

## **Playing (the Casino) Indian: Native American Roles in Peak TV**

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The current television era, sometimes called “Peak TV,” was ushered in with serious creator-driven shows of the late 1990s. The increasingly frequent Indian character type of the manipulative, money-hungry, and usually criminal casino “chief”/CEO simultaneously offers dramatically significant guest-star roles for Native actors and reflects a neoliberal version of the Noble Savage fit for twenty-first century audiences. This article analyzes examples of the “casino Indian: characterization found in the award-winning television dramas *The Sopranos*, *Big Love*, *The Killing* and *House of Cards*. Adapting the figure of the imagined “Indian” to suit the anxieties of our political and economic moment, each of these critically acclaimed shows have created an image of “Indianness” in relation to “casinos” and thereby have added the casino Indian trope to the long-established line of “Indian” characters crafted by non-Native “experts,” writers, and artists of the stage and screen.