10 / The Returning Hosts

The Seattle spirit, the story of a city's birth in pioneer stalwartness, could take its adherents in strange new directions. On the centennial of the landing at Alki, it could lead them into the Cold War. The Founders Day celebrations of 1951 were like those in the past, full of pomp and pageantry. Some celebrants attended performances of "The Landing of the Calico Pioneers" followed by baton twirling and a "God Bless America" sing-along at the Alki Field House, while more studious participants visited City Hall to view the city's original charter and various other "musty old files." And like other Founders Days, the centerpiece of the centennial was a reenactment of the Denny Party's landing, where junior high school boys in badly dyed wigs played Indian, awaiting the arrival of grown-ups playing pioneer. As the founders strode ashore, Mayor William Devin smashed a bottle containing the commingled waters of Seattle's lakes and rivers against the Alki Monument, the Hiawatha Sparklers did an "Indian dance," and serial salute bombs closed the program.[1]

The reenactment of the landing at Alki was the heart of the centennial program, but its headliner was General Douglas MacArthur. Thousands of Seattleites went to the University of Washington the next day to hear him extol the lessons of Alki Point. He told his audience that Seattle had been the "full beneficiary of what the pioneering spirit has wrought upon this continent" but warned that said spirit was still very much needed. "Should the pioneering spirit cease to dominate the American character," MacArthur continued, "our national progress would end. For a nation's life is never static. It must advance or it will recede." Invoking long-standing anxieties about the loss of the frontier, the man who so famously strode ashore in the Philippines proposed an agenda for

the nation: "To the early pioneer the Pacific Coast marked the end of his courageous westerly advance—to us it should mark but the beginning. To him it delimited our western frontier—to us that frontier has been moved beyond the Pacific horizon." Broadcast on national television—one of Seattle's first appearances in the medium—MacArthur's speech linked the Seattle Spirit to the nation's interests in the Pacific. The story of Seattle's birth in a wilderness with its own "red menace" could now resonate for a new generation, and the Seattle Spirit, always linked to the nation's own place-story, helped lead the nation, for better or mostly for worse, into new places around the world.[2]

For all its historical rhetoric, MacArthur's speech had little to do with the past and much more to do with the future. It was much like another centennial event: the burying of a time capsule on Alki Beach. The capsule's contents were not listed in the *Post-Intelligencer* story announcing its burial, but the author's vision of the future was richly detailed. Seattleites might, for example, "shoot over" to Alki Point in their "personal atomic cruisers" to watch the opening of the time capsule on 13 November 2051. "We'll probably be wearing a spun air afternoon dress with radium buttons," imagined journalist Dorothy Hart, "and nary a qualm about the weather! Before the days of atmospheric control, we understand, Seattle women carried umbrellas!" Here was Seattle's space age future, full of technocratic optimism and personal affluence despite threats abroad. Here was a Seattle that had escaped its past (not to mention its ecology).[3]

Although surely tongue in cheek, Hart's vision of twenty-first-century Seattle reflected its time, that period in the 1950s when consensus politics, consumer confidence, and scientific progress augured a bright future for Americans. In the years to come, however, history would intervene. The consensus would crack as social unrest transformed public discourses on race, inspired in part by the unjust ways in which postwar affluence had been distributed. The American Indian Women's Service League and United Indians of All Tribes made that point beautifully. Meanwhile, Hart's atomic cruisers and radium dress buttons would come to seem like naïve paeans to a nuclear industry that, only a few short decades after its inception, was seen by many to be an eco-

logical nightmare. Instead of a nuclear-powered, climate-controlled, deracinated futuropolis, Seattle became a place where both multicultural politics and environmental anxieties dominated much of postwar civic life.

Most important to our story, the legacy of Seattle's urban and Native histories would come back to haunt the city in the postwar era. As in the apocryphal Chief Seattle Speech, the white man—and all the other new people here, including urban Indians from other places—would "never be alone." But it was not the ghosts of Seattle's indigenous people that returned to the city: it was their living descendants. Fueled by both the new activism shared by other urban Indians and growing unease about the legacies of urban conquest, the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the Duwamish and Shilsholes and Lakes began to exert new influences over both urban environmental affairs and the civic story. By the late twentieth century, even if Seattle continued to use Indian imagery to market itself on the global stage, it could no longer easily do so without taking into account the city's real Native past. It appeared that Seeathl's "returning hosts" had indeed come back to town, in ways that MacArthur and the Hiawatha Sparklers never could have imagined.

From Elvis Presley movies to reruns of the popular television series *Frasier*, the Space Needle has replaced Princess Angeline (and perhaps even her father) as the symbol of Seattle. Rising hundreds of feet over where Denny Hill once stood before it was washed away by the regrades, it symbolizes the squeaky-clean, nervous optimism of the Camelot-and-Apollo 1960s expressed at Seattle's second world's fair, the Century 21 Exposition, for which the Space Needle was built. The fair's logo was a circle topped by an arrow pointing skyward (the symbol for masculinity, as the city's budding feminists pointed out), and along with the Space Needle, Century 21's exhibits reflected Americans' unswerving faith in the future. At the World of Tomorrow, the Bubbleator carried fairgoers to showcases of personal gyrocopters, interoffice "micro-mail," and kitchens that washed themselves. At the World of Science extravaganza, visitors were taken on a ten-minute expedition into outer space, while in the adult-entertain-

ment area of the exposition men could snap photos of nude "Girls of the Galaxy." When the fair received its second *Life* magazine cover in May 1962, showing the futuristic Monorail streaking along with the Space Needle rising in the background, it was described as being "OUT OF THIS WORLD," and there was some truth to this. For six months and ten million guests, the fair had captured the ethos of the era, in which ecological and technological constraints—even gravity itself—seemed a thing of the past.[4]

But less than a decade later, something had shifted: Seattle had become ecotopian. In truth, well before the 1975 publication of Ernest Callenbach's mediocre but wildly popular utopian novel *Ecotopia*, in which Seattle, Portland, and San Francisco became the centers of a secessionist nation organized around environmentalist principles, Seattle's culture of nature was undergoing a radical transformation.[5] Confronted by the pollution attendant to rapid urban and suburban growth, and fueled by a growing emphasis on health, aesthetics, and an outdoor lifestyle, Seattleites began in the late 1950s to undertake massive campaigns to undo environmental damage in and around the city. Cleaning up Lake Washington, protecting green spaces, and enhancing salmon runs became major civic projects, while Seattle became a haven for environmentalist organizations that hoped to change policy throughout the region and beyond. By the 1970s, these efforts had helped to shape an environmentalist ethic in Seattle that, if by no means monolithic, dramatically reoriented the city's self-image. Gone was the Seattle that prided itself on lumber mills and regrades and rail connections; in its place was one of the few cities in the world that one moved *to* in order to get closer to nature. Now, the Space Needle simply offered the best view of Sound and mountains.[6]

Few things reflected this cultural shift more, or had more implications for Native people, than the symbolic resuscitation of Chief Seattle. Just as Seattle the city was born again as an environmentally friendly metropolis in the 1970s, Seeathl the symbolic Indian was reborn as well. More than the city's patron saint, he now became the city's first environmentalist. This was not just a local phenomenon. Following the publication of an augmented version of the speech in which Seeathl

anachronistically mourned the coming of the railroad and the passing of the buffalo, the words attributed to the Native leader became famous around the world, particularly among European environmentalists, progressive Christians concerned with human rights, and some Native rights activists. Soon, the city's public image became closely linked to the ostensible environmental message of its namesake, as well as to a growing concern for the predicament of Indian peoples.[7]

But the question remained: who was Seeathl now being asked to serve? While many Native peoples, and in particular Puget Sound area tribes, used the Chief Seattle Speech as evidence of their claim to the lands in and around Seattle, for many non-Indians, the words of the long-dead indigenous leader had a different purpose. Theologian and ecophilosopher Thomas Berry, for example, found the speech to be a "profound insight into the enduring trauma being shaped in the psychic depths of the white man," referring particularly to the prophecy that settler society would never be alone and would be haunted by Indian ghosts. "These voices are there in the wind, in the unconscious depths of our minds," Berry continued. "These voices are there not primarily to indict us for our cruelties, but to identify our distortions in our relations to the land and its inhabitants, and also to guide us toward a mutually enhancing human-earth relationship."[8] For all their sympathy toward indigenous people, Berry's words were statements about history and about power. The words attributed to Seeathl were not about conflict but about healing, and at their core, they were most valuable, not in how they could serve Seeathl's own people or in how they might bring to light the injustices of the past, but in how they might assuage the environmental ills of modern American society. As has so often been the case in Seattle's history, stories that non-Indians told about Native people were in fact not about Native people but about non-Indians.

But beginning in the late 1960s, something new was happening. Whereas, in the past, whites and others had often been able to tell stories about Indians and the city without taking into account actual Native American people and their concerns, new political, legal, and cultural developments brought Indian people back into the center of urban life. Seattle's ecotopian turn was accompanied by a parallel resurgence in

Native American activism—not just among the urban Indians of the Service League and United Indians of All Tribes but among local tribes as well. These developments allowed the very real descendants of Seeathl and their tribal compatriots to assert a new kind of influence over the city. As new ideas about nature and progress came to dominate Seattle's civic consciousness, local tribes achieved a new degree of control over their ancient territories as ecological stewards and protectors of cultural patrimony, even if those territories had been changed irrevocably.

That local tribes would come to be seen as urban environmental stewards seemed unlikely in the 1960s, when members of the Muckleshoot Tribe, whose reservation was upstream from Seattle (and whose population included some descendants of the Duwamish), became scapegoats for the depletion of salmon runs. Criminalization of indigenous subsistence practices, begun decades earlier, continued well into the postwar period. In 1963, for example, Harold E. Miller, director of the new regional environmental and planning entity known as METRO, characterized the gillnetting practiced by Muckleshoots upstream from the city as anathema to urban environmental restoration. Miller claimed in the *Seattle Times* that "all we have done in the Duwamish is being offset by this [fishing] activity." Never mind urban development and the wholesale transformation of local rivers; the disappearance of the fish was clearly the Indians' fault.[9]

Beginning in the late 1960s, however, Native people became increasingly defiant about the state-sponsored repression of treaty fishing rights and staged fish-ins throughout Puget Sound and even in and around Seattle, bringing salmon conservation and human rights to center stage in local, national, and international media. One morning in the early 1970s, for example, Muckleshoot fishermen convened on the shore of Lake Washington with members of the American Indian Movement and with other Northwest tribes. "Makahs were prepared to die for our cause," recalled Gilbert King George, and until the drums and songs of the protestors convinced the well-armed fish and game wardens to back down, violence seemed imminent. The presence of the American Indian Movement, the National Indian Youth Council, and other allies also spurred fish-ins on the tidal Duwamish. "By then, our group was

growing and growing, and we outnumbered the state agents," King George remembered. "What's one or two guys mean when they come down the river banks, and we are about 12, 18 ornery old Indian people, standing up for what they firmly believed in?" The fish-ins brought together many strands of Seattle's Native community: one Muckleshoot activist recalled that she already knew most of the American Indian Movement people from her days on Skid Road, and the American Indian Women's Service League got involved as well, publishing articles about fishing rights in *Indian Center News*. So while urban Indians and local tribes had very different histories in this place, this place also brought them together in defense of Native rights as a shared principle.[10]

Meanwhile, many non-Indian Seattleites had come to support treaty fishing rights, thanks in part to the savvy media techniques of Indian activists. By 1974, when George Boldt, U.S. District Court judge, finally ruled in favor of the tribes in *United States v. Washington*, ordering the state to allocate half the harvestable salmon to treaty tribes, many Seattle residents (with the noticeable exception of the city's large commercial fishing industry) had in fact already become outspoken advocates of both tribal sovereignty and a new, socially informed approach to conservation. Throughout the "fish fights," progressive churches, civil-rights organizations, and other groups decried the arrests and intimidation faced by tribal members and played critical roles in garnering support for fishing rights. By the 1980s, Seattle had become a center of pro-Indian and pro-environment sentiment, perhaps best symbolized in the formal apology for cultural genocide and religious oppression that was issued by Seattle-area churches in 1987.[11]

These new urban attitudes toward nature and Native peoples were often linked to each other through the increasingly iconic image of the salmon, a connection that had lasting implications for tribal authority in the city in the years to come. The Muckleshoots and Suquamish, federally recognized tribes whose membership included many descendants of the indigenous people of Seattle, began to assert themselves as stewards of Seattle's environment. They focused their attentions in particular on fisheries, empowered both by Boldt's ruling and by Seattle's

growing urban environmental ethos. In 1982, for example, the tribes intervened against the proposed Seacrest Marina, a $13 million project that would have occupied 1,600 feet of shoreline between Duwamish Head and the mouth of the Duwamish. Tribal concerns over the impact on fisheries, along with opposition from urban environmentalists, led to the scrapping of the Seacrest proposal. Despite opposition from developers, right-wing ideologues, and many commercial fishermen, tribal efforts to manage urban nature earned positive reviews from environmental organizations and the mainstream press. When the Muckleshoots created a tribal fishing reserve in Elliott Bay in 1988, for instance, the *Seattle Times* referred to the tribe as a "fine conservation example," a total reversal of the scapegoating so common only twenty years earlier. In the fourteen years since the Boldt decision, tribes had exerted their authority over environmental issues just as those issues were coming to dominate civic consciousness. In the city named for an indigenous man now thought of as its "first environmentalist," Native authority had returned.[12]

But, like other developments in Seattle's postwar Indian history, the path to tribal control over urban places had its ironies. For example, the Treaty of Point Elliott was the legal basis for tribal fishing in the waters in and around Seattle. The treaty assured Indians access to the "usual and accustomed" places and resources that their ancestors had managed for millennia. But those places had often been transformed beyond recognition by urban development. As Muckleshoot fishing nets tangled with pleasure boats in the Lake Washington Ship Canal in the 1980s, for instance, they did so in a waterway that did not exist at the time of the treaty. The same engineering marvels that had destroyed indigenous subsistence in and around Seattle had also created a new and spectacular fishery that was neither usual nor accustomed. Similarly, tribes and their environmentalist allies won major concessions in a sixty-five-acre marina development on the north shore of Elliott Bay—concessions that included tribe-operated pens for up to one million farmed coho salmon. If tribal concerns sprang out of historic connections with the indigenous landscape, their modern manifestation some-

times bore little relation to the indigenous geography of salmon. Finally, despite tribal claims on the city's environment and a strong environmentalist ethic among many Seattleites, by the end of the twentieth century, the salmon were almost gone; indeed, some of them had been placed on the Endangered Species List. For all the power local tribes had gained over urban nature, the city's environmental history had not been reversed. And resentments over the new tribal authority continued to simmer: when the Muckleshoots legally killed two sea lions that had been devastating salmon runs at the ship canal locks, the tribe received threats, including one warning that an Indian would be killed for every dead sea lion. The hunt also brought the tribe into conflict with environmentalists; the Progressive Animal Welfare Society and the Humane Society were among the hunt's most outspoken critics. Indians as symbols of nature were one thing; Indians as real-life hunters in the city were quite another.[13]

The Muckleshoots and Suquamish emerged from the fish-ins and other wranglings of the 1960s and 1970s as legally enfranchised stakeholders in the urban environment. As federally recognized tribes, they asserted their treaty rights and sought, in many cases successfully, to become comanagers of significant elements of the urban environment. By the end of the twentieth century, the two tribes had become stewards of Seattle's waterways and shorelines, even if those places had been transformed almost beyond recognition. While their ascendancy was related to a broader national—even international—movement toward tribal self-determination beginning in the 1970s, local forces, including urban ones, had also helped to set the stage for this new development. Their activism, while rooted in their own reservation experiences, was also influenced and supported by Indian allies whose traditions of protest had grown out of the more radical, multicultural, urban work of groups like United Indians of All Tribes. Meanwhile, their successes, in the public eye if not necessarily the courtroom, hinged to no small degree on the fact that the non-Indian Seattleites, questioning the social and environmental legacies of their city's growth, seemed readier than ever before to acknowledge tribal peoples as having a stake in environmental management. But the Suquamish and Muckleshoots were

not the only local Indians to place new claims on Seattle in the late twentieth century.

The Boldt decision, as *United States v. Washington* soon came to be known, was a stunning victory for the people whose ancestors had settled the shores of Salt Water millennia earlier. It was also a victory for indigenous peoples around the world: its basic premise—that indigenous peoples, by definition, have unique claims on their territories—has become the basis for successful legal arguments throughout the United States as well as in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. At the same time, it also set local tribes against each other, creating legal conflicts over shared or overlapping traditional territories. The Duwamish Tribe, including descendants of the Lakes and Shilsholes, had been involved in land claims cases throughout the twentieth century, its members giving testimony alongside relatives and allies from reservations at Muckleshoot, Tulalip, Suquamish, and elsewhere. But in many ways, the Duwamish had always been different, for one simple reason: their territory included the Pacific Northwest's largest city and the region's most valuable real estate. Arbiters of Indian law rarely recognized that value; after decades waiting for settlement of their claims, Duwamish tribal members each received $64 in 1971 for lands in what was now Seattle.

But for the Duwamish, a greater offense was yet to come. In 1979, five years after his decision in *United States v. Washington*, Judge Boldt determined that the Duwamish and four other Puget Sound Native communities no longer met all of the seven criteria required for inclusion on the list of tribes eligible for treaty fishing rights. In the case of the Duwamish, the disqualifier was an apparent ten-year break in the tribe's political leadership (one of the seven criteria required showing continuous tribal organization from the signing of a treaty to the present). The decade in question stretched from 1916 to 1925, the years immediately after the completion of the Lake Washington Ship Canal and the destruction of the Black River, where many Duwamish people had still been living. The chaos of those years now had its consequences some six decades later. The modern-day Duwamish officially ceased to

exist in the eyes of the federal government and thus were considered to have no legal claim over the city named for their ancestral leader. (Never mind that government agents had included the Duwamish during discussions of proposed tribal termination policies of the 1950s.)[14]

Bureaucratic extinction is one thing; actual disappearance is quite another. So while the decision to extinguish Duwamish treaty status might have been a massive blow to the tribe's claims, it also opened new doors in terms of public sentiment. During the same years that the Muckleshoots and Suquamish were angling—literally—for control over the city's environment, the Duwamish, even without federal recognition, laid their own claims on Seattle. Stripped of legal authority, the Duwamish capitalized on changes in what it meant to be urban—most notably, the ascent of environmentalism and multiculturalism in civic politics and new ideas about history—to assert a kind of cultural authority. In doing so, they would not only challenge their own alleged extinction but capsize the city's very story of itself.

The Duwamish River was a place utterly transformed by 1975, the year after *United States v. Washington*. Only a single curve of the indigenous estuary still existed, near the place where Seetoowathl and his wife had starved half a century earlier. This backwater bend sheltered by a sliver of scrubby island was all that remained of the once-fecund interface between river and Salt Water. For some, though, even that was too much "unproductive" nature: in 1975, the Port of Seattle proposed to dredge and fill it to make way for a new container ship terminal. During initial surveying, an Army Corps of Engineers archaeologist identified the riverbank—then sporting five dilapidated houses—as a site of significance; historical documents and shell middens suggested that the site had once been an indigenous town. It appeared that the Duwamish village of Basketry Hat had been rediscovered. But in early 1976, the Port made a mistake. While demolishing the old houses, a bulldozer operator obliterated most of the archaeological layers at the site. Almost immediately, the local press blasted the Port for destroying a crucial piece of Seattle's heritage. (Business and maritime editors were less outraged; one longed rather confusingly for the days "when there were many more acres of clams here and digging for those clams was the only dig that

man worried about.") In its own defense, the Port contended that it did not know the houses were on top of the archaeological site, and since public corporations could not be sued, it could not be held accountable anyway. These excuses did little to satisfy those who saw the Port's actions as the wanton destruction of civic patrimony.[15]

Then Cecile Maxwell stepped into the fray. As the young chairwoman of the Duwamish Tribe, Maxwell was, like many Indian leaders in her generation, including Bernie Whitebear, unafraid of controversy and extremely media savvy. Her own activism, however, was also shaped by her family's connections to local places and by watching, for example, her brother being arrested for fishing on the Duwamish. Soon after the bulldozer had done its work in 1975, Maxwell used her anger and expertise to begin telling a new kind of place-story. With the help of other Duwamish tribal members and allies in the local press, Maxwell connected what had happened at Basketry Hat to broader urban and Native narratives. In one interview, for example, she lamented that "we have no culture left, no history left. That's because we have no land base," linking the Port's blunder to a longer history of dispossession. Meanwhile, activist and journalist Terry Tafoya pointed out in the *Post-Intelligencer* that Europeans "were in the dark ages" when the longhouses of Basketry Hat were built and that "perhaps a thousand years from now, Indians will discover the decaying remains of the Space Needle." For their part, the *Post-Intelligencer*'s editorial staff noted that the pioneers who arrived at Alki Point were "Johnny and Janie-come-latelies," going on to ask, "Who says that Seattle was founded in 1851?" And when the dig went public in 1978 with free tours, the site was interpreted as "a boon, not only to the public, but also to the Duwamish people" and presented a chance "to learn about the way of life of the Duwamish people, whose past has almost been completely wiped out by a growing city."[16]

Here, then, was the overturning of Seattle's narrative. Like the "treaty" read at Fort Lawton or the fish-ins on Lake Washington, these were new kinds of public place-stories about Seattle and about urban meaning and often seemed to arise directly out of the ground itself. In 1994, for example, construction crews disturbed cultural deposits

while building a new sewage treatment plant at West Point. Builders immediately halted construction and allowed excavation to take place under tribal oversight and at a cost of one month and $3.5 million. *Post-Intelligencer* arts writer Solveig Torvik noted that Seattle residents and the tribes would be "inestimably poorer" if sites like West Point were destroyed; as at the lauded opening of Daybreak Star, civic and Indian goals appeared to merge. But tensions remained. In early 1998, while digging footings for the new Seattle World Trade Center, a Port worker discovered a woman's skull attached to a piling. Having learned from past mistakes, the Port stopped work and contacted the Suquamish and Muckleshoots, but they neglected to notify the Duwamish, who learned of the discovery only through the media. Under the leadership of Cecile Maxwell—actually, now known as Cecile Hansen—the Duwamish picketed the dig. "Seattle promotes itself as a place of great cultural sensitivity," Hansen told a *Seattle Times* reporter. "I am here to tell you this cultural sensitivity has not been measurably extended to Seattle's indigenous Duwamish Tribe and its people." Even though the nature of Seattle's relationship to its indigenous past had changed, for some that change had not gone nearly far enough.[17]

Still, the fact that the Duwamish, with no legal standing as a tribe, were able to garner significant media attention and public sympathy spoke to the cultural authority they had acquired in Seattle's urban imagination. That attention and sympathy increased in the new millennium as the Duwamish worked to have their federal recognition reinstated. Working with local archivists and historians, they sutured together the alleged ten-year break in tribal organization using oral histories, Catholic Church records, and genealogical research. Recognizing the disruptions caused by environmental transformation, the Duwamish argued that what seemed like a break in organization was in fact simply a change from one generation of tribal leadership to another within a single, identifiable Duwamish community. Their argument must have been convincing: on the last day of the Clinton administration, Cecile Hansen received a phone call from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, telling her that the Duwamish had been recognized. The victory was short-lived, however; only a few days later, the new Bureau of Indian Affairs adminis-

trator appointed by George W. Bush informed Hansen that the decision had been reversed. Stunned, Hansen, other members of the Duwamish Tribe, and their allies vented their anger in the local press. But the greatest opportunity to express their outrage was yet to come: fifty years after MacArthur's speech, Seattle was about to celebrate its 150th birthday.[18]

The coverage of the Duwamish recognition fracas, which included front-page stories in local papers as well as some international coverage, dovetailed with the run-up to the sesquicentennial of Seattle's founding. By November 2001, it was clear that it would no longer be possible to tell Seattle's story without the participation of Native people and in particular without the Duwamish. And so when actors playing the Denny Party came ashore in a drenching rain at Alki that 13 November, they were welcomed not only by hundreds of spectators as in past reenactments but by Cecile Hansen and other representatives from the Duwamish Tribe. After a series of speeches, many of which noted the tribe's recognition struggle, city leaders unveiled two new plaques at the Alki Monument: one commemorating the women of the group, the other honoring the Duwamish who had made survival at New York–Alki possible. Meanwhile, at a luncheon attended by members of the Denny, Bell, Boren, Terry, and Low families, Ruth Moore, the great-granddaughter of John and Lydia Low, told those gathered that "we need to let the federal government know that those Indians made the city possible—and I love them for it."[19]

Sesquicentennial events often emphasized either the positive interactions between pioneers and Native people in the first months of settlement or the multicultural sentiments of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. They left out much of what had happened in between: the burning of the longhouses, the attempts to keep Indians out of town, the fish fights. In crafting a new, multicultural place-story, anniversary organizers had perhaps stilled the Manichean heart of the Seattle Spirit, but they had also whitewashed much of Seattle's real history. On a handful of occasions, however, a more confrontational version of Seattle's urban story rose to the surface. As part of a local museum exhibit, Anne Overacker Rasmussen described the shame she had once

felt at being Duwamish, even in a city named for one of her Duwamish ancestors: at long last, memories of "No Dogs or Indians Allowed" were creeping into the mainstream urban narrative. Meanwhile, at the pioneer family reunion, historian David Buerge, who had helped craft the Duwamish petition for recognition, pointed out that "if the Duwamish had a nickel for everyone who said something should be done for them, they could afford to buy back a considerable chunk of [Seattle]." He thus highlighted the difference between honoring the city's Indian past and addressing its Indian present. And at a sesquicentennial Rotary luncheon, Duwamish tribal member James Rasmussen balked at reciting the speech attributed to Seeathl. "The Duwamish are staring down the maw of extinction while you talk of progress. I won't do this," he told them before abruptly walking off the stage. And as the final event of the yearlong sesquicentennial, Duwamish tribal members welcomed canoes full of Indian people from many tribes ashore at a new city park at the site of Basketry Hat, asserting their status as guardians of their traditional homeland.[20]

The sesquicentennial might have ended, but the efforts of the Duwamish to obtain federal recognition did not. After a series of inquiries into criminal wrongdoing in the Bureau of Indian Affairs during both the Clinton and the Bush administrations, the issue came to down to technicalities: when a particular set of papers was signed and whether those papers were drafts or final copies. Finally, in the spring of 2002, Interior Secretary Gale Norton reaffirmed the government's position against recognition despite a concerted campaign on the part of Seattle-area religious organizations and other Duwamish allies. These included more than six dozen descendants of Seattle pioneers, who signed a petition calling for the creation of the Duwamish reservation that their ancestors had petitioned *against* more than a century earlier. Meanwhile, federally recognized tribes in the area had staked out a wide range of positions on Duwamish recognition. The Suquamish across Puget Sound supported it; the Tulalip Tribes to the north said they would not fight it, having lost a similar battle with the Snoqualmie Tribe in the 1990s; and the Muckleshoots announced plans to fight Duwamish recognition should it ever be granted through an act of Congress, the

only option left. This would be the great irony of *United States v. Washington:* in settling old disputes, it had opened new legal, political, and cultural rifts in the city and beyond. Meanwhile, the forces of urban dispossession that had rendered the Duwamish invisible in the early twentieth century continued to have powerful effects in the twenty-first.[21]

The Duwamish have continued their efforts to carve out a place in the city. With the financial support of individual donors, companies, and local governments, Cecile Hansen and her group purchased land on West Marginal Way, just across the street from Basketry Hat, with plans to build a longhouse and cultural center. "This longhouse won't just be for us," Hansen told a reporter the summer before the sesquicentennial. "It will be for everyone who lives in and visits Seattle." As with Bernie Whitebear's People's Lodge and Edgar Heap of Birds' *Day/Night*, a large part of being Indian in modern Seattle involved showing yourself to non-Indians on your own terms. The Duwamish longhouse, once built, would be a way for one Indian community to tell its place-stories to a larger community that finally appeared to be listening. Recognition and a reservation, however, seem farther away than ever.[22]

Back in 1925, boosters ruled the day. Only aging pioneers and a few Indian people saw fit to question Seattle's rise to metropolitan primacy, and their accounts of vanquished spirit powers and bucolic village life were not often heard among the shouts and bellows of the advocates of metropolis. One of those *cheechakos,* his name now lost to history, scripted one of the thousands of promotional brochures that beckoned visitors to look around, settle down, and buy in. He began with his own encounter with the city: "First impression! As I found her so will I always think of Seattle. As young and eager. Life still the great unexplored; living still the great adventure. With no old past to stop and worship; no dead men's bones to reckon with; no traditions chained to her ankles." Here, then, was the prevailing place-story of the modern era (and not just in Seattle): that the past was irrelevant (although it had been a great adventure), that only the future lay ahead of the city and nation, that all negative consequences of modern urban life would be outweighed by the benefits. No old bones.[23]

Not so; just ask Jan Deeds and Ron Mandt. Three quarters of a century after that anonymous promoter crowed about Seattle's freedom from the past, laborers unearthed old bones—two adults and a child, to be exact—while repairing the foundation of Deeds and Mandt's home near Alki Point. As work came to a halt and the coroner was called, the homeowners soon learned that this was not the first time Indian graves had been disturbed here. Half a century before, an earlier resident had experienced "a little excitement" when he found bones under the house. In those days, aside from meriting a bemused article in the *Seattle Times*, such a discovery carried no consequences. But for Deeds and Mandt, who lived in a very different Seattle at the beginning of the twenty-first century and were trying to sell their house, there were definite consequences, which they bore with great decency: calls to the Suquamish and Muckleshoot tribes (but not to the Duwamish), thousands of dollars paid to privately hired archaeologists, and buyers who withdrew their offer. Finally reburied in accordance with tribal wishes and the state's Indian Graves and Records Act, the family first laid to rest here long ago showed that there are, in fact, old bones to reckon with in Seattle. Boosters may still run the show, but at least now they have to share the stage. Word has gotten around: the past has consequences.[24]

The central challenge of Seattle's Native histories, however, has been to acknowledge those consequences. The struggles of the Duwamish Tribe in the last quarter of the twentieth century typify the tensions inherent in Seattle's Native pasts. On the one hand, they show the lasting social and environmental consequences of the city's urban development. On the other hand, the attention the Duwamish received at the end of the century, and especially around the time of the sesquicentennial, shows the metaphorical place some Native people have come to occupy in the urban imagination: as environmental stewards, as indictments of injustice, and as indigenous hosts of civic history. And so we return to the central problem of Seattle's Native pasts: the distance between the imagined Indian in the city and the real experiences of Indian people and the tensions between fantasy and reality, symbolism and history, ghosts and humanity. All too often, the tendency remains to talk about Seattle's Indian imagery and Seattle's Indian people as though they have

little to do with each other. During the sesquicentennial, for example, the vocal presence of the Duwamish Tribe was at times overshadowed by Seattle's symbolic Indians, especially in discussions of one of the thorniest urban concerns of recent years: transportation.

Seattle has some of the worst traffic in the nation, and efforts to build mass transit systems have been hampered both by citizen-sponsored tax revolts and by infighting among transit organizations. What is fascinating about the transportation debates, however, is how often metaphorical Indians have been part of them. The winner of a *Seattle Weekly* poetry contest, for example, had Seeathl cursing Seattle with Tim Eyman, the notorious spokesperson for several antitax initiatives:

Arrrrrgh! Nixoney chu-ga roalhop Eyman non-shaman Hooog in facto. We Chinnok cho killa firebo an der baa baa Healtee err an errer!

(Arrrrrgh! Cursed, treaty-breaching fiends, may a smiling White Devil [Eyman] eviscerate your roads, your emergency and health services, and your quality of life and community for ever and ever!)

Meanwhile, Indian author Sherman Alexie penned a sarcastic column in the city's other alternative weekly, *The Stranger*, about the ancient monorail of the Kickakickamish people, which had been destroyed along with most of its builders by vengeful neighbors. "It was genocide," Alexie wrote, noting that the current monorail was still haunted by the ghosts of the Kickakickamish, who would tear to pieces any expansion of the space-age sky-train's route. Then, for a story a few months later about sports utility vehicles, the *Weekly*'s front cover showed the statue of Chief Seattle sticking out of an electric car's sunroof over the tagline, "What Would Chief Seattle Drive?" Like other Indian images in Seattle's past, these stories were not really about Native people at all. That is exactly the point: even today, Indians in Seattle are often more visible as metaphors than as people. When, for example, an emcee quipped at the Rotary's sesquicentennial luncheon that "Native canoes are moving smoothly through the Black River S-Curves" in a mock nineteenth-century traffic bulletin, he linked one of the Seattle area's worst highway

interchanges with the empty riverbed nearby—as a joke. No wonder James Rasmussen, whose Duwamish ancestors had once lived on the Black River, had walked out.[25]

Debates over traffic and mass transit are closely related to the urban malaise experienced by many Seattleites during the 1990s, when the phenomenal wealth and growth of the dot-com boom seemed to threaten the city's identity. Among the most vocal of those concerned was writer Fred Moody, who had spent years chronicling the high-tech industry's effects on the region. He lamented the loss of a more working-class, slower-paced Seattle, a place his intellectual forebear, the irascible newspaperman Emmett Watson, had dubbed "Lesser Seattle" back in the 1970s. Moody's lament drew from the Native past:

> The better the city's material prospects, the worse its psychological prospects. I sat up late one night and regarded the history of Seattle as a history of diminishment, boom by boom. I remembered reading . . . how the tribes finally were forcibly put on a boat and sent out into the sound. . . . Now I saw their expulsion as equal parts exile and deliverance. They were our first lesser Seattleites. Fully aware that a material boom would bring a spiritual bust to their homeland, they served by their very existence to mock the pretensions of newcomers intent on bringing civilization and wealth to the Northwest's paradise.

In Moody's estimation, the Seattle of Microsoft, Starbucks, and Amazon.com had gone overboard: "New-York-Pretty-Soon had grown into More-Than-New-York-Right-Now," he complained, continuing that Seattleites like him and his downwardly mobile friends were "practically the next best thing to Native Americans." Arguing that the defining characteristic of a "lesser Seattleite"—and of lesser Seattle itself—was the forswearing of ambition, Moody realized that the question "What kind of city is Seattle becoming?" was also "What the hell am I turning into?" The interesting thing was how crucial Indians were to the answer.[26]

On the other side of the debate over Seattle's soul, Robert Ferrigno, a contributor to Microsoft's online *Slate* magazine, pointed out that Seat-

tle's problems in fact stemmed from the "sloth and poor economic policies of its other tenants: Indians, Scandinavians, and hippies." The indigenous tradition of the potlatch, Ferrigno claimed, had prevented "research and development," and the potlatch's supposed values ("No investments. No competition. No ego. No progress.") had prevented Northwest Indians and their slow-growth descendants from reaping the rewards of urban achievement. A similar story about the so-called Seattle Freeze, the idea that people in the city are superficially friendly but distant and hard to get to know, meanwhile, referred back to Emmett Watson's tongue-in-cheek claim that "Seattle" was "Indian for 'stay away from here.'" According to these observers of local culture, both the best and worst things about Seattle—its disappearing authenticity, on the one hand, and its stubborn resistance to progress and chilly social climate, on the other—could be explained by telling stories about Indians.[27]

These place-stories from millennium's end and new millennium's beginning, for all their postindustrial irony and anomie, sounded remarkably like those told generations earlier. Aging pioneers were replaced by aging lefties and upstart *cheechakos* shape-shifted into venture capitalists from California, but otherwise, the anxieties and conflicts were the same: between native and newcomer, between competing visions of urbanity, between the past and the future. Again, the debate centered on what kind of place Seattle was and who belonged there, and again, imagined Indians gave that debate its rhetorical heft. This is perhaps the most powerful historical impulse in Seattle: to try to understand the urban present through the Native past. Often, it is a noble compulsion, inspired by the need to question economic avarice, environmental degradation, or social disintegration. But only when it is grounded—in the specifics of local history and in the context of present-day Indian realities—does the impulse become something more than blurry-eyed nostalgia or insensitive mockery.

Occasionally, however, there are moments when Seattle's Native pasts have been connected in meaningful ways to its urban and Indian present. Near the boundary between Seattle and its southern neighbor Tukwila ("hazelnut" in Chinook Jargon), three hills guard the Duwamish River and its valley. These were the hills that Dosie Wynn's grandmother told

her about on trips to Seattle from the Muckleshoot Reservation back in the 1930s, sharing stories of battles between North Wind and Storm Wind and how the world came to be as it is. Members of the Duwamish Tribe, for their part, understood the landscape around the hills as the place where the world began. But urban history had not been kind to the hills: one had been quarried down to less than half its original size, another had been bisected by a freeway exit, and at the end of the twentieth century, the third—known locally as Poverty Hill—was put up for sale and was most likely going to be leveled. Then in 2000, a group of neighbors contacted local tribes and began to organize on behalf of Poverty Hill. In the end, the Friends of Duwamish Riverbend Hill raised over a million dollars to purchase and preserve the site through the auspices of the Cascade Land Conservancy. On the summer solstice in 2004, the Friends' coalition came together to celebrate the hill's preservation and unveiled plans for restoring the hill's native ecosystems and for building trails with signs interpreting the Duwamish Valley's history. Local and state officials, representatives of environmental organizations, and, most notably, members of both the Muckleshoot and Duwamish tribes (as well as Indian people from other places), all spoke of the importance of Poverty Hill: as a symbol of racial reconciliation and faith in good government, as much-needed open space in an underserved industrial neighborhood, and as tribal cultural patrimony. At Poverty Hill, ecotopian impulses for restoration, preservation, and the ever-elusive "sense of place" intersected with tribal interests in protecting sacred sites and traditional cultural properties. The key was that the parties involved moved beyond the metaphors. Indian people at Poverty Hill were not just symbols of an endangered landscape but active partners in, and beneficiaries of, its preservation.[28]

But the desire to protect and restore urban nature using the Native past can also make for bad history. Not far away from Poverty Hill, for instance, more than a thousand tons of contaminated soil has been removed to create a new estuarine refuge for salmon on the polluted and channelized Duwamish River. Named Herring's House Park after the indigenous town razed in 1893, the site aims to link restoration to local history. The problem, however, is that the park is in the wrong

place: it is not on the site of Herring's House, which is downstream; it is on the site of Basketry Hat. Herring's House was a more "ecological" name, though, and so marketing trumped history. Meanwhile, ironically, native-plant restoration on the site obliterated some of the last visible evidence of Seattle's indigenous geography: broken shells that were part of Basketry Hat's middens. In this case, restoring (and repackaging) the landscape for ecotopian Seattle has only further muddled this place's history. Meanwhile, across the street, a large sign proclaims that someday, if the funding (far less than the cost of restoring the park) can ever be found, the Duwamish Tribe will have a longhouse here again.[29]

In repairing Seattle's landscape, restorationists were also re-*storying* that landscape. Like city leaders warning of Indian-borne apocalypse in Seattle Illahee of the 1870s, Tilikums using totem poles to sell the city in the 1910s, and pioneer descendants playing Indian to lament urban growth in the 1930s, restorationists were using the Native past to understand, and in some ways to mitigate, the urban present. But restoration of indigenous places is deeply problematic: there is no guarantee that the salmon or anything else can be brought back or that such efforts will actually improve the material conditions of modern Indian lives. The question remains, then: good intentions aside, whom do these place-stories of "restoration" truly benefit? To *when*, and to *whom*, is *what* being restored, exactly?

Observers of U.S. history have often written that one of the central American cultural projects has been to find a way to belong here on this continent, to craft an identity from Old World origins and New World circumstances. Very often, that project has involved using Indian imagery to tell American stories: Boston Tea Party activists dressed as Indians, James Fenimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales*, the YMCA's Indian Guides, Chief Seattle's fifth Gospel. But this need to become Native in order to be American runs counter to the real history of our nation's engagements with indigenous societies. For every buckskin-clad frontier hero of American folklore, there was a Sand Creek or Trail of Tears; for every liter-

ary Noble Savage, there was a smallpox blanket or a boarding school; for every New Age eco-shaman there was a missionary's insult or a game warden's handcuffs. If the chief American cultural project has been to bury Indian facts under American fictions, then perhaps the new project in Seattle's case, means moving beyond the recycled place-stories—beyond the seeming inability of Indian and urban histories to coexist—and understanding the work our stories have done in this place: what they have ignored, what they have allowed, whom they have benefited.

One way to begin is through knowing, and sharing, the history that has woven lives together in the city and its hinterland, and imagining what might have been different. In *Facing East from Indian Country*, his provocative account of early American history from the vantage point of the continent's indigenous peoples, historian Daniel Richter has argued that the chaos and violence of that history were never inevitable. Indians and whites had to *learn* to hate each other. This is also true on Puget Sound, where the future was never preordained and where the idea that Indian history and urban history were somehow separate had to be created in town ordinances and racial theories, transmitted through pioneer memoirs and Potlatch parades, and literally built into the environment through ship canals and historic districts. Comprehending Native pasts entails connecting urban and Indian histories and understanding the processes through which indigenous places have been dispossessed, expropriated, and transformed. It means knowing the history of the indigenous peoples on whose homelands Seattle was built, the Shilsholes and Lakes and Duwamish and Suquamish and Muckleshoots, as well as the history of the Native peoples and territories who have been drawn into the city's urban orbit, the S'Klallams and Tlingits and Coeur d'Alenes and Aleuts and Blackfeet. Unearthing Seattle's Native pasts requires us also to look critically at which stories we tell about our shared past and why we tell them. Lastly, it demands that we see the ways in which Native people have actively contributed to, shaped, or resisted those stories.[30]

Stories matter. Throughout Seattle's history, actions have sprung out of stories, just as actions—tidelands filled, basket weavers paid, "bow and arrow joints" shut down—have in turn resulted in new narratives

about this place and who belongs here. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Seattle's urban palimpsest surely has room for new stories. It is possible, as some of the elders once said, that the horned serpents are gone, banished by "too many houses" and too much change. There are so many moments where Seattle's history might have gone in other directions: a longhouse unburned, a mortuary pole left where it stood, a lake not lowered. We may look back, but we cannot go back. The past will not be undone. "For better or worse, this native history belongs to us all," Daniel Richter writes, continuing by saying that understanding that past might allow us to "find ways to focus more productively on our future."[31]

Perhaps in the revival of indigenous place-names and in powwows at Daybreak Star, in the growing respect for the treaties and in every college diploma earned by an Indian, in the restoration of urban nature and in the willingness to challenge narratives of progress, there is hope that Seattle's Native past—or, more accurately, its many Native pasts—can be unearthed. These place-stories, linked to urban and Indian presents and futures, will not simply be cautionary tales, smug jokes, or nostalgic fantasies but will be dialogues about the transformations of landscape and power in the city and about strategies for living together humanely in this place. Bringing new stories to light and considering how those stories can inform new kinds of action should be our agenda for the future, and it is crafted in the moments when we simply ask each other, *What happened here?*