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The Indian Gaming Debate

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Teaching about a Controversial Issue

STEVEN S. LAPHAM

The point of an issues-centered lesson is for students to learn how to develop well-reasoned opinions based on disciplined inquiry and thoughtful, in-depth study. An issues-centered lesson does not mean that students sit back and express biases and values that cannot be reconciled. Quite the opposite. It means empowering the student to develop defensible and intellectually well-grounded opinions that can serve as the basis for making decisions, speaking out, and taking action as a citizen. It means exposing new facts, clarifying common values, and asking new questions that reach beyond obvious points of division and toward a creative, collective future.

The *Handbook on Teaching Social Issues* describes four important principles upon which an issues-centered lesson (or unit of study) should be built.¹

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On the cover

This cartoon, by Barbara Beaucar, provides the jumping-off point for discussion in "The Streets are Paved with Silver," page 10.

Correction

In *MLL* of May/June 2003, at the bottom of page M12, the author's affiliation was incorrect. It should have read, "Andrea Port Jacobs teaches in the sixth grade at the Torah School of Greater Washington, in Silver Spring, Maryland."

Middle Level Learning

Michael Simpson DIRECTOR OF PUBLICATIONS

Steven S. Lapham ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Gene Cowan ART DIRECTOR

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One

Depth of understanding is more important than coverage and superficial exposure. Topics must be studied in sustained ways that introduce students to important complexities and details. For example, in a lesson on the American Revolution, students might explore the question whether the colonists should have protested British rule with violent demonstrations. To make the study of this question meaningful, students will need to develop an understanding of the context in which colonial protests occurred. They will need to study in detail specific instances in which governmental power was challenged.

Two

Topics must connect through a thematic, disciplinary, interdisciplinary, or historical structure. Simply studying one issue after another will fail to give students the intellectual structures they need to organize and think about relationships among various issues and how their resolution might approximate social justice.

Three

The study of a current issue must be grounded in challenging content. A sharing of "armchair opinions" is not enough. Such study requires teaching forms of reasoning,

interrogation and presentation of evidence, and also the mastery of concepts and theories that bring expert knowledge to bear. Intellectually challenging content includes critical perspectives and consideration of alternatives that are not commonly included in most curricula. For example, a unit of study on immigration cannot generate depth of understanding just by raising questions about current policy. Such study should include cases from the historical record that can be used to form conclusions about the results of immigration policy during different periods.

Four

Students must be encouraged to influence the inquiry process. The teacher must strive for a judicious balance between guidance in selection of issues and materials to be studied and students' choices in their own education. Choosing a topic should be done with an awareness of students' interests, prior knowledge, and the community context.

This issue of *Middle Level Learning* is devoted to a unit of study on the controversy of Indian Gaming not because it is essential for fifth graders or eighth graders to know about this particular topic, but because the lessons are built squarely upon these four principles. This controversy is a great example of how a current public policy debate is rooted in history and involves economics, anthropology, civics, and geography—in short, all of the disciplines that make up the social studies. 🗺️

Note

1. Ronald W. Evans and David Warren Saxe, *Handbook on Teaching Social Issues* (Washington, DC: National Council for the Social Studies, 1996), 3-4.

Steven S. Lapham is editor of *Middle Level Learning*.

Lookout Point is an open forum. For consideration, send a response or an original essay to *Middle Level Learning*, National Council for the Social Studies, 8555 Sixteenth Street, Suite 500, Silver Spring, Maryland, 20910, USA, or e-mail mll@ncss.org.

WILLIAM L. HEWITT AND
BARBARA BEAUCAR

INDIAN NATIONS are sovereign governments, recognized as such in the U.S. Constitution and hundreds of treaties with the U.S. federal government. Today, tribal governments resemble state governments in many ways--they provide a broad range of governmental services on tribal lands including law enforcement, environmental protection, emergency response, education, health care, and basic infrastructure.¹

The degree of sovereignty that Indian Nations actually experience has varied greatly over the last two centuries.² Today, tribes are subject to most federal laws. They are subject to some state laws, but not others. The changing power relationships between Indian Nations and federal and state governments sets the stage for an interesting controversy.

During the 1980s, many states began holding lotteries as a way of raising revenue without raising taxes. At the same time, some Indian tribes opened bingo and gambling parlors. These tribes capitalized on their sovereign status to bypass state laws that regulate gaming (games of chance). In 1979, for example, the Seminole Tribe of Florida started the Indian bingo industry. By 1982, the tribe's bingo operations earned \$2.7 million in net profits annually.

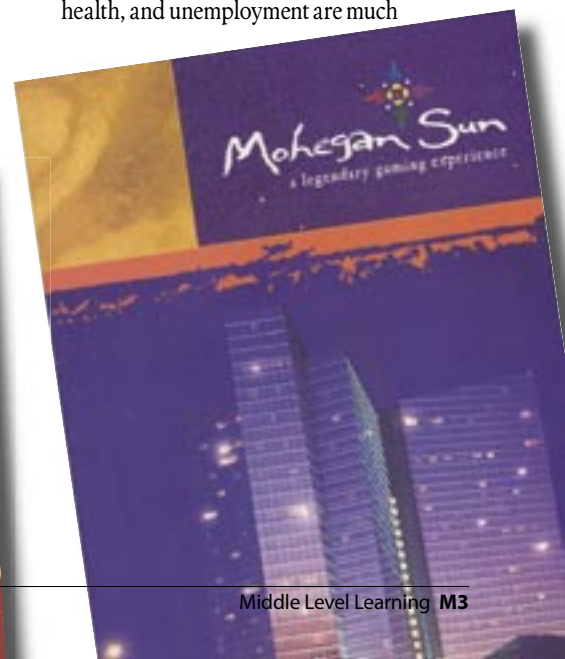
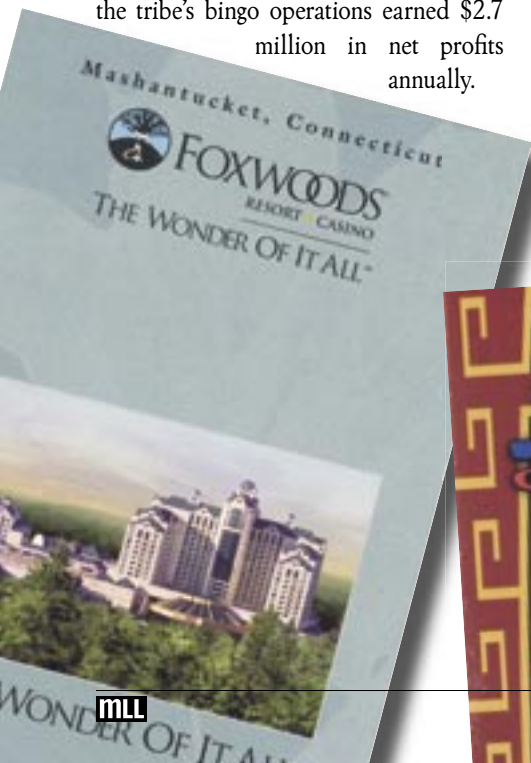
State v. Tribe: How the Indian Gaming Controversy Began

The government of the state of Florida insisted that it had the right to regulate this gaming (and get some of the profit from it too). But the U.S. District Court of Southern Florida held in the case of *Seminole Tribe v. Butterworth* that Florida's regulations governing bingo did not apply to the Seminole Tribe, which should be allowed to regulate its own gambling operations. The Seminole tribe's gaming then grew throughout the 1980s to become an important source of revenue for the tribe during this period of federal budget cuts.

High-stakes gambling means playing games in which a person might win or lose hundreds or thousands of dollars. In 1987, state and county governments in California attempted to stop Cabazon and Morongo Bands of Mission Indians from conducting high-stakes bingo and card games, arguing that the state had a right to enforce its gambling laws on Indian reservations. The case of *California v. Cabazon* went to the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled that any state allowing gambling at all must also allow Indian gambling. (States that prohibited gambling altogether can prohibit it on Indian Reservations as well. Only a few states prohibit all types of gambling including bingo).³

Finally, the U.S. Congress created a new law, attempting to settle ongoing controversies in states that allowed gambling. Under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) of 1988, if a state allows certain types of gambling, even for charitable purposes, then it cannot prohibit Indians from conducting the same games on their reservations for profit. States and tribes, however, must still negotiate gaming compacts to govern the activity. This makes tribes subject to partial state control. The resulting tribal-state compact must be approved by a federal official, the U.S. Secretary of the Interior. Thus, IGRA formalized the process of gaming on many Indian reservations in many states. But if Indian tribes decided they wanted to get into the gaming business, they had to negotiate the terms with both state and federal governments.

Advocates of IGRA hoped that Indian gaming would become an engine of economic development for tribes and communities. Gaming, it was hoped, would raise the standard of living on many reservations, where problems like poverty, poor health, and unemployment are much



Project Ideas

A teacher could engage the entire class in one of these projects, or break the students into groups, each of which could take on one of these projects and present its finished work to the class. This approach might work as a concluding project for a unit of study on American Indians.

Wall Mural

After discussing the complexity of the Indian gaming issue, students could be asked to make a visual representation of the pros and cons. With their own drawings, pictures from magazines, and newspaper headlines, they can create a collage on a bulletin board depicting the many aspects, both positive and negative, that comprise this controversial issue.

Myths and Legends

Students could research ancient legends, and historic and current events about a local tribe, using a library and/or an Internet search. Does a particular casino reflect, in its architecture, advertising, and promotions, any of these legends and events?

Arts and Crafts

Students could research the crafts made by various Indian people, again using a library and/or an Internet search. Acting as anthropologists, they can explain how art can provide insights into a tribe's religion, diet, clothing, climate, social activities, and work—past and present. They can also examine the materials that are indigenous to their region of the country such as sweet grass and ash wood used to make baskets in the northeast, or clay for pottery in the southwest.

Traditional Games

Students could research various Native American games and sports, construct some gaming pieces, and give a demonstration (for example, of a string game such as cat's cradle). See page M16.

Wampum Bead Necklace

Wampum necklaces and bracelets were worn by the Indians of New England as a form of ornamentation, but these small tubular beads were also used as a medium of exchange in the 17th century. The beads were made from the shell of the quahog clam, with the scientific name *Mercenaria mercenaria*, from the Latin word for money. The shells that have purple in them are found only between New Jersey and Maine, and because of their rarity, the purple beads were worth twice as much as the white beads. Coastal tribes such as the Narragansett and Nehantics of southeastern New England made wampum by the fathom (six-foot lengths) and traded it with both the European colonists and the Iroquois, who used the beads in their ceremonies and for recording (in beaded pictures and symbols) important events, legends, speeches, and treaties. Due to the scarcity of coinage in the colonies, the English declared wampum as legal tender in 1637. It was still being used to buy land and furs and to pay tribute and taxes into the 1700s. The English colonists at first valued wampum at six beads per penny.

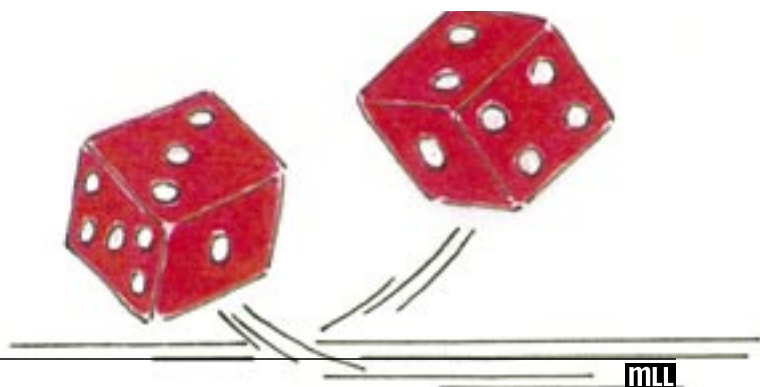
Teachers could provide students with string and enough purple and white tubular beads to make a bracelet. Students could trade some of their purple beads for twice as many white beads and make longer strings into necklaces.

Posters

Commercial artists make posters to advertise a particular event or occasion. Often, people who are participating in political or social events such as elections, strikes, or demonstrations carry posters that tell others who they are and what they stand for. Recently, the Narragansett Indians tried to gain approval for a casino in West Warwick, Rhode Island. The proposed site was very close to a school. Citizens protested with a political poster that read: CASINO-FREE SCHOOL ZONE. Using short phrases, like GAMING BRINGS JOBS, students could express different points of view on separate posters. The posters could be displayed on the walls during a classroom debate on the issues surrounding Indian gaming. Students could play various roles in the debate as determined by a random drawing (of descriptions of various citizen positions) from a hat.

Camcorder Interviews

This project would be the most demanding and might involve the whole class. Students could first discuss some of the ways in which casinos affect both the people on Indian reservations and those in surrounding communities in their state. Students would compose a list of questions in advance so as to be prepared to interview people with various opinions, such as Indians from a local tribe (who may favor or oppose gaming), tribal officials, local government officials, employees of a Casino, and other local residents. Acting as reporters, students can explore both sides of the issue. See Colleen Swain, Rachael Sharpe, and Kara Dawson, "Using Digital Video to Study History," *Social Education* 67, no. 3 (April 2003): 154-157.



more severe than in the general U.S. population. Opponents of the new law argued that it would bring wealth to only a few tribes and their non-Indian business partners. Opponents also feared that gambling on reservations might bring in a flood of easy cash that would wash away more traditional economic activity, increase crime, and erode Indian culture. Today, fifteen years after IGRA became law, to what degree Indian gaming is a success or failure is a matter of much debate.

Indian gaming is now big business. Gambling operated by Indian tribes or on Indian lands in 2002 accounted for \$12.7 billion in gross profits, which is almost 20 percent of all legal gambling revenue generated in the United States. Tribal casinos in California alone accounted for between \$4 and \$5 billion for the year, and the two Indian casinos in Connecticut grossed more than \$2 billion.⁴ Other states that bring in large amounts of gambling revenue for Indian tribes include Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, New Mexico, Arizona, and Louisiana. 📖

Notes

1. National Congress of American Indians, Homepage at www.ncai.org.
2. Karen D. Harvey, Lisa D. Harjo, and Jane K. Jackson, *Teaching About Native Americans* (Washington, DC: National Council for the Social Studies, 1997): 43-53.
3. *A Historical Review of Gaming in America* (Washington, DC: National Indian Gaming Association, 1994).
4. Christiansen Capital Advisors, LLC, www.ca-i.com on June 25, 2003.

William L. Hewitt is a professor in the Department of History at West Chester University in West Chester, Pennsylvania. Barbara Beaucair is archives project assistant at the Barnes Foundation in Merion, Pennsylvania. She worked on this article while earning an M.A. in the Department of History at West Chester University.

Museum Preview...

The National Museum of the American Indian is scheduled to open in Washington, DC, in 2004. Today you can visit www.nmai.si.edu/education/teacher/content.html and scroll down to access the Teacher's Resource Center with links to critical bibliographies, interesting websites (like Buffy Sainte-Marie's Cradleboard Teaching Project) and free NMAI materials for teachers such as *To Honor and Comfort: Native American Quilting Traditions* and *Harvest Ceremony: Beyond the Thanksgiving Myth*.

Suggested Resources

Books/Gaming

Gabriel, Kathryn. *Gambler Way: Indian Gaming in Mythology, History, and Archaeology in North America*. Boulder, CO: Johnson Books, 1996.

Mason, W. Dale. *Indian Gaming: Tribal Sovereignty and American Politics*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000.

Books/Pedagogy

Harvey, Karen D., Lisa D. Harjo, and Jane K. Jackson, *Teaching About Native Americans* 2nd. ed. Washington, DC: NCSS Bulletin 84, 1997.

Hirschfelder, A., and Yvonne Beamer, *Native Americans Today: Resources and Activities for Educators Grades 4-8*. Englewood, CO: Teacher Ideas Press, 2000.

Reports

Eric Forman, "Review of Current Literature: Economic Development on American Indian Reservations" (Chapel Hill, NC: Department of City and Regional Planning, University of North Carolina, 1998). The two-page section on Indian Gaming in this report is a great summary of the gaming controversy. www.unc.edu.

National Gambling Impact Study Commission Final Report (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1999). Chapter six of this report, "Native American Tribal Gambling," comprises 24 pages. It can be found at govinfo.library.unt.edu/ngisc/reports/fullrpt.html.

National Issues Forum Institute, *Gambling: Is It a Problem? What Should We Do?* (Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt, 2000). This 25-page booklet describes in some detail what happened as people across the U.S. deliberated about this issue.

Websites

NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS: www.ncai.org/index.asp

NCAI, founded in 1944, is the oldest and largest tribal government organization in the United States. NCAI serves as a forum for consensus-based policy development among its membership of over 250 tribal governments in every state. See their well-balanced, one-page fact sheet on gaming, listed under "issues."

NATIONAL INDIAN GAMING COMMISSION: www.nigc.gov

The Commission, an independent federal regulatory agency, was set up under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988 (Act). The chairman is appointed by the U.S. President and must be confirmed by the Senate. The Secretary of the Interior appoints the other two commissioners. At least two of the three commissioners must be members of an Indian tribe. The Commission's work is to regulate gaming on Indian lands, to shield Indian tribes from organized crime and other corrupting influences; to ensure that tribes are the primary beneficiaries of gaming revenue; and to see that gaming is conducted fairly and honestly by both operators and players.

NATIONAL INDIAN GAMING ASSOCIATION: www.indiangaming.org

NIGA, established in 1985, is a non-profit organization of 168 Indian Nations with other non-voting associate members representing organizations, tribes, and businesses engaged in tribal gaming enterprises. It could be considered a pro-gaming lobby group.

NATIVEWEB: www.nativeweb.org

This Internet service by and for Native Americans is a useful starting point for Internet research. Search on "gambling" to find descriptions of traditional Indian gaming. Search on "casinos" and other key words to find useful websites, data, and debates about Indian gaming.

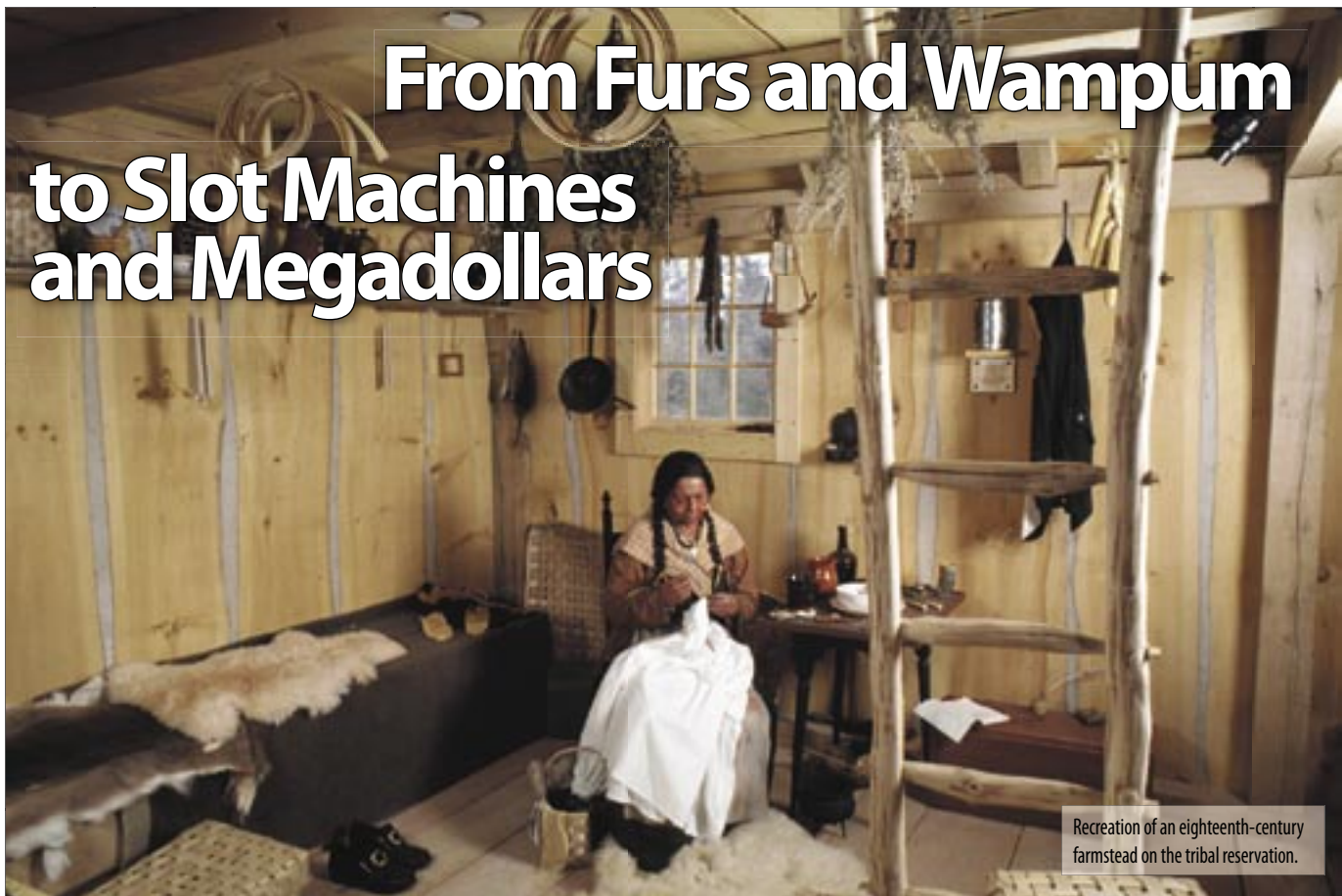
MASHANTUCKET PEQUOT MUSEUM AND RESEARCH CENTER: www.pequotmuseum.org

This is the website of a state-of-the-art, tribally owned-and-operated museum and research complex. Various web-pages tell about the history of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation (from that tribe's point of view), the histories and cultures of other tribes, and the region's natural history. It is funded largely by Indian gaming.

Note: The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) website at the U.S. Department of the Interior (www.doi.gov/bia) is shut down currently because of an ongoing court case. *Cobell v. Norton* is a class-action suit against the U.S. government regarding Indian Trust Monies that are allegedly missing. Read about this controversy at www.ewebtribe.com/NAculture/.

From Furs and Wampum to Slot Machines and Megadollars

Courtesy Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center



Recreation of an eighteenth-century farmstead on the tribal reservation.

BARBARA BEAUCAR

Recent Controversy

In 1992, the Mashantucket, a Native American tribe in Connecticut, opened Foxwoods—the largest casino resort in the world. Foxwoods Resort now generates gross profits of \$1 billion a year. In 1996, the Mohegans, relatives of the Mashantucket, opened Mohegan Sun, a colossal concrete complex, only eleven miles away from Foxwoods. It is also a gambling, or “gaming” resort. The competition created by another casino being so close by did not appear to slow the profitable growth of Foxwoods.

By 2000, two more groups of people in Connecticut asked for federal recognition from the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs (B.I.A.). Identifying themselves by similar names, both the Eastern Pequot and the Paucatuck Eastern Pequot wanted to be recognized as Indian tribes. Each group hoped to build separate casinos on a reser-

vation in Connecticut. In March 2000, the BIA granted preliminary approval to the two tribes’ requests, but it could not decide whether the groups should be recognized as one tribe or two. The Eastern Pequot claimed that the Paucatuck Eastern Pequot were a part of their tribe.¹ But the Paucatucks said they were a separate group and wanted to run their own affairs. They had already struck a deal with real estate tycoon Donald Trump, who hoped to finance their new casino.²

Town officials of North Stonington opposed the B.I.A.’s recognition of the “new” tribes. These officials were concerned about the social and environmental effects that additional casinos might have on the region. They held up a report from 1976 that had found “no discernable evidence that the [Pequots] had any criteria to establish or define its membership.”³ Adding to the controversy, a local author published a book challenging the Mashantucket’s claim

to be descendants of the historic Pequot tribe. The author also alleged that the U.S. Congress had bypassed the BIA’s requirement for documentation in order to settle a land dispute with the Mashantuckets in 1983.⁴

Some citizens in the surrounding communities angrily called for a congressional investigation into the federal government’s process for officially recognizing Indian tribes.

Echoes from History

Do you find this situation a bit confusing? You are not alone. By May 2000, the BIA announced that it no longer wanted to be the “entity that grants federal recognition to American Indian tribes.”⁵ This confusion over how to define a “tribe” is not new. Conflict over control of land and trade between groups of Native Americans in Connecticut predates the arrival of Europeans. A legacy of clan and tribal divisiveness reaches back

beyond historical records to the fragile threads of oral traditions. When Europeans arrived, their desires for power and profit only added new fuel to a fire that was already ablaze.

Mohegan elders said that long ago, they were all one people. The story of the Mohegans begins with a legend about their ancestors, members of the Wolf Clan of the Lenni Lenape peoples, who migrated from the Hudson River (in what is now New York State) to the Atlantic coast. Indians who were already living in the region referred to the Mohegans as *pequotaug* meaning “invaders” or “destroyers,” which indicates that their arrival in the area was regarded as a sudden and hostile invasion.⁶ Their new name, the Pequot, stuck, but it is worth noting that, originally, the names Mohegan and Pequot referred to one and the same tribe.

The Pequot War in 1637 marked the first major conflict between Indians and settlers in the region. Trouble began in 1634 when a Dutch trader kidnapped Tatobem, a Pequot *sachem* (chief), and ransomed him for *wampum* (belts of shell beads which, like money, served at this time as a means of exchange). After the Pequot paid the ransom, the kidnapper killed Tatobem instead of returning him alive.⁷ The Pequot were enraged by this betrayal. Over the next three years, they attacked wampum dealers (who were Dutch and English settlers) on the Connecticut River and Block Island. The Pequot retaliation escalated until one hundred of their men attacked an English farm, killing nine people and carrying off two young women. A colonial court called in Hartford on May 1, 1637 “concluded some forces should forthwith be sent out against the Pequots; [the settlers’] grounds being just, and necessity enforcing [the settlers] to engage in an offensive and defensive War.”⁸ Thus, the Pequot War began.

Rivalry Between Pequots

Beneath the surface of these violent incidents were currents of social, economic, and political conflict. Tribal hostility, personal power struggles, and the control of wampum were factors in the conflict. For example, after the murder of Tatobem, his son, Sassacus, inherited the role of sachem.

Uncas, one of the Pequot sagamores (subordinate chiefs) and a rival of Sassacus, married the daughter of Sassacus to gain a closer proximity to the “tribal elite.” After several attempts to usurp control of the Pequot, Uncas was accused of treachery and banished.⁹

Stripped of his power, prestige, and possessions, Uncas and his followers moved across the Connecticut river and adopted the original name of their ancestors, the Mohegan. In 1637, news that the English planned to march against the Pequot offered Uncas a new strategy to overpower Sassacus—he formed an alliance with the English. He also successfully negotiated the alliance of another tribe, the Narragansett, whose relationship with the Pequot had never been peaceful.

At dawn, on May 26, 1637, the combined forces of seasoned Colonial soldiers and skilled Mohegan and Narragansett warriors arrived at the gates of the Pequot’s fort

in what is now Mystic, Connecticut. In just over an hour, the fort was destroyed and an estimated 300 to 700 old men, women and children of the Pequot tribe who were in the fort were killed, mostly burned to death.¹⁰

The survivors in the Pequot tribe, living throughout Connecticut, blamed Sassacus for the defeat at the fort in Mystic. The disgraced sachem fled with some followers to the island of Manhattan. His departure significantly weakened the Pequot, fracturing their nation into smaller groups, which became vulnerable to neighboring tribes from which the Pequot had once exacted tribute.

A month after their defeat at Mystic, the remaining Pequot were captured by the English. The Hartford Treaty of 1638 divided the Pequot population between the Mohegans and Narragansett. “The Pequots were then bound by Covenant, that none should inhabit their native country, nor should any of them be called Pequots anymore.”¹¹



Native Americans used wampum, crafted from marine shell beads, for decorative and ceremonial purposes. Settlers used it as currency.



Pequot sachem Robin Cassacinamon helped reestablish the tribe on portions of its ancestral land after the Pequot War of 1636-38.

Wampum, Trade, and Conflict

The Pequot War also resulted in the devaluation of wampum as a form of legal tender among the colonists. The Dutch discovered the profits that could be derived from the exchange of cheap shell beads for valuable beaver furs. By 1627, the English began to compete with the Dutch in a “wampum-for-furs” trading triangle: (1) European cloth was exchanged for wampum made by coastal tribes. (2) Europeans then traded with inland tribes, exchanging wampum for furs. (3) These luxurious animal pelts brought huge profits overseas in Europe, and a small portion of the profits could be used to purchase cloth, starting the cycle over. Competition also came from native entrepreneurs such as the Pequots, “whose geographic location between coastal wampum and hinterland furs ... placed them in a monopolistic position.” Their production and control of wampum supplies from less

powerful coastal bead makers, English observers wrote, made [the Pequot] “rich and potent” by 1627, and a “stately and warlike people” by 1634.¹² (Note that the English first refer to the tribe as “warlike” in the same year that the Dutch trader kidnapped, ransomed, and killed Pequot Chief Tatobem for wampum.)

In 1637, just months before declaring

war, the English had adopted the use of wampum as legal tender. After defeating the Pequot, the English devalued wampum from three to six beads per penny. The colonists, now in control of the bead making, used “wampum-for-fur” to pay off their European debt.¹³

The Pequot quickly and quietly broke their covenant with the English by returning to their former homes in Connecticut. Those living with the Mohegans in the west crossed over the Thames River to their former fishing territory at Noank¹⁴ and those under Narragansett domination in the east crossed over the Pawtucket River to Stonington, Connecticut. By the mid-1660s, the Western Pequot had been granted 2,000 acres called Mashantucket in the town of Ledyard and, in 1685, Connecticut Colony purchased an additional 280 acres near Lantern Hill on Long Lake for the Eastern Paucatuck Pequots.¹⁵ Thus, the stage was set 300 years ago for land claims in the 1960s and law suits in the 1970s, suits that led to federal recognition, land and cash settlements, and the rights of sovereignty that allowed, at the end of the 20th century, for Indian gaming on reservations in Connecticut.

The Road to Wealth and Happiness?

Following the precedent set by other tribes (the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy of Maine), the Mashantucket Pequot brought suit in federal court in 1976, claiming that all but 180 acres of their land had been illegally sold at auction in 1856. The tribe argued that the auction sale was a violation of the Indian Trade and Intercourse Act of 1790, which stated that Indian land could not be taken without federal approval.¹⁶ Their claim was settled in 1983 when the state of

Not Synonymous: “Mohican” and “Mohegan”

James Fenimore Cooper confused things a bit. His 1826 historical fiction *Last of the Mohicans* romanticized the Mohegans, not the Mohicans.

The broad rubric “Mohican” includes two large groups of Eastern Indians, the Mahicans (Mohican or Stockbridge) and the Mohegans (including the Pequot, Niantic, Metoac or Montauk, and Narragansett). The various Mohegan tribes were distinct at the time of European contact, but were driven together by colonial pressures. The Mahicans, though given a confusingly similar name, have always considered themselves a different people. They were forced to emigrate to Wisconsin and joined the Munsee there as Stockbridge Indians. Today there are about 6,000 Mohegans in the eastern United States and about 3,000 Stockbridge Indians in Wisconsin.

— Native Languages of the Americas (www.native-languages.org/mohican.htm)

Connecticut agreed to contribute \$900,000 to a trust fund and to restore their 2,000 acre reservation. Federal legislation approved the settlement and extended recognition to the Mashantucket Pequot tribe. Some residents of North Stonington, the town just outside the reservation, were angry that the tribe received Federal Recognition directly from Congress rather than through the BIA's Federal Acknowledgement Process. Five years later, in 1988, the U.S. congress passed the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA), which recognized Indian tribes' authority to engage in gaming operations on reservation lands in order to promote tribal economic development.¹⁷

The Mashantuckets wanted to expand their bingo operation into a gaming resort, but they needed to borrow money to build it. Indian land is held in trust by the US government, so tribes cannot use it as collateral to obtain financing (that is, they cannot use reservation land as a guarantee to back a loan). They were obliged to find alternative financing. It was easy. Investors from Asia saw that the beautiful wooded reservation was located only two hours by car from either Boston or New York City, which would provide gaming customers. These investors created a business (a subsidiary realty company) to finance what would become the biggest casino in the world.¹⁸ Further expansion entailed negotiating with the state of Connecticut for casino-style gambling, including slot machines. The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act disallowed such activities except in states where it was already legal. This new obstacle was also overcome when the Mashantuckets offered the state of Connecticut 25 percent of the slot machine earnings, which the state government could use to balance its budget.¹⁹

When Foxwoods opened its doors in 1992, New England was gripped in an economic depression. Businesses and factories that had thrived for 150 years were shutting their doors and laying off workers. It seemed like Indian Gaming, sponsored by the Pequot, might be Connecticut's best hope to bolster a flagging economy. 📺

Notes

1. "New Book on Mashantuckets Prompts Call for Probe," *The Sun* (Westerly, RI, April 28, 2000): 1.
2. "Business Deal by Tribe Clouds Recognition Quest,"

Questions and Ideas for Further Research

1. Make a timeline of Pequot history, from the first major conflict between Indians and settlers, to the opening of the Foxwoods Resort. Do this by reading the article slowly, writing down on index cards any years mentioned and what happened in that year. Then sort the stack of cards by year. You can now spread your timeline out along the wall.
2. How was the geographic location of Connecticut exploited economically by Indians and non-Indians in the 1600s? How is Connecticut's location economically beneficial in the present?
3. This article was written in 2000. What has happened since that time? Visit useful websites (listed on page M5) and seek out printed material at your public library to gather information for answering the following questions:
 - a) Has the Foxwoods Resort resulted in economic development for the Pequot?
 - b) Have new jobs and tourist dollars continued to aid New England's economy?
 - c) What problems or challenges have arisen due to the introduction of high-stakes gambling to the region?

- The Sun* (Westerly, RI, April 19, 2000): 4.
3. "Towns Differ with BIA on Recognition of Tribes," *The Sun* (Westerly, RI, March 28, 2000): 1.
 4. Jeff Benedict, *Without Reservation: The Making of America's Most Powerful Indian Nation and Foxwoods, the World's Largest Casino* (New York: HarperCollins, 2000). Parts of this book are especially controversial. Contrast with Hauptman and Wherry, note 7.
 5. "BIA Wants Out of Tribal Recognition Business," *The Sun* (Westerly, RI, May 25, 2000): 1.
 6. John Heckewelder, *The History, Manners, and Customs of the Indian Nations Who Once Inhabited Pennsylvania and the Neighboring States* (Philadelphia, PA: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1876), 51-53; John Deforest, *A History of the Indians of Connecticut: From the Earliest Known Period to 1850* (Hartford, CT: W.J. Hamersley, 1851), 59-66; Frank Speck, *Native Tribes and Dialects of Connecticut* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1928), 216. Speck refers to Fedelia Fielding, last speaker of the Mohegan language, and Emma Baker, Mohegan Medicine Woman, as corroborating sources for the legend.
 7. Lynn Ceci, "Native Wampum as a Peripheral Resource in the Seventeenth-Century World-System," in Laurence M. Hauptman and James D. Wherry, eds., *The Pequots in Southern New England: The Fall and Rise of an American Indian Nation* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990), 60.
 8. John Mason, *A Brief History of the Pequot War* (Boston, MA: S. Kneeland & T. Green, 1736), x.
 9. John Deforest, 30. Deforest explains that blood purity was highly regarded because leadership was usually inherited from father to son and "if male heirs were wanting, upon the females." However, the extent of a sachem's power was determined by his abilities. The European terms, "noble" or "royal," might describe the relationship of certain families to their tribes.
 10. Laurence Hauptman, "The Pequot War and Its Legacies," in Hauptman and Wherry, 73; John Deforest, 59; John Mason, 14. Mason does not specifically state that the individuals in the fort at Mystic were old men and women, but he does mention that Sassacus and his men were not there that morning and were found later at another Pequot fort.
 11. John Mason, 18.
 12. Lynn Ceci, 59. See also the description of wampum in this issue of *MLL*, p M4.
 13. *Ibid.*, 61.
 14. The Pequot, who became subjects of the Mohegans, were granted fishing privileges in Noank on the coast of the old Pequot territory not far from Groton. The people who moved there are sometimes called the Pequots of Groton. They were later granted hunting rights in Mashantucket near Ledyard, Connecticut, from which they derived their present name, the Western Mashantucket Pequot. The Pequot placed under Narragansett authority in Rhode Island to the east moved back across the Pawcatuck River to Stonington, Connecticut. They are sometimes known as the Pequots of Stonington and have developed into two groups, the Eastern Pequot and the Paucatuck Eastern Pequot.
 15. Jack Campisi, "Mashantucket Pequot Tribe, 1637-1975," *The Pequots in Southern New England*, 119 (see note 7).
 16. *Ibid.*, 140.
 17. William N. Thompson, *Native American Issues: A Reference Handbook* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 1996), 54.
 18. J. Benedict, 215.
 19. *Ibid.*, 245.

Barbara Beucar is archive project assistant at the Barnes Foundation in Merion, Pennsylvania. She wrote this article while earning an M.A. in the Department of History at West Chester University in West Chester, Pennsylvania.

The Streets are Paved with Silver

BARBARA BEAUCAR AND WILLIAM L. HEWITT

LATE NINETEENTH-CENTURY CARTOONIST Thomas Nast was famous for his ability to take a complex political issue and represent it in a drawing. His 1871 portrayal of corrupt New York City Tammany Hall politicians in the form of a ravenous tiger attacking a woman labeled “the Republic” made a lasting impression in the public mind.

When it came to Indians, Nast drew images of ragged, blanketed Plains Indians that became the “Vanishing American” stereotype of the beginning of the twentieth century. Other political cartoonists drew comical caricatures of Indians that were speaking pidgin English, wearing headdresses, shooting arrows, and living in teepees. If the public’s image of Native Americans were based only on these artists’ drawings, people would believe that there were no Indians east of the Mississippi River, that Indians dress daily in feathers, live only in teepees, and cling to the past.

Look at the contemporary political cartoon about Indian gaming on the next page. Unlike most newspaper editorial cartoons, this drawing does not convey a single point of view. Rather, the cartoonist was trying to depict some of the consequences of Indian gaming, leaving it up to the viewer to decide whether the changes are desirable or not. The purpose of the cartoon is to invite readers to begin a conversation about the issue of Indian gaming.

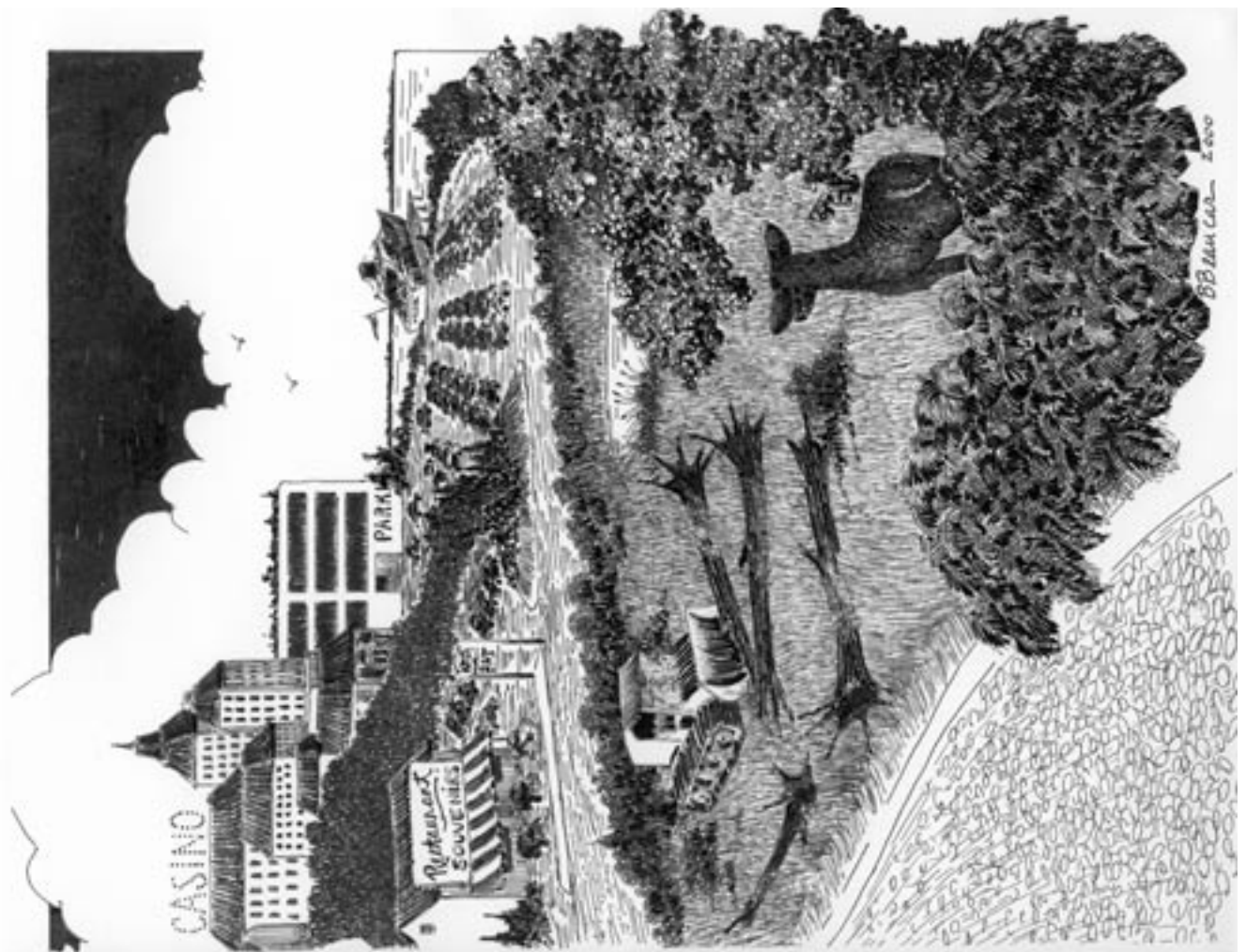
The questions below may be used to guide a classroom discussion. Remember that the topic of Indian gaming is controversial, and that there are probably no simple answers to the questions that are raised by Indian gaming--or legalized gambling in general. Also, there may be no single “correct” interpretation of an artist’s drawing.



This stereotypical portrayal of Native Americans by Thomas Nast shows Carl Schurz, Secretary of the Interior under Rutherford B. Hayes, explaining the use of a ballot box. The idea of permitting Indians to vote was progressive for that era. From *Harper's Weekly* (March 13, 1880).

Questions for Discussion

1. The street down the middle of the picture is “paved with silver,” according to the caption. Are there roads of silver or gold mentioned in myths and legends, American history, or modern fiction? (Spain’s desire for gold and silver motivated Hernando Cortés’ conquest of the Aztec empire. A modern example: In *The Wizard of Oz*, Dorothy follows a “yellow brick road,” hoping to get her wishes fulfilled. There are many other examples.)
2. As one travels the road from the foreground into the background, how does the landscape change? (There is more and more development of the land. Cartoonists often use a bulldozer as a symbol of construction and development.)
3. Choose a man-made object on the right-hand side of the cartoon. Why might some people see this object as a beneficial thing, while others might see it as harmful? (Example: The parking lots full of cars show that customers are coming to the casino. The business creates jobs, but the parking lot is not as pretty as the rural scene on the left-hand side of the cartoon.)
4. What things on the left-hand side of the cartoon show how gaming profits might be used to benefit a Native American community? (A museum has been built. A health center is planned. Also, for people to leave part of the rural landscape undeveloped, economic pressures to develop the land must be countered. Some of the gaming proceeds might be dedicated to this purpose.)



BB MAN CAR - 2000



The streets are paved with silver -

Deception and Games of Chance

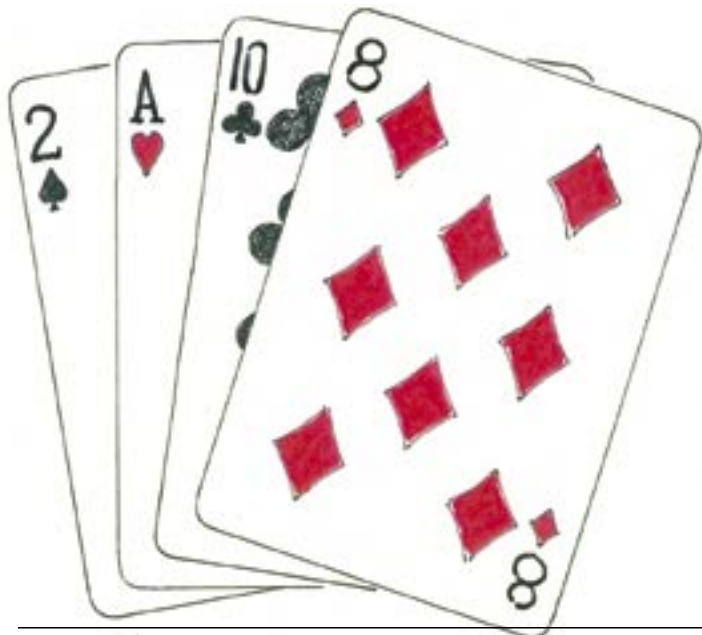
STEVEN S. LAPHAM

A GAMBLING ESTABLISHMENT, whether it is a private casino or a state government, can survive only if it makes a profit—that is, if it takes in more money than it gives out to winners. One way to bring in money is to make people think that the chances of winning a game are better than they really are. For example, an advertisement on TV for a state lottery will show an interview with last week’s happy winner, but it will not highlight the fact that it is more likely that you will be hit by lightning than win the lottery.



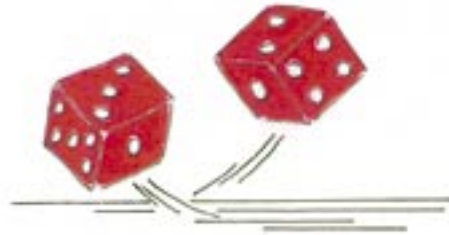
Some gambling games are won by pure chance, while others call upon skill as well as luck. Take, for example, a lottery wheel, with the numbers 1 to 52 around the edge. If that wheel has been played all day long, and the number eight has not been hit all day, it is not more and more likely to get hit as the hours roll past. The probability is always 1 out of 52, or $\frac{1}{52}$, every time the wheel spins. The lottery wheel is a game of pure chance. There is no skill involved in winning.

In contrast, take a deck of 52 cards. There are four aces in the deck, so the chance that you will take an



ace off the top of a full deck of cards is 4 out of 52, or $\frac{4}{52}$. Now if half the cards have been dealt, and no ace has appeared, the probability of an ace turning up next has increased. It is now 4 out of 26, or $\frac{4}{26}$. If a person can remember which cards have been played, he might then calculate his chances of getting a card that will help him win.¹ Many card games involve skill as well as chance.

Various advertisements for gambling seem to suggest that the more you play the game, the more skilled you become at it. In a game of pure chance, however, the rank beginner is as good a player as the old hand.



Questions for Discussion or Writing

1. Why are gambling games called “games of chance?” Is winning a matter of “pure luck” in every sort of gambling game? Explain your answer.
2. Today, approximately thirty-five states hold lotteries and ten host casinos.² This gambling makes money to help cover the costs of state government (like building roads, repairing schools, and providing health care). Do you think that state governments should raise money with gambling? If a state sponsors gambling, should it advertise the games, encouraging more of its citizens to gamble?
3. Some people believe that gambling can become a fierce habit, just like a drug addiction. Other people think that it just takes will power to realize when to quit playing a game. What is it about gambling that some people find so exciting, do you think?
4. In many states, various charities such as churches can raise money from bingo games. If nonprofit charities can sponsor gambling, should other groups be allowed to sponsor gambling for the purpose of making a profit? 🎲

Notes

1. Example provided by Lee Jones, poker player and author of *Winning Low-Limit Hold 'em*.
2. Questions 2-4 are controversial today in American society. A teacher might choose to ask students to write briefly about these topics rather than hold an open class discussion if there is an ongoing controversy about gambling in your community. Lists of states with various forms of gambling can be found at www.lotteryamerica.com and www.cca-i.com.

Does Gaming Hurt or Help?

WILLIAM L. HEWITT

THE EDITORIAL PAGES of a newspaper are a place where newspaper staff, specialists in an issue, and ordinary citizens can share their opinions with readers. The editorial writer often tries to convince the reader that a certain opinion or point of view is closer to the truth than is any competing perspective. In contrast, the newspaper reporter usually tries to give the reader a balanced view of a controversial topic by describing it from different perspectives.

Read carefully the two editorials below, which were printed in the same newspaper on different days. They provide two different perspectives on the topic of Indian Gaming. A glossary of words that may be new to you follows each editorial; these words are bold in the editorials. Answer the six questions below for each editorial. Then discuss your answers in small groups (or with the whole class). Remember that Indian Gaming is a controversial topic, and there may not be a single “correct” policy toward gaming that is best for every state, community, or Indian tribe. 📖

Questions for the Critical Reader

Answer these questions for each of the editorials on the following two pages.

1. Who wrote this editorial, and what is told about his credentials (his professional expertise)?

2. List three numerical statements made in the essay (facts and figures that the author cites to support his position).

3. Where does this writer get his information (Is he describing his own observations? Did he interview other people and quote them? Does he cite reports or studies undertaken by individuals or organizations?)

4. List and describe one of this author’s main sources of information.

5. Might this source (or the people connected with it) stand to gain or lose anything from Indian Gaming? Explain.

6. If you could talk with this editorial writer, what question might you ask him?

Casinos Don't Help Most Indians

VIC GLOVER

Many people think American Indian-owned casinos are making hordes of money and Indians no longer are a population needing federal or private assistance. We can see this perception manifesting itself in several ways, from a 50 percent drop in charitable giving for Indian programs, to governmental officials attempting to cut federal assistance to Indians. Much of this perception may be due to media attention upon the few larger and more successful casinos like Foxwoods, the nation's biggest casino, run by the Mashantucket-Pequot Tribe. Although the total **tribal enrollment** is about 500 members, their casino generates more than \$800 million a year.

Reality in Indian America portrays a different picture and challenges the notion that Indians don't require help anymore. Fewer than 25 percent of American Indian tribes have gaming operations. Among those, some are **parasitic** on their own population. Still, some policy-makers have exploited this recent anti-Indian sentiment as an opportunity to scrap federal assistance. This is an especially disturbing trend, accompanied by welfare reform requiring reservation recipients to work even if there are no jobs available in the area.

On some reservations, the unemployment rate is as high as 85 percent, with one-third of the population living below the poverty level. By contrast, 13 percent of the total U.S. population lives in poverty.

A recent Harvard study on mortality rates in the U.S. provides a frightening snapshot of Indian America. According to this study, the **life expectancy** of Oglala Lakota (Sioux) men on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota is 56.5 years, a figure lower than [that in] any other nation in the western hemisphere with the exception for Haiti.

While a few financially stable tribes provide some **inter-tribal assistance**, the bulk of the support is from small donations of Americans across the country. The average contribution to Christian Relief Services, an agency that funds basic services and general assistance programs on twenty American Indian reservations, is less than \$20.

However, public support is declining precipitously, and casino revenues are unable to replace the broad, traditional generosity of the American people. For example, Running Strong for American Indian Youth, with programs on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota, reported receiving donations ranging from \$500 to \$5,000 from tribal casinos. Conversely, the agency has suffered a 50-percent drop in fundraising support from the public over previous years.

Glossary

INTER-TRIBAL ASSISTANCE: One tribe sharing some of its wealth or resources with another.

LIFE EXPECTANCY: The average age at which people die in a certain population. It provides an idea of the general health of a group of people. In the United States, the life expectancy for men in general is about 78 years.

PARASITIC: To feed off others without giving anything in return.

TRIBAL ENROLLMENT: The total members of a Native American tribe who are documented as belonging to that tribe.

Vic Glover, a journalist of 22 years, taught at the University of Indiana for 10 years and spent 12 years working in the print and TV fields. This article appeared in *Indian Country Today* (www.indiancountry.com), January 26, 1998, and is reprinted by permission.

Gaming Revenues Boost Local, State Economies

DAVID MELMER

Surveys on Indian gaming, according to the **National Indian Gaming Association**, have directly and indirectly improved economic conditions on some reservations and in the counties and areas where the casinos are located.

The Wisconsin Intertribal Task Force on Gaming ordered a survey in 1996 to provide data [for] compact negotiations with the state. The report states: “It is important to note that while the Indian communities have benefited greatly from the employment and income generated by gaming, a very significant share of both the direct and indirect benefits of Indian gaming accrues to the non-Indian community as a result of the employment of non-Indians, purchases from the non-Indian vendors, and the indirect effects resulting from the **re-spending of income** generated by the Indian casinos.”

An example of the direct impact points out an employment increase of from 1,422 people in 1991 to 14,073 in 1995 in the areas in Wisconsin where casinos are located. At the same time, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (a welfare service) was reduced in the state of Wisconsin by 28 percent, according to the Wisconsin Department of Social Services. Total wages paid increased from \$20 million to \$160 million in five years. By adding in the multiplier effect (a formula used to determine the impact of circulated money in a community), the benefit to Wisconsin was more than \$450 million. Federal and local taxes were paid on salaries earned at casinos.

Visitors from outside Wisconsin who came to the casinos wagered \$381 million, and another \$38 million was spent for non-gaming activities at restaurants and bars, motels, [and gift shops]. The report estimates that than \$1 billion is wagered in a year with the casinos retaining at least half as gross revenue, from which local and state-wide **vendors** are paid for goods and services. According to the survey, this spreads the revenue across the entire state. In 1995, casinos paid vendors a total of \$144.5 million.

The survey covered only the state of Wisconsin. Other states may have different results, but according to the Indian gaming association, gaming operations in all states that allow casinos or gaming operations have shown economic growth in and around their areas and also have shown positive impacts to the state.

In New York, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan, Indian-owned casinos are listed as either the number one employer in their areas or are among the top 10 employers in the state.

Glossary

NATIONAL INDIAN GAMING ASSOCIATION: An organization made up of Native American tribes that sponsor gambling establishments on their reservations.

RE-SPENDING OF INCOME: When a gambling business takes in a dollar, it might use that dollar to pay an employee, buy advertisements in a local paper, or hire a contractor to build a new hotel.

VENDOR: Any business that is hired (or contracted) to provide a product or perform a task on a regular basis.

David Melmer is on the staff of *Indian Country Today*. This article appeared in *Indian Country Today* (www.indiancountry.com), December 28, 1998, and is reprinted by permission.



Can You Find Me?

An American Indian Guessing Game

Introduction (Read Aloud to the Class)

Various tribes played hiding games, dice games, and games of dexterity, skill, and strength—occasionally wagering on the outcome. Games and play were essential to Native American culture. “With summer lasting only a few brief weeks, with the ever-present threat of starvation, [Wabanaki] families [in Maine] still spent many hours in play.”¹

“Can You Find Me?” is a version of a traditional guessing game using sticks or bits of bone hidden in the hands. Because the game was played entirely by gesture, it could be enjoyed by individuals from different tribes who had only sign language in common. More than 80 tribes, belonging to 28 different linguistic families, played some variation of this game.² Frequently, far into the night in the winter camp of the Kiowa tribe of Oklahoma, sounds of the game—players could be heard from “several games in progress simultaneously, the high-pitched voices of the women in one tipi making a pleasing contrast to the deeper tones of the men in another.”³

A gathering of two tribes for competition in games and sports could be as exciting as Superbowl Sunday.⁴ “In a memorable game in the winter of 1881-82, two tribal leaders—Kiowa and Apache—faced off in a hand guessing game. Large stakes were wagered and won by the Kiowa.”⁵

Choosing the hand that is holding the marked bone would seem to be an act of pure luck, but the game is really about detection and deception. When looking for the bone, a skillful player practices keen observation and remembers the behavior of players on the opposing team. Likewise, when concealing the bone, a skillful player practices deceptive movements, or tries to reveal nothing at all. “Although at first flush [this might seem to be a] game of chance, nothing could be farther from the truth. No real aboriginal [American Indian] game is a true game of chance. The invention of that dangerous and delusive plaything was reserved for civilized ingenuity.”⁶

Notes

1. Edith Favour, *Indian Games, Toys, and Pastimes of Maine and the Maritimes* (Bar Harbor, ME: Robert Abbe Museum, 1974), 19.
2. Stewart Culin, *Games of the North American Indians* (Smithsonian Institution, 1907 reprint. New York: Dover, 1975), 267-320.
3. James Mooney, 1898, quoted in Culin, 285.
4. Lowell Kirk, “The Cherokee Ball Game,” *Tellico Plains Mountain Press* (Tellico Plains, TN, 2003), www.telliqah.com/History3.htm.
5. James Mooney, quoted in Cullin, 285.
6. Charles F. Loomis, 1891, quoted in Culin. 191.

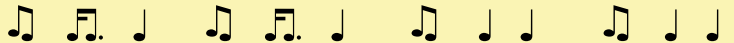
Equipment

Ten bits of deer bone (or uncooked pieces of macaroni), one of which is called the “rabbit” and is marked with black rings drawn around it. Ten small sticks (or toothpicks) for keeping score. A small paper bag decorated with rabbit footprints.

Time

Five minutes in class to a half-hour recess if students enjoy the competition.

Directions (Read Aloud to the Class)

1. Form two teams of five players each. One group starts out as the Hiders (these players conceal bones) and the other group is the Seekers (these players make guesses). Opposing teams sit in two lines facing each other, about six feet apart. No conversation is allowed.
2. Place ten sticks (toothpicks), used for keeping score, in the middle of the floor.
3. Place the rabbit in a bag with nine other pieces of bone. Each Hider draws at random two pieces of bone from the bag and holds one in each fist. Thus, there are ten hands hiding ten pieces of bone. Hiders can peek at the bones in hand. To the casual observer, it is not clear which fist might be holding the rabbit.
4. The Hiders repeat this chant (to a $\frac{3}{4}$ beat) four times:

Ah-la wee-ah oh, Ah-la wee-ah oh Can you find me? Can you say so?
 All the while, they wag their arms around. They can switch a bone from one hand to the other, exchange a bone with a neighbor, or only pretend to move bones around. Hiders can move bones around behind their backs or in front.
5. When their chanting ends, the Hiders rest their hands on their knees, with one bone in each hand.
6. Seekers have been silently observing this performance. When the chanting ends, the 1st Seeker in line must quickly reach out and tap the hand that appears to be hiding the rabbit while shouting “A-ha!”
7. If the guess is correct, the Seekers win two toothpicks and the bag of bones. The teams switch roles and play a new round; that is, return to step 3.
8. If the guess is incorrect, the Hiders win one toothpick, hold on to their bones, and play a new round, in which the 2nd Seeker will call out “A-ha!” This pattern repeats, with the 3d, 4th, 5th, then back to 1st Seeker, until the marked bone is discovered.
9. The game continues until all ten toothpicks have been won (or until the bell rings).
10. If time runs out, all Hiders open their hands, which reveals the rabbit, if it has not already been detected. The team with the most toothpicks at the end wins. 🐰