

In the same seven-year period, the county showed a population loss of 1,652. Perhaps, Garrett notes, casino gaming slowed the demographic hemorrhage.

The impact of casino gaming on the local residents of the two urban counties was harder to discern because casino employment was such a small part of the overall total.

Nevertheless, the 1,184 casino jobs in St. Clair County were 11 percent of the county's total jobs gain by the end of 2001, and the 2,050 casino jobs in St. Louis County were 12 percent of the gain there.

On balance, Garrett concludes, casino gaming appears a pretty good bet in terms of local employment, especially in rural areas.

SOCIETY

Revising Indian History

"The Rise and Fall of Plains Indian Horse Cultures" by Pekka Hämäläinen, in *The Journal of American History* (Dec. 2003), 1215 E. Atwater Ave., Bloomington, Ind. 47401-3703;

"Virgin Soils Revisited" by David S. Jones, in *William and Mary Quarterly* (Oct. 2003), Box 8781, Williamsburg, Va. 23187-8781.

By introducing the horse to the New World, Europeans enabled the Indian tribes of the Great Plains to reinvent themselves as equestrian cultures, radically altering their way of life for the better. On the much heavier debit side, the Europeans (and Africans) brought deadly infectious diseases against which the Indians had almost no immune defenses. These statements

both sum up mainstream historical views, but both seem to need thorough revision.

"Horses did bring new possibilities, prosperity, and power to Plains Indians" after the Spanish brought the animals to the Western Hemisphere in the 16th century, says Hämäläinen, a professor of early American history at Texas A&M University.



*Fierce competition among Plains Indians for scarce horses often led to bloodshed, such as depicted in this encounter, *Duel to the Death*, by Charles M. Russell in 1891.*

With horses, the Jumanos and Apaches—who “traded for, and stole, horses from New Mexico and Texas” and created in the 17th century the first distinct “horse culture” in the Great Plains—could hunt bison with ease and “travel farther to trade, raid, and wage war.”

But horses “also brought destabilization, dispossession, and destruction,” says Hämäläinen. In the southern plains, the Indian tribes’ vast herds of horses competed with bison for the limited riverine resources, helping to trigger a decline in the bison population in the 19th century. In the northern plains, the long, cold winters, which exposed the horses to starvation, kept most tribes chronically horse poor. The few owners of horses became rich. This scarcity, along with the expanding fur trade with Euro-Americans, says Hämäläinen, resulted in “constant warfare” among the northern tribes.

In the late 18th century, the Lakotas in the Mississippi Valley began to obtain horses and to expand westward across the Missouri River into the northern plains. The Lakotas’ aggressive movement and rise during the 19th century, says Hämäläinen, “supposedly encapsulates the full spectrum of Plains Indian experience from the adoption of horses to the exhilarating affluence of the buffalo days and from the fierce resistance against the American empire to the final, dreadful defeat.” In fact, he says,

the Lakotas’ wholly successful experience with horses was the exception, not the rule, among the Plains Indians.

Also in error is the conventional notion that Indians had “no immunity” to the diseases the Europeans brought to North America, maintains Jones, a resident in psychiatry at Massachusetts General Hospital. “With the exception of persons born with rare genetic immune diseases, all humans can mount a powerful defense against viruses, bacteria, fungi, and parasites.”

There’s no evidence of smallpox, measles, and influenza before Columbus, and Indians might indeed have been genetically vulnerable to them, but throughout history the physical and social environments have also been important in the spread of disease. “Any factor that causes mental or physical stress—displacement, warfare, drought, destruction of crops, soil depletion, overwork, slavery, malnutrition, social and economic chaos—can increase susceptibility to disease,” Jones writes. And incursions by whites exacerbated many of these conditions.

The relative contributions of genetics and other factors to the decimation of the Indians will probably never be known, Jones concludes, but the simplistic “no immunity” thesis lets the Europeans off the hook much too easily.

When Crime Goes to School

“Are Idle Hands the Devil’s Workshop? Incapacitation, Concentration, and Juvenile Crime” by Brian A. Jacob and Lars Lefgren, in *The American Economic Review* (Dec. 2003), 2014 Broadway, Ste. 305, Nashville, Tenn. 37203.

Getting kids “off the street” is a time-honored recipe for reducing juvenile crime and a commonsense rationale for everything from an extended school year to “midnight basketball” programs. But there’s a tradeoff involved, warn Jacob, a professor of public policy at Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government, and Lefgren, an economist at Brigham Young University.

In analyzing data from 29 cities, ranging in size from Minot, North Dakota (pop. 36,657) to Austin, Texas (pop. 656,562), they found a surprise. The level of vandalism and other property crimes in the community did de-

cline, by about 14 percent, on days when school was in session. But on those same days, assaults and other violent crimes—mostly among the kids themselves—*increased* by about 28 percent. Any parent could tell you why: Putting a bunch of kids together in one place increases the chance that some kind of mayhem will break out.

In a hypothetical city of 120,000, the authors calculate, lengthening the school year by a day would lead to a decrease of only 0.29 property crimes and an increase of only 0.25 violent crimes. Of course, there are other reasons for increasing the amount of