



SERMONS SLAVERY & SCANDAL

in Early Boston

PRINTED WORKS: 1660 - 1830

A collaborative exhibit by the graduate students and faculty of the Department of English, University of Massachusetts Boston and the Department of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Boston Public Library.

15 July - 30 September

Monday-Friday, 9:00-5:00

**Boston Public Library
Rare Books Exhibition Room
3rd Floor, McKim Building**



THE *B*OSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

**Sermons, Slavery, and Scandal:
The Printed Worlds of Early Boston, 1660-1830**

An Exhibit at the Department of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Boston Public Library

15 July - 30 September 2009

While we know that Boston was from its beginnings a city organized around the study of the word, we have tended to imagine that reading community as a disembodied entity, one which left earthly concerns behind for the contemplation of Scripture. This exhibit invites reconsideration of the origins of our city of readers and writers by revealing how the print culture of early Boston reflected its bodies and borders, particularly its lines of race and gender.

“Sermons, Slavery, and Scandal” is the culmination of a graduate course on the early literature of Boston offered by the Department of English, University of Massachusetts Boston. The class met regularly in the Boston Public Library's Rare Book and Manuscripts Room.

Descriptive Catalog

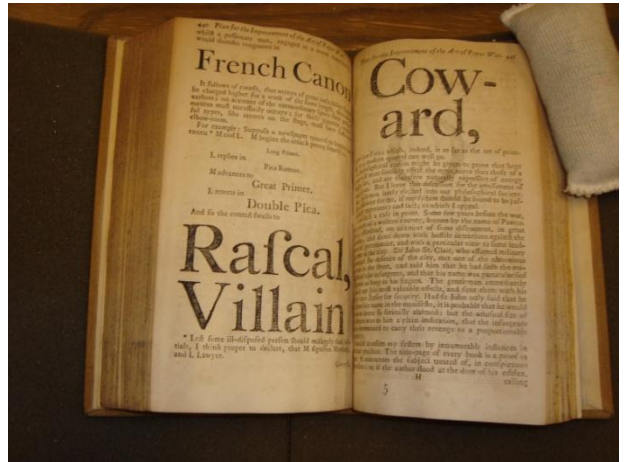
Our "Frontispiece"

1 Francis Hopkinson. "Plan for the Improvement of the Art of Paper War." Satirical essay. The American Museum Volume 1 (Philadelphia, 1787): 437-444.

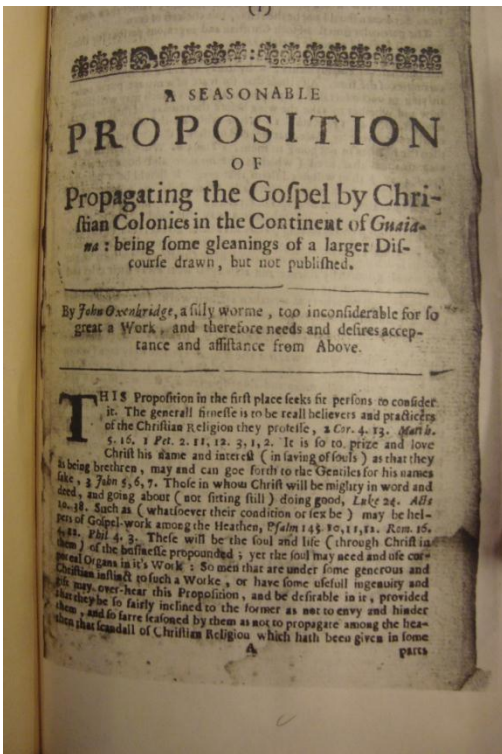
In this tongue-in-cheek disquisition on the art of printing, the "Projector" (as Hopkinson calls himself) considers ways of capturing feeling and tone in print. He laments that many heated arguments do not translate adequately into print, "not for want of a proper spirit in the combatants, but merely for want of a sufficient vehicle for resentment and rage." To solve this problem, the Projector proposes a "vehicle" for conveying feelings in writing—something like the linguistic equivalent of a system of musical notation. Treating writing as speech, he suggests that as political controversies or "paper wars" grow more heated, the printer can turn up the volume by increasing the size of the characters.

Hopkinson's proposal was satirical; he knew that printers had always liked to use big fonts to attract attention. Notice the use of this device in the various title pages shown in this exhibit. Words which suggest boredom, like "Sermon," are often in small print, while words like "Scandal" are large. Though a Philadelphian, Hopkinson's suggestions might have described the methods of Boston printers.

A man of many talents, Hopkinson was also a harpsichordist, painter, political satirist, statesman, judge, signer of the Declaration, and creator of the "Stars and Stripes" design on the American flag.



PART ONE Labor for Empire: Colonialism and Puritan Views on Slavery



2 (left*) John Oxenbridge. A Seasonable Proposition of Propagating the Gospel by Christian Colonies in the Continent of Guaiana [sic]... Pamphlet facsimile. Cambridge [?], 1662 [?].

English Puritans of the early seventeenth century did not necessarily think of Boston as their world capital. In the 1630s they had colonized an island off the coast of modern-day Nicaragua, and they continued to undertake serious colonial projects. This curious twelve-page pamphlet was written "by John Oxenbridge, a silly worme, too inconsiderable for so great a Work, and therefore needs and desires acceptance and assistance from Above." Yet the plan of colonization proposed by Oxenbridge (1608-1674) was hardly modest. He proposed to follow English successes in Barbados and Surinam with a colony in Guyana.

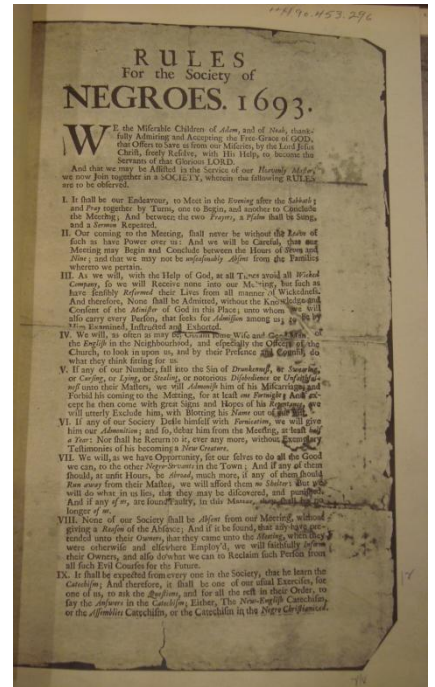
Oxenbridge pointed out that by moving to Guyana New Englanders could escape "a hoary, horrid winter," but there was

* Designations refer to the side of the exhibit display case in which you will find the book under discussion.

a more important consideration: “For help in labour, you may more easily than in cold Countries procure and maintain heathen bond-servants, (Blacks or others) and in that point be after the manner of the Patriarchs.” Puritans tended to distinguish between *buying* and *stealing* people, seeing the former as part of the Puritan colonial mission and the latter as reprehensible. We don’t know how fellow New Englanders reacted to Oxenbridge’s suggestion; he died in 1674 while giving a sermon in Boston.

3 (right) [Cotton Mather.] Rules for the Society of Negroes, 1693. Broadside (facsimile). Boston: Bartholomew Green [?], 1714 [?].

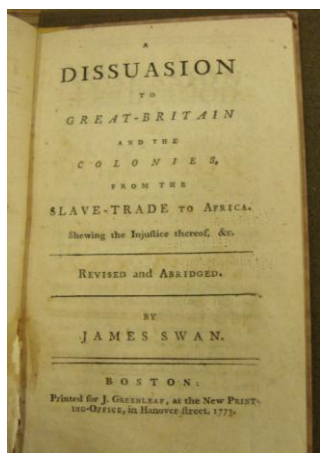
Prior to the abolition of slavery in Massachusetts in 1780, colonial Bostonians enacted modes of legislation designed to limit and control black experience in America. Originally formulated in one of Cotton Mather’s diary entries, the “Rules for the Society of Negroes” required that “the Miserable Children of *Adam*, and of *Noah*” conform to social mandates. In addition to requiring conversion to Christianity and a disavowal of any previous mode of worship or ritual, Puritan society subjected black sexuality to special ministerial control, as the sixth “Rule” reveals.



Mather himself held several slaves, and the printing of his “Rules” in the early eighteenth century points to early prohibitions on miscegenation and generational growth among the black population. In regulating sexual relationships within this specific population, Mather effectively expresses a colonial preoccupation with the relationship between racial mixture and social disruption. Civic mandates in Massachusetts began with impositions against miscegenation and extended to laws limiting or all together prohibiting marriage within black populations.

Though formulated in 1693, the “Rules” could not have been printed before 1706, when Mather’s pamphlet on *The Negro Christianized* (recommended in the final “Rule”) was printed.

PART TWO Bound and Sold: Early Abolitionism and the Business of Books



4 James Swan. A Dissuasion to Great-Britain and the colonies from the Slave-Trade to Africa.... Political pamphlet. Boston: J. Greenleaf, 1773.

In 1767, leading eighteenth-century British pundit Malachy Postlethwayt asked the question that early advocates for the abolition of the slave trade would quote ad nauseum:

Whether so extensive and populous a country as Africa is, will not admit of a far more extensive and profitable trade to Great Britain, than it yet ever has done?

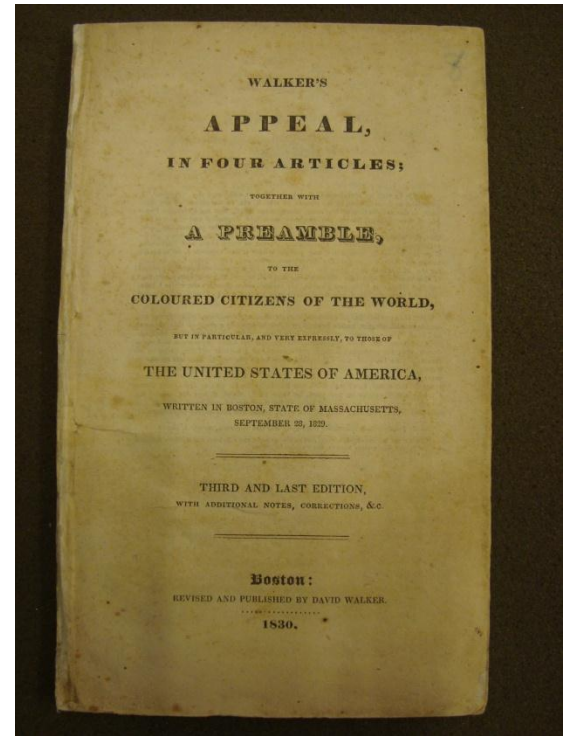
It was hoped, in other words, that the abolition of the slave trade would allow Africa to emerge as a major trading partner, a source of both raw materials and consumers.

James Swan was a Scottish merchant who emigrated to Boston, where he published influential attacks on the slave trade. He depicted the gruesome suffering of Africans, but also emphasized its negative effects on the commercial expansion of the British empire. Africa, as he saw it, was the

center of the world, joining American merchants to Asia and India. He suggests that “if the *Europeans*, &c. would cultivate a humane and christian like commerce with the *Africans*, they might through these rivers, become the medium of an endless beneficial commerce.”

5 David Walker. Walker’s Appeal, in Four Articles; Together with a Preamble, to the Colored Citizens of the World... Third and Last Edition. Political pamphlet. Boston: Walker, 1830.

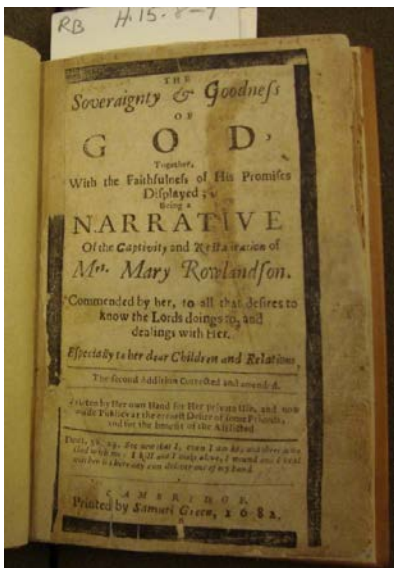
Perhaps the most extraordinary political pamphlet of nineteenth-century America was the work of David Walker (1785–1830), an African-American writing and publishing in Boston. Born in North Carolina, Walker had by 1825 arrived in Boston, where he set up shop as a publisher and a used-clothing dealer. In circulating his Appeal, Walker ingeniously combined these two professions. He stitched copies of his radical abolitionist book into the jackets he sold to white and free black sailors, who would bring the books into Southern seaports. He was aware of the irony that much of that very clothing had been woven from the cotton made by slave labor. Walker was successful in distributing his books: in Savannah, for example, sixty copies of the Appeal were confiscated in December 1829.



While the Appeal called for the immediate and violent overthrow of slavery, Walker did not stop with abolition. Unlike some abolitionists, he fought for equality. “Even here in Boston,” he pointed out, “pride and prejudice have got to such a pitch!” He was angered by the racism he encountered on the city’s streets. Examples of what he could have seen in Boston in the 1820s appear in exhibit items #16 and #18.

PART THREE The Captive Redacted: Editing the New England Captivity Narrative

6 (left) Mary Rowlandson. The Sovereignty and Goodness of God. Autobiographical captivity narrative. Cambridge, Mass.: Samuel Green, Jr., 1682.



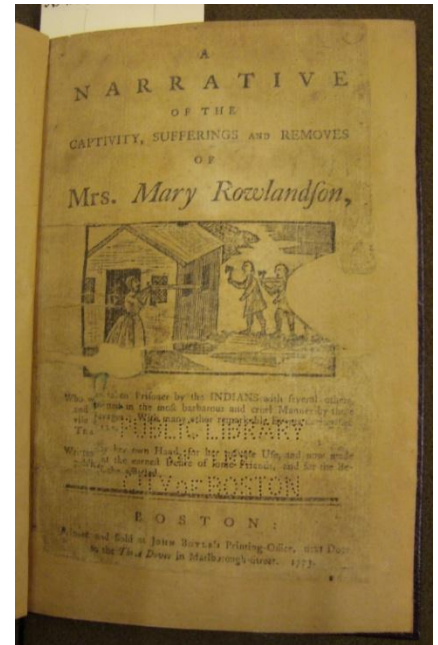
One of the best known and most often read accounts of the captivity experience among Indians is the narrative of Mary Rowlandson. Twenty-three villagers, including Rowlandson, were taken prisoner as the result of an attack on the town of Lancaster during Metacom’s (King Phillip’s) War in February 1675. After three months, she was ransomed back to her husband. Five years later, her famous narrative was published. It remains the only extended prose narrative by a seventeenth-century Puritan woman. It is likely that Cambridge’s most prominent minister, Increase Mather, prompted the publication of Rowlandson’s narrative for political reasons.

Careful to limit the independence of women authors, the Puritan authorities sandwiched Rowlandson’s story between commentaries by two religious men. They deliver a strong religious and political message designed to guide the reader of the main narrative to a correct Puritan

conclusion. The entire text reflects the hostile shift in attitude toward Native Americans that was the result of the war. The tribulations of white women captives became a recurring pattern in the captivity narratives, reinforcing the singular message that the righteous and innocent Puritan colony was beset by the Devil.

7 (right) Rowlandson, Mary. A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration. Autobiographical captivity narrative. Boston: John Boyle, 1773.

Today we know Rowlandson's book by the abbreviated title given it in the 1770s, when it was one of the decade's most frequently reprinted works. The title no longer begins with a reference to God's "sovereignty and goodness," laying emphasis instead on the individual's powers of endurance. Fiercely preserving her identity in the face of calamity, Rowlandson served as a good model for the American revolutionaries, who believed that a corrupted King and Parliament had stolen their ancient English liberties. Woodcuts from the 1770s commonly depict Rowlandson carrying a musket, which would have been somewhat less conceivable in Puritan New England a hundred years earlier, when the Mathers had had difficulty accounting for the acts of Hannah Duston, who had killed and scalped ten of her Indian captors with a tomahawk.



No copies of the first edition of Rowlandson's book survive, but a second edition was printed in the same year, and at least twenty editions appeared before 1830. We present the second and seventh editions.

8 (left) William Aldridge, editor. A Narrative of the Lord's Wonderful Dealings with John Marrant, a Black. (Auto)biographical narrative. 2d ed. Leeds: Davies and Co., 1815.

A few years before coming to Boston to become chaplain to the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of African-American masons, John Marrant dictated this astonishing narrative to the white British evangelical Methodist William Aldridge. The narrative is the work of one of the few African-American writers of the eighteenth century never to have been enslaved. Instead, Marrant is best known for his almost



magical description of two years of captivity under the Cherokee. But his narrative also fulfills other functions. It is an ordination sermon delivered shortly before the author sailed to Nova Scotia to begin his North American ministry. It is a narrative of his life, travels, and travails from birth until his becoming a minister. It opens with the details of his birth, formative years, fall from grace, and conversion to Methodism at age thirteen.

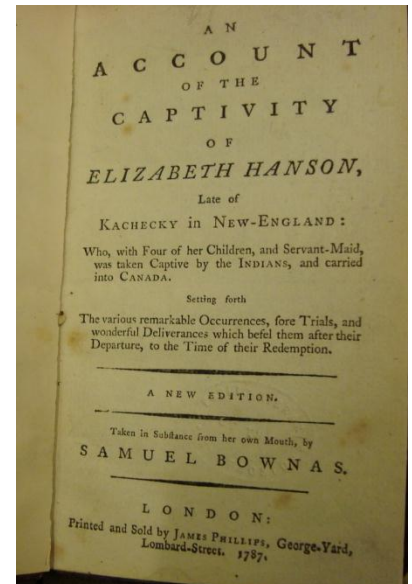
Written down by Aldridge and published in London in 1785, the work includes, in its second and fourth editions, an attribution on the title pages reading as follows: "Taken down from his own Relation, Arranged, Corrected and Published by the Rev. Mr. Aldridge." The Boston Public Library holds four versions of this beloved narrative, which saw at least twenty editions before 1835. We display a later edition because it includes this drawing of the famous conversion of James Gardiner, a

Relation, Arranged, Corrected and Published by the Rev. Mr. Aldridge." The Boston Public Library holds four versions of this beloved narrative, which saw at least twenty editions before 1835. We display a later edition because it includes this drawing of the famous conversion of James Gardiner, a

Scottish playboy who had a sudden spiritual awakening in 1719. This served as a model of the type of conversion represented in Marrant's experience.

9 (right) Samuel Bownas, editor. An Account of the Captivity of Elizabeth Hanson, Late of Kachecky in New England. Captivity narrative. London: James Phillips, 1787.

In 1724 Abenaki Indians captured the Quaker woman Elizabeth Hanson (1684–1737) and her family from Cochecho ("Kachecky"), now Dover, New Hampshire, whence they were taken for six months to French Canada. The first edition of this narrative was recorded and printed in 1728 by Quaker minister Samuel Bownas (1676–1753). The book displayed here is the fourth edition, published in London in 1787.



First printed four decades after Rowlandson's book, Hanson's narrative is more sympathetic to her captors, more secular in tone, and more peaceful in sentiment. Ironically, however, later printers re-contextualized the work as a call to arms. A new edition was published in London in 1760, in the middle of the French and Indian War (1754–1763). The English colonial army needed recruits, and Hanson's story inflamed the passions of the English against the French, who play a large and sinister role in the story. It is darkly hinted that the French pay for English scalps, thereby sharing responsibility for gruesome Indian atrocities, and that French merchants enslave and sell English captives, sending young Englishwomen into Catholic convents as nuns. The urgent wartime need to move public opinion against the French may have facilitated the republication of Hanson's narrative in 1760.

PART FOUR Dealing in Death: The Market for Gallows Confessions and Execution Sermons

10 (back) The last Words and Dying Speech of Levi Ames, who was Executed at Boston, on Thursday the 21st Day of October, 1773, for Burglary. Gallows confession as broadside. Boston: Richard Draper, 1773.



The words of a doomed convict held a special cultural authority. With nothing to lose, a person facing the gallows might say things other people could not say without fear of retribution. Of course, these utterances were often heavily edited into "confessions" before being printed.

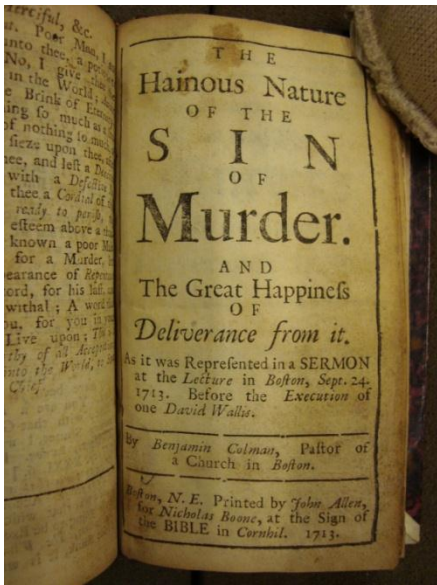
For quick sale, such speeches were usually printed as *broadside*s (one side of a single sheet of paper, which did not need to be cut and folded as a book would). They would be hawked in the street for a fraction of a penny each. Broadside>s also might contain news, government proclamations, opinions, public service announcements, or general advertisements.

Also popular in Europe, gallows confessions were not unique to the American colonies. Yet they served Puritan readers less as psychological studies of the sinner (the British model) than as examples of depraved, essentially hopeless humanity. By the late eighteenth century, however, the last words of a criminal could serve more secular functions. The execution of Levi Ames in 1773, observers thought, was all about politics, not religion or justice. Indeed, of all the executions carried out in New England, none attracted more

attention and controversy than that of Ames. Twelve publications recounting the execution flooded the marketplace.

What made the event so important? It wasn't the nature of the crime. He did not perform any spectacular escapes, lead a gang of felons, or commit murder. Ames was a common thief.

The reason for the massive protest from the general public was the perceived inequity of the sentence. Three years earlier, the British soldiers involved in the Boston Massacre had not faced such stiff penalties. And shortly after the Massacre, the authorities sentenced Ebenezer Richardson, a customs officer who fired at random into a rioting crowd and accidentally killed an eleven-year-old boy, to only two years of prison. At the time Ames faced execution, Richardson had recently gotten out of prison. The resulting outcry resulted in such poems as *Theft and Murder!* which starkly contrasted the two crimes.



11 (front) Benjamin Colman, et al. The sad effects of sin. A true relation of the murder committed by David Wallis ... To which are added, the sermons preached ... on the day of his execution. Collection of sermons. Boston: John Allen, 1713.

Hangings were among the most important communal events in New England. Out of these events grew a distinctively American rhetorical genre: the execution sermon, an address delivered the day before or the day of the hanging. A baffling crime excited special attention, such as the religiously educated Scottish sailor David Wallis's stabbing of a ship's cook without apparent motive. Wallis's execution drew a marquee roster of opening acts, as big names like Cotton Mather and Benjamin Colman contributed a flurry of sermons. These were then quickly printed and sold for as little as two pence, an affordable price even for common laborers.

The appeal of such sermons seems not to have been the doctrine, but the chance to contemplate thrilling questions regarding life and death, transgression and the law. Notice that the words "Sin" and "Murder" are far more prominent than the word "Sermon" on the title page. Even so, books could serve more prosaic functions. The owner of this book, James Herring, seems to have used the book irreverently to practice his signature and do arithmetic.

12 (back) The Life, Last Words and Dying Confession, of Rachel Wall.... Gallows confession as a small broadside. Boston, 1789.

On March 18, 1789, Rachel Wall tried to rip a bonnet from the head of an upper-class woman who was strolling through Boston. Seven months later, Wall was hanged on Boston Common for the offense.

The first woman executed in Massachusetts under a highway robbery statute, Wall had already gained some attention from the authorities for stealing from the home of Perez Morton, a prominent Dorchester attorney whose scandalous activities are reflected in exhibit items 23 and 24. Comparison of Wall's fate to Morton's tells us much about the walls of class and gender in early Boston. Born in Pennsylvania, Wall was an outsider of low social standing who had moved repeatedly along the seaboard, and had even spent some time as a pirate.



In her narrative, Wall admits to “Sabbath-breaking, stealing, lying, disobedience to parents,” but does not confess to the crime for which she is being hanged. Nonetheless, she has forgiveness for false witnesses, gratitude for her judges, and a moral lesson for her husband. Though the final words claim that this is a verbatim record of her speech, confirmed by her signature, the question of the extent to which the convict’s discourse has been manipulated by minister, judge, or printer may always be asked of gallows confessions.

13 (front) Jill McDonough. Habeas Corpus. Collection of poems. London: Salt Publishing, 2008.

The work of Boston poet Jill McDonough is the creative outgrowth of both her archival research and her teaching. For Habeas Corpus, McDonough researched gallows confessions in this archive, as well as at the Boston Athenaeum, Harvard, and UMass-Boston, among other places. For the last ten years, she has taught incarcerated college students through Boston University’s Prison Education Program.

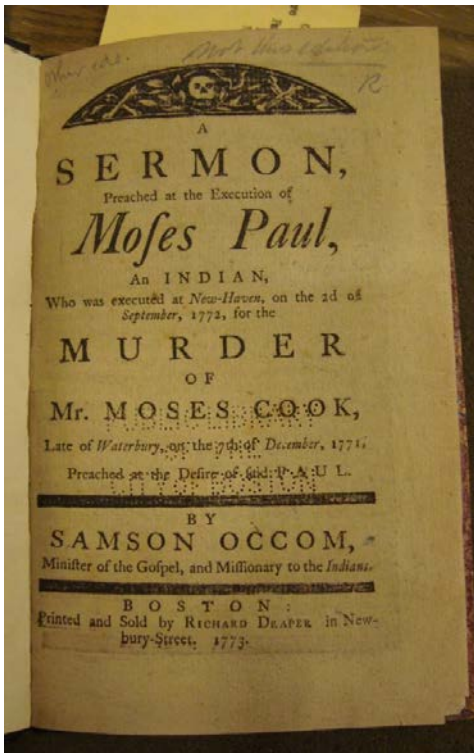
Reaching from 1608 to 2005, McDonough’s fifty sonnets ponder the gruesome reality that spectacles of execution have always been a quintessentially American tradition. McDonough’s poem on Rachel Wall begins with an ekphrasis, or poetic description of a drawing, in which she notes the portable gallows, strangely like a house, from which Wall, along with two men, were hanged. In keeping with the sonnet tradition, the middle of the poem turns in a new direction, moving from the visual spectacle to Wall’s own words. The startling final lines recenter our attention on a peripheral detail in Wall’s confession: her exoneration of an indigent and disabled woman. In addition to exposing the absurdity of the penal system, Wall’s small act of kindness may reflect her identification with Dorothy Horn, for she, too, held little social power in early Boston.

14 (back) Execution of Samuel Clisby and Gilbert Close, convicted of high-way robbery. Broadside. Boston, 1822.

Two laborers, Samuel Clisby and Gilbert Close, were hanged on Boston’s Necklands near the burying ground on March 7, 1822. They had robbed Ezra Haynes on Cambridge Street the previous August. Excluding punishments for the federal crime of mail robbery, Clisby and Close were the last convicts hanged in the Northern colonies for the crime of robbery. Their timing was particularly unfortunate given that capital punishments for theft had been suspended in Massachusetts during the previous decade.

The printer exploited the recent event by publishing a broadside on the next day. Rapid broadside publication concerning recent events was also common in the previous century, but later examples of the genre contrast with earlier ones in taking a more secular tone. For example, this one describes “religion” in general terms as a source of solace rather than of moral instruction, and marginalizes the role of the two clergymen at the scene. The most obvious difference, however, is that this later broadside does not attempt to preserve the words of the convicted.





15 (front) **Samson Occom. A sermon, preached at the execution of Moses Paul, an Indian, who was executed at New-Haven, on the 2d of September 1772... Execution sermon. Boston: Richard Draper, 1773.**

Samson Occom's *Sermon at the Execution of Moses Paul* is the most popular of all execution sermons. One of the first publications authored by a Native American in the colonies, this sermon was reprinted seventeen times before Occom's death. Like all execution sermons, Occom's effectively communicates how a sin, no matter how trivial, is the root cause of evil in society. Using as an example the life of fellow Indian Moses Paul, Occom shows how sin can lead to both carnal and spiritual death.

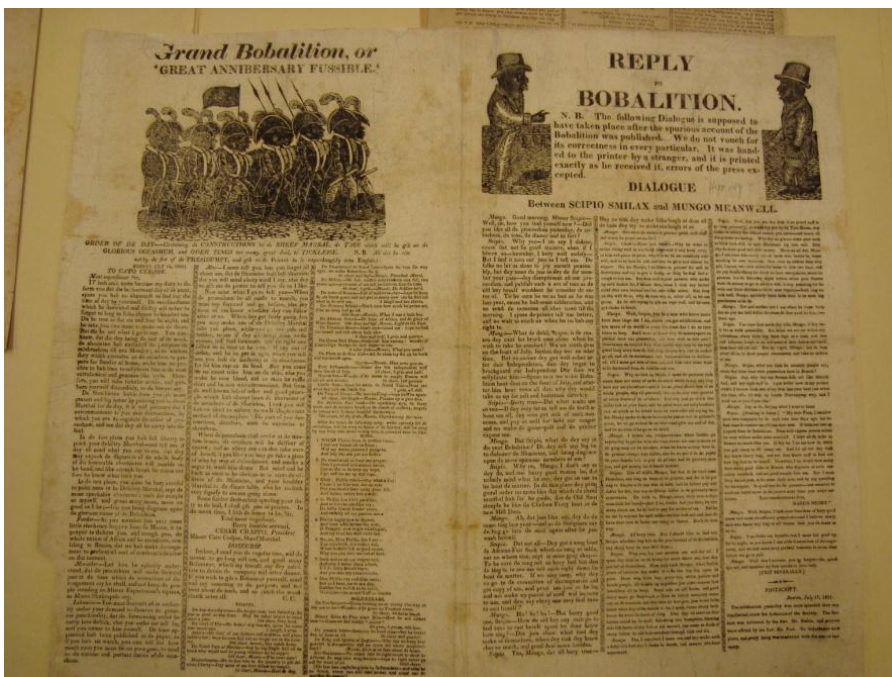
Occom's exhortation to repentance addresses a mixed audience, shedding light on the complexities that surrounded Native American lives at that time. Broken into distinct sections for distinct audiences, Occom's sermon undergoes shifts in tone as he addresses white spiritual authorities, fellow Native Americans, and the criminal. Occom's careful address to the different social and racial groups present to witness the execution illustrates some

of the cultural tensions and protocols present in colonial times.

PART FIVE Race and the Republic: The Subjugation of Black Bostonians After Abolition

16 (back) [Leonard Deming, printer.] **Grand bobalition, or "Great Annibersary Fusible" and Reply to bobalition.** Burlesque broadside. Boston: Leonard Deming, 1821 [?].

Racist caricatures of the African Society of Boston abounded. Several broadsides satirizing their annual July 14 meetings survive. A series of four surviving caricatures by printer Leonard Deming (we show two here) makes obvious references to the perceived intellectual disparities and linguistic inferiorities of black Bostonians. Also noticeable in the style and tone of this artifact is the author's



wish to ridicule even the idea of a black Bostonian engagement in political or civic events. The caricatures seem to acknowledge the Haitian Revolution and other slave revolts by featuring men in uniform, but they are reduced to a Lilliputian, mock-epic scale.

The early nineteenth-century burlesque broadside stands alone as a literary genre, and a close examination of such texts offers a unique opportunity for engaging with the culture of the time, much as the language of a cave painting might inform us about a vanished civilization.

Physiognomic distortion and verbal dialect characterize the genre of racial caricature, a genre which flourished in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. This example of a Boston production demonstrates that many white Bostonians viewed black Bostonians as inferior in linguistic and intellectual capabilities. The authors of these burlesques used their literary texts to exaggerate the bodily differences between blacks and whites – to effectively paint a physical description of character through the manipulation of language – in the name of a popular entertainment which would have fueled the insidious spread of American racism.

17 (front) Reverend Thaddeus Mason Harris. A Discourse Delivered Before the African Society in Boston, 15th of July, 1822, on the Anniversary Celebration of the Abolition of the Slave Trade. Boston: Phelps and Farnham, 1822.

When the U.S. ban on the transatlantic slave trade took effect in 1808, the members of the African Society of Boston chose July 14 as a holiday to celebrate the event. Meeting annually at the African Meeting House on Beacon Hill, Boston’s African-Americans held a grand celebration that could last for days. Traditionally, the plenary speaker would be a white clergyman, whose (often conservative) discourses would be published.

In 1822 the white speaker was Thaddeus Mason Harris (1768–1842), who proclaims a by-then traditional form of Massachusetts exceptionalism. He flatly denies that the Puritans practiced slavery,

claiming that the condition of unfree Africans “was merely that of *servants*, not of slaves. Indeed, the practice itself of domestic slavery is altogether repugnant to the institutions and feelings of the people of New England...” Harris congratulates the assembled group on their good fortune in living where they do. Such a delusory view of conditions in Massachusetts would be belied by the racist print culture that surrounded Boston’s 1200 African-Americans.

18 (back) [Leonard Deming, printer.] Grand Celebration of the Bobalition of African Slavery. Broadside. Boston: Leonard Deming, 1825.

Printed approximately four years after Grand Bobalition (#16), Grand Celebration of the Bobalition of African Slavery clearly demonstrates the evolution of racism in republican Boston. The prejudices embodied in this broadside are obvious: this early artifact signifies just the beginning

GRAND CELEBRATION
OF THE
BOBALITION
Of African Slavery!



GENERAL ORDER.
Tention! all creation, in de lower world of de city!
Most Quaters, de de Grass-hopper, Uly 14, 1825 & July.
Te QUIMBO BUSHEN, Esq. de Chief Marshal ob
de day, he mos Sublime Highness de President
transmits de followin' directions:—

Caroling is de usual custom, you will please to
start de grand procession as soon as dey gin to move,
procession at an tickler time by de Ole South, and
march on in triumphant line fro' forward zactly
in de city ob cherry ring treat which dey shud not be
oblig to pay town, seeing dat dey kemp de mos com-
petitive step wid de musick obgelder one at a time.
De gratis philosopher Peter Guss once tell me dat it
was he mos sublime genius dat Moses Bousquet horn
de battal ob Water Grand cause one ob he men no
keep his step wid de musick.

You will be ticklar dat de men which disempose
de mos splendid procession hab nothing in dare coat
pocket cep't de jack o' de tooth pick de quinqu-
glass and copy ob de order. Any member ob de So-
ciety dat shall not hab de quinqu-glass ob dare swan-
nos not fetch any ting in de room cep't de tin trump-
et or de Kalashnikov. He gibe me bery grate ambush
de year to see some ob dare pocket stuff out wid de
d'blet de boot juk de bread and de brackin' pag; such
skandulous practis put me bery much in mind ob
some ting dat I can no recollect ob.

I wook you also see dat dey all hab dare troutsalon
in de one side face, as he be bery disconcerted to
put one hand in de pocket. Massa Shakespearite hab
bery good idee ob dis subject when he say,
When he expiating of de nation,
When you put on de troutsalon,
For no man know what he feel!

If he ever see de song side out!

Our valiant ting I would recommend which strike me
bery hard step on de mind, which be dat we mos dat
wek in de procession shall hab in he mouth alwey
de pound ob tobacco at de same time, as he make
a shock stuff out too much like de striped squirrel
wid de cheese fat ob hestachion, or de Misser Jonah
swallowing de shark.

I hab grate many more ting in de note, but I can no
spend de time no now as I hab twenty nine pore ob
head to clean here I dress um for dis mos competitive
celebration.

I here describe myself by my albe chair wid my
fat hand you bery much respected fren,
MUNGO MUFFLECHOPS,
President.
SIMON SCRATCHALL,
Secretary.

BOBCRIPT.—I almost forget to tell you I hab
mov'd from where I now live, and taken my lodgin at
4000,00, Boot Black Plate, 3 doors from de opposite
side ob de way, down 7 pair ob stairs de first door on
de left hand, coming back at de sign ob de Boot Black.
I mention dis so dat if you can read dis order you
know where you find me.

Bobcript Junior.—In de hurry ob de moment
I mos forget to recollect to send you
de toast dat will be drunk on dat mos
objejoyful casum. Here um be.

Toasts.

De Orator ob de day.—He cober bossell wid moral
honour—he exorcise wid so much better dan de
Bankum Hill Dress as Belosa Deavage; in better dan
de Nova Scotia Wheatstone. 9 Chew always.

Massa Wilberforce.—We always remember um, he
hab some ting under his jacket dat feel for de poor
brack folk. Multitude ob nobler bust.

De Bankum Hill Monument.—Guess he be bery
large pile ob rock—“bad work for de eyes” in build
um, as de ole woman say when de wheelbarrow run
uber her nose. 23 Swaze.

Massa Nunce.—Spouse now he get trow he work
he hab no ting in de cept drink he bottle ob brack-
strap and smook he lung nine.

Song.—Four and twenty smokers all in de row.

Wess Bussan.—De commerce bery dull—the high-
binder mos starbe I guess he hab to get be libing by
de sweat ob he nose.

Song.—Sweet habing Phillis de rose ob de Hill.

De Engine folk.—Guess dey better squirt few drop
ob water on de head ob one man at de north part ob
de city, as he be bery inflammatory in de upper story
dat we fruid be explode here. 71 Sky look.

De memory ob Peter Guss.—He like in de memo-
ry long as we no forget um, and some time after.

De Fair Sex.—Dare smile is like de semban on
de bank ob de stream, but when dey frown alwey
ting look dark and brack at woodstock hole.

Soon as dis toast be drunk, de followin'
Song will be sung accompanied by dat
fine tone piece ob music de bass drum.

Fair as de lead-stool dat grow in de vale,
Is de fair sex when smile it fall from dare face;
It make de hart mabe like tree logged oval
When he ran wid de cackroach to win a scruple race.

Is dare man so stupid dat he no can't sigh,
To see de soft graces dat float bout dare form;
De languishing look dat beam from dare eye,
Exquisite de vote like pick ob parch corn.

So let de brack-strap mabe swiftly roused,
And drink to de health ob de mos lovin' fair;
Let not one in dis wide circle be found,
Dat don't like de gal wid moart in her hair!

Tin Pot.—Dido bear much bout um now days,
guess he gone to de Mayor's washshop to get be
Lotion mended. 48 log 10 grin.

De 14 Uly.—He come just de right time in de
season dis year, we hope he haber come in de win-
ter. Free log 10 de table.

De Boot Black.—He meet wid good many hind
rub; we hope he never be oblig rub be shin down
wid brick but for no ting. 25 pep gun.

De President ob de Day.—Genius set on he eye
brow, and honor rest on de top ob he head.
Considerable quantity ob log.

Arter dis toast be drunk, extinguish
guest retire, when will be giben de follow-
ing

BOLUNTEAR TOASTS.

By Peter Blakelips, Esq.—De Lampighter.—May
he light shine so bright dat we feel um shine when
we fast sleep.
Song.—De day he go in de bed in de sent.

By Scupper Governor.—De Watchman.—May de folk
keep still in de night, as not make no habe last
dream. 20000000 about log.

By Crissa Sharpshooter.—De Elm Tree.—De olive de
mos—He cober multitude ob last bery wish dat he
can no speak. 82 last end.

By Jos Sashmaker.—De Weather.—De olive de folk
feel all alter in cooperation, as de nation chop say
to de grinders. 22 more some grin.

By Pomp Perce.—Our Brack Strappers at de North
dey great way off, but we no forget um long as de
shin grow to de leg. 30 grin, 7 after last.

By Clew Sashmaker.—Mass Luckrat.—Good ole
Geethman an other chaber here! wid hand saw.
Song.—Here's a health in cheer dat habe poor cloth.

Soon as dis las toast be drunk de mem-
bers will expire in disorder, some ob um
will go no where, de res will go to de Prop-
Room in Wilson's Lane & snake de snail.

of racial objectification and ridicule in popular American culture.

It should also be noted that this particular burlesque retains the mark of its enjoyment by its reading audience: the words "Oh, Phillis" have been written into the relief cut at the top of the page, as spoken by the presumed "Presumdent" of the celebration, Mungo Mufflechops. Most likely, this is a back-handed commentary regarding Phillis Wheatley, a famous black American female poet who lived in Boston as a slave. The seeds of discrimination and oppression planted in the late seventeenth century, as exemplified in Mather's "Rules," had overgrown Boston in the early nineteenth century. Rather than oppress blacks through legislative mandates, blacks had, in the era of these burlesques, become oppressed through the very print culture that helped to establish the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Racial tensions and anxieties in America can be traced back to British occupation of the colonies, the use of the printing press, and the promotion of literature as a form of popular American culture as exemplified by such texts exhibited here.

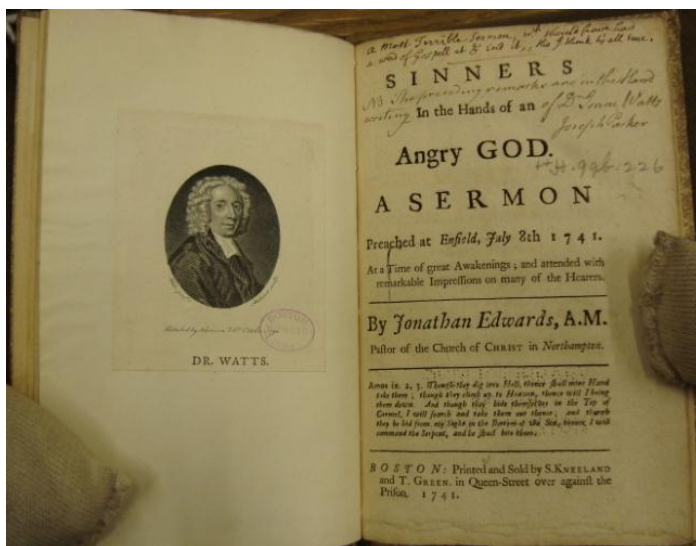
19 (front) Prince Sa[u]nders, editor. Haytian Papers: A Collection of the Interesting Proclamations and Other Official Documents, Together with Some Account of the Rise, Progress, and Present State, of the Kingdom of Hayti. Political work. Boston: Caleb Bingham and Co., 1818.

Born somewhere in New England in 1784, the African-American educator and writer Prince Saunders was an instructor at Boston's African School from 1808 to 1815, where many young black men were educated until the formation of the Abiel Smith School in 1835, which would become the first public school for blacks. Saunders became interested in Haiti, and encouraged other American blacks to emigrate there, where they might form an English-speaking contingent in the country. Traveling between England, Haiti, and the United States to promote his cause, Saunders published his Haytian Papers in London and Boston to disseminate information about the nation, which had been sorely misrepresented in the United States. However, Saunders's plans for colonization were met with skepticism among fellow African-Americans. Black leaders had by the 1820s pinned their hopes on effecting change in the United States. Saunders was less optimistic.

In 1820 Saunders decided to live permanently in Haiti. He made significant contributions to developing its system of universal education. He would become attorney general of Haiti, residing in Port-au-Prince until his death in 1839.

***PART SIX* Melancholy Enthusiasm: The Dialectic of the Affections in the Great Awakening**

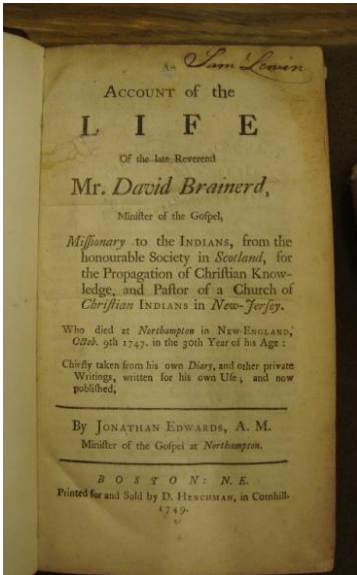
20 (left) Edwards, Jonathan. Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God. Sermon. Boston: S. Kneeland and T. Green, 1741.



So notorious is Jonathan Edwards's "Sinners in the Hands of An Angry God" that it has become a cultural icon. Audiences reportedly writhed in pain and horror when Edwards uttered this vehement and frightening call to repentance. Visceral appeals were the hallmark of the Great Awakening, which were considered a sign of spiritual ardor, or "enthusiasm." Yet enthusiasm more often involved pleasant feelings of grace than anguish. Wrongly taken as representative of all Puritan sermons, "Sinners" has led to the perception of the Puritans as harsh people obsessed with self-mortification. It has even been

satirized in the popular television show The Simpsons.

This copy of the sermon was owned by the famous English hymnist Isaac Watts. It includes a handwritten note by Watts which suggests that even fellow Calvinists found the sermon excessive: "A most terrible sermon, which should have had a word of Gospell at the end of it, tho' I think it all true." Watts wished that Edwards's terrified listeners could have come away with some assurance of God's love. Yet such assurance would have been provided by Edwards's other sermons, which are generally far more contemplative and peaceful.



21 (center) Edwards, Jonathan. The Life of David Brainerd. (Auto)biography. Boston: D. Henchman, 1749.

Composed of Brainerd's diary with bracketed interjections by Edwards, Brainerd's Life occupies a fuzzy place on the border between autobiography and biography. Full of expressions of despair, Brainerd's diary reveals a deeply melancholic personality, while Edwards's works, on the other hand, generally approach religion with a joyous appreciation of God's benevolence. Edwards's interjections therefore often attempt to placate the intensity of Brainerd's misery.

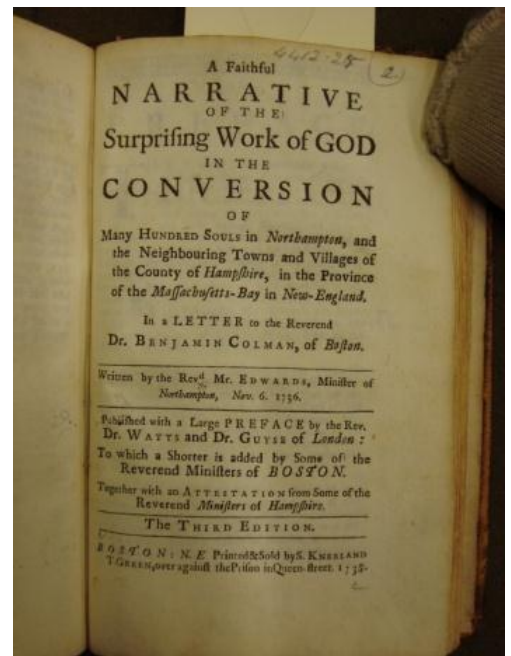
As though an extended case study from the Faithful Narrative, Edwards's work details the effects of melancholy as Brainerd seeks grace. Both men had worked as missionaries—Brainerd with Indians who were previously unexposed to colonists and Christianity, and Edwards with an Indian settlement rampant with alcoholism and crime. For all the differences of

personality between the two friends, the two men were similar in failing to winning many Indian converts.

22 (right) Edwards, Jonathan. A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God in the Conversion of Many Hundred Souls in Northampton. Collection of spiritual autobiographies. Boston: S. Kneeland and T. Green, 1738.

Nominally in the form of a persuasive letter, A Faithful Narrative is a set of case studies by Edwards. The piece details the religious experiences of his congregation during the religious movement later called the Great Awakening, which swept through the colonies in the 1730s and 1740s. The phenomenon of mass conversion was characterized less by widespread embrace of dogma than by powerful religious experiences that shook converts out of their ordinary lives.

The Awakening excited controversy both for its challenge to traditional religious authority and for the vehemence of the converted. Edwards was particularly concerned for the melancholy state of those about to be converted, which led several in his congregation, including his own uncle, to commit suicide. In the face of feelings of unworthiness among the converted, Edwards introduces the case studies with a chapter on the relationship between penance and God's love. He goes so far as to call emotional turmoil "needless" and the manifestation of "Satan."



PART SEVEN Publishing the Heart: The Scandalous Birth of the American Novel in Boston



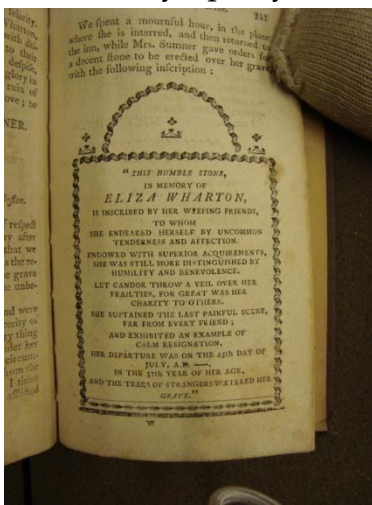
23 [William Hill Brown.] The Power of Sympathy. Epistolary novel. Boston: Isaiah Thomas, 1789.

Many factors militated against the printing of novels in early Boston, the most important of which was the lingering critique of fiction, which was thought to be full of even more dangerous temptations than the sensory world. As Perry Miller summarizes the Puritan view, "the imagination was not bound to the senses and could form images beyond and in excess of nature." Yet not only was the first U.S.

novel published in Boston rather than in the more welcoming literary capitals of Philadelphia or New York, but it was a narrative chock full of "perverted images," notably seduction, incest, and suicide, the last of these represented in Samuel Hill's famous copperplate engraving for the frontispiece.

So how do we explain the unlikely fact that Boston was the place where the first American novel (and a lurid one at that) was written, published, and set? A Puritan heritage had made Bostonians keenly aware of hypocrisy; the difference between inner and outer character make them appreciative of scandal, particularly those involving sexual transgression and the sins of the fathers. And this is just what happened when the prominent Boston attorney Perez Morton began an affair with his sister-in-law, Fanny Apthorp. After Fanny became pregnant, she was cast out of the house, and poisoned herself after giving birth to Perez's child (an event fictionalized in the story of Ophelia, whose fate is depicted here). All this occurred semi-openly in the Mortons' grand Dorchester house, where their neighbor William Hill Brown (and a gallery of newspaper reporters) were busily taking notes. While Fanny ended up dead, Perez escaped the affair unscathed.

For more a century, it was believed that Perez's wife Sarah had fictionalized the scandal herself, presumably to spite her husband. Indeed, the later, nineteenth-century binder of the edition of The Power of Sympathy shown here put Morton's name on the spine. The several pages of handwritten



notes in this copy were scribbled by various members of the Fleet family, who connected the novel to the real-life scandal of their time.

24 Hannah Webster Foster. The Coquette; or, the history of Eliza Wharton. Epistolary novel. Boston: Thomas & Whipple, 1811.

A bestseller when it was first published in 1797, The Coquette is, like The Power of Sympathy, a tale of seduction based on a semi-public scandal. Elizabeth Whitman was a Connecticut socialite who had given birth to a child out of wedlock and died shortly thereafter. The Coquette can sometimes read like a morality tale for unmarried young women.

However, the popularity of the book not only highlighted an increasing interest in leisure reading, but also drew attention to the growing social and political issues of the era. In fact, it was Foster's aim to address the changing role of women, which had shifted from self-sufficiency during the Revolutionary War (when men were occupied on the battlefield) to more traditional positions. With Eliza Wharton as a symbol for the eighteenth-century woman who resists the restraints of social convention, The Coquette challenges the repressive standards of female conduct then prevailing in republican New England. Nonetheless, Eliza is still made to suffer the fate met by Elizabeth Whitman. Her tombstone appears on the final pages of the novel.

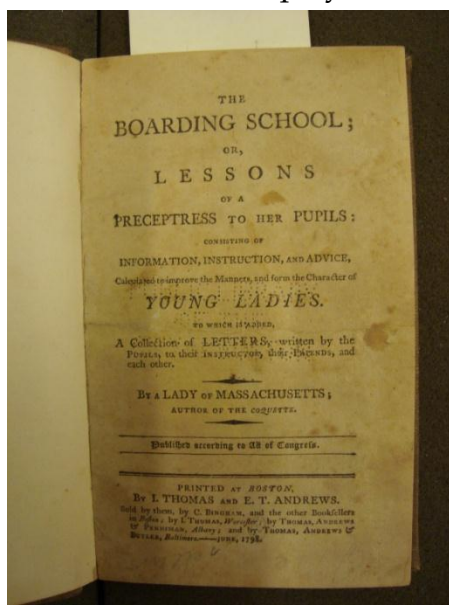
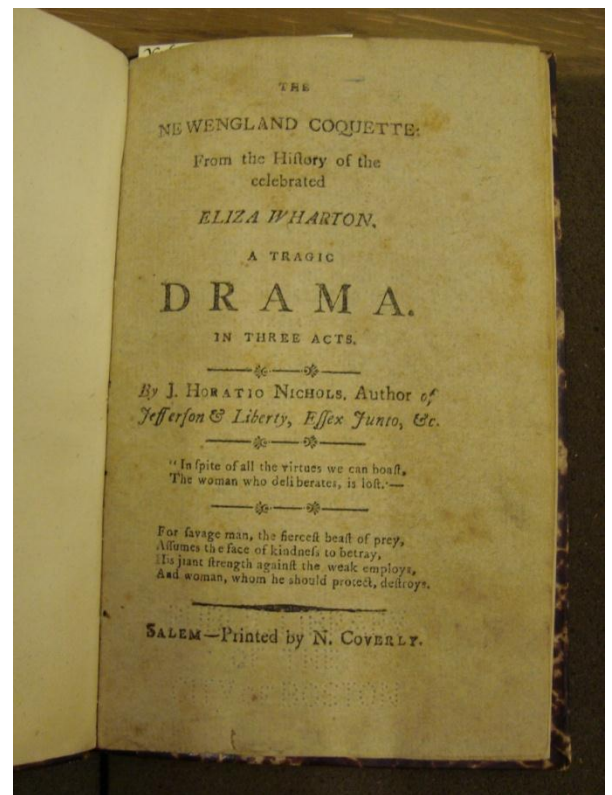
Since reading novels was considered inappropriate for ladies, the idea that Elizabeth Whitman was an avid reader led many to believe that fiction caused her downfall. Foster, however, disagreed. Her verbatim copy of Whitman's gravestone serves to clear their indiscretions by asking the reader to remember both Eliza Wharton and Elizabeth Whitman's intrinsic goodness, and to acknowledge that they were victims of a patriarchal eighteenth-century New England society—a tragedy, Foster suggests, worth mourning.

The earliest copy of the novel held by the BPL was printed in 1811. Few copies of earlier editions remain anywhere; only a dozen of the first edition survive, suggesting that the book was read to pieces.

25 J. Horatio Nichols. The New England Coquette: From the history of the celebrated Eliza Wharton. A tragic drama. In three acts. Salem: N. Coverly, 1802.

In his play based on Hannah Webster Foster's best-selling novel, The Coquette, J. Horatio Nichols brings life to Charles Deighton, a character Foster references only slightly in her novel. In Nichols's version, Deighton is a somewhat awkward fellow who is "profoundly ignorant" of the ways of women. He suffers from gout, dances poorly, and goes to sleep early—the opposite of Major Sanford, the libertine who has an affair with Eliza Wharton. Deighton does not indicate that Sanford should stop seducing Eliza; instead, he half-heartedly mentions Sanford's lack of conscience. Sanford's reply hints that he knows he is doing something wrong, yet he continues his pursuit nonetheless. Just as Deighton remains silent in Foster's novel, Deighton's indifferent voice in Nichols's play reinforces the notion shared by

both authors: that eighteenth-century patriarchal New England cared very little about the rights of women.



An obscure figure, Nichols was a Massachusetts dramatist whose productions tended to feature political humor. In one work, for example, Nichols satirized John Adams as the "Duke of Braintree."

26 Hannah Webster Foster. The Boarding School. Conduct book/novel. Boston: I. Thomas and E.T. Andrews, 1798.

The other book by Hannah Webster Foster, best known for The Coquette, was The Boarding School, which consisted “of information, instruction, and advice, calculated to improve the manners, and form the character of young ladies.” Foster saw the book as a portable school for young women, who were often denied formal education.

Each chapter is devoted to some feature of women’s education. In the first chapter, for example, Foster stresses the importance of advanced literacy to young women. Foster has to tiptoe around novel-reading, which was considered an unladylike pastime in eighteenth-century New England, but she does praise books that inform and raise awareness of social and political issues, which courted controversy by calling for women to get involved in public debates. Other key topics Foster addresses in The Boarding School include arithmetic, music, dancing, friendship, and religion. Here there may be a more conservative lesson, as young women are instructed to regulate “the economy of your domestic affairs.” On the whole, however, Foster’s aim in writing The Boarding School was to build self-sufficiency and equality among young women living in the new republic.

The Boarding School is a hybrid of novel and conduct manual. In the larger story, young women are instructed by a teacher who in turn uses stories to illustrate ideas. The representative pages displayed here show how Foster works. A chapter on “Politeness” opens onto an entertaining story which demonstrates that “defamation is a species of cruelty, which can never be expiated.” The story is a thumbnail version of Shakespeare’s Winter’s Tale: a hot-tempered young fiancé named Leontine drops his girlfriend after someone instills suspicion that she has been unfaithful. The lesson to girls: Stop gossiping!

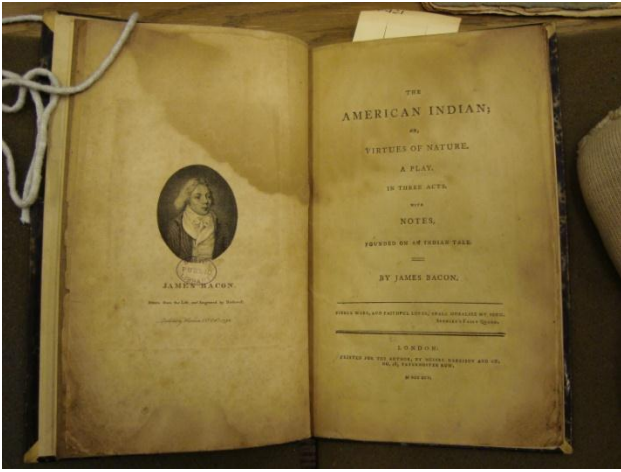
PART EIGHT At the City’s Edge: Imagining the Boundaries of Civilization

27 [Sarah Wentworth Morton.] Ouâbi; or, The Virtues of Nature: An Indian Tale. Dramatic poem in four cantos. Boston: Isaiah Thomas, 1790.

After his scandalous and tragic affair with his sister-in-law was publicized in The Power of Sympathy, Perez Morton might have wished that his family never make another appearance in literature. Yet such was not to be the case, for Morton’s wife had literary ambitions. Indeed, for a century it was believed that she had penned The Power of Sympathy herself. Sarah Wentworth Morton’s interests lay, however, in the more traditional genre of poetry rather than the novel, and she enlisted the leading Massachusetts publisher to issue long narrative poems with the subtitles of The Virtues of Nature and The Virtues of Society.

Ouâbi; or, the Virtues of Nature features a triangular romance. A young Illinois Indian woman is compelled to choose between a comely young European who has rescued her and the titular chief to whom she is married: a choice between “Nature” and “Society.” As suggested by the beautiful copperplate engraving by Boston artist Samuel Hill, Morton’s story starkly contrasts the heroic Illinois chief Ouâbi (on the right) with the long-haired European boy-adventurer Celario (in the middle), whose name and appearance echo the cross-dressing Cesario (real name Viola) of Shakespeare’s Twelfth Night.





28 James Bacon. The American Indian; or, The Virtues of Nature. A play in three acts. London: Harrison & Co., 1795.

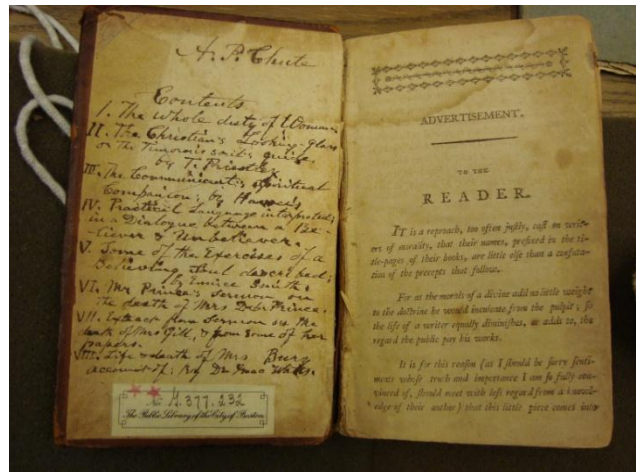
While only one copy of Morton's poem arrived in England, it nonetheless had admirers, perhaps none more so than the aspiring London dramatist James Bacon. Hearing of the story, Bacon began work on a theatrical adaptation before even having received a copy. When he finally received the book, Bacon was so distressed by the ending, in which Ouâbi dies, that he changed the outcome.

Bacon's lengthy critical introduction and concluding reference pages reflect the growing interest in ethnology among Europeans during the early stages of Romanticism. Eagerness to hear about the customs of Native Americans no doubt contributed to the play's publication. Nonetheless, the story was too scandalous for the London stage, and remained unperformed. As *The Analytical Review* of London put it, "The reader will perceive, from this story, that the *virtues of nature*, which it exhibits, are not very consonant with european ideas of conjugal fidelity; and will not be surprized, that a play, founded on such a story, was not accepted by the managers of an english theatre."

PART NINE Schools Against Scandal: Conduct Books and the Shaming of the Novel

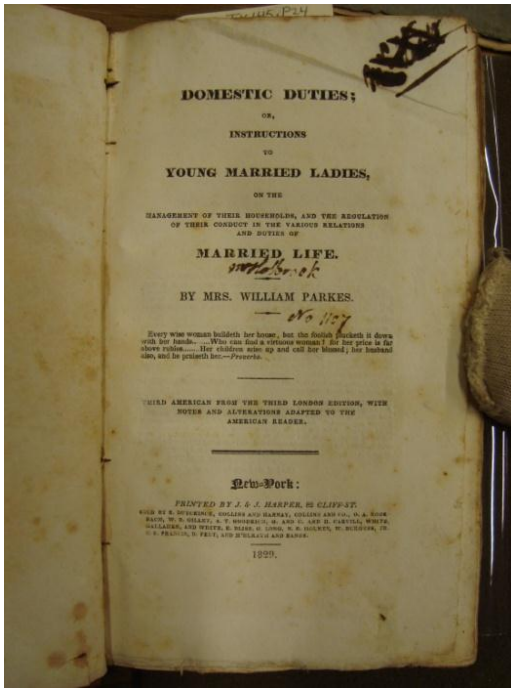
29 [William Kenrick.] The Whole Duty of Woman. Conduct book. Newburyport, Mass.: Blunt and Robinson, 1793.

Piracy of British authors was rampant in early America, as copyright protection was minimal; the lion's share of the work involved in publishing a book was thought to be done by the printer, not the author. The 1793 printing in the remote Massachusetts town of Newburyport of a conduct book originally issued in London in 1753 testifies to the broad reach of British authors with an American public long after political independence.



One of the most popular of eighteenth-century conduct books, The Whole Duty of Woman represented a feat of literary cross-dressing: though written by a London hack named William Kenrick (c. 1725-1779), the title page proclaimed its authorship "by a Lady, written at the desire of a Noble Lord." Echoing Eliza Wharton in Hannah Webster Foster's The Coquette, the author laments that she was once happy but now is full of sorrow, for "I listened to the voice of *adulation* and her bewitching banishments allured me to destruction." She admonishes young ladies to avoid her errors. Novel reading, she suggests, causes girls to lose their virginity: "Delight not in the romantic tales of love; the triumphant beauty and the captive knight are deluded images to thy passions. A fictitious tale may awaken a real curiosity, and that may prove fatal to thy peace."

This copy of Domestic Duties was bound with other contemporary spiritual works for women like The Christian's Looking Glass and The Communicant's Spiritual Companion (both Newburyport, 1794).



30 Mrs. William [Frances] Parkes. Domestic Duties: Or, Instructions To Young Married Ladies, on the Management of their Households, and the Regulation of their Conduct in the Various Relations and Duties of Married Life. Housekeeping manual. New York: J. & J. Harper, 1829.

Well into the nineteenth century, British ideals of domestic life prevailed in the United States, where Englishwoman Frances Parkes's Domestic Duties was one of the most widely read books. This book is only residually a conduct book; it comes closer to a manual of housekeeping, written for an age when service was being modernized, the servants no longer a fixture of every household. Some advice had, therefore, to be simply practical, such as these instructions on how to prepare fish. With topics extending from social relations and household concerns to religious duties and the regulation of time, there is little doubt that Domestic Duties would have been a book found in most households in New England.

Throughout the book, Parkes urges circumspection in the purchase of books, warning against “productions of an immoral tendency, or those which offend against propriety,” naming such authors as Fielding, Smollett, and Byron. Parkes is very worried about how women who display immoral books will *look* to visitors; this reading advice appears in a section on the proper ornamentation of a drawing-room. Parkes summarizes: “The world corrupts; home should refine.”

Credits

Photographs by Macaulay Ward

Text by Len von Morzé with contributions from several graduate students from Spring 2009's English 606 course (“Books, Manuscripts, Libraries”): Safa Alzaim, Kat Camgemi, Monica Cheever, Georgette Jover, Christina Ricks, Macaulay Ward

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