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Bradford's Indian Book: Being the True Roote & Rise of American Letters as Revealed by the Native Text Embedded in *Of Plimoth Plantation*. By Betty Booth Donohue. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2011. 176 pages. \$69.95 cloth.

In her analysis of William Bradford's *Of Plimouth Plantation*, Cherokee scholar Betty Booth Donohue posits that the earliest examples of "American literature" begin with Native contact, as the influence and poetics of Native American culture embedded themselves within the colonial narratives of the "new world," thus creating a form of letters distinct from the British literary tradition. When Bradford and the Mayflower pilgrims landed in Massachusetts in November 1620, their lives and stories were to be permanently connected to the land they claimed as home—inevitably intertwining with the land narrative that had birthed, nurtured, sustained, and preserved Native peoples since creation. This first contact with the land of the new world results in first contact with Native culture. Donohue's text not only elucidates the Native/colonial cultural transactions as recorded by Bradford and others, but is itself such a transaction. With Cherokee syllabary weaved throughout the text to signify the enduring presence of Native language, Donohue delivers what she proposes: "a red reading of a white book" (xix). Awarded 2012 History Book of the Year by the Wordcraft Circle of Native Writers, *Bradford's Indian Book* is a Cherokee reading of a non-Cherokee text that advocates pan-tribal readings of Native contributions from colonial through contemporary American literature. Moreover, Donohue's text provides a model for reinterpreting the American canon, making possible a reimagining of American literature as we now know it.

Although *Bradford's Indian Book* focuses primarily on the interaction between the colonists and the Eastern Algonquian Nations, at its core the text is concerned with revealing the ways in which Native culture manifested itself within early American letters, thus solidifying its overarching influence on American literary culture at large. Donohue titles each chapter in both English and Cherokee. The Cherokee chapter titles in part one, "Preparing the Ground," traverse a counterclockwise path of the four cardinal directions as means of paying homage to evil spirits and also situate it as a "power text," a practice the author likewise attributes to *Of Plimouth Plantation*, from which the author draws the majority of her analysis. Donohue supplements historical gaps within the primary text by referencing passages of historical narratives written by Bradford's contemporaries. These additional texts further clarify the impact that Native presence and instruction had on the social, ceremonial, political, and commercial practices of the Plymouth colonists.

Donohue's analysis of colonial texts and the critical texts that followed argues equitably for a larger set of Native traditions within American literary culture. When the author chronicles the beginnings of Native/colonial interactions and the effects of those relationships, she offers one possible (Cherokee) interpretation and invites others to participate in Native readings of non-Native works. Donohue examines both the diegetic and hypodiegetic *Of Plymouth Plantation* and the accompanying colonial texts at length. Rather than relying on the previously established diegesis of figures such as Samoset and Tisquantum (Squanto) to argue the importance Native influence had on Plymouth colony, she frames her argument so as to illustrate the hypodiegetic manifestations of Native traditions that run throughout American colonial literature. In her innovative historicization *Of Plymouth Plantation*, Donohue demonstrates an acute awareness of the possible limitations of adhering to a strictly Eastern Algonquian frame of reference, while seamlessly enacting pan-tribal reflections of Native identity in American literature.

Bradford's Indian Book begins with the assertion that the most powerful of Native genres is the "healing narrative" (5), the chants Donohue identifies as "medicine texts" (xviii). Medicine texts effect change, and Donohue's major claim is that Bradford's text imitates Native literary tradition by functioning as a medicine text. Donohue interprets *Of Plymouth Plantation* as such because it was a shared religious vision that brought the colonists over the ocean and onto Native shores. The author illustrates Native reverence for the medicine text by relating a brief account of Passaconoway, a Penacook medicine man who sought not only to stop the influx of white settlers, but also compel them to return to their homeland. When Passaconoway's efforts failed to yield results, he interpreted this failure as evidence that the colonists were meant to stay and become instructed in Native ways—they were to be Indianized.

The healing and change sought in the Algonquian medicine texts were often tied to the fate of the land, privileged in Native tradition. Donohue refers to the land both as "the mother text" (13) and "First Text" (58). As the source of Native spirituality, the land represents the setting *and* the narrative's plot. Comprised of various narrative strands through which all religious ceremonies and compositions are called forth, the land narrative is the most important genre to interpret. Donohue's history traces the progress of Plymouth Colony as reflected in the narratives of Bradford and his contemporaries. Their letters, peppered with references to tobacco, corn, beaver, wampum, and tricksters, demonstrate an undeniable Native influence and are evidence of the many literary transactions that took place.

According to Donohue, Indianization begins most notably with narratives circulating around corn as both sustenance and sacrament. In exposing the settlers to the ceremonial preparations and functions of corn, the Algonquians

sought to Indianize the settlers and, in so doing, entered them into Algonquian literary tradition. Donohue explains the role of corn in the Cherokee creation account, as well as its significance in Penobscot, Navajo, Hopi, and Seneca traditions. Just as the narrative of corn runs throughout Native oral history, its continual harvest and cultivation parallels life in the colony, as death and rebirth mimics the lifecycle of the crop; as a case in point, Bradford's role as Plymouth Colony politician, historian, and man of letters stemmed primarily from the occasion of Governor John Carver's return to the earth. Donohue's reading of *Of Plimouth Plantation* emphasizes Bradford's respect for words as evidence that he was a fine candidate for Algonquian Indianization. The author references Bradford's evident "logo theology" to argue that he, like Native peoples, felt the power of language and meaning existed in the words themselves; they were not merely symbols or signifiers, but the whole of the experience (50). The spiritual and poetic nature of Bradford's text resonates with Donohue because it shares tenets with Native traditions.

Despite the promise and possibility represented by the initial Native influence embedded in Bradford's text, Donohue suggests that the narrative of corn transformed the colony "from communism to capitalism" (60). This societal shift altered the perceived value of land, subsequently leading to a collective desire for more land to cultivate, and driving members further away from the colony's center. "Wampampeak" or wampum first appeared in Bradford's text in a 1627 contract, and it soon supplanted the corn narrative as the primary genre at work within colonial life. Like corn, wampum became a commodity that transformed Native/colonial relations seemingly overnight. As Natives began trading wampum for weapons, the settlers became increasingly uneasy; feelings of distrust and aggression spread, and both sides strategized for self-preservation through alliances and confederacies. Friends became enemies, and tensions persisted well into the time of King Philip's War of 1675. In Donohue's analysis, the narratives of corn and wampum help the colonists to thrive but are essentially the undoing of the Algonquians.

In stark contrast to the looming threat of colonial capitalism via the corn and wampum narratives, Donohue's discussion of animal and trickster narratives throughout *Of Plimouth Plantation* is enlightening and entertaining. The author equates the troublemakers within Bradford's narrative as tricksters of Native tradition, and the correlations she makes between these facets of Native and colonial life are highly engaging, ushering the reader effortlessly into what she calls "the Native Hagiography" (89).

The first part of *Bradford's Indian Book* addresses the dovetailing history of the Plymouth Colony with Eastern Algonquian culture, while the second part focuses on the ways in which the Natives of colonial letters were transformed into fragmented representations of Native culture. Donohue examines the

colonial accounts that mythologized the roles of Tokamahamon as the ephemeral shadow figure, Wituwamat as the murderous savage, and Tisquantum is discussed at length as both teacher and turncoat. Enumerating the roles in which these caricatures of Native identity have continued to prosper, Donohue's wit and sense of humor shine, further convincing the reader of the validity of her claim—that *Of Plymouth Plantation* is the best early example of colonial literature through which to read Native influence on white literary culture.

Betty Booth Donohue's *Bradford's Indian Book* introduces new ways of reading American and Native American literature, and could do great service to students and scholars looking to ground themselves in individual approaches of highly communal subject matter. Her examination of the "First Text" as it relates to the histories and literatures of the Algonquians and Plymouth colonists is intriguing and highly informative, and offers new ways through which to reconsider the whole of American letters and literature.

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Crazy Brave: A Memoir. By Joy Harjo. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 2012. 176 pages. \$24.95 cloth, \$14.95 paper.

Joy Harjo's memoir *Crazy Brave* is a remarkable book, as multifaceted as any of her fine poems. Even so, Harjo's life is in some ways ordinary; it's a story of rising above the challenging circumstances of alcoholism, physical abuse, and poverty to become an author—like Rick Bragg's *All Over But the Shoutin'*, or Jeanette Walls's *The Glass Castle*. Add in racial prejudice, and it's like Richard Wright's story in *Black Boy/American Hunger*. But in truth *Crazy Brave* is like none of those. What sets this memoir apart, besides the Mvskogee cultural context and personal details, is the ease with which Harjo mixes the supernatural with the ordinary, and her compact use of specific events to stand for years of experience and history. *Crazy Brave* is a poetic memoir from a renowned poet and musician.

Harjo recounts a period of a little more than two decades, from her earliest memories in Oklahoma, through her years in New Mexico at the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) and the University of New Mexico, to the momentous night when "the spirit of poetry" came to her in a dream and she embraced it (163). Harjo organizes the memoir into four sections. Each is named for a cardinal direction with a description that sets the tone. While her life story roughly corresponds with the physical geography, it's the emotional geography that guides the structure. The opening section is the East, a place