

MAY 1, 2010 TAH WORKSHOP NOTES

Present: John Daly, Brian Morse, Mike Penney, Kelly Davila, Ann Weeks, Sarah Kaye, Phil Hureau, Henry Zussman, Ed Belbin, Sandra Gibson-Quigley

10 AM – Noon: Museum tours

Noon—1:00 PM : Lunch

1:00 Pequot survival (Jason Mancini)

“Extinction”: *“None of the pure Pequot race are left; all being mixed with Indians of other tribes, or with whites and negroes. One little girl among them has blue eyes and light hair, and her skin is fairer than that of the majority of white person. There is no such thing as regular marriage among them....from fellow feeling, therefore they are extremely hospitable to all vagabonds....”*

- The idea that the Indians had vanished (or were vanishing) was prevalent by the early 19th century...Hawthorne’s “Last of the Mohegans” contributes mightily to this.
- Pequot reservation land was alienated in 1856 (and earlier).

Issues of race are essential for understanding Pequot identity and the perceptions of others.

- Picture shown of Lizzie Jane Hoxie/Wheeler/Lawrence Dufree (ca. 1884-1971) & Martha Anne Hoxie/Lawrence/wheeler-George—Langevin.... Both determined to be of a variety of races (“negroe”, white, Indian, mullato, etc.)
 - Snake collections and snake dances associated with Pequots---Bronx zoo bought snakes from the Pequots (and Skatakook)
 - Involvement in churches/communities—Ephraim Williams (preacher)
 - Pequots off the reservation—involvement beyond the local area—established through letters and journals....the reservation had shrunk to such a degree that it could no longer support much of a population
 - Pequot families in Norwich....along the Norwich trolley line... a number lived on the 175 acres of the reservation, but most had moved off...
 - Mixed in with local white farm families....Ephraim Williams was a Baptist member
 - Martha Langevin (became the “face of Mashantucket”) is pictured often and was active in promoting the community
 - Phil Deloria (Indians in unexpected places)---Pequots in unexpected places.... Image of “old mystic” baseball team from about 1910—a variety of “racial types” pictured on the team (George Sebastian, Amos George)....individuals and families in the area... Amos George moves to Simsbury...involved in the state political community....

- In Westerly...Mashantucket Pequots, Narraganset, eastern Pequots... on canal street in Westerly RI
- Ephraim Williams family photo
- 1920's photo from westerly RI.. grand chief sachem "silver star" of Pequots....American Indian federation..
- Alfred Williams became a central figure in reclaiming the rights of the tribes to manage their own affairs (affairs had been managed by overseers in the welfare community, then, later, the parks service)
- Overseers managed the rents of reservation lands to non Indians... monies would be used for the welfare of the tribe...after 1821 the state (Connecticut) mandated certain guidelines...1850's tribe claims 36-40 adults; the state says there are 13 old ladies (on the reservation)
- 1930's powwow images—people wearing plains style dress and using tee-pees... not native costumes... image of Pequots (including Alice Langevin) from 1930's to 1950's—demonstrating against land sales (again wearing plains type Indian costumes). The wearing of what was publicly perceived as "Indian" clothes played a part in these demonstrations...the clothing also gave them a sense of "national/cultural" identity
- Clothing also played a role in re-presentation
- People were very conscious of their communal identity
- Interesting newspaper lines: "Pequot Indians' dogs must be licensed" (April 5 1918); and 50 years later, "ugh on palefaces...Grandma gets her Pequot up" (March 23, 1968—again about licensing dogs)
- John George---from a long line of mariners (commercial fisherman)...chief of mashantuckets.... Very active in community affairs and American Indian federation (included any native person living in New England)
- Various Indian councils created over the years
- By 1960's and 1970's a resurgence of tribal identity and economic activity....
- 1975 the state finally relinquished control over tribal lists—the tribes could determine their own membership.....
- Political cartoon of rangers in a tower and Mashantucket land suit with \$ signs, bingo, smoke signal \$ and an Indian with a blanket and a war bonnet making \$ smoke-signals, "non intercourse act of 1790" (Mac Gregor)
- Citizenship and tribe.... Contemporary tribe in Mashantucket are descended from people on the 1900 and 1910 censuses...blood quantum does not count anymore...anyone descended from the families in the 1900/1910 censuses may apply for membership. About 862 members now (picture of tribal gathering from about 15 years ago)
- Tribal membership roles can be reassessed...the determination is made by the tribes

Planning for the future

- Movement from connection found in the village (pre-contact) society....to individuals described in the later period of Pequot/Mashantucket history....issue of race and public perception becomes striking in the images of modern Pequots (20th century).... Many don't "look" Indian (so called white, black, and in between features) and this plays a role in how they are perceived as a people...

- New museum exhibits will be put in place to portray the modern communal experience

Then and now—houses on reservation...1938, 2002; Langevin homestead (1939, 2002); tribe has decided not to restore older housing....

Q & A