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Epidemics and Enslavement: Biological Catastrophe in the Native Southeast, 1492-1715. By Paul Kelton.

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“marking identity with language and culture.” O’Neil concludes “the potentially unifying effects of contact have not penetrated the structural kernel of these three neighboring languages,” and he contrasts northwestern California to such well-known examples of linguistic convergence as Kupwar Village (India) where four languages have structurally converged (307). Though I think O’Neil could have used more of a language ideological focus on speaker awareness and what I have called the difference between discursive and practical consciousness and their respective roles in linguistic convergence to explain his findings, I am confident that readers will share my enthusiasm and admiration for this outstanding and innovative rethinking of an ethnolinguistic area we once thought we knew but now know so much better.

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Epidemics and Enslavement: Biological Catastrophe in the Native Southeast, 1492–1715. By Paul Kelton. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007. 314 pages. \$50.00 cloth.

Since the mid-1960s there has been a renewed and sustained interest in the impact of European contact on the health of Native American people. Although there is general agreement among scholars that contact with indigenous societies resulted in a radical alteration of their health status, not all Native American communities were affected similarly. Changes in postcontact health status varied widely between and within various Native societies. In *Epidemics and Enslavement: Biological Catastrophe in the Native Southeast, 1492–1715*, Paul Kelton explores the impact of European contact, specifically early Spanish and English interactions, on the health status of southeastern societies in order to address a fundamental issue: that is, how developing social processes and historical conditions as part of colonialism affect different patterns of morbidity and mortality among southeastern Native American populations.

Drawing on ethnohistorical methods and environmental history, Kelton presents a clearly written, thoughtful examination of the impact of introduced infectious diseases among southeastern Native societies. The book’s central thesis is that outbreaks of introduced European infectious diseases among southeastern Native societies remained relatively localized until the development of colonial institutions—English slave raiding after 1615 in particular—created the necessary conditions in disease ecology to create acute regional epidemics and pandemics.

The author begins with a chapter that synthesizes the disease ecology of the Native Southeast (1000 to 1492), noting that indigenous populations suffered from an array of precontact disease afflictions. By using archaeological, epidemiological, and demographic evidence from living tribal populations, the author assesses the levels of vulnerability and mortality among southeastern indigenous populations prior to the introduction of European infectious diseases.

Building on this pre-Columbian epidemiological baseline, the author examines the protohistorical and early postcontact period extending from 1492 until 1659 in chapter 2. Although Kelton contends that Native societies did experience depopulation, he argues that population changes were not the result of epidemics because political economic conditions did permit indigenous societies to interact in a web of relationships in order to transmit crowd-type infectious agents across the social landscape reliably. Even early Spanish intrusion and missionary efforts were not sufficient to unleash widespread epidemic episodes. “Consequently,” Kelton concludes, “the most lethal diseases circulating through the Atlantic world found it difficult to travel into the interior until colonialism radically altered exchange patterns and buffer zones across the entire region” (87). His interpretation, although contentious and somewhat speculative based on the presented evidence, is necessary to detail the roles English colonialism played in creating the conditions for the rapid spread of introduced infectious diseases.

Chapter 3 examines the intimate relationships among slave raiding, trading, and manifestation of epidemic disease episodes between 1659 and 1700. The incorporation of Native societies into the Atlantic market economy, along with slaving, warfare, and accelerated population movements, disrupted southeastern indigenous societies, making them more vulnerable to acute infectious diseases, especially smallpox. Although other diseases appeared, these conditions, Kelton argues, resulted in the “Great Southeastern Smallpox Epidemic of 1696–1700,” a regional pandemic that ultimately would play a role in the collapse of indigenous slave raiding.

The final chapter describes how indigenous depopulation, combined with population movements and consolidation, and the continued disruption of economic relations between English colonists and Native societies culminated in the Yamasee War (1715–17). The war, the author contends, represents the final collapse of slaving but more importantly establishes other political economic conditions that would lead to further disruptions and epidemic episodes that would continue to affect Native southeastern societies.

Kelton’s regional analysis persuasively demonstrates that infectious diseases do not manifest in epidemic proportions in a vacuum. His description of epidemic episodes, particularly the “Great Southeastern Smallpox Epidemic of 1696–1700,” details that the appearance and magnitude of introduced diseases depend not only on the ecology of the specific infectious agent but also on economic, political, social, and cultural variables. It is the complex interaction of these biosocial factors that determines patterns of morbidity and mortality within and between societies.

The recognition that introduced infectious diseases, as well as their diffusion, magnitude, and impact, are intimately embedded in the processes of European colonialism has been firmly established by other scholars of Native North America and indigenous studies. In that respect, Kelton’s conclusions are neither groundbreaking nor novel. *Epidemics and Enslavement*, however, is a valuable addition to the burgeoning literature about Native American historical demography. Although scholars will raise questions surrounding the interpretation of data and his lack of understanding of

basic epidemiological and genetic principles, the work offers a regional synthesis with provocative conclusions that will certainly warrant attention and further debate.

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Forced Federalism: Contemporary Challenges to Indigenous Nationhood. By Jeff Corntassel and Richard C. Witmer; foreword by Lindsay G. Robertson. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008. 251 pages. \$34.95 cloth.

In a classic sense, this book is social scientific study. Based on directed and random sample surveys with tribal governments and archival research and interviews with contemporary indigenous leaders, this book examines with great breadth and social scientific rigor a new era in indigenous politics, the era of “forced federalism.” Forced federalism is subsequent to the era of self-determination and thus moves Indians away from self-determined activity vis-à-vis the federal government in matters relating to jurisdiction, taxation, and revenue. Instead, the forced federalism era sees a devolution of federal power to states in their dealings with Native peoples—a devolution that forces Indian nations to act less as nations, these authors argue. “Acting less as nations” is a posture that speaks from the challenge that this era poses to the inherent and federally recognized sovereignty of Indian nations.

Once thought to be within the exclusive domain of federal power through the trust relationship, Native nations have been subject to state power and jurisdiction and more so, Corntassel and Witmer convincingly argue, since the passage of the Indian Gaming and Regulatory Act (IGRA) in 1988. This act, which appears to confer upon federally recognized Indian nations in the United States the “right” to game, requires that the first nation in question compact with the state that now surrounds them in order to exercise that right. This necessity of “compacting” with state governments, rather than “treating” with the federal government—an era that ended in 1871 but is foundational for many sovereignty arguments—moves Indian nations into another jurisdictional ambit and, perhaps, another form of sovereignty than has been experienced historically or is ideal. This is a model of political relatedness that results in a diminished form of indigenous nationhood, which is defined as a form of politics determined by a reciprocal, dignified, clan-based governmentality and is challenged by the constraints posed by compacting. However, the study that Corntassel and Witmer conducted with 168 indigenous governments in the United States revealed the different strategies and visions that this era has brought into play. This era has induced a form of politics that relies less upon forms of separateness and litigation than analysts might have anticipated or indigenous nationals might have imagined or, perhaps, desired following the era of self-determination.

Corntassel and Witmer’s central question is how are indigenous nations managing this new era? This is a question that finds its answers generated by