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The Complexities of Consumption: Eastern Pequot Cultural Economics in Eighteenth-Century New England

ABSTRACT

Colonialism shaped economic interactions between Native Americans and settlers, and placed considerable constraints on indigenous people, but Native Americans creatively negotiated these material, economic conditions in practical and cultural ways in their daily lives. By the mid-18th century, Native Americans in New England were deeply entrenched in colonial and market economies as farmhands, domestic workers, whalers, soldiers, craft producers, store customers, and consumers. The Eastern Pequot community of southeastern Connecticut serves as an example which is examined by combining data from three years of excavation of two 18th-century reservation households and the transcribed store ledgers of a local merchant from the middle of that century. Using these dual information sources that sometimes converge and other times relate to different scales or materialities, the study permits a look at the long-term processes and negotiations of colonial market economies through the lens of consumption and cultural economics.

Introduction

Despite the growing array of research on Native Americans during the colonial and "contact" periods of North America, the study of Native American participation in the market economies of the 18th and 19th centuries has only begun to mature in North American archaeology. The role of trade relations has always been recognized as an integral component of Native American interactions with newly arrived colonists and long-term settlers, but the transformations of cultural, economic, and material relations ushered in by early and late market economies require a different perspective than those drawn largely from somewhat-equal relations of trade and exchange. In the market economy, Native Americans confronted the larger apparatus of capitalism, a system that involves global relations of production and distribution, increasing alienation between producers and consumers, currency-based transactions, credit and indebtedness, and a mode of economic and social engagement framed by particular kinds of consumption (Orser 1996). Unlike the trading relations in several regions of post-Columbian North America that may have preceded the market economy, ones that likely involved closer social networks between somewhat more-equal partners, the market economy was founded on inherent inequality, an inequality born in large part from the cauldrons of colonialism. Importantly though, inherent inequality at a systemic level did not preclude creative and even mundane negotiations of this inequality between the poles of oppression and opportunity (Mullins 1999a, 2003).

Because of the complexities of the market economy and its powerful impact on Native American negotiations of continuity and change across North America, more work on this front promises to enrich the historical archaeology of indigenous people in four significant ways. First, it counterbalances the overreliance by archaeologists on studies of the earliest periods of cultural entanglement—often called the "contact period"—between Native Americans and Europeans. These early moments have undeniable importance, but their overrepresentation in the literature tends to give the impression that later periods, by default, have less relevance to Native American history. If care is not taken, this numerically renders the early moments—typified by trade, disease, and outright warfare—as the decisive ones rather than the later instances that involved more embedded colonial, capitalist, and racist relations. Also, the fewer cases recognized as falling in the periods between earliest contacts and contemporary Native American communities, the easier it is to misrepresent aspects of change and continuity (Lightfoot 2006; Silliman 2009). Simply put, scholars cannot do justice to understanding long-term native histories if they neglect the periods immediately preceding, and even those within the 20th century. A more

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sustained archaeology of colonialism as a long-term process is needed, one that extends well beyond the historiographic label of "colonial," as though such a process for indigenous people ended, on the Atlantic coast for example, at the beginning of the American Revolution.

Second, focusing on the market economy as a point of articulation between Native Americans and European settler populations helps to move away from the tendency to see all Native American/European or European American interactions as a kind of culture contact. The first-encounter model mentioned above frequently hinges on an idea of cultures coming into contact, with one or more of those cultures undergoing changes as a result. Yet this contact model does not work when considering the colonial institutions and situations in which many Native Americans found themselves, sometimes immediately after contact, but other times decades, if not centuries, later (Silliman 2005). An agricultural field at a Spanish mission in Florida, a Mexican rancho in California, or a British farm in New England, on which long hours are worked, should not be considered merely a *place* where cultures come into contact, but as a *context* in which complex labor, gender, economic, racial, market, and colonial relations were at work.

Third, an investigation of the market economy encourages more attention on the various strategies and struggles that indigenous people underwent in the colonial world of North America. For instance, they can be studied as workers and as consumers, both of which are rarely considered as elements of Native American life in the "contact period" (Knack and Littlefield 1995; Cassell 2003; Silliman 2004, 2006, 2010). Doing so does not deny the role of identity and culture, but rather expands the scope to include those market and labor activities that occupied Native American lives, since these dimensions may well have been part and parcel of cultural and identity negotiations. In addition, reorienting the analytical focus to workers and consumers also offers a much-needed link between the study of Native Americans and the study of African diaspora populations in North America as instances of colonialism, a link that is discouraged when Native American experiences are considered culture contact rather than colonial (Silliman 2005:64–65). Despite their unique contexts and histories, these groups shared similar experiences (despite many differences) in the capitalist market economy as people surrounded by the practices and discourses of racism and assimilation, as interpreted and exercised by white colonists and settlers.

Fourth, a careful examination of market economies promises to sharpen the archaeological interpretations of Native American identity. Historical archaeologists tend to interpret the array of material culture recovered from native-occupied sites as primarily a function of cultural preferences, and therefore, of identity. Although a laudable interpretive goal, archaeologists must be wary of jumping quickly to cultural preferences and identity if unable to establish first the range of material culture items that were available to Native American consumers, whether geographically or financially, before talking about their choices therein. Doing otherwise assumes that individuals had unrestrained access to any and all available material goods in order to enact "perfect" cultural choices, and this may well be untenable. Similarly, archaeologists must realize that the market economy became a context for social agency and cultural practice rather than a universally dominating force of assimilation and uniformity. Historical archaeologists have already begun to lay out frameworks for considering choices of subaltern peoples, primarily those of African descent in the Americas, amidst constrained economic contexts (Mullins 1999a, 1999b; Wilkie and Farnsworth 1999).

With these four goals in mind, this article examines the labor and consumer practices of the Eastern Pequot in the colonial market system of 18th-century Connecticut. The Eastern Pequot of the late 1700s considered the Lantern Hill Reservation, in what would be incorporated in 1807 as North Stonington and surrounding areas, as their home (Figure 1). This pattern began "officially" in 1683 with the reservation's establishment by the Connecticut colony, and continues today for the Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation. This study's objective is to explore Eastern Pequot consumer practices as a dual function of the constraints of the economic context, and their cultural negotiations of those constraints to maintain community and individual well-being. The study is based on archaeological data from two 18th-century sites excavated in 2005–2007 by the Eastern Pequot Archaeological Field School, a joint

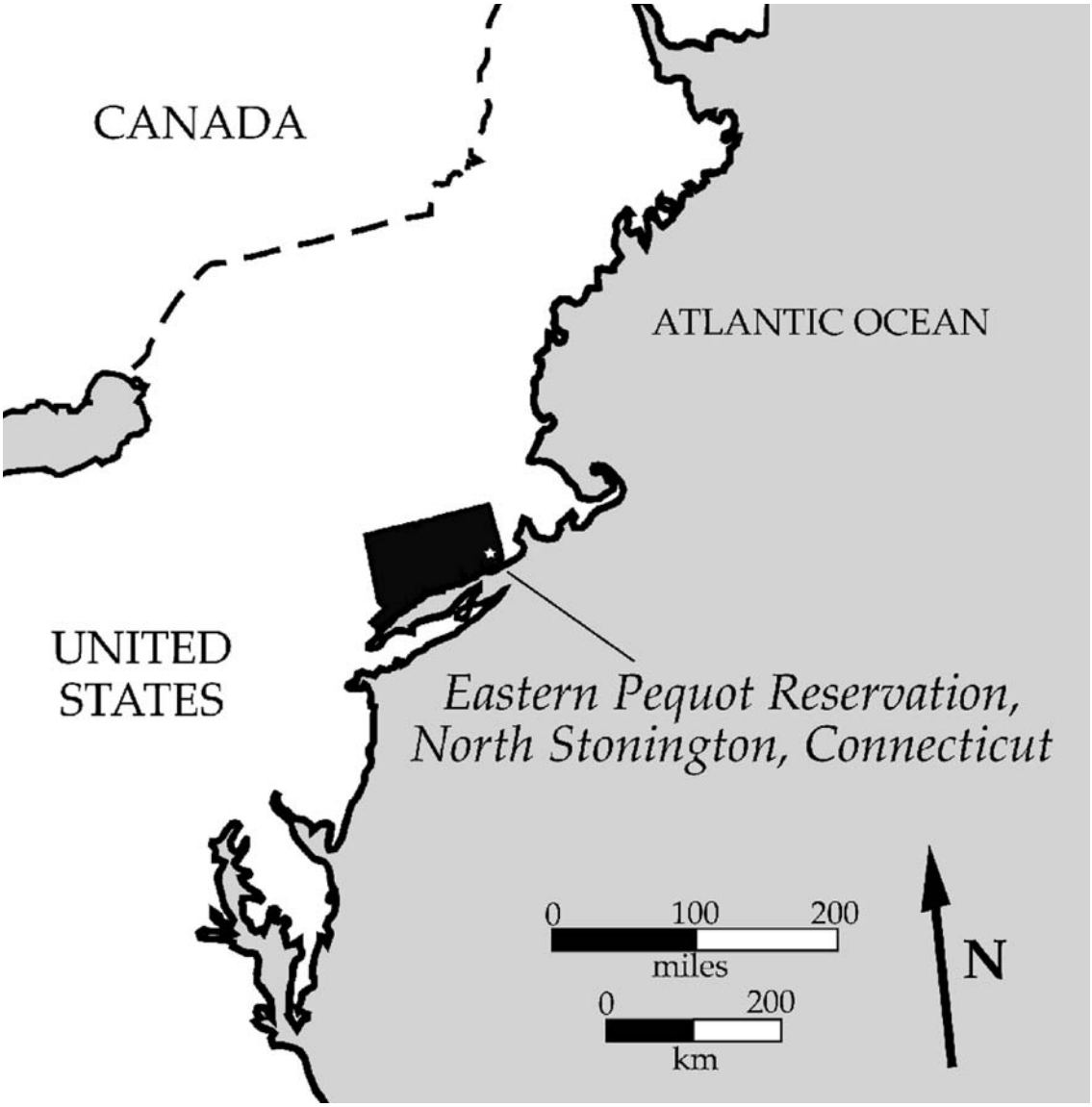

FIGURE 1. Map of northeastern North America, showing location of the historic Eastern Pequot Reservation in North Stonington, Connecticut. (Map by Stephen Silliman and Craig Cipolla, 2005–2008.)

venture between the University of Massachusetts, Boston and the Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation, which took place on that nation's historic reservation (Silliman and Sebastian Dring 2008), and documentary data from the account books of Jonathan Wheeler, a merchant farmer in Stonington who had frequent economic interactions with the Eastern Pequot in the 18th century (Witt 2007). Both archaeological and documentary data are used to examine how colonial contexts shaped the consumer decisions of the Eastern Pequot, how individual Eastern Pequot negotiated these contexts through economic activities, and what can be said about the consumer preferences of the Eastern Pequot living in these environments. In short, these results are used to address the complex nature of culture change and continuity for Native Americans, particularly Eastern Pequot, involved in market economies (Silliman 2009).

Consumption and the Acquisition of Goods

Many types of consumption can be studied, including the use of natural resources, acquisition through trade and exchange, and market transactions for commodities and currency. Although studying consumption of resources in nonmarket contexts has value (Douglas and Isherwood 1978:57), in the context of 18th-century Native American consumption patterns it is better to distinguish between goods that are produced and ones that are acquired for purposes of tracking engagements with the expanding market economy. As a result, the acts of consumption that involve, for example, hunting animals for meat or processing plants for making baskets, are not discussed further. For the purposes of this paper, consumption is defined as the acquisition of goods through the market economy. It is realized, of course, that direct engagement with the market economy through commerce or labor comprises only one way to acquire material objects that people, whether Native American or not, used and gave meaning to in their daily lives. For instance, indigenous people may have also acquired goods through gifting, bartering, pilfering, inheriting, and borrowing. Since these different acts are difficult to distinguish in the archaeological record, the authors rely on the likely fact that any of these processes taking place in 18th-century New England still required the market economy to supply the objects in question, and that these goods may well have materially presenced the market even in those other interactions.

For archaeologists, the study of consumer practices can be an effective way to look at economic interactions and cultural practices. Consumption has tangible and observable consequences in the types and quantities of goods acquired, and it manifests the choices that people made as individual participants in a larger economic and social system. Recent studies of consumer practices recognize that consumption is as much about the social interactions between participants in the exchange as it is about the acquisition of resources (Douglas and Isherwood 1978; Appadurai 1986; Miller 1987; Spencer-Wood 1987). Consumption is also entangled with the tastes and agencies of consumers in their social contexts (Dietler 1998; Stahl 2002). The meanings that people give to consumer goods engage with their sense of identity and how they relate to others. Focusing on tastes also takes into consideration the social aspect of conspicuous consumption that may play a role in the construction of some individual and group identities (Smith 2002).

Studying consumption and taste requires looking at more than just the types of goods that people acquired. Consumption also relates to the circulation of goods, meaning the ways that people acquired goods can be as meaningful as the actual goods consumed (Carrier 1994). Similarly, tastes can be difficult to ascertain in smaller markets or in ones constrained by harsh economic contexts, because taste implies that individuals make consumer choices entirely out of preference, which should not be taken as a given in all contexts. In addition, the way that these contexts affect consumer choices should not be linked solely to broad categories of class or ethnicity. Such models that predict the ebb and flow of consumption by looking at the patterns of large-scale economic and class systems tend to overlook the complexities of individual and quite-localized economic choices and cultural contexts. Attributing the wide range of consumer choices merely to an individual's socioeconomic position takes little account of the complexity of social relations or the nonfinancial constraints upon consumption (O'Donovan and Wurst 2002:74).

Consumption is about choice, but it is choice constrained by a variety of factors. The cultural identities of individual agents, the groups and communities with which they identify, the classes in which they find themselves, and the social, political, and economic contexts in which they live can all impact consumer choices (Cook et al. 1996:51; McGuire and Wurst 2002). To understand the way that consumption can be a component of both individual and group identities and daily practices, it is necessary to try to access the preferences behind these consumptive choices. Yet, cultural preferences cannot be comprehended, or at least not materialized, outside the constraints surrounding access to goods. Constraints on consumption—such as economic constraints based on access to capital, geographic constraints caused by distance and limited access to sources of material, or sumptuary laws or boycotts that can prevent consumption based on social or political influences—can impact the choices that people make and create a gap between

consumer preference and consumer choice. These constraints and structural elements are ones that indigenous communities and individuals in colonial worlds had to negotiate in both labor and consumer practices.

Models of taste and class run the risk of oversimplifying the complexities of people like Native Americans, who were often but not always at the margins of European and European American economic activity in the 18th century. To say that people were at the margins of an economy is not to say that they were marginalized *by* that economy in all respects. Several studies looking at the consumer practices of people at the margins have demonstrated that people at these margins were still active participants in that economic system, a type of social agency that resists such systemic attempts to dominate them (Mullins 1999a, 1999b; Wilkie and Farnsworth 1999; Brighton 2001). Others have recently considered these acts of consumption through postcolonial notions of mimicry and social camouflage, a conceptual reorientation that restores significance to those Native American sites that may appear, at first glance, to be insignificant because of their similarity to those of Anglo-American neighbors (Pezzarossi 2008). Although contexts can drastically shape consumer practices, these studies have shown that such contexts do not entirely dictate those decisions, and that consumption still embodies personal preference and provides a way of navigating and resisting harsh economic contexts. This does not make consumption in a capitalist market economy some kind of liberating experience—much like Leone (1999:17) has argued it can never be—nor does it suggest that these communities and consumers were anything but marginalized in the economic, political, and spatial arenas of colonialism and capitalism. Yet it does reveal these practices and actions to have elements of creativity and cultural survival rather than of overdetermination and obliteration.

When examining the lives of consumers at the margins of an economy it is of particular importance to distinguish between consumer preference and consumer choice. Consumer preference, the choices a person would make free from constraints, differs significantly from what Sen (1982) describes as "revealed preference," which constitutes a person's actual consumer choices. In a world free of constraints, a person's consumer preference and the resulting consumer choices would be identical. This is of course a heuristic model rather than anything truly attainable, but it accentuates cases where the distance between consumer preference and revealed preference or choice is great. For instance, the Eastern Pequot in the 18th century, like many other Native Americans and other ethnic groups in North America, certainly did not live in a world without constraints. As described below, their consumption was constrained from all directions by issues of economics, politics, geography, and access to goods. Choice is significantly easier to study than preference, especially when the data sources are material records of people no longer available to speak about them, but the disjuncture between what people prefer and the choices they make can inform about how contexts constrain and influence consumer decisions, and how people living in such constrained contexts navigated these contexts in their daily lives.

The differences between consumer preferences and consumer choices can often be revealed in patterns of inconsistency and ambiguity in historical data. Rather than see these as places where documents, artifacts, or their intersections do not agree and therefore reveal unreliable information, archaeologists can look at these as contexts where complex meanings and practices are at play, and where processes of silencing (Trouillot 1995) and networks of archiving (Galloway 2006) have been at work. The following sections place the consumer activities of the Eastern Pequot within the social and political contexts that may have influenced their purchases, look at the goods that the Eastern Pequot chose to consume, and consider what these details can reveal about the lives of Eastern Pequot living in 18th-century southeastern Connecticut. Rather than mistakenly considering the incorporation of these goods as standard indices of cultural change, they are considered in terms of agency and consumption in households and ultimately in a larger community struggling to persist.

Economic, Cultural, and Colonial Environments in New England

By the time English colonists established their first settlements in New England in the early 17th century, Native Americans were already economically engaged with European traders. Trade and exchange began almost a century

before with fur traders and fishing vessels, and these goods moved through trade networks all across the Northeast (Campisi 1990b). The introduction of mercantilist and capitalist economics into indigenous communities had tremendous impacts on native lives, beginning with the earliest interactions with Europeans, especially with regard to the commodification of native-produced goods such as wampum shell beads and animal furs. The impacts of mercantilist and capitalist economics on New England's indigenous communities did not diminish after the famous Pequot War in 1637, contrary to standard historiography that frequently drops Native Americans from historical processes outside early colonial battles, but continued through the British colonial and American periods and into the present (Campisi 1990a).

With the decline of the fur trade at the end of the 17th century, the New England colonies struggled to find a new medium of exchange to support their economy. The poor soil and short growing season relative to the southern colonies made agricultural activity a poor replacement for large-scale trade. Labor was also affected, making slavery unappealing to colonists since it required supporting workers who would have little to do in the winter months, but would still require food and housing (McCusker and Menard 1985:239). For this reason the plantation system of the South did not take hold in New England, and free labor was more prevalent. This does not mean that slaves or indentured servants were absent from New England. These systems were in place and had tremendous impacts on those (including many Native Americans) caught up in them, but unlike the South they were not the center of the New England economy. Another factor influencing the large-scale New England economy was the lack of hard currency within the colonies (Breen and Hall 1998). Exchanges were usually supported by systems of credit and paper money, whose values could fluctuate wildly. Though instabilities in both labor and specie seem to support the idea of an unstable and fragile economy, the 18th century was a relatively prosperous time for New England colonists (Richardson 1991). The variety of economic activities in New England helped to develop a "diverse and tightly integrated commercial economy. Farming, fishing, and trade employed the bulk of the population in an interdependent and profitable round of economic activity" (McCusker and Menard 1985:110).

Land also played a key role in the economic activities of New Englanders (Main and Main 1988). Since a majority of New England colonists and early American citizens would have been at least partially involved in agricultural activity, either for subsistence or trade, land would have been of high value, especially as populations increased. This placed colonists in frequent conflict with Native Americans over control of reservations, many of which were established in the preceding century, and usually in perpetuity. Encroachment and sale of native-controlled land dominated native/colonist interactions during the 18th century. Legal battles raged over the sale and theft of land, as well as the damage done by domesticated animals set to graze on those reservation lands. Battles over the legitimacy of native leaders often related to land sales with colonists, as colonial governments attempted to replace "troublesome" sachems (or community leaders) with those more supportive of colonial expansion (Den Ouden 2005).

The economy of New England was also disrupted by wars and political upheavals in the 18th century. Restrictions on the import and export of goods, boycotts, and the loss of land and labor forces to war at times severely disrupted local economic activities (McCusker and Menard 1985:361–362). Although the American Revolution (and the preceding Seven Years War of 1756–1763) impacted the economy of the North American colonies, the economic system experienced no dramatic change until the 19th century (McCusker and Menard 1985). Labor, resources, and capital continued to be central issues in the economy of New England, and the variety of economic activities in which New Englanders were engaged remained diverse.

Native American Contexts in Southern New England

In order to discuss how the 18th-century economics of southern New England affected Native Americans in the region, it is necessary to look back to the 17th century. Though native lives saw the impact of interaction with Europeans well before the first permanent settlements were established, colonization of southern

New England in the early 17th century magnified the effects of these exchanges. Tensions between native, British, and Dutch communities over control of the fur trade and the wampum supply, in part, culminated in the Pequot War of 1636–1637 and the infamous massacre of Pequot residents at Mystic in May of 1637. The Treaty of Hartford in 1638 at the close of the war, resulted in the division of the powerful Pequot into smaller groups overseen by the Narragansett, Mohegan, and Niantic, as well as a large number being sold into slavery or executed (Campisi 1990a:118; Ceci 1990:60–61). The treaty stipulated that the Pequot would be no more—not in community or in name. This discursive and political act of conquest proved to be much less of a cultural conquest than the colonists had hoped (Den Ouden 2005)

By the latter decades of the 17th century, two Pequot communities had regained some independence and held reservation land in Connecticut. The Pequots who had been living under Mohegan oversight separated from them to form the Mashantucket Pequot, and were granted a reservation in the town of Groton (out of which Ledyard was incorporated in 1836) in 1666 (McBride 1990). The Pequot who had been living with the Narragansett became the Eastern Pequot, and were given a reservation near Stonington (before North Stonington's incorporation) in 1683 (Campisi 1990a; Salisbury 1990; Bragdon 2001:50–51). The reservations and the native communities living on them were administered by the colonial and then state governments, later through the "overseer" system. These overseers managed native lands and the colonial and state funds provided for them. Overseers acted as one source of goods for trade and purchase, and as a link to the colony and the state to fight the loss of land from encroachment. Too often, however, these overseers used their positions to enrich themselves, holding back money owed to the Pequot and selling off reservation lands (St. Jean 1999; Den Ouden 2005).

The combination of land loss by debt and encroachment by Europeans made for a difficult situation for native people in New England. In order to pay those debts, many Native Americans were forced to rent or sell land to colonists for pasturing, sometimes leading to its loss outright and political strife within native communities (Pezzarossi 2008). For instance, the Narragansett sachem Ninigret II incurred so much debt over legal battles to protect his land and to prove his legitimacy as leader, he was forced to sell tribal land in Rhode Island, putting him at odds with his own councilors and creating a large rift in the Narragansett community (Simmons and Simmons 1982:xxx–xxxvii). Another strategy involved the sale of natural resources or the production of goods such as timber or fur (Cronon 1983). This further depleted the resources on the ever-decreasing land under native control. A third way was to participate in wage labor and labor exchange in the surrounding area. While this was often the most effective way for Native Americans to earn money or credit for goods, it often took native people away from their land, leaving it susceptible to encroachment, and injected them into systems structured by debt. This was particularly true for those trapped in indentured servitude. Sainsbury (1975) has reported that more than a third of all documented Native Americans in Rhode Island in the mid-1770s lived with European American families, usually in service-oriented capacities.

Therefore, particularly by the mid-18th century, many Native Americans in New England who remained on Indian land by choice or necessity, existed at the very margins of the colonial economy, on poor-quality agricultural land, with decreased trade resources once used in previous centuries, and under restrictions placed on their movements and access to resources for hunting and gathering (Den Ouden 2005). All the while, they began to be surrounded more and more by colonial towns, further decreasing freedom of movement and increasing the frequency of both wanted and unwanted interactions with nearby settlers. In many ways these conditions made Native Americans increasingly dependent on economic relationships with settlers for survival. This is not to say that Native Americans in southern New England had no resources for exchange or that subsistence agriculture was completely futile. Quite the contrary; agriculture and hunted game continued to be a means of subsistence for these groups, supplemented by goods acquired from nearby farmers and merchants. Archaeological data from the reservations of the Mashantucket Pequot (McBride 1990, 2005) and Eastern Pequot bear this out (Cipolla et al. 2007; Fedore

2008; Silliman 2009). Both men and women would exchange labor with local merchants in return for credit on subsistence purchases, or for durable goods such as clothing or tools. Baskets, brooms, and other manufactured goods were often sold by women in nearby towns. Even though this seems to have been stable work for some native women, it also removed them from home lands, taking away watchful eyes which protected against encroachment (O'Brien 1996; Wolverton 2003).

New England native people, whether deriving from communities on or off the various colonial Indian reservations that appeared in the latter half of the 17th century, worked in nearby European/European American farms and households, and frequently far from home as soldiers and whalers. These lifestyles were tough choices, as they produced economic indebtedness, emptied some homes of adult men, and disrupted social relationships both within and between communities, all while serving as a vehicle for Native American peoples' attempts to insure their families' and communities' survival in a colony and then settler nation that was clearly not going away. Labor in more urban environments or on whaling ships, especially for men, could mean a better chance of earning cash wages rather than credit, as well as access to more competitive markets for exchange, but it could also lead to dependency and entrapment as living costs surpassed income, causing laboring workers to fall deeper into debt (Silverman 2001).

Many native people across New England felt the effects of colonial constraints, but individuals, families, and communities each negotiated these constraints in a variety of ways and with an equal variety of results (Grumet 1995:129–152; Bragdon 2001:28–30). Although the impact of European economic systems on native lives is undeniable, the changes and continuities in native lives cannot be attributed to economic forces alone. A focus on economics reveals only one facet of the broader colonial world that indigenous people inhabited, a world framed by racism, disenfranchisement, dispossession, confinement, marginalization, and cultural persecution, but one that with persistent struggle made possible the survival of communities. Yet colonial economics bound individuals together in complex social and material relations, due in large part to the frequent market and exchange interactions that Native Americans had with European and European American settlers. As a result, economic relationships may have served as a potential medium of cultural exchange and negotiation.

The combinations of subsistence, exchange, and wage labor, along with demands placed on the protection of land from encroachment or loss from indebtedness, created complex consumer contexts. For Native Americans who had working wages, pay varied greatly depending on the year, the season, or the labor performed (Rothenberg 1988:540). Differences between labor at home and labor away, as well as trading in cash or credit, also increased the complexity of access to material goods. These economic and political contexts constrained the access and availability of consumer goods, impacted the nature of consumption, and increased the differences between consumer preference and consumer choice. By the 18th century, Native Americans in New England were deeply entrenched in colonial economies, and as a result, European-manufactured goods became common fixtures in native homes, a fact borne out by both documents and archaeological collections. In fact, many of the goods used in native households were similar to those found in European ones, although the reasons and meanings behind these introductions and uses can be complex (Law 2008; Pezzarossi 2008; Silliman 2009). Caution must be taken not to use these economic relationships or their material outcomes to render uncritical evaluations about whether or not native communities, such as the Eastern Pequot, changed significantly—that is, compromised their communities, cultures, or identities to become "less" Indian—with the influx of European/European American–produced goods. The evidence suggests instead that they used these goods to *remain* Eastern Pequot, and therefore Native American, rather than the opposite (Silliman 2009).

For this reason, it is vitally important to understand how colonial contexts impacted economic exchanges, and how indigenous people negotiated these contexts in their daily lives. Considering all of the dimensions of this complex phenomenon across southern New England is beyond the scope of this article, but the general discussion can shift to one with more nuance and detail. Examining a case with both

documents and artifacts, as well as recognizing specific named individuals, can highlight some of the complexities in a local setting and establish parameters for future comparison with other cases. Therefore, the Eastern Pequot case in the 18th century can be considered through the perspectives of two named community members, one merchant farmer, and two archaeological sites.

Documentary Insights into Eastern Pequot Consumer Practices

Documentary analysis serves as an entry point for considering two different dimensions of the current problem: (1) the accessibility and circulation of consumer goods that help to frame the difference between consumer choice and consumer preference, and (2) the consumption practices of specific Native American individuals whose names have been recorded. Of particular use for 18th-century Connecticut are store ledgers maintained by merchant farmers in the area, and overseers' reports kept by reservation supervisors. Building on Witt (2007), the analysis here focuses on the former resource, since it has been underutilized in historical and archaeological research in the area, and can offer more enriched data sets for the 18th century than the somewhat-later overseers' accounts (Patton 2007). To date, our studies cannot undisputedly link specific individuals in these ledgers to actual residences, or perhaps even to the reservation itself, but the patterns reveal interesting dimensions of consumption practices in the broader Eastern Pequot community, since these individuals were both externally and self-identified as Indian.

A member of a prominent southeastern Connecticut colonial family, Jonathan Wheeler lived along Stony Brook, approximately 3 mi. south of the Eastern Pequot Reservation (Hoadley 1873:355). Like others of European descent, he was involved in a variety of economic activities, working as a farmer at times and a merchant at others. He had frequent economic interactions with his European/European American neighbors, as well as with other area farmers and merchants. He also had regular interactions with Native Americans, both as participants in economic exchanges for goods and services, and as paid laborers. Between 1737 and 1760, he had a number of Eastern Pequot and other Native American laborers who lived and worked on his property, the names of which are known thanks to the tracking of Indian genealogies by Jason Mancini and other staff members of the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center. These individuals were not slaves or indentured servants, but paid laborers; they were paid for the days they worked, and either docked money or forced to make up days that they missed (Connecticut Historical Society [CHS] [1739–1775]).

Jonathan Wheeler appears to have dealt mainly in foodstuffs such as pork, beef, apples, cider, molasses, and rye, as well as in livestock such as sheep and pigs. He also had some trade in clothing, especially shoes, although this component perhaps served merely to keep his workers clothed (CHS [1739–1775]). Wheeler traded in a variety of other goods acquired through exchanges with other area merchants and farmers. Foreign goods such as silks, cinnamon, and ginger were exchanged in much smaller quantities. Wheeler seems to have been more involved in local trade than foreign or regional trade, and dealt in small volumes. This said, however, the local trade still involved both foreign luxury goods and European-manufactured goods, which would only have been available through larger trade networks. Wheeler's access to imported goods from Europe and its colonies meant that these goods would have been available to the Eastern Pequot through him and others like him. Unfortunately, he records little about the buying and selling of ceramics that tend to prevail on most native sites from this time period, so there still exists a sizeable gap in the linkage between artifacts and texts. Equally, this gap may ultimately offer insight into the different ways that individuals acquired ceramics as compared to other goods, whether by dispersing their economic purchases among multiple merchants, by participating in other types of exchanges such as bartering, or by obtaining them as gifts or inheritances.

Two of the Eastern Pequot who dealt with Wheeler, George Toney and James Nead, represent two different kinds of economic interactions. George Toney worked as a laborer for Wheeler from 1744 to 1754, building up substantial credit during the summer months and spending it year-round, usually through Wheeler as a middleman.

James Nead's relationship with Wheeler between 1752 and 1760 involved a more direct exchange of goods, selling wool for credit, and primarily purchasing food. Although significant differences typify the exchanges between Wheeler, Nead, and Toney, several similarities speak to the contexts shaping those exchanges.

George Toney

The first record of George Toney in Jonathan Wheeler's account books is in March 1744, with Toney performing various activities for Wheeler in exchange for credit. His purchases from Wheeler also began about this time. In 1744, Toney worked for Wheeler from March until August, earning £20 12s. of credit (CHS [1739–1775][1]:46). Toney soon spent that credit, beginning in March of 1744 and continuing until February of 1745. The remainder of his account was settled in February of 1745 and was paid to him "in cash and in noates to Minor" (CHS [1739–1775][1]:49), a reference to another dealer of durable and consumable goods in the area. This pattern of summer labor paying for goods year-round continued from 1744 to 1754, each year following a similar pattern of Toney working April through September, sometimes as late as November, and using the credit he accumulated to make purchases throughout the year.

Although Toney worked regularly for Wheeler over this time period, he spent a fair amount of each work season away from the Wheeler farm. Some references point to him being at "home" (CHS [1739–1775][1]:46,[2]:4,14), and others to "the hoing of corn" (CHS [1739–1775][2]:8), going to "Indian Town" (CHS [1739–1775][2]:23), and repairing a fence (CHS [1739–1775][2]:4). In 1751 George Toney does not appear at all in the Wheeler accounts, which may mean he had temporarily left the area. While some records specify why Toney missed days of work or where he was, most of these records simply list them as "lost days." These could have been times that Toney spent wherever he called home, or times he spent engaged in other forms of employment, but this cannot be known with any certainty. Some evidence exists in the Wheeler records that Toney worked his own land (CHS [1739–1775][2]:33,35) and that he spent time fishing. He never sold agricultural goods to Wheeler, so any crops he raised were probably for personal use, but in one instance he did sell fish (CHS [1739–1775][1]:53B). Whether these production activities took place on or off the Eastern Pequot reservation lands is not clear, but they seem to have been handled away from the Wheeler farm. In addition, a Mary Toney appears in the Wheeler records associated with George (CHS [1739–1775][2]:35), and the connection between the two of them may suggest a spousal relation.

The credit that Toney accrued with Wheeler was not always spent on goods from him directly. George Toney used the majority of his credit from Wheeler in exchanges with other area merchants such as Clement Minor or James Denison, or took it in cash. In 1744, Toney received over £14 in cash, or in credit and notes to other merchants; the same year he received only £2 12s. in goods from Wheeler (CHS [1739–1775][1]:37–43). A similar pattern appears for most of the other years of Toney's work for Wheeler, with the majority of his credit being spent with other merchants.

George Toney's periods of service in the Connecticut militia during the French and Indian War were very similar to those he kept with Wheeler. He enlisted in the spring and was discharged at the beginning of winter in both 1757 and 1758 (CHS 1903–1905). Both Toney's military service and his work for Wheeler were seasonal. No labor records for Toney exist for the winter months, but he still purchased goods using the credit accumulated through his work for Wheeler. Once George Toney entered military service, all record of both George and Mary Toney in Wheeler's account books stopped, and after 1755 all of their accounts with Wheeler appear to have been settled. A probate inventory for George Toney recorded at the time of his death shows that although he had a steady income between 1744 and 1754 and was certainly spending money with area merchants and shopkeepers, he had only a modest number of possessions when he died. His estate was valued at less than £39, only £7 of which was in durable goods. This, however, may be a result of Toney's shift to military service in the last years of his life, and the limitations this service may have placed on maintaining possessions (New London Probate District 1758).

James Nead

James Nead presents a contrast to George Toney in that he had more limited economic interactions with Jonathan Wheeler. Unlike Toney, Nead is identified only as "Indian Nead" in Wheeler's account books (although research has identified his Eastern Pequot heritage), which may indicate less-frequent economic and noneconomic interactions between the two men. Whereas Toney worked as a wage laborer, Nead's economic activity involved the direct exchange of goods and services. The primary exchange commodity for Nead appears to have been wool. Nead sold wool to Wheeler in 1752, 1753, 1756, and 1758 (CHS [1739–1775][2]:29,32,42,58). In return for this wool he purchased a variety of goods directly from Wheeler, such as flaxseed, turnip seed, onions, corn, and potatoes.

Since Nead did not work directly for Wheeler, he did not build up a large amount of credit. He also does not appear to have purchased goods from other merchants through Wheeler, or by credit earned from these exchanges with him. Nead seems to have traded goods for credit with Wheeler, which he spent entirely on goods from Wheeler. Surprisingly, although the credit accumulated by Nead for the sale of wool totaled more than £8 in both 1753 and 1756, none of that credit was converted into cash (CHS [1739–1775][2]:32,42). In fact, in the four years during which Nead sold wool to Wheeler, he only received 5s. 9d. in cash from Wheeler, almost all of the rest of the credit having been spent on goods from Wheeler (CHS [1739–1775][2]:29). This may indicate that Nead had similar direct dealings with other merchant farmers in the area and did not rely on Wheeler as a middleman in the way George Toney did. It may also indicate that Nead never acquired enough of a surplus to stay ahead of his consumer needs. This was a common problem for Native Americans in the 18th century and often led to severe indebtedness.

In 1757 and 1759, James Nead enlisted in the colonial militia. Like Toney, Nead was discharged during the winter months, and there is no record of where he went during these times. Nead did not join the militia in 1758, and again returned to selling wool to Wheeler in exchange for food (CHS [1739–1775][2]:58). He enlisted again in 1759, and when he next appears in the Wheeler account books in 1760, circumstances appear to have changed. Instead of wool, Nead sold 37 lb. of bass to Wheeler, again in exchange for food (CHS [1739–1775][2]:51). In addition to the shift from trade in wool to fish, he made no purchase of plant seeds in either 1758 or 1761. It is possible that by 1760, Nead had either given up the raising of sheep and crops, or lost the capacity to engage in these activities. Since the documents indicate that Wheeler continued to purchase wool from other farmers, what may have changed was Nead's ability to produce this commodity and not Wheeler's desire to purchase it.

James Nead died in late 1760 or early 1761. There is no record of how he died, nor is there a probate inventory associated with his estate. The only record of his death comes from a note of debt from the probate court associated with his death and the deaths of five other "Indians." Administration of his death and the other five "Indians" was paid for by Clement Minor and his son, William, who are listed as being "the Largest Creditors" (New London Probate District 1761). This may be the result of Nead's losing his land due to encroachment, the disruption caused by his participation in the French and Indian War, or an end result of years of indebtedness.

The absence of a probate inventory, debt records, or the account books of these other merchants makes it difficult to examine the consumer practices of James Nead over the years. What these records do reveal is that in the nine years from 1752 to 1761, Nead went from having access to domesticated animals and some land, to military service with the colonial militia, to selling fish. These changes over a relatively short period of time were likely common for many Eastern Pequot in the 18th century. They may indicate the spiral of indebtedness that many native people fell into as they tried to provide for themselves and their families in difficult times. Although Nead shows a degree of adaptability in his exchanges with the colonial economy, and in the case of fishing, perhaps reorienting or supplementing a more "traditional" practice, this adaptability does not appear to have prevented Nead, and perhaps others, from falling into debt to colonial neighbors.

Summary

George Toney and James Nead provide two examples of the kinds of consumer and labor relations that Eastern Pequot community members had with their colonial neighbors. Toney's employment as a laborer showed more economic stability than Nead, but he still revealed a level of diversity in his exchanges when working land for Wheeler, likely cultivating some land of his own and trading in goods such as fish. Nead's exchanges with Wheeler may have been duplicated with many other merchant farmers in the area, but it appears that both men show the effect of colonial contexts on their economic activities. George Toney also showed a degree of economic freedom, spending as he did significant periods of the working season away from the Wheeler farm. Some of this time may have been spent working on his own land, but regardless, he was able to spend that time away from his labor with Wheeler and still often had a surplus of credit at the end of the year. Both Toney and Nead also show some resilience in these difficult circumstances, using diverse economic activities and an adaptability to frequent changes. These changes could occur over short spans of time, sometimes on the order of mere months. The effects of the French and Indian War appear to have been severe for both Toney and Nead. Toney died during the war (although it is unclear if he actually died *in* the war), and Nead, either losing his land or at least the ability to trade in wool, never recovered economically from the disruption of this time period.

Moreover, the documents for Nead and Toney show significant seasonality and spatiality to their activities. Their labor and consumption acts were not tied solely to Wheeler, nor to any kind of year-round attachment. These two Native Americans came and went frequently from Wheeler's ledgers, sometimes departing to go home, to work their own fields, to fish, or to return to their communities. Furthermore, they show a spatiality to Native American social and cultural life that extends beyond their reservation households or even the reservation landscape itself. These archives indicate that people like Nead and Toney did not limit their economic transactions to Wheeler either. They worked for, and acquired goods from others in the region. The general pattern may be one of overall indebtedness to the capitalist market, but the specific nodes were more dispersed and flexible.

These two individuals provide helpful insights into Eastern Pequot economic activities, but these documentary sources have two current limitations. The first relates to gender. These records, so far, document two Eastern Pequot men whose livelihoods, activities, seasonal patterns, and credit histories may or may not have paralleled those of Eastern Pequot women. That is, these two male individuals do not necessarily represent the Eastern Pequot *community* per se, but rather a subset of some adult men. One or both of these individuals may have had strong connections to the reservation itself, if not as residents then as participants in the broader community that considered the area their homeland. Yet, historical documents have revealed that the reservation was largely inhabited and strongly guarded by Eastern Pequot women, who saw their male partners, children, siblings, and other relatives depart elsewhere for labor and economic resources. Sometimes these male loved ones, such as those who fought in wars and served as sailors, did not return.

Second, these accounts do not record economic transactions for some of the most commonly recovered goods (other than nails) from Eastern Pequot and other similar archaeological sites. Those goods—ceramic vessels, glass bottles, metal tools, etc.—have appeared thus far only as material fragments in excavations. Archaeologists can rightfully assume that these material objects had important functional, social, cultural, and perhaps symbolic roles, but the documents analyzed here remind us that these recovered objects do not cover the full range of consumer goods that Native Americans acquired and used in the market economy. Only in the interplay of texts and things can such a material richness and the complex materiality of lived experiences be appreciated. Furthermore, the documents, such as those reported here, reveal that the sources of material objects for Native American individuals and households could have been quite diverse due the interactions of local conditions, community needs, and the credit and material systems of the market.

Archaeological Insights into Eastern Pequot Consumer Practices

To expand the insights already available from the documentary records, discussion turns to two

18th-century archaeological sites on the Eastern Pequot reservation. The 225 ac. Eastern Pequot reservation in North Stonington, Connecticut, as one of the first and longest-occupied reservations in what is now the United States, provides an ideal setting for studying colonialism. The land, although now roughly 65 ac. smaller than originally granted in the 1680s, has seen almost exclusive residence by Eastern Pequot community members, whether members through birth or marriage, with the only European/European American infiltration occuring mainly through pasturage and border-fence dismantling. This pattern ensures that virtually all reservation sites from the 1680s onward had to have been occupied and used by Eastern Pequot community members.

Archaeological information offers the perfect complement to the documentary data previously outlined, not only because it materializes the exchanges captured only in words in the archives, but also because it offers interesting points of divergence and convergence when compared to these documented exchanges. It also adds a longer pattern and a spatial dimension to these economic rhythms. Excavations at the Eastern Pequot reservation have been carried out since 2003 under the direction of the senior author with the approval and collaboration of the Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation. As detailed elsewhere, this collaboration has involved Eastern Pequot tribal members inviting the field school project onto the reservation, engaging with the research process, helping to decide excavation locations, participating as interns and tribal historic preservation officers, offering counsel for cultural issues, sharing oral histories, reviewing manuscripts and graduate theses before finalization, and conducting smudging and offering ceremonies to ameliorate the impacts of doing archaeology on their ancestral lands (Silliman and Sebastian Dring 2008).

Only two 18th-century sites from the historic reservation are considered in detail here, because they represent the most thoroughly investigated in the project area, and because they offer complements to the documentary revelations about George Toney's and James Nead's lives. To respect the Eastern Pequot Tribal Council's wishes and authority to protect their site locations and manage archaeological access to them, no map of the reservation that pinpoints site locations is included here. This should not matter since the sites' spatial relationship to reservation boundaries or other localities and landscape features does not contribute necessary information to the argument developed here. Fine-grained spatial and artifact analyses remain to be done on both of these sites, but enough data have been gathered to address questions of economic cycles and material consumption, since all areas contained ceramic, glass, and metal artifacts, as well as shellfish and other faunal remains. The focus here is almost exclusively on the ceramic subassemblage, not only because of its ability to "tell time," but also because it interjects a different material component than otherwise offered by the archives.

Site 102-124

Site 102-124, excavated in Summer 2007, was a small site covering approximately 200 m^2, with a few pit features filled with domestic debris, and a light artifact scatter to the margins (Figure 2). Close to 20% of the full site area was excavated with most of the excavation concentrated in the obvious core of the site, an area that produced three pits rich in artifactual material. The site had no visible manifestations on the surface, and revealed little in the way of architectural remnants below ground other than possible postholes and a few nails. Whether this household lived in a *weetu* (or wigwam) supplemented by nails and possibly wooden planks, or lived in a small wooden-frame structure with no foundation, remains under investigation. Important for this discussion, however, are the ceramic collection and the site date (Table 1).

The range of ceramics indicates a *terminus post quem* of 1740—the presence of brown-reserve (or brown-glazed) porcelain and scratch-blue white salt-glazed stoneware, and the high frequency of Staffordshire slipware—and a likely *terminus ante quem* in the 1760s, with the complete absence of even a single piece of creamware. Creamware tends to appear on any archaeological site that postdates the 1760s and has even the remotest of connections to the market economy. Resting comfortably between them is the mean ceramic date of 1752 calculated with sherds from the brown-reserve porcelain, Jackfield-type redware, white salt-glazed stoneware, scratch-blue white salt-glazed

FIGURE 2. Excavation of two adjacent trash pits from Site 102-124, the main areas of the site that produced ceramics and other artifactual materials. North is toward the right. (Photo by Stephen W. Silliman, 2007.)

stoneware, and Astbury-type redware. These point to this being the first site studied on the reservation that dates to the mid-18th century, and one that coincides with the adult lives of George Toney and James Nead.

Site 102-123

Site 102-123, excavated extensively in the summers of 2005 and 2006, dates to the second half of the 18th century, probably occupied around the time that residents left Site 102-124 about 120 m to the south, and the time when James Nead and George Toney passed away. The site was chosen for investigation based primarily on the large number of aboveground rock features. The two years of excavation focused on several areas of the approximately 500 m^2 site core. These included a collapsed rock chimney and an adjacent small, deep, stone-filled cellar associated with a wooden-framed house with nails and window glass (Figure 3); an additional collapsed chimney oriented parallel to the other chimney, approximately 7 m away with no associated basement, but also providing evidence of a framed structure; a dense shell-and-rock midden approximately 10 m to the east of the house remnants; a small depression about 4 m to the southwest of the chimney/cellar pair that may represent a partially filled root cellar or other structure; and an associated rock-and-trash deposit. Some of the architectural details are still being sorted out—such as whether this was a dual-chimney house, two sequential houses, or two simultaneous struc-

tures—but again the analysis here focuses on the site ceramics and chronology (Table 1).

A cursory review of the archaeological data would place the site in the latter half of the 18th century, with creamware, pearlware, white salt-glazed stoneware, slipware, redware, porcelain, and a variety of items of personal adornment, nails, and glass artifacts. In fact, a mean ceramic date, calculated after the 2005 excavations for the units centered on the main chimney, deep cellar, root-cellar-type depression, and associated deposits was 1780 (Witt 2007), a figure subsequently revised here to 1788 based on data from 2005 and 2006—using pearlware, creamware, slipware, Jackfield-type redware, agateware, tin-glazed earthenware, and white salt-glazed stoneware. A

TABLE 1
CERAMIC SHERD COUNTS FOR EASTERN PEQUOT RESERVATION ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

	102-124	102-123 Site Areas					
	Total	House	Around house	South of house	Midden	Depression	Total
EARTHENWARE							
Creamware	0	568	639	243	22	31	1,503
Pearlware	0	191	114	12	40	4	361
Creamware/pearlware	0	60	38	13	0	11	122
Agateware	0	1	1	0	0	1	3
Tin-glazed earthenware	0	55	27	10	0	38	130
Staffordshire slipware	46	1	4	3	0	17	25
General redware	238	809	326	55	210	154	1,554
Jackfield-type redware	10	4	8	2	26	0	40
Astbury-type redware	12	0	0	0	0	0	0
Coarse earthenware	35	25	5	1	1	1	33
Indeterminate	2	5	10	3	2	1	21
Subtotal	343	1,719	1,172	342	301	258	3,792
PORCELAIN							
Chinese	9	2	1	3	0	9	15
English	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Indeterminate	7	3	2	1	0	4	10
Subtotal	16	6	3	4	0	13	26
STONEWARE							
White salt-glazed	63	91	58	17	3	47	216
White salt-glazed, scratch-blue	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gray	3	9	7	1	105	6	128
Brown	0	3	0	1	2	3	9
Indeterminate	0	0	3	0	0	0	3
Subtotal	71	103	68	19	110	56	356
TOTAL	430	1,828	1,243	365	411	327	4,174
Mean ceramic dates	1752	1789	1790	1789	1785	1768	1788

FIGURE 3. Excavation at Site 102-123 of cellar (*right side* of picture) adjacent to collapsed chimney stack, as well as of the area that would have once been beneath the wood-plank floor (*left side* of picture) of the framed house. North is toward the left. (Photo by Stephen W. Silliman, 2005.)

closer look at the spatial distribution of ceramics, however, particularly the earlier agateware, slipped redware, white salt-glazed stoneware, and the later pearlware, along with the concerns regarding time lag, considering the potentially long curation of goods (Groover 2001; Adams 2003), have hinted at a more complex occupation sequence, one that suggests economic and architectural shifts by long-term site residents.

One telling pattern was the presence of pearlware and creamware in the lower levels of excavation units in the cellar, the two chimney areas, and the spaces between those chimneys (ranging between 31% and 75% of the locus ceramic totals), but the minimal presence of those wares in the half-filled root cellar and nearby excavation units. Since pearlware first began to arrive in the American colonies in the 1780s (Noël Hume 1969; Miller 1991), it is unlikely that the large framed house that sat on the foundation and above the cellar was occupied before that time. Mean ceramic dates for these loci range from 1778 to 1791.

Excavations in the depression and adjoining trash-and-rock pit south of the house foundation revealed a somewhat different pattern. The sherd counts of creamware (n=39), pearlware (n=12), and indistinguishable pearlware/creamware (n=5) together produced only 14% of the ceramic totals from that area. Correspondingly, this area instead revealed a higher percentage of older ceramics such as white salt-glazed stoneware, slipware, and tin-glazed earthenware. In fact, 68% of the 25 pieces of slipware, 22% of the 216 sherds of white salt-glazed stoneware, and 33.3% of the 3 pieces of tin-glazed earthenware for the whole site occurred in the excavation units in or near this depression, despite these units only opening 19% of the total spatial coverage of 52.5 m^2. Contrary to the mean ceramic dates for the rest of the site loci, these areas had dates of 1766–1773, with a calculated mean ceramic date of 1768.

In addition, the cultural layers were much deeper in the depression than anywhere around the foundation, with significant deposition of

culturally sterile or nearly sterile soil atop these artifact-rich layers. Coupled with the fact that this "overburden" had the mottled appearance characteristic of mixed A, B, and perhaps even C soil horizons, and rested on a darker layer that appeared to be a buried A horizon, this depression must have been filled in during the later use of the site. A logical source for the fill would be the cellar hole dug within the house foundation, and the stratigraphically visible spread of this mottled fill between the house and the depression adds further support to this sequence of activity.

The difference in ceramic date ranges and the sequence of depression filling and cellar digging suggest that residents probably underwent a noticeable shift in spatial use sometime around 1780, give or take a few years. Currently there is no reason to believe that these represent different residents, but rather a temporal and spatial shift in the activities of a household over a couple of decades. As the documents revealed, changes in the lives of the Eastern Pequot sometimes occurred over short periods of time, with rather drastic changes in the types of economic activities in which they were engaged. Based on the data from Site 102-123, it would appear that the residents used the depression as either a root cellar or perhaps even a residence, given the materials found therein, and deposited some trash in a nearby rocky pit. Afterward they constructed a large, frame-style house with a cellar and took the root cellar area out of service by filling it in. At the close of an estimated 20–40 years of occupation, the residents left the house ca. 1800—given the lack of classic turn-of-the-century material signatures, such as improved pearlware, whiteware, transfer prints, and additional underglaze colors beyond blue.

Comparison

The ceramics at these two sites offer insights into the economic practices of Eastern Pequot reservation residents beyond those already examined in the documents. At the most general level, the diversity and quantity of mass-produced ceramics found at both sites show that residents had strong connections to the consumer market that prevailed off the reservation, whether in 1750 or in 1780. This likely meant that the relationships between Eastern Pequot community members and the merchant farmers and shopkeepers did not diminish over those periods, despite any annual or seasonal fluctuations now known thanks to the Wheeler account books. The ceramic evidence also indicates that Eastern Pequot sought and received these goods rather than produce similar serving, cooking, or storage containers of their own from local materials. This does not negate the numerous wooden objects that likely served households in a number of economic and perhaps spiritual ways, but that have not survived the ravages of time in New England soils. The lack of traditional native-produced ceramic sherds from these two house sites does, however, confirm the growing pattern of evidence from the region, particularly from nearby archaeological projects at Mashantucket and Mohegan sites, that the longstanding production of pottery by Pequot-Mohegan people did not continue into the second half of the 18th century.

The presence of these market ceramics also made Eastern Pequot house interiors look materially similar, at least from an archaeological perspective, to neighboring nonnative households. Situating this similarity in a consumer context rather than in a simplified "culture" pattern reveals something other than what might have once been incorrectly termed "acculturation." In other words, rather than attribute the similar array of ceramic wares in native and settler households to a loss of cultural identity, one can instead look at the ways that Native Americans made their way in and out of colonial market economies on terms that both were and were not their own. Choosing to buy available and affordable goods as part of broader credit and labor systems that surrounded native people in New England does not translate directly into the dilution of native cultural practices, attachment to indigenous communities, or connections to reservation land. These choices represented strategies of survival (Silliman 2009).

Examining the ceramic artifacts more specifically, the presence of porcelain in both sites tells something about the types of goods that the Eastern Pequot consumed. The high value of porcelain tended to make it less accessible to those at the margins of an economy. In Site 102-123, a total of 26 pieces of porcelain, representing at least 4 vessels, was found in the depression area, and 13 pieces of

porcelain, representing at least 4 vessels, were found in the house area. In Site 102-124, 16 pieces of porcelain were recovered, 9 of which were brown-reserve (or brown-glazed) vessels. At least one teapot could be discerned in that collection. Porcelain represents a statistically negligible percentage of the overall ceramic assemblage from these sites (4% in Site 102-124, 1% in Site 102-123). The limited quantity is not at all surprising due to the high cost, but the presence of porcelain when cheaper alternatives were available does seem to indicate that some cultural or at least economic value had been placed on the consumption of ceramic goods. As Adams and Boling's (1991) study of slave households in Georgia shows, high-value and high-status ceramics were sometimes available, whether or not they were chosen, in even the most constrained environments. When contrasted with the more-reduced economic abilities demonstrated in the account books for individuals like Nead and Toney, this pattern is all the more poignant.

Other artifacts found at the later-18th-century site, such as a glass tumbler base, brass shoe buckles, and several metal utensils, support the idea that some higher-value goods were being consumed along with more pedestrian goods such as creamware, and that purchases were taking place in all areas of consumer goods, as revealed in both documents and artifacts. Despite the many constraints placed on Native Americans in southern Connecticut in the 18th century, the occupants of this site appear to have achieved an economic level that supported the construction of a framed house with paned windows, at least later in the century, and the consumption of a wide variety of European-manufactured goods. Future research may explain why such house construction was sought, since economic ability alone cannot explain the choice.

The variety of ceramic types and vessel forms, along with the presence of high-value manufactured goods (such as porcelain and clear-glass tumblers) when less-expensive alternatives were available, shows that although many Native Americans in southern New England were at the margins of the economy, they actively engaged in consumer exchanges with their neighbors. One can expect that these material objects came to have particular meanings and perhaps took on roles in the practices of identity during daily life on and off the reservation. Rather than these ceramics indicating cultural loss and decline, the ceramics recovered at these reservation sites seem to show that some Eastern Pequot negotiated colonial constraints in ways that encouraged their own community and cultural survival.

Discussion

Clearly the constraints placed on consumption and economic activity by colonial contexts represented a real and sometimes overwhelming factor in the lives of Eastern Pequot people. For both George Toney and James Nead, participation in the French and Indian War seems to have had drastic impacts on their lives. Although this war did not significantly affect the New England economy as a whole (McCusker and Menard 1985:366), it had an impact on individuals involved in that economy, especially those Native Americans who participated directly. It is not overly surprising therefore, to find a change at the later Site 102-123 around the time of the American Revolution. The shift and possible abandonment of an earlier site around 1780, and the construction of a house with a cellar after 1780 falls right around the time of political and economic upheaval in the colonies. Although there are fewer records for Eastern Pequot participation in the American Revolution than there are for the French and Indian War, some are known to have been involved (Mandell 2005).

War was not the only source of constraints on native economic activities. The loss of land, as well as the poor quality of the land retained, made farming difficult, and the restriction of movement made migration to seasonal resources dangerous. It is difficult to see the direct effects of these constraints in documentary sources, although complaints about land encroachment frequently appear in the colonial records (Den Ouden 2005). James Nead seems to have come out for the worse living in this constrained environment. His exchanges with Wheeler show a cycle of indebtedness in which he was forced to sell goods to pay for debts from the previous year. This, rather than involvement in the militia, may have led to the loss of his land or livestock, and to the debts he owed at the time of his death.

George Toney and the occupants of the two sites appear to have fared better in their economic exchanges with their European and European American neighbors. George Toney regularly had a surplus of credit with Wheeler, and took frequent leaves from his work on the Wheeler farm for a variety of reasons. These absences from his employment with Wheeler may indicate a diverse engagement with other merchant farmers in the area, but they may also indicate a consumer preference not to consume. Although he had debts at the time of his death, these likely resulted from an untimely death during war rather than a repetitive cycle of indebtedness. The moderate value of George Toney's estate may indicate his preference to spend his time and credit on activities other than the accumulation of goods. It is also possible that while George Toney may have lived near the Wheeler farm, Mary Toney may have lived on the reservation in North Stonington. The references to George Toney going to "Indian town" (CHS [1739–1775][2]:23) may be a sign that Mary Toney or other friends and relatives were living on Pequot land. If this is the case, then it is possible that the time George Toney spent away from his labor on the Wheeler farm involved working on reservation land or protecting it from European encroachment.

Contrary to what could been seen in Site 102-124, the length of occupation for Site 102-123 differs from that seen in the lives of George Toney and James Nead, who both show a great deal of mobility over the 10-year periods during which they interacted with Wheeler. The ceramics found at this later site seem to indicate an occupation of roughly 30–40 years, from perhaps sometime in the 1760s until around 1800. The long occupation at the reservation household site is not without disruption of its own, however. The two depositional periods, before and after the construction of the wood-framed house(s) with cellar and rock chimneys, indicate some change in the lifestyle of the residents. It may be that the residents of the site showed a mobility similar to that of Toney and Nead, with seasonal or even annual movements on and off the reservation; or that before the construction of the house the Eastern Pequot living at that site were only there for part of the year.

The differences in these deposits may indicate a change in the economic activities in which the occupants were engaged. While a considerable increase in worldwide consumption of ceramics around the 1780s was linked to production increases in Europe (Miller 1984), the changes in consumption at Site 102-123, along with the construction of a house with a stone foundation and a cellar, seem to indicate a more specific change than a global economic perspective would indicate. The consumption or curation of older ceramics before the construction of the house may indicate a limited involvement with Europeans and European Americans, while the abundance of ceramics in a variety of types and forms after the 1780s, consistent with European American households of the time, may show a greater involvement after 1780.

What can be seen from both the Wheeler account books and the two excavations reported here is that the Eastern Pequot engaged in a diverse set of economic activities. Some of this diversity—such as the reliance on diverse resources and geographic mobility—may be the conservation of traditional patterns of labor and subsistence, but some of this diversity was likely influenced by the constraints imposed by harsh colonial contexts and creative adaptations to them. The consumer choices that these Eastern Pequot were making were driven by cultural preferences, even if they were limited by the constraints of colonial contexts.

Conclusion

Colonialism created harsh political, economic, and consumer contexts that greatly affected the economic activities of the Eastern Pequot, but it did not determine the actions of indigenous people within it. The Eastern Pequot described in the Wheeler account books, as well as those living on the reservation at these two 18th-century sites, clearly made decisions that allowed them to navigate these constraints through their daily activities and through their economic interactions. The purpose of this paper was to look at how colonial contexts shaped the consumer decisions of the Eastern Pequot, how individual Eastern Pequot negotiated these contexts through economic activities, and what can be said about the consumer preferences of the Eastern Pequot living in these contexts. The implication for the archival and archaeological realms is that an excavated house on the reservation cannot

be understood without some attention to how individuals may have moved on and off the reservation daily, seasonally, or even yearly, and with whom they interacted in the larger community. These external relationships are the ones that brought ceramics, glass, metal, and other items into reservation households in the absence of domestic production. Similarly, one cannot presume that archives reveal the complete nature of economic life for Eastern Pequot community members, for the space of the reservation offers a view very different from the space of the settler farmstead and store.

Archaeologists tend to assume that the array of objects found in a site reflect the preferences and choices of its residents, frequently to the degree that these are attributed solely to expressions of identity. Yet what this investigation makes clear is that the economic constraints on marginalized people, such as Native Americans in a colonial economy, may be restrictive enough to bracket their choices much more stringently than normally assumed. That is, people did not simply buy and use things because they fit into their cultural predispositions, for these individuals did not exist in a kind of free and open market that might facilitate such "pure" consumption. For instance, Nead and Toney show flexibility in their seasonal work and purchasing patterns, but also indebtedness and relatively low amounts of available cash or credit that likely precluded the ability to purchase what they wanted when they wanted it. This does not diminish requirements to study their actions in documents or in archaeological materials as full expressions of social agency and cultural practice, but it does require proper contextualization. That is, these market goods may not have held the same cultural or symbolic meanings as other materials, such as those obtained in nonmarket economies (e.g., by gifting, bartering, borrowing) or those made in residential contexts, or even those linked to more ancient practices, but they did facilitate economic and cultural survival through such strategies as giving the appearance of assimilation, helping to create new chains of social memory, or simply serving as useful items in everyday life (Silliman 2009).

The Eastern Pequot made and continue to make decisions to shape their lives amidst broader colonial and postcolonial contexts. These decisions have been shaped by both resistance to and residence in these contexts. As a result, archaeologists must better appreciate the attempts at cultural production and resilience that accompanied Native American consumer practices, rather than write them off as homogenous and acculturated. The latter interpretation runs the risk of making the dire predictions of capitalism and globalization—that is, homogeneity, inauthenticity, assimilation—come to pass in native histories, ones historically written primarily by and for nonnative people and in contemporary indigenous struggles, when something much more complex has been taking place. Further research into the economic interactions between Native Americans and Europeans and European Americans will be of great benefit in understanding native adaptations to and negotiations of colonial contexts. This research, using a combination of artifact and archival analysis, not only offers analytical nuance about the various roles that native people had as workers, producers, buyers, sellers, and consumers in the market economy (i.e., different ways to be Pequot rather than indices of assimilation), but also better frames the availability and accessibility of material culture that archaeologists hope will provide access into the ambiguous realms of identity. Only by parsing out consumer choice and consumer preference can archaeologists begin to strengthen interpretations of material culture and identity.

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