A COMPANION TO THE
LITERATURES OF COLONIAL AMERICA

EDITED BY SUSAN CASTILLO AND IVY SCHWEITZER

Blackwell
Publishing

© 2005 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd
except for editorial material and organization © 2005 by Susan Castillo and Ivy Schweitzer

BLACKWELL PUBLISHING
350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148-5020, USA
9600 Garsington Road, Oxford OX4 2DQ, UK
550 Swanston Street, Carlton, Victoria 3053, Australia

The right of Susan Castillo and Ivy Schweitzer to be identified as the Authors of the Editorial Material in this Work has been asserted in accordance with the UK Copyright, Designs, and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, except as permitted by the UK Copyright, Designs, and Patents Act 1988, without the prior permission of the publisher.

First published 2005 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd

1 2005

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A companion to literatures of colonial America / edited by Susan Castillo and Ivy Schweitzer.
p. cm.—(Blackwell companions to literature and culture ; 35)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN-13: 978-1-4051-1291-8
ISBN-10: 1-4051-1291-3
1. American literature—Colonial period, ca. 1600–1775—History and criticism.
2. Imperialism in literature. 3. Colonies in literature. 4. United States—Intellectual life—18th century 5. United States—Intellectual life—17th century.
I. Castillo, Susan P., 1948– II. Schweitzer, Ivy. III. Series.

PS185.C66 2005
810.9′001—dc22
2004029749

A catalogue record for this title is available from the British Library.

Set in 11/13pt Garamond
by SPI Publisher Services, Pondicherry, India
Printed and bound in India
by Replika Press Pvt. Ltd, Kundli

The publisher's policy is to use permanent paper from mills that operate a sustainable forestry policy, and which has been manufactured from pulp processed using acid-free and elementary chlorine-free practices. Furthermore, the publisher ensures that the text paper and cover board used have met acceptable environmental accreditation standards.

For further information on
Blackwell Publishing, visit our website:
www.blackwellpublishing.com

General [illegible] System
Univers[illegible]nsin - Madison
728 Sta[illegible]
Madison, [illegible] 53706-1494
U.S.A.

25

Neither Here Nor There: Transatlantic Epistolarity in Early America

Phillip H. Round

The New World arrived in the Old sealed in the folds of a transatlantic letter. For three centuries after Columbus' first report of the Americas, epistolary discourse dominated the many linguistic regimes that Europeans, indigenous peoples, and Africans employed to mediate exchanges between the two worlds. Early modern transatlantic letters encode an elusive set of cultural technologies. Their producers and interlocutors were neither here nor there – separated by geographic distance and great stretches of time, yet they clung to the familiar social, civil, and religious bonds that had sustained them in Europe. Although letters to and from the Americas have been characterized as a "fundamental instrument of administrative control and government" (Mignolo 2003: 172), in practice, such letters were just as likely to exhibit what Roger Chartier, following Michel de Certeau, has called "everyday writing." Within the imperial administrations of Spain, Portugal, Holland, France, and England, the familiar letter offered both colonizers and the colonized, from up and down the social strata, "silent technologies [to] . . . short-circuit institutional stage directions." At once obligatory and impulsive, improvisational and codified, early modern transatlantic letters were "always on the watch for opportunities that must be seized 'on the wing' " (De Certeau 1998: xiv, xix).

In 1493, when Columbus first wrote about America, the familiar letter wa undergoing changes to accommodate new modes of social interaction then emerging across Europe. While letter writing had flourished throughout the Middle Age Renaissance intellectuals, in their multidisciplinary effort to revive classical learning sought to free themselves from the Medieval *ars dictamanis*, the rigid rhetoric of lette writing disseminated by dictaminal treatises and model letter formularies. The *a* *dictaminis* tradition strictly observed the etiquette of social hierarchy and thereb eschewed the use of everyday language and forms of address. As part of his larg project of intellectual reform, Erasmus attacked the rigidity of the medieval system devoting an entire book to the craft of writing letters. In *De Conscribendius Epistolaris* (1522) he redefined the role of epistolary discourse, calling letters "a mutual conversation between absent friends, which should be neither unpolished, rough, or artificial, nor confined to a single topic" (Erasmus 1978: 20). Erasmus' detailed exploration of the epistolary genre reflected a growing recognition among sixteenth-century humanists that some form of "everyday" writing was needed to manage new discourses of rhetorical instruction and social exchange.

Perhaps the most important contribution of humanist epistolarity came in the way the form itself began to embody new modes of human interaction. As Erasmus explained it, "as befits any good go-between," a letter "performs the function of a messenger." Early modern letters acted as "go-betweens" in a number of important ways. Claudio Guillén has demonstrated that the Renaissance letter not only communicated everything from gossip to business and diplomacy, but also "signified a crucial passage from orality to writing itself – or a practical interaction between the two" (Guillén 1986: 78). Letters mediated between "ordinary" writing and extraordinary experiences. While constituting "one sort of... everyday and private writing, like the accounts book, the recipe book, or the family record book" (Chartier 1997: 2), letters could also be startlingly transgressive. In a letter, "the humblest citizen may dispatch a missive to the highest reaches of the political, social, or cultural hierarchy ... bypass[ing] all intermediaries standing between ordinary public opinion and decision makers" (Boureau 1997: 24–5).

Historically speaking, the familiar letter emerged at the intersection of several important nodes of the expanding European world system. The recovery of classical epistolary practices coincided with larger social revolutions like state formation and the spread of literacy. The emergence of the bureaucratic states of the late Middle Ages was in fact closely linked to the appearance of epistolary formularies that codified new administrative languages and epistolary forms. The Renaissance expansion of these same states into the Americas constituted an even greater degree of "the geographical isolation of human settlements and the complexity of seigniorial relations" (Boreau 1997: 36) that had spawned the new fashions in letter writing in the first place. Just as European colonial expansion provided impetus to the extension of bureaucracies through formulaic letters surrounding diplomacy and statecraft, so did the greater geographic isolation of these colonies put pressure on the epistolary form to speak from an absent presence about the reality of lands, peoples, and politics that few European correspondents would ever witness in person.

Yet speaking from the absent presence of the New World proved to be a very anxious rhetorical position for all involved. At the outset of European colonization, Diego Alvarez Chanca, a Spanish physician who accompanied the second Columbus expedition, concluded his 1494 public letter on the voyage with a protest that would become a commonplace in transatlantic letters over the centuries: "I believe that those who do not know me and who hear these things may find me prolix and a man who has exaggerated somewhat. But God is witness that I have not gone one iota beyond the bounds of truth" (Jane 1930a: 72). Poised on the anxious edge of incredulity, pleading for understanding, acceptance, and (quite often) for preferment or supplies, the early modern transatlantic letter proffered a unique form of subjectivity for both writer and reader. As a mining entrepreneur in New Spain discovered in 1595 when he wrote to a metropolitan merchant for help, the virtual economics of New World colonization had transformed letter writing into a complex substitute for interpersonal relationships. After a polite salutation, Nicholas de Guevara outlined his desperate economic situation and then stopped to muse about the requirements of this new form of epistolarity: "Now that I am writing you, it seems proper to give you an account of my life" (Lockhart and Otte: 1976: 86).

In some senses, neither-here-nor-there subject positions like the one Guevara discovered while writing across the Atlantic were rooted in a tension fundamental to colonial immigration. Settlers were caught between what Jack Greene has called "a highly competitive, individualistic, and acquisitive 'modern' mentality" and "those ideas of moral economy and suspicions of the market usually associated with traditional peasant societies" (Greene 1988: 34). Transatlantic epistolary practices thus reflect their authors' efforts to negotiate premodern and modern modes of social order. In early modern transatlantic letters, time-honored "vertical" social relations were replaced by "fleeting contacts," and their writers, more and more often "strangers" to their metropolitan readers, were left to seek out rhetorical methods of earning trust. Such writers had to find new ways to sustain interpersonal connections that, in the metropolis, had been nurtured by face-to-face contact, kinship, and acquaintance networks. From their culturally "peripheral" position, colonial correspondents exploited emerging letter writing conventions that echoed the gestures of gentility and truth telling as a replacement for traditional or "customary" modes of interaction.

Given the heightened pressure that transatlantic conversation placed on immediacy and embodiment, the material conditions of the transatlantic letter also underscored these features. They sustained transatlantic "scribal publication," extending the social bonds of manuscript communities across the ocean. The reading of a transatlantic letter, often aloud, often in groups, and sometimes accompanied by the envoy who delivered it, became a communal act of reconstituting the voice and gestures of the absent writer. The reader's voice animated the scribal text; the envoy's gestures and exposition fleshed out the bare bones of the necessarily short narrative. Thus, a sixteenth-century colonist writing from New Spain not only communicated news and asked for news in return, but also performed proper social etiquette in the virtual space his missive provided: "I kiss the hands of my good friend Hernando de Uceda and his wife, and they should consider this letter theirs; I kiss the hands of all my lords and friends and ask that they pardon me for not writing them" (Lockhart and Otte 1976: 134).

Beyond the constitutive role they played in early modern European subjectivity, transatlantic letters served a very practical function in the diffusion of knowledge and power across the Atlantic world. Throughout the period, the letter was second in importance only to the caravel in the process of European colonization in the Americas. Indeed, one could argue that from the first, European settlements in the New World relied almost totally on epistolary mediation. Letters mediated the flow of goods and services, people, politics, and culture, allowing emigrants to maintain their ties to the nation-states they had left behind and to explore the possibilities of the emerging social and cultural identities offered by the New World. Transatlantic epistolary traffic was always already part of the "public" circulation of goods and resources between metropolis and periphery. As John Smith, president of the Jamestown colony, pointed out, letters from the New England colonies often substituted for real profits in the early years of settlement. "Neglecting to answer the Merchants expectations with profit," the early colonists were accused of "feeding the Company only with Letters and tastes of such commodities" (Smith 1986: 271). Transatlantic letters like those of John Smith became marketable commodities in their own right, printed and distributed in the form of news books, open letters, and circulars. Some entered print culture as high cultural artifacts of social refinement or "literary" achievement, and their recipients were imagined as an entire "reading public."

In the final analysis, transatlantic letters of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were both "familiar" and bureaucratic. They could be as exotic as Charles Garnier's 1636 birch bark missive from New France, or as mundane as a copy of a ship's bill of lading. Examined from the point of view of transatlantic epistolary exchange, the early cultural history of the Americas is a history of immediacy and embodiment. Over and against interpretations of colonial America as a discursive arena of European mythic fantasy or imperial administration, the epistolary history of the Americas reveals a world constructed of ad hoc arrangements, whose subjects cobbled together their senses of self from the contingencies and compromises that remain sedimented in the thousands of letters patent, *cartas de relación*, verse epistles, and letters of manumission that streamed across the Atlantic throughout the early modern era.

Epistolary Discovery

Columbus' first letter of 1493 describing the New World presents a paradigmatic example of how the epistle would negotiate between monarchical state bureaucracy, the church's sense of the "life-giving power of the letter" (Boreau 1997: 32), and the huge distances of space and time that separated New World peoples and events from their Old World interlocutors. Most importantly, it dramatizes how central the epistolary mode would become in fashioning a European "discourse of discovery." After several centuries of scholarly debate about the status of the Columbus letters as historical evidence, recent work has begun to acknowledge the fundamentally discursive role these letters played – as acts of reading, writing, publishing, and corresponding – in the European discovery of America. The textual histories of the letters written on Columbus' four voyages of discovery highlight how the epistolary mode served *both* the purposes of those in authority who wished to control the meaning of New World exploration and the "tactical" goals of individuals such as Columbus.

They reveal why Columbus, among the many persons involved in the actual voyages, attained personal mythic status as *the* discoverer of the New World.

The first transatlantic letter about the New World is shrouded in mystery. In early 1493, letters bearing the name "Columbus" began to appear in the court of Philip and Isabel, and in print in Spain and Italy. The most well known of these letters, the "Carta a Luis de Santangel" (February 15, 1493), appeared printed in Spanish, Italian, Latin, and Italian verse. Although a manuscript copy in Santangel's hand is preserved in the Archivo General de Simancas, Margarita Zamora points out that "none of [the] versions are identical." The various versions, Zamora adds, "differ quite significantly from the text that was probably their common matrix, the *Carta a los Reyes* of 4 March, 1493." A close reading of all extant copies suggests further that "the February letter was at least substantially revised, if not completely composed by someone other than Columbus" (Zamora 1993: 5–6).

To further the confusion, while Columbus' public letter begins without the standard salutation, all extant versions of the letter bear endorsements – some to the "escribano de ración," Luis de Santangel, some to the Spanish treasurer, Gabriel Sanchez – and these have caused much speculation about the recipient of this first New World example of epistolary discourse. Was Columbus writing to the court? To the treasurer? To the king and queen themselves? Cecil Jane has suggested that Columbus' letter was essentially "of the nature of a draft circular letter enclosed in [a] letter to Ferdinand and Isabella for their approval" (Jane 1930a: 50). Zamora believes that "the significant variation between the . . . texts suggests that one constitutes a reading of the other, an emendation of the scriptural act that created a new and different image of discovery" (Zamora 1993: 9). Whatever the case, it is clear from the endorsements that the letters of Columbus were part of a bureaucratic discourse of state and empire. It is also clear from its immediate 1493 publication in quarto and folio in Spanish, and from the subsequent nine Italian editions of the 1493 Latin translation by Leandro de Cosco, that Columbus' letter was always already a public document. Thus this first letter mobilized a particularly salient technology of social analysis and social reproduction even as it extended that analysis and reproduction well beyond the known European world. The various endorsements that accompany the many versions of the letter show how Columbus sought to secure social standing for himself as a writer and explorer (and also for the reader) outside of the court structures to which the endorsements refer. The reader becomes one of the "insiders," one of those pushing forward New World exploration, and as the letters entered into print culture, they secured a place in the "public sphere."

In the body of the letter, this technology of social reproduction is arrayed across several discourses in order to locate the unknown landscape and peoples of the Americas within the categories of knowledge then accepted by European statesmen and intellectuals. In the Colombian writings, Peter Hulme has identified "two distinct discursive networks . . . what might be called a discourse of *Oriental Civilization* and a *discourse of savagery*," that appear to have their origin in classical texts (Hulme 1986: 21). The 1493 letter invokes several other discursive registers as well.

There is discourse of civil conversation and statecraft, as when Columbus details how he "took possession" of the New World "with proclaiming heralds and flying standards." There is the discourse of natural history, intermingling mercantile practicality with disinterested "science." The islands Columbus encounters are "surrounded by many very safe and wide harbors . . . many great and salubrious rivers flow through it." There is also the discourse of truth-telling. The letter opens and closes with Columbus' assertion of the veracity of his claims. The things Columbus has seen "exceeded belief, unless one had seen them," and he alone can be "relied on for accuracy" (Castillo and Schweitzer 2001: 24, 27).

Columbus devotes over half of his first letter to describing the indigenous people of Hispaniola. Although his description does sound predetermined by the discourse of savagery (Native people are "always naked," "without weapons," "timid and full of fear," and "eat human flesh"), his account of his trade with these people outlines a more complex imperial, millenarian, and mercantile set of motives and discourses. Columbus "gave them many beautiful and pleasing things . . . no value being taken in exchange." He explains that the idea was to make them more friendly toward the Spaniards and accomplish his threefold goals: "that they might be made worshipers of Christ, and that they might be full of love towards our king, queen, prince, and the whole Spanish nation; also that they might be zealous to search out and collect, and deliver to us those things of which they had plenty, and which we greatly needed." Of course, Columbus famously squanders any goodwill earned by seizing "by force several Indians," but his use of these Native people as heralds of his conquest further enlarges the discursive scope of his letter. Columbus' report that he used these captives to proclaim to other indigenous people "in a loud voice 'Come, come, and you will see the celestial people'" (ibid: 25) is the earliest example of the ventriloquism of the colonial subject.

The letter concludes with a coda that attempts to make present a world that, until Columbus' "discovery," had been outside of human time ("which hitherto mortal men have never reached"). Before Columbus' public letter, "if any one ha[d] written or said anything about these islands, it was all obscurities and conjectures." With Columbus, the New World becomes at least a *discursive* reality. His letter reinscribes New World history into Christian time by employing Spanish civic and religious rituals to bridge the gap between the New World and the Old, creating a sort of cultural continuity between the known and the unknown: "Let religious processions be solemnized; let sacred festivals be given; let the churches be covered with festive garlands" (ibid: 27). The letter reaches a level of exhortation that mimics sacramental cadence to instantiate a link between the Old and New World through the rites of civic and religious ceremony. Such ceremonies make the New World a concrete experience for the Old World society that has "discovered" it. The formerly incredible and conjectural is officially "solemnized."

Columbus would write several more letters about the New World, each progressively more apocalyptic as his personal fortune waned and his power to conjure the magic of the New World through his personal control of its representation gave way to the explorations and discoveries of others. None were published in his lifetime. What remains of Columbus – his reputation and his famous first description of the New World – is a story told by a stranger, made more personal and believable by the epistolary mode in which it was framed.

An Epistolary Imperium

By the dawn of the sixteenth century, transatlantic letters had become the primary means of negotiating the imperial relations of metropolis and periphery, and the social orders of aristocrats, merchants, soldiery, indigenous peoples, laborers, and slaves. Pêro Vaz de Caminha's letter of 1500 to the Portuguese King Dom Manuel I reflects how the generic conventions Columbus established had come to dominate the epistolary side of empire building for European sovereigns and subjects. Sent as a scribe to document the voyage of Pedro Álvares Cabral, Vaz de Caminha begins by asserting that he writes the king only after his military superiors have filed their official reports, and then only in a plain style befitting his station: "I shall neither prettify nor distort nor add anything to what I say and appeared to me." His ethnographic description of the Tupinamba reflects a temperament different from that of Columbus. Although silver, gold, and exotic parrots remain essential to the discourse of discovery mobilized in Vaz de Caminha's account, he is more frank about the nature of the Native people's curiosity. They came to the cross the crew erected, he explains, "more to see the iron tools . . . than to see the cross" (Castillo and Schweitzer 2001: 33, 34). He is also circumspect in attributing absolute value to the Portuguese contingent's interpretation of the events surrounding their landfall. "We interpreted it thus," Vaz de Caminha flatly reports, "because we wished it to be so."

If Vaz de Caminha's and Columbus' letters differ, however, it is more in degree than in overall shape and substance. Letters from the New World directed to a European sovereign would follow this model for the next century. The epistolary subject abases himself before the monarch, asserts the monarch's sovereign right to the land explored, and then reports on the riches of the country, the pliability of the inhabitants, the navigability of the harbors, and the progress of Christianity, embellishing to greater or lesser degree depending upon temperament and political context. Among the Spanish conquistadors, *cartas de relación* were required by law, and although they were often little more than lists of exploits, they firmly established the central role of epistolary reporting in furthering the European empires of the New World (see Echevarría 1998). Letters from the New World to the metropolitan leadership changed little from 1500 to 1700. Take, for example, the letter Father Louis Hennepin appends to his 1683 book *Description of Louisiana*. Addressed directly to Louis XIV, Hennepin's letter begins in obeisance, claiming the book never would have seen the light of day "if it had not been undertaken by . . . so glorious a Monarch" (Castillo and Schweitzer 2001: 182). Hennepin goes so far as to claim that the Native people of the region pay homage to the king every time they smoke.

"Tchendiouba Louis," they say, "Smoke O Sun." According to Hennepin's report, "your Majesty's name is every moment on their lips." Like Columbus' captive heralds, the Natives of New Orleans mouth the praises of the conquesting culture.

Perhaps the most striking examples of this genre are the letters of Hernán Cortés. Cortés undertook his famous series of letters to King Charles V out of desperate political necessity. In order to authorize his illicit foray onto the Mexican mainland in 1520, Cortés and his men ingeniously set themselves up as a separate municipality, called "Villa Rica de Veracruz," in contradistinction to the royally recognized government in Cuba. Using a loophole in Spanish law, they then elected Cortés their leader. The effect of this "brilliant legalistic maneuver" was, as J. H. Elliot explains, "to free Cortes from his obligations to his immediate superior, Velazquez, and make him directly dependent upon the King." Cortés then elevated the *carta de relación* into a powerful political tool in the arsenal of the New Spanish elite who wished to circumvent local authority by appealing directly to the Crown. Elliot argues that Cortés' letters from Mexico during the period of the conquest of Tenochtitlan should not be "read as an accurate historical narrative but as a brilliant piece of special pleading, designed to justify an act of rebellion and to press the claim of Cortés against those of the governor of Cuba" (Elliot 1986: xx). The Cortés letters are thus marked by the "suppression of evidence and ingenious distortion," and weave a narrative of Mexico conducive to royal, rather than local, interest. By his "Segunda Carta" of 1520, Cortés employs frankly "imperial" rhetoric, likening his conquest of Mexico to Charles' own triumphs in Germany, and arguing that Mexico represents a second empire across the Atlantic.

Throughout his *relaciónes*, Cortés manipulates the intangible qualities of letter writing, moving beyond content to capitalize on the way a transatlantic missive might buy time for faraway (and unauthorized) actions in the New World. Cortés also employs letters as go-betweens to stand in for him when summoned by royal authority, diffusing the personal peril of their writer. Cortés further uses letters to fabricate a personal relationship with the sovereign where none existed. By writing directly to the king, Cortés exploited the epistle's ability to "bypass all intermediaries standing between ordinary public opinion and decision makers" (Boreau 1997: 24–5). He also shrewdly – and alone among his fellow conquistadors – had two complete scribal copies made of all his letters, thus ensuring that letters sent by court messenger to the king would be printed in public and thus enter the burgeoning public sphere, insulating him, and guaranteeing his posterity in the written history of New Spain. By October of 1522, mostly due to his calculated manipulation of transatlantic epistolary networks, Cortés was named Captain General of New Spain.

Transatlantic letters also underwrote the administration of New World empire for New England and New Netherland. And like their Iberian counterparts, the Dutch and the English found letters to be, at best, an ambiguous mode of colonial governance. The early years of English colonization in North America are punctuated by letters that functioned as go-betweens both across the physical distance of the

Atlantic and the ideological divide separating competing motives for colonization. Philip Barbour points out in his authoritative edition of John Smith's works that Smith's "*True Relation* (1608) bears evidence of being a letter designed to tell a friend or backer what happed to *him* from the time he sailed until the day he dispatched it to England" (Smith 1986: lxiv). Other kinds of epistles – like letters from the Virginia Company or religious pilgrims – struck Smith as "tedious." The never-ending transatlantic flow of "Letters, directions, and instructions" simply confirmed the cultural and experiential gulf that separated colonials and metropolitans, stuffed as they were with "strange absurdities and impossibilities... contrary to that was fitting" (ibid: 203).

Nor was Smith's experience unique. The letters exchanged between the Dutch West Indian Company and Peter Stuyvesant in New Netherland expose similar tensions between Old and New World expectations, and the impossibility of running a mercantile empire through epistolary administration alone. The Company repeatedly expresses its "astonishment" at receiving transatlantic news of actions that the governor has taken directly contrary to its wishes. Pleading for "caution and moderation," it asks Stuyvesant to keep their epistolary instructions secret. But transatlantic letters, it seems, had a way of getting loose. As property disputes and criminal actions began to leak from official transatlantic missives into the Dutch continental public sphere, the Company's officers warn Stuyvesant that "we must acknowledge that letters of exchange gone to protest do not add to the Company's reputation." Always at work in transatlantic epistolary circuits were "disruptive souls... trying to convince the community that these letters were not conceived by the entire board, but only by some of individual directors" (Gehring 2000: 72, 144).

Among the colonists at Massachusetts Bay, the situation was little different, if articulated in the language of Reformed Protestantism rather than that of corporate mercantilism. Like the Dutch West India Company's colonies, the Bay Colony was founded by a corporate body, the Massachusetts Bay Company, which believed that continual letters of instruction to the settlers would "put life into [their] affairs" (Young 1846: 141). Although the Company tried to assert its authority through "the power granted us by his Majesty's letters patent," their letters often fell on deaf ears. All of the culturally divisive moments in the Bay Colony's affairs (the Antinomian Crisis, the Pequot War, King Philip's War) were subsequently aired in transatlantic epistles that accentuated the difference between metropolitan instructions and the colonists' actions. The same is true of the Plymouth Colony, where William Bradford interleaved transatlantic letters with his narrative in *Of Plymouth Plantation* to provide readers with a visceral experience of the material and cultural "cost" of the Plymouth pilgrimage. Writing with the perspicuity of hindsight in the 1640s, Bradford was merely acknowledging what Bay Colony, New Netherland, Spanish, and Portuguese emigrants had discovered not long after settling in the New World – that their self-fashioning would be largely accomplished within the sacred and secular, public and private discursive spaces framed by the pages of transatlantic letters.

Sacred Writ

Transatlantic letters of spiritual fulfillment exploited a "network of communications, not unlike [those of] the mercantile organizations . . . [where] family ties were an important constituent element" (Lockhart and Otte 1976: 114). For Protestants and Catholics alike, the New World experience reproduced a context for letter writing that was typologically parallel to the Pauline epistolary tradition. From the perspective of seventeenth-century English Puritans, the early history of New England looked like the history of the Pauline epistle writ large. "A letter from New England then, and for a good time after," Joshua Scottow recalled, "was Venerated as a Sacred Script, or as the Writing of some Holy Prophet, 'twas carried many miles, where divers came to hear it" (Round 1999: 28). For Puritans in New England and Old, the transatlantic exchange of letters between "God's people" promised to extend the metropolitan discursive network that was beginning to unite Puritans into a formidable political community all across England.

Transatlantic letters served a similar function among the Catholics of New Spain and New France. The letters of an Ursuline nun, Marie de l'Incarnation (Marie Guyart Martin, 1599–1672), who lived in Quebec from 1639 to 1672, reflect the intricate bonds of kinship, doctrine, and piety that were woven into transatlantic spiritual epistolarity. Marie de l'Incarnation came to New France from Tours, a recent widow who had had a vision ordering her to the New World to save "heathen" souls. Her transatlantic salutations and leave takings, in letters to ecclesiastical superiors, aristocratic patrons, and the son she abandoned when she took her vows, always seek to preserve the ties of faith that had bound writer and reader together in the Old World. "Let us dwell together in Christ," her many letters to her son begin, and close, "join your prayers to ours." For Marie, "letter writing became a means for carrying on mutual spiritual direction" (Zecher 1996: 94).

In their capacity as spiritual go-betweens, however, Marie's letters move beyond simply reaffirming ties of faith between the Old and New Worlds to embody the sacrifices of the New World martyrs. In one particularly vivid letter, she describes cleaning up after an Indian "massacre" and seeing a Frenchman carrying body parts – a trunk, several legs, and arms – of his fellow villagers back into the settlement for identification. As their sacrifices are written on the villagers' corpses, so Marie's letters inscribe these sacrifices onto the bodies of letters sent home to France.

Marie was not to find the martyrdom she herself sought, and the dominant theme that emerges from her 32 years of transatlantic letters is the historical contingency of fe in the New World. Her thin epistolary tether to the Old World actually seems to acerbate her anxieties. To one correspondent, she writes, "I am merely entrusting is letter to chance"; to another, she confesses, "your arguments seem very good to me nd I find them very much in agreement with those I often have myself – though with nquility. But the way God governs this country is quite contrary to them." The ew World is redolent with baleful portents, canoes seen burning in the sky after dark, and a broken social order in which "it is impossible to make the captain obey although he has been ordered in the name of the King to come to Quebec." In short, she remarks, "this country subsists... only with the support of His divine providence" (Marshall 1967: 181, 205, 217, 275). Marie's letters embody God's providence, chart it, and carry it across the Atlantic where it might be witnessed by a fallen European world that has seemingly lost its sense of contingency and wonder.

Epistolary Resistance

Transatlantic letters played constitutive roles not only in the lives of Europeans, but also in the strategies of resistance employed by indigenous peoples. Native people were indispensable in the organization of European New World settlements, in the warfare that made those settlements possible, and in the economic systems that sustained them. They were also essential to mediating communications between the metropolis and periphery. Marie de l'Incarnation notes in passing the central role played by Iroquois people in the communications system of New France: "As soon as the Iroquois... had arrived in his own country, he had sought out Couture [Guillaume Couture, a "donné" who served the mission] and given him the letter with which he had been entrusted, and they then went together to the principal men of the nation and gave them an account of their commissions, both spoken and written" (Marshall 1967: 138).

Although Marie de l'Lincarnation would report that the Iroquois people in her region "held it a miracle to see her read and write, a thing they had never yet seen in one of their own people" (ibid: 109), in other parts of the Americas, indigenous elites had employed writing systems for several centuries before the arrival of Europeans, and many of them later adapted these to European alphabets in order to pursue hybrid forms of literacy during European colonization. The relationship of the majority of Native people in the New World to European alphabetic literacy can best be described as "non-literate," a term the anthropologist Sarah Lund has employed to "emphasize the acoustic character of successful oral communication," rather than "the negative image of failed communication in a medium not mastered" (Lund 1997: 195). It is important to recall, in this context, that even among the French nobility during the period of American colonization, epistolary communication "resonates with the formulaic and repetitive construction typical of orally based compositions." Nobles were "accustomed to face-to-face communication, and the language with which they perceived and expressed their knowledge of the world was still largely an oral one" (Neuschel 1989: 103). Thus indigenous orality or "non-literacy" was not the wholly alien thing that writers like Marie de l'Incarnation sometimes made it out to be.

Martin Leinhard has outlined how the epistolary form came to be the primary mode of written communication adapted by indigenous peoples across the Americas. When Europeans began to exercise political control over many parts of the

New World, "they created the need for a new, intercultural type of communication between the groups who were marginalized by the conquest and the new masters." Within such epistolary circuits, Leinhard argues, "outsiders took on a role as part of a communicative system the basis of which was fixed in the sixteenth century: an asymmetrical system, dominated by the figure of the Spanish king" (Leinhard 1997: 172).

Transatlantic epistles produced by indigenous elites within these discursive circuits, from the sixteenth through the eighteenth century, do indeed demonstrate the "asymmetry" of the system. At the same time, they interleave traditional, pre-contact practices with the "modern," virtual communication gestures that were common in the transatlantic letters of European colonists. In their 1560 letter to King Philip of Spain, for example, the Indian city councilors of Huejotzingo, Mexico, retain "stylistic devices and vocabulary" from pre-contact times: "Our lord, you the king don Felipe our lord, we bow low in great reverence to your high dignity... very high and feared king through omnipotent God, giver of life." The letter continues in this style, each paragraph "introduced by the [Nahuatl] invocations *totecuiyoe tolatocatzine* ('O our lord, O our king')." These indigenous rhetorical practices are intertwined with another set of epistolary gestures that attempt to bridge the great physical divide separating native writers from the person of the Spanish king. "O, unfortunate are we," the councilors write, "very great and heavy sadness and affliction lie upon us. Your pity and compassion do not reach us" (Lockhart and Otte 1976: 165, 163, 166). In early modern European monarchies, "the nation is not a separate body but resides entirely in the person of the king" (Melzer and Norberg 1998: 3), and letters were often sent to embody this authority. Indigenous writers, seeking to tap into a similar power of epistolary embodiment, sought to close the distance between themselves and the metropolis by embodying their political selves in the leaves of a transatlantic letter. Because "we did not reach you, we were not given audience before you," the Aztec elites lament, "who then will speak for us?" (Lockhart and Otte 1976: 170). The answer – for indigenous people throughout the early modern period – was "the letter."

This practice of epistolary embodiment reappears in the 1688 letter from the Apalachee leaders of the San Luis Mission community in La Florida to the Spanish ruler, Charles II. Having suffered much at the hands of one royal governor, the Apalachee leadership was encouraged by his replacement, Diego de Quiroga y Losada, to set out their grievances in a letter written in their own language. The only document in Apalachee to date, this letter encodes the technologies of embodiment that both the indigenous peoples of the Americas and their European counterparts recognized as viable in transatlantic epistolary exchange. After assuring the king of their faithfulness and willingness to serve as Christian subjects, they voice the concerns of virtual subjects from all walks of life and from within all early modern European New World empires:

> So we and all these your wretched vassals are maintained and live through your noble and great word. And although we do not see them bodily with our eyes, we see the one

> who occupies your place, that is to say (your lieutenant), who is the one whom we call governor... And we look to this one as to the one who is in your place. And we hear and understand and cherish and keep his word as your very own word, believing it and obeying it.

The letter concludes with an extended leave-taking that performs the obedience and vassalage intoned in the body of the missive: "we wrap our hearts around your feet." As they beg the sovereign's forgiveness, they also pointedly direct his attention to the physical object before him: "This is as far as this goes. Look at it and understand it" (Hann and McEwan 1998: 156–8).

Within the general discursive space carved out by such transatlantic indigenous letters, there emerged what Leinhard calls an " 'autonomous' literary genre of unexpected dimensions" (Leinhard 1997: 176). Citing the 66 epistolary folios of the Inka Titu Cusi Yupanqui, writing in 1570 to Philip III of Spain and "the vast letter-chronicle (1,189 folios)" of Guaman Poma de Ayala (1611), Leinhard argues that indigenous resistance discourse both frees itself from "the conventions of the epistolary traditions," while employing the mode to embody its politics. The mediative power of the epistle is especially evident in the conclusion of Poma de Ayala's *Letter to a King* (1613), where the *mestizo* narrator engages in an imaginary dialogue with Phillip II concerning the "true state of affairs in Peru." To the narrator's mind, the imaginary dialogue is best performed within the epistolary format: "We can communicate with one another by letter, with Your majesty asking for information and myself replying" (Castillo and Schweitzer 2001: 128). Regretting that he cannot address the king "face to face," Poma de Ayala proceeds to construct an imaginary set of epistles that frame native knowledge and native discourse in the new cultural setting of "coloniality" as a function of royal interrogation and local response.

Gendered Epistles

Of all the forms of early modern transatlantic letters, women's epistles offer perhaps the most salient indices of the structural and historical transformation in European subjectivities entailed in New World colonization. As "conversational" texts consumed with the everyday, women's letters are especially valuable sites for locating "the different forms of women's power and influence within the family, locality and occasionally within a wider political scene" (Daybell 2001: 13). Women's letters sent across the Atlantic underscore the gendered nature of the epistolary "go-between." They served not only as "messengers" that mediated orality and literacy, the public and private, but also as a discourse of gender difference whose Old World antinomies of work and leisure, masculine and feminine, were challenged by New World circumstances. Women's experiences in the colonies exacerbated the "category crisis" that many feminist historians see at work in the *querelle des femmes* debates that dominated discussion of sex roles throughout the early modern period (Merrim 1999: xi–xliv) and their transatlantic epistles often expose a heightened awareness of the widening social and sexual divide inculcated by life in the New World.

While fewer transatlantic women's letters survive than men's, it is clear from the ancillary evidence that colonial women often positioned their utterances in an epistolary mode, even if they did not post them on an ocean-going ship. Such is the case in Anne Bradstreet's many verse epistles to her husband. Bradstreet penned private verse "In Thankful Acknowledgement for the Letters I Received from My Husband out of England." Calling herself his "loving love and dearest dear," Bradstreet sought out an epistolary mode for her lyric poetry that could range "home, abroad, and everywhere" (Bradstreet 1967: 230). The feeling of being adrift and in need of an epistolary tether to friends and family remained a central fact of colonial women's lives nearly one hundred years later, when Elisabeth Begon of New France (1696–1755) wrote to her son-in-law: "What are you doing dear son, and where are you? This is what I do not know, nor shall I know any times soon, which gives me great pain. Adieu" (Castillo and Schweitzer 2001: 403).

Many colonial women in the Americas found themselves in similar positions, managing personal and family relations at great distances, without the assistance of men. The letters of such women show them "participating in a masculine world of information exchange beyond the household and family, rather than the kind of personal communication that is often taken to characterize women's letters" (Laurence 2001:195). In an early modern world where demands for preferment and reward were strictly gendered, colonial women often found themselves thrust into traditionally masculine roles. Witness, for example, this 1556 letter from Doña Isabel de Guevara, in Asunción, Paraguay, to the Princess Dona Juana, regent in Spain:

> Very high and powerful lady... On reaching the port of Buenos Aires, our expedition contained 1,500 men, but food was scarce and hunger was such that within three months, 1,000 of them died... The men became so weak that all the tasks fell on the poor women, washing the clothes as well as nursing the men, preparing the little food there was, keeping them clean, standing guard, patrolling the fires, loading the crossbows when the Indians came sometimes to do battle, even firing the cannon and arousing the soldiers who were capable of fighting. (Lockhart and Otte 1976: 15–16)

Doña Isabel says she writes so that "her Highness will readily believe that our contributions were such that if it had not been for us, all would have perished." As in so many transatlantic letters, believability is the key issue, but with one important difference. Writing as a woman, Doña Isabel's subject position is subordinated (rhetorically, at least) to men: "were it not for the men's reputation, I could truthfully write you much more and given them as the witnesses." Despite its rhetorical subordination, however, Doña Isabel's letter manages to remain a frankly practical text, as forthright and practical as any conquistador's, pointing out how "ungratefully" she has "been treated in this land" and asking for preferment.

The situation was even more difficult, however, when a colonial woman had cause to address her epistle to a man in the public sphere. Such is the case of the letters of Maria Van Rensselaer (1645–89?) of New Netherland, whose transatlantic correspondence came about as a result of the death of her husband, the director of the colony of Rensselaerswyck. Burdened with the responsibility of carrying on business until a suitable male replacement could be found, Maria Van Rensselaer discovered that crafty men indebted to her husband were trying to take advantage of her because she was a woman. Fighting back, she complained to male relatives back home, "I told [them] . . . I would await your answer before I would pay one stiver" (Van Rensselaer 1935: 51). Admitting that she could not stand "Braggarts and pompous men," Maria Van Rensselaer took advantage of the time and distance involved in transatlantic epistolary negotiations to hold them at bay. Even her brother was shocked by her epistolary toughness. Commenting on his sister's resistance to his plans for her husband's estate, Richard Van Rensselaer remarked, "instead of thanking me for brotherly advice, [she] sent me a very sharp answer" (ibid: 160).

Epistolary embodiment was particularly difficult for women like Maria Van Rensslaer because they were forced to act in a masculine, public space. This exposure was multiplied if the letter appeared in print. While many men's transatlantic letters were written strategically, with print in mind (as was the case with Cortés' *cartas*), similar letters written by women met with outrage. The career of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz's (1651–95) *Carta Atenagórica* (1690) shows how epistolary ground rules for women were far more rigid. Replying to Sor Juana's religious tract, written in an epistolary mode, the bishop of Puebla points out that by publishing her letter, he is in effect punishing her by submitting her to the discipline of the scribal economy. The bishop tells Sor Juana: "I have printed it, . . . so that you may read yourself in clearer lettering" (La Cruz 1988: 199). In a traditional patriarchal attack on women's learning, the bishop further remarks: "Letters that breed arrogance God does not want in women." Letters were fine, the bishop chided, as long as they did "not remove women from a position of obedience." The discursive shelter letters provided for men (a space of "conversation," informality, and speculation) often proved to be a house of cards for women. The same Pauline tradition that exalted letters also admonished women to "keep silent" (1 Corinthians 14: 34). Even in the relative privacy of letters, women found their utterances under surveillance. Thus, like other transatlantic letters we have examined, women's stress embodiment and the continuity of social order. The female body and the women's role in the early modern social order, however, did not easily lend themselves to what Erasmus termed "a mutual conversation between absent friends . . . neither unpolished, rough, or artificial, nor confined to a single topic."

Epistolary Revolution

By the first decades of the eighteenth century, epistolarity had become so constitutive of bourgeois identity that Jürgen Habermas dubbed that period of European history "the century of the letter." Through epistolary discourse, Habermas maintains, the bourgeois individual "unfolded himself in his subjectivity" (Habermas 1991: 48). This "unfolding" of subjectivity coincided with an explosion in the production of letter writing manuals and the establishment of "literary" epistolary collections. These, in turn, gave birth to a "specialized literature . . . whose aim it was to regulate and control ordinary forms of writing." Against the Renaissance humanists' insistence on brevity and clarity, eighteenth-century letter writing manuals emphasize propriety, regulating "the terms of epistolary exchange according to a precise perception of the positions occupied by the people involved in a given correspondence" (Chartier 1997: 1, 75).

Such demands for propriety extended into the activities of bourgeois social revolutionaries. Even the American Revolution, harbinger of future creole revolutions in Mexico and Latin America, found respectability in letters. John Dickinson politely expressed his outrage at British colonial policy in the *Letters from a Farmer in Philadelphia* (1768). Benjamin Franklin framed his life story as a Chesterfieldian letter to his son posted from Twyford, England, even as its implicit purpose was to explain "that adversion to arbitrary power that has stuck to me my whole life" (Franklin 1958: 17). J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur's *Letters from an America Farmer* (1782, 1783), which was published in London, reflects its author's attempt to use epistolarity to mediate his own divided loyalties during his time of exile from the American colonies. Even the Declaration of Independence, with its salutation, leave-taking, and signatories, poses as a "candid" letter to Europe.

For indigenous peoples across the Americas, the creole revolutions of independence created a situation in which "epistolary relations . . . ceased to be carried out within a stable framework." (Leinhard 1997:173). "In this qualitatively different situation," Martin Leinhard argues, "Indian-led letter writing definitively abandoned its vertical relationship with the supreme authority and began to move in all sorts of horizontal directions" (Leinhard 1997: 173). In British North America, the letters exchanged between Eleazar Wheelock, the Protestant missionary founder of Moor's Charity School for Indians, and his Algonquian students epitomize the shifting power dynamics at work in eighteenth-century indigenous epistolarity. During the 1750s, Wheelock printed many of his students' letters under the auspices of several metropolitan missionary groups – the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and the Society in Scotland for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, among others – in order to raise money for his mission. In their metropolitan print manifestations, Wheelock's Indian letters functioned much the same way as Columbus' Indian heralds had in 1493. Through a skillful manipulation of Native voices, Wheelock produced a body of Indian epistles that seemed to repeat the motto of the Massachusetts Bay Colony Seal, which depicted a Native American calling to Europe, "Come over and help us" (Castillo and Schweitzer 2001: 245).

However, as Laura J. Murray explains, Wheelock's Indian correspondents "still maintained circles in which they could speak and act outside of his knowledge or control." Murray shows how the letters of one convert, David Fowler, actually shuttle between "complex emotion or negotiation and formulaic obedience" (Murray 1996: 20, 21). Thus, Murray exposes how eighteenth-century North American Indian epistolarity reflects the "horizontal" movement and chaos that Leinhard describes for Latin America in the same period.

For African Americans in the eighteenth century, letter writing was also focused on power and symbolic violence. Letter writing by slaves is perhaps the least common form of early American epistolarity, but the letters of Phyllis Wheatley to her fellow slave and friend in Connecticut, Arbor Tanner, and her transatlantic letters to the Countess of Huntington and Lord Dartmouth, reveal the rhetorical complexities involved in African American epistolarity. For a slave, a woman, and a colonial subject, Wheatley's letters are surprisingly forthright, and although she executes many gestures of obeisance (calling herself an "untutor'd African"), she performs them within the overarching eighteenth-century bourgeois social context of letter writing as sociability. Her salutation to Lord Dartmouth is especially interesting for the way it mobilizes the sociability and conversationality of the eighteenth-century familiar letter in the service of a subjectivity that both defers to the metropolitan aristocrat and embodies the disembodied slave. Wheatley salutes Dartmouth in the guise of "an African who with the now happy America exults with equal transport in the view of one of its greatest advocates presiding with special tenderness of a Fatherly heart" over American colonial affairs (Wheatley 1988: 166). Linking her subject position with that of a dependent colony seeking freedom, Wheatley shrewdly employs the mediating power of the transatlantic epistle, that had since 1493 mobilized both signs of obeisance and the "illusion of unbounded communication" (Boreau 1997: 24), to break free of her marginal identity.

Perhaps the most important piece of writing in any colonial free black American's life was a letter. In *The Interesting Narrative* (1791), Olaudah Equiano prints in full the letter of manumission penned by his former master, Robert King. King's letter circulates around the Atlantic world along with Equiano, thereby "giving, granting, and releasing unto him . . . all right, title, dominion, sovereignty, and property" over himself. As a result of this transatlantic epistle, Equiano observes, "the fair as well as the black people immediately styled me by a new appellation . . . which was freeman" (Equiano 1995: 120). In a related way, the transatlantic letters of Toussaint L'Overture to the French Directory were posted across the Atlantic as a method of political embodiment at a distance – "in order to justify," L'Overture explains, "in your eyes and in the eyes of my fellow citizens" the actions of a revolutionary and freeman (Castillo and Schweitzer 2001: 541).

From the first transatlantic American letter of 1493 to Olaudah Equiano's eighteenth-century letter of manumission, epistolarity in the Atlantic world involved a series of discursive negotiations that signaled early on the "proto-creole" identities of many Europeans in the New World. Despite assertions that they remain members of the religious and secular communities they had left behind, their letters often betray them as a different people, a people of contingency, distance, and change. Although New Spain's *cartas de relación* and New England and New Netherland's letters of instruction were instituted as modes of imperial administrative control, the familiarity of letters – their "go-between" nature, secrecy, publicity, and conversationality – opened spaces for transgressive behaviors and alternate subject positions that exceeded the grasp of even the most hegemonic states. Pious letters of New World missionaries struggled hard to maintain orthodox acceptance of providence while constantly acknowledging the contingency of things in the New World. The interior spaces of a transatlantic missive might perfectly encapsulate the inner reaches of the Christian heart, but in the wrong hands and under trying circumstances, they might just as often spur sectarian controversy, doubt, and dread. Colonial women, whose social relation to writing was always already suspect, found themselves in the double bind of being by necessity tied to writing when they tried to maintain the familial and religious bonds that were commonly accepted as the proper sites for performing gender difference.

For Native peoples in the Americas, letters became a fundamental mode of discursive resistance and cultural revitalization. Alphabetically literate indigenous scribes and writers exploited the transatlantic letter's status as messenger to attach themselves to the imperial body politic that sought to forcible remove them from their homelands or to strip them of communal membership. To Africans, whether slaves or freemen, finding their way in the early modern "Black Atlantic" meant navigating discourses of legality and sociability that inevitably turned on the epistolary mode and its central negotiating role in manumission and patronage. Thus, at the social margins of the Atlantic world, the letter was an appropriately "marginal" mode of discourse, mediating from the borders of empires, embodying the disembodied subject in such a way as to "bypass all intermediaries standing between ordinary public opinion and decision makers" (Boureau 1997: 24–5).

Although some scholars have seen transatlantic letters primarily as harbingers of the novel – their episodic nature prefiguring fictional narratives of national identity (e.g., Armstrong and Tennenhouse 1992) – reading early America through its epistles offers an instructive contrast to studies that focus on the Americas of books and printed codices. "The difference between a book and a letter," Erasmus wrote, "is that the latter must be adapted as far as possible to the immediate occasion, whereas a book is for general consumption" (Erasmus 1978: 14). An epistolary history of the Americas reveals a place of "immediate occasions" and human colonial subjects who imagined themselves as "emissaries" and "go-betweens."

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Altman Jane Gurkin (1982). *Epistolarity: Approaches to a Form*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press.

Altuna, Elena (2000). "Imagenes del Peru y Protocriollismo en las cartas Privadas de los Inmigrantes." *Revista de Critica Literaria Latinoamerica*, 26 (52): 215–25.

Armstrong, Nancy and Tennenhouse, Leonard (1992). *The Imaginary Puritan: Literature, Intellectual Labor, and the Origins of Personal*

Life. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Boureau, Alain (1997). "The Letter-Writing Norm, a Medieval Invention." In Roger Chartier, Alain Boureau, and Cecile Dauphin, eds. *Correspondence: Models of Letter-Writing from the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 24–51.

Bradstreet, Anne (1967). *The Works of Anne Bradstreet*. Ed. Jeannine Hensley. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Castillo, Susan and Schweitzer, Ivy, eds. (2001). *The Literatures of Colonial America: An Anthology*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Chartier, Roger (1997). "Introduction: An Ordinary Kind of Writing," In Roger Chartier, Alain Boureau, and Cecile Dauphin, eds. *Correspondence: Models of Letter-Writing from the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1–23.

Cortés, Hernán (1986). *Letters from Mexico*. Ed. Anthony Pagden. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Daybell, James (2001). "Introduction." In James Daybell, ed. *Early Modern Women's Letter Writing, 1450–1700*. London: Palgrave.

de Certeau, Michel (1988). *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Decker, William Merrill (1998). *Epistolary Practices: Letter Writing in America before Telecommunications*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Echevarría, Roberto González (1998). "The Law of the Letter in Garcilasco's Commentarios." In Roberto González Echevarría, ed. *Myth and Archive: A Theory of Latin American Narrative*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Elliot, J. H. (1986). "Introduction." In Hernán Cortés, *Letters from Mexico*. Ed. Anthony Pagden. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Equiano, Olaudah (1995). *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*. Ed. Robert J. Allison. New York: Bedford.

Erasmus, Desiderius (1978). *De Conscribendius Epistolaris*. In J. K. Sowards, ed. *The Collected Works of Erasmus, Vol. 25*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Franklin, Benjamin (1958). *Autobiography and Other Writings*. Ed. Russel B. Nye. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Gehring, Charles T., ed. (2000). *Correspondence, 1647–1653*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.

Gilroy, Amanda and Verhoven, W. M., eds. (2000). *Epistolary Histories: Letters, Fiction, Culture*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press.

Greene, Jack P. (1988). *Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Guillén, Claudio (1986). "Notes Toward the Study of the Renaissance Letter." In Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, ed. *Renaissance Genres: Essays on Theory, History, and Interpretation*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 70–101.

Habermas, Jürgen (1991). *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Hann, John and McEwan, Bonnie G., eds. (1998). *The Apalachee Indians and Mission San Luis*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.

Hulme, Peter (1986). *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean, 1492–1797*. New York: Methuen.

Jane, Lionel Cecil, ed. (1930a). *Select Documents Illustrating the Four Voyages of Columbus*. London: Hakluyt Society.

—— (1930b). "The Letter of Columbus Announcing the Success of His First Voyage." *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 10: 33–50.

La Cruz, Sor Juana Inés (1988). *A Sor Juana Anthology*. Trans. Alan S. Trueblood. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Laurence, Anne (2001). " 'Begging Pardon for all Mistakes or Errors in this Writeing I being a Woman and Doing itt Myselfe': Family Narratives in Some Early Eighteenth-Century Letters." In James Daybell, ed. *Early Modern Women's Letter Writing, 1450–1700*. London: Palgrave, 194–206.

Leinhard, Martin (1997). "Writing from Within: Indigenous Epistolary Practices in the Colonial Period." In Rosaleen Howard-Malverde, ed. *Creating Context in Andean Cultures*. New York: Oxford University Press, 171–84.

Lockhart, James and Otte, Enrique, eds. (1976). *Letters and People of the Spanish Indies: Sixteenth*

Century. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lund, Sarah (1997). "On the Margin: Letter Exchange Among Andean Non-Literates." In Rosaleen Howard-Malverde, ed. *Creating Context in Andean Cultures.* New York: Oxford University Press, 185–96.

Marshall, Joyce, ed. (1967). *Word from New France: The Selected Letters of Marie de l'Incarnation.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Merrim, Stephanie (1999). *Early Modern Women's Writing and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz.* Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.

Murray, Laura J. (1996)." 'Pray Sir, consider a little': Rituals of Subordination and Strategies of Resistance in the Letters of Hezekiah Clavin and David Fowler to Eleazar Wheelock." In Helen Jaskoski, ed. *Early Native American Writing: New Critical Essays.* New York: Oxford University Press, 15–41.

Melzer, Sarah E. and Norberg, Kathryn (1998). "Introduction." In Sarah E. Melzer and Kathryn Norberg, eds. *From the Royal to the Republican Body: Incorporating the Political in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1–10.

Mignolo, Walter (2003). *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality, and Colonization.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Neuschel, Kristen Brooke (1989). *Word of Honor: Interpreting Noble Culture in Sixteenth-Century France.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Quiroz, Sergio Vergara (1987). *Cartas de Mujeres en Chile, 1630–1885: estudio, selección documental y notas.* Santiago: Editorial Andrés Bello.

Round, Phillip H. (1999). *By Nature and By Custom Cursed: Transatlantic Civil Discourse and New England Cultural Production, 1620–1660.* Hanover, NH: University Press of New England.

Smith, John (1986). *The Complete Works of John Smith.* Ed. Philip L. Barbour. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Van Rensselaer, Maria (1935). *Correspondence of Maria van Rensselaer, 1669–1689.* Ed. A. J. F. van Laer. New York: University of the State of New York.

Wheatley, Phyllis (1988). *The Collected Works of Phillis Wheatley.* Ed. John Shields. New York: Oxford University Press.

Wyss, Hilary (2000). *Writing Indians: Literacy, Christianity, and Native Community in Early America.* Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.

Young, Alexander (1846). *Chronicles of the First Planters of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, 1623–1636.* Boston, MA: Little and Brown.

Zamora, Margarita (1993). *Reading Columbus.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Zecher, Carla (1996). "A New-World Model of Female Epistolarity: The Correspondence of Marie de l'Incarnation." *Studies in Canadian Literature/Etudes en Litterature Canadienne,* 21 (2): 89–103.