

- [Journal Home](#)
- [About This Journal](#)
- [Aims & Scope](#)
- [Editorial Board](#)
- [Policies](#)

[Submit Article](#)

[Most Popular Papers](#)

[Receive Email Notices or RSS](#)

Select an issue:

All Issues

Browse

Enter search terms:

Search

in this journal

[Advanced Search](#)



**Marshall Digital Scholar**  
Scholarship  
Publishing  
Preservation

## "A Prey to Their Teeth": Puritan Sermons and Ministerial Writings on Indians During King Philip's War

[Gregory Michna](#), [Arkansas Tech University](#)

### Abstract

King Philip's War encouraged the construction of barbaric Native American typologies by puritan ministers through sermons and wartime histories. While select Algonquians in New England invested in a hybridized identity as a "Praying Indian" during the decades before the war, martial circumstances encouraged ministers to emphasize indigenous savagery, which outweighed earlier efforts to demonstrate the Christian piety of native converts. English texts outlining God's providential wrath linked the contemporaneous war to Old Testament punishments meted out to the Hebrews. This typological reading of current events also superimposed the characteristics of heathen barbarians on Native Americans irrespective of their allegiance, offering an explanatory script for initial puritan losses and justifying harsh reprisals against dehumanized enemies. While Indian Christians struggled to support their English allies and demonstrate friendship and loyalty during the war, this hyperbolic rhetoric promoted patterns of violence and enmity which lasted beyond the immediate aftermath of the conflict and precluded later efforts to join New England's religious community. The events of King Philip's War and the religious impulses undergirding English understandings of barbarism laid the groundwork for eighteenth-century understandings of Indian savagery as an innate aspect of their nature.

### First Page

24

### Last Page

43

### Creative Commons License



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivative Works 4.0 License](#).

### Recommended Citation

Michna, Gregory. "'A Prey to Their Teeth': Puritan Sermons and Ministerial Writings on Indians During King Philip's War." *Sermon Studies* 1.1 (2017) : 24-43.  
<https://mds.marshall.edu/sermonstudies/vol1/iss1/3>

[Download](#)

**INCLUDED IN**

[History of Religion Commons](#)

**SHARE**



**DIGITAL COMMONS**  
powered by bepress

[Home](#) | [About](#) | [FAQ](#) | [My Account](#) | [Accessibility Statement](#)  
[Privacy](#) | [Copyright](#)



Cookies are used by this site. To decline or learn more, visit our [cookies page](#).

Close