

*Crossing the Cultural Divide:
Indians and New Englanders,
1605-1763*

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IN HIS *Letters from an American Farmer* (1782), Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur wondered why 'thousands of Europeans are Indians, and we have no examples of even one of these Aborigines having from choice become European!'¹ The peripatetic Frenchman claimed no originality on this matter. He undoubtedly knew that earlier in the eighteenth century Cadwallader Colden and Benjamin Franklin, among others, had remarked on the Europeans' eagerness to join the Indians and the Indians' contrasting reluctance to assimilate with Europeans.² None of Crèvecoeur's contemporaries seems to have

An abbreviated version of this essay was delivered by Mr. Vaughan at the semiannual meeting of the American Antiquarian Society in Boston on April 16, 1980. The authors thank James Axtell, Glenn W. LaFantasie, and William S. Simmons for helpful comments on a preliminary draft.

¹ J. Hector St. John [Crèvecoeur], *Letters from an American Farmer; Describing Certain Provincial Situations, Manners, and Customs . . . of the British Colonies in North America* (London, 1782), p. 295.

² Cadwallader Colden, *The History of the Five Indian Nations Depending on the Province of New-York in America*, 2d ed. (London, 1750), pp. 203-4 (first pagination); *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, ed. Leonard W. Labaree et al., 4 (New Haven, 1961): 481-83. A similar statement was made by the Swedish botanist Peter Kalm, but he was probably repeating what he heard from Franklin or other Americans. (*Travels into North America*, 3 vols. [Warrington, Eng., 1770-71], 3:154). Colden and Kalm noted that French Canadians were highly susceptible to the lure of Indian life. For other Americans and Europeans who asserted that North American colonists frequently became Indianized but Indians almost never became Europeanized, see James Axtell, 'The White Indians of Colonial America,' *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser. 32(1975):68 n.8.

disagreed, and by now the paradox has so thoroughly permeated American thought that most modern scholars accept its accuracy without question. According to a recent specialist on early American history, 'the one case in which transculturation between Indians and Europeans did occur involved the Indianization of whites rather than the Europeanization of Indians. Throughout the colonial period . . . colonists in eastern North America ran away to Indian settlements.'³ And a prominent ethnohistorian's analysis of 'The White Indians of Colonial America' starts with the assumption that 'by the close of the colonial period, very few if any Indians had been transformed into civilized Englishmen[;]. . . on the other hand, large numbers of Englishmen had chosen to become Indians.' He then explains, rather than tests, that historical anomaly.⁴

There is, of course, no way to measure conclusively the number of early Americans of each race who exchanged their original cultural identity for another way of life. Severe problems of definition and sources cloud the issue. How much cultural change constitutes a thorough metamorphosis—a 'transculturation' from one set of values, beliefs, and behavior to another?⁵ How can transculturation in individuals and groups be measured? What sources document the complex human interaction in which cultural crossovers occurred, especially on the frontier where literacy was rare among Europeans and almost nil among Indians? Despite such conundrums, imprecise but useful numerical estimates of Indians and European-

³ Gary B. Nash, *Red, White, and Black: The Peoples of Early America* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1974), p. 283.

⁴ Axtell, 'White Indians,' p. 56.

⁵ We use 'transculturation' to mean a virtually complete shift from one culture to another and 'acculturation' to mean a partial shift or blending of cultures. Probably no individual past infancy totally sheds his original cultural affiliation; some vestiges almost certainly cling internally if not externally. But a sincere and nearly thorough acceptance of the alien culture—its values, customs, beliefs, and allegiances, and, ultimately their internalization—and a concomitant rejection of the original culture did happen in hundreds, perhaps thousands, of instances in early America. For a somewhat different use of the terms see A. Irving Hallowell, 'American Indians, White and Black: The Phenomenon of Transculturation,' *Current Anthropology* 4(1963):519-31.

Americans in colonial New England who changed their cultural allegiances can be made, thanks to the Puritan colonies' relatively abundant historical records and to the diligent research of several late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century investigators. And the evidence suggests a far less one-sided exchange than Colden, Franklin, and Crèvecoeur presented; in fact New England colonists were probably more successful than Indians in attracting social and religious converts. Yet, ironically, Indian culture incorporated strangers far more thoroughly and enthusiastically than did Puritan New England. In their basic attitudes toward new members of their societies, Indians and Englishmen were worlds apart.

I

Probably the first New England Indian to become substantially Europeanized was Squanto of the Patuxet tribe. His story has often been told: how George Waymouth captured him in 1605; how Sir Ferdinando Gorges kept him until 1614 when he returned to New England with Capt. John Smith just in time to be recaptured by Capt. Thomas Hunt and sold into slavery in Spain; and how he escaped to England where he lived for two years before returning once again to New England. Squanto's dual kidnappings were, of course, reprehensible, but they probably saved his life: during his absence from Patuxet his tribe was exterminated by disease. Squanto subsequently befriended the Pilgrims who settled on his ancestral lands and served them gladly if sometimes duplicitously until his death in 1622.⁶ His crucial contributions as interpreter,

⁶ Information on Squanto is scattered and sometimes confusing because of variant spellings and uncertain identifications. The principal sources are William Bradford, *History of Plymouth Plantation*, ed. Worthington C. Ford, 2 vols. (Boston, 1912), passim; Bradford and Edward Winslow, *A Relation or Journall . . . of the English Plantation settled at Plimouth [Mour's Relation]* (London, [1622]), passim; Sydney V. James, ed., *Three Visitors to Early Plymouth* (Plymouth, Mass., 1963), pp. 12-13; Ferdinando Gorges, *A Briefe Relation of the Discovery and Plantation of New England* (London, 1622), repr. *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 2d ser. 9 (1823): 7-8 [hereafter cited as *MHS Colls.*]; and Ferdinando Gorges, *A Briefe Narration of the Originall Undertakings . . . Especially . . . of New England* (London, 1658), repr.

guide, pilot, and fishing and planting instructor convinced Gov. William Bradford that Squanto was 'a special instrument sent of God for their good beyond their expectation.'⁷

Squanto's acculturation must have been extensive. He gained considerable command of the English language during his years abroad, he apparently acquired some English customs, and he probably learned something of English farming practices from settlers in Newfoundland.⁸ After the spring of 1621 he lived the remaining year and a half of his life among the Plymouth colonists, and at his death, according to Bradford, Squanto asked the governor's prayers 'that he might goe to the Englishmens God in heaven.'⁹ Although romantic illustrations of Squanto (there are no contemporary pictures) invariably show him in loincloth and feathers, the popularity of European garments among seventeenth-century Indians and Squanto's long exposure to English customs suggest that he more likely wore breeches, shirt, and Monmouth cap. While the depth of Squanto's social and religious conversion is uncertain, he seems to have substantially crossed the cultural chasm between Indian and Englishman in Puritan New England.

Counterparts are hard to find during the next three decades. Samoset, who introduced Squanto to the Pilgrims,

Collections of the Maine Historical Society 2(1847):17. The best secondary summaries are Charles Francis Adams, *Three Episodes of Massachusetts History*, 2 vols. (Boston, 1892), 1:23-44; and Samuel Eliot Morison, 'Squanto,' *Dictionary of American Biography*, ed. Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone, 20 vols. (New York, 1928-36), 17:487. On other early New England Indians taken to England see Carolyn Thomas Foreman, *Indians Abroad, 1493-1938* (Norman, Okla., 1943), passim; and Alden T. Vaughan, *New England Frontier: Puritans and Indians, 1620-1675*, rev. ed. (New York, 1979), ch. 1.

⁷ Bradford, *History of Plymouth*, 1:202.

⁸ See Lynn Ceci, 'Fish Fertilizer: A Native North American Practice?' *Science* 188(April 1975):26-30, and the 'Letters' section of the succeeding volume.

⁹ On Squanto's curious role see Bradford, *History of Plymouth*, 1:252-55; Bradford and Winslow, *Relation of Plymouth*, p. 59; James, ed., *Three Visitors*, pp. 12-13; Edward Winslow, 'Good News from New England' [orig. pub. London, 1624], Edward Arber, ed., *The Story of the Pilgrim Fathers* (Boston, 1897), pp. 513-28; and Leonard A. Adolf, 'Squanto's Role in Pilgrim Diplomacy,' *Ethnohistory* 11(1964):247-61. The quote is from Bradford, *History of Plymouth*, 1:283.

disappears immediately from the records. Hobomock, whose role at Plymouth somewhat paralleled Squanto's and lasted twenty years longer, is also a hazy historical figure, although he apparently identified closely with the settlers and adopted their beliefs.¹⁰ Perhaps the Indians who frequented the transient outposts near modern Quincy acquired a smattering of English ways—at least they eagerly accepted 'civilized' society's rum and muskets—but, according to early Puritan sources, the acculturation process went mainly in the other direction: Thomas Weston's English band in the early 1620s and Thomas Morton's at the same location later in the decade probably became more Indian than the Indians became English.¹¹

Formation of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1629 and its dramatic growth in the 1630s opened new opportunities for Indians to become anglicized. The Bay Colonists came to America—so their leaders and their charter said—partly to bring civilization and Christianity to the heathen; not, however, until midcentury could Massachusetts or its Connecticut offshoot claim much progress in converting Indians to their ways. The Puritans' critics, then and since, have charged that New England made scant efforts to fulfill their pious pronouncements or their charter's admonition to 'wynn and incite the natives . . . [to] the onlie true God and Savior of mankinde.'¹² Colonial spokesmen, by contrast, blamed their mea-

¹⁰ On Hobomock and Tokamahomon, another Indian who aided the Pilgrims and lived with them for a time, see Bradford, *History of Plymouth*, 1:225, 252, 253, 346; Bradford and Winslow, *Relation of Plymouth*, 46-55; and Winslow, 'Good News,' passim.

¹¹ Weston's group is described in Bradford, *History of Plymouth*, 1:271-72, 280-97; Winslow, 'Good News,' passim; and Phinehas Pratt, 'A Declaration of the Affaires of the English People [That First] Inhabited New England,' *MHS Colls.*, 4th ser. 4(1858):476-87. On Morton's outpost see Thomas Morton, *New English Canaan . . . Containing an Abstract of New England . . .* (Amsterdam, 1637; repr. New York, 1972), 'The Third Booke'; Bradford, *History of Plymouth*, 2:45-58; and 'Governour Bradford's Letter Book,' *MHS Colls.*, 1st. ser. 3(1794):62-4. Both the Weston and Morton outposts are examined in Adams, *Three Episodes*, part 1.

¹² Nathaniel B. Shurtleff, ed., *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England*, 5 vols. (Boston, 1853-54), 1:17.

ger success on circumstances: the Indians' language, which few Englishmen could speak and which varied from tribe to tribe; the opposition of Indian sachems and shamans; a shortage of funds and personnel; and especially the Indians' 'infinite distance from Christianity, having never been prepared thereunto by any Civility at all.'¹³ Puritan clergymen insisted that Indians must close the cultural distance. As Cotton Mather later observed of John Eliot: 'he was to make *Men* of them, ere he could hope to see them *Saints*; they must be civilized er'e they could be *Christianized*.'¹⁴ However, Eliot and the other ministers interested in the Indians were only part-time missionaries, because the Puritans defined a clergyman—and hence a missionary—as a man who served a parish church.¹⁵ With physical and economic survival demanding everyone's energies in the early years, the Puritans taught few Indians to act like Englishmen and therefore converted few to Christianity.

The surviving records claim a few proselytes in the Bay Colony's first two decades, but the evidence is sparse and inconclusive. In 1643 several Massachusetts clergymen boasted that appreciable progress had already been made toward civilizing and converting the Indians. The opening section of their promotional tract, *New Englands First Fruits*, offered 'a little tast of the sprincklings of Gods spirit, upon a few Indians'; many more examples, the authors insisted, could be gathered if all of the New England settlements were searched, for they had 'snacht up only such instances which came at present to hand.'¹⁶ They devoted half a page to an Indian at

¹³ For a general discussion of early Puritan missionary efforts see Vaughan, *New England Frontier*, ch. 9. The quote is from *New Englands First Fruits; in Respect, First of the Conversion of Some, Conviction of divers, Preparation of Sundry of the Indians . . .* (London, 1643), p. 1.

¹⁴ Cotton Mather, *Triumphs of the Reformed Religion: The Life of the Renowned John Eliot . . .* (Boston, 1691), p. 83.

¹⁵ See Williston Walker, *The Creeds and Platforms of Congregationalism* (New York, 1893; repr. Philadelphia, 1960), pp. 210–17; and William Ames, *The Marrow of Theology*, trans. John Dykstra Eusden (Boston, 1968), pp. 209–10.

¹⁶ *New Englands First Fruits*, p. 7 (incorrectly numbered 15). A decade earlier William Wood reported that many of the Indians were 'much civilized since the

Plymouth who believed that Christian prayers had ended an 'extreame Drought' by producing 'a most sweet, constant, soaking showre'; he was impressed enough to endure his countrymen's scorn and to remain thereafter with the English.¹⁷ In 1637 Wequash, a Pequot Indian living with the Narragansetts, was inspired by the colonists' military prowess. 'Seeing and beholding the mighty power of God in our English Forces, how they fell upon the *Pequits*, . . . [he] was convinced and perswaded that our God was a most dreadfull God; and that one *English* man by the help of his God was able to slay and put to flight an hundred *Indians*.' Wequash soon moved to Saybrook, Connecticut, discarded all his wives but the first, and spread Christ's message among neighboring tribes. But Satan retaliated by causing some disgruntled Indians to poison Wequash, who on his deathbed bequeathed his child to the English 'for education and instruction.' Thomas Shepard hailed Wequash as a Christian martyr, and Samuel Danforth's *Almanack for the Year of our Lord 1647* called him 'the first Indian that held forth a clear work of conversion to Christianity.'¹⁸ Another admirer of English customs was Sagamore John of the Massachusetts tribe, who studied English and 'loved to imitate us in our behaviour and apparrell, and began to hearken after our God and his wayes.' However, Indian threats and ridicule kept Sagamore John from living with the English, a decision he lamented on his deathbed

English colonies were planted, though but little edified in religion. They frequent often the English churches where they will sit soberly, though they understand not such hidden mysteries.' Wood also noted that 'one of the English preachers, in a special good intent of doing good to their souls, hath spent much time in attaining to their language.' *New England's Prospect*, ed. Alden T. Vaughan (Amherst, Mass., 1977), pp. 97, 110. The early student of the Indian language has not been further identified; Wood probably wrote in 1633, several years before John Eliot began to learn the Algonquian tongue.

¹⁷ *New Englands First Fruits*, p. 2.

¹⁸ *New Englands First Fruits*, pp. 5-7; Danforth, *An Almanack for the Year of Our Lord 1647* (Cambridge, Mass., 1647), p. 16. In 1637 Wequash guided a Connecticut-Mohegan-Narragansett army to a surprise attack on the principal Pequot fort. Thus he witnessed and abetted the Puritans' military success. John Mason, *A Brief History of the Pequot War* (Boston, 1736), p. 7.

when he gave his only child to the Rev. John Wilson of Boston.¹⁹ A somewhat different missionary success involved a 'Blackmore maid' of Dorchester who had met Puritanism's rigorous requirements for full church membership; thereafter she sought to persuade Indians that Christ would welcome them also.²⁰

Indian children bequeathed to Puritan control may have been more thorough in their social and religious conversion than their parents. Here too, however, the records are frustratingly sparse. Sagamore John's son soon died of smallpox, but perhaps Wequash's heirs and other Indian children among the Puritans grew up virtually as English youths and silently merged into the colonial population. Or perhaps they just as silently slipped back into native society with none of their fathers' attachment to Puritan culture.²¹ That the former situation obtained in similar cases if not in theirs is strongly argued in *New Englands First Fruits*: 'Divers of our *Indians* Children, Boyes and Girles we have received into our houses, who are long since civilized, and in subjection to us, painfull and handy in their businesse, and can speak our language familiarly; divers of whom can read English, and begin to understand in their measure, the grounds of Christian Religion . . . and are much in love with us, and cannot indure to returne any more to the *Indians*.'²²

¹⁹ *New Englands First Fruits*, pp. 4-5; John Cotton, *The Way of the Christian Churches Cleared* (London, 1648), repr. Larzer Ziff, ed., *John Cotton on the Churches of New England* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), p. 277. Cotton claimed that Sagamore John's 'neighbor Indians sagamores, and powwaws hearing of this [attachment to the English], threatened to *cram* him (that is, to kill him) if he did so degenerate from his country gods. . . .' For similar reports of threats and abuse see [John Wilson?], *The Day-Breaking, if not the Sun-Rising of the Gospell with the Indians in New-England* (London, 1647), repr. *MHS Colls.*, 3d. ser. 4(1834):17, 22.

²⁰ *New Englands First Fruits*, p. 5.

²¹ Cotton, *Way of the Christian Churches*, p. 278; Daniel Gookin, *Historical Collections of the Indians in New England* (Boston, 1792), pp. 32-33; [Wilson?], *Day-Breaking*, pp. 3, 18, 21, 22.

²² *New Englands First Fruits*, p. 3. Some of the Indian children may have been captured in the Pequot War; if so, they, like the Indian captives in King Philip's War, seldom appear in the records, and neither their numbers nor the extent of their acculturation can be measured. Most young captives who were not sold out of New England were probably released after a few years' servitude.

Neither *New England's First Fruits* nor any other contemporary source gives exact figures on the Indian youngsters who lived with English families and studied at New England common and grammar schools; few are even mentioned by name. Perhaps a score of Indians before 1675 attended Puritan schools, and of these about half a dozen entered Harvard.²³ Because instruction at all levels of Puritan education was in English, and because the curriculum and living circumstances apparently made no allowance for Indian preferences, the 'hopeful Indians youths' must have been almost fully incorporated into English culture. Some of the English, in fact, attributed the high mortality rate among Indian students to the 'great change upon their bodies, in respect of their diet, lodging, apparel, [and] studies; so much different from what they were inured to among their own countrymen.'²⁴ Modern observers would add psychological strain to the list. In any event, some Indian students apparently did survive and returned to their tribes; others disappear from the records but may have retained their anglicized behavior and beliefs; while several, including the only Harvard graduate, endured the perils of Puritan academia only to die soon after of 'European' diseases.²⁵

Some Indians did substantially cross the cultural divide and live the bulk of their lives among the English. John Eliot, Sr., attributed his early training in the Algonquian tongues and help in translating several religious tracts to 'a pregnant witted

²³ Samuel Eliot Morison, *Harvard College in the Seventeenth Century*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1936), 1:340-60; Vaughan, *New England Frontier*, pp. 280-88; John L. Sibley, *Biographical Sketches of Graduates of Harvard University*, 2 (Cambridge, Mass., 1881): 201-3.

²⁴ David Pulsifer, ed., *Acts of the Commissioners of the United Colonies*, 2 vols. (*Records of the Colony of New Plymouth*, vols. 9-10 [Boston, 1859]), 2:107; Gookin, *Historical Collections*, p. 33.

²⁵ Vaughan, *New England Frontier*, pp. 282-85; Sibley, *Biographical Sketches*, 2:202-3; Douglas Edward Leach, *Flintlock and Tomahawk: New England in King Philip's War* (New York, 1958), p. 31. Joel Hiacoomes of Martha's Vineyard, perhaps the most proficient Indian student, was murdered by Indians shortly before he would have graduated. Gookin (*Historical Collections*, p. 33) attributes the motive to greed rather than hostility toward transculturation.

young man, who had been a servant in an English house.²⁶ This Indian was captured during the Pequot War and held by the English for several years. Eliot's subsequent interpreter and principal assistant in publishing the Indian Bible was James Printer, who spent twenty years at the Cambridge Press. He must have absorbed a hefty portion of Anglo-American customs and values, for although his loyalty apparently wavered in 1675 when he sided briefly with the Wampanoags, the next year he received amnesty and thereafter aided the English. He later became a missionary to the Indians.²⁷

The most substantial body of transculturated Indians in colonial New England emerged from the missionary efforts of the Mayhews on Martha's Vineyard, the Eliots in Massachusetts, and a number of less prominent clergymen in Plymouth and Connecticut. In 1644 several eastern Massachusetts sachems relinquished sovereignty over their lands and jurisdiction over their tribesmen to the Bay Colony government, which inspired a modest missionary effort led principally by John Eliot, Sr., of Roxbury.²⁸ In 1651 he established the first 'praying town' of converts and catechumens at Natick, and by the eve of King Philip's War in 1675 fourteen such communities dotted eastern Massachusetts and the neighboring fringe of Connecticut.²⁹ Meanwhile, on Martha's Vineyard and its neighboring islands, the Mayhews—Thomas, Jr., who

²⁶ John Eliot, *The Indian Grammar Begun; or an Essay to Bring the Indian Language into Rules* (Cambridge, Mass., 1700), p. 60.

²⁷ Samuel G. Drake, *The Aboriginal Races of North America, Comprising Biographical Sketches of Eminent Individuals*, 1875 ed. (Philadelphia, 1890), pp. 113-16.

²⁸ Slaughter, ed., *Records of Massachusetts Bay*, 2175.

²⁹ Vaughan, *New England Frontier*, pp. 263-64, 288-90. The principal sources for Eliot's missionary work are several tracts, sometimes known as 'the Eliot Indian Tracts' but actually written by several clergymen, reprinted (with some exceptions) in *MHS Collections*, 3d ser. 41 (1891); Eliot's correspondence (which scattered) the most complete published list is in Frederick L. Wels, 'The New England Company of 1649 and Its Missionary Enterprises,' *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, Transactions* 28 (1917-51): 214-16; and two works by Daniel Gookin, *Historical Collections and An Historical Account of the Dobaga and Singlering of the Christian Indians in New England, in the Years 1675, 1676, 1677*, in *Transactions and Collections of the American Antiquarian Society* 2 (1836): 129-534.

died at sea in 1657, and Thomas, Sr., who carried on his son's work—conducted an even more promising experiment in Indian transculturation. The island's isolation and the Mayhews' virtually unlimited authority facilitated wholesale social and religious conversion. Once the sachems agreed to follow English ways, which many of them did in the 1650s, other Indians quickly followed suit.³⁰ In Plymouth Colony, Richard Bourne had by 1670 established a Christian church among the Nausets.³¹ Connecticut and Rhode Island, however, had little missionary success in the seventeenth century, partly because of Indian resistance and partly because neither colony produced dedicated proselytizers.³²

The depth and breadth of transculturation among these Christianized New England Indians can only be loosely estimated. Puritan efforts in schooling, evangelizing, providing European tools and paraphernalia, and encouraging adherence to English laws and customs produced many partial but probably few complete converts. Indians who met the Puritans' demanding social and theological qualifications for full church membership, however, must have been highly transculturated.³³ That status was accorded only to Indians who substan-

³⁰ On the Mayhews see especially Gookin, *Historical Collections*, pp. 31–37; the 'Ellier Indian Traces,' *passim*; Eliot's correspondence, Wals, 'New England Company,' *passim*; Vaughan, *New England Truther*, pp. 297–298; H. J. C. M. Hart, *The Mayhew: Puritan to the Indians, 1702–1782* (New York, 1962); Charles F. Brink, *The History of Martha's Vineyard*, 3 vols. (Boston, 1941–25), 1:176–77; and William S. Simmons, 'Conversion from Indian to Puritan,' *New England Quarterly*, 2 (1927): 197–218.

³¹ Richard Bourne and other early Plymouth missionaries are discussed especially in Gookin, *Historical Collections*, pp. 56–61; William Tookaway, *The New England Company, 1616–1776: Missionary Society to the American Indians* (Glasgow, 1961), p. 100; and Vaughan, *New England Truther*, pp. 298–300.

³² The sparse missionary achievements in Connecticut and Rhode Island are summarized in Gookin, *Historical Collections*, pp. 67–70; and Vaughan, *New England Truther*, pp. 300–303. Connecticut's clergy seem to have been less successful and less adept than their counterparts in Massachusetts, Plymouth, and Martha's Vineyard. Rhode Island's potential missionaries were distracted by denominational wrangling in their heterodox colony, and, in Roger Williams' case, by the de-legitimation of the legitimacy of proselytizing.

³³ For concise discussions of Puritan conversion experiences see Edwin S. Morgan, *Visible Saints: The History of a Puritan Idea* (New York, 1963) (pp. 116–121, 124–125).

tially changed their lifestyles and beliefs, experienced God's saving grace, and gave a convincing oral account of their conversion experience. According to Superintendent of Indians Daniel Gookin, in 1674 more than 150 Indians had already met those requirements, and many others were approaching that stage. Of the nearly 2,300 Indians whom Gookin estimated to be living in New England praying towns, many had been baptized as Christians (which for adults required an extensive knowledge and acceptance of Christian doctrine as well as substantial social reformation) and were presumably seeking a conversion experience and a thorough cultural transformation (table 1).³⁴ (Undoubtedly some Indians were at-

Table 1

DANIEL GOOKIN'S ESTIMATES OF THE CHRISTIAN
INDIAN POPULATION OF NEW ENGLAND, 1674

	<i>'Souls yielding obedience to the gospel'</i>	<i>Full communicants</i>	<i>Other baptized Christians</i>
Massachusetts	1,100	46-56*	45+*
Plymouth	497	27	90
Martha's Vineyard	360	50	N.A.
Nantucket	300	30	40
Connecticut	30	0	0
TOTALS	2,287	153-163	175+

* There were two Indian churches in Massachusetts in 1674, at Natick and Has-sauamesitt (Grafton). The latter church had 16 full communicants and 90 other baptized members. The Natick church had 40-50 full communicants and an unknown number of baptized members, including at least 15 who lived at Hopkinton.

SOURCE: Gookin, *Historical Collections*, pp. 40-70.

1965). For examples of public confessions see Morgan, ed., *The Diary of Michael Wigglesworth, 1653-1657: The Conscience of a Puritan* (repr. New York, 1965), pp. 107-25. For Indian conversion statements see John Eliot and Thomas Mayhew, *Tears of Repentance: Or, a Further Narrative of the Progress of the Gospel amongst the Indians in New England* (London, 1653).

³⁴ Gookin, *Historical Collections*, pp. 42-55.

tracted to Puritan religion but not to other aspects of New England culture and thus cannot be considered transculturates. Our concern here is with the small portion of the Indian population that sought to become as anglicized as possible.³⁵)

In 1675–76 King Philip's War disrupted the missionary experiment. Many of the praying Indians sided with Metacomet, (dubbed 'King Philip' by Puritan authorities), some took a neutral stance, and others remained loyal to the English, despite their incarceration on Deer Island and the calumny heaped on them by war-scared colonists. Eliot ruefully admitted that 'soone after the warr with the Indians brake forth . . . the profane Indians prove[d] a sharp rod to the English, and the English prove[d] a very sharp rod to the praying Indian.'³⁶ Yet substantial numbers of Indians from the praying towns held firm to their new faith, and in the end their military contribution decided the war in the Puritans' favor.³⁷

After the war, Eliot, Gookin, John and Experience Mayhew, and dozens of other Puritan clergymen and laymen had some success in molding Indians into Englishmen.³⁸ In 1698 the Rev. Grindal Rawson and Samuel Danforth visited the colony's praying towns on behalf of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England; their report dispels the notion that King Philip's War ended Puritan missionary activity and underlines once more the indissoluble tie between social and religious conversion. Rawson and Danforth described more than a score of Christian Indian congregations, ranging in size from a handful to several hundred participants. One congregation on Martha's Vineyard claimed 64 communicants among a local population of 231, and other congrega-

³⁵ See n. 49, below.

³⁶ Boston Record Commissioners, *Report* [No. 6] . . . *Containing the Roxbury Land and Church Records*, 2d ed. (Boston, 1884), p. 193.

³⁷ Leach, *Flintlock and Tomabawk*; ch. 8; Gookin, *Doings and Suffering*, passim.

³⁸ On Puritan missionary efforts after 1675, see especially William Kellaway, *The New England Company, 1649–1776: Missionary Society to the American Indians* (New York, 1962); and Weis, 'New England Company,' passim.

tions had almost as high a percentage. Equally revealing are the report's frequent references to schools and teachers, English-style meetinghouses, and English clothing. At Gay Head on Martha's Vineyard, for example, 'Abel and Elisha are preachers, to at least two hundred and sixty souls; who have here at their charge a meeting house already framed. We find that the Indians here . . . are well instructed in reading, well clothed, and mostly in decent English apparel.'³⁹ Two decades later, Experience Mayhew reported that Martha's Vineyard and its neighboring islands had 110 communicants in a total population of about 800. The converts were 'generally Cloathed as the English are, and they by degrees learn the English way of Husbandry. . . .' One Edgartown convert, 'being a Person of great Industry in his Business,' was proud of his 'Cows, Oxen, Horses, and Swine, also his Cart and Plough, and Cribs, and Stacks of Corn.'⁴⁰ Other Martha's Vineyard Indians had become carpenters, weavers, wheelwrights, tailors, shoemakers, blacksmiths, and cooper.⁴¹ Mayhew claimed that an increasing number of Indians had built houses 'of the *English* fashion,' but as late as 1727 most Indians on the islands still lived in wigwams.

Adoption of English-style housing seems to have been one of the last steps in transculturation, and the least essential.

³⁹ Rawson and Danforth, 'An Account of an Indian Visitation, A.D. 1698,' *MHS Colls.*, 1st ser. 10(1809):129-34. A few years earlier Matthew Mayhew estimated the number of adult Christian Indians on Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket to be 3,000. M. Mayhew, *A Brief Narrative of the Success which the Gospel hath had among the Indians, of Martha's-Vineyard (and the Places Adjacent) in New-England* (Boston, 1694), pp. 23-24.

⁴⁰ Experience Mayhew, 'A Brief Account of the State of the Indians on Martha's Vineyard . . . 1694 to 1720,' appended to E. Mayhew, *Discourse Shewing that God Dealeth with Men as Reasonable Creatures* (Boston, 1720), pp. 5, 11-12 (second pagination); Experience Mayhew, *Indian Converts; Or Some Account of the Lives and Dying Speeches of a Considerable Number of the Christianized Indians of Martha's Vineyard, in New-England* (London, 1727), p. 115. Apparently some women converts liked English attire too much: Mayhew praised one woman because 'she did not appear to affect gay and costly Clothing, as many of the *Indian* Maids do, yet always went clean and neat in her Apparel, still wearing such things as were suitable to her own Condition and Circumstances.' *Indian Converts*, p. 175.

⁴¹ E. Mayhew, 'Brief Account,' p. 12.

Experience Mayhew observed that Japheth Hannit, a Christian Indian preacher and a man 'generally and justly esteemed, as well by the *English* as *Indians*, a Person of a good Conversation . . . courteously received and entertained by . . . the best Gentlemen on the Island,' lived in a wigwam built by his wife, while the Edgartown farmer mentioned above inhabited a 'Wigwam well furnished with things necessary for the Use of his Family.' A generation earlier, Daniel Gookin described the Massachusetts praying town of Natick, already in existence for twenty-five years: 'Their . . . houses in this town are generally after their old mode . . . though some they have built in this and other of the praying villages, after the English form.' Gookin went on to explain, with apparent sympathy, the Indians' reasons for preferring 'to keep their old fashioned houses': cheapness, warmth, and portability.⁴² While Puritan spokesmen clearly favored English-style houses for Christian Indians, it was not an important issue. Orderliness, not architecture, was the criterion for Puritan approval.

While in the eighteenth century, as in the seventeenth, the offshore islands continued to be a major center of transculturation, New England's schools and colleges played a diminishing role. Fewer Indians attended and, once again, disease carried away the most promising; yet those who braved the rigors of Puritan education seem to have most thoroughly absorbed English ways and values. For example, Benjamin Larnell, an Indian from Plymouth Colony, lived for two and a half years in Judge Samuel Sewall's home, attended Boston Latin School, and impressed President Leverett of Harvard as 'an acute Grammarian, an Extraordinary Latin Poet, and a good Greek one.'⁴³ Larnell was progressing reasonably well at Harvard (class of 1716) when he suddenly took ill and died in Sewall's house during his first summer vacation. All the surviving evi-

⁴² E. Mayhew, 'Brief Account,' p. 11; E. Mayhew, *Indian Converts*, pp. 50-51, 115, 167; Gookin, *Historical Collections*, p. 41.

⁴³ Clifford K. Shipton, *Biographical Sketches of Those Who Attended Harvard College. Sibley's Harvard Graduates*, 6(Boston, 1942):142-44.

dence—including the particulars of his funeral—suggest that Larnell was thoroughly integrated into the Cambridge and Boston communities.⁴⁴

In the 1740s New England's Great Awakening furthered the trend toward Indian transculturation. The native population of southern New England had already undergone a large measure of political and economic anglicization. The Narragansetts, for example, as anthropologist William Simmons observes, were by 1740 'following in most respects an English social model while remaining on the periphery of English society. Through conversion they advanced their participation in colonial culture one step further by accepting the symbolic system which represented that culture.'⁴⁵ Some elements of Narragansett theology remained essentially Indian, but in most doctrines and practices the Narragansett Christians had become indistinguishable from English Calvinists. So too had the Mohegans, Pequots, and Niantics; during the Great Awakening many joined neighboring English churches while others formed exclusively Indian congregations. In either case, Indian response to Gilbert Tennent, James Davenport, Eleazar Wheelock, and other itinerant preachers was enthusiastic.⁴⁶ For some of these Indians—perhaps for most—transculturation became virtually complete. Had not widespread prejudice among Anglo-Americans reminded the Indians that despite their adoption of European behavior and beliefs they were still a distinct people, most of the Indians might have merged with their non-Indian neighbors, as a few probably

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 6:144; [Samuel Sewall], *The Diary of Samuel Sewall, 1674-1729*, ed. M. Halsey Thomas, 2 vols. (New York, 1973), 2:763-64.

⁴⁵ William S. Simmons, 'The Great Awakening and Indian Conversion in Southern New England,' *Papers of the Tenth Algonquian Conference*, ed. William Cowan (Ottawa, 1979), p. 32.

⁴⁶ Simmons, 'Great Awakening and Indian Conversion,' pp. 25-36; Cedric B. Cowing, *The Great Awakening and the American Revolution: Colonial Thought in the 18th Century* (Chicago, 1971), pp. 83-85; Paul R. Campbell and Glenn W. LaFantasie, 'Scattered to the Winds of Heaven—Narragansett Indians 1676-1880,' *Rhode Island History* 37 (Aug. 1978):74.

did through marriage or by following occupational careers such as seamanship that immersed them in non-Indian surroundings. In any event, by 1763 hundreds of Indians had crossed the cultural divide.

Estimating the total number of New England Indians who crossed cultures between 1605 and 1763 is fraught with pitfalls. Admission to full church membership may be an acceptable criterion for complete cultural change in the seventeenth century, but less rigorous definitions of sainthood in the eighteenth century undermine its diagnostic reliability.⁴⁷ One group of eighteenth-century Indians, however, must have been heavily, if not thoroughly, anglicized: native Christian preachers, trained and supervised by Anglo-American missionaries. Frederick L. Weis, in his exhaustive studies of colonial clergymen, identifies 140 Indian ministers who at some time before 1763 served sixty-two praying towns and other Christian Indian communities, twenty-one Congregational and Baptist churches, and nine Protestant missions (table 2).⁴⁸ These 140 Indian clerics added to Gookin's 1674 count of Indian full communicants in Puritan churches and perhaps half of the Indians known to have become full communicants between 1675 and 1763 (on the assumption that many, but not all, later Christian Indians had crossed cultures) yield a rough estimate of 500 New England Indians who almost wholly crossed the cultural divide during the colonial period.⁴⁹ Additional evidence is likely to raise rather than lower this figure.

⁴⁷ Although most Congregational churches continued to hold that God saved only true believers and that man was helpless to control God's choices, the eighteenth century witnessed laxer standards and, in some churches, less stringent rules for membership. See, for example, the positions of Northampton's Solomon Stoddard and Boston's Brattle Street Church in Alden T. Vaughan, ed., *The Puritan Tradition in America, 1620-1780* (New York, 1972), pp. 324-33; and Morgan, *Visible Saints*, pp. 145-52.

⁴⁸ Weis, 'New England Company,' pp. 153-202.

⁴⁹ The estimate of approximately 500 subdivides as follows: Gookin's list of full members, 153-163; Weis's list of Indian preachers, 140; half of Weis's estimate (428) of full members 1675-1763, 214; for a total of 507-517. To these could be added the undeterminable numbers of transculturated youths in New England schools, war captives (living as servants in New English homes), and free Indians residing within

Table 2

NUMBER OF NEW ENGLAND PROTESTANT INDIAN COMMUNITIES,
CHURCHES, AND MISSIONS; EURO-AMERICAN MISSIONARIES;
AND INDIAN MINISTERS, AT FIVE-YEAR INTERVALS, 1660-1760

	<i>Christian Indian communities</i>	<i>Indian churches</i>	<i>Missions & schools</i>	<i>Euro-American missionaries</i>	<i>Indian ministers</i>
<i>Number of individual cases, 1605-1763</i>	62	21	9	71	140
<i>Number existing in:*</i>					
1660	6	5	3	7	4
1665	8	10	1	9	7
1670	24	13	1	10	22
1675	46	14	1	9	40†
1680	32	14	1	11	14
1685	33	14	1	12	28
1690	34	14	1	13	20
1695	34	16	1	13	17
1700	34	15	1	13	43†
1705	31	17	1	14	21
1710	32	15	1	20	25
1715	32	15	2	19	22
1720	31	15	1	16	13
1725	30	15	2	15	10
1730	27	14	2	15	5
1735	26	15	3	18	4
1740	26	15	5	22	5
1745	22	15	6	22	3
1750	21	16	6	18	4
1755	20	16	7	17	4
1760	20	16	6	17	5

* Items that appear in the source for only brief periods and do not fall on one of the tally dates are included with these figures and are added to the nearest five-year tally. For example, Josias Hossuit, whose entire career as an Indian minister took place during 1702, is included with the tally for 1700.

† Larger totals of Indian ministers in 1675 and 1700 reflect the more complete data available for those years as a result of the studies of New England missions undertaken by Daniel Gookin in 1674 and Grindal Rawson and Samuel Danforth in 1698; for other years information is not as complete.

SOURCE: Weis, 'New England Company,' pp. 153-202. Weis's sources were fragmentary and many of his dates are approximate; in particular the date at which a community or mission became defunct is often quite uncertain. These figures therefore represent only rough estimates. All Christian Indian communities ('praying towns' and others), exclusively Indian Protestant churches (Congregational, Baptist, and Moravian), Protestant missions, Euro-American Protestant missionaries who apparently devoted most or all of their time to Indians, and sanctioned Indian preachers in Massachusetts, Plymouth, Connecticut, and Rhode Island are included in these tabulations.

II

The experiences of Indian converts demonstrate both the attraction of New English society for Indians and the barriers it raised against them. Puritanism's appeal lay partly in the ostensible power of its deity—demonstrated, some observers believed, in the crushing victory over the Pequots in 1637, the functional superiority of European tools and weapons, and the colonists' relative immunity to infectious disease. Puritan missionary success in eastern Massachusetts and on Martha's Vineyard illustrates the last point. Thomas Mayhew, Jr.'s first convert, Hiacoomes, endured considerable abuse from other Indians, especially sachems, 'for his fellowship with the English, both in their civil and religious wayes.'⁵⁰ Hiacoomes was already something of an object of ridicule among his countrymen because 'his Descent was but mean, his Speech but slow, and his Countenance not very promising.' But when he began frequenting English homes and churches 'they laughed and scoffed at him, saying, *Here comes the English Man.*' Hiacoomes (and the Puritan God) got his revenge, however, when his principal tormenter was struck by lightning and many of his other detractors succumbed to an epidemic which left Hiacoomes and most of his followers unscathed. Thereafter the Martha's Vineyard missionary program made rapid headway.⁵¹ Comparable, though less dramatic, events occurred at various times and places in seventeenth-century New England to ease the task of Mayhew, Eliot, and the other missionaries, while at the same time the apparent failure of the powwows'

English communities. They would perhaps raise the total by 50 to 75. We have excluded them from our tabulation because (1) we have no quantitative basis for measurement; (2) we do not know how many of them were Christian, a condition we consider essential to transculturation—though not, of course, to acculturation; and (3) they would only minimally affect our estimated number of transculturates.

⁵⁰ Henry Whitfield, 'The Light Appearing more and more towards the Perfect Day,' *MHS Colls.*, 3d ser. 4(1834):109.

⁵¹ E. Mayhew, *Indian Converts*, pp. 1-5.

incantations against the English and Christian Indians further undermined Indian confidence in their traditional belief system.⁵² Moreover, Puritan society offered material advantages that some Indians found attractive. The inhabitants of John Eliot's praying towns received, through funds collected by the missionaries' supporters in England, a wide range of European goods: axes, hoes, hatchets, knives, crowbars, plows, wagons, cloth, spinning wheels, and much more.⁵³ Probably few Indians gravitated to praying towns primarily for economic reasons, but the colonists' technology may have enhanced significantly their other perceived virtues. Similarly, instruction in literacy (Algonquian, English, or both) appealed to many Indians, even if education in classical languages and moral philosophy attracted very few.⁵⁴

Largely offsetting the virtues some Indians saw in Puritan culture were several obstacles to their social and religious conversion. Most insurmountable, perhaps, was the magnitude of the required transformation, a barrier that John Eliot recognized, although he, of course, thought the reward justified the effort. In 1671 Eliot published a volume of imaginary *Indian Dialogues* through which he hoped to override frequent Indian objections to Christianity. One of Eliot's hypothetical pow-

⁵² As early as 1634 William Wood reported that the Indians of New England 'acknowledge the power of the Englishmen's God, as they call him, because they could never yet have power by their conjurations to damnify the English either in body or goods; and besides, they say he is a good God that sends them so many good things, so much good corn, so many cattle, temperate rains, fair seasons, which they likewise are the better for since the arrival of the English. . . .' *New England's Prospect*, p. 103.

⁵³ For evidence on the material goods provided by English and New English missionary funds, see Pulsifer, ed., *Acts of the Commissioners*; George P. Winship, ed., *The New England Company and John Eliot (Publications of the Prince Society, 36 [Boston, 1920])*; and John W. Ford, ed., *Some Correspondence between the . . . New England Company in London and the Commissioners of the United Colonies* (London, 1896).

⁵⁴ There is no way to measure the demand among Indians for education, but circumstantial evidence, such as the wide distribution of the Algonquian edition of the Bible and the missionaries' frequent calls for more teachers in Indian communities, suggests that many Indians were receptive to training in literacy. By 1727 on Martha's Vineyard 'considerable numbers of *Indians* have learned to *read* and *write*, yet they have mostly done this but after the rate that poor Men among the *English* are wont to do.' E. Mayhew, *Indian Converts*, p. xxxiii.

wows argues strongly against anglicization: 'We have Gods also, and more than [the English] . . . and we have Laws also by which our forefathers did walk, and why should not we do as they have done? To change our Gods, and Laws, and Customs, are great things, and not easily to be obtained and accomplished. Let us alone that we may be quiet in the ways which we like and love, as we let you alone in your Changes and new Ways.' Eliot's answer, of course, was that Christianity and English 'civility' were the only *right* ways.⁵⁵

Candidates for transculturation, as Sagamore John and Hiacoomes learned, also faced social isolation if not ostracism. One of the Indians in Eliot's *Dialogues* objects to leaving his friends: 'If I should forsake our former wayes, all my friends would rise up against me like a stream too strong for me to stand against.'⁵⁶ And there was always the likelihood that a sachem would resent his followers' allegiance to a foreign faith because it would diminish his authority and tribute payments. Eliot replied that neither need happen ('give unto Caesar . . .'), but the realities of the situation did not support him.⁵⁷ Only if an entire Indian community converted did its power structure remain intact, and even then it was likely to be reorganized according to Eliot's Old Testament pattern with rulers of tens, fifties, and hundreds.⁵⁸ In fact the missionaries and colonial magistrates would have more real authority than the sachems. Even on Martha's Vineyard, where a relatively large and stable Indian population and a sparse English population made political reorganization of the Indians unnecessary and impractical, by 1720 English civil authorities were in complete control except for some Indian officers who assisted English

⁵⁵ Eliot, *Indian Dialogues, for Their Instruction in that Great Service of Christ* (Cambridge, Mass., 1671), pp. 19, 55.

⁵⁶ Eliot, *Indian Dialogues*, p. 15.

⁵⁷ Eliot, *Indian Dialogues*, pp. 44-46.

⁵⁸ Vaughan, *New England Frontier*, pp. 265-66. Eliot summarized his thoughts on civil polity in *The Christian Commonwealth* (London, [1659]), which he was later forced to repudiate. Thereafter the praying towns were less biblically structured.

commissioners.⁵⁹ Moreover, for Indians who adhered fully to Christianity and English medical practices, Indian powwows were not only irrelevant but downright evil; Puritans considered them to be in league with Satan and their ministrations a form of witchcraft. The shamans' roots and herbs could still be used, for they were among God's gifts to mankind, but incantations, dances, and spells were the Devil's work.⁶⁰ Little wonder that Puritan missionaries considered sachems and powwows their greatest human opponents.⁶¹

A more insidious obstacle to Indian transculturation was the colonists' pervasive contempt for Indians in general, especially after 1675 when frequent wars, numerous captivities, and the general failure of the Indians to accept anglicization hardened English prejudice—a prejudice all too apparent, as Puritan spokesmen admitted, in everyday Anglo-Indian contact. In 1666 Eliot asked the Commissioners of the New England Confederation to guarantee adequate territory for Indian towns 'and suffer not the English to strip them of all their Lands, in places fit for the Sustainance of the life of man.'⁶² A decade later, Increase Mather complained about 'Those unhappy *Indian-trading-houses*, whereby the Heathen have been so woefully scandalized. . . .'⁶³ Eliot probably expressed the intentions if not always the realities of Puritan civil and clerical authorities when he quoted an Indian supporter of the English: 'if any [English] do us wrong, it is without the consent of their Rulers; and upon our Complaints our wrongs are righted. They are (especially the Ruling part) good men.'⁶⁴

⁵⁹ E. Mayhew, 'A Brief Account,' p. 10.

⁶⁰ Eliot, *Indian Dialogues*, p. 20. See also Frank Shuffelton, 'Indian Devils and the Pilgrim Fathers: Squanto, Hobomok, and the English Conception of Indian Religion,' *New England Quarterly* 46(1976):108–16; and William S. Simmons, 'Cultural Bias in the New England Puritans' Perception of Indians,' *William and Mary Quarterly*, in press.

⁶¹ See, for example, Eliot, *Indian Dialogues*, p. 20.

⁶² Eliot, *Indian Dialogues*, dedication.

⁶³ Increase Mather, *An Earnest Exhortation to the Inhabitants of New-England* (Boston, 1676), p. 10.

⁶⁴ Eliot, *Indian Dialogues*, p. 9.

The implication was clear: the rulers could not prevent all wrongs, and the nonrulers were not necessarily 'good men.' Even Eliot could not escape New England's growing anti-Indian sentiment, as he discovered in 1676 when his boat was run down in Boston Harbor to the delight of those who resented his defense of the Christian Indians during King Philip's War.⁶⁵

Increasingly New England's leaders admitted that anti-Indian bias was widespread and inimical to missionary efforts. As early as 1643 Roger Williams observed that 'both the English and Dutch (not onely the civill, but the most debauched and profane) say, These *Heathen Dogges*, better kill a thousand of them then that we *Christians* should be indangered or troubled with Them; Better they were all cutt off, & then we shall be no more troubled with them.'⁶⁶ And on Martha's Vineyard where Indian and English got along best in New England, Experience Mayhew complained in 1720 of opposition from 'such *English men* as are filled with Prejudices against the *Indians*.' Seven years later, several Boston ministers lamented the anti-Indian sentiment that hindered missionary efforts. New Englanders, they said, had 'doubtless too much of that spiritual *Pride* . . . which many of the *Jews* had of old among them; which caused them to say to others, *Stand by thy self, come not near me; for I am holier than thou*.'⁶⁷ That pride had not diminished by 1767, when some prominent residents of Middletown, Connecticut, objected to Eleazar Wheelock's work among the Indians as 'altogether absurd and fruitless. . . . So long as the Indians are dispised by the English we may never expect success in Christianizing of them. . . . [We can] never respect an Indian, Christian or no Christian, so as to put

⁶⁵ Cotton Mather, *Triumphs of the Reformed Religion*, pp. 42-43; Eliot's account of the episode is in Boston Record Commissioners, *Report* [No. 6], p. 193.

⁶⁶ [Roger Williams], *The Complete Writings of Roger Williams*, 7 vols. (New York, 1963), 7:31.

⁶⁷ E. Mayhew, 'A Brief Account,' p. 6; Cotton Mather et al., 'An Attestation of the United Ministers of Boston,' in E. Mayhew, *Indian Converts*, pp. xx-xxi.

him on a level with white people of any account especially to eat at the same table.⁶⁸

Indians who thought of changing their allegiance and lifestyle must have known they would never be wholly accepted by most New Englanders. That so many Indians ostensibly crossed cultures must be attributed largely to the overwhelming preponderance of Puritan society's numbers, technology, power, and cultural aggression, not to its attitude toward strangers.

III

The other side of the coin—the number of New England settlers who became thoroughly Indianized—is also hard to measure. Despite the persistent assumption that Anglo-Americans flocked from the stultifying atmosphere of Puritan New England to the social and psychic freedom of Indian life, documented cases of voluntary transculturation are rare.

As early as 1623 several members of Thomas Weston's outpost at Mount Wollaston may have joined Indian society; they can hardly be labelled Puritans, but they at least qualify as transient New Englanders. So do Thomas Morton's men at Merrymount, some of whom may also have preferred Indian to English ways. But the most likely guess is that Weston's and Morton's followers returned to England or moved to the New England frontier where they absorbed some elements of native culture while retaining much of their Englishness. If a few wholeheartedly adopted Indian ways, the surviving records fail to mention them.⁶⁹

Some early Connecticut settlers apparently did choose an Indian lifestyle. In 1642 the colony's General Court, com-

⁶⁸ David Crosby to Eleazar Wheelock, Nov. 4, 1767, Papers of Eleazar Wheelock, WP 767604.1, Dartmouth College Library.

⁶⁹ One of Weston's men reported in 1623 'that another of their Company was turned savage,' but nothing further is recorded about the alleged transculturated (Winslow, 'Good News,' p. 564). For other sources on the Weston and Morton colonists see n. 11, above.

plaining that 'divers persons departe from amongst us, and take up their abode with the Indians in a prophane course of life,' prescribed three years in the workhouse for any Connecticut inhabitant who thereafter forsook godly society. The number of defectors probably had been small, but it was certainly upsetting to the Puritans' perception of their cultural superiority. Apparently, however, no one was prosecuted under the new law; it was either obeyed or successfully evaded.⁷⁰

The inspiration for Connecticut's law may have been William Baker, the first documented defector to Indian culture. In a series of letters to Gov. John Winthrop of Massachusetts in 1637-38, Roger Williams reported that Baker, who had been living at the Plymouth Colony's trading post on the Connecticut River, was in Mohegan territory and 'is turned Indian in nakedness and cutting of hair, and after many whoredoms, is there married.' Baker was soon apprehended by Connecticut authorities (aided by Wequash); the fugitive escaped, was recaptured, and was whipped at Hartford for assorted crimes. He then disappears from the records.⁷¹

Almost thirty years elapsed before the next recorded instance of a New Englander's voluntarily joining Indian society, and the evidence in that case is, at best, contradictory. In 1662, according to Puritan sources, Joshua Tift (or Tefft) fled to the Wampanoags after punishment for some unknown misdemeanor, 'renounced his Religion, Nation and natural Parents,' married an Indian, and eventually became a councillor to King Philip. Tift may have fought on the Indians' side in 1675-76 and supposedly proved his loyalty to Philip by bringing in a settler's scalp and by helping to design the Narragansetts' defenses. On January 14, 1676, Tift was captured by English forces; four days later he was hanged and quartered. One con-

⁷⁰ J. Hammond Trumbull, *The Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut*, 15 vols. (Hartford, 1850-90), 1:78. Although no prosecutions under the law appear in the General Court's records, it is possible that some trials at lower court levels are recorded in the state's archives.

⁷¹ *Writings of Roger Williams*, 6:66-67, 85, 86, 95, 98.

temporary dubbed him 'A sad wretch who never heard a sermon but once these last 14 years'—perhaps a reference to an unrecorded execution sermon.⁷² Tift's version was far different. Roger Williams transcribed without comment Tift's claim to have been a law-abiding farmer until captured in 1675 by Indians who spared his life in return for perpetual bondage. Tift denied having fought against the English,⁷³ but Puritan authorities were obviously unconvinced. Depending on which version of his career is believed, Tift was either an early and brief captive of the Indians or another documented case of substantial transformation from Puritan into Indian.

The confusion surrounding Tift's transculturation—if it was that—illustrates the near impossibility of determining the precise number of New Englanders who voluntarily forsook English for Indian culture. Tift's case is almost unique in that it appears in the historical record at all. Most New Englanders who defected to the Indians were evidently marginal figures in colonial society—fur traders, inhabitants of isolated outposts, or others who never found a place in the characteristically close-knit New England villages.⁷⁴ They left no clear track for historians to follow, nor is there reason to believe that their numbers were large. And among families who lived in stable communities—even among servants of such families—converts to Indian life seem almost nonexistent. Voluntary transculturations were greatly feared by New England author-

⁷² N[athaniel] S[altonstall] to ?, Feb. 8, 1675/6, in Charles H. Lincoln, ed., *Narratives of the Indian Wars* (New York, 1913), p. 67; James Oliver to ?, Jan. 26, 1675/6 in George Madison Bodge, *Soldiers in King Philip's War* (Leominster, Mass., 1896), p. 175; James N. Arnold, 'Joshua Tefft,' *The Narragansett Register* 3(1884-85) 164-69; William Hubbard, *A Narrative of the Troubles with the Indians in New-England* (Boston, 1677; repr. as *The History of the Indian Wars*, 2 vols. [Roxbury, 1865]), 1:162; Thomas Hutchinson, *The History of the Colony of Massachusetts-Bay*, 3 vols. (London, 1764-1828; repr. New York, 1972), 1:302-3.

⁷³ Roger Williams to Governor Leverett, Jan. 14, 1675/6, *Writings of Roger Williams*, 6:376-84.

⁷⁴ William Baker and Joshua Tift (discussed above) seem to fit this generalization; there are few other documented cases.

ities, but the instances were probably only frequent enough to lend those fears a touch of reality.

More easily traced are the New Englanders who, at least initially, crossed the boundary between Euro-American and American Indian cultures against their will. Hundreds of New England men, women, and children got their first glimpse of a drastically different way of life when they became wartime captives of the Indians or French Canadians.

The earliest-known seizures of New Englanders by Indians occurred in 1637, shortly before the formal start of the Pequot War in the Connecticut Valley, when a Pequot raiding party carried off two young Wethersfield women and held them for a month, in vain hopes that they could teach their captors to make gunpowder. (During the previous year the Pequots had seized a number of Englishmen at various locations but killed them immediately or during a hasty torture ceremony.⁷⁵) The Pequots apparently made no real attempt to change the Wethersfield captives' cultural allegiance, and the women do not seem to have been tempted to remain voluntarily with the Indians.

For nearly four decades after 1637 New England experienced neither Indian wars nor recorded captivities, until, during King Philip's War, more than forty New Englanders were taken prisoner and held by Indians for varying lengths of time.⁷⁶ The most famous was Mary Rowlandson of Lancaster, Massachusetts, whose published narrative of her captivity launched a popular literary genre.⁷⁷ King Philip's War also

⁷⁵ John Underhill, *Newes from America* (London, 1638), repr. *MHS Colls.*, 3d ser. 6(1837):11-13, 15, 17-23; [Edward Johnson], *Johnson's Wonder-Working Providence, 1628-1651*, ed. J. Franklin Jameson (New York, 1910), pp. 149-50; Increase Mather, *A Relation of the Troubles which Have Hapned in New-England, By Reason of the Indians There* (Boston, 1677), pp. 44-46.

⁷⁶ We calculate that at least forty-two New Englanders were captured in King Philip's War; see Appendix A.

⁷⁷ [Mary White Rowlandson], *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God, Together, With the Faithfulness of His Promises Displayed; Being a Narrative of the Captivity and Restauration of Mrs Mary Rowlandson*, 2d ed. (Cambridge, Mass., 1682). For the rest of the colonial period and beyond, captivity narratives enlightened—and often

generated the first prisoners who may have willingly remained with their captors. Robert Pepper of Roxbury, a soldier captured in 1675 near Northfield, Massachusetts, had been (according to Rowlandson) 'a considerable time with the *Indians*,' and perhaps he stayed with them.⁷⁸ Evidence on the captivity of eight-year-old Richard Nason, Jr., is more abundant but conflicting. He was seized at his parents' home in Salmon Falls, New Hampshire, in 1675 and either returned there after 'some Months' only to be recaptured in 1693 as an adult, or he may have found his way directly to Canada in the 1670s. In any event, Nason received Catholic baptism in 1702 at St. François and, after marrying a French woman, was naturalized a Canadian citizen in 1710.⁷⁹

Nason's experience illustrates the complexity of transculturation for English captives after 1689, who now would be taken by the hundreds rather than the handful. No longer did they have only to choose between staying with the Indians or returning to English society; with the onset of the imperial wars between England and France that embroiled New England's frontier for nearly a century, most captives were also

misled—contemporaries about Indian life, and they still provide valuable clues to the captives' fates. At least four major collections of captivity narratives have appeared in the past twenty years: Frederick Drimmer, ed., *Scalps and Tomabawks: Narratives of Indian Captivity* (New York, 1961); Richard VanDerBeets, ed., *Held Captive by Indians: Selected Narratives, 1642-1886* (Knoxville, Tenn., 1973); James Levernier and Hennig Cohen, eds., *The Indians and Their Captives* (Westport, Conn., 1977); and Alden T. Vaughan and Edward W. Clark, eds., *Puritans among the Indians: Accounts of Captivity and Redemption, 1676-1724* (Cambridge, Mass., forthcoming). On the importance of captivity narratives as literary and historical texts, see the introductions to the above anthologies and Roy Harvey Pearce, 'The Significances of the Captivity Narratives,' *American Literature* 19(1947):1-20; Richard VanDerBeets, 'The Indian Captivity Narrative as Ritual,' *American Literature* 43(1972):548-62; Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860* (Middletown, Conn., 1973), esp. pp. 94-145; David L. Minter, 'By Dens of Lions: Notes on Stylization in Early Puritan Captivity Narratives,' *American Literature* 45(1973):335-47; and Wilcomb E. Washburn, 'Introduction' to *Narratives of North American Indian Captivity* (New York, 1980).

⁷⁸ Rowlandson, *Sovereignty and Goodness*, pp. 9-10.

⁷⁹ Emma Lewis Coleman, *New England Captives Carried to Canada between 1677 and 1760 during the French and Indian Wars*, 2 vols. (Portland, Maine, 1925), 1: 124-25, 381.

exposed to French Canadian culture and could—sometimes had to—exchange their faith, loyalty, and lifestyle from Protestant English to Catholic French. Although for Puritan New Englanders this was a profound shift in cultural affiliation, it was less drastic—and therefore more probable—than the quantum leap from English to Indian culture. Canadian society thus offered an alternative adjustment to captivity that some New Englanders avidly accepted.

The complexity of English transculturation from 1689 to 1763 is further compounded by the frequent impossibility of clearly distinguishing between captives of the Indians and captives of the French. Many of the prisoners were taken by combined French and Indian forces, and at some stage in their captivity most prisoners were exposed to both cultures. Moreover, many of New France's Indian allies were themselves substantially acculturated. They practiced a hybrid Catholicism, observed some French customs, and generally supported France's imperial ambitions. Thus New England captives of Indian war parties might confront pressures from Jesuit missionaries to change their faith and simultaneously be urged by Indian hosts to adopt a variety of Iroquoian or Algonquian customs. In short, after 1689 transculturation meant for Englishmen a greater range of options than for their Indian counterparts in the Puritan colonies.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ The following portion of the essay stresses numerical rather than experiential aspects of transculturation among European-American prisoners of war because the latter is perceptively treated in Axtell, 'White Indians,' and to varying degrees in the following works, all of which take a wider geographical scope than New England: John R. Swanton, 'Notes on the Mental Assimilation of Races,' *Journal of the Washington Academy of Sciences* 16(1926):493-502; Dorothy Anne Dondore, 'White Captives among the Indians,' *New York History* 13(1932):292-300; Erwin H. Ackerknecht, "'White Indians': Psychological and Physiological Peculiarities of White Children Abducted and Reared by North American Indians,' *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 15(1944):15-36; Robert W. G. Vail, 'Certain Indian Captives of New England,' *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 68(1944-47):113-31; Marius Barbeau, 'Indian Captivities,' *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 94(1950): 522-48; Howard H. Peckham, *Captured by Indians: True Tales of Pioneer Survivors* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1954); Hallowell, 'American Indians, White and Black'; and J. Norman Heard, *White into Red: A Study of the Assimilation of White Persons Captured by Indians* (Metuchen, N.J., 1973).

The most extensive studies of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century European-American prisoners of war were done by C. Alice Baker and Emma Lewis Coleman, dedicated antiquarians who devoted nearly two lifetimes to unearthing information about 1,606 captured New Englanders. Baker began her research during the 1870s and was later joined by Coleman, who continued the work after Baker's death and in 1925 published their findings as *New England Captives Carried to Canada between 1677 and 1760 during the French and Indian Wars*.⁸¹ (Despite its title, the study contains considerable information about captives who never reached Canada.) *New England Captives* is impressive for its diligence and detail but frustrating in its muddled organization and sparse interpretation.⁸² As a result, scholars have seldom examined Baker's and Coleman's work closely, and their cornucopia of evidence has remained largely unanalyzed. Neither Coleman nor later writers have published accurate tabulations of the number of prisoners she cited nor the proportion who remained with the Indians or

⁸¹ Baker, a descendant of New England captive Elizabeth Stebbins, apparently began her research on New England captives in 1870, when she prepared a paper on captive Eunice Williams for the 1871 meeting of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association. Subsequently she read to that Association five more papers concerning the experiences of New England prisoners of war, which were published in *History and Proceedings of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association 1-3 (1870-98)*, and reprinted along with several other essays in Baker, *True Stories of New England Captives Carried to Canada during the Old French and Indian Wars* (Cambridge, Mass., 1897); 'More New England Captives' appeared posthumously in *History and Proceedings 5 (1905-11):173-98*. While Baker's published work received scant circulation outside her hometowns of Deerfield and Cambridge, her reputation as an expert on colonial captivities did spread; Francis Parkman praised one of her essays as 'the result of great research,' containing 'much original matter' (*A Half-Century of Conflict*, Frontenac edition [Boston, 1907], p. 89n). Coleman and Baker first collaborated on an 1888 trip to Canada to research the topic that by then, according to Baker's necrologist, 'haunted' the older woman's 'waking and sleeping hours.' Baker died in 1909, leaving Coleman to finish her work and to be sole author (with hearty thanks to Baker) of *New England Captives*. See J. M. Arms Sheldon, 'Tribute to Alice Baker,' *History and Proceedings 5 (1905-11):352-64*.

⁸² As one contemporary reviewer understated, while 'the volumes form a mine of genealogical information, . . . the results of these new researches are presented in a rather raw and indigested fashion, without any attempt to summarize them or to show the significance of the mass of material so industriously gathered together' (R. Flenley, Review of *New England Captives*, *Canadian Historical Review 7 [1926]:171-72*).

French Canadians. Instead, most generalizations about the transculturation of captives stress a few well-documented and (by now) overworked cases of sixteenth- through nineteenth-century captives who stayed with the Indians and subsequently led colorful lives. Because of this research focus—and because of a too-literal reading of the great concern colonial spokesmen expressed over ‘civilized’ Englishmen succumbing to Indian ‘savagery’—historians have greatly overestimated the number of New Englanders who crossed cultures during Indian captivity.⁸³

The following paragraphs analyze the careers of 1,641 New England prisoners of the Indians and French about whom some information is available: the 1,606 cases in Coleman’s volumes plus 35 cases drawn from other sources.⁸⁴ Most of these cases occurred during the four Anglo-French conflicts. In each of the first three intercolonial wars our sources document approximately 300 New Englanders who spent time in captivity; for the Seven Years’ War the total climbs to over 500, reflecting the larger scale of the latter conflict and the greater role played in it by regular troops, who were often captured in large groups (fig. 1).⁸⁵ Peace between Britain and France did not, however, always stop Indians from raiding English settlements. Some 55 New Englanders were seized during the long interval between the end of Queen Anne’s and the beginning of King George’s wars (50 of them during ‘Dummer’s War’ of 1722–25) and at least 33 were captured during the brief period between the end of King George’s War and the onset of the Seven Years’ War.

From 1675 to 1763 the age, sex, and status of captive New

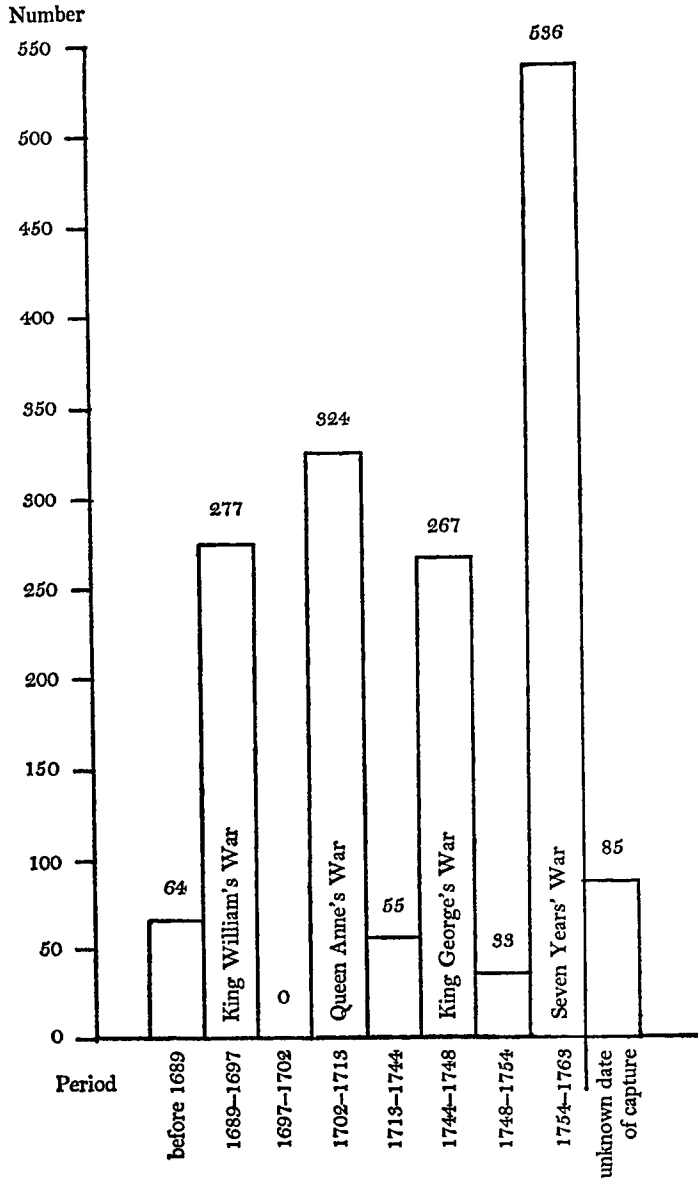
⁸³ For a discussion of previous analyses see Appendix B.

⁸⁴ The sources and methodology for this analysis are presented in Appendix A.

⁸⁵ Over 80 percent of the enlisted men and active militiamen captured between 1675 and 1763 were seized during the Seven Years’ War. While 315 identifiable soldiers were taken during that war, only 14 were made prisoner during King George’s War, 12 during Queen Anne’s War, 3 during King William’s War, and 2 during King Philip’s War.

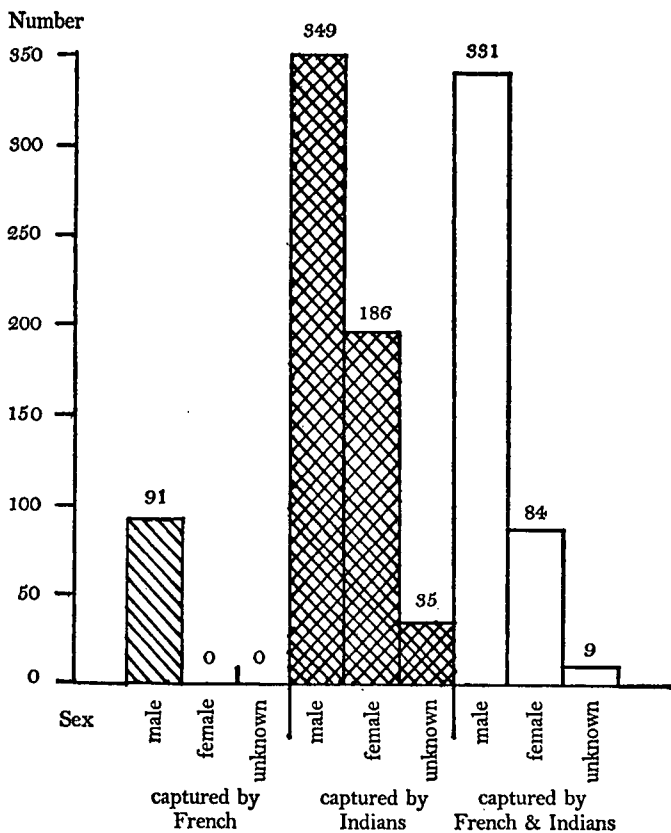
Figure 1

NEW ENGLANDERS CAPTURED DURING PERIODS
OF WAR AND PEACE, 1675-1763



Englanders varied with the ethnic composition of the forces who took them.⁸⁶ French patrols captured only adult male European-Americans, most of them combatants, and took pris-

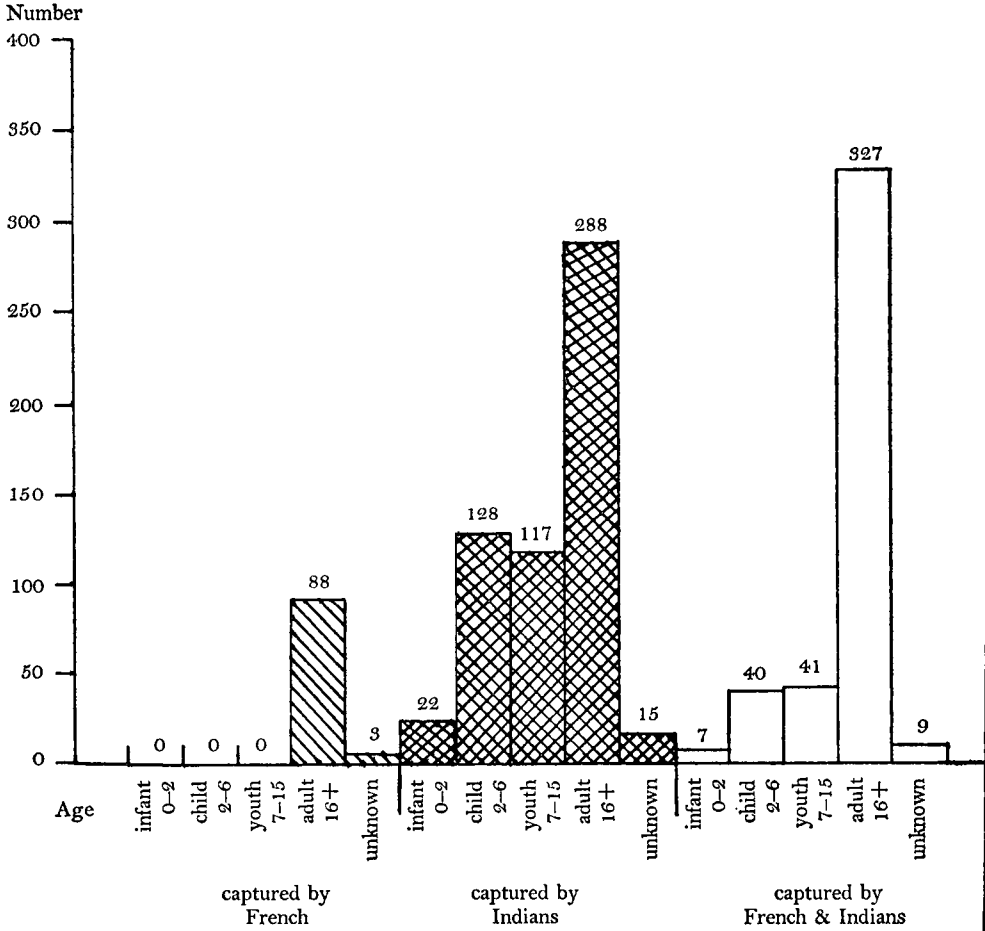
Figure 2

SEX OF CAPTIVES TAKEN BY FRENCH, INDIAN,
AND FRENCH-INDIAN FORCES, 1675-1763

⁸⁶ In the 1,085 cases for which the captors can be identified, Indian war parties seized 570 prisoners (52.5 percent), French-Indian expeditions—frequently an Indian party led by a French officer—took 424 (39 percent), and French forces acting without Indian allies took 91 (8.4 percent). In the remaining 556 cases (33.9 percent of the entire 1,641), the identity of the captors is unknown or unclear; presumably, in light of the small numbers of prisoners French patrols are known to have taken, the captors in these cases were either Indian or French-Indian forces.

Figure 3

AGE OF CAPTIVES TAKEN BY FRENCH, INDIAN,
AND FRENCH-INDIAN FORCES, 1675-1763



oners only during declared wars.⁸⁷ By contrast Indian war parties took primarily civilian prisoners and seized persons of all ages and both sexes; less than 7 percent of their captives were professional military men. (Of course, many of the 'civilians' the Indians captured were hardly noncombatants, for nearly every male of sufficient age, and most women, could use a gun.⁸⁸) Yet, despite the arguments of some historians, Indian war parties, at least in New England, did not take primarily women and children. Nearly two-thirds of the Indians' captives were males, half were adults, and war parties seldom seized a child less than two years old (figs. 2 and 3). Probably because they knew that Anglo-American forces might pursue them and that prisoners could be sold to the French for a bounty, Indians preferred captives who could survive the trek to Canada. Those who could not make a quick exit and withstand the rigors of wilderness travel—infants, the old, and the sick—were likely to be killed on the spot rather than taken prisoner.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ French forces seized forty-nine seamen, two army officers, two enlisted men, five known civilians, and thirty-three individuals whose status is unclear and who presumably were civilians. The ages of three captives taken by French forces are unknown.

⁸⁸ Indians, acting independently of the French, took 354 known free civilians, 164 presumed free civilians, 31 enlisted men and active militiamen, 6 army officers, 1 seaman, 9 white servants, and 5 black slaves.

⁸⁹ According to Axtell, in the Pennsylvania theatre of the Seven Years' War, 'women and children—the "weak and defenceless"—were the prime targets of Indian raids' ('White Indians,' pp. 59–60); and Coleman believed that 'in all the wars captives, mostly women and children, were carried from New England to Canada (*New England Captives*, 1:1). That may have been true of Pennsylvania, but of our study's 570 New England captives known to have been taken by Indians acting alone, 349 were males, 186 were females, and the sex of 35—mostly infants and small children—is unknown. Indians seized 288 adults aged sixteen and over, 117 youths aged seven to fifteen, 128 children aged two to six, 22 infants under age two, and 15 persons whose age is unknown. (See Appendix A for a discussion of our use of these age categories.) A knowledgeable observer of Indian society noted that because victorious war parties 'could not keep the great number of prisoners whom they take in a[n enemy Indian] village, . . . the conquerors separate those whom they want to sacrifice to warlike fury from those whom they wish to save to incorporate among themselves [as adoptees]. Thus the old men who would have trouble in learning their language or whom age would render useless, the chiefs and important men among the warriors from whom they would have something to fear if they escaped, the children of too tender age and the infirm who would be too heavy a burden on their route, comprise the unfortunate

Many of the 1,641 New England captives never returned to New England.⁹⁰ Only 754 (45.9 percent) are definitely known to have seen their homes again (fig. 4). At least 194 (over 11 percent) were either killed by the Indians after capture or died during captivity. The fate of 361 more (22 percent), nearly half of them military men, is unknown. Many probably languished in Canadian, French, or West Indian prisons, and, if they were lucky, returned to New England when peace treaties were signed; most probably died in overcrowded and unsanitary jails.⁹¹ Perhaps, however, some of these 'unknowns'—civilian and military—joined at least 229 others (14 percent of

victims whom they immolate . . . before leaving the village' (Joseph François Lafitau, *Customs of the American Indians Compared with the Customs of Primitive Times*, ed. and trans. William N. Fenton and Elizabeth L. Moore, 2 vols. (Toronto, 1974, 1977 [orig. publ. Paris, 1724]), 2:146.

⁹⁰ Our data do not allow conclusive statements about the average duration of New England captivities because in over 40 percent of the cases the time between a captive's seizure and the date when he or she returned, died, or decided to remain in Canada is unknown. Apparently, however, most captivities were either quite short (less than six months) or quite long (over two years):

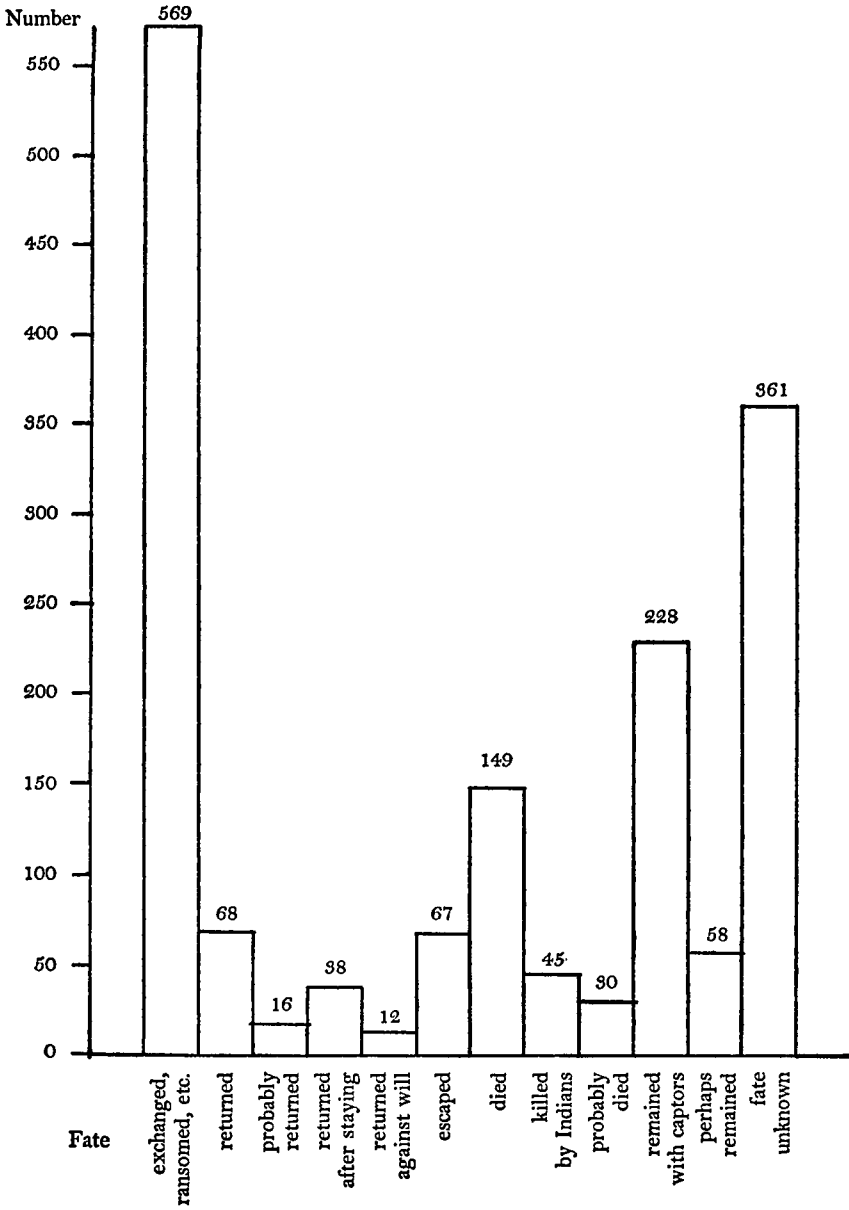
DURATION OF NEW ENGLAND CAPTIVITIES, 1675-1760

<i>Length</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Few days	88	5.1
Few weeks to 6 months	177	10.8
7-12 months	109	6.6
13-18 months	77	4.7
19-24 months	60	3.7
Over 24 months	231	14.1
Remained with captors	229	14.0
Unknown	675	41.1

⁹¹ The 361 captives whose fate is unknown include 167 enlisted men and militiamen, 9 seamen, and 2 army officers, with 12 servants and slaves, 78 known free civilians, 90 assumed free civilians, and 3 whose status is unclear. Captive Nehemiah How tried to put a favorable light on the Quebec prison where he was kept for over nineteen months during King George's War: 'this Prison was a large House built with Stone & Lime two Feet thick, and about 120 Feet long. We had two large Stoves in it, & Wood enough, so that we could keep our selves warm in the coldest Weather. We had Provision sufficient, viz. two Pound of good Wheat Bread, one Pound of Beef, and Peas answerable, to each Man ready dress'd every Day.' The jail was nonetheless an unhealthy place: 'I was taken ill, as was also most of the other Prisoners, with a Flux, which lasted near a Month, so that I was grown very weak,' wrote How soon after his confinement. He recovered from that attack, but not from another which killed him in May 1747. How, *A Narrative of the Captivity of Nehemiah How* (Boston, 1748), pp. 13, 22.

Figure 4

FATES OF CAPTURED NEW ENGLANDERS, 1675-1763



the total) in choosing to remain in exile and to live either as Indians or as French Canadians.⁹²

Traditional wisdom holds that large numbers of wartime prisoners found wilderness life so attractive that they chose to remain with the Indians rather than return, when the opportunity arose, to their Puritan hometowns. 'Many whites were Indianized—few Indians were civilized,' wrote Coleman, summarizing widespread belief; 'the proportion of whites barbarized to Indians civilized is as a hundred to one.'⁹³ Recent scholars echo this view, albeit in less value-laden language. A distinguished specialist in early American literature emphatically states that 'all colonists knew that most whites who spent considerable time in captivity refused later opportunities to return to white civilization.'⁹⁴ One historian similarly argues that captives 'frequently showed great reluctance to return to white society,'⁹⁵ and another estimates that 'hundreds of white captives became almost completely Indianized.'⁹⁶ Such generalizations are not supported by the careers of the 1,641 captives studied here.

Most of the 229 New England captives who refused to return to New England remained among the French rather than among the Indians. There is conclusive evidence of only 24 prisoners who became 'white Indians'—just 1.5 percent of the total number of cases and 6.2 percent of those known to have spent the last part of their captivities with Indians—while there are indications that an additional 28 prisoners (1.7 percent) perhaps remained with their Indian hosts (table 3). At most, therefore, 52 of the recorded New England captives, or 3.2 percent, underwent completely the cultural transition from

⁹² For a discussion of the possible fates of the 'unknowns,' see n. 97 below.

⁹³ Coleman, *New England Captives*, 1:44, 44n.

⁹⁴ J. A. Leo Lemay, 'The Frontiersman from Lout to Hero: Notes on the Significance of the Comparative Method and the Stage Theory in Early American Literature and Culture,' *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 88(1978):192.

⁹⁵ Nash, *Red, White, and Black*, p. 283.

⁹⁶ Heard, *White into Red*, p. 5.

Table 3

FATES OF NEW ENGLANDERS HELD BY INDIANS, CANADIANS, AND FRENCH, 1675-1763

Last known place of captivity

<i>Fate</i>	<i>Indians</i>		<i>Probably Indians</i>		<i>French Canada</i>		<i>Probably French Canada</i>		<i>Prison, Canada</i>		<i>Probably Prison, Canada</i>		<i>France</i>		<i>Prison, France</i>		<i>Unknown, unclear</i>	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Exchanged, ransomed, etc.	165	42.7	40	46.5	117	25.9	34	54.0	41	45.1	14	58.3	3	60.0	52	37.7	103	25.9
Returned	14	3.6	11	12.8	14	3.1	8	12.7	2	2.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	19	4.8
Probably returned	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	2.0	1	1.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	1.5
Returned after staying	13	3.4	0	0.0	23	5.1	0	0.0	1	1.1	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Returned against will	8	2.1	0	0.0	4	0.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Escaped	50	13.0	1	1.2	10	2.2	0	0.0	1	1.1	2	8.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	0.8
Died	14	3.6	5	5.8	10	2.2	7	11.1	32	35.2	5	20.8	0	0.0	67	48.6	9	2.3
Killed by Indians	45	11.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Probably died	3	0.8	4	4.7	1	0.2	1	1.6	3	3.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	15	10.9	3	0.8
Remained with captors	24	6.2	1	1.2	202	44.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Perhaps remained	25	6.5	2	2.3	21	4.7	2	3.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	2.0
Fate unknown	25	6.5	22	25.6	40	8.9	10	15.9	11	12.1	3	12.5	0	0.0	4	2.9	246	62.0
TOTALS	386		86		451		63		91		24		5		138		397	

British American to American Indian.⁹⁷ The few New Englanders adopted by the Indians were overwhelmingly free white civilians; they were equally divided between males and females; and although they included a number of adults, most were under age 16 (fig. 5). These sex and age distributions differed little from those of prisoners who voluntarily remained with the French Canadians.⁹⁸ But in sharp contrast to captives of the Indians, at least 202 New Englanders—12.3 percent of all known cases and 44.8 percent of those who spent the final part of their captivities among the French Canadians, but not in prison—chose to remain among the French and, presumably, to adopt their culture.⁹⁹ French Canada, not Indian Canada, caught the New England captives' fancy.

Throughout the period from 1675 to 1763, certain types of New England prisoners were more likely than others to remain with either their French or Indian captors. A far larger percentage of females than males made that choice: almost a third of the female captives but less than one in ten males refused repatriation (table 4). Because male captives were far

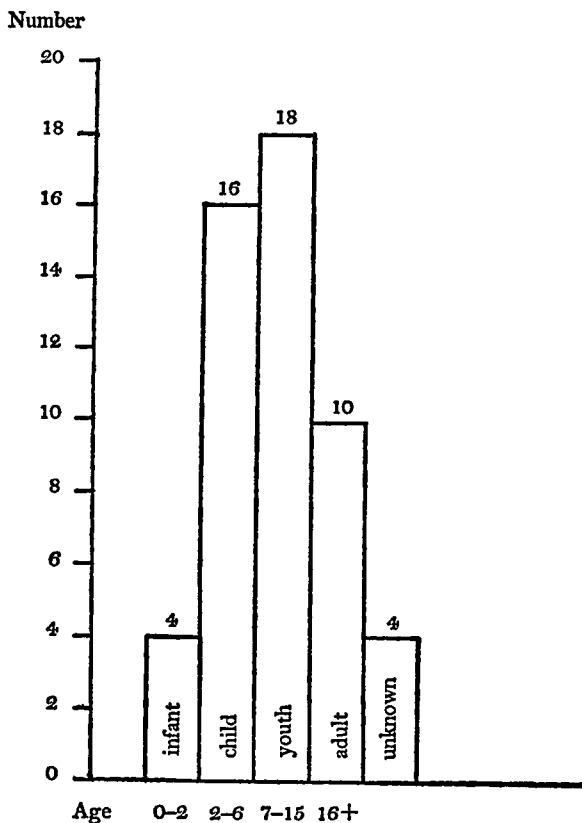
⁹⁷ This figure is conservative. We have made no effort to estimate the percentage of captives whose fate is unknown who might have stayed with their Indian or French captors. Any attempt to deal with these 361 cases involves only guesswork, but because 178 of them are known to have been military or marine personnel (167 enlisted men and active militiamen, 9 seamen, and 2 army officers), because over 11 percent of all captives died as prisoners, and because the death rate for soldiers and sailors was roughly twice that for the captives as a whole, it seems reasonable to conclude that among those prisoners whose fate is unknown there were far more deaths in captivity than there were transculturations. Among those whose fate *is* known, at most 4.1 percent (52 of 1,280) remained with the Indians. Even if those whose fate is unknown transculturated at the same rate (approximately 15 out of 361), the possible number of New Englanders who might have stayed with the Indians would still be only 67, or 4.1 percent of the 1,641 captives.

⁹⁸ Captives who definitely or possibly remained with their Indian captors included 26 males and 26 females, while 108 males, 116 females, and one child of unknown sex definitely or probably remained with the French. The latter group comprised 35 adults aged sixteen or over, 65 youths aged seven to fifteen, 48 children aged two to six, and 5 infants under age two. The age of 73 is unknown.

⁹⁹ The ninety-one New Englanders who spent the last part of their captivities in Canadian prisons rather than Canadian households understandably were less attracted to their captor's society; none of them apparently remained in Canada (table 3).

Figure 5

AGE OF CAPTIVES WHO REMAINED, OR PERHAPS
REMAINED, WITH INDIANS, 1675-1763



more numerous, however, the proportion of females to males who stayed with the French or Indians was not so lopsided: 120 females and 107 males definitely refused to return. Adults of either sex were less likely than children to cross cultures and more likely to be exchanged or ransomed (table 5). Less than 4 percent of adults remained while nearly 40 percent were exchanged or ransomed; put another way, nearly 69 percent of all captives who were exchanged or ransomed were adults.

Table 4

FATES OF NEW ENGLAND MALES AND FEMALES CAPTURED BY FRENCH, INDIANS, OR FRENCH AND INDIANS, 1675-1763

<i>Fate</i>	<i>Males</i>		<i>Sex</i>		<i>Unknown</i>	
	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Exchanged, ransomed, etc.	423	35.6	123	31.4	23	37.1
Returned	54	4.5	14	3.6	0	0.0
Probably returned	11	0.9	5	1.3	0	0.0
Returned after staying	20	1.7	18	4.6	0	0.0
Returned against will	8	0.7	4	1.0	0	0.0
Escaped	58	4.9	9	2.3	0	0.0
Died	132	11.1	16	4.1	1	1.6
Killed by Indians	18	1.5	22	5.6	5	8.1
Probably died	26	2.2	3	0.8	1	1.6
Remained with captors	107	9.0	120	30.6	1	1.6
Perhaps remained	31	2.6	25	6.4	2	3.2
Fate unknown	299	25.2	33	8.4	29	46.8
TOTALS	1,187		392		62	

Most likely to remain with either the French or the Indians were captives between the ages of seven and fifteen: almost 40 percent of these youths were assimilated into their captors' society and nearly another 10 percent lived for a time as French or Indians before either voluntarily or involuntarily returning to New England. The prime candidate for transculturation was a girl aged seven through fifteen. Almost 54 percent of that group of captives refused to return to New England, compared with less than 30 percent of the boys in the same age

Table 5

FATES OF AGE GROUPS OF NEW ENGLANDERS CAPTURED
BY FRENCH, INDIANS, OR FRENCH AND INDIANS, 1675-1763

Fate	Infant (under age 2)		Child (ages 2-6)		Age group Youth (ages 7-15)		Adult (over age 15)		Age unknown	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Exchanged, ransomed, etc.	8	24.2	72	32.3	50	25.4	391	38.7	48	27.1
Returned	2	6.1	6	2.7	8	4.1	51	5.0	1	0.6
Probably returned	0	0.0	1	0.4	3	1.5	10	1.0	2	1.1
Returned after staying	4	12.1	6	2.7	13	6.6	14	1.4	1	0.6
Returned against will	0	0.0	4	1.8	7	3.6	1	0.1	0	0.0
Escaped	1	3.0	7	3.1	2	1.0	57	5.6	0	0.0
Died	3	9.1	5	2.2	4	2.0	131	13.0	6	3.4
Killed by Indians	6	18.2	9	4.0	7	3.6	23	2.3	0	0.0
Probably died	0	0.0	3	1.3	4	2.0	23	2.3	0	0.0
Remained with captors	2	6.1	40	17.9	77	39.1	35	3.5	74	41.8
Perhaps remained	7	21.2	25	11.2	7	3.6	14	1.4	5	2.8
Fate unknown	0	0.0	45	20.2	15	7.6	261	25.8	40	22.6
TOTALS	33		223		197		1,011		177	

Table 6

FATES OF FEMALE NEW ENGLANDERS CAPTURED
BY FRENCH, INDIANS, OR FRENCH AND INDIANS, 1675-1763

<i>Fate</i>	<i>Infant</i> (<i>under age 2</i>)		<i>Child</i> (<i>ages 2-6</i>)		<i>Age group</i> <i>Youth</i> (<i>ages 7-15</i>)		<i>Adult</i> (<i>over age 15</i>)		<i>Age</i> <i>unknown</i>	
	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Exchanged, ransomed, etc.	2	15.4	28	31.5	15	18.3	72	43.1	6	14.6
Returned	1	7.7	0	0.0	1	1.2	12	7.2	0	0.0
Probably returned	0	0.0	1	1.1	1	1.2	1	0.6	2	4.9
Returned after staying	2	15.4	3	3.4	5	6.1	7	4.2	1	2.4
Returned against will	0	0.0	1	1.1	2	2.4	1	0.6	0	0.0
Escaped	0	0.0	1	1.1	1	1.2	7	4.2	0	0.0
Died	1	7.7	2	2.2	1	1.2	12	7.2	0	0.0
Killed by Indians	1	7.7	5	5.6	2	2.4	14	8.4	0	0.0
Probably died	0	0.0	1	1.1	0	0.0	2	1.2	0	0.0
Remained with captors	2	15.4	28	31.5	44	53.7	20	12.0	26	63.4
Perhaps remained	4	30.8	12	13.5	2	2.4	5	3.0	2	4.9
Fate unknown	0	0.0	7	7.9	8	9.8	14	8.4	4	9.8
TOTALS	13		89		82		167		41	

Table 7

FATES OF MALE NEW ENGLANDERS CAPTURED
BY FRENCH, INDIANS, OR FRENCH AND INDIANS, 1675-1763

Fate	Infant (under age 2)		Child (ages 2-6)		Age group Youth (ages 7-15)		Adult (over age 15)		Age unknown	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Exchanged, ransomed, etc.	4	30.8	29	30.5	33	29.2	318	37.7	39	31.7
Returned	1	7.7	6	6.3	7	6.2	39	4.6	1	0.8
Probably returned	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	1.8	9	1.1	0	0.0
Returned after staying	2	15.4	3	3.2	8	7.1	7	0.8	0	0.0
Returned against will	0	0.0	3	3.2	5	4.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
Escaped	1	7.7	6	6.3	1	0.9	50	5.9	0	0.0
Died	1	7.7	3	3.2	3	2.7	119	14.1	6	4.9
Killed by Indians	1	7.7	3	3.2	5	4.4	9	1.1	0	0.0
Probably died	0	0.0	1	1.1	4	3.5	21	2.5	0	0.0
Remained with captors	0	0.0	12	12.6	33	29.2	15	1.8	47	38.2
Perhaps remained	3	23.1	13	13.7	5	4.4	9	1.0	1	0.8
Fate unknown	0	0.0	16	16.8	7	6.2	247	29.3	29	23.6
TOTALS	13		95		113		843		123	

group (tables 6 and 7). By contrast—and perhaps surprisingly—younger children seem less likely to have been adopted by their captors: only about 18 percent of the two- through six-year-olds are known to have remained with the French or Indians. Over 20 percent of all child captives, however, vanished without a trace. Most probably died, but some may have melted into their hosts' society (table 5).¹⁰⁰

The ninety-one captives seized by French forces acting independently of their Indian allies fared quite differently than did those taken by either Indian or French-Indian parties (table 8). The military and seafaring personnel who comprised all of the captives taken by the French were treated as formal prisoners of war. Most were kept in prison and, if they survived the experience, were sent home under flags of truce or exchange agreements. Nearly two-thirds of the prisoners captured by the French returned to New England this way, but approximately 20 percent died in captivity, more than twice the death rate among those captured by French and Indian forces and over five times the rate for those captured by Indians alone. Significantly, there is no evidence that any of those seized by the French might have crossed cultures. Among those for whom the identity of their captors is known, all who refused repatriation were captured by forces that included some Indians.

The likely fate of a captive depended on when he was taken

¹⁰⁰ The infants studied here include thirteen who were born while their mothers were in captivity. Several of them bore such appropriate names as Captivity Jennings, Captive Johnson, and Canada Waite. These infants who began their lives as captives fared little differently from those who were born before their parents were seized. Eight of the thirteen eventually returned to New England (two after receiving Catholic baptism). One, the child of Tamsen Drew, an Oyster River woman taken in 1694, was born in a snowstorm and soon killed by the Indians because its mother could not care for it; two more of the infants born into captivity died of other causes. Priscilla Cole, born in 1704, five months after her mother's capture, perhaps remained with the French Canadians; her mother lived with them for many years and perhaps until her death. The final infant—Joseph Hegeman, born after his parents were captured in 1689—perhaps stayed with the Indians. His mother was redeemed from Indian captivity after three years, but his father's fate is unknown (Coleman, *New England Captives*, passim).

Table 8

FATES OF NEW ENGLANDERS CAPTURED BY INDIAN,
FRENCH, AND FRENCH-INDIAN FORCES, 1675-1763

<i>Fate</i>	<i>Captured by</i>							
	<i>Indians</i>		<i>French</i>		<i>French & Indians</i>		<i>Unclear, unknown</i>	
	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Exchanged, ransomed, etc.	256	44.9	60	65.9	133	31.4	120	21.6
Returned	27	4.7	5	5.5	17	4.0	19	3.4
Probably returned	6	1.1	0	0.0	7	1.7	3	0.5
Returned after staying	25	4.4	0	0.0	9	2.1	4	0.7
Returned against will	11	1.9	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0
Escaped	44	7.7	0	0.0	15	3.5	8	1.4
Died	22	3.9	18	19.8	38	9.0	71	12.8
Killed by Indians	19	3.3	0	0.0	26	6.1	0	0.0
Probably died	9	1.6	1	1.1	4	0.9	16	2.9
Remained with captors*	53	9.3	0	0.0	33	7.8	142	25.5
Perhaps remained*	32	5.6	0	0.0	4	0.9	22	4.0
Fate unknown	66	11.6	7	7.7	137	32.3	151	27.2
TOTALS	570		91		424		556	

* Refers to the party who last held the captive, as opposed to the original captors.

as well as by whom he was taken. New Englanders captured during the first two intercolonial wars had somewhat different experiences from those seized in later conflicts (table 9). In both King William's and Queen Anne's wars, approximately 28 percent of the captives are known to have been ransomed or exchanged while roughly 20 percent definitely refused to return home. During King George's War, however, over 60 percent of the New England prisoners were ransomed or exchanged and only four or five individuals apparently remained with the French or Indians. The most plausible explanation for this shift is that in 1750 England and France, in compliance with a treaty of 1748 concerning North American exchanges, ordered American governors on both sides to relinquish their prisoners; in the earlier conflicts exchange negotiations had been interminable and often inconclusive.¹⁰¹ The disposition of the 536 New Englanders known to have been captured during the Seven Years' War also differed from those in earlier conflicts: the subsequent careers of 41 percent are unknown and only about 2 percent are known conclusively to have changed loyalties. The first figure reflects the large number of military personnel taken captive in this war—in general less is known about military captives than about civilians—and the second figure is something of a statistical artifact: there is no way of knowing how many former prisoners chose to live as quasi-Frenchmen in the province of Quebec after the treaty of 1763 made Canada a British territory.

One final, ironic category of wartime captives: at least six Indian residents of New England towns were taken prisoner by the French Canadians and their Indian allies during the intercolonial wars. Two of them—Peter Dogamus of Yarmouth, an elderly laborer captured in 1746, and Joseph Joseph of Wareham, who served as a soldier and was captured at Fort

¹⁰¹ 'Order for delivering up all the Prisoners,' Feb. 6, 1750, Edmund B. O'Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, 15 vols. (Albany, 1856-87), 6:544-45 (hereafter cited as *NYCD*): George Clinton to the Duke of Bedford, July 30, 1750, *ibid.*, pp. 578-79.

Table 9

FATES OF NEW ENGLANDERS CAPTURED IN PERIODS OF WAR AND PEACE, 1675-1763

Fate	Period												Date of capture					
	King William's		Queen Anne's		King George's		Seven Years' War		Peace		War							
	Before 1689	1689-1697	1697-1702	1702-1713	1713-1744	1744-1748	1748-1754	1754-1763	Peace	War	Peace	War						
N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %					
Exchanged, ransomed, etc.	28	48.8	78	28.2	0	0.0	92	28.4	29	52.7	167	62.5	22	66.7	153	28.5	0	0.0
Returned	1	1.6	18	6.5	0	0.0	21	6.5	1	1.8	14	5.2	0	0.0	11	2.1	2	2.4
Probably returned	0	0.0	5	1.8	0	0.0	4	1.2	0	0.0	3	1.1	0	0.0	4	0.7	0	0.0
Returned after staying	0	0.0	15	5.4	0	0.0	15	4.6	1	1.8	2	0.7	1	3.0	4	0.7	0	0.0
Returned against will	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	0.9	1	1.8	1	0.4	2	6.1	5	0.9	0	0.0
Escaped	11	17.2	18	6.5	0	0.0	9	2.8	4	7.3	2	0.7	3	9.1	20	3.7	0	0.0
Died	2	3.1	8	2.9	0	0.0	12	3.7	0	0.0	49	18.4	1	3.0	76	14.2	1	1.2
Killed by Indians	6	9.4	9	3.2	0	0.0	26	8.0	3	5.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0
Probably died	2	3.1	4	1.4	0	0.0	1	0.3	0	0.0	4	1.5	0	0.0	19	3.5	0	0.0
Remained with captors	0	0.0	54	19.5	0	0.0	76	23.5	3	5.5	4	1.5	2	6.1	10	1.9	79	92.9
Perhaps remained	2	3.1	26	9.4	0	0.0	14	4.3	0	0.0	1	0.4	1	3.0	13	2.4	1	1.2
Fate unknown	12	18.8	42	15.2	0	0.0	51	15.7	13	23.6	20	7.5	1	3.0	220	41.0	2	2.4
TOTALS	64		277		0		324		55		267		33		536		85	

William Henry in 1757—were fond enough of Anglo-American society to return to it when the opportunity arose. Only one of the six is known to have voluntarily remained with the Indians rather than return to New England—Isaac Peck of Cape Cod who married a mission Indian at St. François in 1749. The first, chronologically, of the Indians taken prisoner, Jeanne Wannannemin, was one of Eliot's 'praying Indians' at Natick until King Philip's War, then 'lived in the woods' with her Indian husband until her capture near Deerfield in 1695. In 1698 Wannannemin was baptized a Catholic, and presumably she stayed in Canada.¹⁰² Whatever their fate, these Indians reflect the complexity of the cultural frontier. Some of them may have twice changed their cultural identity—from Indian to English and back to Indian again—or perhaps thrice in Jeanne Wannannemin's case, from Indian to English to Indian to French. All of these changes may have been superficial and outside the realm of transculturation. But there are hints that in some instances new loyalties held firm and that crossing the cultural divide was a profound and lasting experience.

IV

That so many New Englanders were taken prisoner between 1689 and 1763 reflects not only the persistence of military conflict but also certain traditions of Indian warfare. Indian allies, on whom both the English and the French relied heavily, entered the Europeans' struggles primarily for their own reasons and waged war mainly by their own rules. Nowhere was the latter more apparent than in the role captivities played in colonial warfare. Although European armies had always taken

¹⁰² Coleman, *New England Captives*, 1:300-302; 2:350, 353, 377, 402. The fate of the remaining two captured Indians—Jonathan George, a Rehoboth servant, and Nathan Joseph, both taken at Fort William Henry in 1757—is unknown. For the statistical purposes of this essay, all six captured Indians are treated as if they had become New Englanders and are included with their Euro-American fellow captives in all tabulations.

prisoners of war, and although they occasionally enslaved captured 'heathens,' an unwritten rule of European international law—generally observed by French forces fighting alone in America—prohibited the seizure of noncombatants and allowed the retention of combatants only until they could be exchanged or released with a pledge to fight no more. But according to Indian rules, captives of all ages and of either sex could—indeed must—be taken, either to be adopted into the families of the victorious nation or, if less fortunate, to be tortured, killed, and (occasionally) eaten. These practices, which American colonists too readily dismissed as evidence of the Indian's savage nature, were embedded in complex cultural ideas about warfare and the possibility of 'requickening' (physically and spiritually replacing) deceased relatives.¹⁰³

Indian wars have often been described as endless series of blood feuds, but a closer examination of the cultural assumptions behind Indian warfare suggests, as anthropologist Marian W. Smith noted three decades ago, that 'mourning-war' is a more accurate label. While individuals often joined an Indian war party to secure revenge or to enhance personal prestige, throughout North America east of the Rocky Mountains the party's avowed collective purpose was to assuage the misery of a deceased person's mourning kin, partly by gaining revenge but mainly by securing captives who could help, in a

¹⁰³ On European attitudes and practices concerning enslavement of non-Christian prisoners of war, see Winthrop D. Jordan, *White over Black: American Attitudes toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1968), pp. 54-56; and William McKee Evans, 'From the Land of Canaan to the Land of Guinea: The Strange Odyssey of the "Sons of Ham,"' *American Historical Review* 85(1980):15-43. New Englanders sold Indian war captives into slavery during both the Pequot War and King Philip's War; most were shipped to the West Indies or other colonies, but little is known of their numbers or ultimate fate (Jordan, *White over Black*, p. 68; Leach, *Flintlock and Tomabawk*, pp. 178, 227-28). On the enslavement of Indians in southern New England in the eighteenth century see John A. Sainsbury, 'Indian Labor in Early Rhode Island,' *New England Quarterly* 48(1975):378-93. A useful but outdated study is Almon Wheeler Lauber, *Indian Slavery in Colonial Times* (New York, 1913). As will be seen below, northeastern American Indians possessed an ideology of warfare quite foreign to the experience of Euro-Americans (either of the colonial era or of the twentieth century) which assigned war captives an entirely different and vastly more important role in warfare.

variety of symbolic and actual roles, to lessen the survivors' grief. Accordingly, any death—not merely one resulting from homicide or war—might cause an Indian community to take up the hatchet against a neighboring people.¹⁰⁴

Among northeastern Indians, and especially among Iroquoians, relatives of the recently deceased were expected to plunge into depths of despair that might threaten the community's safety if some controlled outlet were not found. 'Ten days of profound mourning' followed the death of an Iroquois, observed Joseph François Lafitau, the Jesuit missionary to the Catholic Mohawks at Caughnawaga:

The laws of deep mourning are very austere; for, during those ten days [the deceased's close kin], after having the hair cut, smearing the face with earth or charcoal and gotten themselves up in the most frightful negligence, they remain at the back of their bunk, their face against the ground or turned towards the back of the platform, their head enveloped in their blanket which is the dirtiest and least clean rag that they have. They do not look at or speak to anyone except through necessity and in a low voice. They hold themselves excused from every duty of civility and courtesy.¹⁰⁵

Such grief might lead to violent outbursts that could harm the community or the mourner himself. Northeastern tribes therefore erected social barriers against the bereaved's ex-

¹⁰⁴ Marian W. Smith, 'American Indian Warfare,' *Transactions of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 2d ser. 12(1951):348-65, esp. 352-59; see also Anthony F. C. Wallace, *The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca* (New York, 1969), pp. 101-2. Smith borrowed the term 'mourning-war' from George A. Dorsey, 'The Osage Mourning-War Ceremony,' *American Anthropologist*, n.s. 4(1902):404-11, and demonstrated its applicability to warfare customs across central and eastern North America in a 'pattern which is strikingly correlated with the area of the northern distribution of maize agriculture' (Smith, 'American Indian Warfare,' p. 363). If, as Calvin Martin argues in *Keepers of the Game: Indian-Animal Relationships and the Fur Trade* (Berkeley, 1978), eastern Canadian Indians declared a 'war' against fur-bearing animals in the wake of a series of medical disasters that slew much of the Indian population, their actions illustrate the principle that the deaths inspiring a mourning war need not be directly attributed to homicide or previous enemy acts of war. On blood feuds, see George S. Snyderman, 'Behind the Tree of Peace: A Sociological Analysis of Iroquois Warfare,' *Pennsylvania Archeologist* 18, nos. 3-4(Fall 1948):6-8, 32.

¹⁰⁵ Lafitau, *Customs of American Indians*, 2:242.

pected rage. They held condolence rituals and mourning feasts, gave presents to survivors, and frequently conducted a 'requickening' or adoption ceremony in which another individual assumed the deceased's name and sometimes quite literally replaced him in the family. Conferring the dead person's name on the adoptee, the Indians believed, assured survival not only of the former's memory but also of his personality and social role.¹⁰⁶ That requickening ceremonies could result in more than symbolic replacement is shown by a practice the Jesuits found among the Huron and Iroquois in the seventeenth century: 'The husband of a quite young wife having died, his name was transferred to a young man who had recently lost his wife,' and the man quickly moved in with the woman and assumed the role of husband and father. 'It was said that they were married together,' just as the woman and her former husband had been.¹⁰⁷

If the mourners' grief remained unassuaged by such means—and especially if an enemy people could, rightly or wrongly, be blamed for the death—a mourning war was an acceptable outlet for grief-inspired violence. The war party's principal task and the primary mark of a warrior's prowess was the seizure of captives, who would subsequently play a central role in condolence rituals. Indeed, before the arrival of Europeans, Indian war parties seldom had other concrete objectives; plunder or land acquisition were rarely pre-contact wartime goals, and killing enemies on the spot or taking their scalps were less preferred than bringing captives back to the home village for disposition by bereaved kin.¹⁰⁸ The mourners might vent their

¹⁰⁶ Lafitau, *Customs of American Indians*, 1:71; Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents, 1610–1791*, 73 vols. (Cleveland, 1896–1901), 22:286–89; Alfred Goldsworthy Bailey, *The Conflict of European and Eastern Algonkian Cultures, 1504–1700* (St. John, N.B., 1937), p. 144.

¹⁰⁷ Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit Relations*, 29:214–17.

¹⁰⁸ Smith, 'American Indian Warfare,' p. 362; Wallace, *Death and Rebirth*, pp. 102–4; William N. Fenton, 'Northern Iroquoian Culture Patterns,' *Handbook of North American Indians*, 15: *Northeast*, ed. Bruce C. Trigger (Washington, D.C., 1978); Lafitau, *Customs of American Indians*, 2:152–55.

rage and satisfy the deceased's demands for revenge by torturing and killing the captives. New York Gov. Thomas Dongan observed that the Indians had 'a custom when any of there people are lost [in war] to give upp thoes [prisoners] they take to the crueltie of thoes fammilyls which have lost any of there people.'¹⁰⁹ Or, the mourners might adopt one or more captives into their families to replace their loss. 'A father who lost his son adopts a young prisoner in his place,' reported Philip Mazzei in an eighteenth-century account of British America. 'An orphan takes a father or mother; a widow a husband; one man takes a sister and another a brother.'¹¹⁰ Underlying these condolence and adoption customs was the nation's pragmatic need to restock its population, a need that sharply increased during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when northeastern Indians faced the twin onslaughts of European war and European diseases. The Iroquois Confederacy strikingly illustrates this point: by 1700 it contained more outsiders and their descendants than ethnic Iroquois.¹¹¹

Although the mourning war, with its ritualized treatment of captives, was especially characteristic of the Iroquois,¹¹² sim-

¹⁰⁹ Thomas Dongan to Jacques-Réné de Brisay, Marquis de Denonville, Oct. 31, 1687, *NYCD*, 3:517.

¹¹⁰ Philip Mazzei, *Researches on the United States*, trans. and ed. Constance D. Sherman (Charlottesville, Va., 1975), p. 349.

¹¹¹ 'Memoir of M. de Denonville on the State of Canada,' Nov. 12, 1685, *NYCD*, 9:281; Snyderman, 'Tree of Peace,' pp. 13-15; Sherburne F. Cook, 'The Significance of Disease in the Extinction of the New England Indians,' *Human Biology* 46(1973): 485-88; Cook, 'Interracial Warfare and Population Decline among the New England Indians,' *Ethnohistory* 20(1973):1-24; William N. Fenton, 'The Iroquois in History,' in Eleanor Burke Leacock and Nancy Oestreich Lurie, eds., *North American Indians in Historical Perspective* (New York, 1971), p. 143. If the Indians' need to expand their population underlay their mourning-war practices and thus their assimilation of captives, perhaps the European-Americans' relative lack of need for additional population helped to shape their attitudes toward outsiders. Widespread ethnic prejudice in overcrowded Tudor-Stuart England lends this explanation some support, though clearly other influences were also present. In any event, the subtle relationship between social needs and social attitudes deserves further study.

¹¹² The highly ritualized Iroquois practices of captivity, torture, and adoption and the ceremonial return of the war party with prisoners was widely reported by contemporaries. An excellent modern account of the process by which an adopted captive was made an integral part of the nation, focussing particularly on the experiences of Euro-American prisoners, is Axtell, 'White Indians.' For a concise modern description of the fate of less fortunate captives—Indian and European—who were ritually tor-

ilar patterns existed among the northeastern Algonquians, and by the beginning of the intercolonial wars the practices of the two linguistic groups had substantially converged. Perhaps Algonquians had earlier preferred to torture and kill than to adopt their prisoners¹¹³—at least there is no evidence before 1675 of New Englanders being captured for adoption. In King Philip's War, New England Algonquians began taking Euro-American captives in substantial numbers, though possibly for later exchange.¹¹⁴ By the beginning of King William's War in 1689, all of the Indian allies of the French—Iroquoian and Algonquian—seized prisoners not only for torture and execution but also as prospective adoptees.

Warfare and adoption customs had grown more alike among New France's Indian allies as a result of their frequent residential intermixture at Canadian mission settlements. Christianization seems to have done little to weaken mourning-war customs and may even have fostered their diffusion and homogenization among Iroquoians and Algonquians.¹¹⁵ Until late in the seventeenth century, Catholic missionaries attempted to impart a Christian gloss to native adoption ceremonies, but the results were usually superficial and by then Canadian civil authorities had largely abandoned their policy of 'Francisa-

tured, killed, and sometimes eaten by the families and friends of a deceased Iroquois, see Wallace, *Death and Rebirth*, 103-7; for a broader geographical and cultural perspective, see Nathaniel Knowles, 'The Torture of Captives by the Indians of Eastern North America,' *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 82(1940):151-225.

¹¹³ Snyderman, 'Tree of Peace,' pp. 56, 63, 70; Bailey, *Conflict of Cultures*, p. 98.

¹¹⁴ Leach, *Flintlock and Tomahawk*, pp. 178-81; Gordon M. Day, 'Western Abenaki,' in Trigger, ed., *Northeast*, p. 157.

¹¹⁵ Christianized Mohawks comprised most of the residents at the Caughnawaga mission and (after the turn of the eighteenth century) Algonquian Western Abenaki predominated at St. François, but at other Canadian missions, especially those on the immediate outskirts of Montreal, peoples of various ethnic backgrounds clustered together. One example of the kind of cultural intermingling and diffusion of adoption customs that occurred among mission Indians is a requickening ceremony at Sillery in the late 1660s. Taking part in Iroquois-style rituals designed to replace the dead sachem Noel Tecouerimat were people originally from Algonquin, Montagnais, Micmac, Abenaki, Etechemin, Atticameg, Nipissing, and Huron villages, while French missionaries looked on (Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit Relations*, 52:223-27; Bailey, *Conflict of Cultures*, p. 93).

tion' of the natives. The Jesuits had also lowered their sights, concentrating instead on 'gathering their charges into Indian villages, teaching them the rudiments of agriculture and the catechism, screening them from contact with Europeans, and allowing the Indians to retain their own tongues and sense of identity.'¹¹⁶ As a result, in 1691 a French official could observe that 'our Indians in the adjacent Missions will not ask any thing better . . . than to wage war in their own way.'¹¹⁷ The Marquis de Denonville had learned the same lesson a few years earlier: during an expedition against the Seneca in 1687, his Christianized Indian allies clung tenaciously to their ancient wartime rituals. 'Our Christian Indians' he wrote, 'were waiting for us [at a rendezvous], who sung and danced the war dance all night, at a feast which was prepared for them by means of two lean cows, and some dozen dogs, roasted, hair and all. In this consists the *true enrolment* for a vigorous prosecution of the war.'¹¹⁸

Just as tenaciously, Christianized Indians retained their custom of taking captives. 'The best proof' of the loyalty of the Western and Eastern Abenaki to the French cause, wrote Canadian Intendant Jean Bochart de Champigny, 'has been the great number of prisoners of all ages that they have brought in.'¹¹⁹ If the Canadians' Indian allies were denied their accustomed rights concerning prisoners of war, they might refuse to fight. In January 1708 Christian Mohawks of the Caughnawaga mission informed the Chevalier de Ramezay that because

¹¹⁶ George F. G. Stanley, 'The Policy of "Francisation" as Applied to the Indians during the Ancien Regime,' *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* 3 (1949-50):346-47. See also Cornelius J. Jaenen, 'The Frenchification and Evangelization of the Amerindians in the Seventeenth Century New France,' *Canadian Catholic Historical Association, Study Sessions, 1968*, pp. 57-71.

¹¹⁷ 'Remarks on what appears Important to the King's service for the preservation of New France. 1691,' *NYCD*, 9:511.

¹¹⁸ Jacques-Réné de Brisay, Marquis de Denonville, 'Memoir of the Voyage and Expedition of the Marquis de Denonville . . . against the Senecas . . . October, 1687,' *NYCD*, 9:359-60.

¹¹⁹ 'An Account of the Military Operations in Canada from the month of November, 1691, to the month of October, 1692,' *NYCD*, 9:537.

the Canadians had taken many of the Caughnawagas' captives for exchange with the English, the Indians would no longer maraud British frontiers. Ramezay's reminder that they still held many of their adopted captives and that they had been paid for the rest only partly mollified his allies.¹²⁰ Throughout the intercolonial wars, especially during the first two, French authorities were powerless to make the mission Indians yield all their English captives. As soon as the Indians learned of an approaching French or English envoy, they hid their favorite adoptees.¹²¹

Both the English and the French used these traditional aspects of Indian warfare for their own purposes. As early as 1690 both European sides paid scalp and prisoner bounties to their Indian allies.¹²² The fact that the Indians' prisoners had to be turned over to the Europeans if bounties were to be collected did not alter native patterns as much as might be supposed; war parties had always delivered captives to the be-reaved in the home village and occasionally to other nations in fulfillment of treaty obligations. Now the French or English simply assumed the role of the receiving party.¹²³ Colonial

¹²⁰ Francis H. Hamming, *The Marquis de Vaudreuil: New France at the Beginning of the Eighteenth Century*, Université de Louvain, *Recueil de travaux*, 2d ser. 47 (Louvain, 1938):180-81.

¹²¹ Philippe de Rigaud de Vaudreuil to the Minister, Apr. 14, 1714, *Rapport de l'archiviste de la Province de Québec pour 1947-1948*, p. 252; John Williams, *The Redeemed Captive, Returning to Zion* (Boston, 1707), pp. 49-51; William Johnson to George Clinton, Sept. 1, 1749, *NYCD*, 6:526-27.

¹²² W. J. Eccles, *Frontenac: The Courtier Governor* (Toronto, 1959), pp. 251n-52n; Coleman, *New England Captives*, 1:52-54. Canadian officials, rightly or wrongly, blamed the English for starting the practice of encouraging Indians to take European captives. The Marquis de Denonville, governor of New France, told Gov. Edmund Andros of the Dominion of New England in 1688 that he had 'no doubt' that the Mohawk and Mohegan raiding parties then harrying New France 'were despatched by Mr. Dongan [Andros's predecessor as governor of New York] . . . the thing is only too notorious in your country for you not to be convinced of it; he having even furnished ropes to bind the French, whom they might carry away prisoners, besides all the munitions of war with which he had supplied them for that purpose' (Denonville to Andros, Oct. 23, 1688, *NYCD*, 3:570).

¹²³ Axtell's statement that 'the Canadian Indians who raided New England tended to take captives more for their ransom value than for adoption' is undoubtedly true ('White Indians,' p. 59). Nevertheless, the New England captivities seem to have fit easily into patterns familiar to Indian war parties, who were accustomed to yielding up most of their prisoners to other hands upon the expedition's return.

authorities used the civilian prisoners they obtained from the Indians for traditional European purposes: as bargaining chips to achieve diplomatic ends and to insure the safe return of their own people from the enemy. But to some extent, French Canadians also used the numerous captives who fell into their hands during the eighteenth-century wars much as the Indians did: as a partial solution to the problems of underpopulation and a shortage of labor. Nuns in the Canadian convents were eager to 'adopt' young English girls and raise them in the Catholic faith, while other Canadians found more mercenary uses for English captives. During Queen Anne's War, a French woman ransomed English prisoners from the Indians so that they could teach her and her neighbors the art of weaving, and several New England men earned their freedom from the French by building sawmills.¹²⁴

Nonetheless, Canada's Indian allies attempted to retain some of their Anglo-American captives and to incorporate them into their traditional patterns of captivity and adoption. They seldom succeeded. Although historian James Axtell has shown that Indians were adept at subtly educating their captives for adoption,¹²⁵ New Englanders seem to have been slow pupils in the wilderness school. Few of them apparently perceived, as did Moravian missionary John Heckewelder, that customs such as running the gauntlet were not fiendish tortures but rather—for anyone who knew the rules of the game—relatively harmless initiation rites. 'I can say with truth,' wrote Heckewelder,

that in many instances, it is rather a scene of amusement, than a punishment. Much depends on the courage and presence of

¹²⁴ Hammang, *Marquis de Vaudreuil*, p. 87. At least six New Englanders paid their own ransoms by building sawmills for French Canadians: Thomas Sawyer and John Bigelow in 1706, Philip Huntoon and Jacob Gilman in about 1711, and Nathan Cross and Thomas Blanchard in 1725. The mill constructed by Sawyer and Bigelow was reputed to be the first in New France. A seventh New Englander, Edward Hall of Exeter who was captured in 1706, received special treatment while building a sawmill and repaid his captors by using a hunting pass to return to his home (Coleman, *New England Captives*, 1:310-11, 370, 374-75; 2:168).

¹²⁵ 'White Indians,' pp. 66-75.

mind of the prisoner. On entering the village, he is shewn a painted post at the distance of from twenty to forty yards, and told to run to it and catch hold of it as quickly as he can. On each side of him stand men, women and children, with axes, sticks, and other offensive weapons, ready to strike him as he runs, in the same manner as is done in the European armies when soldiers, as it is called, run the gauntlet. . . .

If a prisoner in such a situation shews a determined courage, and when bid to run for the painted post, starts at once with all his might and exerts all his strength and agility until he reaches it, he will most commonly escape without much harm, and . . . he will have the satisfaction to hear his courage and bravery applauded. But wo to the coward who hesitates, or shews any symptoms of fear! He is treated without much mercy, and is happy, at last, if he escapes with his life.¹²⁶

Probably few New England captives faced such ordeals without 'any symptoms of fear' or saw any virtue in the Indians and their ritual.

Long before they ran the gauntlet or confronted a Catholic missionary, most Anglo-Americans had been conditioned to fear and despise their captors. Some New Englanders had harbored such sentiments from the earliest days of colonization, but animosity toward Indians became especially virulent during King Philip's War—the period when captives were first taken in appreciable numbers.¹²⁷ Thereafter, narratives by redeemed captives and tracts by Puritan spokesmen kept ethnic antagonisms high. In 1676 Benjamin Tompson's poetic imagination added sexual abuse to the catalogue of Indian cruelties:

Will she or nil the chastest turtle must
Tast of the pangs of their unbridled lust.
From farmes to farmes, from towns to towns they post,
They strip, they bind, they ravish, flea and roast.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ John Heckewelder, *History, Manners, and Customs of the Indian Nations Who Once Inhabited Pennsylvania and the Neighbouring States*, ed. William C. Reichel, *Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania* 12 (Philadelphia, 1876 [orig. publ. Philadelphia, 1819]):218–19.

¹²⁷ Vaughan, *New England Frontier*, pp. 315–22; Leach, *Flintlock and Tomahawk*, pp. 145–54, 245–46.

¹²⁸ *New England's Crisis* (Boston, 1676), p. 12.

Abundant evidence eventually demonstrated the inaccuracy of the sexual charge, and in 1706 Cotton Mather would set the record straight: 'Tis a wonderful Restraint from God upon the Bruitish Salvages, that no *English Woman* was ever known to have any Violence offered unto her *Chastity*, by any of them.'¹²⁹ But before Mather's disclaimer, and perhaps even after, no captive could be sure what treatment to expect. And there were innumerable other agonies to dread. In 1691 Mather urged his readers to

think upon the miserable Captives now in the Hands of that brutish Adversary; *Captives* that are every minute Looking when they shall be Roasted Alive, to make a Sport and a Feast, for the most Execrable Canibals; *Captives*, that must Endure the most bitter Frost and Cold, without Rags enough to Cover their Nakedness; *Captives*, that have scarce a bit of meat allow'd them to put into their Mouthes, but what a Dog would hardly meddle with; *Captives*, that must see their nearest Relations butchered before their Eyes, and yet be afraid of Letting those Eyes drop a Tear upon the most Heart breaking Occasions, that can be imagined; *Captives*, that may not bear a part in any Comfortable Devotions, nor be known to have so much as a Bible with them, lest a French Priest should sieze upon it; *Captives*, that wear away one weary Week after another, in the midst of such Wolves as are every moment ready to tear them all to pieces.¹³⁰

Any New Englander old enough to understand such admonitions must have entered captivity expecting the worst, especially if he had seen Indians slay friends and relatives in a bloody, though hardly uniquely Indian, fashion. The discovery that torture and abuse were seldom their fate, rather than ad-

¹²⁹ Cotton Mather, *Good Fetch'd Out of Evil* (Boston, 1706), pp. 33–34. Sexual abuse of female captives by Indians in the Northeast was rare if not altogether absent. For a possible exception see Underhill, *Newes from America*, p. 18. Explanations for the warriors' restraint include their lack of attraction to English women, their reluctance to violate potential adoptees, and tribal taboos against sexual activity during military operations. We consider the last of these to be the most plausible, though all may have had some influence.

¹³⁰ Cotton Mather, *Fair Weather: Or, Considerations to Dispel the Clouds* (Boston, 1692), p. 87.

miration for Indian culture, largely explains the captives' occasional testaments to the Indians' kindness.¹³¹

Reinforcing the captives' fears were colonial laws against becoming Indianized and clerical warnings of God's vengeance on those who did. In 1676 Increase Mather insisted that King Philip's War revealed God's displeasure at the Puritans' Indian-like heathenism: 'If we mind where [the troubles] began and by what Instruments, we may well think that God is greatly offended with the *Heatbenisme* of the English People. How many that although they are *Christians* in name, are no better than *Heathens* in heart, and in Conversation? How many Families that live like *profane Indians* without any *Family prayer*? . . . If we learn the way of the Heathen, and become like them, God will punish us by them.'¹³² Such warnings placed a dual burden on Puritan captives: they must not succumb to Indianization lest they and their countrymen suffer further depredations, yet their own capture suggested that they were already so heathen as to merit God's wrath. Perhaps we should be less amazed that so few New Englanders 'became' Indians than that any did.

From an Indian perspective, New Englanders must have seemed unfit candidates for adoption. As part of mourning rituals and as means of assuaging grief, the efficacy of adopting or torturing prisoners depended on the captive's conformance to a highly ritualized code of behavior: if adopted he must assimilate completely; if tortured he must die bravely.¹³³ By these standards, Englishmen—unfamiliar with the rules of mourning wars and reluctant to learn them—proved highly unsatisfying prisoners. Notably few New Englanders, for example, were tortured, presumably because they neither sang their death songs nor taunted their tormenters but quickly suc-

¹³¹ For a different interpretation of these comments by colonial captives see Axtell, 'White Indians,' p. 68.

¹³² Increase Mather, *An Earnest Exhortation*, pp. 5, 11.

¹³³ Wallace, *Death and Rebirth*, pp. 102-7.

cumbed to agony and thereby, according to Indian belief, disgusted instead of mollified the angry spirits of the dead and the grieving survivors. Thomas Brown observed such behavior in one unfortunate English captive of the Caughnawaga Iroquois during the Seven Years' War:

They made a Fire, stripp'd and ty'd him to a Stake, and the Squaws cut Pieces of Pine, like Scures [skewers], and thrust them into his Flesh, and set them on Fire, and then fell to pow-wawing and dancing round him. . . . They cut the poor Man's Cords, and made him run backwards and forwards. I heard the poor Man's Cries to Heaven for Mercy; and at length, thro' extreme Anguish and Pain, he pitched himself into the Flames and expired.¹³⁴

Quite likely, then, Indians were only too willing to exchange most of their Euro-American captives for French bounties or English ransoms, while reserving for adoption the few who met their high standards. But still they continued to seize large numbers of prisoners during their raids on New England settlements, for this was their way of waging a proper war.

The French Canadians, meanwhile, were so flooded with English captives who wished to stay with them that Canadian authorities begged Paris for guidance on how to house and support the expatriates.¹³⁵ Reasons for French society's attractiveness to English colonists deserve further study, but several possibilities can be mentioned briefly. Many New Englanders, after a harrowing overland trip through the wilderness and weeks among the 'cruel savages,' were grateful for

¹³⁴ Thomas Brown, *A Plain Narrative of the Uncommon Sufferings, and Remarkable Deliverance of Thomas Brown, of Charlestown, in New-England* (Boston, 1760), pp. 16-17. Though the sources are not often explicit about torture, we have found evidence of only 85 of the 1,641 New England captives who suffered Indian torture or other painful rituals, such as running the gauntlet. Of the 85, 57 were adults.

¹³⁵ Vaudreuil to the Minister, Apr. 14, 1714, *Rapport arch. Québec 1947-1948*, pp. 252-53; Vaudreuil and François de LaBoische de Beauharnois to the Minister, Nov. 17, 1704, *Rapport arch. Québec 1938-1939*, p. 61; W. J. Eccles, *The Canadian Frontier, 1694-1769* (New York, 1969), p. 198n. For a compilation of the names of Anglo-Americans from New England and elsewhere who received letters of naturalization from the French crown between 1668 and 1758, see P. G. Roy, 'Les lettres de naturalité sous le régime français,' *Bulletin des recherches historiques* 30(1924):225-32.

the sight of European faces, houses, and food—even if they did belong to papists; English captives frequently marvelled at the hospitality of the first French farm they reached in Canada. The Rev. John Williams luxuriated on ‘a good *Feather-bed*’ his first night in Canada and found that ‘where-ever we entred into Houses, the *French* were very Courteous.’ Nehemiah How praised the Canadian ‘Gentlemen and Ladies, who shew’d us great Kindness, in giving us Money and other Things, and a pleasant Behaviour towards us.’¹³⁶ Gratitude, then, perhaps paved the way for some New Englanders’ decisions to remain in Canada, although it failed to persuade either Williams or How. In addition, the prospect of having to make the grueling return trip to New England and suspicions—sometimes encouraged by French hosts—that most of one’s loved ones were dead or that France would win the war may also have encouraged some Englishmen to stay put.¹³⁷ And, finally, well-intentioned Canadian priests and nuns exerted effective if not always admirable pressures, especially on impressionable younger captives, to convert to Catholicism and to remain in Canada.¹³⁸ Cotton Mather complained that ‘the *French* use all the means imaginable, to Seduce their *Captives* unto the Idolatries and Superstitions of the Church of *Rome*.’ From a Puritan perspective he was right, but he was wrong when he added that ‘The Successes of the *French Converters*, have been very few, but some feeble and easy *Children*; and little to be boasted of.’¹³⁹

¹³⁶ Williams, *Redeemed Captive*, pp. 19–20; How, *Narrative of Captivity*, p. 12.

¹³⁷ For one excellent account of the perils of overland travel between the English colonies and New France, see John Livingston, ‘A Journall of the Travails of Major John Livingstone from Annapolis Royall in Nova Scotia to Quebeck in Canada, from thence to Albany and soe to Boston, begun Oct. 15, and ended Feb. 23 17th 1701,’ in Cecil Headlam, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and the West Indies*, 25 (London, 1924):371–86. For Canadian encouragement of captives’ suspicions that the French would win the war and that there was little reason to return to New England, see Williams, *Redeemed Captive*, pp. 33–34.

¹³⁸ John Williams claimed that the French sometimes threatened to return captives to the Indians if they would not convert to Catholicism. *Redeemed Captive*, pp. 51–52. In a sermon of Dec. 5, 1706, he also complained that some captives were ‘threatned, some flattered, some shut up and confined in Monasteryes, where no means were unessayed to gain them to change their Religion.’ Appended to *Redeemed Captive*, p. 99.

¹³⁹ C. Mather, *Good Fetch’d Out of Evil*, p. 21.

V

Because America has been, theoretically at least, an ethnic melting pot, and because the friction between European-Americans and the aboriginal population has been a persistent American dilemma, transculturation has fascinated not only historians and anthropologists. Novelists, for example, have been equally intrigued by cultural metamorphosis and equally prone to perpetuate the image of frequent and dramatic conversions by Euro-Americans to 'savagery' while denying, implicitly at least, Indian attraction to 'civilized' society. Two nineteenth-century writers illustrate the point. The only Indian in Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* shows few traces of European influence; generations of missionary efforts on his native Martha's Vineyard had failed to change Tashtego's customs or beliefs. Similarly, the captive Indian boy in James Fenimore Cooper's *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish*, who lives for a time with a New England family, retains his native allegiance while the Puritan girl abducted by Indians marries a sachem and thoroughly absorbs his culture. Melville and Cooper thus reinforced the Colden-Franklin-Crèvecoeur paradigm.

But Cooper elsewhere explored a vastly more important theme in Indian-European culture contact. *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish*, after all, is among his least-known works. Far more popular, and far more reflective of Indian-European contact throughout British America, are Cooper's 'Leatherstocking Tales.' Although their version of wilderness life may be excessively romantic, the Leatherstocking novels offer no accounts of complete transculturation in either direction. Instead they portray the dominant American experience: the emergence—to borrow once again from Crèvecoeur—of a 'new man' who is not merely a transplanted European but a blend of Old World tradition and New World innovation, a fusing of cultures into a distinctively American type (though to Crèvecoeur the principal ingredients were of European rather than

Indian origin). To the extent that Natty Bumppo discards much of his European cultural baggage and embraces Indian ways, he is the prototypical American, a fictional Daniel Boone, and a far more accurate symbol of early American cultural adaptation than the rare instances of thorough transculturation. Acculturation was inevitable, given the frequency of racial contact along the advancing colonial frontier and the vitality of both European and American Indian cultures. The human responses to cultural contact varied, of course, from almost total rejection of alien influences to almost total acceptance, but the choices of the vast majority of Indians and European-Americans fell somewhere between the extremes. They borrowed what they wanted—in religion, economy, apparel, technology, warfare, language—while in all other respects retaining their own cultural heritages. Acculturation, in sum, was an integral and irresistible part of the American experience.

Transculturation was not. Except in rare cases, the obstacles to transculturation were simply overwhelming. Indian attempts to incorporate Englishmen into Algonquian or Iroquoian communities confronted a fiercely resistive mind-set. New England captives were too attached to their kinfolk back home, too bitter over the hardships of capture and the flight to Canada, too fearful of Indian 'savagery' and its implications for God-fearing Christians, too ready to take an ethnocentric view of Indian (and French) customs, and, probably, too hopeful of eventual redemption to accept cultural indoctrination. This psychological barrier was usually strong enough to withstand the Indians' major attraction: the sincerity and thoroughness with which they incorporated outsiders into their societies. For some disgruntled outcasts and impressionable youths, and for a few flexible adults, Indian life promised a new sense of belonging, a new security, a new life. But persistent French and English efforts to redeem captives from Indian control left few New Englanders to experience enough of Indian culture to override their lifetime heritage and even fewer to experi-

ence adoption into Indian families. Not surprisingly, only a handful of New Englanders made the complete transition.

Only a slightly larger handful of Indians made a comparable metamorphosis to English culture, despite New England's greater geopolitical opportunity to effect social conversion. Whereas the Indians almost always had to capture Europeans in war and drag them, sometimes literally, to a distant land before beginning seriously to indoctrinate their unwilling guests, English colonists usually had the ostensibly easier task of convincing peaceful or defeated neighbors to take on new beliefs and habits while remaining in or near their homelands. That was not always an advantage: sachems, powwows, and other Indians who clung to traditional culture were on hand to dissuade or threaten potential defectors. But ultimately the New Englanders defeated themselves by insisting that Indians who made the effort must almost immediately and completely reject their past—and even then the colonists refused, in most cases, to accept the few Indians who met such stern demands. Rejection of the converts rarely came from New England's missionaries and lay leaders but instead from its general populace who increasingly deplored Indian culture and even the value of Indian existence. As early as 1638 William Bradford observed that 'some of the rude and ignorante sorte' objected to the execution of 'any English' for killing an Indian.¹⁴⁰ However limited the outcry against fair treatment of the Indians may have been in the early years of settlement, by 1676 it had grown to an appreciable—probably a majority—viewpoint, and by the eighteenth century it drowned such tolerant voices as Experience Mayhew's and Eleazar Wheelock's. And, by Wheelock's time, what had originally been cultural bias (a repugnance toward aliens but acceptance of those who thoroughly assimilated) had turned into racial prejudice (a conviction that some aliens were innately inferior in appearance and character and were thus unredeemable); thereafter the

¹⁴⁰ Bradford, *History of Plymouth Plantation*, 2:267–68.

Indian could never be accepted as an Englishman no matter what he did. Ironically, we customarily call Indians 'tribal,' suggesting an inbred, parochial society with jealously guarded rituals and totems, and refer to the English as a 'nation,' implying considerable ethnic and cultural heterogeneity and the assimilation of newcomers. In many respects the terms are more appropriately reversed: Indian America welcomed outsiders and freely incorporated them. New English America did not.¹⁴¹

Whatever their failures in assimilating newcomers, the New England colonies, like other European outposts throughout the Americas, were too large and aggressive for the natives to ignore even if they had wanted to. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the English presence impinged sharply on the Indians: diseases and wars dramatically reduced their numbers; wars, land sales, migrations, and missionary endeavors drastically revamped their settlement patterns; technological innovations permanently altered their economic and occupational customs; and the efforts of Christian teachers and missionaries made major incursions into their fundamental modes of communication and belief.¹⁴² Northeastern Indian society had never been stagnant, but not until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries did it undergo cultural revolution. Indian life would never be the same.

Neither would European-American life. The early settlers' intention to transplant the best of European culture and to remain aloof from Indian 'barbarity' proved ephemeral. From the outset Indian culture exerted a subtle but profound influ-

¹⁴¹ Edmund S. Morgan, in a very different context, charged the Puritans with tribalism in the last decades of the seventeenth century for their failure to actively seek new converts even among their fellow New Englanders. *The Puritan Family: Religion and Domestic Relations in Seventeenth-Century New England*, rev. ed. (New York, 1966), ch. 7. Significantly, perhaps, seventeenth-century colonists did not call the Indians 'tribal'; instead they almost always referred to them collectively as 'nations.'

¹⁴² A skillful overview of the English impact on Indian culture is James Axtell, *The Europeans and the Indians: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America* (New York, forthcoming), ch. 9.

ence on the newcomers: in language, travel, warfare, food, clothing, entertainment, and many other aspects of American life.¹⁴³ As one colonial writer observed, 'such is the influence of this Wilderness on the inhabitants who are born here that it inclines them to an *Indian* way of living.'¹⁴⁴ In early New England, at least, very few Indians and even fewer colonists crossed the cultural divide. On both sides of that divide, however, almost everyone moved closer to the middle.

¹⁴³ For a suggestive but outdated study of Indian influences see A. Irving Hallowell, 'The Backwash of the Frontier: The Impact of the Indian on American Culture,' in Walker D. Wyman and Clifton B. Kroeber, eds., *The Frontier in Perspective* (Madison, Wis., 1957).

¹⁴⁴ Daniel Leeds, *An Almanack for . . . 1700* (New York, 1700), p. 11.

APPENDIX A

*Sources and Statistics
on New England Captivity Experiences*

The careers of 1,641 New Englanders taken captive by Indian, French, or French-Indian forces between 1675 and 1763 are analyzed in Part III of this essay. For information about 1,606 of those cases, we relied principally on Coleman's *New England Captives*. We spot-checked Coleman's findings against other sources and found that she was quite thorough for the period after 1688 and that she accurately, if sometimes unclearly, reported the available information on the prisoners she studied. Our survey of major post-1688 captivity narratives unearthed only six documented cases not included in *New England Captives*.¹

Coleman was not particularly concerned with captivities that occurred before 1677, and thus her studies of King Philip's War prisoners were less complete than of those taken in later conflicts. We therefore added to our analysis twenty-nine additional King Philip's War captives mentioned in Mary Rowlandson's narrative.² In all, forty-two prisoners from that conflict are mentioned in these two works; although they constitute most of the documented cases, undoubtedly there were others whose seizure went unrecorded or about whom some evidence might be found in local archives.

Captives of the Indians or French mentioned in these sources—whether or not by name—and whose home was in 'Puritan' New England (including present-day Maine but excluding Rhode Island), regardless of where they were taken prisoner, are included in the analysis. Thus Brinton Hammon, a black New Englander captured in Florida in 1748, is included while James Alexander, a native of New Jersey seized at Casco Bay, Maine, in 1690, is ex-

¹ The six additional cases are found in Brown, *Plain Narrative*; How, *Narrative of Captivity*; Brinton Hammon, *A Narrative of the Uncommon Sufferings and Surprising Deliverance of Brinton Hammon, a Negro Man* (Boston, 1760); Samuel G. Drake, *Tragedies of the Wilderness; or, True and Authentic Narratives of Captives, Who Have Been Carried Away by the Indians* (Boston, 1842); and Robert W. G. Vail, *The Voice of the Old Frontier* (Philadelphia, 1949).

² Rowlandson, *Sovereignty and Goodness*.

cluded, as are thirteen other cases mentioned by Coleman whose homes were outside Puritan New England. Our figures include captives known to have been residents of New England but whose precise date or place of capture is unknown; many such cases are recorded, for example, in the Canadian sources Coleman and Baker consulted. Not included in our calculations are New Englanders killed during an attack on a town or fort or in battle. Those carried away from the place of capture and later killed by Indians are included, as are prisoners whose confinement lasted only a few hours or days. Some individuals were seized more than once; each of their captivities is tabulated separately. We recorded each case mentioned by Coleman that satisfied these criteria; we scoured other sources less thoroughly and therefore may have missed a few cases of post-1688 captivity.

A computer aided in performing most of the tabulations used in this essay. For each of the 1,641 captivities we coded for analysis the following information, if known: sex, age, race, social status (i.e., known free civilian, assumed free civilian, soldier or active militiaman, army officer, seaman or naval officer, servant, or slave), hometown, year and place of capture, identity of initial captors (French, Indian, or French and Indian), last known place of retention (Indian village, French Canadian settlement, Canadian prison, etc.), length of captivity, whether or not torture occurred, and ultimate fate.

Several of the categories listed in tables 3-9 and mentioned in the text require some explanation. The captives' fates are distributed among twelve headings: (1) *Exchanged, ransomed, etc.*, includes those prisoners who returned to New England as a result of some formal bargain struck between their captors and either an individual or a government, or who were liberated by English forces. (2) *Returned* indicates that a captive is known to have reappeared in New England after his capture but that how he got there is unknown or unclear. (3) *Probably returned*, by contrast, encompasses those captives about whom there is uncertain evidence of an exchange, ransom, or escape. (4) *Returned after staying* is a category in which some arbitrary judgments had to be made: it covers captives who seem voluntarily to have remained with their captors for a time and to have undergone partial transculturation, but who later returned willingly to New England. All who became fluent in French or an Indian language or who converted briefly to Catholicism and who later returned of their own volition to New

England are included under this rubric; others are added because of reports that they had acquired Indian characteristics during their captivities, had refused repatriation at some point, or retained a fondness for their captors' ways after their return. (5) *Returned against will* includes captives forcibly returned to New England who would have preferred to live with the French or Indians. These, like those who returned voluntarily after living for a time as an Indian or Canadian, we do not consider to have been cases of complete transculturation. (6) *Escaped* encompasses all who by their own efforts and without the consent of their captors returned to New England. (7) *Died* refers to prisoners who perished either from natural causes or from wounds suffered incidentally during their capture, or who were released or escaped but died before they completed the trip back to New England. (Those who were apparently undergoing transculturation when they died are not included in this classification but are in categories 10 or 11 below.) (8) *Killed by Indians* includes only those prisoners who, after they had been carried away from the place of capture, were purposefully executed, killed during torture, or murdered. (9) *Probably died* denotes uncertain reports of a captive's demise. (10) *Remained with captors* indicates that the evidence seems conclusive that the prisoner voluntarily continued to live with the French or Indians rather than to escape or be ransomed or exchanged, and that he apparently died among his adopted people after presumably undergoing considerable transculturation. Evidence of the decision to remain includes, for instance, marriage to a French or Indian spouse, religious conversion, loss of the ability to speak English, or an account of a transculturated captive's death. (11) *Perhaps remained* includes those about whom the proof of transculturation is less clear. (12) *Fate unknown* encompasses only those captives about whose fate absolutely nothing is recorded in our sources or about whom reports are hopelessly conflicting.

It should be kept in mind that the ethnic identity of the force who originally seized a captive (Indian, French, or French and Indian) need not correspond to the ethnic identity of the captors with whom the prisoner spent the last, and usually longest, portion of his captivity—hence the distinction made in the text and in tables 3–9 between 'captured by' and 'last known place of captivity.' The latter is more relevant to the issue of transculturation. Captives frequently changed hands between Indians and their French Canadian allies, French Canadian officials continually attempted to

consolidate most Anglo-American captives under French rather than Indian control, and some New England prisoners escaped or talked their way out of Indian villages and into French settlements, or vice versa. Nevertheless, even those who thus somewhat voluntarily exchanged one form of captivity for another were not free to return to New England without French or Indian permission, and therefore remained prisoners until they were set free, escaped, or made the conscious decision to remain. It was the culture of these 'last' captors—at the place where the prisoner observed and possibly grew to appreciate the way of life in an Indian or French Canadian village—that presented the New Englander with the strongest prospect of transculturation, not the culture of his initial captors or those with whom he might have sojourned briefly. The initial contact with the raiding party was not without its effects, however; historian James Axtell has argued strongly that Indian war parties almost immediately began educating Euro-American captives concerning Indian ways.³ Our findings suggest the possibility, however, that the initial journey to Canada may have served more to frighten New Englanders into consenting to stay with the French than it did to enamor them of Indian culture.

One final methodological note is in order. We divided the captives studied here into four age groups: *infant* (under age two), *child* (ages two to six), *youth* (ages seven to fifteen), and *adult* (age sixteen and over). These divisions are based on the consensus among recent students of colonial New England childhood that crucial benchmarks in the child's development came at about age two, when the child shed infant's clothing, completed his or her toilet training, and began to experience stricter parental discipline; at about age six or seven, when he or she began to wear recognizably adult-style clothes and began formal education, either as a servant or in school; and at about ages sixteen to twenty-one, when he or she completed a gradual entry into the adult world.⁴ In many cases included in our analysis the exact ages of captives are unknown. Most of these were clearly adults and were classified as such. All married persons and all marine and military personnel

³ Axtell, 'White Indians,' pp. 66-75.

⁴ See Joseph E. Illick, 'Child-Rearing in Seventeenth-Century England and America,' in Lloyd deMause, ed., *The History of Childhood* (New York, 1974), pp. 303-50; James Axtell, *The School upon a Hill: Education and Society in Colonial New England* (New Haven, 1974), pp. 89-99; and John Demos, *A Little Commonwealth: Family Life in Plymouth Colony* (New York, 1970), pp. 131-70.

whose ages are unknown were also considered adults, although some were probably under sixteen years of age. Other captives were identified in the sources only as 'infant,' 'child,' or 'youth,' and were tabulated as if they were under age two, ages two to six, or ages seven to fifteen, respectively. Only when there was no clue to the captive's age was he or she classified as 'age unknown.' If the definition of 'youth' were expanded to include captives older than fifteen, as undoubtedly it sometimes was, the proportion of young people—as distinguished from adults—choosing to stay with their captors would be appreciably higher.

APPENDIX B

*Previous Estimates of New English
to Indian Transculturation*

Scholars have consistently overestimated the number of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Anglo-American prisoners of war who became substantially Indianized. This tendency often reflects an author's implicit assumptions and the focus of his research rather than a concerted attempt to count transculturations. Anthropologists such as John R. Swanton, Erwin H. Ackerknecht, A. Irving Hallowell, and J. Norman Heard are primarily concerned with captives who experienced partial or nearly complete transculturation.¹ While that focus is legitimate, by considering such individuals apart from the larger universe of all Euro-American captives of Indians, their works (especially those of Swanton and Ackerknecht, which dwell on Eunice Williams, Mary Jemison, John Tanner, and a few other colorful cases) leave the impression that transculturation was a typical captivity experience.² Heard discusses many more captivities than do most authors: a rough count yields eighty-three sixteenth- through nineteenth-century prisoners, of whom twenty-three lived out their lives with the Indians and thirty-two returned after willingly staying with their captors for some time and acquir-

¹ Swanton, 'Notes on Assimilation'; Ackerknecht, 'White Indians'; Hallowell, 'American Indians, White and Black'; Heard, *White into Red*.

² Eunice Williams, the Reverend John Williams's seven-year-old daughter, was captured with him at Deerfield, Mass., in 1704. She received Catholic baptism, forgot her English, married an Indian, and died at age ninety among her adopted people. The heartaches she caused her father made her famous. Mary Jemison, captured by the Shawnee in Pennsylvania in 1758 at age fifteen, was adopted by a Seneca family, married a Delaware, and died on a reservation, also at age ninety. Her popular captivity narrative, first published in 1824, appeared in more than thirty editions. Six-year-old John Tanner was captured in Kentucky in 1786 and was immortalized by Henry Rowe Schoolcraft and others as the prototypical 'White Indian'; for years he worked as an interpreter and trader in the vicinity of Sault Sainte Marie. Ackerknecht, 'White Indians,' pp. 16-21; Clifton Johnson, *An Unredeemed Captive: Being the Story of Eunice Williams* (Holyoke, Mass., 1897); James Everett Seaver, *A Narrative of the Life of Mrs. Mary Jemison* (Canandaigua, N. Y., 1824, and numerous later editions); Schoolcraft, *Personal Memoirs of a Residence of Thirty Years with the Indian Tribes of the American Frontiers* (Philadelphia, 1851), pp. 601-2.

ing some aspects of Indian culture.³ But because Heard's interest is in transculturation per se, not in its relative frequency, he makes no attempt to estimate the representativeness of his case studies beyond warning the reader that 'the number of captives living out their lives with Indians was probably considerably smaller than the number restored to their white families.'⁴

Attempts to determine the number of colonial New England captives who chose to stay with the Indians have been rare; even Coleman apparently made no effort to count them. But two scholars who have published brief tabulations of parts of the Baker-Coleman data also overestimate the frequency of transculturation. Richard Slotkin finds in Coleman's work 'some 750 individual captives between 1677 and 1750'; a few lines later, he says these are only those 'whose names and fates are known.' Of these, according to Slotkin, 'no fewer than 60 . . . became Indians outright'; his brief discussion is unexplained and unfootnoted.⁵ Our analysis reveals 965 New Englanders captured by French and Indian forces between 1677 and 1750, of whom only 20 definitely and 17 possibly transculturated in Indian captivity.

A more thorough explication of part of the Baker-Coleman material was made by James Axtell. Extrapolating from his count of 437 New Englanders captured between 1689 and 1713 and discussed in Coleman's chapter 4, he estimates that 'about 600' were probably seized during that period. He finds that 'of these, 174 (29 percent) definitely returned to New England,' while 146 (25 percent) remained with the French Canadians. Noting that in 1705 the French and the Indians held Anglo-American prisoners in a ratio of five to three, he—mistakenly in our opinion—reasons that a similar ratio of captives must have remained respectively with the French and the Indians. Hence, Axtell concludes, if 25 percent of the captives chose the French Canadian way of life, 15 percent, or 90 of the 600, must have become 'full-fledged Indians.'⁶ We find in Coleman and our other sources 601 New Englanders captured by French and Indian forces between 1689 and 1713, but only

³ Heard lists another forty-one captives without comment in his tables. These figures are for purposes of illustration only; they reflect no more than an approximate tabulation of Heard's data.

⁴ Heard, *White into Red*, p. 138.

⁵ Slotkin, *Regeneration through Violence*, pp. 97-98.

⁶ James Axtell, 'The Scholastic Philosophy of the Wilderness,' *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser. 29(1972):361-62, 361n.

Table 10

FATES OF NEW ENGLANDERS HELD BY INDIANS, CANADIANS, AND FRENCH, 1689-1713

Last known place of captivity

<i>Fate</i>	<i>Indians</i>		<i>Probably Indians</i>		<i>French Canada</i>		<i>Probably French Canada</i>		<i>Prison, Canada</i>		<i>France</i>		<i>Prison, France</i>		<i>Unknown, unclear</i>	
	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Exchanged, ransomed, etc.	68	37.2	28	57.1	45	20.4	12	57.1	1	50.0	0	0.0	2	66.7	14	11.6
Returned	10	5.5	7	14.3	8	3.6	3	14.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	9.1
Probably returned	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	1.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	4.1
Returned after staying	7	3.8	0	0.0	22	10.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Returned against will	3	1.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Escaped	19	10.4	1	2.0	6	2.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.8
Died	9	4.9	1	2.0	5	2.3	3	14.3	1	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.8
Killed by Indians	35	19.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Probably died	0	0.0	2	4.1	1	0.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	1.7
Remained with captors	18	9.8	1	2.0	111	50.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Perhaps remained	12	6.6	2	4.1	18	8.1	2	9.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	5.0
Fate unknown	2	1.1	7	14.3	1	0.5	1	4.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	33.3	81	66.9
TOTALS	183		49		221		21		2		1		3		121	

18 of them certainly remained with their Indian captors (9.8 percent of all those who definitely spent the last part of their captivities with Indians and 3 percent of the total number seized between 1689 and 1713). Another 15 captives perhaps remained with the Indians; thus at most we find evidence of 33 possible transculturations—14.2 percent of the 232 New Englanders who may have last been held by Indians but only 5.5 percent of all 601 captives seized between 1689 and 1713 (table 10). By contrast, over half of the New Englanders who spent the final part of their captivities with French Canadians definitely remained in Canada.

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