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GENDER ANALYSIS OF KING PHILLIP'S WAR

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MENTOR: Dr. Carol Lilly

ABSTRACT

Women and war have existed in history since the beginning of time. Yet in most modern historical accounts, women's participation and significance in war conflicts is not present or is severely undermined. Often the conflict itself is presented to fit an agenda of the presenter or contributor. In modern American history, students are presented with a Pilgrim thanksgiving dinner with the Algonquin and then it fast forwards roughly 100 years to the American Revolution. The rest is commonly not acknowledged. Feminist author Roe Bubar sums it up well: "The problem is the narrative is told from a nation-building perspective in which the fight for equality and democracy is specifically highlighted and made natural while the stories of the so-called "others" become histories that do not complement the dominant or master narrative quite so well and thus are contested, ignored, erased, and left out."¹ The mass genocide of a nation of indigenous is often left out. Unsurprisingly, then, the stories of indigenous women are also ignored. This paper, in contrast, presents the significance of female Algonquin Native American women during King Phillip's War (1674-1678).

The goal of this paper is to give life to indigenous women's counter narrative through a feminist lens, accomplished by focused ethnography. Although historians have acknowledged radical violence against the Indians, only now through modern feminist gender analysis and ethnography are we able to apply recent feminist theories to determine the Puritans' intersectional use of religion, racism, and heteropatriarchy to demonize female native populations.

INTRODUCTION

Primary sources of King Phillip's War provide historians with a framework for comparing modern feminist theories to comprise a gendered analysis. Naturally, there were not many accounts to study. From a historiographic perspective, this is not surprising. Much of the colonizing population was not educated. The natives all carried their history orally which was never written down. Countless accounts faded over history through the genocide they faced over centuries. The accounts of King Phillip's War that remain today were recorded by Puritan males of high religious and governmental authority. They offer a one-sided view of history that require conscious speculation and theory to determine legitimacy.

Due to the lack of primary sources, much of this essay relies on modern indigenous feminist study of the Algonquin people and their application of feminist theory. These sources detail

¹ Roe Bubar, "Decolonizing Sexual Violence." *International Review of Qualitative Research* 6, no. 4 (2013): 529.

aspects of Native Algonquin culture in alignment with their cultural identity and importance. These theories are then applied to examples of three primary sources of King Phillip's War. The first is *Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*.

Mary Rowlandson was the wife of a Puritan preacher who was taken into captivity during King Philip's War in February of 1675. Her home was attacked by a captive-seeking war party directed by Sachems Metacomet (King Philip) and Weetamoo. Mary faced many hardships during her captivity and presents the natives as the sole proprietors of these hardships. At the time of initial publication, this account was used as Puritan propaganda against native people. Rowlandson's account is seen as the first major publication by a woman in American history. It was published by influential Puritan preacher and political figure Increase Mather in 1676. Modern historians believe Increase Mather wrote the preface to the account and influenced her account to fit his own Puritan agenda. This is apparent in the preface referring to the captors as, "atheistical, proud, wild, cruel, barbarous, brutish, (in one word) diabolical creatures... the worst of the heathen."² Rowlandson's savage description is because of the Algonquin's failure to meet Puritan cultural standards. Professor Tiffany Potter states, "Rowlandson's work ultimately attempts to articulate indigenous femininity solely as a failure to meet the English standard. This effort both enables Rowlandson to maintain her understanding of herself as superior to any woman of difference and confirms for Mather and his audience Puritan valuations of purity and the naturalness of Puritan cultural dominance in the New World."³ Coincidentally Rowlandson was placed under the watch of the Sachem (chief) Weetamoo. Rowlandson's descriptions of Weetamoo unintentionally give readers insight into the true influence and power that native females held in Algonquin Society.

The second primary text is *Our Beloved Kin* by historian Lisa Brooks.⁴ Brooks' work is a historical recreation of events taken from remaining legal documents that mention Weetamoo's presence forming a cohesive narrative. This narrative cements Weetamoo's influence not only in her own culture as sachem, but also in interactions with Puritans that had commonly been ignored. This narrative projects Weetamoo as a staunch diplomat as opposed to a war-inducing savage, the view commonly accepted from Increase Mathers' publication.

The third and final primary text is *A Brief History of the War with the Indians in New-England* by forementioned Puritan Priest Increase Mather.⁵ This account formally cements what is taught in history books about King Phillip's War. Increase Mather was a devout Puritan preacher, and a key actor in spreading anti-native Puritan propaganda. He was able to do this by becoming one of the first presidents of Harvard College which allowed him accessibility to printing and publishing, along with influence in reporting to the British, as in his brief history.

Mather argues that King Phillip's War was a product of the assassination of John Sausaman. Sausaman was a native Christian convert who was found murdered after warning the Plymouth governor of a potential attack from Metacom (King Phillip). In his warning to the

² Tiffany Potter. "Writing Indigenous Femininity: Mary Rowlandson's Narrative of Captivity." *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 36, no. 2 (2003): 164.

³ Potter, "Writing Indigenous Femininity," 153-154.

⁴ Brooks, Lisa. *Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Philip's War*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018.

⁵ Mather, Increase, and (editor) Paul Royster. "A Brief History of the War with the Indians in New-England (1676): An Online Electronic Text Edition."

governor, he foretold that he would be a target of Metacom for his deception. The English failed to protect Sausaman, as he was found dead shortly after his warning. Three natives were charged with the murder, the primary culprit being one of Metacom's "chief Captains and Counselors".⁶ Lisa Brook's *Our Beloved Kin* provides a series of complicated events that suggest other reasons for mounting tensions that led to King Phillip's War. She tells the story of how Metacom and Weetamoo are related, and how this relation was severely strained by actions of colonizers.

Metacom and Weetamoo shared an important relative, Wamsutta who was Metacom's elder brother, and Weetamoo's husband. Wamsutta was known by the Puritan Colonizers for his willingness to sell land to provide wealth to his people. Prior to his marriage to Weetamoo, he was charged with selling land that did not belong to his people.⁷ Weetamoo claimed that the land was her tribes, not Wamsutta's. The Plymouth courts were upset that Wamsutta tried to sell the land to a Rhode Island colonist, as opposed to a Massachusetts colonist. Wamsutta was eventually taken from his hunting lodge to Plymouth for questioning. He mysteriously died during or shortly after that interrogation. Accounts differ on his death. Weetamoo and Metacom believed he was poisoned and Increase Mather claims Wamsutta killed himself with his own fiery temper.⁸ Either way Wamsutta's death raised the status of both Weetamoo and Metacom. Metacom took the sachem position left from his brother, and Weetamoo (already a sachem of her own people) found herself intertwined with complicated court proceedings on land claims from encroaching colonists. This event was the beginning of a decade of constantly rising tensions, on both sides, that came to a head with the murder of John Sausamon. It is also where we see Increase Mather begin to highlight King Phillip as the head of the natives and completely erase Weetamoo's leadership role.

HETEROPATRIARCHY

Mather's war account is stereotypically portrayed around masculine ideologies and agendas. This approach is true in all heteropatriarchal historical accounts of the colonization of America. Heteropatriarchy is a feminist theory describing "the social systems in which heterosexuality and patriarchy are perceived as normal and natural"⁹. This cultural facet is apparent among all European colonizers, including the Puritans of New England. Upon their arrival in North America, Pilgrims enacted "settler colonization," which Arvin, Tuck, and Morrill define as: a persistent social and political formation in which newcomers/colonizers/settlers come to a place, claim it as their own, and do whatever it takes to disappear the Indigenous peoples that are there. Within settler colonialism, it is exploitation of land that yields supreme value. In order for settlers to usurp the land and extract its value, Indigenous peoples must be destroyed, removed, and made into ghosts.¹⁰

⁶ Mather, "A Brief History of the War."

⁷ Brooks, Lisa Tanya. *Our Beloved Kin*, 49.

⁸ Brooks, *Our Beloved Kin*, 52.

⁹ Maile Arvin, Eve Tuck, and Angie Morrill. "Decolonizing Feminism: Challenging Connections Between Settler Colonialism and Heteropatriarchy." *Feminist Formations* 25, no. 1 (2013): 8-34. Accessed April 8m 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43860665>.13.

¹⁰ Arvin, "Decolonizing Feminism," 12.

Bubar further argues that Puritans relied on heteropatriarchy to enact colonization/settler colonialism:

The introduction of gender dominance is viewed as an important aspect of colonization responsible for increased violence toward Indigenous women... (it) condones and encourages violence against women by endorsing the misconceptions of male superiority, ownership and control of women and children, and men's rights to control the environment.¹¹

By combining these definitions, we see that colonization depended on heteropatriarchal gender dominance to enact genocide against indigenous populations. This heteropatriarchal gender dominance was particularly devastating to the female indigenous, physically and culturally. Bubar continues, "Heterosexist gender violence becomes normalized and naturalized, which condones and encourages violence against women by endorsing the misperceptions of male superiority, ownership and control of women and children, and men's rights to control the environment."¹² Because of Indigenous women's multifaceted involvement in war and conflict, it is impossible to identify a precise reason for this targeted violence. This introduces the feminist theory of intersectionality. As Gina Samuels explains intersectionality, "gender cannot be used as a single analytic frame without also exploring how issues of race, migration status, history, and social class, in particular, come to bear on one's experience as a woman."¹³ There is no way to declare exactly what patriarchal colonizers motives were, since many could be argued to be subconscious in alignment with their violent patriarchal culture.

Colonizers eventually noticed the importance of native women in their cultures. Their intersectional importance caused them to be a direct target of forced heteropatriarchal acculturation. Disbanding native communities relied on targeting their women. Feminist Author Paula Gunn Allen argues,

Colonizers realized that in order to subjugate indigenous nations they would have to subjugate the women within these nations. Native peoples needed to learn the value of hierarchy, the role of physical abuse in maintaining that hierarchy, and the importance of women remaining submissive to their men. They had to convince 'both men and women that a woman's proper place was under the authority of her husband and that a man's proper place was under the authority of the priests. It was to the advantage of white men to mislead white women, and themselves, into believing that their treatment of women was superior to the treatment by the men of the group which they considered savage. Had white women discovered that all women were not mistreated, they might have been intolerant of their men's abusiveness.¹⁴

The colonizers' means of achieving this was patriarchal gender violence. To support this violence, Puritans relied on propaganda like their narrative of natives as mere savages. These narratives served a dual purpose, both to justify brutality against natives, and to reinforce male superiority amongst their own women. This approach also builds on Jean Bethke Elstain's feminist theory of "Just Warriors and Beautiful Souls".¹⁵ According to this theory males justify

¹¹ Bubar. "Decolonizing Sexual Violence," 526-528.

¹² Bubar, "Decolonizing Sexual Violence," 529.

¹³ Gina Samuels and Fariyal Ross-Sheriff. "Identity, Oppression, and Power." *Affilia* 23, no. 1 (2008): 5.

¹⁴ Andrea Smith. *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press: 2015, 10.

¹⁵ Elshtain, Jean Bethke. *Women and War*. University of Chicago Press, 1995.

their violence towards opposing forces by stating that they are protecting their females. Hence, males become the “just warriors” protecting the female “beautiful souls.” The beautiful soul image relies on the patriarchal view of women as innocent, helpless, and pure beings that required masculine violence for their protection.

Puritan men used rape as a form of genocide against native populations. They also used it as a tool to instill fear upon their own women. They told their women that the savage heathen natives wanted nothing more than to violate their purity. While doing this they slaughtered and raped natives during warfare and through prisoners of war. Feminist author Carol Cohen details “women’s sexual ‘purity’ as central to the patriarchal family honor”¹⁶ which creates motivation for rape as a weapon against the enemy. This is multi-faceted because European colonizers saw bloodlines as racially hierarchal. A royal or noble bloodline had a greater association with purity. White skin was objectified as a thing of beauty and pure, suggesting that dark skin was tainted.¹⁷ Fair complexion also played into the patriarchal aspect of women remaining inside doing domestic work. Natives on the other hand did not acknowledge tainted bloodlines. Their captive adoption ritual only acknowledged roles of becoming part of the family.

Puritan men held control of all socio-economic aspects in their societies. In turn, Puritan brutality toward native men and women was increased on two heteropatriarchal bases. Puritans had the economic backing of the theory “*vacuum domicilium*.” which claimed that lands were vacant if they were not being efficiently used.¹⁸ They argued that natives were not civilized enough to use their land properly.

Algonquin culture differed radically from the heteropatriarchal Puritan’s in that native American tribes were matrilocal and matrilineal. Their family lines followed their mother’s family and when females married, they remained in proximity to their family. When a male married a woman, he joined her “clan”, and gained *her* family’s support and companionship. As a result, indigenous women had a lot of social and political power.¹⁹ Women had the right to leave or “divorce” a man if he did not meet her expectations which would prove exceptionally debilitating for the man, because his existence heavily relied on the support of the clan.

Women’s kinship ties were crucial to native existence; they were established by their matrilocal communities. Natives found coexistence with nearby tribes preferable to constant conflict. Land was the primary source of sustenance through agriculture. Land claims were also inherited matrilocally. Brooks shows that maintaining kinship with local sachems was key in “respecting the bonds and bounds between their territories, ‘our land’, on which families relied on sustenance.”²⁰ These networks of women were in constant cooperation in economic and agricultural affairs. They commonly participated with men in councils, often having councils of their own. Sachems (chiefs) were elected by elder women known as matrons. The eldest/most powerful female of the clan was commonly referred to as a matron. She held extensive spiritual

¹⁶ Carol Cohn and Cynthia H. Enloe. *Women and Wars*. Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2017. 29.

¹⁷ Natsu Taylor Saito. *Settler Colonialism, Race, and the Law. Why Structural Racism Persists*. New York, NY: New York University Press, 2020. 12.

¹⁸ Roy Harvey Pearce. *The Savages of America: A Study of the Indian and the Idea of Civilization*. Glen Rock, NJ: Microfilming Corp. of America, 1973. 16-17.

¹⁹ Devon Abbott Mihesuah. *Indigenous American Women: Decolonization, Empowerment, Activism*. Lincoln, NE: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 2003. 44.

²⁰ Brooks, *Our Beloved Kin*, 46.

and ritualistic duties, as did all women. According to Brooks, native sachems were often mislabeled by colonists as kings or queens: “They were not ruling ‘kings’ and ‘queens’, but rather ambassadors, ‘hard-bodied’ diplomats who traveled to other nations, carried their community’s deliberative decisions, communicated effectively and persuasively with other leaders, and travelled swiftly to return the wider deliberations home.”²¹ In fact, the sachem’s true role furthered the importance of women’s kinship as it showed the importance of collective decision making and representation.

Weetamoo faced constant struggle protecting her lands from colonizers. There are a few examples of colonizers trying to extort land from Weetamoo. At first colonizers claimed that the previous generation laid claim to the land upon arrival, and that they had the right to distribute it. Another example is an “Indian land deed” signed by a mysterious unknown native “Ekatabake” that signed over Weetamoo’s family’s land. The final example is extorting Weetamoo’s husband for tracts of land, by claiming he had previous debts prior to their marriage.²² The colonizers’ heteropatriarchal culture caused them to deny the passing of land through matrilineal descent. They also relied on the heteropatriarchal aspect of a man owning his wife and everything she has. Brooks provides legal papers indicating that Weetamoo tried to meet with Plymouth courts to discuss and settle the accusations of the Algonquin men concerning the death of John Sausamon. These documents show Weetmoo’s desire to preemptively avoid war through diplomatic meeting.²³ She was denied these meetings because, to colonizers, women had no place in court. This is once again another example of Weetmoo being erased from history.

Another source of native women’s influence was the division of labor which provided females with a sedentary agricultural lifestyle, while males practiced a migratory lifestyle around hunting and warfare.²⁴ The women were sedentary agriculturists which provided them with possession of the land and material goods of the tribes. Algonquins differed from the Puritans in that their women were in control of their agriculture and all material goods. Women gained influence because they leveraged the allocation of resources (mostly food stocks) as trade goods, nourishment for hunts, and providing resources for warfare. Algonquin men’s responsibilities were commonly protection and hunting.

Algonquins are known for their egalitarianism. If one of the sustenance programs lacked successful yields at a particular time, there was a shift in prerogatives and decision making towards the more successful sustenance practice at that time.²⁵ Naturally agriculture and gathering were important during summer and fall seasons, whereas hunting gained importance during winter months. This enabled a fluidity of switching labor groups to whichever helped the clan. Men occasionally gathered or planted, and women would hunt when it was needed. The fluidity also existed with age. When men became too old or weak to hunt, they easily transitioned into an agricultural role. Elderly women (matrons) transitioned into an important spiritual role that came with age. This approach helped make all Algonquin citizens equal within their community.

²¹ Brooks. *Our Beloved Kin*, 34.

²² Brooks, *Our Beloved Kin*, 41-43.

²³ Brooks, *Our Beloved Kin*, 12.

²⁴ Carol Berkin. *First Generations: Women in Colonial America*. New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 1997.58.

²⁵ Berkin, *First Generations*, 58.

At the time of initial colonization, food was the key resource that colonizers severely lacked. The Puritans depended on trade and diplomacy with surrounding natives to acquire sustenance. As a result, the natives' land area under cultivation increased, leading to a natural power shift towards the women's prerogatives and importance. Women became responsible for not only providing food for their clan, but also teaching cooking techniques and sharing their produce with colonizers.²⁶ Each visit from colonizers to native areas involved a series of rituals and a feast primarily supplied by the clan matron. The visits from the Puritans increased as their rising population sought to acquire more land rights along with their dependency on native food stocks. Native women's influence is seen in how matrons played key roles in voting for the clan's sachem or chief.²⁷

In most recorded instances the sachem is a male, but as we will see with Weetamoo, there are a few records of females serving as sachem. One reason is that colonizers' records often ignore or omit the participation of women at court hearings.²⁸ Colonizers' patriarchal culture would cause them to only recognize male authority. There is also evidence that councils favored male sachems to comply with the heteropatriarchal standards of colonizers during diplomatic meetings.²⁹ Maeve Kane highlights this in her essay, '*She Did Not Open Her Mouth Further*': "A (male) speaker for the women maintained the appearance of consensus by speaking for the women to the men's council with one voice while respecting gender protocols and conveying the position of the clan matrons to council of sachems and Euro-American diplomats."³⁰ Colonizers discouraged women from attendance at court proceedings or diplomatic agreements. Feminist author Devon Abbot Mihesuah states "this lack of proper documentation, including ignoring women's prominent roles altogether, reinforces patriarchal socialization among all Americans."³¹

The colonizers' view of sachems portrayed them as authoritarian leaders through birthright, much like their monarchies. In truth sachems gained their authority through voting not birthrights. This would be like comparing today's presidents with kings. Along with the imposed title of king, colonizers aligned sachems with absolute authority over their people, undermining the importance of females' inclusion in councils and electing sachems. This perceived authority was reinforced as sachems were forced to lead war against colonizers. This acculturation successfully displaced sachem's initial role as a peacekeeper, negotiator, and kinship diplomat into that of one of a threat as a military leader. This was evident in Metacom and Weetamoo's forced protection of their own lands against self-righteous Puritan invaders--another form of forced heteropatriarchal acculturation.

Rowlandson's account was careful to not acknowledge the prestige of her overseer, matron, and Sachem Weetamoo. Multiple times she refers to as a Puritan title of "mistress" relating her influence as 'gentry'.³² Rowlandson's account provides instances where Weetamoo and Metacom lead rituals as equals, yet only acknowledges his authority in other sections.

²⁶ Gunlog Fur. *Nation of Women: Gender and Colonial encounters Among the Delaware Indians*. Philadelphia, PA: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 2012. 20.

²⁷ Maeve Kane. "'*She Did Not Open Her Mouth Further*':" *Women in the American Revolution*, 2019, 85.

²⁸ Brooks. *Our Beloved Kin*, 49.

²⁹ Maeve Kane. "'*She Did Not Open Her Mouth Further*'," 85.

³⁰ Maeve Kane. "'*She Did Not Open Her Mouth Further*'," 85.

³¹ Mihesuah. *Indigenous American Women*, 45.

³² Potter, "Writing Indigenous Femininity," 159.

Rowlandson undermines Weetamoo's influence by highlighting one of her failures, which was the passing of her own child. Rowlandson inadvertently hints that because Weetamoo partakes in masculine responsibilities, her maternal instincts falter.³³ In doing this Rowlandson promotes her own maternalism/Puritan role in her own culture while undermining Weetamoo's. I believe this is another instance of where Increase Mather may have played a part in editing. Rowlandson had just lost a child weeks before, and I believe she related in the anguish Weetamoo felt, and that Mather doctored that entry.

RELIGION

In an essay, *Pilgrims and Puritans and the Myth of the Promised Land*, Heike Paul describes how Puritan Colonizers/ Pilgrims "considered America their Promised Land, thus taking biblical scripture as prophecy and anticipating its fulfillment in their own lived reality in North America."³⁴ Their vision was based on America as a utopian land free for the taking. This idea caused many religiously suppressed Calvinists (Puritans) to seek haven in this new land. Puritans adopted the logic of "Christian imperialism" as described by Roy Harvey Pearce, "God had meant the savage Indians' land for civilized English and, moreover, had meant the savages state itself as a sign of Satan's power and savage warfare as a sign of earthy struggle and sin."³⁵ Christian imperialism mixes religion with its heteropatriarchal qualities intersectionally. Christian imperialism showed the perceived supremacy and economic logic of white patriarchal culture that implied Puritans had the divine right to cleanse the land. Puritans associated natives as being influenced by the devil; therefore, they were sub-human and deserved genocide because they were 'savage', incapable of being evangelized and redeemed.

Puritan religion defined native populations as sexually perverse often comparing them to Canaanites from biblical text. Much like this example from the Bible, Puritans saw the genocide of natives as commanded by God, because they were corrupt and inhabited their "promised land". A quote from Puritan minister Alexander Whitaker in Andrea Smith's book *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*, "They live naked in bodie, as if their shame of their sinne deserved no covering: Their names are as naked as their bodie: They esteem it a virtue to lie, deceive and steale as their master the divell teacheth them."³⁶ Smith goes on to reason that Puritans saw natives as "violable and rapable" because of their sexual perversion. She hints that rape did not count in the eyes of their God. She continues, "the history of mutilation of Indian bodies, both living and dead, makes it clear that Indian people are not entitled to bodily integrity."³⁷

Algonquin religion differed radically from heteropatriarchal Christianity. Algonquins believed an individual's connection with the spirits was the basis on their rise of importance in their community. Their spiritual relativity was based on an individual's alignment with successful rituals. Indigenous attributed the success of their sustenance ventures to their preceding tribe rituals. In her book, *A Nation of Women*, Gunlog Fur describes rituals men and

³³ Potter, "Writing Indigenous Femininity," 159.

³⁴ Heike Paul. "Pilgrims and Puritans and the Myth of the Promised Land." *The Myths That Made America: An Introduction to American Studies*, 137.96. Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2014. Accessed April 8, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv1wxsdq.7>.

³⁵ Pearce, *The Savages of America*, 20.

³⁶ Smith, *Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*, 10.

³⁷ Smith, *Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*, 10.

women's spheres in religion as "remembering ahead". Spiritual leaders were able to recognize when they would need to perform rituals to promote the success of their sustenance practices.³⁸ Rituals pertained to male led hunts or raids for captives and to female led planting, diplomatic feasts, or herbal healing. Naturally, matrons held high spiritual prestige which enforced their duty of enculturating future generations. Fur builds on native's views on spirituality being in two different spheres, defining "Men's roles as those who were primarily in charge of the activities that ended life."³⁹ She continues to state women's roles served as reproductive or gaining life. Natives equated this to their diplomatic roles with colonizers where men specialized in conflict, while women specialized in coexistence and peace. As the need for repopulation increased, so did the importance of women in acculturation of war captives.

Disease and violent conflicts ravaged native populations. Puritans justified the spread of disease amongst the natives as "God's work". Puritan leader John Winthrop pens, "[the natives] are neere all dead of smalle Poxe, so as the Lord hath cleared our title to what we possess."⁴⁰ Lack of kinship possibilities for the Algonquins aligned with slaughtering of neighboring tribes (Pequots) by the Virginian colonizers a decade prior. Without nearby tribes and their own population severely crippled, Algonquins began increased numbers of raids on Puritan colonies to acquire captives. Natives' goals in acquiring captives were acculturating them into their own populations. Once again power shifted for women's prerogatives.

The increase of raids amplified importance to the significance of women's roles in acculturation. Men led war parties to acquire captives, yet upon their return, it became the women's responsibility to supervise and eventually integrate the captives into their societies through rituals. June Namias describes it well in the preface of her book *White Captives*,

Capture was rarely an act of caprice. Rather, for many indigenous peoples of the Northeast it was a major strategy of warfare used against all enemies, regardless of race. Captives were taken to prevent expansion onto Indian lands. This was a direct threat to settler families and frontier fortresses. Prisoners were held in exchange for the purchase of weapons and goods and to replace lost relatives. Decimation by disease and intense warfare left woodland Indians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries fearing extinction, and as mentioned, traditional practice encouraged the replacement of a dead brother, sister, or spouse by another person of either sex by ritual adoption.⁴¹

During these raids often younger children and women were targeted because they would be easier to acculturate. Children were easier because their minds were still developing, and they did not have a sense of their born into culture. Women were easier because they realized they had escaped a Christian, often-violent patriarch.

Historians today contradict the implied barbarity of Rowlandson's captivity. In Rowlandson's own words, "I have been in the midst of roaring Lions, and Savage Bears, that feared neither God, nor Man, nor the Devil... and yet not one of them ever offered the least

³⁸ Fur, *Nation of Women*, 24-25.

³⁹ Fur, *Nation of Women*, 24-25.

⁴⁰ Pearce, *The Savages of America*, 19.

⁴¹ June Namias. *White Captives: Gender and Ethnicity on the American Frontier*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1993.

abuse of unchastity to me in word or action.”⁴² If anything, the natives were more pious than colonizer in their treatment towards war prisoners. The problem is that there are few written accounts from captives that joined their captors; “Captives who never returned home usually produced no books. Those captives who recounted their stories for publication had chosen not to live as Indians and therefore provided a revealing but rather one-sided view of Indian life.”⁴³ Interestingly, Andrea Smith shares that studies show that roughly 40% of female captives chose to remain with their captors rather than return to their heteropatriarchal societies.⁴⁴

RACISM

The concept of intersectionality comes full circle in the aspect of racism. Although racism as a theory was not conceived until the middle of the 18th century, early racism is evident in colonizer interactions with Indigenous. Puritans preached that natives were descendent of the dark-skinned Tartars from biblical times --Tartars being the brutish adversaries of the Christian Romans who had supposedly migrated West from Asia.⁴⁵ Author Taylor Saito defines this early racism in his book, *Settler Colonialism, Race, and the Law. Why Structural Racism Persists*.

The contemporary construct of ‘race’ has functioned as a kind of shorthand for the cultural differences used to justify colonialism’s “civilizing mission.” This mission, in turn, has served- and continues to serve- as the rationale for the exploitation of the land, labor, and natural resources of those deemed Other. Race has the added benefit, from the colonizer’s perspective, of being considered a “scientific” descriptor of physical characteristics, serving to perpetuate the dynamic of difference by linking cultural attributes identified as savage, barbaric, or otherwise uncivilized to relatively immutable biological factors.⁴⁶

Through these means, racial identification assists the colonists’ claim that they “are uplifting and civilizing “the natives” through assimilationist measures” intended to diminish “the political, social, or economic rights of the peoples subject to their rule.”⁴⁷

An example of this is clear in Rowlandson’s narrative in her travelling with Weetamoo. In an incident when coming across natives clothed in English clothing, Rowlandson states, “[W]hen they came near, there was a vast difference between the lovely Faces of Christians, and the foul looks of those Heathens”.⁴⁸ Even though they dressed like colonizers, they were not able to fully embody feminine beauty because of their skin color.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of King Phillips’s War was extremely brutal for the Algonquin population. Essentially, they were completely wiped out through genocide. The subjugation and violence of women was obviously a mechanism to accomplish this. The problem is there are no accounts to detail these brutalities. The only individuals writing the histories that exist today held

⁴²Smith, *Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*, 20.

⁴³ Colin G. Calloway. *North country Captives: Selected Narratives of Indian Captivity from Vermont and New Hampshire*. Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1992. Xii..

⁴⁴ Smith, *Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*, 20.

⁴⁵ Pearce, *The Savages of America*, 24.

⁴⁶ Saito, *Settler Colonialism, Race, and the Law*, 42.

⁴⁷ Saito, *Settler Colonialism, Race, and the Law*, 42.

⁴⁸ Potter, “Writing Indigenous Femininity,” 160.

an obvious biased heteropatriarchal, religious, and racist viewpoint. It is not surprising that there are no accounts of the Puritans committing brutalities against native women. The worst thing they could do is admit their sin's, incriminating themselves not only to their peers, but also God. There is however one brief description of brutality concerning Weetamoo's grim demise. Increase Mather only mentions Weetamoo one time in his 102-page report discerning King Phillip's War, noting that "long after some of Taunton finding an Indian Squaw in Metapoiset newly dead, cut off her head, and it hapned to be Weetamoo. When it was set upon a pole in Taunton, the Indians who were prisoners there, knew it presently, and made a most horrid and diabolical Lamentation, crying out that it was their Queens head. Now here it is to be observed, that God himself by his own hand, brought this enemy to destruction."⁴⁹

This passage shows us two things. The first is another aspect supporting that Increase Mather truly knew of Weetamoo and of her clear importance. The other is an example of vulgar acts propelled through pure hatred towards native populations. The desecration of Weetamoo served as a foretelling of violence that met all native women over the colonization of our country. Not only physical violence, but cultural violence as well as heteropatriarchal Christian evangelization was inevitable in destroying their culture and legacies.

⁴⁹ Mather, "A Brief History of the War," 71.

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