

Up and Down the River: Radio Play

Educator Guide

This five part radio drama was co-written by Mohegan mother and daughter, Melissa Tantaquidgeon Zobel and Madeline Sayet. It was collaboratively written through an intertribal artistic lens and produced virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic. For each of the radio plays, there are guiding concepts to analyze with students before, during, and after listening, for greater engagement and understanding. As an extension, students can view the film, *Up and Down the River*, a dramatized story reflecting depictions of real issues and people during the Revolutionary Era. The film and film guide are both located on the Educators Project. You will notice overlapping themes across the radio play and the film leading to great opportunities for inquiry.

Introduction:

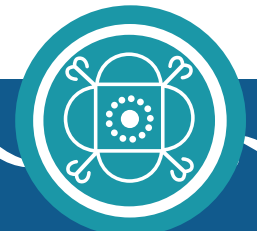
Following the arrival of English colonists to Quinnetucket, (the Indigenous name for Connecticut meaning place of the long river) four centuries ago, the Mohegan Nation faced challenges in its homeland along the Massapequotuck River, now called the Thames. European culture clashed with Tribal beliefs in matriarchy, education, religion, leadership, family and the animacy of sacred objects. *Up and Down the River* is a series of five short plays that speak to the up and down struggles of Mohegan leaders from 17th-20th centuries, along the river we call home. Each story offers a glimpse into a way of seeing the world, a time in history, and the sacrifices all Mohegans had to make to preserve the future of the Mohegan Nation.

Up & Down the River:

Our story begins in 1683 with infirmed and elderly Mohegan Sachem (Head Chief) Uncas being carried to the Massapequotuck River to watch the comings and goings of Natives and English colonists. Uncas had been a Pequot Sagamore who split with his Tribe to found the Mohegans, due to his desire to ally with the English. Here, his Narragansett grandmother, Meekunump, greets him on his last day on earth to offer a harsh retrospective on his life's choices and foreshadow their impact on the future of his people.

Cast: Bruce “Two Dogs” Bozsum (Mohegan) as Sachem Uncas, Margaret Bruchac (Abenaki) as Nonner Meekunump, David Uncas Sayet (Mohegan) as Sagamore, Kenny Ramos (Kumeyaay) as Wawequa, Miles Roe (Shinnecock) as Miantonomo, Ed Littlefield (Tlingit) as Sassacus.

Part 1 Guiding Concepts: Self-reflection by Uncas, self-sacrifice, gratitude, dignity, regrets, forgiveness, perspective, role of a Nonner, why Uncas wears the collar, lessons learned, interconnectedness, conflict resolution, colonization.



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An Indian Scholar:

Reverend Samson Occom (1723-1792) Founds Dartmouth College.

Samson Occom (Mohegan) was born in a wigwam and followed a scholar's path to become an educator and a Presbyterian minister. When he travelled to England to raise funds for the Indian School that became Dartmouth College, his mentor, the Rev. Eleazar Wheelock, promised to take care of Occom's family. But Wheelock failed to do so, due to the lack of subservience of Occom's Montaukett wife, Mary Fowler. Worse, Wheelock reneged on his pledge to make Dartmouth an Indian College.

Cast: Frank Kaash Katasse (Tlingit) as Samson Occom, Madeline Sayet (Mohegan) as Mary Occom, Randy Zobel as Eleazar Wheelock.

Part 2 Guiding Concepts: Broken promises, betrayal, Indian school, Moor's Charity School, sacrifices, prejudice, cooperation, civilized, acculturation, offerings, Makiawisug (Little People of the Woodlands).

Draw Down the Thunder:

Reverend Samuel Ashbow (1718-1795) Sacrifices for the American Revolution.

Samuel (Mohegan) and his wife Mary, a Wangunk, lost three sons in the American Revolution. Their son, Samuel Jr., was the first Native to die for this country at Bunker Hill. Samuel also sold Mary's land and supported the building of a mill on Mohegan land. When Mary could no longer tolerate her husband's choices, she called down the thunder spirits upon him.

Cast: Miles Roe (Shinnecock) as Samuel Ashbow Sr., Erin Trip (Tlingit) as Hannah Maminash Ashbow, Madeleine Hutchins (Mohegan) as Martha Uncas, Kenny Ramos (Kumeyaay) as Jacob Fowler.

Part 3 Guiding Concepts: Battles, role of women, sacrifice, Palmer Mills in Montville CT, relationship to the land, spirituality, old ways, Uncas Leap in Norwich CT.

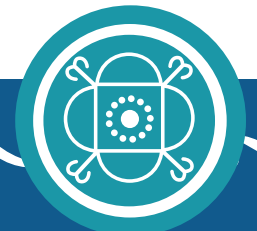
The Eagle Feather:

Lucy Teecomwas & Cynthia Hoscott Found Mohegan Church in 1831.

With the help of their well-connected missionary friend, Sarah Huntington, Lucy Teecomwas (Mohegan) and Cynthia Hoscott (Mohegan) founded Mohegan Church. To appear Christianized, and therefore civilized, as well as to avoid tribal relocation West, under Andrew Jackson's 1830's Federal Indian Removal policy.

Cast: Margaret Bruchac (Abenaki) as Lucy Teecomwas, Erin Tripp (Tlingit) as Cynthia Hoscott, Madeleine Hutchins (Mohegan) as Missionary Sarah Huntington.

Part 4 Guiding Concepts: Heathen activity, Indian Removal Act, Tribal relocation, civilized and Christianized, heart of the reservation, meaning of the eagle feather.



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Tantaquidgeon Lodge:

John, Gladys and Harold Tantaquidgeon Found Tantaquidgeon Museum in 1931.

Shortly after John, Harold and Gladys Tantaquidgeon (all Mohegan) founded Tantaquidgeon Museum (originally called Tantaquidgeon Lodge), a fire broke out in their house. With limited water, they had to choose between saving the house or the lodge.

Cast: Bruce “Two Dogs” Bozsum (Mohegan) as John Tantaquidgeon, Madeleine Hutchins (Mohegan) as Gladys Tantaquidgeon, Kenny Ramos (Kumeyaay) as Harold Tantaquidgeon, Miles Roe (Shinnecock) as Fireman.

Part 5 Guiding Concepts: All my relations, whittling wood, seeing things the old way, sanctuary, lodge vs. museum vs. athenaeum, BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs), healing, welcoming, “if they can forget it, they never really knew it.”

Credits:

Directed by: **Madeline Sayet**

Sound Design by: **Rory Stitt**

Conceptualized & Produced by: **Madeline Sayet**

Stage Managed by: **Amanda Luke**

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Supported by: **Hartbeat Ensemble &
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