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**Author**
Knack, Martha C.

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# Southern Paiute Letters: A Consideration of the Applications of Literacy

**MARTHA C. KNACK**

Reading and writing, often coupled, are really two separate skills and their effects can be dramatically different, especially within a colonial situation. Reading, particularly in the language of the dominant group, enables Native people to receive messages that the power-holders choose to channel to them. While not precluding Native people's selection from among these available reading materials, literacy does in part serve to move information from the power center to indigenous communities.

Writing, on the other hand, taught as a simple and natural accompaniment to reading, has the potential to reverse this information flow. It places in Native people's hands the ability to express their own ideas and desires in such a way as to be comprehensible to bureaucrats and policymakers. Writing enables communication to travel *up* the political hierarchy.

Colonialism worldwide, from the eighteenth century to the twentieth, included the promotion of literacy in European languages. Missionary schools, government agencies, and international aid programs, assumed that reading and writing constituted a substantial, unquestionable, and above all self-evident, benefit. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) shared this belief and after the mid nineteenth century increasingly budgeted for boarding and day schools. That agency viewed literacy as both a component and a measure of "progress" and implied that "benefits" would accrue to Native people who learned these skills, such as access to wage employment.

Early-nineteenth-century anthropological theorists followed the thinking of their times and interpreted literacy as a unitary and inherently beneficial phenomenon.[1] By the 1970s and 1980s, however, analyses were more critical and proceeded to refine concepts and distinguish among various literacies.

Martha C. Knack is Distinguished Professor of Anthropology and Ethnic Studies at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. She is the author of *Boundaries Between: The Southern Paiutes, 1775–1995* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001) and *Life Is with People: Household Organization of the Contemporary Southern Paiute Indians* (Socorro, NM: Ballena Press, 1980).

Systematic field studies documented "types" of reading and writing that differed in structure, application, and consequence. Early written forms of many Native American languages, for instance, had been developed by Euro-American religious missionaries who had hoped that Christian scriptures translated into the vernacular would facilitate conversion.[2] In other cases, such as Southern Paiute, the structure of the written Native language did not appear until the late twentieth century when scholarly linguists introduced a complex phonetic script.

The situations in which Natives applied writing differed. McLaughlin, following Heath's method of content analysis, uncovered the differing social contexts in which bilingual Navajos chose to write either in Navajo or in English. Less formally, Reder and Wikelund found that Alaskan Aleuts selected between Russian written in the Cyrillic alphabet and English written in Roman script, depending on who they were corresponding with and why.[3]

The consequences of literacy were also shown to vary. The BIA lured Indians students with images of jobs and financial well-being. Teachers' intentions, however, were not always the reasons Native people went through the effort to learn to write or to retain the skill once acquired. Studies documented situations in which Native people were pursuing power, either spiritual or political, or access to legal institutions, as well as economic benefits.[4] Whether such aspirations were met, of course, varied immensely for different persons, historical times, places, and situations.

Even within colonial environments where Native and dominant people held drastically disproportionate political power, sensitive studies showed that alternate literacies competed in complex ways. It could not be assumed automatically that the dominant group's language would replace indigenous systems. McLaughlin asserted that Navajos' use of written vernacular was a form of ethnic empowerment and self-assertion against political domination by English-speakers.[5] Clearly, however, writers using Native scripts could manipulate readers and rewrite history to their own benefits just as well as could authors employing the dominant language. Use of the Native language in and of itself did not assure that the writer would necessarily be intent on cultural preservation or that his or her motivations would be socially beneficent; nor did composition in English inherently imply capitulation to power-holders.[6] Authors' motivations, self-interests, relative power, and roles within the hierarchical structure, were necessary components in any analysis, whether between dominant and Native persons, or among the disparate Native people within their own communities.

Nevertheless, too often scholars have been prejudiced against Native American writings in English, especially historically early ones, seeing them as somehow tainted by "acculturation" and therefore not carrying "the authentic Indian voice."[7] To avoid English-language Native prose denied the messages those writers were trying to communicate. It demeaned them by implying that they had become passive pawns, unable to pursue their own interests or think their own thoughts, as soon as they learned a second language. Surely theirs was a rational decision to employ a language comprehensible by power-holders that was an effective element in their attempt to

communicate with those external forces. Only through actual analysis of the English-written documents, rather than through theoretical preconception, could it be discovered who was writing and for what purposes, and whether those messages did indeed serve Native empowerment or merely mirror the thoughts and desires of colonial masters.

Publication by Native American authors writing in English has been extensive and has taken a variety of forms, some of which, like letter writing, were themselves borrowed from the Euro-American literary tradition.[8] Of the few partial or substantial collections of Indian-written correspondence, most have been offered simply as data sources, perhaps with some comment regarding their accuracy, or their historical or literary value.[9] Some were published for the recipient's political purposes, rather than the correspondent's, such as Reverend Wheelock's attempts to use letters from his school students for fundraising.[10] A few collections have served as foundations for biographies or sociopsychological analyses of the correspondents' social positions.[11] The most extensive use of Native letters, however, has been in ethnohistorical analyses of boarding school students' experiences and personal reactions to those institutions.[12] Nevertheless, Indian-written correspondence as a data source remains largely underutilized and underanalyzed. In particular, we know very little about the intended purposes Native people had in mind in writing letters.

I will explore how Southern Paiutes historically employed their newly acquired writing abilities. Paiutes actively sought and embraced literacy very early in their historical contact with Euro-Americans. Written from the beginning in English, Paiute documents have been ignored by anthropologists and ethnohistorians as intrinsically uninteresting, since they were neither in the Native language nor in an exotic script. Nevertheless, quite a large number of Paiute-written letters have survived in public archives. These documents reveal Paiutes' views on what issues were significant, their attempts to influence events, and their efforts to manage relations with both each other and with those outsiders who increasingly exercised control over their lives. These substantive issues, as well as the utilitarian role of writing itself in Southern Paiutes' particular historical and multiethnic context, may hint at why they so eagerly adopted literacy, unlike some other Native American groups. In addition, exploration of these documents can expand our understanding of how Paiutes, and by implication other Native peoples, actively molded their own history.

## SOUTHERN PAIUTE LETTERS

Southern Paiutes lived, and still live, across southern Utah and northern Arizona, in southern Nevada and the California deserts. They were foragers practicing some horticulture in isolated favored sites when Euro-Americans first settled the southern Great Basin in the 1850s. Like other Great Basin peoples, Paiutes were remarkably open to adoption of those novel culture traits which they found useful, while trying to ignore the rest.[13] Among the things Paiutes selectively adopted was writing. Even before reservations and

schools were established in their area, Paiutes asked non-Indians to write letters in their names and were soon themselves avid correspondents. While nearby Quechans and Hopis resisted schools, Southern Paiute parents petitioned the BIA for day schools and went to extraordinary efforts to get their children into public schools.[14]

In the course of researching a general ethnohistory of Southern Paiutes, I uncovered ninety-two Paiute-written letters in governmental, university, church, and historical archives. They were written by sixty-two different individuals between the time of first non-Indian settlement and World War II. All the letters were written in English. Because this assortment of letters was preserved in public archives, the collection was skewed toward correspondence with white power-holders on issues deemed by non-Indian archivists to be sufficiently "important" to save; it was in no sense a statistical sample. I knew that the frequent letters by Paiutes to each other were seriously underrepresented and probably reflected proportionately more personal concerns, community news, family events, and emotive feelings than those discussed below. Nevertheless, this public correspondence was remarkably revealing of Paiutes' identification of significant issues and their positions on those issues. These letters bear consideration as an important body of data, even if admittedly not a complete one. They supplement the overwhelmingly numerous documents written by non-Indians, most of which are overtly from a Euro-American point of view, although some of those narrate what non-Natives *thought* Natives thought. The body of Paiute-written documents analyzed here provides a small, and therefore all the more important, independent expression of Native concerns over the period when they were becoming evermore tightly enveloped by US hegemony.[15.]

Despite brief earlier contacts with Spanish explorers and transient American fur trappers, the first substantial Euro-American impact on Southern Paiutes was caused by large, organized parties sent from Salt Lake City by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) to settle southern Utah in 1851. Within a year local Paiutes were being hired to carry letters from one settlement to the other.[16] The clothes and food the Indians received for these services indicated the value that Mormons placed on letters. Even though the Mormon communities were religious theocracies and most of the letters passed between men of high sectarian office, Paiutes did, from the first, perceive letter writing in a totally pragmatic fashion. They clearly understood that it enabled people, separated far distant in space, to communicate with one another.

Paiutes not only observed Mormons sending and receiving letters, they were also recipients of correspondence themselves. Brigham Young, head of the Mormon Church, wrote letters to tribal headmen in English that local church officials then read to the addressee. Many of these letters promised political alliances between specific Native leaders and the non-Indian power structure and were often accompanied by material gifts. For instance, Young wrote to Toquer and Tutsegabits, Paiute headmen near St. George in 1854: "we wish that peace may prevail through all the settlements and on the road to Calif. I send some tobacco to you to smoke the pipe of peace and wish that

I could see you, shake hands, smoke with you."[17] In 1861 a Paiute headman whose name was not recorded asked one Mormon bishop to send a letter to another to thank him for supporting the Indian's leadership. "The Piede Captain is now at my elbow," the correspondent wrote, "and wishes me to say that he loves you; Is anxious to know when you are coming home. Dimick [a Mormon interpreter] reinstated his [*sic*—him] as Captain. It is also the wish of Pres't Young that he should be the captain of the band here."[18] Because early Paiutes recruited scribes who knew only English and employed readers who again read only that language, all this initial Paiute correspondence was in the English language.

In the late 1850s and 1860s Paiute relations with non-Indians were particularly turbulent. Mormon Utah was surrounded by actively hostile Utes, raided by Navajos, was on the border of Apache and Walapai wars, and suffered intense pressure from the US Army sent to quell Mormon insurgency. Church leaders gave Paiutes letters that identified them as converts or attested to their character as non-hostile, "good Indians." For instance, two headmen known as Thomas and Isaac assiduously waved their letters before travelers Remy and Brenchley at the Muddy River crossing in southern Nevada in 1860 and a cavalry patrol came across a Paiute deep in Navajo country carrying "a paper, certifying he was a Latter-day-Saint and a good man."[19] Urged to carry these letters with them at all times, Paiutes realized that if they could get close enough to strangers to have these letters read, it would act as a powerful talisman of safety in troublous times. In several cases there was evidence that men were even buried with such letters among their most prized possessions.[20]

Even before Paiutes were themselves literate, they both received and also sent correspondence by using non-Indian intermediaries. As early as 1854, for instance, some Paiutes asked a passing Mormon traveler to write a letter to Brigham Young on their behalf requesting that a missionary be assigned to their group.[21] Kanosh, a major Paiute leader in west-central Utah, frequently wrote Young using this procedure: "Kanosh dictate[d] a statement in his own words, which I took down in my pocket-diary. The astute old fox made three persons read it to him to make sure I was not cheating him, before he made his X mark."[22] Almost 10 percent (9 percent[23]) of my collection of Paiute letters were written for them by non-Indians, typically then thumb-printed or signed as in this case by an "X." Paiutes clearly understood the usefulness of written correspondence very early and actively seized the novel opportunities presented by the written word. They employed it to gain specific pragmatic benefits, such as material goods, using styles of interpersonal alliance familiar from their Native social structure.

Letters written directly by Paiutes themselves appeared in 1907, only two years after the first BIA school program began at a small boarding school in Panguitch. Southern Paiutes in general favored schools. In 1909, Robert Pikyavit, one of the first Panguitch students, wrote directly to the commissioner of Indian affairs, "many Boys and girls says. Be thankful to who sent Them to School and learn Them a words."[24] Eight reservations were designated for Paiutes across four states between 1876 and the 1940s, not all large

enough to support day schools, and still many families lived far from any of these land bases. For their children only boarding schools were available, either Riverside in southern California or Fort Mohave on the lower Colorado River. Where no BIA grade school operated, the children sent to boarding schools were often very young. Paiute parents preferred local day schools over the boarding school program, seeing it as a potential loss of their children, but they accepted it reluctantly when no other possibility was offered.

The Panguitch school closed by 1911, and instead the BIA opened a series of small day schools on the newly established Paiute reservations. Parents encouraged attendance at these local schools, including the one at Shivwits which operated briefly in 1893 and then intermittently after 1907, at Las Vegas in 1911, at Moapa for six years after 1918, and on and off at Kaibab until 1930. In 1910 Robert Pikyavit complained that the reservation teacher, also the general agent, did not hold classes every day: "He has run the school not all time some times [students] get rest one week or 3 days doing that all year round, and we wanted a *new teacher for our school.*"[25] When the Las Vegas school was closed because the tiny group had only a small number of school-aged children, Paiute parents actively complained to the agent that they "all wanted to know if some provision could be made for their children to atte[n]d a school somewhere," and inquired about admission to public schools.[26]

Although public school districts in Utah and Nevada refused Paiute students until the 1930s, the number of preserved Paiute letters correlated directly with access to the early federal schools and increased dramatically after the turn of the century, reaching substantial levels by the 1930s. The number from the tiny Kanosh Paiute community, which never had a BIA school, far exceeded its proportion of the population. Parents were among the first to get their children into public schools, and they then went to extraordinary efforts to assure attendance, pooling transportation to and from school every day, and even renting a house in town as a dormitory, with a rotation of mothers as chaperons, so children would not be blocked from education by winter snows.[27] Of course, the same community solidarity of action and dynamism of purpose that produced this aggressive pursuit of schooling might well have also caused the active writing campaigns, instead of there being simply a lineal causality of literacy producing letters.

Although many of the letters in my collection were of a political nature, only one-quarter (23 percent) were written by headmen, or acknowledged "chiefs," this proportion reflecting the egalitarian and participatory political organization that Paiutes have retained throughout their history. Women wrote fully 41 percent of the letters and they discussed the same range of issues as did men, including topics considered "male" by non-Indian recipients, such as irrigation rights and financial accounting technicalities. Although nearly 90 percent (89 percent) of the letters were addressed to Euro-Americans, this number was probably a figment of my sources. The few letters in my collection written between Paiutes demonstrated that Paiutes employed letter writing in the school-taught English language from an early period as a way to communicate internally across their geographically dispersed Native community.

Turning from the writers to the recipients, half again as many receivers as senders were male leaders of powerful organizations, such as the commissioner of Indian affairs or the president of the Mormon Church. Many letters complained about the actions of local Indian agents or Mormon neighbors; the authors were clearly trying to "go over the heads" of the sources of their irritation. Although Paiute social structure had been traditionally extremely egalitarian and has remained so to the present, they rapidly comprehended the nature of other peoples' sociopolitical hierarchies. After all, throughout the nineteenth century, Paiutes' primary contact with Euro-Americans was with federal government officials and Mormons, both masters of hierarchical constructions. It did not take Paiutes long to realize that non-Indian society was organized vertically. They immediately employed this understanding in their attempts to shape the stratified structure in which they found themselves enmeshed by evading the dictates of lower echelons and escalating their protestations to the most sensitive point of any hierarchy, the top.

Paiutes often discussed a number of interrelated issues in their letters, so a single document often reappeared in several analytical categories in even the briefest content analysis. Almost half (49 percent) of the Paiute letters declared that the issues presented were matters of concern to the group as a whole, the writer presenting him- or herself as merely a spokesperson for the community. This characteristic might be a stylistic reflection of the strong and continuing Paiute ethic against self-aggrandizement, a statement of the real social cohesiveness of the Paiute communities through the time period, a rhetorical device to increase persuasiveness, or a combination of all three. Forty-six percent of the letters were not shy about expressing primary or secondary personal goals as well. The issues involved can be roughly classified as economic in two-thirds (68 percent) of the letters, political in a third (34 percent), and social in another third (30 percent). Complaints against BIA officials or policies formed the substance of an unexpectedly small one-quarter of the letters, while a fifth complained of local white neighbors. Fewer than 5 percent challenged the behavior of the recipient, an avoidance of direct conflict typical of Paiutes' interpersonal relations.

Such summary statistics need to be balanced with a closer look at the purposes for Paiutes' writing of these letters and the uses of written literacy in their lives. More than three-quarters (82 percent) of the documents explicitly asked the recipient for help of some kind with economic, political, or social problems. The earliest letter in my set was typical. In 1868 the headman Kanosh tried to consolidate his dyadic alliance with the non-Indian leader Brigham Young: "I have ever ben at pease with the Breathren and ever Want to be," he wrote. "I very hungrey for some Beeaf...the Bishop lets me have Floure al the time but Meat I Caint get . . . I want to raise my oane wheat and corn and potatoes and squashes and all that I Can grow and then I shall have them and shall have to have some Oxen and a plow to [do] it with I would like Very Much if you could Send youer influance in the Matter as soon as you can Make it Con[v]eanent."[28] Much later, in 1936 Emily Workie, a widow at Moapa, sought federal support against her mother-in-law in a dispute over inheritance of the family farm. "[O]f course she take care of him [her late

husband] When he was a baby," she explained, "bout I take care of him for 20 years. . . . I feel so bad about it. [She] told me I can't touch the land or Water My fruite trees. the fruite trees are all my fruite trees. also the alfalfa. *I plant them all by my self.*"[29]

Sometimes Paiutes wrote to the external power figures out of fear. In 1923 non-Indians blamed a homicide near Bluff in southeastern Utah on a mixed band of Utes and Paiutes who they rounded up and held prisoner in a corral. Anticipating repetition of the vigilante bloodshed of eight years before in the same town, five Paiute headmen from all over Utah united under the signature of Peach in a virtually unprecedented joint letter to a Cedar City man, asking for his intervention through the regionally extremely powerful Mormon Church. "I don't like see them Indains [*sic*] or white man get killed: fight over little thing," they wrote. "It has been enough trouble over there. It is not right to killed woman, little children. Reason why I said, many of white man not treat right. Because they fire first. . . . please do not spread, the killing your prisoner all over. . . . Repeat this to Bluff City peoples."[30]

Other writers also sought alternate avenues for redress from local political oppression. In 1936, Minnie Timican used letter writing to send information through the Paiute community network about a case of police brutality. "My brother Crockett just told me yesterday that his mind is all blank. he said he cant remember the happenings around him. this absentminded consciousness is due to a blow that was dealt during the night of December 7 which he received, that was dealt upon him by the Richfield City night marshal with two drunkard assistant. . . . perhaps he hates my brother to be free again. . . . There maybe something that he is having a secret meeting on to send my brother to state prison for many years for the crime he didn't done." Alienated from the legal procedures by lack of English language fluency, she was particularly worried about the translation for his upcoming trial. "You know that I don't talk good english or I don't know how to talk english words to speak the words is hard for me. . . . There is no one that are going to talk for my brother to speak the words that he says to the court. . . . Probably I'll secure one of the Kanosh Indians for my brother, Joe Pikyavit would be right man. he is dependable honest man. . . . So I want you to tell all about this to Kanosh John."[31]

Paiutes wrote letters not only to gain leverage in dealing with issues of concern, but also to protest directly events that they saw as inimical to their best interests, ethically unfair, or immoral. Not unexpectedly, a prominent theme was the loss of land and resources. As late as 1935 Mabel Wall wrote from Cedar City to the president of the Mormon Church saying, "I heard lot White people are talk no good I don't see why . . . they take [w]hole Indian Ground away Indians dont get nothing out of it they think Indians dont know anything about it But Indians dont say anything to White peoples. and the[y] get Water spring away from Indian. . . . I can name all Indian that own all they Spring and Ground. But all White people think that they Made World. I never see they make it, and don't treat Indian right."[32] She was viewing Paiute land loss, not as an event already completed, but as a contemporary wrong from which non-Indians continued to profit within the ethnically structured, regional economic system.

Similarly, Paiutes were aware of the low wages they were offered by local employers. "Is there any more slaves should be held in the states any more?" inquired Robert Pikyavit of the commissioner of Indian affairs in 1909. "That Mine Father is working like a slaves of states Utah, only for eat. I could not heardly stand that workes . . . Because my Father dont know any things about the money. and getting old now. . . . and many others Indians do that at Mormon twones [towns]."[33]

Paiutes wrote about social and cultural concerns as well, such as disturbances of the dead. "Since 20 or 30 years we have lost some graves that was taken away," Joseph Pikyavit wrote in 1930, "was gone and round through country. the White People are gather around the old grave the Baurial and the Bones. all those thing what the Parent have used for Baurial has taken up and Put up to shoe [show] the people toras [tourists] from East. Why is that done that way? Who tell them to do that take body and take it some Place and stand it alike it was alive? Why is that done The Indian was the first and when his Parent Dies he put him away by its mother Earthe to take car[e] of."[34]

Over the early years of the twentieth century, Paiutes sought redress from the increasing circumscription of their lives by numerous governmental agencies. When local stockmen convinced Iron County officials to set out poison for coyotes, for instance, the Paiute woman Mabel Yellowjacket protested potential public health risks: "We [way] I look at it I don't like it poisoned. . . . some man can step on it. . . . I think [as] long they Trapping them coyote is no danger. . . . You no [know] Indians kill rabbet we eat. I don't want any poison down Cedar Valley. . . . All diff[er]ent kind of animals will dieding with poison. . . . that Bad stuff you fellow doing now. Will take it up Washington D.C. if any Indian die."[35] In the 1920s the state of Utah insisted on auto and hunting licenses for off-reservation Paiutes, striking hard at both the seasonal wage labor and supplemental subsistence hunting upon which most Paiutes depended. "[I] think these all animal belong to Indian," Mabel Wall opined from Cedar City. "[D]eer fish, rabert [rabbit] and belong to Indian they aught have it for nothing White people get Rich wont Indian to pay up license for car. . . . Well how Will the Indian run thier [*sic*] car and Indian got no money. . . What will Indian do or leave thier car home and go on foot. . . . Well it's all right for White people to pay taxes on anything they got. the Indian people got nothing."[36]

The actions of federal Indian agents on the eight small Paiute reservations provided endless subject matter for Native correspondence. In 1910 the Kaibab agent followed federal regulations to dispose of surplus pipe from an irrigation construction project, thereby incurring the wrath of Robert Pikyavit who took a long-term view of the matter. "While anyone was not looking out," he wrote to Washington, "he has *sole all pipes to the white man, got money for it.* An we wanted the pipes to use on when ever our pipes get old."[37] Another Kaibab agent tightened his budget during the Depression and Dick complained to Washington that he "no give us any money litte bit flour enought for 3 days, bacon, no good he give us."[38] The Moapa agent moved an irrigation ditch, replaced the fence line, and casually gave the old wire to an Indian employee for scrap; it was a woman, Emily Day, who wrote the commissioner

of Indian affairs on this "men's issue," outlining the historic claims of at least three families to the fence and hence the salvage.[39] In 1928 a self-appointed three-man committee of Moapa Paiutes complained to the commissioner that they no longer had a resident agent, but shared one with Las Vegas. They then enumerated grievances ranging from reassignment of lands after irrigation expansion, changes in the payment methods for agency Indian employees, to "why we have school building standing idle and we are forced to put our children many miles away from our homes."[40] Six years later thirty-seven people signed a petition that accused the new agent, whom they had gotten in response to the prior complaint, in turn of not giving them clothing and blankets, not immediately repairing irrigation ditches after flash floods, not hiring as many men as wanted jobs, not loaning government vehicles to men who wanted to borrow them, and not stopping at the post office and bringing them their mail on his way back from town.[41]

Other Paiute correspondents lodged more substantial complaints against agents. In 1917 the Kaibab agent, a trained doctor, was serving double duty as reservation physician. When a young woman under his care died during birth of a premature child, her grief-ridden brother, the prolific correspondent Robert Pikyavit, asked the commissioner of Indian affairs, "I wish you get us new Dr. before We lost many more. We don't like man who wouldnt realy dont care for any body. We wanted some body want some one always one that treads [treats] man good. one that love old and young and little ones. We wishes Grovement [*sic*] would sent good man all time"[42]

All the Paiute reserves were in the desert and Paiutes wrote many letters about all-critical water rights. At Kaibab a long-standing dispute raged between Paiutes, the agency, a homesteader family, cattle associations, the US Park Service, and the Department of Justice, over the two springs that composed the sole water source for the entire reservation.[43] In 1927 Minnie Jake appealed to the newly formed National Council of American Indians: "this Heatons family [the homesteaders] stop our water all time every evening and night, so we don't like this be doing that Mr. Heatons take our farm up to Moccasin [Spring] We don't want them to stay up there. I don't want my farm give[n] it away because it is my [mine] I got children to have them."[44] After the agent negotiated a three-way division of the spring between the contending parties, a Paiute man who signed only as Joe appealed to the commissioner: "the Kiabab [*sic*] Indian reservation are getting shortage on our Irraggating water. . . . We altogether had a plenty of Irraggating water to rise [raise] a good crops of most any kind of vegetables an[d] we had a plenty of every thing for the winter plenty of hay. But now we have'nt half that. . . . Why is it we Indians are receiving only third of the stream."[45]

At Kanosh, too, rising multiethnic populations led to competition for the limited amount of water. As troubles rose with local landowners, Joseph Pikyavit wrote directly to the secretary of the interior: "The Indians was droven [out] of the Kanosh town two times be for of the years 1878 the white said to the Indian Kanosh he was chieff said to him the water for him to take on his land will run all year around can't be shut off no time it been running fine untill lest spring the white man shut our watter down after all and yester-

day and of the Kanosh Water co. water master spoke up to me and said he will pull law suite against the Indian at Kanosh Utah and will take the water aways from them. . . . Could you help us?"[46] As Pikyavit said, much of the problem at Kanosh was not the amount of water the Indians received, but how they got it. In order to reduce seepage from continuous, low water flows in open, dirt-bottomed ditches, the irrigation company, in which the Indians owned shares, wanted to put everyone on a rotation system. Each farm would get rapid delivery of its fair share and then those ditches would go dry until their turn came round again. The problem was that the Kanosh Indians relied on the irrigation ditches for drinking water. Pikyavit wrote again, "We have always been allowed a continuous stream for our share of the water until this season; now the Kanosh Irrigation board are demanding that we run our water on a rotation system and are not willing to allow us any water for domestic uses. This is a great hard ship on us as the turns are too far apart. Our last turn was thirty (30) days with out water."[47]

Other Paiute concerns with the federal government stemmed from general policy, rather than the specific actions of local agents. In 1924 when Congress passed the American Indian Citizenship Act, Joe Smith feared that this foretold imminent closure of the reservation system. He wrote to the president of the United States, "I have in my Possession a Letter from Each Individual Chief of the different [Paiute] tribe in Utah and Arizona. . . . is it a fact we are to be moved from our old homes? and Compeled to take Citizenship. Some thing we don't appericate. And again is it a fact we here at Moapa Nev. are going to have no school this year. we got faith in our government, but feel we are being [w]ronged Every day By his Agents."[48]

During World War I, because they were without federal treaties and erroneously said therefore not to be a federally-recognized tribe, Southern Paiutes were told to register for the draft. Lincoln Silver, judge for the Moapa Court of Indian Offenses, voiced his protest of the draft policy from within the context of traditionally non-aggressive Paiute culture:

> We do not want to go to the war. the're not very many mens folk here. only a few mens. Nearly all of them are Married and farming. . . . so we heat [hate] have them go from this Reservation. . . . When german come in to the United States and every body have to fight, and we have to, [we will] fight to[o]. fight to help our boys and sister and mother and our country. We know that. Now we not feel like to go. . . . Nearly all White boys are willing to go because the[y] are so many of White poeples *[sic]*. . . . the[y] care for Money most then [more than] the[ir] own body. . . . the[y] have lot money all way and have storys [stores]—oh lot thing, worth lot money million million dollars. so the son are fighting for that, and help there mother and sister father keep german away from that Indians here got not thing no money no storys no money in bank, and no not thing. the[y] care for there own body, that all. . . . Murtaugh [the agent] say he is going to send Soldiers to this Reservation from Los Angeles, Cal., so we are so afried [afraid] now, and do not know what to do.[49]

Southern Paiutes also wrote letters on less dramatic issues. Women offered baskets for sale and tried to control the business practices of middlemen. In a feisty 1935 letter, beadworker Emma Parashont debated the accounting structure of the "putting out" system used in Cedar City:

> You ought to run the design business in proper manner . . . . Look here! for example, if employer hires a worker, he furnishes the beads and threads + designs to be work on. When the designs should be finished, he doesn't charge the hired labor for beads and threads which he furnished all by himself. he agrees to pay for whatever the hired laborer charges him. . . . but you have failed to pay for what I have charged you. . . . I think you have cheated me.

Despite the perceived inequities, she attempted to monopolize the sales outlet for her own group by protesting his "offering proposition to some outsiders [from other Paiute reservations] who hasn't any responsibility in this business."[50]

Paiutes wrote letters seeking information from each other and from external agencies. In precontact times headmen had served as loci of information networks, and historic correspondence showed that they continued to function in that role. "I've heard that Moapa Indian boys are dying from poisoning some kind of poisoning, that they have contracted during their routine hours [from insecticides, while working as vegetable harvest pickers]. How many that are layed up by poisoning, name how many boys. what is the cause of all that sudden tragedy. . . . Let me know by return mail, how that news has developed in Moapa, that tragedy."[51] A woman who had married a non-Indian and subsequently been separated from the Paiute community wrote the Cedar City headman in 1936 to re-establish contact and proclaim her kinship credentials: "[Y]ou are My Father's people. My Father was a full blood piute Indain his parents were killed by the whites in the spring of 1866 in Circle Valley. . . . they were taken out of a cellar and killed he was a little boy so they saved him and sold him or trated [traded] him for a horse to peter Monsen of Spring City. . . . tell me more about My people. I would be very grateful to you."[52] Fred Bulletts from Kaibab wrote the secretary of the interior inquiring about regulations on "how I could get released from the reservation so I can file on land the same as any other american citizen."[53]

Paiutes not only sought information but sent it. Sixteen percent of the letters contained community news, chatting about local events and people the recipient knew. They told who was sick, whose baby had been born, and which relatives were visiting, all reaffirming the diffuse social network which *was* the Southern Paiute community. "I am now here with my Brother sister They allways fine," Walter George relayed from Shivwits in 1936. "These my Grand people [grandparents] here Working at Mountain [harvesting pinyon nuts] Old Rena Squint is here now got Back from Moapa Nevada They said Fred Wall Been Working at Moapa Res. are Bu[i]lding Road with Archie Ben[n] to[o] They allways get Job There This Summer."[54]

As Paiutes ranged more widely during the Depression in search of jobs, aided by cars and new highways, or stayed in cities after graduation from

boarding schools, they wrote home about the novelties of the urban areas. Arvilla Benson said, "abo[u]t frist time I ever seen Salt lake, 'Gee' It was Big City I am planting [planning?] on working over there."[55] Yetta McFee wrote, "I have been working here, at (Union Linen) Launtry only next block from where I stay on State Street. Roland [her husband] work's out [at] Garfield Utah in Smelters. drives out every day. . . . there is another Indian working with me fr.[om] Fort Hall Idaho."[56] When Lila Frank, bored with harvest work, returned to Riverside, California, where she had gone to school, she soon wrote her aunt, "So please write and tell me some news from around there."[57]

Many Paiutes' letters rang with familiar, universal, and eternal interpersonal conflicts. In 1935 Mamie Merrycats set down in writing what her demands would be before she would return to her wayward husband: "I have heard that you want me to come back to Cedar [City]. . . . If Merrycats dont drink any more liquor, and dont beat me up like he did sometimes. See Merrycats and ask him if he will stop his Drunkness and be like a man."[58] Mabel Arrowgarp was a Ute woman who had gone home after a quarrel with her Paiute spouse; she asked a Mormon churchman to mediate for her: "[T]ell Dell Arrowgarp to come and support me up here. We are up here in White Rocks, Utah, at my home. . . . My dad cannot support me nor feed me all the time. he's got family of his own to take care off [of]. What does Dell think anyway. What does he think I am. he's got to support. They have been having a strict rule about that nowadays. . . . so I am asking you [to ask him] in right away, to come + support me. or otherwise he will know the rest."[59]

In what was the most poignant of the letters, the Jake family thanked friends for "you word of sympathy and for kindly acts" upon the death of their daughter. Because the Paiute reservations had no medical facilities, they had tried to drive her the 480 miles to the nearest BIA hospital at Kayenta, Arizona, across the canyonlands and Navajo Reservation in the midst of a winter snowstorm. She had died on the way. "It sure makes us feel bad since she died so late when she suffered so long and when it was snowing bad. I am awful sorry the roads weren't open altho I wanted any one who wanted to see her come [to the funeral]. . . . It is alright you people didn't get to see her. It was all of because the snow had blocked the roads." Even in their own misery, they had time to think of others and assure them of their solidarity: "We are always thinking about you, and Merry cats [who was sick]. If he leaves you it's bad, we'll help you greive in your loss."[60]

## ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

The question this paper raises is simply, what did Paiutes use writing for? Did perhaps those uses have something to do with their ready acceptance of the technique, rather than waiting for schools to thrust it upon them? The ways Native people applied the reading and writing skills that they acquired historically need not have been those which literacy purveyors originally intended. For instance, writing has often been justified as a means whereby Natives could record and preserve their aboriginal cultures. Cherokees did in fact use

syllabary script to record traditional shamans' chants, visions, and medical formulae.[61] Using English, Francis La Flesche wrote to Alice Fletcher, as did George Hunt to Franz Boas, when they collaborated with those anthropologists to help record their Omaha and Kwakiutl cultures.[62] Similarly, Wovoka chose English for his missives of religious redemption, because that was the *lingua franca* for his intertribal audience.[63]

On the other hand, extant Paiute documents written before 1940 seemed to be almost exclusively letters. The entire corpus of extant Paiute writings that record Native tradition was very small, and that mostly by persons who were also the most active letter writers. Robert Pikyavit wrote to a local newspaper editor describing the harvest and preparation of cactus fruit in 1931, and another member of his family collaborated on a small memoir of which the same editor ran seven copies on his news press. Tony Tillohash, while still at the Carlisle Indian School, was a linguistic informant for Edward Sapir and later listed place and animal names for naturalists at Zion National Park and wrote down a myth for the Works Progress Administration.[64] Otherwise the use of literacy to salvage precontact culture was not a technique Southern Paiutes employed.[65]

A second usage to which Cherokees applied their literacy was to keep their own autonomous records, independently of the BIA; they wrote contracts, kept lists of war orphans, and posted revival meetings.[66] Paiutes left all this bookkeeping to the BIA until after they had formed tribal council structures in the 1930s. Because literacy was reasonably widespread through the Paiute community, many people undoubtedly made ephemeral records, similar to the notes, household lists, and recipes created by Paiutes today, but these have not survived in public archives.

My small collection of Southern Paiute writings indicated that there were at least two primary uses to which Paiutes applied their literacy in early years. One was internal, to keep contact with friends and relatives, seeking and passing on news of events to those who lived elsewhere. The second function was external, to let their views be known beyond the Native community, to protest policies and practices that they believed harmful to themselves or overtly unethical.

In accomplishing both of these goals Paiutes employed the mechanism of letter writing, an historically-introduced tool to carry messages from one person to a distant other. In this Paiutes resembled Native peoples around the world who have accepted writing willingly. After ethnologist Walker described Potowatomi, Winnebago, and Aleut writing, he generalized that these operated within one of two spheres: to retain social contact across a dispersed Native community, or within religion.[67] While Paiutes seemed not to use early literacy for the religious functions reported elsewhere, they clearly employed it for maintenance of their social structure.

Long before the arrival of Euro-Americans, Southern Paiutes had faced the challenges of building and maintaining social networks across sparsely populated territory and had developed a variety of techniques for doing so. Before writing, these methods necessitated the physical movement of people. Camp groups shared usufruct territories with each other when local resources fluctuated. Local groups expanded and contracted with the seasons, and

quarreling individuals freely shifted affiliation from one camp group to another along dispersed bilateral kinship networks. Paiutes held no fixed rule of post-nuptial residence, but lived where resources could support the new couple and relatives were mutually compatible. Leadership was situation-specific and founded on expertise in the task at hand. They were a people singularly without structural rigidities.

At that time Southern Paiutes lived in small, decentralized camp groups diffused across an immense landscape. Their common language and shared culture, despite such isolation, could only have resulted from a community of intercommunication. They created a social organization of overlapping networks through bilateral kinship and intermarriage, periodic aggregation at sporadically rich resource sites, and ceremonial gatherings. Through the first half of the twentieth century, Paiutes remained a diffuse population, scattered over parts of four states, and assigned to eight different reservations. As many as half of the people, and virtually all at some time or other, lived off the reservations in towns and on ranches where they could get work. They sought to overcome the wrenching destructiveness of co-residence among culturally alien people by developing new techniques to maintain their social contacts with each other over these large distances. Some methods grew out of Native traditions, such as the characteristically Great Basin "fandangos" and the Funeral Cry ceremony, which they borrowed from Native California.[68] Other techniques came from Euro-American cultures. Paiutes went into debt with the BIA to get stout wagon horses and harness for transportation. They eagerly adopted the Model-T car and still cheerfully drive hundreds of miles over a weekend and absorb enormous long-distance telephone bills to keep in contact with relatives.[69] And, of course, they wrote letters.

Although letters by Paiutes to Paiutes were underrepresented in my collection, enough of these have survived in the public archives to show that, from virtually the earliest dates of literacy, Paiutes wrote to keep in contact with each other. They passed on community gossip, complained of the actions of their relatives and neighbors, and commented on the tragedies and joys of everyday life. In this way, they kept members of the community, married elsewhere or working in distant cities, up to date on community happenings and activities of familiar people. In short, Paiutes used letter-writing as a new technique to help solve an age-old problem, chronic long before the arrival of Euro-Americans: the maintenance of their geographically dispersed social structure.

Southern Paiutes also found their literacy useful in a second way. They wrote letters to express their concerns and wishes to members of the distant, non-Indian power structure which increasingly influenced their lives. They used literacy skills to attempt to mediate and manage their interethnic relations. They tried to construct alliances with highly placed individuals in the hierarchically structured elite that increasingly regulated their activities, men like Brigham Young, the ever-changing commissioners of Indian affairs, secretaries of the interior, and even presidents. Although those ethnically alien others were often unresponsive, Paiutes persisted in approaching not only these office holders, but also lobbying groups, civil rights advocates, and anthropologists.

Paiutes wrote to mobilize opinion and action on a wide variety of issues that were important to them. They complained of wrongs done by local whites in land and water transactions, in wages and employment, of vigilante justice and police brutality, and of discrimination and prejudice. They protested political actions by civil, county, state, and federal officials, but more than any others, by BIA agents. They expressed resentment of powerlessness within their own reservation communities and over their own lives. They objected to moral wrongs, of graves plundered and wildlife arbitrarily slaughtered. They sought changes in the world around them, on issues important to themselves as individuals and as a people.

From the beginning Southern Paiutes wrote in English, a language that especially men began learning informally at an early period as they worked for settlers. English was the only written language understood by those who held power over Paiutes—the federal government, its agencies, the state, and the church. Pragmatically if Paiutes wanted to be heard by those in power they had to write in English. Furthermore, that was the only written language available to them before linguists created a written form of Paiute in the 1970s. Before then the Indians learned writing and English simultaneously in BIA or state schools. By 1900 most adults were functionally bilingual, so correspondence in English sent internally within the Native community too was easily interpreted by both sender and recipient.

It has become *de rigueur* among ethnohistorians to presume colonialist bias in all written documents on the grounds that these were written either by Euro-Americans or by Natives so altered by the fact of their literacy that they could no longer speak in the authentic "Native voice." This complaint may be overly simplistic. Surely Southern Paiutes were not unique in their active acceptance of literacy and creation of a body of recoverable materials. If ethnohistorians sorted out the Native-written letters from their mass of files, they might, as did I, find a previously disregarded but significant body of Native narrative. In addition to being simply a data source about job access or water disputes, such correspondence legitimately identifies through the selection of topics discussed which issues were important to at least some members of the Native community. These letters offer glimpses of Native perceptions of their times and of relations with non-Indian neighbors and with each other. If scholars persist in their prejudicial disregard of Native-written, English-language documents, they will be disfranchising a significant portion of many Indian populations. Bilingual literate people were also part of the historic Native experience; their letters carry one of the many legitimate Indian voices, if we care to listen.

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## NOTES

1. Lewis Henry Morgan, for instance, made the phonetic alphabet the hallmark of "Civilization" in his sequence of progressive cultural stages. Lewis Henry Morgan, *Ancient Society* (1877; reprint, Cleveland: Meridian-World, 1963), 11. More recently, British social anthropologist Jack Goody has made grandiose claims that literacy improves abstract reasoning, encourages individualism over collectivism, replaces myth with history as the mode of cultural explanation, and stimulates cultural critique and rational social self-analysis. Jack Goody, introduction to Jack Goody, ed., *Literacy in Traditional Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 1–26; Jack Goody, *The Logic of Writing and the Organization of Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 174–185; Jack Goody, *Power of the Written Tradition* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1999); and Jack Goody and Ian Watt, "The Consequences of Literacy," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 5 (1963): 304–345; see also Lucien Levy-Bruhl, *How Natives Think* (*Les fonctions mentales dans les sociétiés infèrierures*) (1910; reprint New York: Washington Square, 1966); Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London: Methuen, 1982); and J. Willinsky, *The New Literacy: Reading and Writing in the Schools* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 152. Critics have challenged such presentations both for lack of empirical support and its naive presumption of institutional benevolence. Keith H. Basso, "The Ethnography of Writing," in R. Bauman and J. Sherzer, eds., *Explorations in the Ethnography of Speaking* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 425–432; Ruth Finnegan, *Literacy and Orality: Studies in the Technology of Communication* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988); Kathleen Gough, "Literacy in Kerala," in Jack Goody, ed., *Literacy in Traditional Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 133–160; Brian Street, "Introduction" to Brian Street, *Literacy in Theory and Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 1–16; and John F. Szwed, "The Ethnography of Literacy," in Marcia Fau Whiteman, ed., *Variations in Writing: Functional and Linguistic-Cultural Differences* (Hillsdale, N. J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1981), 13–23.

2. Willard Walker, "Native American Writing Systems," in Charles A. Ferguson and Shirley Brice Heath, eds., *Language in the USA* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 145–174. In Canada Jesuits accompanied the first fur traders, writing lists of Native words and generating catechisms in the vernacular. Bruce G. Trigger, *The Children of Aataentsic: A History of the Huron People to 1660* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987), 469, 511–512. The written Navajo McLaughlin studied also had such a missionary origin. Daniel McLaughlin, *When Literacy Empowers: Navajo Language in Print* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1992).

3. Heath's original study was of regional and class differences in the United States. She separated the situations in which communications took place to investigate whether or not literacy was used in the same way under different conditions. She identified instrumental communications (e.g., instructions), social interactional (greeting cards), memory-supportive (address books), news transmissive (newsletters), and so on. Shirley Brice Heath, "Functions and Uses of Literacy," in Suzanne de Castell, Allan Luke, and Keran Egan, eds., *Literacy, Society and Schooling: A Reader* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 14–26. McLaughlin found that written vernacular was used for pedagogic and interpersonal communications within church and school institutions, and as a salable skill for employment in the tribal bureaucracy; English was used for organizational, instrumental, authoritative, and planning functions in church, school, and tribal contexts. McLaughlin, *Literacy Empowers*, 118, 141, 149–162. Aleuts learned Russian in the late eighteenth century through the fur trade and Orthodox Church and employed it internally within the community. They learned English more than a century later in American government schools and tribal officials used it primarily when dealing with federal authorities. Stephen Reder and Karen Reed Wikelund, "Literacy Development and Ethnicity: An Alaskan Example," in Brian V. Street, ed., *Cross-Cultural Approaches to Literacy*, Cambridge Studies in Oral and Literate Culture no. 23 (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1993), 176–197.

Similarly, Scribner and Cole did extensive work with African Vai who had three literacies. Religious specialists used the Arabic of Islam, while bureaucrats employed the English taught in colonial schools. The third Vai system was a unique indigenous script that local tutors taught adults at home in a matter of weeks. Sylvia Scribner and Michael Cole, *The Psychology of Literacy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981). This latter form was used extensively for informal social communication and is reminiscent both in method of transferral and in use of Sequoyah's Cherokee syllabary. Janine Scancarelli, "Cherokee Writing," in Peter T. Daniels and William Bright, eds., *The World's Writing Systems* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 587–592; Walker, "Writing Systems"; and Willard Walker and James Sarbaugh, "The Early History of the Cherokee Syllabary," *Ethnohistory* 40(1993): 70–94.

4. Heath, for instance, compared the ways people used their literacy in a number of southern US mill towns and specific rewards obtained, including many noneconomic ones, that motivated the next generation of literacy learners. Shirley Brice Heath, *Ways with Words: Language, Life, and Work in Communities and Classrooms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). Hill's subtle analysis of sixteenth century Cakchiquel Mayas showed that they developed a written form of their own language and used it to generate an independent set of title records. They then took those documents into the Spanish-imposed courts and successfully defended their remnant village and private lands, using Spanish standards of written court evidence. Hill concluded that Cakchiquels, far from rejecting literacy, "innovated new uses for writing in order to both solve problems and take advantage of opportunities created by the colonial situation" (Robert M. Hill, "Social Uses of Writing among the Colonial Cakchiquel Maya: Nativism, Resistance, and Innovation," in David Hurst Thomas, ed., *Columbian Consequences,* vol. 3, *Spanish Borderlands in Pan-American Perspective* [Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989], 295).

Meggitt's analysis of Melanesian cargo cults showed, on the other hand, that missionaries in New Guinea, who emphasized the importance of the written Bible and

preached of a heavenly kingdom obtained through "The Word," created a message that was interpreted in terms of Native traditions of controlling supernatural power; the rapid adoption of Native language literacy followed. Marvin Meggitt, "Uses of Literacy in New Guinea and Melanesia," *Bijdragen Tot de Taal-, Land-, en Volkenkunde* 123(1967): 71–82; reprinted in Jack Goody, ed., *Literacy in Traditional Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 300–309. Kulick and Stroud summarized, referring to the nearby lower Sepik Valley of New Guinea, that people there "have creatively adopted reading and writing to pursue certain goals and achieve certain effects which have been generated from [their own] larger cultural concerns" (Don Kulick and Christopher Stroud, "Conceptions and Uses of Literacy in a Papua New Guinean Village," *Man* 25[1990]: 286–303; reprinted in Brian V. Street, ed., *Cross-Cultural Approaches of Literacy* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993], 33–34).

5. McLaughlin, *Literacy Empowers,* 163–164. On the other hand, Mühlhäusler cited New Guinean Native leaders who discovered themselves ghettoized and unable to gain political leverage against their non-Native fellows within the national legislature as long as they were literate only in the vernacular. That Native political elite then spearheaded the drive to replace indigenous literacy with the written form of the politically dominant language. Peter Mühlhäusler, "Reducing Pacific Languages to Writings," in John E. Joseph and Talbot J. Taylor, eds., *Ideologies of Language* (London: Routledge, 1990), 189–205.

6. Andrew Shryock, "Tribes and the Print Trade: Notes from the Margins of Literate Culture in Jordan," *American Anthropologist* 98 (1996): 26–40. Mühlhäusler observed that "vernacular literacy is potentially as powerful an agent of social change and decline of traditional modes of expression and life as [is] literacy in a metropolitan language" (Mühlhäusler, "Reducing Pacific Languages," 203). Either language can be used by power elites, Native as well as foreign, to propagandize for changes harmful to the people (i.e., scurrilous tribal leaders could urge approval of environmentally destructive nuclear dump leases as effectively in a Native language newspaper as they could in an English-written press; conversely, Indian girls could bemoan to their families the conditions of BIA boarding schools in letters written in English just as effectively as in a vernacular script).

Sarris justly warned that the "teaching of reading can be an effective colonizing device" and Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin equally correctly observed that "postcolonial literature and its study is essentially political" (Greg Sarris, "Keeping Slug Woman Alive: The Challenge of Reading in a Reservation Classroom," in Jonathan Boyarin, ed., *The Ethnography of Reading* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993], 238–269; Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literature* [London: Routledge, 1989], 196).

7. Perhaps ironically, within the last twenty years Native American novelists, poets, and essayists writing in the English language and through introduced literary structural forms have gained widespread Native, popular, and scholarly acceptance as valid spokespersons for indigenous peoples.

8. H. David Brumble, *American Indian Autobiography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988); A. LaVonne Ruoff, "Native American Writing: Beginnings to 1967," in Andrew Wiget, ed., *Dictionary of Native American Literature* (New York: Garland, 1994), 145–154.

9. Ives Goddard and Kathleen J. Bragdon, *Native Writings in Massachusetts*, 2 vols., Memoirs of American Philosophical Society no. 185 (Philadelphia, 1988); Matthew E. Kreitzer, ed., *Washakie Letters of Willie Ottogary: Northwestern Shoshone Journalist and Leader, 1906–1929* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2000); Barry O'Connell, ed., *On Our Own Ground: Complete Writings of William Apess, A Pequot* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992); Penny Petrone, ed., *Northern Voices: Inuit Writing in English* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988).

10. James D. McCallum, ed., *Letters of Eleazar Wheelock's Indians* (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College Publications, 1932).

11. Laura J. Murray, "'Pray Sir, Consider a Little': Rituals of Subordination and Resistance in the Letters of Hezekiah Calvin and David Fowler to Eleazar Wheelock," in Helen Jankoski, ed., *Early Native American Writing: New Critical Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 15–41; Barry O'Connell, "'Once More Let Us Consider': William Apess in the Writing of New England Native American History," in Colin Calloway, ed., *After King Phillip's War: Presence and Persistence in Indian New England* (Hanover, NH: University of New England Press, 1997), 162–177.

12. Genevieve Bell, "Writing Back, Writing Home: Exploring the Documentary Record of the Carlisle Indian School" (paper presented at Ninety-Fourth Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington, D.C., 19 November 1995); Brenda Child, *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900–1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998); Rebecca Dobkins, "Reconstructing Native American Ethnohistory Through Boarding School Research" (paper presented at the Ninety-Fourth Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington, D.C., 19 November 1995).

13. Robert Euler, *Southern Paiute Ethnohistory*, University of Utah Anthropological Papers no. 78 (Salt Lake City, 1966), 97–116.

14. Frank Beckwith, *Indian Joe: In Person and in Background* (Fillmore, UT: privately published, 1939), copy in Utah Historical Society, Salt Lake City, 14; Robert L. Bee, *Crosscurrents along the Colorado: The Impact of Government Policy on the Quechan Indians* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1981), 20–21, 28–33, 39–44; Harry C. James, *Pages from Hopi History* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1974), 111–114, 125–126; Martha C. Knack, *Boundaries Between: The Southern Paiutes, 1775–1995* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), 144–145.

15. Knack, *Boundaries Between*.

16. Henry Lunt, Life of Henry Lunt and Family, Together with a Portion of His Journal, n.d., typescript, Special Collections, Southern Utah State University, Cedar City, 150. Mormons comprised virtually all of the non-Indian population in the Paiute area during the nineteenth century and even today the overwhelming majority of the non-Indian population there belongs to this single denomination.

17. Brigham Young to Tut-se-aperts and To-chinks, Piede Chiefs, 20 May 1854, Reel 91, Ms. #1234, Brigham Young Collection, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, 1.

18. Calvin Pendleton to William Dame, 5 June 1861, William Dame Papers, 1855–1884, Ms. #67/199, Bancroft Library, Berkeley, CA, 3.

19. John Simonson to Adj. General Johnathan Wilkins, 23 September 1859, Reel 10, Microfilm M1120, *BIA Letters Received from New Mexico Superintendency* (US National Archives, Washington, D.C., n.d.), frame 786; Jules Remy and Julius Brenchley, *A Journey to the Great Salt Lake City*, 2 vols. (London: W. Jeffs., 1861), 2: 407.

20. David M. Lewis to Brigham Young, 29 January 1855, "Church Journal History," Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, 1 this date.

21. George Washington Bean, Journal, 1854–1856, typescript copy, Ms. #A-68, Utah Historical Society, Salt Lake City, 19 November 1855.

22. Elizabeth Wood Kane, *Twelve Mormon Homes: Visited in Succession on a Journey through Utah to Arizona* (Philadelphia: privately printed, 1874; reprinted Salt Lake City: University of Utah Library Tanner Trust, 1974), 67.

23. Statistical accuracy to two significant digits is highly dubious with a sample this overtly non-random, so specific percentages are included for informational purposes only.

24. Robert Pikyavit to US Indian Office, 27 November 1909, Kaibab Agency Records, BIA Central Classified Files, 1907–1939, US National Archives, Washington, D.C., 1. In this and other quotations, the original spelling, grammar, and punctuation are retained.

25. Robert Pikyavit to "Washington, D.C.," 29 March 1910, Kaibab Agency Records, BIA Central Classified Files, 1907–1939, US National Archives, Washington, D.C., 1, emphasis in the original.

26. L. B. Sandall to commissioner of Indian affairs, 7 September 1918, Paiute Agency Records, BIA Central Classified Files, 1907–1939, US National Archives, Washington, D.C., 1.

27. Knack, *Boundaries Between,* 274.

28. Kanosh to Pres. Briggam [*sic*] Young, 13 December 1868, Roll 91, Ms. #1234, Brigham Young Collection, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Church Historian's Office, Salt Lake City, 1–2.

29. Emily Workie to Maud Russell, 12 March 1936, Paiute Agency Records, BIA Central Classified Files, 1907–1939, US National Archives, Washington, D.C., 2, emphasis in the original.

30. Peach to Anthony W. Ivins, 18 March 1923, Ms. #B-2, Anthony W. Ivins Papers, Utah Historical Society, Salt Lake City, 1–2. Note the characteristic use of *s* with the already plural irregular English noun, *people*. This "double" pluralizing is still common in spoken Paiute English, e.g., "sheeps," and "mens," and is a nice example of how closely these written letters reflected the correspondents' customary speech.

31. Emily Timican to John Merricats, 8 January 1936, William R. Palmer Papers, Special Collections, Southern Utah State University, Cedar City, 1–3. Even though Mrs. Timican declared that spoken English was difficult for her, she wrote this letter in English to another native Paiute speaker.

32. Mabel Wall to Heber Grant, 11 September 1935, William R. Palmer Papers, Special Collections, Southern Utah State University, Cedar City, 1–2.

33. Robert Pikyavit to commissioner of Indian affairs, 6 December 1909, Kaibab Agency Records, BIA Central Classified Files, 1907–1939, US National Archives, Washington, D.C., 1–2.

34. Joseph Pikyavit, to Indian Fair [Affairs], 27 November 1930, Paiute Agency Records, BIA Central Classified Files, 1907–1939, US National Archives, Washington, D.C., 1. It is not clear whether the writer was objecting to grave robbing or archaeology here. In the 1930s there was a tourist attraction in the Sevier Valley which featured a human skeleton, labeled to be an "Indian mummy," which welcomed visitors to an

artificial cavern with a recorded message. There was also a professional archaeological crew excavating a large site near the writer's home at about this same time.

35. Mabel Yellowjacket to William Palmer, 25 January 1947, William R. Palmer Papers, Special Collections, Southern Utah State University, Cedar City, 1.

36. Wall to Grant, 11 September 1935, 4–6.

37. R. Pikyavit to "Washington, D.C.," 29 March 1910, 1.

38. Dick to "US Indian Department," 21 February 1930, Paiute Agency Records, BIA Central Classified Files, 1907–1939, US National Archives, Washington, D.C., 1.

39. Emily Day to "Washington, D.C.," 9 March 1909, Moapa Agency Records, BIA Central Classified Files, 1907–1939, US National Archives, Washington, D.C., 1.

40. Joe Smith, Daniel Martinez, and Sam Samson to "Indian Office, Washington, D.C.," 23 April 1928, Paiute Agency Records, BIA Central Classified Files, 1907–1939, US National Archives, Washington, D.C., 1.

41. Sam Samson, et al., Petition to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 5 September 1934, Paiute Agency Records, BIA Central Classified Files, 1907–1939, US National Archives, Washington, D.C.

42. Robert Pikyavit to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 15 July 1917, Kaibab Agency Records, BIA Central Classified Files, 1907–1939, US National Archives, Washington, D.C., 2–3. In this letter Pikyavit appeared to extend Paiute verbal custom of not speaking the name of the dead to the novel written form; the sister's name was carefully avoided.

43. Martha C. Knack, "Interethnic Competition at Kaibab During the Early Twentieth Century," *Ethnohistory* 40 (1993): 212–245.

44. Minnie Jake to Gertrude Bonnin, August 1927, typescript copy in Paiute Agency Records, BIA Central Classified Files, 1907–1939, US National Archives, Washington, D.C., 1.

45. Joe to commissioner of Indian affairs, 11 January 1934, Kaibab Agency Records, BIA Central Classified Files, 1907–1939, US National Archives, Washington, D.C., 1.

46. Joseph Pikyavit to Secretary of Interior, 28 July 1927, Goshute Agency Records, BIA Central Classified Files, 1907–1939, US National Archives, Washington, D.C., 1–2. See also, Martha C. Knack, "Utah Indians and the Homestead Acts," in Robert Bee and George Castile, eds., *State and Reservation: New Perspectives on Federal Indian Policy* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1992), 76–77.

47. Joseph Pikyavit to Office of Indian Affairs, 2 April 1934, Goshute Agency Records, BIA Central Classified Files, 1907–1939, US National Archives, Washington, D.C., 1.

48. Joe Smith to President Calvin Coolidge, 5 September 1925, Moapa Agency Records, BIA Central Classified Files, 1907–1939, US National Archives, Washington, D.C., 1.

49. Lincoln Silver to Maud Russell, 29 May 1917, Moapa Agency Records, BIA Central Classified Files, 1907–1939, US National Archives, Washington, D.C., 1–4.

50. Emma Parashont to William Palmer, 22 April 1935, William R. Palmer Papers, Special Collections, Southern Utah State University, Cedar City, 1–4.

51. Crockett Kanosh to Carl Jake, 24 March 1937, William R. Palmer Papers, Special Collections, Southern Utah State University, Cedar City, 1.

52. Mrs. Gibbs Monsen to Jimmie Pete via William Palmer, 6 August 1936, William R. Palmer Papers, Special Collections, Southern Utah State University, Cedar City, 1–3. For the Circleville Massacre, see Albert Winkler, "The Circleville Massacre: A Brutal Incident in Utah's Black Hawk War," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 55 (1987): 4–21.

53. Fred Bulletts to Secretary of Interior, 4 March 1932, Paiute Agency Records, BIA Central Classified Files, 1907–1939, US National Archives, Washington, D.C., 1.

54. Walter George to William R. Palmer, c. 1936, William R. Palmer Papers, Special Collections, Southern Utah State University, Cedar City, 1.

55. Arvilla Benson to William Palmer, 26 September 1941, William R. Palmer Papers, Special Collections, Southern Utah State University, Cedar City, 4.

56. Yetta McFee to William Palmer, 10 January 1946, William R. Palmer Papers, Special Collections, Southern Utah State University, Cedar City, 1–2.

57. Lila Frank to "Dearest Auntie," 7 May 1942, William R. Palmer Papers, Special Collections, Southern Utah State University, Cedar City, 2.

58. Mamie Merrycats to William Palmer, 13 November 1935, William R. Palmer Papers, Special Collections, Southern Utah State University, Cedar City, 1–2.

59. Mabel Arrowgarp to William Palmer, 29 May 1946, William R. Palmer Papers, Special Collections, Southern Utah State University, Cedar City, 1–2.

60. Jake to Mr. and Mrs. Merricats via William Palmer, 25 January 1936, William R. Palmer Papers, Special Collections, Southern Utah State University, Cedar City, 2, 4.

61. Jack Frederick Kilpatrick and Anna Gritts Kilpatrick, trans. and eds., *The Shadow of Sequoyah: Social Documents of the Cherokees, 1862–1964* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965), 48, 82, 91, 97.

62. Franz Boas and George Hunt, *Kwakiutl Texts*, Jesup North Pacific Expedition Publications no. 3 (Leiden, 1905); Alice C. Fletcher and Francis La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe*, Bureau of American Ethnology, Smithsonian Institution, Twenty-seventh Annual Report (Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1911), 29–645.

63. James Mooney, *The Ghost-Dance Religion and Wounded Knee*, Bureau of American Ethnology, Smithsonian Institution, Fourteenth Annual Report, Part 2 (Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1896), 780–781.

64. Robert Pikyavit to Frank Beckwith, 17 February 1931, *Millard County Chronicle* (Fillmore, UT), 23 August 1945; Beckwith, *Indian Joe*; C. C. Presnell, "Miscellaneous Notes on Southern Paiutes," *Zion and Bryce Nature Notes* 8, number 1 (1936): 1–12; Edward Sapir, *Southern Paiute, A Shoshonean Language*, American Academy of Arts and Sciences Proceedings no. 65 (Philadelphia, 1930); Tony Tillohash, Indian Legends as Written by the Shivwit Indian, Tony Tillohash, 1936, typescript, Juanita Brooks Papers, Ms. #B-103, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City.

65. Like other groups in the Great Basin Paiutes were and are remarkably adaptable, readily borrowing foreign culture traits which they find useful. Unlike some others, such as the well-known traditionalist Hopis, Paiutes see little intrinsic value in tradition simply for its own sake. They are intensely pragmatic; they do things only if and only for as long as those practices work. I suspect this open approach to their own culture is a very old culture trait indeed.

66. Kilpatrick and Kilpatrick, *Shadow*, 32 39, 56.

67. Walker, "Writing Systems," 171. In the western Highlands of New Guinea, Rule came to similar conclusions: "All the missionaries engaged in literacy work are unanimous that the two dominant motives for desiring literacy have been to maintain communication between those at [wage] work [on the coast] and those at home in the village, and to read God's Word for themselves in their own language." Quoted in Mühlhäusler, "Reducing Pacific Languages," 199.

68. Richard O. Clemmer, “Fandango, Symbol, Oratory, and Identity: The Changing Ideological Role of Myth among the Western Shoshoni” (paper presented at the Great Basin Anthropological Conference, Reno, NV, October 1990); Edward Sapir, “The Mourning Ceremony of the Southern Paiutes,” *American Anthropologist* 14 (1912): 168–169.

69. Martha C. Knack, Fieldnotes, 1973–1976, in possession of the author; R. Bradley Stuart, “Old John’s Ford,” *Masterkey* 19, number 1 (1945): 24–29.