

Chapter 3

“Fertile with Fine Talk”: Ungoverned Tongues Among Haudenosaunee Women and Their Neighbours

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Questions for Critical Reading

1. Why did white women’s position and power within the colonial context change in the eighteenth century? What were the consequences of this change?
2. Why were some women—such as the Desauniers sisters and Konwatsi’tsiaenni—permitted to step outside traditional gender roles?
3. This study disrupts the common history of the male dominated fur trade. Why are studies like this important? What do they reveal about Indigenous women’s lives of the period?
4. How did women from multiple locations in the colony resist attempts to diminish their “voice”? What were the consequences of this resistance?

List of Primary Sources

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- “Letter Written by Mary Brant...” Letter. 1779.
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- “Sauvagesse Iroquoise (Wild Iroquois Woman).” Grasset de Saint-Sauveur, Jacques. Print. 1796–1804.
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- “The Iroquois Attack of For Vercheres, 1692, Madeleine closes the Gate.” Jefferys, Charles Willam. Watercolour. 1918.
http://collectionscanada.gc.ca/pam_archives/index.php?fuseaction=genitem.displayItem&lang=eng&rec_nbr=2835234&rec_nbr_list=2835234
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- “Eighteenth Century selection of Documents relating to Indian Affairs.” Textual Documents. 1696–1796.
http://collectionscanada.gc.ca/pam_archives/index.php?fuseaction=genitem.displayItem&lang=eng&rec_nbr=102179&rec_nbr_list=102179
- “Nova Anglia Novvm Belgivm et Virginia.” Excudit, Johannes Jan Bonius. Map. 1637.
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Multimedia Resources

- Cataraqui Archaeological Research Foundation, Molly Bryant
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- The Pioneer Exploration, Country Wives and Other Fur Trade Women
www.bcheritage.ca/tod/bios/cwives.htm
- The Canadian Encyclopedia, Fur Trade
www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/fur-trade/
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