

ALONG the ROBESON TRAIL

by Dr. Stan Krick, Director,
PSU Native American Resource Center

A recent book about southeastern Native Americans is an example of what can happen when archaeologists and anthropologists work together on historical projects — the result may occasionally seem rather complex, but an enormous amount of territory gets covered in the process. In their book, *Hernando de Soto and the Indians of Florida*, Jerald Milanich and Charles Hudson pull together information from diverse sources, merging historical accounts with geographic, archaeological and linguistic data. They shed new light on de Soto's invasion of the Southeast and the impact he had on the native people who once filled the land.

The authors do not moralize, but leave that task to the reader. They recognize that each person, and indeed each era, has a particular view of the conquistadores. The authors provide sufficient background about de Soto to characterize the man's intentions — he fought against Indians in Panama by the time he was twenty; he went with Pizarro to conquer the Inca; he was promised huge profits by Carlos V if he successfully colonized what was known as "La Florida" (most of the southeastern U.S.). Clearly the authors realize that de Soto's main effect was devastation, and that the "most important legacy" of his failed mission to find wealth in "La Florida" was that he and his comrades left written information about the Native Americans whose lives they changed.

One aim of the book is to reconstruct the route taken by de Soto. To make the reconstruction manageable, the authors examine it in short segments. Although they go to considerable lengths discussing the details and sometimes myriad possibilities of de Soto's exact route, they also show that in some segments the route should be seen as a wide swath rather than as a single trail.

The reader travels with de Soto day by day across rivers and swamps. The authors use multiple maps and descriptions of the terrain to ensure that their interpretations fit all the known data. They test alternate interpretations in an apparently impartial way, and when there is not enough evidence to draw conclusions, they seem ready admit it.

This book will generate further discussion, and possibly controversy. Indeed controversy seems fairly to jump off the page in the section about the Tequesta and other southern Florida Indian people. The authors give us the triple assumption that the Tequesta were (1) less decimated by epidemics because they were (2) "non-agricultural" and thus (3) "presumably less sedentary than northern Florida agriculturalists (p. 115)."

The authors seem to ignore the fact that non-agricultural people who live in a place where food resources are plentiful are quite able to live sedentary lives (for example, traditional Northwest Coast Indian nations). Tequesta homeland, "at the north end of the Keys on the bank of a river (p. 114)," would possibly have been such a place — with marine, riverine and other food resources sufficient to support year-round sedentary life. (The Tequesta may also have traded fish and shellfish for the agricultural goods of their northerly Indian neighbors.)

The Tequesta may not have lived so densely as their agricultural brethren, and this may have lessened the effect of epidemics on them and other non-agriculturalists. But simply being non-agricultural does not always indicate being non-sedentary. In any case, the authors then go on to show that the Tequesta were being decimated! The discussion about epidemics among the Calusa Indians also seems loaded with potential controversy.

But generating discussion was

something the authors were clearly willing to do. Whether one agrees with everything in the book is not the point. The fact remains that the authors incorporate previously obscure data, include recent archaeological information, and give a sweeping survey of colonial activity in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. These elements combine to give the reader an enriched context for understanding the period and its Indian people.

This book brings into focus some of the relationships among the Indian nations of "La Florida" — their political connections, their economic realities, their material culture. In this way the authors clarify some of the differing effects which the de Soto invasion had upon the Indians.

The book also presents several ironies. An especially bitter one is the way Indian people were embroiled in colonial struggles — indeed used in warfare against each other — mainly to the detriment of all Indians. The authors close the final chapter with another: "It is ironic that those very colonial powers — England, France and Spain — that provided the modern world with our only firsthand descriptions of those native peoples, also led to their demise (p. 254)."

Readers interested in the original Indian people of "La Florida," or in the relationship among archaeology, ethnography and history in the Southeast, will definitely benefit from this volume. The general reader will also find in it a view of fascinating and critical times in American history. Milanich and Hudson answer a number of important questions by their careful research. To their credit, they also ask a number of others.

For more information about de Soto and the Indians of the Southeast, visit the Native American Resource Center in Old Main Building, on the campus of Pembroke State University.

Cameron's Comment

By Paul Cameron

If you want to get a flavor of what pro football once was, don't miss "75 Years" It's the league history without the fluff. How Chuck Bednarik of the Eagles once got cold cocked by one Chuck Noll of the Packers during a game. Bednarik was no wackie—he got hold of Noll's jaw after a game and the feud brewed for years. In Joe Namath relating his requirements for playing pro football: "\$100,000 salary. And a car. A big red." ar

NFL Films provided the pictures, players, coaches, broadcasters and writers supplied the rest. It's worth the investment in your time to watch. And isn't it ironic that the week baseball cancels the World Series for only the 2nd time in 90 years, Ken Burns epic documentary on the game of baseball plays on PBS? It comes as sort of an eulogy—what the game once meant but will never be again.

The first week in October is always the busiest of the fall. Within three days, you've got both the Hornets and Checkers hitting training camp, the Mello-Yello 400 and All-Pro 300 at CMS, plus high school and college football. Just wait till next year when the Panthers are playing on Sunday. It reminds me of the mess David Letterman makes when he throws melons out of a 7th story building.

Sophomore Applications Now Being Taken

The North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics (NCSSM) has begun recruiting sophomore applicants for the 1995-96 Junior class. There is no charge for tuition, room or board to attend the school. Application forms will be available in high school guidance offices statewide around the middle of October.

Representatives of the NCSSM admissions office are conducting information meetings across the state. Announcements of visits to each area are being mailed to high schools and the media to inform high school sophomores and their parents of meeting times, dates and places.

The application period for NCSSM opens on October 15, 1994 and closes on January 15, 1995. Tenth graders who have demonstrated a high aptitude and interest in science and mathematics are invited to apply for admission to NCSSM, which opened in 1980 as the nation's first statewide, residential high school for academically talented students.

Applications must be postmarked by January 15, 1995. As NCSSM is a residential school, applicants must be willing to live at the Durham campus. Tuition, room and board, textbooks, laboratory equipment and routine health care are provided at no cost to the estimated 275 students selected for next year's junior class. Approximately 550 students will attend the two year public high school next year.

All interested students should register to take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) during October, November, December or January. Students should also use the NCSSM school code (2241) to direct their SAT scores to NCSSM. Registration forms for the SAT are available from the guidance office at the student's home school.

Additional information is available through local science and mathematics teachers, principals and headmasters or guidance counselors. Applications and information booklets may be obtained by writing to the NCSSM Admissions Office, PO Box 2418, Durham, NC 27715. For more information, contact Sandra Jackson, NCSSM Admissions Office, at 919/286-3366, ext. 607.



Pediatric Pointers

By JOSEPH T. BELL, MD

When I read the written history and hear the oral history of Native American health, it confirms to me that our ancestors were very wise people. Many Native Americans believed that to be healthy, you had to live a "balanced life." This means a balance of family life, spiritual life, work and play. This concept of health, which entails dealing with the individual as a whole with its surroundings, is being embraced by more and more modern medical centers today. It is funny how it has taken modern medicine so long to realize what Natives knew many generations ago!

When we look at family life and it relates to health in the 1990's, we must remember that many children today live in "blended families." The blended family refers to family reorganization associated with divorce and subsequent remarriage. Today almost 50% of all children will experience divorce of their parents and spend an average of 5 years in a single parent household; however, 72% of women and 80% of men will go on to remarry. It is estimated that 40% of married adults will become members of step families before their youngest child reaches 18 years of age.

The developmental stage of a child will affect their response to the blended family. In general, children age 1- and above have the social skills and personal resources for coping with their parents' marital transitions. Often preadolescents and adolescents cope by disassociating themselves from the family and becoming involved in our outside groups and activities. Due to

fewer options, the adjustment for younger children depends more on the situations and experiences within the family. In fact, younger children may become attached to and benefit from the introduction of a competent step parent.

The early teenage years appear to be the most difficult for adjusting to remarriage because of the developmental changes occurring at this age, which include self autonomy. That is why these adolescents may see the step parent as an intrusion of their independence. For older adolescents who are anticipating leaving home and becoming young adults, the step parent may facilitate separation by releasing them from responsibilities toward their biological parents.

In both home and school environments, behavioral, social, emotional and educational problems are more frequent in children from divorced and blended families than in children from non divorced families. However, these differences are small; indeed, many children and adolescents gradually adopt to their new family situation and decrease their problem behavior. Many medical studies support the position that parental conflict and fighting in the family structure is the critical variable that disturbs adjustment of children.

That is all on blended families. Again, I think it is important to remember that health involved the whole person, and that the situation and environment of life greatly affects health.

Support the Lumbee Bill! Take Care!

NC Equity Women of Color

The NC Equity Women of Color Program will promote ways women of color can improve their health during a two day session in Fayetteville, September 30-October 1.

The conference is part of NC Equity's ongoing follow-up to a report released at the end of last year on the status of women's health in North Carolina—In Sickness and In Health. Open to the public of both genders and all colors, the conference seeks to draw attention to the research that indicates that women of color in North Carolina have more health problems than do White women and men. The report also found that compared to other states, North Carolina ranks among the highest in the nation in many health problems affecting women.

The State of Our Health Empowering to Mobilize for Action will look at the current health status of African-American, Native American, Hispanic/Latina, and Asian Pacific Islander women. The conference will also address leadership and advocacy skills, health care reform and ways individuals and groups can influence policy to bring about change.

Dr. Brenda Jarmon, Associate Professor, School of Social Work at Florida State University and Vice President of the National Job Corp Alumni Association, will be the keynote speaker at the Friday night session. Donna Chavis, Executive Director of Native Americans in Philanthropy, will speak during the luncheon on Saturday.

Torchbearers and Trailblazers Recognition Awards will be presented

on Friday evening to North Carolina women of color who have demonstrated leadership on health care issues. Sessions of Saturday will include panel discussions on reproductive health issues, HIV AIDS and other STDs, violence against women, cancer and cardiovascular disease. Good health, which is ensured by adequate health care, is an important part of the foundation women need to survive the rigors of home, the work environment outside of the home, and life in general. Poor health and chronic illness can undermine all other aspects of an individual's life. Women must make health our Number One priority.

Following the conference, NC Equity will hold regional workshops with women of color to develop local advocacy networks of increasing community awareness of health care issues and improving access to health care.

Registration for the conference is \$35 before September 15 and \$50 thereafter.

Overnight accommodations are \$55. The event will be held at the Holiday Inn I-95-Fayetteville. The limited number of scholarships are available for the conference. Please contact Brenda S. Williamson at (919) 833-4055 ext. 30 for more information.


NC Equity is a non-profit organization that works for the economic strength of North Carolina women. It is dedicated to improving the well-being of all women and families, but particularly those of low and moderate income.

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