**2022-08-12: Economic History Field Exam**

Answer four of twelve

1. There has been significant commitment in recent years from offshore financial centers to improve information exchange with foreign countries (the multilateral agreement on an automatic exchange of bank information). What does the history of offshore wealth management teach us about the effectiveness of these policies, and in particular the prospects for truthful information sharing?

2. Some economists argue that the corporate income tax is unworkable in a globalized world and should be abolished. How do you assess the different forms of international cooperation that have been implemented to make the corporate tax work internationally over the course of the 20th century?

3. What is the societal well-being-maximizing top income tax rate (a) given the likely extent of international cooperation on tax enforcement over the next generation, and (b) if effective comprehensive international institutions to tax plutocrats and divvy up the revenue should happen to be successfully designed and implemented?

4. Those of us working for Bill Clinton in the early 1990s on his administration's urban policies were constrained by his campaign promises. And so we attempted to square the circle by proposing to (a) end welfare as we know it, (b) boost low-wage worker incomes by raising the minimum wage and massively expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit, (c) being "tough on crime", and (d) being "tough on the causes of crime". What does research tel us about the extent to which this diagnosis of America's urban problems as of the early 1990s accurate? To what extent was it misleading and destructive? To what extent was it simply incoherent?

5. Ellora Derenoncourt's dissertation can be summarized thus: When the post-WWII Great Migration began, both Salt Lake City and Baltimore were very promising places to raise a young African-American male; by the late 1970s, Baltimore had received massive African-American migration and was no longer a promising place; while Salt Lake City had received little migration and was still a promising place. What speculations do you think the evidence warrants making about the \_\*\*mechanisms\*\*\_ of Deronencourt's finding that migration is the cause and the decay of opportunities for young African-American males the effect?

6. Post-WWII American governments worked at cross-purposes as far as segregation was concerned. At the federal level, governments pressed for legal integration. At the state and local level, governments pressed for continued and expanded segregation. Which of these levels was the more effective at shaping the current state of urban America?

7. What does research tell us about how much of the transformation over the past two centuries of women's societal roles in today's rich countries has been driven by changes in material conditions and how much has been driven by changes in ideologies and world views? How far does this leave us today from true gender equity?

8. What can we confidently say, and what can we only guess, about the shifting pace of growth of human technological knowledge about manipulating nature and organizing ourselves to be productive?

9. What can we confidently say, and what can we only guess, about why the coming of the Industrial Revolution was delayed until after 1750 and took place in Britain?

10. Bayer and Charles present the earnings level gap and the earnings rank gap between Black and white men from 1940 to the present. How are these measures defined and what insights do they offer us into the evolution of Black-white earnings inequality relative to past literature? Why has positional convergence, improvement in the relative earnings of Black men compared to white, slowed over the last 70 years?

11. What do Carlos, Feir, and Redish (2021) argue is traded off with the consolidation of European settler property rights in the “frontier” era of US history? How does their essay complicate our understanding of the link between secure property rights and US economic development during this period

12.Secure property rights are considered critical for modern economic development. Hornbeck (2010) uses the spread of barbed wire in US agriculture to provide empirical evidence that increased protection of property rights stimulated investment. How does Hornbeck establish causality from property rights to investment? What omitted variable concern is there? Is reverse causality plausible in this case?