
From White Man to Redskin: Changing Anglo-American Perceptions of the American Indian

ALDEN T. VAUGHAN

WHEN THOMAS JEFFERSON wrote his *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1784), he professed to draw heavily “on what I have seen of man, white, red, and black.” Here, as elsewhere, Jefferson demonstrated a knack for phraseology: he was probably the first public spokesman to use the tricolor metaphor that has flourished, with minor rearrangement, ever since.¹ And now, with the historical profession’s increasing attention to race and ethnicity, “red, white, and black” is enjoying a rhetorical boom. Attracted by the color trilogy’s symmetry and symbolism, scholars have recently employed it in numerous book and article titles. Color terminology is as firmly fixed in writings on early America as it is in conversations about modern race relations.²

The tacit justification for using the chromatic metaphor in colonial and early national studies—apart from its ironic parody of “red, white, and blue”—is basically sound: Indians, Europeans, and Africans played central roles in early America, and the commonly accepted color labels are convenient and unambiguous, even though they exaggerate human complexions. Implicitly, if not explicitly, such usage further

A preliminary version of this essay was presented to an American history seminar in January 1978 at the University of Maryland, where I profited from comments by several participants. I am also indebted to James Axtell, Francis Bremer, Virginia Carr, Daniel Richter, and Bernard Sheehan for perceptive critiques and to the staffs of the Folger Shakespeare Library and the American Antiquarian Society for frequent, skillful, and genial assistance.

¹ Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1784), ed. William Peden (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1955), 59. More than a decade earlier, at least one writer used all three colors in reference to America’s inhabitants but not in a single phrase; Bernard Romans, *A Concise Natural History of East and West Florida* (New York, 1775), 37–38. Still earlier, Benjamin Franklin had used similar terms in a single essay but with a different meaning for red; Franklin, “Observations concerning the Increase of Mankind, Peopling of Countries, etc.,” in Leonard W. Labaree *et al.*, eds., *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, 3 (New Haven, 1961): 234.

² Works that use one or more racial colors in their titles and deal, at least in part, with the colonial period include Gary B. Nash, *Red, White, and Black: The Peoples of Early America* (1974; 2d edn., Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1982), and “Red, White, and Black: The Origins of Racism in Early America,” in Nash and Richard Weiss, eds., *The Great Fear: Race in the Mind of America* (New York, 1970); Wesley Frank Craven, *White, Red, and Black: The Seventeenth-Century Virginian* (Charlottesville, Va., 1971); Neal E. Salisbury, “Red Puritans: The ‘Praying Indians’ of Massachusetts Bay and John Eliot,” *William and Mary Quarterly* [hereafter, *WMQ*], 3d ser., 31 (1974): 27–54; James P. Ronda, “Red and White at the Bench: Indians and the Law in Plymouth Colony, 1620–1691,” *Essex Institute Historical Collections*, 110 (1974): 200–15; Wilcomb E. Washburn, *Red Man’s Land / White Man’s Law: A Study of the Past and Present Status of the American Indian* (New York, 1971); Norman J. Heard, *White into Red: A Study of the Assimilation of White Persons Captured by Indians* (Metuchen, N.J., 1973); Dwight W. Hoover, *The Red and the Black* (Chicago, 1976); and Winthrop D. Jordan, *White over Black: American Attitudes toward the Negro, 1550–1812* (Chapel Hill, N. C., 1968). In a few instances, and certainly for Jordan’s work, the title is entirely justified by the historical context. But the use of “red” either in titles or in texts is, I contend, inappropriate in works concerning Indian-European relations in colonial America. (*Mea culpa*, too, in my earlier writings.) In addition to the many authors who refer anachronistically to “reds” and “red men” in writing about the colonial period, most other authors at least call the Europeans “whites,” thus implying a fundamental color difference.

suggests that a tripartite racial division, based to an appreciable extent on perceived differences in pigmentation, underlay colonial America's social and political policies. But such an interpretation and the assumptions on which it rests are misleading: not until the middle of the eighteenth century did most Anglo-Americans view Indians as significantly different in color from themselves, and not until the nineteenth century did red become the universally accepted color label for American Indians.³ To read later perceptions of Indian pigmentation into the first centuries of racial contact is fallacious, because, in general, it distorts the nature of early ethnic relations and, in particular, it obscures the evolution of Anglo-American attitudes toward the Indians.⁴

Color, of course, was not the only characteristic to shape British-American perceptions of non-Europeans. Also important in the formulation of attitudes toward the natives of Africa and America were cultural traits: religion, government, economy, language, technology, and social mores. Important too were physical traits other than skin color: stature, proportions, facial features, and hair texture. But from the dawn of England's intellectual awakening to the African and American continents in the mid-sixteenth century, color perceptions were fundamental to Anglo-American assessments of peoples strikingly different from themselves, because color was more than a matter of aesthetic preference. Pigmentation also symbolized a cluster of behavioral and biological characteristics. In the case of Africans—but not Indians—color prejudice combined with cultural and religious prejudice to place blacks in a tragically inferior status.⁵ That eventually happened to Indians, too, though not quite to the same extent and not until two centuries of culture contact had altered Anglo-American perceptions.

³ Europe's essentially dichromatic perception of human color—white and black, with minor intermediate shades—applied to Orientals as well: they, too, were initially seen as white. See, for example, Allesandro Valignano, S.J. (1580), as quoted in P. G. Rogers, *The First Englishman in Japan: The Story of Will Adams* (London, 1956), 17–18; and John Saris, *The Voyages of Captain John Saris*, Hakluyt Society Publications, 2d ser., 5 (London, 1900), 84. Also see Hiroshi Wagatsuma, "The Social Perception of Skin Color in Japan," in John Hope Franklin, ed., *Color and Race* (Boston, 1968).

In this essay I generally use "Anglo-Americans" rather than "European-Americans" (or "Euro-Americans") because English culture predominated in British America and subsequently in the early United States and because I have drawn primarily on English and American sources, although those sources often include translations from Continental tongues. I find no evidence that non-English colonists or their descendants had different perceptions or terminology; there seems to have been a European consensus on color perception. I cite Spanish, Dutch, and Swedish sources *passim*; for French Canadian sources, see note 24, below.

⁴ Winthrop Jordan, with whom I agree on almost every point and to whose work all students of early race relations are deeply indebted, erred, I believe, in arguing that colonial Americans saw Indians as lighter than they "really" were; *White over Black*, chap. 6. It is more likely that both modern historians and the general public—perhaps because of racial assumptions they cannot easily overcome—are determined to view the Indians as darker than they are. But the reality of color is more subjective than objective: how the Indians' color is judged in comparison to the Europeans' and Africans' was—and is now—largely a matter of social perceptions, which can change to meet the psychological needs of the observer. For useful insights into color and racism, see Franklin, *Color and Race*, especially the essays by Kenneth J. Gergen, Harold R. Isaacs, and C. Eric Lincoln. A serious misunderstanding of seventeenth-century color perception is G. E. Thomas's "Puritans, Indians, and the Concept of Race," *New England Quarterly*, 48 (1975): 3–27, which concludes, "No matter how hard the [seventeenth-century] Puritan tried to transform the Indian or how completely the Indian conformed, the cause was ultimately hopeless because the Indian could never become white." Although Thomas's article is unprofessional on several counts, it is occasionally and mistakenly cited as authoritative.

⁵ A recent wide-ranging analysis of slavery in the Western world concludes that "patterns of both race relations and prejudice are determined by power relationships" rather than by deep-seated racial bias. Such an interpretation, I believe, applies only to a minor extent in British America and seriously underestimates the importance of color bias among European-Americans. See William McKee Evans, "From the Land of Canaan to the Land of Guinea: The Strange Odyssey of the 'Sons of Ham,'" *AHR*, 85 (1980): 15–43.

To generalize baldly what this essay elaborates: English and American writers, and most likely the mass of their countrymen, believed at the outset of England's age of expansion that Africans were inherently and immutably black—a color fraught with pejorative implications—and that therefore Africans were fundamentally unassimilable even if they adopted English ways and beliefs. At the same time, Anglo-Americans believed that American Indians were approximately as light-skinned as Europeans—with all its implications—and thus would be assimilated into colonial society as soon as they succumbed to English social norms and Protestant theology. The first of these beliefs held fast throughout the colonial period and beyond; the second underwent a slow but drastic change in the late seventeenth century and throughout the eighteenth as Anglo-Americans shifted their perception of Indian color from innately white to innately dark and eventually to red. That transformation, reflecting a confluence of European and American ideas and events, signaled important changes in white America's attitudes toward the native population. The new attitudes, in turn, helped assure the Indians' continued segregation and heighten their exploitation in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Although the Indians' position in British America was always precarious, not until they were thought of as inherently inferior "redmen" rather than unenlightened "whites" did their separate and unequal status become firmly fixed in the American mind. Only then could the bulk of American writers hold that Indians were prevented by *nature*—rather than by education or environment—from full participation in America's democracy and prosperity.

EARLY ENGLISH CONTACT WITH AFRICA spawned a vast range of literature—plays, poems, sermons, and secular tracts, as well as accounts of travel and exploration—that reveals a profound antipathy toward African appearance and culture. As Winthrop D. Jordan's *White over Black* (1968) convincingly demonstrates, virtually all descriptions of the "dark continent" portray its inhabitants as unattractive, heathen, and grossly uncivil. In theory at least, the Africans' culture could be ameliorated; their physical characteristics could not. And, although several aspects of African appearance—stature, facial features, and hair texture, for example—displeased the English eye, most striking and disturbing was the darkness of African skin. Descriptions of African people invariably stress their blackness, always disapprovingly.⁶

Europeans accepted with little debate the prevalence and permanence of the African's dark complexion. Doubts focused instead on its cause—whether from tropical heat, disease, or divine judgment—and on the reasons for the degrees of blackness within the continent. An early example of an argument for environmental causation and its implications was André Thevet's *New Founde Worlde*, translated into English in 1568 and widely read in Britain. Extreme solar temperature, Thevet argued, drew heat from the heart and other interior parts, leaving Africans cold on

⁶ Jordan, *White over Black*, chap. 1; and Eldreth D. Jones, *The Elizabethan Image of Africa* (Charlottesville, Va., 1971). The first wave of English settlers used similar pejorative terminology in referring to Africans (as, of course, did later generations). On early colonial attitudes, also see Alden T. Vaughan, "Blacks in Virginia: A Note on the First Decade," *WMQ*, 3d ser., 29 (1972): 469–78.

the inside, scorched on the surface. His observations applied principally to the southern regions: "Those of *Arabia* and of *Egypt* are betweene black and white, others browne coloured whom we call white Moores, others are cleane black." Three decades later, George Abbot, master of University College, Oxford, and the future archbishop of Canterbury, summarized the prevailing English view of African color. By then, the causal explanation had largely shifted from geographical to theological, but the original color perception remained the same: "all the people in generall to the South, lying within the *Zona torrida*, are not only blackish like the Moores: but are exceedingly black . . . so at this day, they are named Negroes, as them, whome no men are blacker."⁷

As Abbot suggested, the English name for central and southern Africans came from their skin color. Throughout Europe, in fact, Africans were almost invariably labeled by color. To the English, they were "blacks," "blackamores," or "Negroes"; to the Spanish, Portuguese, and Italians, they were "negros" and "negras"; to the Dutch, they were "negers." And in each language the word for "black" carried a host of disparaging connotations. In Spanish, for example, *negro* also meant gloomy, dismal, unfit, and wretched; in French, *noir* also connoted foul, dirty, base, and wicked; in Dutch, certain compounds of *zwart* conveyed notions of anger, irascibility, and necromancy; and "black" had comparable pejorative implications in Elizabethan and Stuart England.⁸ An early seventeenth-century cleric neatly tied the contempt for blackness to the standard theological explanation of African complexion, which asserted that Africans were descended from Noah's disobedient son: "the accursed seed of *Cham* . . . had for a stamp [of] their fathers sinne, the colour of hell set upon their faces."⁹ Predictably, to the English eye, the lighter the skin, the less hellish its connotations. Poet Thomas Peyton incorporated the prevailing chromatic hierarchy into a verse description of Africa:

The Libian dusky in his parched skin,
The Moor all tawny both without and in,
The Southern man, a black deformed Elfe,
The Northern white like unto God himselfe.¹⁰

Thus, whether using an English word or borrowing an equivalent term from a Continental language, Englishmen in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries subtly and succinctly reflected their contemptuous view of the African. Captain John Smith, who had seen far more varieties of mankind than had most of his contemporaries, articulated the assumed connection between color and character when he described Africa as "those fryed Regions of blacke brutish Negers."¹¹

⁷ Thevet, *The New Fountaine of Knowledge* . . . , trans. T[homas] Hacket (London, 1568), ff. 25, 13v; and Abbot, *A Briefe Description of the Whole Worlde* (London, 1599), sig. C7. The belief that North Africans were considerably lighter than those on the rest of the continent is graphically demonstrated on an illustrated map reproduced from Willem Janszoon Blaeu, *Appendix Theatri A. Ortelii et Atlantis G. Mercatoris* . . . (Amsterdam, 1631), as "A New Description of Africa, 1631," appended to Jones, *Elizabethan Image of Africa*.

⁸ Emilio M. Martínez Amador, *English-Spanish and Spanish-English Dictionary* (Barcelona, 1945), 699; E. Roubard, ed., *A French and English Dictionary* (London, n.d.), 369; *Nieuw Engelsch Woordenboek*, pt. 2 (Zutphen, n.d.): 586; and Jordan, *White over Black*, 4–11.

⁹ [R. Wilkinson] *Lot's Wife: A Sermon Preached at Paules Crosse* (London, 1607), 42.

¹⁰ Peyton, *The Glasse of Time, in the First Age* (London, 1620; reprint edn., New York, 1886), 142.

¹¹ Edward Arber and A. G. Bradley, eds., *Travels and Works of Captain John Smith, President of Virginia, and Admiral of New England, 1580–1631*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1910), 1: 191, and 2: 705.

Not until the eighteenth century did Englishmen, either at home or in America, develop a somewhat comparable perception of Indians. Rather, Englishmen and Continental Europeans labeled the natives on the basis of culture, not color, and whatever pejorative connotations such terms carried were social rather than biological. No single label predominated, although since Columbian times "Indian," occasionally modified by "West" if the context did not distinguish American from Asian Indians, was the overwhelming favorite. "Natives" probably ranked second in frequency to "Indians." "Savages" (often spelled "salvages"), "barbarians," and "heathens" were also commonly used by Europeans, especially in the sixteenth century, as were, less frequently, "wild people" or "brutish people" and such neutral terms as "country people," "naturals," "inhabitants," "old inhabitants," or "old people."¹² "Americans" and "Virginians" denoted Indians until the swelling colonial population made such words ambiguous; henceforth, "Americans" usually meant European immigrants and their descendants, while the definition of "Virginians" shifted from the natives to the English settlers of the first permanent British colony. Similarly ambiguous, "natives" began as a term for Indians but was soon (though inconsistently) applied to the colonists.¹³

English and Continental writers rarely applied color terms to the original American inhabitants. Not that Europeans were unconcerned with the Indians' color. They were intrigued by it; for the two centuries after 1492, most published accounts of America gave at least some attention to Indian complexion, and many examined it meticulously. During the first decades after 1492, writers took pains to deny that the Indians were black, to counteract the prevailing supposition that all people in torrid latitudes ought to be as dark as Africans. (The discovery that the Indians were not black dealt a crippling blow to the geographical explanation of human color, although that argument in modified form lingered into the nineteenth century.) Columbus, for example, reported that the natives in the Caribbean Islands were "not at all black, but the colour of the Canarians, and nothing else could be expected, since this is in one line from . . . the Canaries."¹⁴ Voyagers to more southerly latitudes found that the inhabitants of the equatorial zone were not appreciably darker, which gave rise to more expansive descriptions of their color and to various causal explanations, especially after Europe realized that America was a separate land mass and its inhabitants were perhaps a distinct branch of mankind.

Most early chroniclers of America's natives called them olive, tawny, or brown, occasionally russet or yellow, and sometimes a combination of such colors. Sir Walter Raleigh, for example, joined two of the standard hues when he described the

¹² Although "Indians" was by far the most common appellation, a few writers eschewed it completely. Sir William Alexander, for example, used "savages," "natives," and "Americans," and Abbot simply referred to "the inhabitants," "the old people," "the people of . . .," and occasionally "the Americans." Alexander, *An Encouragement to Colonies* (London, 1624); and Abbot, *Briefe Description of the Whole Worlde*.

¹³ Other geographical terms, of course, were also used for Indians in specific localities or regions: Floridians, Mexicans, Brazilians, and the like. In the eighteenth century, "Americans" was frequently used by European biologists and occasionally by political writers to distinguish American natives from transplanted Europeans. "Virginians" was often applied to Indians in the early decades of the seventeenth century (during Pocahontas's visit to England in 1616–17, a contemporary referred to her as "the Virginian woman") but rarely thereafter.

¹⁴ Columbus, *The Journal of Christopher Columbus*, trans. Cecil Jane and L. A. Vigneras, Hakluyt Society Publications, extra ser., 38 (London, 1960), 24–25.

women of Guiana as “brown and tawnie.”¹⁵ English plays and poems of the era often resorted to more imaginative descriptions, reflecting both the variety of New World reports and the confusion they produced in the European mind. A masque of 1603 specified that *America* be represented by a woman in “a skin coate the colour of the iuyce of Mulberries,” and Thomas Peyton’s *The Glasse of Time* (1620) described “the American” as “Olive coloured of a sad French green.”¹⁶ Presumably, Peyton’s readers knew what he meant.

Surprisingly, in light of today’s wide acceptance of red as the American Indians’ color label, Europeans rarely associated that color with the Indians before the late eighteenth century, and the few such references are to red stains. Walter Bigges, who accompanied Sir Francis Drake to the West Indies in 1585–86, observed that the natives of Dominica had “their skin coloured with some painting of a reddish tawney.” George Percy corroborated Bigges’s judgment when the Virginia expedition of 1607 stopped at the island en route to the mainland: “their bodies are all painted red to keepe away the bitings of Muscetos.”¹⁷ A few years later, William Strachey described the coloring of Virginia’s Indians. “Their heades and shoulders they paynt oftenest,” he reported, “and those with red, with the roote of Pochone [pokeberry], brayed to poulder mixed with oyle of the walnut, or Beares grease.” In the mid-1630s Father Andrew White related that the Maryland Indians painted themselves “a darke read, especially about the head.”¹⁸ But neither “redskins” nor “reds” appears in the early literature, and the few references to “red Indians” denoted East Indians. “This World’s Sunne,” asserted John Davies in 1599, still clinging to the climatological explanation,

Makes the *More* black, & th’ European white,
Th’ *American* tawny, and th’ *East-Indian* red.¹⁹

¹⁵ Raleigh, *The Discoveries of the Large, Rich, and Bewtiful Empire of Guiana* (London, 1596), 95. For another description of the Indians of the North American coast as brown, see Peter Lindström, *Geographia Americana, with an Account of the Delaware Indians, Based on Surveys and Notes Made in 1654–1656*, trans. and ed. Amandus Johnson (Philadelphia, 1925), 191.

¹⁶ Thomas Champion, *Somerset’s Masque* (1613), as quoted in Allardyce Nicoll, *Stuart Masques and the Renaissance Stage* (London, 1938), 192; and Peyton, *The Glasse of Time*, 142. An early suggestion that American Indians differed in pigmentation from other peoples was offered by Samuel Purchas in 1613: “The tawney Moore, black Negro, duskie Libyan, Ash-coloured Indian, olive-coloured American, should with the whiter European become *one sheepe-fold*”; [Purchas] *Purchas His Pilgrimage* (London, 1613), 546. Although he retained this passage in subsequent editions, Purchas’s other writings indicate his acceptance of the prevailing belief that American natives were innately white.

¹⁷ Bigges, *A Summarie and True Discourse of Sir Francis Drake’s West Indian Voyage* (London, 1589; reprint edn., New York, 1969), 20; and [Percy] “Observations Gathered out of a Discourse of the Plantation of the Southerne Colonie in Virginia . . .,” in Samuel Purchas, comp., *Hakluytus Posthumus: or, Purchas His Pilgrimes*, 4 (London, 1625): 1686, and reprinted in Philip L. Barbour, ed., *The Jamestown Voyages under the First Charter, 1606–1609*, Hakluyt Society Publications, 2d ser., 136–37 (Cambridge, 1969), 1: 130.

¹⁸ Strachey, *The Historie of Travell into Virginia Britania* (1612), ed. Louis B. Wright and Virginia Freund, Hakluyt Society Publications, 2d ser., 103 (London, 1953), 71; and White, “A Briefe Relation of the Voyage unto Maryland,” in Clayton Colman Hall, ed., *Narratives of Early Maryland, 1633–1684*, Original Narratives of Early American History (New York, 1910), 42.

¹⁹ Davies, *Nosce Teipsum . . . Hymes of Astrae in Acrosticke Verse* (London, 1622), 40. The reason for the attribution of red skins to East Indians is obscure. Assuming that East Indians looked darker than American Indians but lighter than most Africans, the color descriptions make logical if not literal sense. Davies may have drawn his inspiration from a work of Philippe de Mornay, translated into English in 1581, which was less specific but employed a wider spectrum. The sun, according to Mornay, “maketh some folks whyte, some black, some read and some Tawny, . . . the Ethiopian blacke, and the Scotte yellowish.” Presumably, Mornay included the American Indians among the tawnies. Mornay, *A Woorke concerning the Trewness of the Christian Religion*, trans. Sir P[hilip] Sidney and A. Golding (London, 1587), 21–22.

Part of the confusion over the Indian's color stemmed from the differences in complexion from region to region, from tribe to tribe, and even within tribes. David Ingram, a sailor on Sir Humphrey Gilbert's expedition to North America in 1568, reported that the Indians in the southern part were olive, those in the north tawny. In 1583 Antonio de Espejo observed that in the area that later became New Mexico "the women are whiter skinned than the Mexican women." A decade later, Thomas Blundeville insisted that Indians in hot zones are "browne bay like a Chestnut, and the higher they dwell to either of the Poles Arctique or Antarctique, the whiter most commonly they be."²⁰ And readers of Richard Hakluyt's *Divers Voyages Touching the Discoverie of America* (1582) could find in the accounts of coastal North America a considerable chromatic range. In Florida the Indians were "of tauny colour" and in future South Carolina they were "of colour russet, . . . not much unlike the Saracens"; Virginia's Indians were "more white than those that we founde before," while the Narragansetts of southern New England had "the colour of brasse, some of them endline more to whitnes: others are of yellowe colour."²¹

Clearly the Indians were not all of the same hue. Clearly too they were—on the surface at least—appreciably darker than Englishmen and other Europeans. But the reason for the Indians' color was debatable. In the sixteenth century, both heredity and environment had their champions; by the early seventeenth century, a consensus endorsed environment. Most chroniclers who knew the Indians well insisted that they were naturally white-skinned. That judgment had to overcome an earlier contention, which circulated widely in England, that Indians were dark-skinned: Richard Eden's *Decades of the New World* (1555), a compilation of travel narratives that extensively describes America's inhabitants, includes an account "Of the Colour of the Indians" by Francisco López de Gómara, a participant in the early Spanish conquest. He argued that West Indians were "in general eyther purple, or tawny lyke unto sodde quynses, or of the colour of chestnuttles or olyves: which colour is to them natural and not by theyr goynge naked as many have thought." Gómara qualified his emphasis on heredity, however, by adding that "theyr nakednesse have sumwhat helped therunto" and by acknowledging wide variation within the Indies, "with suche diversitie as men are commonly whyte in Europe and blacke in Affricke, even with lyke variety are they tawny in these Indies, with divers degrees diversly inclynynge more or lesse to blacke or whyte." And a few pages later Gómara quoted, without comment, Jacobus Gastaldus's description of Newfoundland's inhabitants as "whyte people."²²

Perhaps in reaction to Gómara's insistence that some West Indians were naturally

²⁰ [Ingram] "The Relation of David Ingram," in David Beers Quinn, ed., *The Voyages and Colonizing Enterprises of Sir Humphrey Gilbert*, Hakluyt Society Publications, 2d ser., 84–85 (London, 1940), 2: 285; Espejo, *New Mexico; Otherwise the Voiage of Anthony of Espejo . . . in the Year 1583* (London, 1587), 191; and Blundeville, *M. Blundeville His Exercises, containing Sixe Treatises . . .* (London, 1594), f. 262v.

²¹ Hakluyt, *Divers Voyages Touching the Discoverie of America* (London, 1582; facsimile edn., Amsterdam, 1967), 86, 46, 50, 53. This edition has bracketed page numbers for the reader's convenience (the original carries only signature letters); an accompanying volume, David B. Quinn's *Richard Hakluyt, Editor*, has an index by Alison Quinn that gives modern locations for the various tribes described in Hakluyt's narratives.

²² Gómara, "Of the Colour of the Indians," in Edward Arber, ed., *The First Three English Books on America, (?1511–) 1555 A.D.* (Birmingham, 1885), 338, 345. Gómara's account of Indian color gained new prominence when it was reprinted and placed on the opening pages of Pietro Martire d'Anghiera et al., *The History of Travayle in the West and East Indies . . .*, trans. Richard Eden and Richard Willes (London, 1577).



*Figure 1: John White's portrait of an Indian near Roanoke, North Carolina, showing extensive body painting. Most of White's contemporaries attributed the Indians' coloration to such painting as well as to constant exposure to the sun. Reproduced from Paul Hulton and David Beers Quinn, *The American Drawings of John White*, 2 (London and Chapel Hill, 1964): 47, courtesy of the University of North Carolina Press.*

dark, and to other observers' failure to account for the Indians' outward appearance, many subsequent authors stressed the innate whiteness of North American Indians. In 1578 George Best argued against climate as the cause of human complexion, partly because "under the Equinoctiall in *America* the people are not blacke, but white."²³ In 1587 René de Laudonnière, commander of an ill-fated Huguenot outpost in Florida, depicted the Indians there as olive. He added, however, that "when they are borne they be not so much of an olive colour and are far whiter. For the chief cause that maketh them to be this colour, proceedes of annointings of oyle . . . and because of the sun which shineth hotte upon their bodies." A Dutch scholar, Jan Huygen van Linschoten, echoed Laudonnière. "When they come first into the world," he wrote in 1598, they "are not so blacke but very white: the blacke yellowish colour is made upon them by a certaine oyntment. . . . Their colour likewise changeth because they goe naked, and with the burning heate of the sunne."²⁴ Shortly after the turn of the century, Martin Pring explained that the Indians he had seen along the northeast coast were "a swart, tawnie, or Chestnut colour, not by nature but accidentally." William Strachey, writing of the Indians around the Chesapeake Bay, insisted in "A True Description of . . . Their Collour" that their tawny skin came partly from the sun and partly from a combination of "arsenickstone," ointments, and juices applied "so sone as they ar borne" and reinforced with daily painting. That Strachey may in some measure have been attempting to refute Gómara is suggested by the analogy both used to describe the resulting complexion. The Indians dye themselves, Strachey noted, because they consider it "the best beauty, to be neerest a kynd of Murrey, as a sodden Quince is."²⁵ Both "murrey" (reddish blue) and "quince" (dull yellow) appeared frequently in European descriptions of the Indians.

For English readers, the most convincing evidence of the Indians' whiteness undoubtedly came from their compatriots, such as Strachey, who settled temporarily or permanently in America. From Virginia, Captain John Smith described the Indians near Jamestown as "a colour browne when they are of any age, but they are borne white." Another participant in the Jamestown venture thought the Indians' skin to be tawny, "not so borne but with dying and paynting them selves, in which they delight greatly." And John Rolfe, whose marriage to Pocahontas made him an unimpeachable authority on the natural hue of at least one Virginia Indian,

²³ Best, *A True Discourse of the late Voyage of Discoverie for the Finding of a Passage to Cathaya* . . . (London, 1578), 28.

²⁴ Laudonnière, *A Notable Historie containing Foure Voyages Made by Certaine French Captayens unto Florida*, trans. R[ichard] H[akluyt] (London, 1587), 4; and Linschoten, *His Discours of Voyages into ye Easte & West Indies* (London, 1598), 220, 224. For French Canadian statements that the Indians were innately white, see W. L. Grant, ed., *Voyages of Samuel de Champlain, 1604–1618*, Original Narratives of Early American History (New York, 1907), 142; Marc Lescarbot, *History of New France*, trans. and ed. W. L. Grant, 3 vols. (Toronto, 1907–14), 3: 138–39; and Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France, 1610–1791*, 73 vols. (Cleveland, 1896–1901; reprint edn., New York, 1959), 1: 279, 2: 73, 38: 241, and 63: 265. Compare *ibid.*, 4: 205; and Chrestien Le Clercq, *New Relation of Gaspesia, with the Customs and Religion of the Gaspesian Indians*, trans. and ed. William F. Ganong, Champlain Society Publications, no. 5 (Toronto, 1910; reprint edn., New York, 1968), 241.

²⁵ Pring, "A Voyage Set out from the Citie of Bristoll . . . for the Discoverie of the North Part of Virginia, in the Yeere 1603 . . ." in Samuel Purchas, comp., *Hakluytus Posthumus: or, Purchas His Pilgrimes*, 20 vols. (Glasgow, 1905–07), 18: 325; and Strachey, *Historie of Truvel into Virginia Britania*, 70.

attributed “their blackness” to ointments and smoky houses, which, he contended, had the same effect on Indian hides that smokehouses had on English bacon.²⁶

Virginia’s Indians differed in customs and language from those in many parts of British America, but not, apparently, in their innate color. In 1666 George Alsop described the Susquehannocks of Maryland and eastern Pennsylvania: “Their skins are naturally white, but altered from their originals by the several dyings of Roots and Barks, that . . . metamorphize their hydes into a dark Cinamon brown.” William Penn reported similarly on the natives of his colony. They are “of Complexion, Black,” he observed in 1683, “but by design, as the Gypsies in England.”²⁷ And several New England writers, whose familiarity with Indians could scarcely be doubted, reached the same conclusion. William Wood (1634), Thomas Morton (1637), and Roger Williams (1643), among others, testified that the Indians in their vicinity were naturally white.²⁸ Many of these early English colonists, including Penn, Williams, and missionary John Eliot, believed that Indians were probably descended from the lost tribes of Israel and that Indians therefore possessed essentially the same pigmentation as Europeans.²⁹

There were, of course, varying shades of pigment even among Europeans—from very light in Scandinavia to relatively dark in Spain—and occasionally Indians were compared to “swarthy Spaniards.” But several commentators insisted that the natives of North America were scarcely, if at all, darker than the average Englishman. “Their color is not much unlike the Sunne burnte Countrie man, who laboureth daily in the Sunne for his living,” according to Dionyse Settle, who had accompanied Martin Frobisher to the northern coast in 1577. “Their infants,” insisted Thomas Morton after several years among the Massachusetts Indians, “are of complexion white as our nation, but their mothers in their infancy make a bath of . . . such things as will staine their skinne for ever, wherein they dip and washe them to make them tawny.” And the Reverend William Crashaw, a staunch supporter of the Virginia enterprise, told of “a Virginian [Indian], that was with us here in *England*, whose skinne (though hee had gone naked all his life, till our men persuaded him to bee clothed) . . . was little more blacke or tawnie, than one of ours

²⁶ Arber and Bradley, *Travels and Works of Captain John Smith*, 1: 65; [Gabriel Archer (?)] “Description of the People,” in Barbour, *Jamestown Voyages under the First Charter*, 1: 103; and Samuel Purchas, “Of Virginia,” in his *Purchas His Pilgrimage* (1613; London, 1626), 844.

²⁷ Alsop, *A Character of the Province of Maryland* (London, 1666), in Hall, *Narratives of Early Maryland*, 366; and Penn to the Committee of the Free Society of Traders of the Province, residing in London [August 16, 1683], in Albert Cook Myers, ed., *Narratives of Early Pennsylvania, West New Jersey, and Delaware, 1630–1707*, Original Narratives of Early American History (New York, 1912; reprint edn., 1959), 230. Penn also likened the Indians’ complexion to an Italian’s.

²⁸ Wood, *New Englands Prospect* (London, 1634), 54–55; Williams, *Key into the Language of America* (London, 1643), 52; and Morton, *New English Canaan* (London, 1637), 32. Also see [William Morrell] “Morrell’s Poem on New England,” *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, 1st ser., 1 (1792): 135; and Thomas Lechford, “Plain Dealing: or, Newes from New-England,” *ibid.*, 3d ser., 3 (1833): 103.

²⁹ For a general discussion of the Lost Tribes theory, see Don Cameron Allen, *The Legend of Noah: Renaissance Rationalism in Art, Science, and Letters* (Urbana, Ill., 1949), 125–28. For Anglo-American subscribers to the theory, see, for example, Henry Whitfield, *The Light Appearing More and More towards the Perfect Day*, in *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, 3d ser., 4 (1834): 72–74, 93–95, 127–28; Penn to the Free Society of Traders, 236–37; and Williams, *A Key into the Language of America*, ed. John J. Teunissen and Evelyn J. Hinz (Detroit, 1973), 85–86. For the European side of the search for Jewish parallels, see Cecil Roth, *A Life of Menasseh ben Israel—Rabbi, Printer, and Diplomat* (Philadelphia, 1934); and Ronald Sanders, *Lost Tribes and Promised Lands: The Origins of American Racism* (Boston, 1978), esp. 363–72.

would be if he should goe naked in the South of *England*.”³⁰ Englishmen, then, perceived Indians as essentially white and, at most, a shade darker than themselves.

Despite this belief, and despite almost universal praise of the Indians' physique and physiognomy, Englishmen in Europe or America harbored a deep prejudice against almost all aspects of Indian culture. William Strachey is representative. Writing from Virginia in 1612, he described the Indians as “generally tall of stature, and streight, of comely proportion, and the women have handsome lymbes, slender armes, and pretty handes.” Of Indian beliefs and customs, however, Strachey was mostly contemptuous: “their chief god . . . is no other indeed then the devill”; “they are a people most voluptuous”; “vindictive and jelous they be” and “very barbarous.”³¹ In fact, many of the same pejoratives that had been applied to Africans appear in descriptions of Indians. In 1559 William Cuninghame described Africans as “blacke, Savage, Monstrous, & rude.” He considered Indians not much better—in some respects “comparable to brute beasts”—but the absence of a color label for the Indians points to a crucial difference in perception.³² For, although Englishmen's descriptions of Indians often are almost as negative as their accounts of Africans, their writings focus on customs, not bodies, on nurture, not nature. To be sure, the catalogue of imagined Indian shortcomings is long: nakedness, cannibalism, barbarism, idolatry, devil worship, brutality, lechery, indolence, and slovenliness. Some observers mitigated the Indians' alleged vices by reciting their virtues: hospitality, integrity, eloquence, hardiness, stoicism. But the lists of negative qualities, especially those compiled by armchair explorers, are usually more extensive and more emphatic. George Best, for example, had seen Indians in Newfoundland and admired their intelligence, modesty, and strength; he also thought them “brutishe and uncivil people” who “live in Caves of the Earth, and hunte for their dinners . . . even as the Beare, or other wilde beastes do. They eat rawe fleshe and fishe, and refuse no meate, howsoever it be stincking. They are desparate in their fighte, sullen of nature, and ravenous in their manner of feeding.” *The Historie of Travayle in the West and East Indies* (1577), the last of Richard Eden's influential translations of Continental narratives, offers a diatribe against the Mexican Indians that concludes, “God never created so corrupte a people for vice

³⁰ Settle, *A True Reporte of the Laste Voyage into the West and Northwest Regions, etc.*, 1577 (London, 1577), sig. c8; Morton, *New English Canaan*, 32; and Crashaw, *A Sermon Preached in London before the Right Honourable Lord La Warre* . . . (London, 1610), sig. e2. Crashaw thought West Indians considerably darker than Virginian Indians. An early eighteenth-century observer declared that Indians along the mid-Atlantic coast were born as white as Spaniards and Portuguese; Ann Maury, *Memoirs of a Huguenot Family* (New York, 1853), 350.

³¹ Strachey, *Historie of Travell into Virginia Britania*, 71, 88, 112, 104, 77. Strachey was less impressed than most of this contemporaries by Indian physiognomy, but he was quick to add that it was “nothing so unsightly as the Moores”; *ibid.*, 71. More representative of seventeenth-century European judgment was a French description of the Indians in Canada as “brown, tawny, and swarthy. . . . Their colour, however, does not lessen at all the natural beauty of the features of their faces.” Le Clercq, *New Relation of Gaspesia*, 241. A distinction should be drawn between armchair explorers in Europe, who had little if any contact with Indians, and actual explorers, who closely observed the Indians. The latter's descriptions are generally more favorable than are the former's. Both, however, usually praised Indian physique and physiognomy. For recent studies of early English writings on North American Indians, see H. C. Porter, *The Inconstant Savage: England and the North American Indian, 1500–1660* (London, 1979); and Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Settling with the Indians: The Meeting of English and Indian Cultures in America, 1580–1640* (Totowa, N.J., 1980).

³² Cuninghame, *The Cosmographical Glasse, Conteynyng the Principles of Cosmographie, Geographie, Hydrographie, or Navigation* (London, 1559), 185, 201.

and beastliness, without any mixture of goodnesse and civilitie.” And George Abbot accused the Indians of being “naked, uncivill, some of them devourers of mans flesh, ignorant of shipping, without all kinde of learning, having no remembrance of history or writing among them, . . . utterly ignorant of scripture, or Christ, or Moyses, or any God.”³³ Even John Rolfe, requesting permission to marry Pocahontas, complained that her “education hath bin rude, her manners barbarous, her generation accursed, and . . . [she is] discrepant in all nurtriture from my selfe.” Finally, King James I, in a statement that effectively summarized his subjects’ ethnocentric perception of America’s natives, called them “beastly *Indians*, slaves to the Spaniards, refuse of the world, and as yet aliens to the holy covenant of God.”³⁴



Figure 2: Seal of the Massachusetts Bay Colony (1675–90). Early Anglo-American expectations of Indian conversion are reflected in this seal, carved by John Foster, in which the Indian invites the English to “Come over and help us.” Reproduced courtesy of the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass.

James’s “as yet” was important. However much he and his countrymen abhorred Indian customs and beliefs, they believed that the Indians would one day be converted into neo-Englishmen. The English themselves, many writers readily admitted, had once been barbarian and pagan; their Roman conquerors had brought the twin blessings of civility and Christianity, for which Rome deserved

³³ Best, *A True Discourse of the Late Voyage of Discoverie*, 3d pagination: 51, 62; d’Anghiera *et al.*, *History of Travayle in the West and East Indies*, f. 458v; and Abbot, *A Briefe Description of the Whole Worlde*, sig. r2.

³⁴ Rolfe to Thomas Dale, 1613, in Ralphe Hamor, *A True Discourse of the Present State of Virginia* (London, 1615), 64; and King James, *A Counter-Blaste to Tobacco* (London, 1604), sig. b2.

abundant praise.³⁵ Would not the Indians similarly respond? Once they saw the clear superiority of English life and faith, the American natives would embrace such advantages avidly. Early English reports from the New World encouraged such expectations. George Best recalled that Indians captured by the Frobisher expedition quickly "beganne to growe more civill"; George Peckham announced optimistically that the Indians were "thirsting after christianitie"; and the elder Richard Hakluyt drew on explorers' chronicles to predict that the Indians in the area of prospective English settlement were ready "to submytte them selves to good government, and ready to imbrace the christian faythe." Accordingly, much of the promotional literature of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries made conversion and the uplifting of the Indians a major goal of English colonization.³⁶

In short, early English writings reflect a deep bias against Indian culture but not against Indian color, shape, or features; the American native was socially deplorable but physically admirable. The challenge to English colonists was therefore educational: the natives must be converted to Protestant Christianity, taught English language and law, and trained in the social mores of Tudor-Stuart England. They must become Englishmen in everything except geographic origin. Africans, however, largely for reasons of outward appearance, were already deemed permanently debased and actual or potential slaves. The difference in English attitudes toward Indians and Africans is underscored in Nathaniel Field's epitome of the two major parts of the world that had recently been opened to English scrutiny: "wilde *Virginia*, Black Affricke."³⁷ Black men would remain forever black and barbarous, England's imperialists believed, but wildmen could be transformed by civilization and Christ.

IN 1634 WILLIAM WOOD, AN EARLY MASSACHUSETTS SETTLER who had recently returned to England, published a detailed description of New England's flora, fauna, and native inhabitants. Wood left no doubt about the natural color of the Indians in that region. "Their swarthinness is the sun's livery," he insisted, "for they are born fair." The first American edition of Wood's book appeared in Boston in 1764. Its editor, Nathaniel Rogers, added a footnote to that observation: "this was one of the popular errors given into by our author."³⁸

Rogers's editorial comment reflects a fundamental shift in color perception from the early seventeenth to the late eighteenth century: by the later date, most Anglo-Americans no longer saw the Indian as inherently white. "The number of purely

³⁵ For examples of comparisons between Indians and ancient Britons, see Thomas Hariot, *A Briefe and True Reporte of the New Found Land of Virginia* (Frankfort, 1590), sig. c1; and Crashaw, *A Sermon Preached in London*, sig. c4v. Also see the paintings and discussions of ancient Picts and Britons in Paul H. Hulton and David B. Quinn, eds., *The American Drawings of John White*, 2 vols. (London, 1964).

³⁶ Best, *A True Discourse of the Late Voyage of Discoverie*, 63; Peckham, *A True Reporte . . . of the Newfound Landes . . .* (London, 1583), sig. b4; E. G. R. Taylor, ed., *The Original Writings and Correspondence of the Two Richard Hakluyts*, Hakluyt Society Publications, 2d ser., 76–77 (London, 1935), 2: 211, 339; and Crashaw, *A Sermon Preached in London*, sig. c3.

³⁷ Field, *A Woman Is a Weather-Cock* (London, 1612), sig. d3.

³⁸ Wood, *New Englands Prospect* (1634 edn.), 54–55, and *New England's Prospect*, ed. Rogers (Boston, 1764), 94n.

white People in the World is proportionably very small," Benjamin Franklin observed in 1751. "All Africa is black or tawny. Asia is chiefly tawny. America (exclusive of the new Comers) wholly so."³⁹ Many of Franklin's contemporaries concurred in his basic judgment, although they did not necessarily accept his choice of colors. Jonathan Carver, who traveled through the American colonies in the 1760s, noted that "their skin is of a reddish or copper colour." And, although Carver denied that he would "enter into a particular enquiry whether the Indians are indebted to nature, art, or the temperature of the climate for the colour of their skin," he gave his opinion anyway. "It appears to me to be the tincture they received originally from the hands of their Creator; but . . . at what time the European whiteness, the jetty hue of the African, or the copper cast of the American were given them . . . I will not pretend to determine."⁴⁰ Robert Hunter, writing in the 1780s, similarly described the Indians' hue when he observed a boy "not contented with his natural copper color . . . [who] was painted red in different places." A more explicit statement of the Indians' innate darkness and their efforts to be even darker appeared in John Filson's *Kentucke* (1774): "the Indians are not born white; and take a great deal of pains to darken their complexion, by anointing themselves with grease, and lying in the sun. They also paint their faces, breasts and shoulders, of various colours, but generally red."⁴¹

The perceptual shift from Indians as white men to Indians as tawnies or redskins was neither sudden nor universally accepted. Throughout the eighteenth century, some authors insisted that the Indians were inherently white. After a brief residence in Pennsylvania in the early 1750s, German immigrant Gottlieb Mittelberger reported—perhaps from personal observation, perhaps from reading William Penn—that the Indians "are born as white as we ourselves are."⁴² More impressive dissent from the new consensus came from James Adair, a long-time supervisor of Indian affairs and an authority on Indian life. The first page of his *History of the American Indians* (1775) stated unequivocally that the "copper or red-clay colour" of the American Indians was "merely accidental, or artificial"; following most sixteenth- and seventeenth-century writers, he ascribed Indian complexion to climate and ointments. Yet at times even Adair hinted at a fundamental color distinction between Europeans and Indians. "All the Indians," he noted, "are so strongly attached to, and prejudiced in favour of, their own colour, that they think as meanly of the whites, as we possibly can doe of them."⁴³ Adair thus had it both ways: he considered the Indians innately white—which was necessary to his belief in their Jewish origin—yet he implicitly reinforced the image of dark-skinned natives and white-skinned Europeans viewing each other as distinct color categories.

That perception had been growing since the late seventeenth century. At first it

³⁹ Franklin, "Observation concerning the Increase of Mankind," 234.

⁴⁰ Carver, *Travels through the Interior Parts of North America in the Years 1766, 1767, and 1768* (London, 1778), 223–24.

⁴¹ [Hunter] *Quebec to Carolina in 1785–1786: Being the Travel Diary and Observations of Robert Hunter, Jr., . . .*, ed. Louis B. Wright and Marion Tinling (San Marino, Calif., 1943), 36; and Filson, *The Discovery, Settlement, and Present State of Kentucke* (Wilmington, Del., 1784), 98–99.

⁴² Mittelberger, *Journey to Pennsylvania*, ed. Oscar Handlin and John Clive (Cambridge, Mass., 1960), 63. Mittelberger described the Indians' acquired color as "black-yellow."

⁴³ Adair, *The History of the American Indians . . .* (London, 1775; reprint edn., New York, 1968), 1–4.

appeared as a contention that stains and paints increased, rather than caused, the Indians' darkness. "They are of a tawny colour," reported a Virginia colonist in 1689, "and they make themselves more so, by annointing their bodies with bear's grease." Soon after the turn of the century, former South Carolina governor John Archdale attested that the "Natives are somewhat Tawney, occasioned, in a great measure, by Oyling their Skins, and by the naked Raies of the Sun." Similarly, John Lawson in 1709 described the Indians of the Carolinas as "tawny, which would not be so dark, did they not dawb themselves with Bears Oil, and a colour like burnt Cork."⁴⁴ By 1728, when William Byrd published his *History of the Dividing Line*, the Indians' color seemed indisputably darker than European-Americans', but Byrd thought it could be "blanched" by two generations of intermarriage. Other commentators, by mentioning the Indians' dark hue without attributing it to environmental or cultural influences, implied a natural darkness. "Their skins," according to Daniel Gookin, supervisor of Indians in Massachusetts, "are of a tawny colour, not unlike the tawny Moors in Africa." Reverend Samuel Lee, also of Massachusetts, described the Indians as "tawny coloured: like the Tartarians."⁴⁵ Writing in the last quarter of the seventeenth century, neither Gookin nor Lee attributed the dusky hue to stains or the sun, as had most of their New England forebears.

The shift in color ascription, explicit or implicit, is not the only sign that European perceptions had changed. The terminology of ethnic identification also altered significantly between the early years of English colonization and the eve of the American Revolution. Almost without exception, sixteenth- and seventeenth-century writers referred to people of the Old World as Englishmen, Spaniards, Frenchmen, and so forth, often as Christians, seldom as whites except to distinguish them from blacks. The few exceptions suggest that the contrast between the Indians' *acquired* color and the Europeans' *natural* hue provided some observers with a handy label for Europeans of whatever nationality, but such usage remained rare in Indian-European contexts until the eighteenth century. A New Netherland document of 1652, for example, complained that "some malicious and evil disposed persons have not scrupled to inform . . . the Indians what sum and price the Dutch or Whites are giving each other for small Lots," but few if any other seventeenth-century Dutch documents use "whites" (*blancken*) in Indian contexts. The author of the anomalous statement from 1652 may have previously served on the African coast, as had many early Dutch officials, and hence have drawn on the vocabulary of black-white relations in the Dutch slave trade.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ [John Clayton (?)] "An Account of the Indians in Virginia," ed. Stanley Pargellis, *WMQ*, 3d ser., 16 (1959): 230; Archdale, *A New Description of . . . Carolina* (London, 1707), 7; and Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina* (London, 1709), 171. Also see John Brickell, *The Natural History of North Carolina* (Dublin, 1737), 294–95. Brickell's volume is almost entirely plagiarized from Lawson's *New Voyage*.

⁴⁵ [Byrd] *The Prose Works of William Byrd of Westover: Narratives of a Colonial Virginian*, ed. Louis B. Wright (Cambridge, Mass., 1966), 160–61, 221–22; Gookin, *Historical Collections of the Indians in New England* (Boston, 1792; facsimile reprint edn., New York, 1972), 4; and Lee to Nehemiah Grew, 1690, in "Letters of Samuel Lee and Samuel Sewall Relating to New England and the Indians," *Transactions of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, 14 (1911–13): 147. Also see Carl Bridenbaugh, ed., "Patrick M'Roberts' Tour through Part of the North Province of America," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 59 (1935): 174.

⁴⁶ E. B. O'Callaghan, ed., *Laws and Ordinances of New Netherland, 1638–1674* (Albany, N.Y., 1868), 131. The original Dutch manuscript is in the New York State Archives, Albany. The rarity of Dutch use of *blanck* in Indian contexts is attested by Charles Gehring of the New Netherland Project; personal communication, November 2, 1981. On Dutch officials who went from Africa to America, see Jordan, *White over Black*, 172–73.

The first seventeenth-century English usage of “whites” in an Indian context appears in a portion of George Fox’s journal of his American travels, recorded in the 1670s but not published until the twentieth century. Fox reported a New England Indian’s account of an ancient belief that “a white people should come in a great thing of the sea.” If the transcription from Fox’s notes is accurate, Indians perhaps adopted color terminology before Anglo-Americans did, although the Indian’s reference may have been to outward rather than innate color—a parallel to the early Europeans’ use of “tawny” and “sodden quince.”⁴⁷

No such ambiguity clouds a South Carolina law of 1696 “for . . . Determining all Causes and Controversies between *White Man* and *Indian*.” Among Carolina legislators at least, and presumably among some of their contemporaries, “whites” was emerging as a legitimate label for Americans of European descent in lieu of “Christian” and “English.” Perhaps the South’s recent influx of Africans prompted an increased sensitivity to pigmentation and encouraged color classifications: the earliest surviving instances of such terminology appear in Southern documents. But authors and officials in Northern colonies were not far behind. Cotton Mather’s *Negro Christianized* (1706) used “whites” primarily in contrast to blacks, but in one passage he differentiated both from a third division of mankind: “As if the great God went by the *Complexion* of men, in His Favours to them! As if none but *Whites* might hope to be Favoured and Accepted with God! Whereas it is well known that *Whites*, are the least part of Mankind. The biggest part of Mankind, perhaps, are Copper-Coloured; a sort of *Tawnies*.” By the 1730s “whites” appeared frequently in Pennsylvania Council minutes and in Indian treaties.⁴⁸ By the second half of the eighteenth century, “white” had become a common appellation for a European of whatever nationality or whatever longevity in America. (National labels, of course, continued to be used where appropriate, especially to distinguish among several groups of European colonists.) For example, Philadelphia naturalist John Bartram usually referred to “Indian” and “English” in his published *Travels* (1751), but he occasionally used “whites” and “white men” to mean Europeans in general. Similarly, Jefferson asserted in his *Notes on the State of Virginia* that he considered

⁴⁷ [Fox] *Journal of George Fox*, ed. John L. Nickalls (Cambridge, 1952), 624. Nearly a century earlier, Arthur Barlowe of the Roanoke outpost described the Indians as “yellowish” and Europeans as “white people,” and he reported that the Indians were amazed “at the whiteness of our skinnies.” Barlowe was writing before extensive contact had altered Anglo-American notions of Indian pigmentation; the Indians, however, must have been puzzled by people who clothed their bodies and used no dyes or ointments. Also at Roanoke, Ralph Lane used “white men” to mean Europeans of unspecified nationality. “Arthur Barlowe’s Discourse of the First Voyage,” in David Beers Quinn, ed., *The Roanoke Voyages, 1584–1590*, Hakluyt Society Publications, 2d ser., 104–05 (London, 1955), 1: 102, 111–12; “Ralph Lane’s Discourse on the First Colony,” *ibid.*, 261.

⁴⁸ John D. Cushing, ed., *The Earliest Printed Laws of South Carolina, 1692–1734*, 2 vols. (Wilmington, Del., 1978), 1: 118, *The Earliest Printed Laws of New Jersey, 1703–1722* (Wilmington, Del., 1978), 22, *The Laws of the Province of Maryland* (Wilmington, Del., 1978), 199, and *The Earliest Printed Laws of the Province of Georgia, 1755–1770*, 2 vols. (Wilmington, Del., 1978), 1: 15; Samuel Hazard, ed., *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania . . .*, 16 vols. (Philadelphia, 1838–53), 4: 281; Mather, *The Negro Christianized* (Boston, 1706), 24; Donald H. Kent, ed., *Early American Indian Documents: Treaties and Laws, 1607–1789*, volume 1: *Pennsylvania and Delaware Treaties, 1629–1737* (Washington, 1979), 291, 375, 404, 428; and Lawson, *New Voyage to Carolina*, 233. The carry-over of color terminology from black-white to Indian-European contexts is illustrated by the writings of an early eighteenth-century Carolinian who often used “whites” in contrast to Africans and occasionally in contrast to Indians. In a few instances, he referred to “white, black, & Indians.” [Francis Le Jau] *The Carolina Chronicle of Dr. Francis Le Jau, 1706–1717*, ed. Frank J. Klingberg (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1956), 22, 39, 155.

"the Indian . . . to be in body and mind equal to the white man," and he clung to such terminology whenever he compared natives and European-Americans.⁴⁹

Apparently, Indians adopted a similar vocabulary—if we can accept the surviving translations—as George Fox's journal entry implied and as several eighteenth-century sources corroborate. As early as 1687, an Onandaga sachem contended that the kings of England and France "are both of one Skinn meaning [the interpreter added] white Skinned, & not brown as they [*sic*] Indians are." This evidence of an emergent Indian sense of color categories and the implication that the differences were innate became more frequent and more explicit in the eighteenth century. In 1751 John Bartram quoted an Indian who advocated "peace and good harmony between the *Indians* and *White People*"; a quarter-century later missionary Samuel Kirkland recorded an Indian spokesman as saying, "We have no . . . inclination of interfering in the dispute between Old England and Boston; the white people may settle their own quarrels between themselves." Indian speeches even applied such words in retrospective accounts, as in an oration of 1773, which began with a brief resumé of Indian-European contact, "Brother, when we first saw the *White People*. . . ."⁵⁰

Anglo-American usage of *tawny* also reflected the new emphasis on color terminology. Until the last quarter of the seventeenth century, it was almost always an adjective, modifying Indians or natives; thereafter, it increasingly became a noun. In 1680, for example, Morgan Godwyn in *The Negro's and Indian's Advocate* discussed the conversion to Christianity of "Tawneys and Blacks"; in the next several decades many authors employed similar terminology.⁵¹ No doubt the temptation was strong among Anglo-Americans and Indians to find generic words to describe themselves and each other. Europeans had applied—or, rather, misapplied—"Indians" to the natives since 1492 but had no convenient term for themselves. "Europeans" was too broad for most contexts; "Christians" soon lost its diagnostic precision; and British America's growing ethnic diversity made "Englishmen" inappropriate. To some extent, perhaps, the coinage of color terms was

⁴⁹ Bartram, *Observations on the Inhabitants, Climate, Soil . . . in His Travels from Pennsylvania to Onondago* (London, 1751; reprint edn., Rochester, N.Y., 1895), 22, 57, 77; and Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, 59–60, 185, 186. For other post-1750 uses of "whites" in Indian-European contexts, see, for example, Sylvester K. Stevens and Donald H. Kent, eds., *Wilderness Chronicles of Northwestern Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1941), 236, 268, 287, 289. Indian uses of "whites" and "white men" proliferated in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, judging from the recorded speeches of the Delaware Prophet, Logan, Cornplanter, Handsome Lake, and others. For examples, see Anthony F. C. Wallace, *The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca* (New York, 1969), 120, 124, 133, 223, 224, 241, 265, 299.

⁵⁰ Lawrence W. Leder, ed., *The Livingston Indian Records, 1666–1723* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1956), 115; Bartram, *Observations on the Inhabitants*, 22; Peter Force, ed., *American Archives . . . : A Documentary History of . . . the North American Colonies*, 4th ser., 2 (1774): 842; and "Extract of the Minutes of a Congress with the Chiefs of the Six Nations," April 17, 1773, in Edmund B. O'Callaghan, ed., *Documentary History of the State of New York*, 4 vols. (Albany, 1849–51), 2: 580. During the eighteenth century, Indian myths about their origins and early history often included white-skinned deities or invaders; see, for example, Wallace, *Death and Rebirth of the Seneca*, esp. 242–48. Also see Wallace, ed., "Halliday Jackson's Journal to the Seneca Indians, 1798–1800," *Pennsylvania History*, 19 (1952): 117–47, 325–49.

⁵¹ Godwyn, *The Negro's & Indians Advocate* (London, 1680), 4. Cotton Mather was especially fond of using "tawny" as a noun rather than as an adjective, usually when describing Indian military activities. See, for example, his *Magnalia Christi Americana: or, The Ecclesiastical History of New-England . . .* (London, 1702), bk. 7, p. 87, *Good Fetch'd Out of Evil: A Collection of Memorables Relating to Our Captives* (Boston, 1706), 38, and *The Negro Christianized: An Essay to Excite and Assist That Good Work* (Boston, 1706), 24.

inevitable as blacks became more numerous and as Indians came increasingly to be seen in ethnic (and eventually racial) rather than national or tribal terms. But the persistence of "Indian" and the tardy appearance of "redmen" on the linguistic scene suggest a lingering reluctance to perceive the Indians in essentially racial terms, a reluctance that weakened, however, as the eighteenth century wore on.

Other, more subtle, indications of a growing pejorative perception of Indian color appear in American writings of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Some are vague, as in Cotton Mather's tale of a "bewitched" girl's encounter with the devil: "hee was not of a *Negro*, but of a *Tawney*, or an *Indian* Colour." Even if Mather meant an Indian's *acquired* hue, the assignment of "an *Indian* Colour" to the devil tells something about Mather's—or the girl's—image of Indians.⁵² Also vague but at least as suggestive in its implications is Governor William Gooch's commentary on the Virginia law of 1724 for "the better government of Negroes, Mulattoes, and Indians," which deprived such men of the political franchise, even if they were free and owned property. In a series of letters to Alured Popple in 1735–36, Gooch explained that the basic issue was complexion: dark-skinned inhabitants were disfranchised purely on the basis of color. Gooch admitted that the number of free blacks and mulattoes "is so inconsiderable, that 'tis scarce worth while to take any Notice of them," but a dark skin, he insisted, should not disable anyone who had attained freemanship. He said nothing about Indians. Gooch either tacitly included them among blacks and mulattoes, or else none had been accorded freemanship. That he probably subsumed Indians under the rubric of mulattoes is strongly suggested by the Virginia Assembly's declaration of 1705 that "the child of an Indian and the child, grand child, or great grand child of a negro shall be deemed, accounted, held and taken to be a mulatto." In any event, the implication of Gooch's remarks and the intention of Virginia's legislation were to include Indians among the colony's colored population.⁵³

Similar intentions appear in other colonial statutes. During the seventeenth century, specific laws rarely applied to both Indians and blacks; the two groups were usually accorded separate and distinct legislative attention. Eighteenth-century lawmakers, however, often lumped them together. New York, for example, frequently proscribed the activities of its "Negro, Indian or Mulatto" populations; Southern colonies used similar language but often added a category of "mustizoes" (part Indian, part black or white). Laws against intermarriage are particularly telling. As early as 1691 Virginia passed an antimiscegenation law

⁵² Mather, "A Brand Pluck'd Out of the Burning," Mather Family Papers, American Antiquarian Society, box 6, folder 6, p. 3, printed with minor variations in George Lincoln Burr, ed., *Narratives of the Witchcraft Cases, 1648–1706*, Original Narratives of Early American History (New York, 1914), 261. If the "Indian color" designation came from Mercy Short rather than from Mather, it probably stemmed from her brief captivity by Indians in 1690—an experience that might well have encouraged her to associate Indians and devils. On such associations generally in the Puritan mind, see William S. Simmons, "Cultural Bias in New England Puritan Perceptions of Indians," *WMQ*, 3d ser., 38 (1981): 56–72.

⁵³ For Gooch's letters, see Emory G. Evans, ed., "A Question of Complexion: Documents concerning the Negro and the Franchise in Eighteenth-Century Virginia," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 71 (1963): 411–15. (My interpretation of Gooch's statements differs appreciably from that of Evans.) The Virginia statute of 1705 is in William Waller Hening, comp., *The Statutes at Large; Being a Collection of the Laws of Virginia, from the First Session . . .*, 3 (Richmond, 1815): 252.

aimed at Indians as well as blacks. (Its 1662 law, while using color as the basis for racial separation, did not mention Indians.) To be sure, Virginia's antimiscegenation laws after 1705 ostensibly ignore Indians, but they were automatically encompassed by the new definition of mulattoes. In 1715 and again in 1741 North Carolina curbed racial intermarriage. Drawing on the intent and almost verbatim on the blatantly racist language of Virginia's act of 1691, the Carolina legislators in 1741 sought to prevent an "abominable Mixture and spurious Issue" by levying a prohibitive fine against any white person who married "an Indian, Negro Mustee, or Mulatto Man or Woman, or any Person of mixt Blood, to the Third Generation, bond or free."⁵⁴ Other colonies did not explicitly prohibit Indian-white marriages before the American Revolution, although Massachusetts almost did in 1705. Samuel Sewall, a supporter of missionary efforts among the New England tribes, claimed to have thwarted the attempt.⁵⁵ In most colonies the taint of color prejudice and the cultural gulf were sufficient deterrents to intermarriage.

Comparable clues to changing Anglo-American perceptions of the Indian are laws concerning servants and slaves. In 1705 Virginia legislated protections for white servants by bracketing together the people it considered non-Christian and nonwhite: "[N]o Negroes, Mulattoes, or Indians, although Christians, or Jews, Moors, Mahametans, or other Infidels, shall, at any Time, purchase any Christian Servant, nor any other, except of their own Complexion." South Carolina in 1712 considered "all negroes, mulatoes, mustizoes or Indians" to be slaves unless they could prove otherwise; later in the century Georgia borrowed heavily from her colonial neighbor when prescribing slavery for "all negroes, Indians, mulattoes, or mestizoes, who now are, or hereafter shall be in this province (free Indians in amity with this government, and negroes, mulattoes, or mestizoes, who now are or hereafter shall become free, excepted)."⁵⁶

Even eighteenth-century New Englanders, with their sparse black and Indian populations, were almost as ready as their Southern counterparts to fuse the two groups in legislation. Cases in point are New Hampshire's "Act to Prevent Disorders in the Night" of 1714 and the regulations proposed in 1723 by Boston's selectmen to control its colored population. The New Hampshire legislation

⁵⁴ A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr., *In the Matter of Color: Race and the American Legal Process—The Colonial Period* (New York, 1978), 122, 123, 127, 129, 169, 204; Hening, *The Statutes at Large, 86–88; A Collection of All the Acts of Assembly, Now in Force, in the Colony of Virginia* (Williamsburg, Va., 1733), 222–23; and John D. Cushing, ed., *The Earliest Laws of North Carolina, 1669–1751*, 2 vols. (Wilmington, Del., 1977), 1: 130, and 2: 65. The only laws in the seventeenth century that commonly classed Indians with blacks were proscriptions on militia service.

⁵⁵ [Sewall] *The Diary of Samuel Sewall, 1674–1729*, ed. M. Halsey Thomas, 2 vols. (New York, 1973), 1: 532. Almon Wheeler Lauber stated that Massachusetts outlawed European marriages to Indians in 1692, and subsequent authors have relied on his testimony. Lauber cited no source, however, and I have not been able to find such an act in the existing records. Lauber, *Indian Slavery in Colonial Times within the Present Limits of the United States* (New York, 1913), 253. For an argument that, despite some restrictive legislation, Indians were not generally subjected to the same proscriptions as blacks, see Jordan, *White over Black*, 163. I concur, but more important in early eighteenth-century legislation is the trend toward equating the two groups. Moreover, champions of Indian-European miscegenation were scarce in the eighteenth century and did not practice what they preached. Symptomatically, perhaps, one of the most frequently cited voices for intermarriage, Robert Beverley in his *History and Present State of Virginia* of 1705, deleted such advocacy in his edition of 1722. Compare Beverley, *The History and Present State of Virginia* (London, 1705), ed. Louis B. Wright (Chapel Hill, 1947), p. 38, with the corresponding page of the edition of 1722, which does not contain the critical paragraph.

⁵⁶ *A Collection of All the Acts of . . . Virginia*, 220; Higginbotham, *In the Matter of Color*, 169; and Cushing, *Earliest Printed Laws of the Province of Georgia*, 2: 276.

empowered local officials and “Her Majesties good Subjects” to “Apprehend or Cause to be Apprehended any Indian, Negro, or Molatto, Servant or Slave that shall be found abroad after Nine a Clock at Night, and shall not give a good and Satisfactory Account of their business.” Boston’s “Articles for the Better Regulating Indians Negroes and Molattos within this Town” set appalling restrictions on non-European residents, whether slave, servant, or free. One provision, for example, required that “every free Indian Negro or Molatto Shal bind out, all their Children at or before they arrive at the age of four years to Some English master.”⁵⁷ That Indians shared with blacks and mulattoes such repressive policies in colonies as diverse as New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New York, Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia (others could be cited) speaks volumes about shifting Anglo-American racial perceptions.

By the eve of the American Revolution, Anglo-Americans had taken the next logical step: they defined “Americans” wholly in terms of themselves. Americans, James Otis assured readers of his *Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved* (1764), were not “a compound mongrel mixture of English, Indian, and Negro, but . . . freeborn *British white* subjects.” Hector St. John de Crevecoeur agreed. “The American, this new man,” he explained in 1786, was a transplanted European or his descendant. A year later, John Jay expanded that notion in *The Federalist*, number 2: “Providence has been pleased to give this one connected country, to one united people, a people descended from the same ancestors, speaking the same language, professing the same religion, attached to the same government, very similar in their manners and customs.”⁵⁸ By the prevailing definition, Indians (and Negroes) simply were not Americans.

Nor, in the eyes of many Anglo-Americans, did Indians merit eventual incorporation into American society. Anglo-America’s fundamental contempt for Indian culture remained relatively constant throughout the history of British America and beyond. What changed under the influence of the new perception of Indians as innately dark-skinned were expectations of the Indians’ civil and theological redemption. Initially the Indians had been viewed as likely prospects for anglicization; by the middle of the eighteenth century they were usually dismissed as incapable and unworthy. Accompanying that judgment was a weakening of the few protections that Indians, as individuals or as tribes, had enjoyed in the previous century.

In the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, English optimism had served as a real, though grossly imperfect, shield against wholesale slaughter, enslavement, or flagrant abuse of the Indians, except in periods of outright war. Although all British colonies subjected Indians to some legal discrimination—prohibitions against serving in the militia or acquiring guns, horses, and liquor, for example—and to individual acts of insult or exploitation, colonial governments often

⁵⁷ A. S. Batchellor, ed., *Laws of New Hampshire*, 2 (Concord, 1913): 138–39; and *A Report of the Record Commissioners for the City of Boston, Containing the Boston Records from 1700 to 1728* (Boston, 1883), 173–75.

⁵⁸ Otis, *The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved* (Boston, 1764), 24; Crevecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer* (New York, 1957), 39; and Jay, *The Federalist*, no. 2, ed. Jacob E. Cooke (Middletown, Conn., 1961), 9. The second edition of Crevecoeur’s *Letters* (London, 1783) differs from the first edition, and almost all subsequent editions, in stating that the American “is *neither* an European, *nor* the descendant of an European” (italics added); the essential message is, however, the same: that Americans are a blend of European stocks.

protected Indian rights and punished white transgressors.⁵⁹ Governmental concern stemmed partly from self-interest, of course: abuse of the Indians could bring lethal retaliation and costly wars. But in most colonies there were genuinely humane leaders who shared the widespread contempt for Indian culture but who also tried to treat individual Indians justly and peacefully. Because they considered the Indians to be as truly and as perfectly God's creatures as anyone, they counted on education and conversion to make Indians into Englishmen. Among the most solicitous of Indian welfare were George Thorpe in early Virginia, the second Lord Baltimore in Maryland, William Penn in Pennsylvania, and Edward Winslow and the elder Jonathan Mayhew in New England.⁶⁰ Most missionaries, too, sought to protect the Indians' lives and well-being while attempting—as missionaries by definition must—to alter the Indians' basic beliefs.

The protections afforded by government and church officials gradually faded during the seventeenth century as public sentiment turned increasingly cynical about the possibility of coexistence and ultimate conversion and as the swelling European-American population became increasingly difficult to regulate. By the mid-eighteenth century, the best the Indian could expect was seclusion on an ever-shrinking reservation or westward migration in the face of an advancing colonial frontier. Powerful tribes won some respect for their usefulness as allies or their danger as enemies; the rest, judging from the writings of the time, were considered by most Anglo-Americans a nuisance to be ignored, enslaved, or eliminated. As Benjamin Franklin observed in 1764 after a major atrocity in western Pennsylvania, "The Spirit of killing all Indians, Friends and Foes, [has] spread amazingly thro' the whole Country." Two years later, Sir William Johnson reported to Whitehall that, in the backcountry from Virginia to New York, the settlers "murder, Robb and otherwise grossly misuse all Indians they could find . . . and [are] treating the Indians with contempt, much greater than they had ever before experienced." The settlers, Sir William lamented, "perpetrate Murders whenever opportunity offers." The stereotypical frontier view that "the only good Indian is a dead Indian" was an American reality long before General Sheridan coined the infamous phrase.⁶¹

Even missionaries reflected the changing view of Indian color and character. During the eighteenth century a new wave of missionary enthusiasm revived efforts

⁵⁹ Although Britain's imperial and colonial governments were uneven and unpredictable in their defense of Indian rights in the seventeenth century, most passed laws against abuse of Indians and made at least sporadic attempts to enforce them. For a complex combination of reasons, Pennsylvania's record on this score is undoubtedly the best, early New England's a distant second best, and Virginia's clearly the worst. Historians are deeply divided on the relative merits of early Indian policies, but most would agree, I believe, that seventeenth-century colonial courts were more likely to punish Euro-American transgressors against Indians than were their eighteenth-century counterparts.

⁶⁰ Thorpe and Lord Baltimore have received relatively little attention from historians of Indian-European culture contact, the former because the information is scarce, the latter because Maryland's early ethnic history has been largely overlooked. Penn has fared far better, drawing frequent (and usually uncritical) praise for his attitudes. Winslow and Mayhew have figured prominently in historical debates over the Puritans' Indian policies; see note 69, below. For an argument that the degree of fairness in Puritan court decisions depended on expediency and ethnocentricity, see Lyle Koehler, "Red-White Power Relations: Justice in the Courts of Seventeenth-Century New England," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 3, no. 4 (1979): 1-31.

⁶¹ Franklin to Richard Jackson, February 11, 1764 in Labaree *et al.*, *Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, 11: 76-78; and Johnson to Henry Conway, June 28, 1766, in E. B. O'Callaghan and Berthod Fernow, eds., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of . . . New York*, 15 vols. (Albany, 1856-87), 7: 835-36.

in many colonies to Christianize the Indians, now that the danger from Indian hostility had receded and as the Great Awakening aroused Christian consciences throughout British America. In a resurgence of attempts to indoctrinate the Indians in English ways and beliefs, several new schools and colleges admitted native youths. Even among educators and institutions, however, the image of the Indian was less hopeful and more susceptible to racial—as distinct from cultural—bias than it had been in the previous century. Plans for Virginia's Indian College at Henrico in the early 1620s and the Harvard charter of 1650 had reflected the seventeenth century's expectation of rapid success based on the biological equality of Indians and Englishmen.⁶² Eighteenth-century efforts reveal a different perception.

The early career of Dartmouth College is illustrative. Several critics of Eleazar Wheelock's missionary school in Lebanon, Connecticut, the precursor to his college in Hanover, New Hampshire, attributed its slim success to English prejudice, freely admitting that they themselves "could never respect an Indian, Christian or no Christian, so as to put him on a level with white people on any account." One of the critics insisted, on the basis of "the irresistible aversion that white people must ever have to black [*sic*]," that "Mr. Wheelock's attempt [*is*] altogether absurd and fruitless. . . . [A]s long as the Indians are despised by the English we may never expect success in Christianizing of them." And it can hardly be coincidental that Wheelock frequently referred to his Indian students as "black" or to his prize pupil, Sansom Occom, as "my black son." Even some of Wheelock's students absorbed notions of abject inferiority and its related color terminology. One Mohegan called himself a "good for nothing Black Indian," and "a despicable Lump of polluted Clay . . . inclosed in this tawny skin."⁶³ The degradation of the Indians had, for Wheelock and his students at least, reached the point where native Americans were rhetorically almost indistinguishable from the Africans who had suffered a century and a half of enslavement and extreme prejudice. It is not, therefore, surprising that in 1764 Thomas Hutchinson of Massachusetts complained, "We are too apt to consider the Indians as a race of beings by nature inferior to us, and born to servitude."⁶⁴ By Hutchinson's time, thousands—perhaps tens of thousands—of Indians were, in fact, enslaved in British colonies from Massachusetts to Barbados. The eighteenth century's view of Indians as innately dark and inferior thus had fruitful implications for America's aboriginal inhabitants.

⁶² On the proposed Virginia College, see Robert Hunt Land, "Henrico and Its College," *WMQ*, 2d ser., 18 (1938): 453–98. The Harvard College charter of 1650, which committed the institution "to the Education of the English, & Indian Youth of this Country," is reprinted in *Harvard College Records (Colonial Society of Massachusetts Publications*, 15 [1925]), 40–42; Harvard's Indian college is described in Samuel Eliot Morison, *Harvard College in the Seventeenth Century*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1936), 1: chap. 17.

⁶³ David Crosby to Wheelock, November 4, 1767, Dartmouth College Library, Hanover, N.H., Papers of Eleazar Wheelock, WP 767604.1; Wheelock to Dennys de Berdt, May 4, 1761, *ibid.*, WP 761304.1; Joseph Johnson to Wheelock, April 20, 1768, in James Dow McCallum, ed., *The Letters of Eleazar Wheelock's Indians* (Hanover, N.H., 1932), 131; and Johnson to Wheelock, December 4, 1774, *ibid.*, 183. On Wheelock's educational and racial views, see James Axtell, "Dr. Wheelock's Little Red School," chapter 4 of his *The European and the Indian: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America* (New York, 1981).

⁶⁴ Hutchinson, *The History of the Colony of Massachusetts-Bay* . . . , 1 (Boston, 1765; reprint edn., New York, 1972): 283.

DOCUMENTING THE SHIFTS IN ANGLO-AMERICAN PERCEPTIONS of Indian color is easier than explaining them. Contemporary authors were oblivious to the changes; they were too close to the phenomena and too involved in them. To a large extent, of course, the reasons for changing attitudes can only be surmised, for they reflect a vast and complicated alteration in millions of disparate individuals whose perceptions of the Indian cannot be precisely reconstructed. Nonetheless, Anglo-American writings of the eighteenth century offer important clues to the psychological imperatives that encouraged "white" Americans to believe that Indians were significantly and irrevocably darker than themselves. At least three major interrelated and mutually reinforcing influences are apparent: the Anglo-Americans' anger at Indian hostility, their frustration over Indian rejection of Christianity and "civility," and their adoption of eighteenth-century racial theories.

First, chronologically, was the transformation of the Indian in English eyes from potential friend to inveterate enemy. That change took place gradually and unevenly, occurring at different times in different places, as military conflict increasingly characterized Indian-English contact. From the standpoint of Anglo-American attitudes, the causes of conflict were irrelevant: Englishmen at home or in America almost invariably blamed the Indians for hostilities and, hence, came to think of them as incorrigibly aggressive and ruthless.⁶⁵ It was only a short step from regarding the Indians as bloodthirsty foes to perceiving them as naturally inferior in morality and humanity, and eventually in color.

The initial Anglo-American view of the Indians was largely amiable and optimistic. Most of the "savages," imperial spokesmen contended, would be friendly. They would also be eager for commerce and the gospel, partly because it would be in their own self-interest but mainly because the English professed to come peacefully, offering voluntary acceptance of English culture and religion. (By contrast, English imperialists viewed Spanish settlement as a model of how to alienate and exterminate the natives.) The Indians would therefore welcome English outposts, willingly sell surplus land, engage in mutually profitable trade, and enthusiastically embrace Protestantism. Yet, from the earliest days of English colonialism, its champions predicted—judging from a century of European experience in America—that some natives would oppose settlement no matter how fairly they were treated. And Indians who persisted in hostility or obstinately rejected free trade and proselytizing, the imperialists argued, deserved no quarter; the English never seriously questioned their own right to occupy part of America, by force if necessary. England's deeply ingrained ethnocentrism (a characteristic other European nations possessed, but apparently to a lesser degree), and England's determination to make profits and converts, which it hoped would emulate Spanish success but not Spanish methods, would brook no native opposition. Even the usually benign younger Hakluyt minced no words on this point: "To handle them gently, while gentle courses may be found to serve . . . be without comparison the

⁶⁵ For an argument that the English mind was especially susceptible to seeing the Indians—or anyone—as untrustworthy, see Karen Ordahl Kupperman, "English Perceptions of Treachery, 1583–1640: The Case of the American 'Savages,'" *Historical Journal*, 20 (1977): 263–87.

best: but if gentle polishing will not serve, then we shall not want hammerours and rough masons enow, I meane our old soldiours trained up in the Netherlands, to square and prepare them to our Preachers hands." With the few recalcitrants chastised, colonization would proceed peacefully, to the benefit of settlers and Indians alike.⁶⁶

Such expectations died early. At Roanoke Island in the 1580s, most of the Indians turned against the colonists, for justifiable reasons, and the neighboring Powhatans probably exterminated the "Lost Colony" of 1587.⁶⁷ In Virginia, settlers and natives clashed almost incessantly from 1607 to 1613, often in open warfare, sometimes in sporadic skirmishes, occasionally in bloodless but hostile negotiations. Nearly a decade of relative calm followed the captivity and conversion of Pocahontas in 1613; the brief and imperfect respite from hostilities ended suddenly with the massacre of 1622, which almost exterminated the colony. Even though responsibility for the massacre ultimately belonged with the English, as their own accounts unwittingly reveal, the Anglo-American attitude toward the Indians quickly shifted from contempt to hatred—a sentiment intensified by the ensuing decade of blatant carnage and by a similar massacre in 1644.⁶⁸

New England's experience offers some parallels and some marked contrasts to Virginia's. Unlike Virginia, the New England colonies had generally peaceful relations with the local tribes until 1675. To a considerable extent that reflected New England's unusual population ratio: epidemics in 1616–17 and 1633–34 greatly reduced the natives while barely touching the colonists, which lessened Indian resistance and further encouraged Puritan immigrants to believe that God intended them to create a New English Zion. So did the Pequot War of 1637, which briefly threatened New England's view of the Indians as potential friends and converts. The decisive victory over the Pequots further reduced Indian numbers, and, when most of the tribes remained neutral or actively supported the colonists, the Puritans' confidence in their own invincibility and in the Indians' vulnerability was reinforced rather than undermined.⁶⁹ By contrast, early Virginians faced an

⁶⁶ Early imperialistic views of America include Crashaw, *Sermon Preached in London*; [Robert Johnson] *Nova Britannia: Offering Most Excellent Fruits by Planting in Virginia* (London, 1609); and Taylor, *Writings and Correspondence of the Two Richard Hakluyts*, 1: 118, and 2: 334, 502–03. For the younger Hakluyt on "gentleness," see *ibid.*, 2: 503.

⁶⁷ On the Roanoke experience, see Quinn, *The Roanoke Voyages, 1584–1590*, 1: 270–72, 281–82, 284–88. For a recent discussion of the Lost Colony's fate, see David N. Durant, *Raleigh's Lost Colony* (New York, 1981), chaps. 17–18.

⁶⁸ On early Indian-English relations in Virginia, see Bernard Sheehan, *Savagism and Civility: Indians and Englishmen in Colonial Virginia* (Cambridge, 1980); Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York, 1975), esp. chaps. 2–6; J. Frederick Fausz, "The Powhatan Uprising of 1622: A Historical Study of Ethnocentrism and Culture Contact" (Ph.D. dissertation, College of William and Mary, 1977); and Alden T. Vaughan, "'Expulsion of the Salvages': English Policy and the Virginia Massacre of 1622," *WMQ*, 3d ser., 35 (1978): 57–84. Significantly, at this early stage of hostilities, Anglo-Americans did not apply color terminology. Even Edward Waterhouse, the most vitriolic of the massacre historians, described the Indians as "naked, tanned, deformed Savages"; Susan Myra Kingsbury, ed., *The Records of the Virginia Company of London*, 4 vols. (Washington, 1906–35), 3: 557.

⁶⁹ Indian affairs in early New England have been seen from widely divergent perspectives. Compare Alden T. Vaughan, *New England Frontier: Puritans and Indians, 1620–1675* (rev. edn., New York, 1979), with Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1975), pt. 2, and Richard Drinnon, *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian-Hating and Empire Building* (New York, 1980), pt. 1.

Indian population that vastly outnumbered them and that had enough political cohesion to use its numerical strength effectively.

But numbers do not tell the whole story. Important too was the strong missionary impulse among New England's founders, an impulse that eventually enjoyed a quarter-century of modest achievement. New England's missionary activity began belatedly in the 1640s, but its success from then until King Philip's War seemed to justify earlier expectations. The uprisings of 1675—once again an Indian response to colonial encroachment and abuses—dashed Puritan assumptions about the eventual transformation of the Indians into proper Englishmen. Henceforth, the British colonists in New England joined those in the Chesapeake and elsewhere in a growing conviction that Indians in general were their enemies. That conviction hardened in the late seventeenth century and throughout the eighteenth as the British colonial frontier became a vast English-Indian battleground, often exacerbated by troops or agents from other colonial powers. Even Pennsylvania, after the effective withdrawal of the Quakers from political control and after the influx of a predominantly non-Quaker population, had its share of racial conflict.⁷⁰

Frequent and ferocious hostilities, regardless of who was at fault, inevitably corroded the earlier Anglo-American view of the Indians and reshaped its vocabulary. References to the Indians, never especially flattering, now became almost universally disparaging. In the aftermath of 1622, Anglo-American spokesmen portrayed the Virginia natives as "having little of Humanitie but shape," "more brutish than the beasts they hunt," and "naturally born slaves."⁷¹ New Englanders reacted similarly to King Philip's War. The Indians were "Monsters shapt and fac'd like men," wrote one New England poet, and most of his compatriots undoubtedly agreed.⁷² Even book titles reflect the shift in attitude. In 1655 John Eliot could write hopefully of the Indians' progress toward conversion in *A Late and Further Manifestation of the Progress of the Gospell amongst the Indians in New England: Declaring Their Constant Love and Zeal to the Truth, with a Readiness to Give Account of Their Faith and Hope, as of Their Desire to Be Partakers of the Ordinances of Christ*. Twenty years later, in the midst of New England's struggle for survival, an anonymous pamphleteer suggested a far different view of the Indians in a *Brief and True Narration of the Late Wars Risen in New-England, Occasioned by the Quarrelsome Disposition, and Perfidious Carriage of the Barbarous, Savage, and Heathenish Natives there*.⁷³ As warfare increasingly became the dominant mode of English-Indian contact, the image of the Indian as vicious savage made deep inroads on the Anglo-American psyche.

⁷⁰ The history of military conflict is traced in a number of secondary studies, most notably in Douglas Edward Leach, *Arms for Empire: A Military History of the British Colonies in North America, 1607–1763* (New York, 1973); Howard H. Peckham, *The Colonial Wars, 1689–1762* (Chicago, 1964); and John E. Ferling, *A Wilderness of Miseries: War and Warriors in Early America* (Westport, Conn., 1980). For Pennsylvania's shift from peaceful relations to frequent hostilities, see Francis Paul Jennings, "Miquon's Passing: Indian-European Relations in Colonial Pennsylvania, 1674–1755" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1965), pt. 4. After 1755, the pace of conflict quickened.

⁷¹ Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus; or, Purchas His Pilgrimes*, 19: 231; and John Boneil, *His Majesties Gracious Letter to the Earle of South-Hampton* . . . (London, 1622), 26.

⁷² Benjamin Thompson, *New Englands Crisis* (Boston, 1676), 19.

⁷³ Eliot's *Late and Further Manifestation of the Progress of the Gospell amongst the Indians* (London, 1655) is reprinted in *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, 3d ser., 4 (1834): 261–87. The anonymous tract appeared in Boston in 1675.

Cotton Mather, whose rhetorical flights often exaggerated but seldom misrepresented colonial sentiments, gave revealing advice to New England's soldiers in King William's War: "Once you have but got the Track of those Ravenous howling Wolves, then pursue them vigourously; *Turn not back till they are consumed. . . . Beat them small as the Dust before the Wind. . . . Sacrifice them to the Ghosts of Christians whom they have Murdered. . . . Vengeance, Dear Country-men! Vengeance upon our Murderers.*" The culmination of a century and a half of military escalation came in 1776 in the Declaration of Independence's only reference to the Indians: The king "has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions." Nearly a decade of border warfare exacerbated the revolutionaries' fear and hatred of the Indians. "The white Americans," observed a British traveler in 1784, "have the most rancorous antipathy to the whole race of Indians; and nothing is more common than to hear them talk of extirpating them totally from the face of the earth, men, women, and children."⁷⁴

War-bred animosities did not require a difference in color perception, but the unconscious temptation to tar the Indian with the brush of physical inferiority—to differentiate and denigrate the enemy—appears to have been irresistible.⁷⁵ War-time epithets have often invoked outward appearance, however irrelevant (witness the "yellow Japs" of World War II), and British Americans frequently resorted to pejorative color labels. In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, as war raged along the northern New England frontier, Cotton Mather castigated "those Tawny Pagans, than which there are not worse Divels Incarnate upon Earth," and "a *swarthy* Generation of *Philistines* here; the *Indian* Natives, I mean, whom alone we are like to have any *Warrs withal*." Nearly a century later, when the bulk of the Indians sided with Great Britain during the American Revolution, Henry Dwight complained of "copper Colour'd Vermine" and hoped that an American army would "Massacre those Infernal Savages to such a degree that [there] may'nt be a pair of them left, to continue the Breed upon the Earth."⁷⁶ Logically enough, "redskins" eventually emerged as the epithet for enemies who usually used red paint on the warpath. Not coincidentally, perhaps, the first reported use of that term appears in a passage about Indian assaults on frontier settlements. In a sentence that suggests the impact of war on changing English attitudes, Samuel Smith of Hadley, Massachusetts, recalled in 1699 that several decades earlier his father had endured Indian raids in the Connecticut Valley. "My

⁷⁴ Mather, *Souldiers Counsell'd and Comforted: A Discourse Delivered unto Some Part of the Forces Engaged in the Just War of New England against the Northern and Eastern Indians* (Boston, 1689), 28; Julian P. Boyd, ed., *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, 1 (Princeton, 1950): 431; and J. D. F. Smyth, *A Tour of the United States of America*, 2 vols. (London, 1784), 1: 345–46.

⁷⁵ On the tendency to stress differences rather than similarities, see Margaret T. Hogden *Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Philadelphia, 1964), 196–201. Despite virulent English antipathy toward the Irish during the same period, however, the Irishman's whiteness was incontrovertible; hence, the English could not perceive of him as dark-skinned. Moreover, the Irishman seldom stained or painted his skin, as the Indians did, so that the outward appearance of the former remained white, of the latter tawny or red. But note the implications of the epithet "black Irishman."

⁷⁶ Mather, *Fair Weather: or, Considerations to Dispel the Clouds, and Allay the Storms of Discontent . . .* (Boston, 1692), 86, and *Military Duties, Recommended to an Artillery Company, at Their Election of Officers . . .* (Boston, 1687), 22; and Henry William Dwight to Theodore Sedgwick, February 18, 1779, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Sedgwick Papers.

Father ever declar'dt," Smith remembered, "there would not be so much to feare iff ye Red Skins was treated with suche mixture of Justice & Authority as they cld understand, but iff he was living now he must see that wee can do nought but *fight* em & that right heavily."⁷⁷

The Indians' refusal to adopt English concepts of civility and religion poisoned Anglo-American attitudes as thoroughly as did warfare. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century expectations of rapid and wholesale anglicization met constant rebuff; by the end of the seventeenth century it must have been clear to all but the more optimistic missionaries that most Indians would never be Christian in faith or English in allegiance and customs. Converts in the southern and middle colonies numbered only a handful; most of John Eliot's "praying towns" had been scuttled by King Philip's War and its aftermath; and even the Quakers in Pennsylvania, despite a commendable effort to treat the Indians fairly, had won few to English ways or beliefs. Occasional successes notwithstanding, the missionary movement had failed. Even less successful was the broader mission of eliminating customs that Englishmen subsumed under the heading of "savagery," such as nakedness, scarification, tribal law and government, hunting instead of herding, and, perhaps most important of all, an exclusively oral language. Some technological assimilation had occurred, as had some imaginative blending of religious ideas, but the overwhelming majority of Indians steadfastly held to their traditional ways and rejected most of the alien culture's offerings.⁷⁸

Who was to blame? The most obvious scapegoat was the Indian himself. He stubbornly resisted spiritual and material improvement, his critics charged, and they eventually concluded that his resistance stemmed either from a deeply ingrained antipathy to "civilization" or from a natural incapacity for improvement. Benjamin Franklin explained to a correspondent in 1753 that "Little Success . . . has hitherto attended every attempt to Civilize our American Indians in their present way of living. . . . When an Indian Child has been brought up among us, taught our language and habituated to Our Customs, yet if he goes to see his relations and make one Indian Ramble with them, there is no perswading him ever to return." Franklin did not consider the Indians inherently incapable of adopting English ways; they simply and obstinately preferred their own.⁷⁹ Many of Franklin's contemporaries were less charitable. The editor of the 1764 edition of William Wood's *New England's Prospect*, for example, thought the Indians incurably barbarian and pagan. "The christianizing the Indians," he peevishly noted,

scarcely affords a probability of success; for their immense sloth, their incapacity to consider abstract truth . . . and their perpetual wanderings, which prevent a steady worship, greatly impede the progress of Christianity, a mode of religion adapted to the most refined temper of the human mind. . . . The ferocious manners of a native Indian can

⁷⁷ Smith to Ichabod Smith, 1699, in Helen Evertson Smith, *Colonial Days and Ways, as Gathered from Family Papers* (New York, 1900), 50.

⁷⁸ There is no way to measure precisely the number of anglicized Indians, but by all accounts it was small. For an attempt to compute the number in New England, see Alden T. Vaughan and Daniel K. Richter, "Crossing the Cultural Divide: Indians and New Englanders, 1605–1763," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, 90 (1980): 23–46. On the importance of language to early European imperialists, see Stephen J. Greenblatt, "Learning to Curse: Aspects of Linguistic Colonialism in the Sixteenth Century," in Fredi Chiappelli, ed., *First Images of America; The Impact of the New World on the Old*, 2 (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1976): 561–80.

⁷⁹ Franklin to Peter Collinson, May 9, 1753, in Labaree et al., *Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, 4: 481.

never be effaced, nor can the most finished politeness totally eradicate the wild lines of his education.

Almost predictably, the editor believed that Indians were not born white: with few exceptions, contempt for Indians correlated highly with a belief in their innate darkness.⁸⁰

A third major influence toward perceiving the Indians as inherently tawny or red came from eighteenth-century naturalists. Few of them had first-hand information about the American Indians—most were European scholars who never visited the New World—but in their frantic attempt to classify systematically all plant and animal life, including the principal divisions of mankind, they contributed directly to the notion of Indians as inherently red and indirectly at least to the belief in their inferiority.

Initially, the naturalists' categories had no hierarchical intent. Their taxonomies were horizontal, not vertical, and each branch of humanity enjoyed equality with all others. Before long, however, the subdivisions of *homo sapiens* acquired descriptive judgments that suggest a relative superiority in Europeans and corresponding inferiority in other races. Such a view meshed perfectly with the eighteenth century's emphatic belief in natural order, metaphorically expressed as a "Great Chain of Being," in which all creatures from microorganisms to angels had permanent places on a hierarchical continuum. The idea of an orderly chain of life had existed for centuries; it flourished in the fifteenth century, for example, when Sir John Fortescue recorded a classic description: "In this order angel is set over angel, rank upon rank in the Kingdom of Heaven; man is set over man, beast over beast, bird over bird, and fish over fish . . . so that there is no worm that crawls upon the ground, no bird that flies on high, no fish that swims in the depths, which the chain of this order binds not in most harmonious concord."⁸¹ Not until the eighteenth century, however, did ranks *within* humankind receive much attention. Then, because natural scientists almost invariably chose skin color as the principal criterion of racial identity, darkness of hue became "scientifically" linked to other undesirable qualities. As Winthrop Jordan has pointed out, for Africans the "Great Chain of Being" soon became a "Great Chain of Color" on which whites regarded blacks as divinely relegated to a lesser rank of humanity.⁸² In the eighteenth

⁸⁰ Wood, *New England's Prospect*, ed. Rogers, 94. Belief in Indian inferiority—in *person* as well as in culture—did not always go hand in hand with a perception of Indians as inherently tawny or red, but the correlation is high. One could argue endlessly over a list of European-Americans who believed the Indians to be their potential equals (after a cultural change), but a consensus could probably be reached on William Penn, Roger Williams, John Eliot, and James Adair; by contrast, *racial* prejudice seems to underlie the attitudes of Nathaniel Rogers, Bernard Romans, and the essayists in *DeBow's Review* (see below). Thomas Jefferson is, as always, eminently arguable. Compare Jordan, *White over Black*, esp. 453, 477–81, and Drinnon, *Facing West*, esp. 78–116. On this point, I find Drinnon more convincing than Jordan. Most of Jefferson's biographers have lauded his attitude toward Indians.

⁸¹ [Fortescue] *The Works of Sir John Fortescue, Knight, Chief Justice of England . . .*, ed. Thomas Fortescue, 1 (London, 1869): 322. On eighteenth-century naturalists and the definition of race, see Bentley Glass *et al.*, eds., *Forerunners of Darwin, 1745–1859* (Baltimore, 1959); Clarence J. Glacken, *Traces on the Rhodian Shore: Nature and Culture in Western Thought from Ancient Times to the End of the Eighteenth Century* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1967); and Benjamin Keen, *The Aztec Image in Western Thought* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1971). The landmark discussion of the "Great Chain of Being" is Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea* (Cambridge, Mass., 1936).

⁸² Jordan, *White over Black*, 252–59.



Figure 3: Charles Linnaeus. Swedish naturalist Linnaeus's classifications and color labels had profound impact on European and American perceptions of the Indians. Reproduced from D. J. N. Stoeber, *The Life of Sir Charles Linnaeus*, trans. Joseph Trapp (London, 1794).

century, American Indians also became victims, though not quite so pejoratively, of the color chain's invidious implications.

The second edition of Charles Linnaeus's *General System of Nature* (1740) presented the Swedish botanist's preliminary attempt at human classification. The previous edition (1735) had said almost nothing about mankind; the new and greatly enlarged version gave only a few lines to the subject, but they were enough to establish four basic groups: "Europaeus albus, Americanus rubescens, Asiaticus fuscus, Africanus niger." Seven subsequent editions, published between 1740 and 1756, repeated those color categories verbatim. In the tenth edition (1758), Linnaeus expanded his discussion of humans. To the four original categories he added two others—wild men and monsters, to whom he assigned no colors—while again ascribing white, red, yellow, and black to Europeans, Americans, Asians, and Africans. But Linnaeus no longer restricted his entries to physical description; he now attributed several character traits to each race. Europeans were, among other things, sanguine, brawny, gentle, and inventive; Americans choleric, obstinate,

content, and free; Asians melancholy, rigid, haughty, and covetous; Africans phlegmatic, crafty, indolent, and negligent.⁸³ The Indians, to be sure, fared far better than Africans and Asians in this Linnaean glossary, and Linnaeus even hinted at the Noble Savage image (“content,” “free”) that was rapidly gaining favor among European intellectuals. But an unavoidable message in Linnaeus’s highly subjective and immensely influential treatise was that American Indians were naturally red and somewhat inferior to whites.

Most of Linnaeus’s scientific contemporaries concurred. In 1744, four years after Linnaeus’s first description of Americans as red, Dr. John Mitchell of Virginia investigated “the proximate cause of the Colour of *Negroes*, Indians, white People, etc.” Drawing on Newton’s *Opticks*, Mitchell argued that the thickness of the skin determined the amount of light reflected by the epidermis and, hence, the extent of its darkness. He saw all mankind as varying only in shade—the Indians differed from Europeans in degree rather than substance—yet even Mitchell argued that the Indians of America and Asia (whom he considered of about the same color) comprised a distinct race and a distinct color category. He also contended that tawny was the original human color: Africans had become darker, Europeans lighter, “Americans retaining the primitive and original Complexion.”⁸⁴ Perhaps from a desire to defend native Americans from European charges of physical inferiority, Mitchell thus gave considerable dignity to Indian color. In that regard, Mitchell was unique.

Of the two prominent eighteenth-century authors who differed significantly with Linnaeus on the Indians’ natural hue, one preceded him by almost two decades and admitted sparse knowledge of America. Richard Bradley’s *A Philosophical Account of the Works of Nature* (1721) lists Indians among the world’s white-skinned people. Of his five categories of mankind, which Bradley based on hair texture as well as on skin color, he included in “the *White Men*” two subcategories: “*Europeans*, that have *Beards*; and a sort of *White Men in America* (as I am told) that only differ from us in having no *Beards*.”⁸⁵ Bradley represents a waning stage in the perception of Indian complexion. More distinguished than Bradley, and more notorious for the counterattacks he provoked, was Georges Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon. The French scientist’s *Natural History* appeared in several editions and innumerable volumes (forty-four in the 1749 version) and was hailed as one of the great works of the time. His disparaging remarks on America in general and on the Indians in particular, however, aroused Jefferson’s ire and inspired other critics as well. Some attacked Buffon for his contention that all mankind was naturally white, “which may be varied by climate, by food, and by manners, to yellow, brown, and black . . . Nature, in her most perfect exertions, made men white.” This extreme environmentalism prodded Henry Home, Lord Kames, to issue an extensive critique. Kames took Buffon to task on several counts, including the notion that

⁸³ Linnaeus, *General System of Nature*, as quoted in [Thomas] Bendyshe, “The History of Anthropology,” *Memoirs of the Anthropological Society of London*, 1 (1863–64): 422, 424–25; and Jordan, *White over Black*, 220–21.

⁸⁴ Mitchell, “An Essay upon Causes of the Different Colours of People,” *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*, 43 (1744–45): 120–30, 146–59.

⁸⁵ Bradley, *A Philosophical Account of the Works of Nature* (London, 1721), 169.

climate is the principal cause of color. If that were true, Kames asked, why were "all Americans without exception . . . of a copper-colour, though in that vast continent there is every variety of climate?"⁸⁶

No answer was really needed, however, for Buffon—much like James Adair at a later date—was simultaneously on both sides of the argument. Although Buffon attributed human color variations to environmental influence, he believed them to be almost permanent: centuries of exposure to a certain climate and to certain foods and body stains could produce essentially different races. And, although Buffon recognized that American Indian complexions varied considerably, he argued that "the whole continent of America contains but one race of men, who are all more or less tawny."⁸⁷ In sum, while Buffon disagreed sharply with Kames and others about the fundamental cause of racial colors, he nonetheless perceived the Indians almost exactly as his critics did—innately dark and racially distinct. That perception appeared with particular virulence on the eve of the American Revolution in Bernard Romans's *Concise Natural History of East and West Florida* (1775). "From one end of America to the other," Romans contended, "the red people are the same nation and draw their origin from a different source, than . . . any other different species of the human genus . . . [They are] a people not only rude and uncultivated, but incapable of civilization."⁸⁸ The overwhelming thrust of eighteenth-century naturalism thus supported the growing conviction that American Indians were inherently deficient in color and basic characteristics. Science had joined forces with war-bred animosities and missionary disillusionment to brand the Indians with an ineradicable mark of inferiority.

IT IS BEYOND THE SCOPE OF THIS ESSAY to trace in detail the evolution of white America's attitudes and policies toward Indians in the early national and antebellum periods. The story has recently received extensive scholarly attention and undoubtedly will continue to attract analysis and debate.⁸⁹ But a brief overview will suggest the major trends and relate them to changing color perceptions.

⁸⁶ Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, *Natural History, General and Particular, by the Count de Buffon*, trans. William Smellie, 9 vols. (2d ed., London, 1785), 3: 57, 173–78, 181, 200–03; and Home, Lord Kames, *Six Sketches of the History of Man* (Philadelphia, 1776), 14–16.

⁸⁷ Buffon, *Natural History*, 3: 57, 173–74, 188. Historians often divide early theorists of the Indians' physical attributes into environmentalists, who believed that climate and circumstances determined color and culture, and biblicists, who viewed basic characteristics as divinely ordained and hence immutable. Some "environmentalists" certainly deserve the label; but others expected changes to occur only after centuries, or at least several generations, and thus were not really admitting that any of their dark-skinned contemporaries (or even the children of their contemporaries) could achieve a light pigmentation and all it implied in racial acceptance. Samuel Stanhope Smith is a case in point. Environment, he contended, could change most aspects of human appearance and behavior, but "a black or dusky complexion, once contracted by the ancestors of a race, is continued in their offspring by a much lower climactical influence, than was originally necessary to create it." Smith thought North American Indians to be naturally dark but made more so "by discolouring paints and unguents." Smith, *An Essay on the Causes of the Varieties of Complexion and Figure in the Human Species*, ed. Winthrop D. Jordan (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), 94–95, 108, 113, 176–77.

⁸⁸ Romans, *Concise Natural History of East and West Florida*, 38–39.

⁸⁹ Significant studies in the last two decades include Francis Paul Prucha, *American Indian Policy, 1790–1834* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964); Reginald Horsman, *Expansion and American Indian Policy, 1783–1812* (East Lansing, Mich., 1967), and "Scientific Racism and the American Indian in the Mid-Nineteenth Century," *American Quarterly*, 27 (1975): 152–68; Richard Drinnon, *White Savage: The Case of John Dunn Hunter* (New York, 1972);

American racial thought in the post-Revolutionary era underwent subtle but significant changes. Ever since the sixteenth century, Europeans had viewed Africans and Indians as fundamentally different from each other in postdiluvian biological development and in their prospects for absorption into British-American society. In the eighteenth century, the gap gradually closed as the Indian became, in the eyes of most white observers, inherently tawny. As earlier, most Anglo-Americans considered Africans immutably black; in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries some writers further debased the Afro-American by contriving polygenic theories to explain what they believed to be the black race's irredeemable physical and behavioral inferiority. Indians, by contrast, were sometimes lauded for superior appearance, virtue, or ability, yet increasingly they too suffered the stigma that white America attached to peoples of darker skin.⁹⁰

That the Indian was, in fact, inherently darker than the European, and that his pigmentation was the sign of a separate branch of mankind, had become axiomatic by the outbreak of the American Revolution. What remained for the Jeffersonian generation and its early nineteenth-century successors was to determine the Indians' proper color label and to reach a rough consensus on the implications of a racial status that was clearly inferior to the white man's but also superior to the black's.

The precise reason for the gradual adoption of red, instead of tawny or some other hue, can only be surmised. Although the earliest recorded use of "redskins" dates from the very late seventeenth century, it is an isolated example and its authenticity is slightly suspect. (Samuel Smith's letter of 1699, which uses "Red Skin Men" and "Redskins," was not published until 1900, when it appeared as a purported transcription inserted in a descendant's Revolutionary-era diary; it may reflect a later editorial hand.) Not until the second half of the eighteenth century did "red" emerge as a fairly common label. By 1765 some Indians may have adopted the primary color label for themselves, either in a pan-Indian sense or

Bernard Sheehan, *Seeds of Extinction: Jeffersonian Philanthropy and the American Indian* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1973); Robert Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York, 1978); Hoover, *The Red and the Black*, chaps. 3–4; and William McLoughlin, "Red Indians, Black Slavery, and White Racism: America's Slaveholding Indians," *American Quarterly*, 26 (1974): 365–85, and "Cherokee Anomie, 1794–1809: New Roles for Red Men, Red Women, and Black Slaves," in Richard L. Bushman *et al.*, eds., *Uprooted Americans: Essays to Honor Oscar Handlin* (Boston, 1979), 125–60. Also relevant and important is Robert E. Bieder, "The American Indian and the Development of Modern Anthropological Thought in the United States, 1780–1851" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1972). Reginald Horsman's excellent *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981) appeared too late for incorporation in this essay. On most matters Horsman and I seem to agree, although I am more impressed than he appears to be with the pervasiveness of popular antipathy to the Indians in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, and I am less impressed than he by the Founding Fathers' supposedly enlightened ideas on race. I think their actions, and indeed many of their statements, reveal them to hold essentially the same racist notions and to be only slightly less pessimistic about the Indians than were their more sanguinary contemporaries. Horsman and I also differ in terminology. I see no advantage to his substitution of *racism* for *racism*; both terms describe the belief that inferior character and ability are inherited by members of certain biologically distinct—by color or otherwise—branches of humankind. I see no significant difference between today's racism and that of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

⁹⁰ Benjamin Rush attributed African pigmentation to hereditary leprosy, which, he believed, could be cured by long residence in temperate climates; Rush, *Sixteen Introductory Lectures, to Courses . . . [on the] Practice of Medicine* (Philadelphia, 1811). Rush is often hailed as one of the Revolutionary era's most enlightened spokesmen, but his statements on race are hardly praiseworthy. For example: "A dull and disgusting sameness of mind characterizes all savage nations," which "is as much the effect of the want of physical influence upon their minds, as a disagreeable colour and figure are of its action upon their bodies." *Ibid.*, 93–94.

perhaps in reference to a particular tribe: "We, red people," a native speaker asserted, "are a very jealous people." (That quotation, too, did not appear in print until much later.) By the 1760s the continuing association of red bodypaint and an almost perpetual enmity—later heightened by the War for Independence—made "redskin" the most plausible epithet. Linnaeus's use of red gave additional impetus. Although the reasons for his choice remain obscure, most likely he sought a primary color to parallel the other races' black, white, and yellow. Red was the obvious candidate because Indians used red stains so widely and because it avoided the confusion that might have come from colors such as brown, olive, and tawny, which were sometimes applied to racial subgroups, especially to North Africans and mulattoes and occasionally to European ethnic groups. In any event, Jefferson and some of his contemporaries used "red" as a racial category in the 1770s and 1780s, a trend that spread rapidly. "Indians," "natives," and "savages" continued to be common appellations, but the conviction sown in the third quarter of the eighteenth century that Indians were inherently red took firm root during the next half century. In the middle of the nineteenth century, James Fenimore Cooper's *The Redskins* (1846) and anthropologist Henry Rowe Schoolcraft's *The Red Race in America* (1847) symbolically marked Caucasian America's full recognition, in both fiction and science, of Indians as innately red and racially distinct.⁹¹

Once red became a viable designation, it seems to have satisfied everyone. To the Indians' bitterest critics, red could signify ferocity, blood, and anger; to their most avid supporters and to the Indians themselves, red could suggest bravery, health, and passion; to those who fell between the judgmental extremes, red could mean almost anything or nothing. In short, red was sufficiently flexible and ambiguous to meet the metaphysical imperatives of a society that did not wholly agree about the Indian's basic character or social and political fate.

The emerging perception of the Indians as innately different and inferior was widespread but not universal. Had it been universal, missionary activity would have languished or expired everywhere; most Indians would have been enslaved or exterminated; and the use of Indians as symbols of America would have stopped abruptly. None of these happened. Despite abundant instances of wholesale disregard for Indian rights and welfare, the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries witnessed a lesser but significant countertrend in attitudes toward the

⁹¹ Smith, *Colonial Days and Ways*, 48–50; and Extract from the Journal of George Croghan in S[amuel] P[rescott] Hildreth, *Pioneer History: Being an Account of the First Examination of the Ohio Valley . . .* (Cincinnati, 1848), 79. As early as 1753, a colonist wrote of "Red Men," but there are few similar references before 1775, when such terminology suddenly proliferated. John O'Neal to James Hamilton, May 27, 1753, in Samuel Hazard, ed., *The Register of Pennsylvania*, 4 (Philadelphia, 1829): 389. Cooper, in his various novels, used color terminology extensively, including "redskins" and "palefaces." In *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish: A Tale*, 2 vols. (New York, 1829), 61–62, Cooper made clear his belief in the permanence of Indian color when Ruth describes an Indian as a "creature, formed, fashioned gifted like ourselves, in all but color of the skin and blessing of the faith." Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville, along with most other American novelists, used "red men" or its variants. By the nineteenth century, most historians, including Francis Parkman, George Bancroft, and William H. Prescott, also referred to "redskins" and "red men." For an analysis of their views on Indians, see David Levin, *History as Romantic Art: Bancroft, Prescott, Motley, and Parkman* (Stanford, Calif., 1959), esp. 127–58. Fictional accounts are analyzed in Albert Keiser, *The Indian in American Literature* (New York, 1933). Linnaeus's impact is hard to measure, but certainly his works were well known to leading eighteenth-century American intellectuals. Cadwallader Colden, among others, corresponded with Linnaeus, Jefferson cited him, and Charles Wilson Peale named his second son Charles Linnaeus.

Indians that afforded them some protection and kept the hostile view from wholly controlling Indian policy in the new nation.

Hints of the Indian as a noble savage had appeared in the earliest decades of European contact with America, but the concept did not reach major stature until the middle of the eighteenth century in Europe and the early nineteenth century in America. Largely as a reaction against what they considered the corruptions of their own societies, European *philosophes* sought models of the natural simplicity and order from which "civilized" society supposedly had fallen in its insatiable quest for property and power. Two attractive foils were available: the "Golden Age" of antiquity and aboriginal America. Both were widely used, and in the process the virtues of both were exaggerated. That was perhaps inevitable when writing of the Indians because none of the *philosophes* had first-hand knowledge of Indian life; in striking contrast to Buffon, they idealized Indian society, although, like Buffon's, their interpretation served their political and intellectual needs. A few European-Americans, especially along the eastern seaboard, adopted similar sentiments.⁹² They and others who respected Indian culture—traders and missionaries, for example, whose personal acquaintance with Indians tempered their ethnocentricity, or systematic students of Indian life, such as William Bartram and John Heckwelder—largely resisted the groundswell of racist attitudes toward the Indians. Although pro-Indian sentiment was a minority viewpoint, it had important repercussions: it encouraged the political, educational, and missionary endeavors of the Revolutionary and early national periods that Bernard Sheehan has labeled "Jeffersonian philanthropy."⁹³

The noble savage countertrend in American thought insisted that certain Indian characteristics were laudable in their own right and—more important—were especially admirable when compared to contemporary European society. Because the Indians seemed to live an unfettered and unacquisitive life amid unspoiled nature, they were hailed by some Americans (following the *philosophes*) as the ideal to which modern man should, to some extent at least, return. Because the Indians appeared to be a "vanishing race," they were romanticized in history, art, and literature. Because the Indians were America's most truly native inhabitants, they personified the nation in statues, cartoons, and cartouches.⁹⁴

⁹² The standard treatment of the noble savage theme is Hoxie N. Fairchild, *The Noble Savage: A Study in Romantic Naturalism* (New York, 1928); also useful is A. L. Dickett, "The Noble Savage Convention as Epitomized in John Lawson's *A New Voyage to Carolina*," *North Carolina Historical Review*, 43 (1966): 413–29. Definitions of noble savagism—usually implicit—vary widely. Too often the term is applied to European observations that merely praise Indian stature or certain traits of character such as hospitality or hardiness; but such praise was almost universal, even among the Indians' most vehement detractors. The true noble savage perception of the Indian, I submit, rests on a belief in (1) the superiority of Indian culture in general to European or Anglo-American culture and (2) the degeneracy of Western culture from an earlier, "higher" level. The *philosophes* saw American Indians as noble because they had not yet succumbed to the corruptions—both individual and collective—of eighteenth-century life. The Indian remained in a Golden Age that closely approximated an earlier European stage of development.

⁹³ Sheehan, *Seeds of Extinction*. On the Indian in Jeffersonian thought, also see Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Lost World of Thomas Jefferson* (New York, 1948), chap. 2. For Bartram's view of the Indians, see *The Travels of William Bartram* (1791), ed. Francis Harper (New Haven, 1958), esp. 306; and, for Heckwelder's views, see his *History, Manners, and Customs of the Indian Nations . . .*, *Memoirs of the Pennsylvania Historical Society*, no. 12 (Philadelphia, 1876).

⁹⁴ Europeans had long used Indian motifs to represent the American continent in plays and illustrations. Americans were slower to adopt such symbols but increasingly used them in the Revolutionary era. Post-



Figure 4: "America." By the early nineteenth century, many Anglo-Americans saw Indians as neither Noble Savages nor symbols of the American continent. Rather, as this English picture from 1804 suggests, Minerva now symbolized America while the Indian had merged with the African into a minor motif. Reproduced courtesy of The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, Del.

Even among their supposed supporters, however, the Indians fared badly, as a host of examples from Jefferson through Thomas McKenney and Lewis Cass amply illustrate. Such “friends” of the Indians contended that in the long run the Indian must be incorporated into the American mainstream, but increasingly in the nineteenth century the number of such advocates declined and the duration of the Indians’ expected tutelage expanded. The Indians, assimilationists argued, must become farmers, landowners, and citizens; they must adopt “white” America’s language, laws, and customs. They must cease to be Indians⁹⁵—even if it took centuries to reach that end. Along the way, Indian desires were rarely considered. Although the overwhelming majority wanted to retain their land and their culture, the Eastern tribes had little choice. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the basic options were assimilation or extermination, with removal to the West as a temporary stage in either case.

Some assimilationists advocated miscegenation as the surest path to de-Indianization. Ironically, the biological solution emerged almost simultaneously with laws in many states against Indian-white intermarriage.⁹⁶ Such laws hint at hypocrisy and racial intransigence among the majority of Americans and reveal the implausibility of intermarriage as a solution to race relations in nineteenth-century America. But whatever the solution—miscegenation, allotment of farmlands in the East, removal to the West, or education in white-controlled boarding schools—the Indian was marked for gradual extinction by the uneasy coalition of his friends and foes. For both groups, as well as for the bulk of Americans who were neither friend nor foe but merely indifferent, the conviction that the Indians were innately and ineradicably “redmen” underlay their concern, or lack of it, for the Indians’ fate. And to most white observers—certainly to the Indians’ foes and almost certainly to the millions who scarcely cared—the stereotypical color carried a host of unfavorable associations that prevented the Indians’ full assimilation into the Anglo-American community and simultaneously precluded their acceptance as a separate

Revolutionary America turned from Indian iconography toward classical symbols and eventually to “Columbia” as a national representation. Significantly, in nineteenth-century paintings that retained an Indian figure, he or she was often assigned to the background and given unmistakably African features and color—a naked and feathered Indian-black child (see figure 4). Relevant studies include James H. Hyde, “The Four Parts of the New World in Old-Time Pageants and Ballets,” *Apollo*, 4 (1926): 232–38, and 5 (1927): 19–27; Roy C. Strong, *Splendor at Court: Renaissance Spectacle and the Theatre of Power* (Boston, 1973); E. McClung Fleming, “The American Image as Indian Princess, 1765–1783,” *Winterthur Portfolio*, 2 (1965): 65–81, and especially “From Indian Princess to Greek Goddess: The American Image, 1783–1815,” *ibid.*, 3 (1967): 37–66; and Hugh Honor, *The New Golden Land: European Images of America from the Discoveries to the Present Time* (New York, 1975).

⁹⁵ For the paradoxical views of the Indians’ early nineteenth-century supporters, see the works cited in note 92, above. On McKenney, also see Herman J. Viola, *Thomas L. McKenney: Architect of America’s Early Indian Policy, 1816–1830* (Chicago, 1974).

⁹⁶ Massachusetts provides a prime example of the impact of emergent racism on antimiscegenation laws. It had no restrictions against Indian-English marriages in the seventeenth century (although, for cultural reasons, few occurred); in 1705 it almost prohibited such marriages but did not, finally, until 1786. Yasuhide Kawashima, “Forced Conformity: Puritan Criminal Justice and Indians,” *Kansas Law Review*, 25 (1977): 362 n. 5. (Kawashima’s reference to an antimiscegenation act of 1692 is based on Lauber, *Indian Slavery in Colonial Times*; see note 55, above.) Two other New England states proscribed Indian-white marriages in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; see *The Public Laws of the State of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations* (Providence, 1798), 483; and *Laws of the State of Maine* (Portland, 1822), 276. The Maine law of 1821 drew verbatim on the Massachusetts act of 1786.

and equal people. Although a few dissenters resisted the prevailing color taxonomy and its correlative racial policies, the surviving literature, both factual and fictional, shows that the Indian was no longer considered a member of the same race; he remained forever distinct in color and character. Even relatively sympathetic spokesmen now believed the Indians to be permanently different. "No Christianizing," declares Natty Bumppo in Cooper's *Pathfinder* (1840), "will ever make even a Delaware [Indian] a white man, nor any whooping and yelling convert a paleface into a red-skin." Bumppo earlier—in *The Prairie* (1827)—puts the same idea more succinctly: "Red natur' is red natur'."⁹⁷

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the shift in Anglo-American perception had reached its logical conclusion: Indian culture was merely a reflection of primordial racial shortcomings and impervious to education or missionization. The Indian was inherently deficient in *character*, which his color proclaimed for all to see. In 1850 the influential *United States Magazine and Democratic Review* could assert as indisputable the "fact that the dark races are utterly incapable of attaining to that intellectual superiority which marks the white race." Four years later, *DeBow's Review* epitomized the antebellum South's attempt to blend racism, ethnography, and polygenesis into a bulwark of white supremacy. "The doctrine of the Unity of the Race, so long believed by the world," one writer insisted, "is ascertained to be false. We are not all descended from one pair of human beings. . . . The negro till the end of time will still be a negro, and the Indian still an Indian." Nor should the white race meddle with a situation beyond its control. Another essayist in *DeBow's* drew the obvious lesson from nearly a century of racist thought: The Indian's "race is run, and probably he has performed his earthly mission. He is gradually disappearing, to give place to a higher order of beings. The order of nature must have its course."⁹⁸ A popular pseudoscientific study, *Types of Mankind* (1854), was less philosophical: "[I]t is in vain to talk of civilizing [the Indians]. You might as well attempt to change the nature of the buffalo." Given such nineteenth-century sentiments, based on a pervasive perception of Indians as inherently dark, incurably savage, and intrinsically non-American, the Indians' subsequent plight comes as no surprise.

⁹⁷ Cooper, *The Pathfinder: or, The Inland Sea*, ed. Richard Dilworth Rust (Albany, N.Y., 1981), 122, and *The Prairie: A Tale*, 1 (Paris, 1827): 113. An English visitor to the United States in the 1790s voiced his pejorative judgment that the Christianized Stockbridge Indians had been "civilized as much as Indians are capable of civilization"; William Strickland, *Journal of a Tour in the United States of America, 1794–1795*, ed. J. E. Strickland, Collections of the New-York Historical Society, no. 83 (New York, 1971), 116. Cooper's corollary, that no white man could become an Indian any more than a redskin could become a white, was another important reflection of the new racial concepts. In the seventeenth century, Anglo-American spokesmen acknowledged (and warned against) the possibility of colonists becoming thoroughly Indianized. No biological barriers were perceived; the settler had only to exchange his ways for those of the Indian. For discussions of Englishmen who "went savage" in British North America, see James Axtell, "The White Indians of Colonial America," *WMQ*, 3d ser., 32 (1975): 55–88; and Vaughan and Richter, "Crossing the Cultural Divide," 46–99.

⁹⁸ *United States Magazine and Democratic Review*, new ser., 27, no. 145 (July 1850): 48; *DeBow's Review*, 17, no. 1 (February 1854): 69; *ibid.*, 16, no. 2 (February 1854): 147–48; and J. C. Nott and George R. Gliddon, *Types of Mankind* (Philadelphia, 1854), 69. Although such views culminated in the 1850s, they had been widespread for at least several decades. In 1830, for example, a writer predicted that "Civilization is destined to exterminate [the Indians], in common with the wild animals"; Charles Caldwell, *Thoughts on the Original Unity of the Human Race* (New York, 1830), 142. Such rhetoric scarcely differs, I contend, from the prevailing sentiment at the end of the American Revolution, although few intellectuals or statesmen were ready to speak so bluntly.