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that by the time the Choctaw government achieved its restored sovereignty and became an active agent in providing services for the neighborhood, less than a fifth of the enrolled Choctaws remained in the Oklahoma counties that were once the Choctaw Nation.

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The Collected Writings of Samson Occom, Mohegan: Leadership and Literature in Eighteenth-Century Native America. Edited by Joanna Brooks with a foreword by Robert Warrior. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006. 445 pages. \$65.00 cloth.

Roman historian Titus Livy proposed that history is the best medicine for sick minds. For Livy, early national figures, whose lives served as positive and negative models for later Romans, were part of this cure. Early Native Americans' life stories have similarly served as models of leadership and personal and spiritual growth, in their own day and in ours. Part of the difficulty of the literature written by these authors, however, is that we do not always agree with their view of what sickness Americans—and Native Americans—faced. Even more crucially, we may not like their cure. As Robert Warrior notes, a writer like Samson Occom can come across as a “cold-souled Calvinist” (v). Yet Occom saw his relationship to Christ as central to his ability to serve as a positive example for others. How can we be honest about early Native writers and pay heed to our own twenty-first-century needs?

Joanna Brooks's stunning edition of the collected writings of Samson Occom faces this problem head-on by providing us with evidence of the true complexity of what Occom calls “this Indian world.” For the first time, Brooks's collection brings together the surviving manuscripts and the known published works of this crucial early Native American author. Since 1982 when Bernd Peyer republished Occom's autobiography and LaVonne Brown Ruoff called attention to Occom's *Sermon, Preached at the Execution of Moses Paul* (1772), Samson Occom has come to serve as the archetypal colonial Native American. Yet, as Brooks usefully notes, much of the scholarship on Occom has at least a “quiet implication that Occom adopted his English-language literacy and Christianity at the expense of his own wholeness or at some cost to Mohegan oral tradition and culture” (31). The full range of Occom's writings, however, reveals that “it is more productive to read his writings . . . as part of an ongoing indigenous intellectual history of engagement and survival against the epic crimes of colonialism” (32). For Brooks, to read the great expanse of Occom's writings is “to grapple with its historical particularity, its generic variety, its familiarity, [and] its foreignness” (33). Perhaps more crucially, to read all of Occom's works is to realize that Occom did not write in solitude but was part of a network of Native American writers and thinkers who “lived and moved within a space he [Occom] called ‘this Indian world’” (34). Brooks's collection goes a long way toward broadening

our understanding of Occom's life and helps place him within the context of eighteenth-century Native American life.

Brooks's compilation is divided into six types of writing: prose, letters, petitions and tribal documents, sermons, hymns, and journals. Each of these sections begins with an introductory essay that provides tips for how to understand the genre in which Occom writes. These tips are crucial because, as Warrior notes in his foreword, many readers are put off by Occom's style and "befuddled by his eighteenth-century rhetorical conventions" (v). Brooks is meticulous in her transcription of Occom's text, providing an admirable balance between making Occom accessible and retaining some of his "foreignness." Perhaps one of the most exciting aspects of Brooks's collection is her eye for detail: Brooks restores many of the "corrections" made by later editors and allows readers to see where and how Occom changed his texts. Brooks also provides readers with a sense of what it is like to read the documents in manuscript form by including notes about what else was written on the reverse side of the documents or on the envelopes that held them. These marginalia help humanize Occom and his eighteenth-century readers: for example, even the often-demonized Eleazar Wheelock remarks bitterly on the envelope of one letter that he is jealous that Occom was never as close to him as Occom was to other correspondents (98). Brooks's front and back matter is succinct and well chosen. The appendix, with brief biographies of the individuals mentioned in Occom's writings, will help readers understand the communities through which he traveled and in which he lived. Also useful are the brief summaries found at the beginning of each journal.

Although readers will undoubtedly find some of the genres in which Occom wrote more helpful than others, Brooks gives us for the first time the ability to read Occom's writings in the context of one another. For example, when looking at his sermons, we can turn to see what Occom said during the same year in his journals and letters. Never has the personal and public Occom been so easily juxtaposed: perhaps one of the most beautiful texts included in the edition is a letter, which Brooks entitled "The Flame of Friendship," that encodes Occom's feelings to a friend (probably Ester Fowler) in alternating lines (92–93). The full range of Occom's work also allows us to see how his style and ideology change over time: for example, after the Revolutionary War, Occom's petitions shift from positioning Native peoples as "individual pleading subjects" to "indigenous nations" (142).

Although the annotations of Occom's texts are exceptional, the collection calls attention to how useful it would be to have a volume specifically aimed at *teaching* early Native American literature. Many readers who are not trained in early American literature may find it difficult to decode Occom's intentions, particularly in his sermons, which are sometimes only in note form. For these readers (particularly students), it may help to try to recapture in class some of the original context or performance of the works. For example, many of Occom's odd spellings and rhetorical flourishes are made more accessible if students read the sermons aloud. Similarly students can more easily identify the subversiveness in Occom's

letters by using eighteenth-century letter manuals such as Dilworth's *The Complete Letter-Writer* (available on Early English Books Online) to write responses to his letters from the point of view of the original recipients. For those who want to find out more about the people to whom Occom wrote and read their letters, the following volumes will be tremendously helpful: Laura Murray's *To Do Good to My Indian Brethren: The Writings of Joseph Johnson 1751–1776* (1998) and James McCallum's *Letters of Eleazar Wheelock's Indians* (2007). Readers will find additional help with decoding early Native American genres in the forthcoming *Early Native Literacies in New England: A Documentary and Critical Anthology*, edited by Hilary Wyss and Kristina Bross (University of Massachusetts Press). Although Carla Mulford's *Teaching the Literatures of Early America* provides some guidance for scholars who seek to include Occom's work in the classroom, a complete volume on teaching early Native American texts would be most welcome.

Brooks's collection of Occom's writing should become standard reading not only for courses in early American literature but also for scholars who work in American Indian studies. This volume will significantly alter the way we speak about Occom and about colonial Native Americans more generally. Although work remains to be done from a historical perspective on Occom, David Silverman's forthcoming *Brothertown: American Indians and the Problem of Race* (Cornell University Press) should provide an important companion for Brooks's groundbreaking work. In the meantime, Brooks's collection helps scholars understand the ways in which "Indian Converts" were often agents of cultural and religious change rather than just "dupes" of the "Christian handlers" (v). In many ways, Brooks's volume reinforces arguments made in James Treat's *Native and Christian: Indigenous Voices on Religious Identity in the United States and Canada* (1996), Gregory Dowd's *A Spirited Resistance: The North American Indian Struggle for Unity 1745–1815* (1993), and Barry O'Connell's *On Our Own Ground: The Complete Writings of William Apess, a Pequot* (1992): it reiterates the idea that for many Native American Christians, Christianity was a means of reinforcing tribal identities, not erasing them. In this way, Occom's writings help provide a background for understanding the complex intersection between Christianity and Native American identity in later canonical American Indian literature such as *Black Elk Speaks*, *Ceremony*, and *Love Medicine*. Brooks's volume also importantly reminds us that one work is rarely completely representative of an author: she challenges our desire to fix authors' identities and asks us to see how early authors can be both exemplum and complex human beings.

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