

Learning from Foxwoods

Visualizing the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation

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Since the passage in 1988 of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, which recognized the authority of Native American tribal groups to operate gaming facilities free from state and federal oversight and taxation, gambling has emerged as a major industry in Indian Country. Casinos offer poverty-stricken reservation communities confined to meager slices of marginal land unprecedented economic self-sufficiency and political power.¹ As of 2004, 226 of 562 federally recognized tribal groups were in the gaming business, generating a total of \$16.7 billion in gross annual revenues.² During the past two decades the proceeds from tribally owned bingo halls, casinos, and the ancillary infrastructure of a new, reservation-based tourist industry have underwritten educational programs, language and cultural revitalization, social services, and not a few successful Native land claims. However, while these have been boom years in many ways for some Native groups, these same two decades have also seen, on a global scale, the obliteration of trade and political barriers and the creation of frictionless markets and a geographically dispersed labor force, as the flattening forces of the marketplace have steadily eroded the authority of the nation as traditionally conceived. As many recent commentators have noted, deterritorialization and disorganization are endemic to late capitalism.³

These conditions have implications for Native cultures. Plains Cree artist, critic, and curator Gerald McMaster has asked, “As aboriginal people struggle to reclaim land and to hold onto their present land, do their cultural identities remain stable? When aboriginal government becomes a reality, how will the local cultural identities act as centers for nomadic subjects?”⁴ Foxwoods Casino, a vast and highly profitable gam-

ing, resort, and entertainment complex on the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation in southwestern Connecticut, might serve as a test case for McMaster's question. Initial financing for Foxwoods was provided for the Pequots by Lim Goh Tong, a Chinese Malaysian businessman and investor whose Kuala Lumpur-based corporation is known for having developed Genting Highlands, the largest casino, resort, and entertainment complex in Southeast Asia.⁵ But rather than being deterritorialized by mortgaging their nationhood to overseas investors, the Pequots have managed to harness the centrifugal forces of the global marketplace to shore up their own centripetal claims to a place-based identity, pouring casino profits into an impressive array of community-building projects. The Pequots have succeeded in turning precisely those economic forces that have devastated so many other rural and traditional communities to their own advantage. In what follows I examine how the Pequots have embraced multinational corporations and the boundless international space of late capitalism to underwrite their exemption from state and local authority and shore up an expression of tribal sovereignty and the bounded space of the reservation. I analyze how Pequot nationhood is given visual form at Foxwoods Casino and consider why and for whom such representations are staged.

VISUALIZING PEQUOT ASCENDANCY

The *Rainmaker* is a twelve-foot-tall, forty-five-hundred-pound, cast translucent-polyurethane sculpture of a well-muscled and formidable Native American hunter, bow drawn and aimed heavenward. The hunter crouches on one knee, shirtless and dressed in breechcloth and moccasins, on a rocky outcropping that rises from a shallow pool amid a grove of artificial trees in a sky-lit atrium at the center of Foxwoods. Much like the famous talking sculptures that tell the story of Atlantis in the forum shops at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, the *Rainmaker* comes to life in an hourly fog and light show. A recorded narration relates the saga of the Pequots, on whose land the *Rainmaker* kneels. Over the din of slot machines and table games and the clatter of the nearby all-you-can-eat buffet, a solemn voice recounts the story of the glaciers that once covered the region, their gradual thaw, the coming of flora and fauna, and the arrival of the "Ancient Ones," the ancestors of the Pequots—nomadic hunters and gatherers who settled in what is now Long Island Sound

and founded a civilization. At the end of the story a laser beam shoots from the tip of the *Rainmaker*'s arrow, causing a momentary downpour that cascades through the branches of the surrounding trees and into the fountain below, full of coins and tokens.

Recently, I sat eating dinner and reading in the Festival Buffet at Foxwoods across a busy concourse from the *Rainmaker*. "What are you reading?" my waitress asked. I showed her the cover of the book. "A history of the Pequots," I answered. My waitress—not Pequot herself but an employee of the tribe—thought for a moment and replied, "They were wiped out." But of course the Pequots are here today, as the *Rainmaker* and the surrounding resort attest. Even in the noisy environs of a casino it seems clear that the *Rainmaker* and its accompanying sound-and-light show are intended as a symbol of the statement of the perseverance of the Pequot nation. Nearly a casualty of a Colonial era war of extermination, the Pequots dodged historical oblivion to emerge as the wealthiest Indian tribe in North America (and likely the wealthiest indigenous group in the world). With more than thirteen thousand employees, Foxwoods is the second largest employer in Connecticut and a leader in the growing service economy, regularly recruiting seasonal workers from Europe and Latin America.⁶ Since opening in 1986 as a high-stakes bingo hall, Foxwoods has grown to include multiple gaming rooms (featuring over 7,400 slot machines and 380 table games), 26 restaurants, shops, entertainment venues and nightclubs, an arcade, a salon and spa, and a new golf resort and private golf club as well as over 1,400 hotel rooms. The contemporary Pequots are the beneficiaries of a convergence of legal gains by Native North American tribes in the 1970s and 1980s. Geography has also helped. Located in Ledyard, Connecticut, the 1,250-acre Mashantucket Pequot reservation is a two-hour drive from the cities of Boston and New York City. At 4.7 million square feet, with over a billion dollars in annual revenues, Foxwoods is the largest and most profitable casino in the world and is wholly owned and operated by the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation.

But if the *Rainmaker* is a statement of Pequot perseverance and ascendancy, it might also be seen as a vexing monument. The polyurethane primitive claims pride of place among a host of representations of Native American culture and identity that, recent commentators have noted, can be described as Pan-Indian at best, pandering at worst.⁷ Indeed, Foxwoods offers to the observer a dizzying visual experience. When

the resort opened its doors in 1992, for example, the cocktail waitresses plied their trade in buckskin dresses and single-feather headdresses à la Pocahontas.⁸ Public areas are made to look like a postcard-quaint Main Street, a little like Disneyland's Main Street USA, but, more specifically, these spaces also recall the nearby villages and towns of Mystic, Ledyard, North Stonington, and New London, although cleaned up and much livelier than these down-on-their-luck remnants of New England's commercial and industrial heyday. The numerous areas for shopping, eating, and walking are filled with light from floor to ceiling windows that open onto sweeping views of the forested landscape of the reservation. Real and artificial flora and fauna abound. Shrubs fill planters, and artificial maples, oaks, and pines stand in for columns and piers. Oversized (artificial) trout swim in crystal-clear streams. On the main shopping concourse a store called Native Nations sells Indian-made merchandise, including T-shirts and baseball caps, compact disks of powwow drums and flute music, baskets and pottery, salmon, sweetgrass incense, and buckskin jackets and moccasins. Elsewhere in the galleria museum-style glass display cases exhibit traditional arts from the Trans-Mississippi West and the Southwest. Throughout the resort visitors encounter a collection of large, figurative bronze sculptures by celebrated Native American artists Bruce LaFountain (Ojibwe) and Allan Houser (Apache), one of whose sculptures served as the model for the *Rainmaker*. And with what is likely unintentional irony, a Plains-style beaded buckskin costume worn by (non-Indian) bassist Felix Pappalardi of the 1970s rock group Mountain is displayed at the Hard Rock Cafe on a mannequin in a glass case that recalls nothing so much as a natural history museum diorama.

There is, of course, a precedent for Native-themed tourism and the marketing of Indian kitsch in North America and Europe. Non-Indian entrepreneurs such as Fred Harvey, "plastic medicine men," and other pretenders have built careers and commercial empires on the appeal of Native American culture to non-Natives. At Foxwoods popular representations of Indianness are wielded by Native Americans and take their place in a rich history of Indians playing Indian—from the Wild West shows of the nineteenth century, to the Native actors employed in the early years of the film industry, to the Indian art markets of the contemporary Southwest. The images and performances of Native culture and identity on view at Foxwoods (and indeed visible at a host of tribal casinos and resorts that have emerged following the Pequots' example) are

ambivalent signs in a hugely lucrative business enterprise; Foxwoods is a glitzy, casino-cum-shopping mall-cum-theme park trading in familiar tropes of Indianness, owned by and operated for the benefit of Native Americans. If the Pequots are playing to (or are themselves constructing) consumers' expectations (that they are on Indian Land; that Indian art looks like this; or that Indian music sounds like this), they are also players in a long history of Native American participation—coerced as well as voluntary—in transnational circuits of production and exchange in which indigenous cultural heritage, cut loose from traditional senses of place, has become, in effect, portable—a global commodity.

Here we might turn again to the *Rainmaker* to ask just what this artwork—a plastic Indian in the middle of a casino—tells us about contemporary Pequot identity and nationhood and its endurance. Indeed, if the *Rainmaker* is a symbol of the contemporary Pequots, what does it mean to say that a people and a nation have endured? And what does it mean to say that the Pequots are a nation? Have the Pequots endured? The perception by some journalists and some Connecticut locals that the casino traffics in inauthentic kitsch has fueled speculation and charges that the Pequots are pretenders—not Native Americans but opportunistic “Casino-Americans.”⁹ But notions of authenticity are confounded by the Pequots, a people whose link to the past was deliberately broken by English authorities in the Colonial period and repressed for over three centuries. Perhaps the preponderance at Foxwoods of stereotypical signs of Indianness embodies the constructedness of modern Pequot identity—or, rather, the modernity of the Pequots’ reconstructed identity.

NADIR AND REVITALIZATION

The Pequots’ story of “rez to riches” is all the more impressive because it begins with one of the most notorious acts of genocide of the Colonial period—the Pequot “War,” which nearly exterminated the tribe. The Pequots, with a population of approximately thirteen thousand at the beginning of the seventeenth century, were the most powerful Indian tribe in the Northeast, dominating their neighbors along Long Island Sound from their tribal base between the Thames and Pawcatuck rivers in what is now central Connecticut. Pequot hegemony was based on control of the production of “wampum”—beads made from the shells of whelks and quahogs that became increasingly important in the expanding fur trade.

The Pequots felt the first of several shocks when a host of European diseases decimated the northeastern tribes in the early 1600s, reducing Native populations by an estimated 55 to 95 percent. But even with their numbers diminished, the Pequots remained the dominant political power in southern New England. The pressures of increasing European settlement, however, brought the tribe into conflict with Dutch traders and English Puritans as well as with the neighboring Mohegans and Narragansetts, who joined forces with the Puritans to wage a brutal war of extermination on the Pequots. By September 1638, when the remaining Pequot sachems signed the Treaty of Hartford, only some one thousand remained. These survivors were parceled out as slaves to live among the English, the Mohegans, and the Narragansetts or were shipped to the Caribbean. Colonial authorities formally declared the Pequot nation “dissolved.” Even the use of the name “Pequot” was outlawed. As one Puritan account read: “The name of the Pequots . . . is blotted out from under heaven, there being not one that is, or (at least) dare to call himself a Pequot.”¹⁰

But a remnant of the Pequots persisted. Under the leadership of the legendary sachem Robin Cassasinamon, those Pequots placed under the rule of the Mohegans were in 1666 granted a three-thousand-acre reservation at the headwaters of the Mystic River and became known as the Western or Mashantucket Pequot Tribe. The Pequots who had been living under the Narragansetts were eventually established as the Eastern or Pawcatuck Pequot Tribe. Thus, the Pequots, who had dominated trade and politics in southern New England, would never again be one nation.

The next three centuries saw gradual losses of land. In 1761 the Connecticut colony reduced the reservation to 989 acres. In 1856 the state of Connecticut sold without tribal consent all but 213 acres of the Mashantucket reservation. The shrinking reservation also hemorrhaged population. By the beginning of the nineteenth century more than half of the Pequots had left Mashantucket to join the Brotherton Movement, a Christian association that attracted Indian followers first to Oneida Territory in New York and later to Wisconsin. Tribal members also left to find wage labor in the surrounding communities, where they intermarried into white and black families. By 1935 only forty-two Pequots remained on the reservation, and in 1974 the two remaining Pequot tribal members living on the reservation—two half-sisters, Martha Langevin Ellal and Elizabeth George Plouffe—died. The state of Connecticut planned to turn the reservation into a park.

Plouffe's descendants, led by her grandson Richard "Skip" Hayward, quickly mounted an effort to save the reservation. With the assistance of the Native American Rights Fund and following recent precedents established by the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy Indians of Maine, the Pequots successfully petitioned for remuneration for lands lost due to bad-faith actions by the state of Connecticut. Under the Mashantucket Pequot Indian Land Claims Settlement Act, signed by President Reagan in 1983, the tribe recovered lands that had been illegally sold in 1856 and was formally granted federal recognition. The swampy reservation as yet had no roads or permanent housing to speak of, and the few development schemes launched by Hayward, now tribal chairman (the harvesting of firewood, maple syrup production, a hydroponic greenhouse, a hog farm, and a pizza restaurant), had barely moved the tribe beyond a subsistence level. However, the tribe's new status as a federally recognized Indian nation made it possible for the Pequots to open a high-stakes bingo hall in 1986, and in 1992, the quincentennial of Columbus's "discovery" of the New World, Foxwoods Casino opened its doors to capacity crowds. It has not closed since.

On the Mashantucket Pequot reservation casino revenues have enabled the tribe to build a modern liberal social-welfare state complete with cradle to grave services, including health and child care; police and fire departments; housing in a comfortable, gated, suburban compound; annual stipends and tuition from kindergarten through graduate school for the approximately eight hundred tribal members; seven-figure salaries for tribal council members; a public relations office; and a full-time staff of Washington lobbyists. Casino profits have also underwritten the construction of the 193-million-dollar Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center, opened in 1998. At 308,000 square feet, the museum is the largest Native American museum in the world. It has attracted more than 1.5 million visitors since opening in 1998, and it marshals an impressive array of state-of-the-art multimedia technologies. Drawing from ongoing archaeological and ethnohistorical projects, the museum links the contemporary Pequots to the histories of Native Americans in general and to the historical Pequots in particular.

CITIZENSHIP AND REPRESENTATION

It is tempting to read Foxwoods solely as a means to an end—an economic engine that plays to the tourists to enable the more serious work of

nation building and the projects undertaken at the museum and research center and by the tribal council on behalf of the tribe. However, as recent commentators have noted, the casino is not just the engine of Pequot sovereignty but its most public expression. The casino embodies the modernity of the tribe and the ease and fluidity with which the Pequots navigate the waters of the contemporary service industry. Anthropologist John Bodinger de Uriarte describes the casino and museum as “integral parts of a nation-building effort, parts that provide legitimate symbolic capital for narratives of historical and essential continuity.” He argues that while representations at Mashantucket are bifurcated (the casino trades in popular images and experiences, while the museum establishes an unbroken line of continuity from the Ice Age to the current moment of Pequot tribal resurgence), the two sites are “counterindicative and countersupporting industries that generate both material and symbolic capital.”¹¹ As museum visitors are often guests of the casino and resort (a shuttle bus runs regularly between them), the two complexes should be understood to function together as institutions for nation building and the representation of Pequot nationhood. Moreover, cultural critic Mary Lawlor has cautioned against “compartmentalizing” the functions performed by the casino and museum, arguing that both contain popular “immersive” experiences that draw from “Pequot history and sense of place.”¹²

If the central project for Foxwoods and the Mashantucket Pequot Museum is the definition, re-creation, and representation of history and experience, my waitress’s recitation of the commonly held belief that the Pequots were “wiped out” speaks to the urgency of the task. But how, exactly, are Pequot identity and nationhood represented? In particular, two spectacular elements of the museum leave the most lasting impressions on most museum viewers. First is the 22,000-square-foot “immersion environment,” a life-size diorama of a sixteenth-century Pequot village on the eve of European contact that draws on the findings of the tribally funded Mashantucket Pequot Ethnohistory Project. Second is a thirty-minute-long 70 mm film entitled *The Witness*, which is shown in two widescreen theaters. With B-movie bluster, *The Witness* recounts the history of the Pequot War and the 1637 attack on Mystic fort by English colonists and their Mohegan and Narragansett allies during which some six hundred Pequots were massacred. The film’s foregrounding of oral history (in the film the actors speak Passamaquoddy, a related Eastern

Algonquian language that stands in for the lost Pequot) and the rejoinder to “remember the story” place the narrative of destruction and dispersal of the Pequots at the center of contemporary Pequot identity. The museum, like the film, places the origins of the tribe in an authentic past and tells a familiar if tragic tale of murder and dispossession. In the museum the Mashantucket Pequots are represented as a nation returning from dispersal to reclaim an ancestral homeland. The Pequots first split with the Mohegans around the time of first contact with the Dutch and English and were again divided and reconstituted in the years following the Pequot War, when the tribe was split into the Eastern, or Pawcatuck, and Western, or Mashantucket, Pequot tribes.

This is not to say, as have some political foes, that the Mashantucket Pequots’ claim to tribal status is spurious.¹³ In the museum, however, representations of Pequot heritage labor to obviate this contradiction between an essential and a (re)constructed Pequot identity. Tragically, much of traditional Pequot culture has been lost. The museum itself houses very few historic Pequot artifacts, featuring instead interpretive galleries devoted to the geology and climatology of the region, the early years of the reservation, the federal recognition process, the development of the reservation, and the present-day economic enterprises of the Mashantucket Pequots. As Lawlor writes, “The formation of a functioning Pequot polity out of the present-day’s heterogeneous experience calls for the assertion of a cultural essence that can serve as a backdrop, a protean core form on which contemporary identity formations can presume to draw their terms.” The narrative of tribal origins, massacre, persecution, and revitalization “represents the tribe as a distinct, historic entity with a stable core of being.”¹⁴

The casino may seem an unlikely national symbol. However, the Pequots worked closely with the design firm to ensure that their casino would be an appropriate symbol of the tribe and its history. A number of motifs were designed to function as references to Mashantucket Pequot tribal history and the experience of dispersal and revitalization, embodying Pequot claims to legitimacy and politically sovereign status. The most clear is the Mashantucket Pequot tribal seal, which is featured above the entrance to Great Cedar lodge and inside the lobby. The seal, which depicts a tree to represent Mashantucket, the “much wooded land,” sachem Robin Cassasinamon’s symbol, and the fox, which represents the Pequots as the vigilant “fox people,” is present throughout the

resort on everything from cocktail napkins to hotel room key cards and is echoed in a mural depicting the outstretched branches of a tree in the Grand Pequot lobby and on the guest-room furniture.

Other motifs and design choices operate as a subtle iconography of Pequot endurance, functioning as what James C. Scott describes as a “hidden transcript” or a “critique of power spoken behind the back of the dominant.”¹⁵ The teal and violet color scheme, although a popular palette for non-Native shopping malls in the late 1980s and early 1990s, was in fact chosen for its resemblance to the wampum that was so central to Pequot regional power in the emerging global system of the seventeenth century. (Wampum is also used metaphorically as the basis for the casino’s rewards program.) Other predominant colors—navy blue and copper—relate to the tribe’s connection to the sea and the metal used by the tribe before European contact. Multiple references to nature are also specific references to the local landscape, and efforts were made to bring the landscape of the reservation into the interior spaces of the casino. Representations of wildlife were chosen for their regional importance, and the many artificial trees are actually copies of the maple, pine, and cedar trees that predominate in the Mashantucket woods. Moreover, what seems to be a stereotypical New England Main Street can also be read as a historical acknowledgment of the fact that the Pequots existed as a dispersed people (“out waiting,” to use Kiowa novelist N. Scott Momaday’s phrase), living for three and a half centuries among their black and white neighbors in the towns and villages of central Connecticut.¹⁶ And finally, perhaps the most poignant of these design motifs is a stylized floral pattern, usually in stained glass, that can be found throughout the casino and resort. This pattern represents the Mast Swamp rhododendron, which grows abundantly in the swamps of eastern Connecticut.¹⁷ The Mast Swamp rhododendron is famous for its blood-colored heart, which local folklore attributes to the blood spilled when a remnant of the Pequots were massacred by soldiers from the Massachusetts Colony in the swamp at Cuppacommock, where they had taken shelter under the leadership of a Pequot named Puttaquapouck after the Pequot War of 1637. Before he was slain, Puttaquapouck was said to have uttered a curse, declaring that “the golden hearts of the Cupacommack rhododendrons would turn to blood as a perpetual reproach.”¹⁸

Previous commentators, however, have failed to adequately note

that the museum and casino address multiple audiences or interpretive communities—non-Pequot gamblers and tourists and the Pequots themselves are each addressed by representations of tribal history and experience. I suggest, then, that representations of Pequot nationhood at the casino and museum be understood as signifying on two levels. The first level, based on the popular, Pan-Indian images directed at non-Pequots, appears to confirm dominant historical narratives and includes, for example, the goods on offer in the Foxwoods shopping galleria and the *Rainmaker*, which represents the Indian as authentic primitive *and* as a claim to an abiding Pequot sovereignty. For the non-Pequot tourist or skeptical New Englander who may need to be disabused of the popular perception that the Pequots are “extinct” and that the contemporary Pequots are mere pretenders, such representations of Native American culture and identity generally—and Pequot history and experience specifically—represent and reinforce the outcome of the 1983 Mashantucket Pequot Indian Land Claims Settlement Act, which affirmed the sovereign status of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation. A second register, the point of which may be overlooked by the gambler or tourist, hails an imagined Pequot subject. As Stuart Hall has written, “Heritage is a discursive practice. It is one of the ways in which the nation slowly constructs for itself a sort of collective social memory.”¹⁹ For the Pequots, the casino and museum function in Hall’s sense as educative state institutions, consolidating and instilling a sense of heritage and citizenship. The need for educative institutions and an iconography of Pequot nationhood is acute, because the overwhelming majority of the Mashantucket Pequots are relative newcomers, having applied for tribal membership in the three decades since the nadir of the tribe in 1975 and since the Settlement Act of 1983, which marked the beginning of Pequot revitalization. This fact is apparent in a series of photographic portraits by Kwagiutl contemporary artist David Neel that point up the racial diversity of the contemporary Pequot tribe. Growing tribal enrollment numbers have highlighted the need for educative projects to instill a sense of Pequot identity because of the multiethnic makeup of the tribe and the lack of a living Pequot tradition (the tribe’s archaeology and ethnohistory projects began in 1983, the year of federal recognition and before the bingo room/casino began).²⁰ Indeed, except for children, Mashantucket Pequots are made, not born—to paraphrase Werner Sollors, they are Pequot by consent rather than descent. The modernity and diversity of

the Pequots notwithstanding, however, tribal members are not hailed as *naturalized* citizens but as *natural* citizens. Tribal identity—reckoned through lines of familial descent—is represented in fundamental terms. While James Clifford and others have argued that contemporary indigenous identity is best understood as “a nexus of relations and transactions actively engaging a subject” amidst a rapidly growing, multiethnic tribal community, citizenship is not represented as civic (i.e., a matter of ideological affinity) but essential, genetic.²¹ However, when the Pequots are represented in terms of emplacement on a specific southern New England landscape and an unbroken family lineage, the narrative fails to account for the experience of dispersal and the multiethnic reality of the contemporary Pequot tribal citizenship. Contemporary Pequot identity might be understood, rather, not as some irreducible core of essential and fundamental peoplehood that has endured from prehistoric times to the present but as a nation formed through a narrative of displacement and diaspora, as the contemporary tribal citizens relearn and retell the story of the tribe’s massacre, dispossession, and revitalization.²²

Foxwoods Resort and Casino and the Mashantucket Pequot Museum might be seen, then, to figure important questions about how and for whom the continuity of culture is embodied and represented in an era of global capitalism and by a people for whom traditional symbols of nationhood have been all but obliterated. For the Pequot, the excavation and exhibition of authentic artifacts or the performance of time-honored traditional practices that would vouch for the unbroken connection between past and present is out of the question, as the colonial experience of destruction and dispersal forever altered—indeed created—the Mashantucket Pequot nation. At Foxwoods, a twelve-foot-tall plastic Indian in a forest of artificial flora and fauna in a multi-billion-dollar gaming enterprise is the authentic expression of a nation that has endured. The modern Pequot nation as such is a product of a history of destruction and dispersal, and the display of what seems impermanent—even inauthentic—may speak most eloquently of that history of loss and redemption.

NOTES

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1. For analysis of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act see W. Dale Mason, *Indian Gaming: Tribal Sovereignty and American Politics* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000). See also the recent phenomenon of impoverished cities and states contracting with Native American tribes to operate casinos on nonreservation lands, for example, the Seneca Niagara Casino, operated by the Seneca Nation in Niagara Falls, New York, and the Greektown Casino in Detroit, Michigan, operated by the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians. Architect Michael Sorkin notes that this is an ironic reversal, as economically unviable reservation land is transformed into valuable real estate and becomes a regional economic boon (“Container Riff,” in *Some Assembly Required* [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001], 185–90).
2. National Indian Gaming Commission Annual Report 2004, <http://www.nigc.gov> (accessed November 28, 2007).
3. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).
4. Gerald R. McMaster, “Towards an Aboriginal Art History,” in *Native American Art in the Twentieth Century: Makers, Meanings, Histories*, ed. W. Jackson Rushing III (New York: Routledge, 1999), 85.
5. For accounts of the Pequots and Foxwoods Casino see Jeff Benedict, *Without Reservation: How a Controversial Indian Tribe Rose to Power and Built the World's Largest Casino* (New York: Harper Collins, 2000) and Kim Eisler, *Revenge of the Pequots: How a Small Native American Tribe Created the World's Most Profitable Casino* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001). For academic studies see John J. Bodinger de Uriarte, “Imagining the Nation with House Odds: Representing American Indian Identity at Mashantucket,” *Ethnohistory* 50, no. 3 (2003): 549–65; Leda Cooks, “Warriors, Wampum, Gaming, and Glitter: Foxwoods Casino and the Re-Presentation of (Post)Modern Native Identity,” in *Readings in Cultural Contexts*, ed. Judith N. Martin, Thomas K. Nakayama, and Lisa A. Flores (Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Company, 1998), 226–35; Celeste C. Lacroix, “Wealth, Power, and Identity: A Critical Reading of Competing Discourses about the Mashantucket Pequots and Foxwoods” (Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio University, 1999); and Mary Lawlor, “Identity at Mashantucket,” *American Quarterly* 57, no. 1 (2005): 153–77. For general histories of the Pequots see Laurence M. Hauptman and James D. Wherry, eds., *The Pequots in Southern New*

England: The Fall and Rise of an American Indian Nation (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990).

6. Karen Florin, “NLRB: Federal Labor Laws Apply on Reservations Decision Allows Casino Employees to Join Unions; Challenge Expected,” *New London Day*, June 8, 2004.

7. Benedict, *Without Reservation*.

8. These costumes have since been abandoned in favor of less-distinctive uniforms.

9. Benedict, *Without Reservation*.

10. Laurence M. Hauptman, “The Pequot War and Its Legacies,” in Hauptman and Wherry, *The Pequots in Southern New England*, 67–80.

11. Bodinger de Uriarte, “Imagining the Nation,” 554, 557.

12. Lawlor, “Identity,” 168–71.

13. This is a common theme in popular accounts of the Mashantucket Pequots’ successful bid for federal recognition and the financial success of Foxwoods (see Benedict, *Without Reservation*). For an alternative perspective on the complexities of contemporary Native American identity and a useful comparison and discussion of why historical continuity is particularly elusive vis-à-vis New England tribes see James Clifford, “Identity at Mashpee,” in *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 277–346.

14. Lawlor, “Identity,” 161, 166.

15. James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), xii.

16. The concept of “outwaiting” is a central motif in Native American studies. As Kiowa novelist N. Scott Momaday writes of contemporary Native American communities, “They have assumed the names and gestures of their enemies, but have held on to their own, secret souls; and in this there is a resistance and an overcoming, a long outwaiting” (*House Made of Dawn* [New York: Harper and Row, 1968], 58).

17. A different species of rhododendron is featured prominently in the landscaping around the casino and resort.

18. Quoted in William M. Simmons, “The Mystic Voice: Pequot Folklore from the Seventeenth Century to the Present,” in Hauptman and Wherry, *The Pequots in Southern New England*, 151.

19. Stuart Hall, “Whose Heritage? Un-settling ‘The Heritage,’ Re-imagining the Post-Nation,” in *The Third Text Reader on Art, Culture, and Theory*, ed. Rasheed Araeen, Sean Cubitt, and Ziauddin Sardar (London: Continuum, 2002), 74.

20. Lawlor, “Identity,” 156.

21. Clifford, “Identity at Mashpee,” 334; also quoted in Lawlor, “Identity,” 158.

22. On diaspora see Daniel Boyarin and Jonathan Boyarin, “Diaspora: Gener-

ational Ground of Jewish Identity," *Critical Inquiry* 19, no. 4 (1993): 693–725; and James Clifford, "Diasporas," in *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 244–77. Indeed, as if to acknowledge the historical, genealogical, and geographic problematics of contemporary Indian identity, in 1997 the Pequots eliminated the notion of "blood quotient" as a requirement of tribal citizenship.