

# *Vacations for All*

“Tourism in America before World War II” by Thomas Weiss, in *The Journal of Economic History* (June 2004), Social Science History Institute, Bldg. 200, Rm. 3, Stanford University, Stanford, Calif. 94305–2024.

The first American tourist may have been one Dr. Alexander Hamilton (no known relation to the first U.S. Treasury secretary), who in 1744 traveled “a course of 1624 miles” from his home in Annapolis, Maryland, just to have a look around. The road from Hamilton’s day to the current era of mass tourism has been, in its way, just as long and leisurely, writes Weiss, an economist at the University of Kansas, Lawrence.

Colonial Americans had little time or money for “frivolous” pursuits, but George Washington and other privileged sorts went, ostensibly for their health, to take the waters in nearby spas. By 1770, Berkeley Warm Springs in what is now West Virginia had become a popular resort for Virginia’s planter aristocracy. After the Revolution spas multiplied, coming to include Hot Springs, Arkansas, and, the most famous, Saratoga Springs, in upstate New York.

In the early 19th century, Niagara Falls and other scenic wonders began drawing visitors (some of them on a fashionable tour of such places not unlike the later Grand Tour of

Europe). Seaside resorts, such as Cape May, New Jersey, also grew in popularity. By about 1855, Weiss estimates, America had as many as 300,000 tourists a year—flocking to spas (100,000), a handful of beach resorts (100,000), Niagara (80,000), New Hampshire’s White Mountains (10,000), and other hot spots.

After the Civil War, the western frontier joined the list of “must see” locales, and the first northern “snowbirds” seeking winter refuge appeared in the South. In coastal South Carolina, people said they lived off fish in summer and Yankees in winter. Still, tourism remained an elite pursuit. At the turn of the 20th century, Weiss estimates, only about two percent of the population (1.5 million people) was able to indulge in the luxury of pleasure travel. That began to change with the arrival of the automobile. Auto touring allowed shorter, cheaper jaunts to a wider selection of destinations, facilitated by auto camps and, by 1930, that fabulous American invention, the motel. By then, America’s best-known tourist destinations were attracting about six million



*The automobile opened up new destinations to travelers, with popular attractions logging more than six million visitors annually by 1937.*

visitors annually, or more than five percent of the population. The Depression brought an unexpected benefit: paid vacations for working people. Nearly 40 percent of hourly workers in manufacturing had them by 1937.

Then came the post-World War II democratization of travel: Paychecks fattened, high-

ways were built, airlines took wing, and, as Weiss sums it up, “all hell broke loose.” Even as Americans complain that they’re starved for free time, tourism has become one of the nation’s fastest-growing economic sectors, accounting for nearly four percent of the gross domestic product.

## *My Name or Yours?*

“Making a Name: Women’s Surnames at Marriage and Beyond” by Claudia Goldin and Maria Shim, in *Journal of Economic Perspectives* (Spring 2004), Macalester College, 1600 Grand Ave., Saint Paul, Minn. 55105.

“I do. I don’t.” That might be the wedding vow of many young women who choose to keep their given names at marriage. Apparently, it’s being heard less often these days. After peaking in the mid-1980s, the number of “keepers” declined in the 1990s, report Goldin, a Harvard University economist, and Shim, a recent Harvard graduate.

The practice of keeping one’s maiden name varies by education and other factors. The authors looked at Massachusetts data on white women who were in their late twenties when they gave birth to their first child. In 1990, 21 percent of the college graduates were keepers; a decade later, only 13 percent. Among those with more than four years of college, the proportion of keepers

dropped from 29 percent to 20 percent.

Goldin and Shim found a parallel trend among Harvard graduates. In the class of 1980, 44 percent of women who married within 10 years of graduation decided to keep their surname; in the class of 1990, only 32 percent did.

Nationwide, the authors estimate, “a shade under 20 percent” of college-educated women now keep their surname when they tie the knot.

Why the change? More conservative social values, or maybe, the authors speculate, young women have gained more self-confidence and feel less peer pressure to turn their married names into proclamations for female equality.

### PRESS & MEDIA

## *Japanese Press Exposed!*

“‘A Public Betrayed’: The Power of Japan’s Scandal-Breaking Weeklies” and “‘A Public Betrayed’: Establishment Press Leaks Tips to Japan’s Weeklies” by Takesato Watanabe and Adam Gamble, in *Japan Media Review* (Aug. 26, 2004), [www.ojr.org](http://www.ojr.org).

Many Japanese readers who suspect (correctly) that they’re not getting the full story from their bland daily newspapers turn to a raffish alternative: the *shukanishi*, 15 weekly newsmagazines that purport to give the real lowdown on people and events. More than 90 percent of *shukanishi* sales are made by newsstands, so the magazines feature sensational headlines, sometimes bearing little or no relationship to the articles that follow.

In the United States, the market is largely divided between a small audience of relatively highbrow newspaper and magazine con-

sumers and a mass audience. Japan, by contrast, has a large middlebrow market. So along with sleaze and sensation, some *shukanishi* offer social commentary, book reviews, political news, and fiction.

Bizarre combinations of *Newsweek* and *The National Enquirer*, with a dash of *Penthouse* and a pinch of *The New Yorker*, the *shukanishi* are often dismissed as trashy tabloids. That’s a mistake, say Watanabe and Gamble, authors of *A Public Betrayed*, a recently published book on the Japanese news media. With their middlebrow readership, the *shukanishi* have an