

politics of the Depression. What Sumner sees as policy shocks, New Dealers saw as humanitarian, and Democrats saw as political realignment. The next question to ask is: What lessons did they take from the experience? Here, Sumner asking if they misinterpreted the Depression is valuable. Are the lessons of people caught in the fog of war being misapplied? Finally, how has the economy changed that might alter practical lessons? Sumner makes valuable insight into the gold standard and the Great Depression, and perhaps is right in how those lessons should be applied today, but it should also be considered that today's economy is dominated by different technologies and, to some extent, how we interact with and think about money has changed. New Dealers had to build state capacity as they enacted policy, while modern policy makers already have powerful governmental institutions. Sumner's emphasis on placing policies in context is a worthwhile contribution.

In summary, Sumner's *Midas Paradox* breaks down the Depression into its complex, interconnected parts. Even if you disagree with his conclusions, this is certainly a book worth reading.

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Catherine Cangany. *Frontier Seaport: Detroit's Transformation into an Atlantic Entrepôt*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014. xi + 288 pp. ISBN 978-0226096704, \$48.00 (cloth); ISBN 978-0226096841, \$48.00 (e-book).

Detroit is the city of the American century. Its meteoric rise through the development of the automotive industry in the early twentieth century, and its tortuous decline through racism and deindustrialization, encapsulates the opportunities and disappointments of the American experience.

To understand twentieth-century Motown, however, Catherine Cangany challenges her readers to look backward to the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to recover the economic and cultural forces that shaped the Americanization of Detroit. In her excellent book, Cangany argues that Detroit was the product of its unique geographic position at the intersection of the Atlantic World and the American frontier. The rise of an All-American city, then, was not the fruit of frontier exceptionalism and isolated entrepreneurialism. Rather, from its

founding by Antoine de Cadillac in 1701, Detroit's success depended on its connections with expansive commercial networks extending throughout the Great Lakes and the Atlantic Ocean.

Early American scholars have largely overlooked eighteenth-century Detroit's connections with the Atlantic World. At first glance, this is hardly surprising, given that Detroit is situated hundreds of miles from the East Coast. Cangany argues that the city "participated fully in the types of reciprocal transoceanic commerce that characterized other North Atlantic settlements" (3). The unique geography of the St. Lawrence River Valley and the Great Lakes served as great commercial highways, connecting Detroit to the Atlantic World via Québec and Montréal. While transportation through this riverine network was seasonal (navigation closed in the winter with the freezing of the lakes and rivers) and took several weeks, Detroit was a full participant in the commercial networks of the Atlantic World. Far from being an isolated outpost of European imperialism, *Frontier Seaport* claims that early Detroit was little different from Boston or Philadelphia.

In yet another revelation, Cangany argues that the fur trade, which was foundation of Detroit's eighteenth-century economy, was the catalyst for the town's integration into what historian T. H. Breen called the "Empire of Goods."¹ Scholars tend to think of the fur trade as a primitive, ad hoc, commercial enterprise, carried on by wild-eyed frontiersman who bartered trinkets for furs with Native hunters. Nothing could be further from the truth. The eighteenth-century fur trade through Montréal was a highly sophisticated operation, depending on transatlantic networks of capital and commerce, and the labor of thousands of merchants, traders, and voyageurs who bought furs from American Indians in exchange for imported European manufactured goods. The commercial networks underpinning the fur trade provided the connections and capital that made possible the rise of "transnational merchandise"—nonfur trade consumer goods—in Detroit. The town's residents were vociferous consumers of the products of Britain's consumer and early Industrial Revolution after the British Empire's conquest of New France in 1760. Detroit shopkeepers could boast the same kinds of merchandise—textiles, teas, dinnerware—as their counterparts in New York or London, as the town's residents embraced the cosmopolitanism of Atlantic consumer culture.

However, *Frontier Seaport* does not just tell the story of the ways in which Detroiters were passive consumers of metropolitan commodities and culture. Rather, Cangany explores the ways in which Detroit's western character functioned as "transculturation," with the

1. T. H. Breen, "An Empire of Goods: The Anglicization of Colonial America, 1690–1776," *Journal of British Studies* 25 (October 1986): 467–499.

“periphery” influencing the “core.” In the innovative third chapter, drawn from Cangany’s 2012 *William and Mary Quarterly* article,² she explains how white Detroiters appropriated the centuries-old practices of American Indians to produce moccasins for eastern markets. The eighteenth-century moccasin trade combined East and West by exploiting Atlantic World commercial networks and manufacturing techniques to produce a commodity that transitioned from frontier culture to metropolitan fashion. As such, the development of tanneries in Detroit to produce moccasins demonstrates that the town was not simply a go-between for two discreet markets but that Detroiters engaged in manufacturing ties to both frontier and empire.

The Americanization of Detroit in the nineteenth century would be no simple matter. Despite the importance of Detroit’s Atlantic World ties to empire, it remained a borderland community in the eighteenth century because the town retained significant local autonomy in the everyday business of government. The French and British regimes depended on local *grande*s to help alleviate the burden of administering justice in the bustling commercial community. The political incorporation of Detroit into the United States after 1796 was a fraught and lengthy process, characterized by the conflict between localism and assimilation. In particular, Detroiters resented American efforts to consolidate control over the civil administration of the town—particularly the rebuilding effort that followed the devastating fire of 1805 and the efforts to prevent smuggling in the run up to the War of 1812—while relegating Detroit to the periphery of the Northwest and Indiana Territories. It was only after Congress established Detroit as the capital of the Michigan Territory in 1805, and with statehood in 1837, that the town increasingly forgot its colonial past as it imagined its future as an American metropole.

Cangany’s approach offers a solution to the problem of combining Atlantic and continental perspectives on early American history—what historian Alan Taylor has referred to as “squaring the circles.”³ Rather than privileging either approach, she reveals how Detroiters deftly exploited economic opportunities born of their participation in trade networks that simultaneously extended into the North American interior and the overseas markets of the Atlantic rim. The question remains, however, just how widely can early American historians apply Cangany’s model? Is Detroit uniquely positioned, or did residents of other towns leverage their location in similar ways? The French

2. Catherine Cangany, “Fashioning Moccasins: Detroit, the Manufacturing Frontier, and the Empire of Consumption, 1701–1835,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 69, no. 2 (2012): 265–304.

3. Alan Taylor, *Squaring the Circles: The Reach of Colonial America* (Washington, DC: American Historical Association, 2012).

colonists who founded St. Louis in the 1760s located the town near the great confluence of the Ohio, Missouri, and Mississippi Rivers, ensuring that they could enjoy access to the Atlantic World through New Orleans, while also exploiting expansive Native trade networks to the West. It may be that Detroit is less unique than it is a leading example of the ways in which models of French, British, and American colonization overlapped one another. Nevertheless, *Frontier Seaport* shows us that Motown's story is not uniquely American, if, indeed, it is unique at all.

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Douglas McCalla. *Consumers in the Bush: Shopping in Rural Upper Canada*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015. xv + 296 pp. ISBN 978-0-7735-4500-7, \$34.95 (paper).

Consumers in the Bush: Shopping in Rural Upper Canada is a history of nineteenth-century retail transactions in selected villages of Upper Canada, now Ontario, Canada's most populous province. This is not a history of retailing, stores, or shopping behavior; rather, it is a descriptive analysis of general store account books to identify the commodity purchasing patterns of nineteenth-century rural consumers. The rural consumers of nineteenth-century Upper Canada—farmers, crafters, and laborers—were not self-reliant settlers any more than the pioneers of colonial America. No, quite unlike Robinson Crusoe and Swiss Family Robinson, the settler families of Upper Canada were reliant on purchased goods, largely imported from the United Kingdom in a process of growing international interaction that is described as globalization, although McCalla never invokes this term. Developed in response to settlers' basic needs for imported goods, general stores became an integral part of daily life and household consumption in the village landscapes of Upper Canada.

The body of the book is divided into chapters that describe the principal product categories of rural general stores of the day: dry goods, including textiles; clothing and sewing supplies; groceries dominated by tea, tobacco, and sugar, and in value terms by alcoholic beverages; hardware, such as nails, tools, firearms, and agricultural implements;