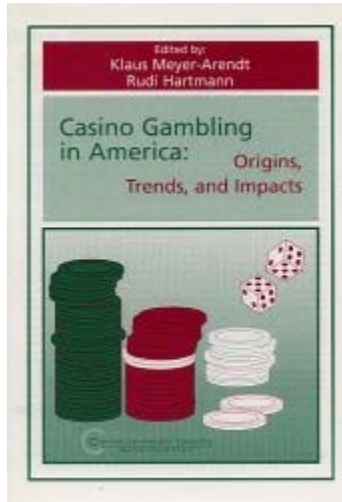


Casino Gambling in America: Origins, Trends, and Impacts

Edited by Klaus J. Meyer-Arendt and Rudi Hartmann



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Book Review

The following excerpts are from a book review by Raymond P. Baruffalo, Department of Geography, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY, appearing in the September 1999 (Vol. 89, No. 3) issue of the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* (pp. 561-565):

Casino Gambling in America: Origins, Trends, and Impacts. Klaus J. Meyer-Arendt and Rudi Hartmann, eds. Elmsford, NY: Cognizant Communication Corp., 1998.

My ambivalence toward *Casino Gambling in America* is similar to that which I harbor toward widespread legalized casino gambling itself; that is, while its positive contributions in certain contexts is evident, an unevenness in those contributions is unavoidable. Largely drawn from papers presented at the 1994 meeting of the Association of American Geographers, this volume, like many similarly constructed, lacks an overall cohesiveness. Nevertheless, this is the most important collection of essays on gambling by (primarily) geographers that has yet appeared.

The stated purpose of *Casino Gambling in America* is to "provide not only better understanding of national and state trends in casino gambling issues but also greater knowledge of some of the controversies present at local venues" (p. xi). In this task, the book succeeds, as it brings the reader up to date on the many forms of casino gambling found in the U.S., and at the same time demonstrates the overwhelming importance of local context.

The eighteen chapters of *Casino Gambling in America* are usefully organized into five sections, each with a brief introduction written by the editors. Part I, "Casino Gambling in America: An Overview," is introduced with two chapters written by William R. Eadington, one of the most prominent scholars in the field of gambling studies.

Geographers have much to contribute to research on casinos. The disparate local socioeconomic circumstances and the role of governments at all levels that are entailed in whether to adopt gambling casinos as a development strategy should interest not only tourism geographers, but other political and economic as well as cultural geographers. This volume provides a starting point.

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