduction to Wieland.

[142] In "A Narrative of the Late Massacres, in Lancaster County," Franklin displays a similar understanding of the fractured nature of racial groupings. "If an *Indian* injures me," he writes, "does it follow that I may revenge that Injury on all *Indians*? It is well known that *Indians* are of different Tribes, Nations and Languages, as well as the White People. In *Europe*, if the *French*, who are White People, should injure the *Dutch*, are the to revenge it on the *English*, because they too are White People? The only Crime of these poor Wretches seems to have been, that they

had a reddish brown Skin, and black Hair; and some People of that Sort, it seems, had murdered some of our Relations" (540).

[143] While the complex history of relationships among Native Americans and Africans brought to the New World has been discussed elsewhere, the confederated tribes recognized common aspects of both groups' experience with white oppression. Aupaumut writes that "I informed [the sachem Tautpuhqtheet] that my nation live (sic) in peace—and that the great men of the United States wished to live in peace with all Indians—and that there is some wars among the great people over the great waters—and that negroes also have cut off many of their masters—which the Indians glad to hear . . ." (89). Aupaumut most likely alludes to the French and Haitian Revolutions, which took place in the 1790s.

[144] Cultural practices played an interesting role in the debate over how race was produced in the New World. As outlined in chapter one, at the close of the eighteenth century, American natural historians tended to consider "society" and cultural practices as not only a delineation of difference but also as an agent in producing racial difference. Perhaps surprisingly, nativists—such as the Delaware prophet Neolin—held much in common with this line of thinking. Although stopping short of professing that adopting white ways might physically make them white, they invested social practices with a racialized tenor and furthermore felt "that proper [Indian] behavior could restore Indian power" (SR 36). Refusing whites' alcohol, European gender-mixed dancing, and European trade goods (Richter 180), some strict nativists also adhered to "a ritual diet that included the frequent consumption of an herbal emetic, after which they would be purified of the 'White people's ways and Nature'" (SR 33). Ritual drinking and vomiting was "a regular feature of Ohio Valley nativism in the 1760s" (SR 33). The importance of "modes of living" is not to be overlooked. Much of the energy animating red-white hostility sprung from white governmental efforts to make Natives adopt white cultural practices (Merrell 204) and from Natives' resistance to such efforts (SR 105-6).

[145] For more similarities and contrasts between Aupaumut and nativist leaders, see Rachel Wheeler.

[146] Taylor is adamant that these "Mohicans" not be confused with seventeenth-century Mohegans (Samson Occom's tribe) or Cooper's fictive Mohicans in his nineteenth-century romance, The Last of the Mohicans.

[147] As Merrell writes, "(f)rom the Revolution to the Jacksonian era, thoughtful Americans agreed that societies progressed along the same path (a path which reached its 'present state of perfection' with Euro-American culture), that differences among peoples could be attributed to environmental influences, and that therefore native Americans could be guided along the path toward 'civilization'" (206).

[148] On Aupaumut challenging the basis of the confederacy because of his very diplomacy, see Wyss 113-4.

[149] See footnote 125.

[150] See footnote 143.

[151] For more on this shift from the exteriority to the interiority of the body in human classification, see Foucault, The Order of Things. For an extension of Foucault's thought in the context of U.S. racialization, see Wiegman, esp. 21-42.

[152] Critical scholarship on the logics of passing abounds. As Elaine Ginsburg writes, "[a]s the term [passing] metaphorically implies, such an individual crossed or passed through a racial line or boundary—indeed *trespassed*—to assume a new identity, escaping the subordination and oppression accompanying one identity and accessing the privileges and status of the other" (3). See also Pfeiffer; and Wald. For an insightful analysis of disguise and passing that works within a nineteenth-century concept of racial identity, see Stern, "Drama of Racial Identity."

[153] Certainly I do not mean to claim that racial truth resides in the body, an idea that much racial identity and performance theory has shown to be false. Rather, I am drawing a contrast between quotidian understandings of

race in the eighteenth century from those in later centuries. Indeed, it is this everyday understanding of one's "racial interior" that passing both buttresses and questions. (As Ginsburg writes, "For the possibility of passing challenges a number of problematic and even antithetical assumptions about identities, the first of which is that some identity categories are inherent and unalterable essences: presumably one cannot pass for something one *is not* unless there is some other, prepassing identity that one *is* [4].)

[154] Diamond also justifies the impulse of scholars to historisize: "[T]o invoke history, and to propose a 'drift' between presence and absence, is not to hitch performance to an old metaphysics of presence—the notion that an absent referent or an anterior authority precedes and grounds our representations. In their very different ways the contributors to [Performance and Cultural Politics] take up the postmodern assumption that there is no unmediated real and no presence that is not also traced and retraced by what it seems to exclude. Indeed, postmodern notions of performance embrace what Plato condemned in theatrical representation—its non-originality—and gesture toward an epistemology grounded not on the distinction between truthful models and fictional representations but on different ways of knowing and doing that are constitutively heterogeneous, contingent, and risky" (1).

[155] My aim here is not to argue for a re-essentialism of racial idetntity by emphasizing the body. Rather, I want to understand better these historical discourses of race. This eighteenth-century notion of transformable race—while in conversation with and understood in relationship to natural history—is also *constituted* in particular ways across these literatures. This framework wherein one does not have an interior that can be raced is more about circumstance and habit, which is its own type of performative model.

[156] As Deloria writes, "[d]isguise readily calls the notion of fixed identity into question. At the same time, however, wearing a mask also makes one self-conscious of a *real* 'me' underneath. This simultaneous experience is both precarious and creative, and it can play a critical role in the way people construct new identities" (7).

[157] See also Smith-Rosenberg's extension of Deloria's formation.

[158] The way Letters partakes of several generic forms supports this reading. It falls within the eighteenth-century tradition of epistolary writing (Cook 140-72; Bannet 275-87), and while also a natural history, it differs from Jefferson's Notes on the State of Virginia because it uses a fictional persona. Crèvecoeur's use of James places the text in the eighteenth-century convention of presenting information through a character ostensibly in order to engage disinterestedly in rational-critic debate (Warner, Letters of the Republic 34-72). For how Crèvecoeur stages "democratic personality" through James' persona, see Ruttenberg 274-89. See also Rice, "Politics of Authorship."

[159] Many scholars retroactively project a sense of nationalism onto Crèvecoeur's "American," thus closing down its meaning around the nation-state. On this point, see Behdad 34-35; and Traister.

[160] See Kulungian; and Landsman. See also Saar on immigration and the idea of the melting pot.

[161] For how the term "race" was used increasingly over the course of the eighteenth century in ethnographic scholarship to denote groups with common physical and mental characteristics, see Hudson. On how race replaced variety in the eighteenth-century lexicon, see Roxann Wheeler 31.

[162] While others have considered the relationship between Letters and general tenets of eighteenth-century Enlightenment thought articulated by Raynal, my argument is most concerned with his specifically racial theories. For how "Crèvecoeur's book lays out an abbreviated fictional history of America loosely based on Raynal's nascent theory of civilizational decline," see Rice, "Politics of Authorship" and "Cognitive Patterns." For views on Raynal's general influence on Crèvecoeur's thought, see Iannini; Bauer 200-40; Holbo; and Ben-Zvi. On how Crèvecoeur uses Letters as a "testing ground" for aspects of eighteenth-century Enlightenment thought, see Rapping; Rucker; and Arch.

[163] Indeed, Samuel Ayscough was so worried that Crèvecoeur's depiction of America might cause many Britons to emigrate there that he dedicates his entire "Remarks on the Letters from an American Farmer" to disputing Crèvecoeur's "contradictions." See Ayscough.

[164] For more on Letters' early readers, see Nye 34; and Stone 8. On European assumptions about New World degeneration, see Parrish 77-109; Lemay, "Frontiersman" 191-2; and Miller 74-78.

[165] While Ralph Bauer claims that "the fiction of authorship in [Letters] suggests that our colonial author[] imitated this rhetoric of Natural History not in order to emulate but rather to parody the scientific authority of the natural historian" (210), I do not see the entirety of Letters' engagement with natural history as simply ironic. First, its environmentalist perspective is much too consistent throughout the entire book and serves as the basis for a variety of James' claims, not simply those about race. (On Crèvecoeur's use of climate theory, see Regis 127-31; and Parrish 20, 95, and 292-3.) Second, Crèvecoeur was very much engaging the science of his day that contemplated these issues. Far from lampooning these debates as an outsider, Crèvecoeur endeavored to become a credible player in transatlantic natural-historical circles. While in Paris in 1782-3, he "dined twice a week with Buffon, frequented the salon of Mme d'Houdetôt, and attended meetings of the Royal Agricultural Society and the Academy of Sciences" (Cook 147). Furthermore, his membership in the American Philosophical Society (Rice, "Politics of Authorship" 107) signals his serious engagement with—rather than ironic depiction of—these circulating theories. For instance, James claims—contra Raynal—that "Let us say what we will of [American Indians], of their inferior organs, of their want to bread, etc., they are as stout and well made as the Europeans" (215). But even as he disputes Raynal's claim about the robustness of the Indians, his logic agrees with Raynal's that the environment can ultimately make the man. Bauer points out that the dedication's tone mixes both reverence and mockery (211), as a reader suspects Crèvecoeur's overly effusive praise. Bauer makes a valid point that Crèvecoeur works to "deconstruct the fiction of authenticity and break through the various levels of scientific authorship to the effect of exposing the imperialist geo-politics of Natural History and its institutionalized geographic division of intellectual labor" (202). However, I tend to agree with Christopher Iannini, who characterizes Crèvecoeur actively working with Raynal's ideas. Iannini describes how Crèvecoeur's "Sketches of Jamaica" engage with Raynal's theories about the Caribbean (205). Jennifer Greeson also argues that Crèvecoeur "invokes and works within conventions of European imperialism," including "scientific theories of climate determinism," particularly those of Raynal (112-3). Yael Ben-Zvi shows how Raynal impacted Crèvecoeur's thoughts on empire (74-75).

[166] Bauer claims that James "openly debunks the determinist theories of a William Robertson, a cmte de Buffon, a Cornelius de Pauw, and a Raynal, all of whom had claimed that the American natural environment and climate are averse to the development of culture. . . . [H]e also counters the scientific maxim that the natural environment of America in particular effects a degeneration of all things Native and transplanted with the theory that it is the distance from the equator, rather than from Europe, which determines the nature of human 'vices and miseries' . . ." (216). While Bauer characterizes correctly, I think, James' recuperation of the American environment in terms of the effect it has on white men, he neglects how James fears his own potential "Indianization." Arguing for a more conflicted and ambiguous Crèvecoeur, I disagree with Bauer that Crèvecoeur cleanly "increasingly debunks the Enlightenment conception of man as blank slate and emphasizes the importance of innate differences such as race and culture" and that he simply sees the "'indelible' difference of blood distinguishing the human races" (231). Bauer overemphasizes how Crèvecoeur essentializes race: "Nature, for Crèvecoeur, does not only reside in the natural environment, on the surfaces of flora and fauna, of the climate and air, but rather in the 'indelible' difference of blood distinguishing the human races" (231). Even as Letters sometimes does characterize race as "indelible," it also explores a more flexible, environmentally-influenced, transformable sense of race. Leo Lemay sees a more contradictory Crèvecoeur on these matters, arguing that Letters participates in "the change in philosophy of civilization from a belief in degeneration to a belief in progress," partaking at times of both paradigms. Lemay claims that Crèvecoeur "attempts to justify both the popular French belief in the *degeneration* of man in America with the nationalistic American belief in man's *regeneration* in America" (209). See Lemay, "Frontiersman."

[167] While I am most interested in James' racial articulations in Letters, many critics have concerned themselves with the ways that Letters' tone shifts dramatically from the beginning to the end of the text. For redactions of this critical debate, see Winston; D. Robinson; Holbo; Iannini; and Goddu 26-32.

[168] For more on the general rhetoric of natural history in Letters, see Regis 106-34.

[169] Most literary critics who note Letters' belief in the efficacy of the environment to make the man have overlooked its specifically racial components. Seeing Crèvecoeur's thinking as physiocratic, Vernon Parrington reads Crèvecoeur's agrarian language as an economic metaphor (142). Jack Babuscio and Albert Stone also cite Crèvecoeur's physiocratic philosophy ("Crèvecoeur in Charles Town" 284; "Introduction" 18). Mary Rucker expresses a contrary, more pessimistic view. Leo Marx emphasizes that in Crèvecoeur's America "the relation between mankind and the physical environment is more than usually decisive," in regards to "the new kind of man being formed in the New World" (109-110). D.H. Lawrence famously lambastes Crèvecoeur for his romantic portrayal of nature, what he calls this "Nature-sweet-and-pure business" (31). Machor reads James' environmental determinism in a Lockean sense. See also Leo Lemay, "Frontiersman," on this Lockean view (210). Larzer Ziff notes Crèvecoeur's belief in "the shaping influence of environment" (31). See also Kulungian, on this point. Elayne Rapping remarks on the general sense in which Letters "test(s)" general eighteenth-century thought, including the idea that man "was also a product of his environment (707).

[170] On the racial aspects of Linnaeus' classification system, see Regis 22; Jordan 213-22; Dain 9-14; Roxann Wheeler 25-30; and Smedley 160-2.

[171] Regis also notes how natural-historical thinking underlies James' description of the new American (128-130). For more on natural-historical theories of racialization, see Roxann Wheeler 1-48; Dain 1-39; Smedley 152-204; Parrish 77-102; and Jordan 216-565.

[172] Blood has been used as a metaphor to denote familial, class, or racial distinction since at least the fourteenth century, but in the eighteenth century it was also considered to be part of the human body that was affected by the environment. Blood had a still-lingering humoral connotation before the nineteenth century, when scientists and, following them, lawmakers would imagine it to be the physical location of racial "truth." The OED tells us that "blood is popularly treated as the typical part of the body which children inherit from their parents and ancestors; hence that of parents and children, and of the members of a family or race, is spoken of as identical, and as being distinct from that of other families or races." In the eighteenth century, blood was used, as Crèvecoeur does here, to denote what one inherits from one's parents and what can be crossed with that of different peoples through interracial sex. As Jordan explains, in the first half of the eighteenth century, "the use of 'blood' in connection with miscegenation represented, especially before the advent of knowledge about genetics, much more than a convenient metaphor. For blood was the essence of man, the principle of life. More important, at least from the time of the Greeks it had been intimately and explicitly linked with the concept of human generation . . . Thus the term blood implied for the colonists a deep inherency and permanence through the generations, and when they called sexual union between Negroes and whites a mixture of bloods they were expressing a strong sense of radical distinction between the two kinds of peoples" (165-6). Yet, blackness was often explained by "the action of the sun, whether the sun was assumed to have scorched the skin, drawn the bile, or blackened the blood" (Jordan 13). As Jordan points out, the use of blood cut both ways: to denote how God made all men of one blood and to signify the difference among peoples. As Jordan says: "It was the old shell game: now you see the identity of all men, now you don't" (197). It is crucial to note, however, that even as blood was simultaneously considered to signal differences among people and to be a racial marker influenced by the environment, it was not until the rise of race science in the nineteenth century that blood was thought to be the ultimate seat of racial "truth." This language of blood was written into law as a way to determine one's racial identity, in the notions of the "one drop rule" of the Jim Crow era and "blood quantum" of the Dawes Act.

[173] Ironically, in his reading of Crèvecoeur, Jordan stresses Crèvecoeur's mixture of blood, overlooking his environmentalist language. Jordan points out that Crèvecoeur's emphasis on the crossing of bloodlines in creating a new American was a minority view. See Jordan 336-7. In contrast, for readings of this passage that note Crèvecoeur's environmentalist language, see Nye; and Saar.

[174] For how James "explores the central metaphor of American pastoral experience, the metaphor of land as woman," see Kolodny 52-66. See also Nelson, National Manhood 48-51 on this passage.

[175] Although it is secondary to my point about James' characterization of the "American," several scholars have interestingly analyzed Crèvecoeur's vacillating political affiliations. See Jehlen 32-49; Rucker; Philbrick; and Traister.

[176] Here, I am talking about "nationality" in the twenty-first century sense of the term, as contemporary critics have used it to try to understand Crèvecoeur's "American." Indeed, "nation" in its eighteenth-century sense denoted a people with shared characteristics and history, something that was coming to be called "race" by the century's end. See Hudson.

[177] For an important reworking of Anderson's claims based upon a careful historical contextualization of them, see Ed White's "Early American Nations as Imagined Communities." For White, creoles developed a sense of "nation" less from "being crowded out of the empire" (67) and more from seeing themselves as distinct from Native American nations. As White points out, "it is fair to say that with Crèvecoeur we are witnessing a transition to the 'nation' of the United States" (72).

[178] Despite the way many critics see Letters as an American nationalist text, James' connectedness to "our famed mother country" (39) is evident. At several points in Letters, James emphasizes his British loyalties while extolling the American continent. In the concluding chapter, James dreads a separation from Great Britain. As the revolution breaks out to establish a mutually-exclusive national identity for the new Americans from the British, James refuses to take sides, planning to withdrawal with his family to the wilderness. Indeed, rather than posit the proto-national subject, the text is quite fraught over a proposed break with England. Published in 1782 before the conclusion of the Revolutionary War but set in a somewhat tranquil time period that leads up to the outbreak of the war, Letters historically telescopes a recently liberated nation-state (post-Declaration of Independence in 1776) back into its British colonial past. The text itself appears melancholic over its loss of ties to its mother country and seems profoundly divided over the issue of political independence. James finds himself "happy in my new situation," that of "an American farmer possessing freedom of action, freedom of thoughts, ruled by a mode of government which requires but little . . ," which isn't contradictory with paying his king "a small tribute" and "loyalty and due respect" (52). He attributes many successes in America to the work of Englishmen (66) and links "our government" with the "crown" (69). For James, one who relocates from Britain "is now an American, a Pennsylvanian, an English subject" (83). For how "Europe is something to retain" for James and how cultural identity is linked to the soil, see Behdad 34-41. See also Traister; and Jehlen 32-49.

[179] On how Crèvecoeur contradictorily depicts the frontiersman using ideas of both degeneration and progression, see Lemay, "Frontiersman." On the frontiersman's degeneracy, see also Goddu 16-17.

[180] Regis also sees a racialized aspect to the change James describes here. "This surrender of identity, or name, of outer shape, and even of the marks of species—a transmutation is the conversion of one species into another—suggest how essential this change would be" (125). She also argues that in the last letter "the natural history that has governed and generated the book threatens James with the loss of his identity, while holding the promise of an orderly outcome to his chaotic situation" (127). See Regis 123-31.

[181] Indeed, in Letters, Indians seem less likely to become European than vice versa. In Nantucket, Indians who come into contact with Europeans only suffer disease and possible extinction (121-3). At Martha's Vineyard, Indians "appeared, by the decency of their manners, their industry, and neatness, to be wholly Europeans" (133) while still remaining Natives.

[182] See footnote 172 regarding the use of blood.

[183] For an alternate reading that emphasizes the "innate differences of race and culture," see Bauer.

[184] Additionally, while James leads us to believe that the hot climate has led to the decadency of this Southern slaveholding society (167), he also intimates that this evil can occur anywhere. James writes that "we often talk of an indulgent nature, a kind parent, who for the benefit of mankind has taken singular pains to vary the genera of plants, fruits, grain, and the different productions of the earth and has spread peculiar blessings in each climate" (175). However, he claims that "[e]ven under those mild climates which seem to breathe peace and happiness, the poison of slavery, the fury of despotism, and the rage of superstition are all combined against man!" (176). Behdad writes that "[n]ot surprisingly, Crèvecoeur accounts for this decadence in contradictory terms: his position is both essentialist, blaming the hot 'climate [that] renders excesses of all kinds very dangerous,' and constructionist, suggesting that commerce and its degenerative effects of greed, luxury, and slothfulness have led to the decline of civilization (152)" (43). I use the term degeneracy in relationship to its racial aspects, not the moral decay James describes in South Carolina.

[185] While others have noted aspects of slavery's complex relation to Nature in Letters, I emphasize its metaphorical linkage to the race-altering Nature in letter 3. See for instance Rucker; Rapping; Bauer 230; Parrish 292-3; Regis 117-19; Ruttenberg 282-9; and Babuscio.

[186] As Teresa Goddu has illustrated, this letter truly represents the gothic aspect of the text (17-21), and here, I argue, it reveals the gothic characteristics of what up to this point in Letters had been characterized as the rejuvenating natural landscape.

[187] See also Ruttenberg on differences between these two "immigrant" experiences, 283-4.

[188] Goddu terms it a "live burial" (20), which makes it even more interesting that this burial is above—rather than below—the ground.

[189] Marrant's Narrative was produced in conjunction with Reverand William Aldridge, a minister who had previously been associated with the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion. Most scholars use the fourth edition, over which Marrant had the most editorial control and included scenes omitted from other editions (Brooks and Saillant 19). It is worth noting that while Aldridge could have heavily influenced the shaping of the Narrative's typological references, probably only Marrant himself would have had the experiential knowledge to bring Cherokee epistemology to bear on his story. For more on Aldridge, the Huntingdon Connexion, and the Narrative, see J. Brooks, American Lazarus 87; and May. For more on the narrator-amanuensis relationship, see Gustafson, Eloquence 107-8; Zafar, Mask 53-55; and Sekora.

[190] This contrasts with the specificity of tribal names that Letters uses in other sections, especially in the description of Nantucket.

[191] See P. Gould for how Marrant reworks the meanings of "mastery" and "liberty" in his narrative, 122-41.

[192] For how Marrant revises the notion of the "savage" speaker, see Gustafson, Eloquence 101-10. See Gates on Marrant's "curious inversion" of the "trope of the Talking Book" (Signifying Monkey 142-6).

[193] On typology in the Narrative, see for instance Costanzo 101-2; Gustafson, Eloquence 102-6; J. Brooks, American Lazarus 98-99; Weyler 47-49; Zafar, Mask 57-60; Miles, "Indians and Intimacy" 175; Montgomery "Recapturing John Marrant" 107-8; Brooks and Saillant 20; and P. Gould 130.

[194] An exception to this critical trend, Tiya Miles insightfully examines Marrant's interaction with the Cherokee. See Miles, "Indians and Intimacy."

[195] Indeed, once Marrant arrives in London and is ordained as a minister in Huntingdon's Connexion, he is sent to missionize among blacks *and Natives* in Nova Scotia (Montgomery, "Recapturing John Marrant" 111; J. Brooks, American Lazarus 89). This suggests Marrant's ability to speak and work across cultures. A notice in the sixth edition of Marrant's Narrative reads: "SINCE Mr. MARRANT's arrival at Nova-Scotia, several letters have been

received from him by different persons, and some by Mr. ALDRIDGE, the Editor of this Narrative; from which it appears, that Mr. MARRANT has traveled through that province preaching the Gospel, and not without success; that he has undergone much fatigue, and passed through many dangers; that he has visited the Indians in their Wigwams, who, he relates, were disposed to hear and receive the Gospel.—This is the substance of the letters transmitted by him to the Editor above-mentioned" (qtd. in Carretta, Unchained Voices 132n60).

[196] My theorization here of racial transformation along a black-red spectrum differs greatly from important work on later conceptions of "hybrid" or "mixed" Afro-Native identity. See Miles and Holland; and Brennan. The transformation-causing capacity of Marrant's Indian dress also contrasts with the performance of black Mardi Gras Indians, so incisively investigated by Joseph Roach (192-211).

[197] James Axtell has also shown how various Native groups adopted whites into their tribes. See Axtel, "White Indians."

[198] Interestingly, this resembles how eighteenth-century Europeans thought of clothing as a crucial "category of difference," what Roxann Wheeler calls a "proto-racial ideology." See Wheeler 14-21.

[199] Perdue argues that the Cherokee adopted European modes of slavery only after becoming involved in the Anglos' capitalist economy, where they were interested in using slave labor to produce surplus wealth. The black-Cherokee interaction is quite storied from contact up to the present day. On how slavery and the Civil War ignited a split among the Cherokee tribe, see Perdue, Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society. Perdue also points out that the "blood quantum" rubric that several modern-day tribes use to measure tribal citizenship grew out of late nineteenth century efforts to dispossess Natives of their land through allotment (Racial Construction 98). Furthermore, at this present moment, the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma is trying to bar citizenship to the descendants of black slaves who were once incorporated into the tribal community, thus showing this topic to be very much a live issue. See continuing coverage in Indian Country Today, including Smith, "Cherokees Vote for Indian Blood," and Lightfoot, "Reconciling Moral Outrage with Self-determination" (9 March 2007); Evans, "Cherokees Vote to Revoke Membership of Freedmen" (12 March 2007); Reynolds, "Principal Chief Chad Smith Speaks on Freedmen Issue" (12 July 2007); Reynolds, "Housing Amendment Would Punish Cherokee over Freedmen" (27 July 2007); Cheyfitz, "The Historical Irony of H.R. 2824" (13 August 2007); Editors Report, "Race, Not Citizenship, Informs Watson's Cherokee Bill" (24 August 2007); Juozapavicius, "Freedman Issue on Detour to Capitol Hill" (28 September 2007); Reynolds, "Congressional Black Caucus Hosts Rally against Cherokee Nation" (5 October 2007); Lyons, "Cherokee by Text" (18 October 2007); Clarkson, "Conflicting Language Clouds Freedman Resolution" (1 November 2007); and Jasper, "Disinformation Campaign Undermines Cherokee" (30 November 2007). On tensions between multiply-identified scholars engaged in cross-racial scholarship, see Crossing Waters, Crossing Worlds, including Miles, "Eating Out of the Same Pot?"; Miles and Holland, "Crossing Waters, Crossing Worlds;" and Warrior, "Afterward."

[200] See Costanzo who makes a related point about the "ritualized adoption" of non-Natives into Indian tribes and the "transformation procedure" that Marrant undergoes (100-1). For other readings of the Indian dressing scene that contextualize it within a triangulated relationship among the red, white, and black races, see Miles, "Indians and Intimacy;" Montgomery, "Recapturing John Marrant;" Weyler; and Brennan 50-52.

[201] Also, toward the end of his narrative, Marrant signals his concern for "the salvation of my countrymen," those who are his "kinsmen, according to the flesh" (73). As I argued in chapter two about how Samson Occom uses this phrase, Marrant signals both his inclusion within a metaphysical body of Christ (by drawing upon the Apostle Paul's signature deployment of the phrase) and also his special relationship to his fellow black men located in the body.

[202] Simon Schama conjectures that Marrant was one of the musicians playing "God Save the King" when Clinton arrived in Charleston (107).

[203] See Vincent Carretta for a related point about eighteenth-century black authors identifying with the British empire, Introduction, Unchained Voices 6-7.

[204] For how Crèvecoeur projects the ill-effects of slavery onto the South, see Greeson.

[205] For more on black resistance in Charleston, especially efforts to aid British forces, see Pybus 41-42, 57-61; Schama 65-91; and Frey 108-42. On Marrant's itinerant preaching in Birchtown, Nova Scotia, see J. Brooks, American Lazarus 87-113.

[206] Drawing on Michel Foucault's The Order of Things, Robyn Wiegman argues that this change in the understanding of race occurs at the close of the eighteenth century as a part of a larger cultural shift from what Foucault terms classical to modern "epistemes of knowledge." Foucault ascribes "the birth of 'man' as an object of study" to this rise of the human sciences (Wiegman 22). Wiegman writes that "through this reorganization [of knowledge], the human being acquires for the first time in history an organic body and an interior psychic depth, becoming the primary object of investigations and making possible a host of new technologies, institutions and disciplines" (22). Wiegman extends this logic to explain why the change in thinking about *race* as an inner phenomenon occurred at this time in the U.S.: "The move from the visible epidermal terrain to the articulation of the interior structure of human bodies thus extrapolated in both broader and more distinct terms the parameters of white supremacy, giving it a logic lodged fully in the body" (31). Joanne Pope Melish makes a related argument. She contends that as more African-Americans became emancipated in the North in the early nineteenth century, whites increasingly believed race to be "fixed" and "not subject to substantial change by external experience" (161). Melish claims that whites sought a way to assure themselves that blacks fundamentally were different from themselves, even if they became free. "The popular conclusion about the stability of whiteness paralleled the direction of scientific thought which increasingly turned away from environmental explanations in the early nineteenth century" (161).

[207] For more on this moment in U.S.-North Africa relations, see Marr 26-34. See also Allison, esp. 3-34; 87-126.

[208] For more on how the curse of Ham gets linked with African slavery in the Americas, see Smedley 154, 212, 224; and Dain 126-7.

[209] Underhill also gestures toward this link when he compares his employment as a schoolteacher to the life of a slave, claiming that "to purchase a school master and a negro was almost synonymous" (183).

[210] See footnote 161.

[211] Gardner links this scene to Underhill's national identity, claiming that "Updike's first moment of patriotism is born out of his anxiety lest Buffon see in the failure of American science the fulfillment of his darkest prophecies for the American race" (29).

[212] Whether this is truly the "humane" thing to do—attending to sick slaves to ensure their eventual sale—is certainly up for debate. The novel represents an alternative to Underhill's choice. A ship clerk suggests that they "tie [the diseased slaves] up and cast them over the ship side together, and thus, at one dash, to purify the ship. *What signifies, added he, the lives of these black devils; they love to die. You cannot please them better, than by chucking them into the water"* (100, emphasis in original).

[213] See Crescenzo, who argues that Tyler reverses "the trope which for at least two hundred years had associated 'whiteness' with good and 'blackness' with evil" (21). See also Margulis 21-22.

[214] It is crucial to note, however, as Stern explains, Smith's theory of sentiment was predicated upon an imperfect exchange between individual's interiors, an idea that usefully illustrates the difficulty of cross-racial sentimental interchange in early America. Christopher Castiglia also argues that the black slave sufferer must present his suffering in such a way that allows the white sympathizer to identify with him, but only temporarily.

[215] For how Wiegman extends Foucault's insight into the shift from natural history to the human sciences at the close of the eighteenth century to describe this "reorganization" of racial "knowledge," see Wiegman, 21-42.

[216] One should note that after the Sympathy's departure, the slaves invite Underhill to return with them to their "native country." Underhill declines, and when he sees a ship that he suspects is the Sympathy returning, he "intimte[s] to them that they might conceal themselves in the brush and escape" (104). Only one refuses Underhill's offer in order to re reunited with his son aboard the slaver.

[217] Wiegman usefully qualifies the epistemological break that Foucault posits. "The intensification of scientific efforts to ascertain the origin and bodily foundation for race in the nineteenth century, alongside the persistence of environmentalism as a key explanation for racial difference in the United States in the antebellum period, indicates a less emphatic break, a more troubled confusion, between classical and modern apprehensions of race. To a large extent, such an intensification points to the importance of thinking about epistemic organizations as heterogeneous, containing subcultural formations of knowledge that exist in contradiction or tension with each regime's primary features" (34). On how theories of environmentalism persist well into the nineteenth century, see Dain.

[218] See Gardner for how the Algerine becomes a "composite of all the racial and national destinies he does not want for his country," including Native American (27).

[219] Jefferson and Smith were two of the eighteenth-century natural historians who famously hypothesized about the minutia of colored skin strata. For instance, in Notes on the State of Virginia, Jefferson argues that "[t]he first difference which strikes us is that of colour. Whether the black of the negro resides in the reticular membrane between the skin and scarf-skin, or in the scarf-skin itself; whether it proceeds from the colour of the blood, the colour of the bile, or from that of some other secretion, the difference is fixed in nature, and is as real as if its seat and cause were better known to us. And is this difference of no importance?" (186). In Essay on the on the Causes of the Variety of Complexion and Figure in the Human Species, Smith contends that "The human skin has been discovered by anatomists to consist of three distinct lamellae or integuments; the external, or scarf-skin, which is an extremely fine netting, and perfectly transparent in the darkest coloured nations, the interior, or true skin, which, in people of all the different grades of colour, is white, and an intermediate membrane, which is cellular in its structure, somewhat like a honeycomb. This membrane is the proper seat of colour, being filled with a delicate mucous, or viscid liquor, which easily receives the lively tinge of the blood when strongly propelled, by any cause, to the surface, or the duller stain of the bile when it enters in any undue quantity into the circulation. The smallest surchange of this secretion imparts to it a yellow appearance; which, by remaining long in contact with the atmosphere assumes a darker hue, and if exposed, at the same time, to the immediate influence of the sun, approaches, according to the heat of the climate and the degree in which the bile prevails, towards black" (35).

[220] Cosmetic creams promising to lighten women's complexions have persisted to the present day. For a discussion of skin-lightening products used in twenty-first century Mexico, see Winders, et al.

[221] See P. Gould 113-4; Schueller 53-54; and Berman 19-20. See also Schueller and Berman for how this scene destabilizes Underhill's gender identity as well.

[222] The setting of white slavery in North Africa is key. Because of changing understandings of race at the time, Underhill becomes black internally while staying white externally, thereby enabling his capture in this particular type of slavery. Then, once enslaved, he can represent the binary opposite to white citizenship, which, as we shall see, comes to be crucial to the novel's conclusion.

[223] See also Mackenthun on how the novel "dramatizes the emergence of an American national identity through amnesia" (342).

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