

**MASHANTUCKET PEQUOT MUSEUM AND
RESEARCH CENTER**
Archives & Special Collections

**Bibliography of
Native American Women**

Introduction

Throughout their histories, Native American tribes have relied on their female members for their continued functioning and existence. They have played key roles in educating the tribes' children and youth, and in maintaining tribal livelihood and culture. Many have contributed significantly to their tribes' artistic heritage, as well. In recent years, they have been instrumental in promoting tribal legal, political, and economic interests.

This bibliography contains items in the Archives and Special Collections that were created by, for, and about Native women. They reflect the various roles they have assumed as tribal members over the years. (JA)

Books

Allen, Paula Gunn. *Skins and Bones: Poems, 1979-1987*. Albuquerque, New Mexico: West End Press, 1988. RARE PS3551 .L397 S54 1988.

Born in 1939 in Cubera, New Mexico, Allen is the daughter of a Lebanese-American father and a Laguna-Lakota mother. Pueblo culture, with its admixture of Hispanic and Native elements, has informed much of her writing as a poet and literary critic. An ardent advocate of the teaching of Native American literature, she has been a Professor of Native American Studies at the University of California at Berkeley, the Director of the Native American Studies Program at San Francisco State University, and a Professor of English at the University of California at Los Angeles. The poems in this collection address pre-Contact indigenous traditions, the responses to the initial European inroads into North America, and the subsequent European impact on Native cultures. (JA)

Boudinot, Elias (1802-1839). *Poor Sarah: or, Religion Exemplified in the Life and Death of an Indian Woman*. Mountpleasant, OH: Printed by Elisha Bates, 1823. MSS 193.

The great Cherokee author Elias Boudinot wrote this brief account of an elderly, impoverished Native woman whom he knew between 1814 and 1818 (the year she died). Married to an abusive husband, she converted to Christianity, where she sought solace. Her spouse opposed her attendance of church; consequently, until his death, she had to practice her devotion secretly. Literacy remained a fond dream for her, although she did learn to read parts of the Bible in later years. (JA)

Erdrich, Louise. *Jacklight*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1984. Copy signed by the author. RARE PS3555 .R42 J3 1984.

Louise Erdrich (b. 1954) is a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of the Chippewa Tribe. An award-winning novelist and non-fiction writer, she is also renowned for her poems, several of which appear in this volume. A sense of irony often permeates her writing (one poem is titled "Dear John Wayne," and another derives from the 1676 captivity narrative of Mary Rowlandson). (JA)

Hogan, Linda and Charles Colbert Henderson. *That Horse*. Acoma, New Mexico: Pueblo of Acoma Press, 1985. RARE PS3558 .O34726 A6 1985.

Linda Hogan (b. 1947) is a prolific, award-winning Chickasaw poet, novelist, and playwright. Though born in Denver, she spent her formative years on the Chickasaw lands in Oklahoma. Partially autobiographical in nature, this collection of short stories depicts the living conditions for members of the Chickasaw Tribe in the twentieth century. (JA)

Hunter, Lois Marie (b. 1903). *The Shinnecock Indians*. [Islip, NY]: Buys Brothers, 1950. RARE E99 .S38 H86 1950.

Lois M. Hunter authored this profile of her tribe (she was a descendant of the Shinnecock sachem Nowedonah, who had greeted the first English settlers on Long Island in June 1640). In her study, she examines the work of such Christian missionaries as Samson Occom among the Shinnecocks and the neighboring Montauks. Also, she discusses her tribe's matriarchal traditions and its involvement in the Long Island whaling industry. Lastly, she pays tribute to Shinnecocks who served in the United States military in wartime. (JA)

Mason, Otis Tufton (1838-1908). *Woman's Share in Primitive Culture*. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1894. RARE GN479.7 .M37 1894.

Written as part of the *Anthropological Series*, this book examines the many roles which women assume in the livelihood of Native American and other tribes around the world, such as gatherers of food, makers of clothing and pottery, teachers of religion, and preservers of linguistic traditions. (JA)

Peirce, Ebenezer Weaver (1822-1903). *Indian History, Biography, and Genealogy: Pertaining to the Good Sachem Massasoit of the Wampanoag Tribe and his Descendants*. North Abington, MA: Published by Zerviah Gould Mitchell, 1878. RARE E90 .M4 P3 1878.

This volume provides biographical sketches of Massasoit and his two sons Wamsutta (alias Alexander) and Metacomet (alias Philip), with particular attention to King Philip's War.

Zerviah Gould Mitchell (1807-1898), publisher of this book, also wrote its preface. She was a seventh-generation direct descendant of Massasoit. For years, she had been petitioning the Massachusetts state legislature to free her land from the control of state-appointed overseers, and to remunerate her for lumber taken from it. Frustrated by 1878, she had "come to the conclusion that Massachusetts does not intend to do (her) justice through its Legislature." Consequently, for her, this book is an appeal "to the understanding and sense of justice of the reading public." Portraits of her and Peirce appear in the frontispiece of the book. (JA)

Rochester (Mass.). *Rochester's Official Bi-Centennial Record, Tuesday, July 22, 1879*. New Bedford, MA: Mercury Publishing Company, 1879. MSS 243.

The bulk of this book provides a history of the town of Rochester, Massachusetts, from the colonial era through the Civil War, along with brief biographical sketches of noted residents. Among the guests attending the bicentennial festivities on 22 July 1879 were three Wampanoag "daughters of the forest," clad in traditional tribal regalia (Zerviah Mitchell (see previous entry), and her two daughters Charlotte and Melinda). Portraits of Charlotte and Melinda Mitchell, which also feature their Native names, appear in the frontispiece of the book. (JA)

Sergeant, John (1710-1749). Letter to Dr. Colman. Boston: Printed by Rogers and Fowle, 1743. MSS 212.

John Sergeant was a Yale-educated minister whom the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England appointed to minister to the Housatonic Indians in Berkshire County, Massachusetts, in 1735. In this letter to Benjamin Colman (1673-1747), the minister of Boston's Brattle Street Church,

Sergeant recommended establishing boarding schools for Native children in the area (for females, as well as males). In his response, Colman concurred, emphasizing the importance of educating the girls as well as the boys in the ways of Christianity. (JA)

Tilt: An Anthology of New England Women's Writing and Art. Lebanon, New Hampshire: New Victoria Publishers, Inc., 1978. RARE NX505 .T54 1978.

This collection of poems, essays, photographs, and drawings features several early poems written by Louise Erdrich (see above). (She is listed here as "Karen Louise Erdrich.") (JA)

Winkfield, Unca Eliza. *The Female American, or, the Extraordinary Adventures of Unca Eliza Winkfield, Compiled by Herself.* Vermont: Jephthah Shedd, 1814. MSS 160.

This book, first published in 1767, recounts the life story of a woman whose father was English, and whose mother was Native American. Her father had been a colonist in Virginia, and he was captured during a tribal raid on the settlement. After the author's mother died, she and her father sailed for England, then returned to Virginia, where he died. The author hired a sloop to return to England, and, when she refused a marriage proposal from the captain's son, she was abandoned on an island. She was eventually rescued, and continued her voyage to England. (JA)

Government Records and Legal Documents

Chicago (Ill.). Mayor. Proclamation, 12 March 1998. Accession Number 2001-0044.

Mayor Richard M. Daley proclaimed 12 March 1998 to be "Maria Tallchief Day in Chicago." Tallchief, born into the Osage Tribe in Fairfax, Oklahoma, in 1925, became one of the premier ballerinas in the United States. After studying for five years under Bronislava Nijinska as a teenager, she joined the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, where she gained acclaim for her abilities. Tallchief married choreographer George Balanchine in 1946, and, together, they established the New York City Ballet. Over the next few years, Balanchine choreographed several ballets which spotlighted Tallchief. After separating from Balanchine, she briefly rejoined the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in 1955-1956, where she became the highest-paid dancer in history. In 1962, the Russian defector Rudolf Nureyev chose her to be his partner for his debut on American television. Although Tallchief retired from the stage in 1965, she remains active in the world of ballet. In 1980, she founded the Chicago City Ballet, and directed it until 1987. She was among the 1996 honorees at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC. (JA)

Connecticut. General Assembly. Petition of Martha Tantaquidgeon, 5 May and 4 June 1835. MSS 36.

This document (dated 5 May) requests permission for Martha Tantaquidgeon (1761-1859), a Mohegan, to sell several tracts of land in Montville, Connecticut belonging to her. The response to her request (dated 4 June) is included here, which put one Ralph Hurlbut of Groton in charge of selling the land and remitting money from the transaction to Tantaquidgeon. (EC)

Johnson, Ebenezer. Receipts, 1722, 1728. MSS 49.

This consists of two receipts documenting the transfer of ownership of a Native woman and slave named Dinah from a Captain Joseph Gorham to Colonel Ebenezer Johnson and from Johnson's widow, Hannah, to their son, Timothy Johnson. (TS)

Osborne, Elisha. Indenture contract, 23 June 1755. MSS 191.

By this document, Nansey, a single Shinnecock mother living in Southampton, Suffolk County, New York, arranged for her son Shadreck to be an indentured servant to one Elisha Osborne of Easthampton for a period of fifteen years. Shadreck's service was scheduled to begin upon his sixth

birthday (he was 1.25 years old at the time of this document's creation). As part of the agreement, Osborne pledged to teach Shadreck to read, and also to give him a suit of "everyday clothes." (JA)

Providence (R.I.) Town Council. Minutes, 8 October 1801. MSS 110.

This is a portion from the minutes of the Providence Council regarding one Lovey Quan, a native woman. In this period, Indians of no fixed address could be "warned out" of New England towns by the town council. Questions from the council members were asked to determine where the person had been born, where they had resided in the past, and who had been responsible for them. If it was determined that they might become a burden on the town's finances, the council would return them to their former town of birth or residence. Lovey Quan was born in Goshen, Connecticut, and had drifted to Saybrook, Northfield and thence to Boston, before arriving in Providence. It is likely that the council had determined that she was undesirable. (EC)

Sonnit, Dority, (Dorothy). Will, 14 December 1713. MSS 6.

In this will, Dority Sonnit refers to herself as "Indian of the town of Plimouth, in the county of Plimouth, in the province of Maccicutsit in New England." She bequeathed 200 acres of land, in parcels of varying size, to her sons Cornelius, George, Jacob, and Daniel; her grandson, Samuel; her daughters, Mary and Marcy; and her husband, Samuel. All of the land was in Plymouth with one parcel at Sampson's Pond. (Bibliographer's note: While it is true that Dority Sonnit is not specifically identified as a Wampanoag Indian in her will, the fact that she is identified as "Indian of the town of Plimoth" points to her being of Wampanoag blood. She may have been a "Christian Indian," since many Indians of that region were Christianized by the first part of the eighteenth century.) (TS/EC)

Manuscripts

Langevin, Martha Hoxie (1862-1927). Correspondence, 1926-1927. MSS 1.

The collection consists of letters written by Martha Hoxie Langevin, a Mashantucket Pequot Tribal member, to her daughter, Alice Guevremont (Brend). Mrs. Langevin was a skilled traditional basket maker whose letters contain information about methods of basket making, family concerns, and the political issues facing the Mashantucket Pequots during the 1920s. (EC/TS)

Presentations

Herndon, Ruth Wallis and Ella Wilcox Sekatau. *Narragansett Communities in Nineteenth-Century Rhode Island.* Paper presented at the American Seminar at Brown University's John Nicholas Brown Center for the Study of American Civilization, 14 March 2001. MSS 215.

This is the text of a presentation given by Professor Ruth Wallis Herndon, of Toledo University's History Department, and Narragansett Medicine Woman Ella Wilcox Sekatau. Responding to an 1880 charge by the Rhode Island state government that no full-blooded Narragansetts resided within the state any longer (which, in turn, was used to justify wholesale detribalization and land appropriation), Herndon and Wilcox cite documentary evidence and tribal oral tradition to demonstrate that the tribe remained a vibrant presence in Rhode Island throughout the nineteenth century. (JA)

Printed Materials

Mohegan Tribe. *Gladys Tantaquidgeon 100th Birthday Program*, 15 June 1999. Accession Number 1999-0077.

Gladys Tantaquidgeon, known as “the Mohegan Medicine Woman,” celebrated her 100th birthday in 1999. In addition to a knowledge of Native American healing methods, Miss Tantaquidgeon was a driving force behind the achievements of the Mohegan Tribe. As a young woman she was the protégé of the renowned anthropologist, Frank G. Speck, and studied under him and other respected scholars at the University of Pennsylvania. In the 1930s she worked for the Bureau of Indian Affairs as a social worker to the Lakota Sioux. Later, she and her brother Harold ran the Tantaquidgeon Museum, the oldest Native-run museum in the country. Most recently, Miss Tantaquidgeon did research necessary for the Mohegan Tribe to receive federal recognition in 1994. She is the author of *Folk Medicine of the Delaware and Related Algonkian Indians*.

This small collection consists of the printed program of the festivities honoring Gladys Tantaquidgeon’s 100th birthday; a commemorative copy of “Ni Ya Yo,” an official publication of the Mohegan Tribe; and a bronze medallion with “Gladys Tantaquidgeon” on the obverse, and “100th Year Celebration, 1899-1999” on the reverse. (EC)

Visual Materials

Bread and Roses Cultural Project. *Women of hope: Native American / Hawaiian*. New Jersey: Bread and Roses Distribution Center, 1997. Accession Number 1997-0066.

Borrowing its name from the slogan used by Socialist women in the early 1900s, this organization is the cultural arm of the AFL-CIO's 1199 Health and Human Services Employees Union. This item is part of its *Women of Hope* series (there are brochures advertising issues profiling African-American and Latina women, as well). A "Study Guide" provides page-long biographical sketches and photographs of women from various tribes in the mainland United States and Hawaii. It also recommends activities for students which address such issues as stereotypes and tribal sovereignty. Also included are full-size posters with enlarged color photographs of the women profiled in the Study Guide; at the bottom of each photograph is a quotation from each woman. (JA)

Daggett, Sandy Hayward. Mashantucket Bingo photo album, 1989. MSS 21.

Sandy Hayward Daggett, a member of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation, created this album of color photographs of events, customers, and employees while managing the Tribe’s bingo operation in 1989. (EC/TS)

Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation. Tribal Council. "Genesis 2 Fashion and Talent Show, 28 August 1999" (2 copies of program). Accession Number 1999-0151.

This begins with brief descriptions (quoted from primary sources) of apparel and accessories which Natives of New England wore and used at the time of the arrival of the first Europeans. At the Fashion and Talent Show, men, women, teenagers, and children displayed garments appropriate for mornings, afternoons, and evenings for each season of the year. Also featured were traditional bridal outfits worn by Native Americans, Africans, and Asians. The Talent portion featured singers, dancers, and a poet. The program contains photographs of the people who modeled the clothing, of the Talent participants, and, on the last page, of the Tribal Council members. (JA)

Neel, David. Photographs, 1995-1998. MSS 50.

David Neel is a professional photographer from the Kwagiutl tribe. His photographs here depict various members, male and female, of the Mashantucket Pequot tribe. Enlarged copies of several of these have been made for exhibition in the Tribal Portrait Gallery of the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center. (JA)

Introduction, overviews and annotations by Jonathan Ault (JA), Elliott Caldwell (EC), and Timothy Spindler (TS).

This bibliography was first compiled in November 2000 and will be updated quarterly. Any omissions or errors are deeply regretted by the bibliographers who have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of this document.

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