

approach by comparing selected countries wherein the thematic focus is particularly warranted.

These chapters, as with most of the contributions to the volume, offer fresh insights. However, here, as throughout the volume, the authors have generally neglected to signal gaps or possible research avenues, analytical categories, sources, methods, and approaches that would be particularly useful to the book's stated target audience of students. Moreover, a more robust introductory chapter or the inclusion of a concluding chapter would have tied up some of the book's loose ends. For instance, a valuable opportunity has been missed to explain why most Latin American countries remain underrepresented in the field of business history. A historiographic chapter highlighting this relative impoverishment and the specific opportunities it presents would have been extremely helpful. Even so, this book is a must-read for anyone wishing to obtain a deeper understanding of Latin America's rich and fascinating business history and its place in the multifaceted history of capitalism.

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Sovereign Entrepreneurs: Cherokee Small-Business Owners and the Making of Economic Sovereignty. *By Courtney Lewis.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019. 312 pp. Illustrations, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. Hardcover, \$99.00. ISBN: 978-1-4696-4858-3.

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Reviewed by Christopher Arris Oakley

The explosion in Native American gaming establishments in the late twentieth century inspired numerous articles, books, reports, and other studies on Indigenous economics. Although this new scholarship addressed several important issues and developments, much of it focused on casinos and other large ventures directly owned and operated by Native nations. This concentration on tribal enterprises overlooked the economic diversity on Native American lands and simplified the complexity of Indigenous life in the twenty-first century.

Courtney Lewis, an anthropologist and an enrolled member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, seeks to address this by painting a

more accurate economic landscape of one Indigenous nation, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, who reside in the mountains of western North Carolina. In *Sovereign Entrepreneurs: Cherokee Small-Business Owners and the Making of Economic Sovereignty*, Lewis argues that small locally owned businesses have been vital to the Eastern Cherokees, providing much-needed economic stability, diversity, and agility. Moreover, Cherokee small business owners, or “Indianpreneurs,” play crucial roles in protecting and promoting the economic sovereignty of the Eastern Band, which in turn strengthens their political sovereignty.

Sovereign Entrepreneurs is based heavily on Lewis’s fieldwork on the Qualla Boundary, also known as the reservation of the Eastern Band of Cherokees. She made several trips to the town of Cherokee, which is the economic center of Qualla, but the majority of her work was done in 2009 and 2010, at the height of the Great Recession. Therefore, her book is partly a chronicle of how small businesses both survived and stabilized the local economy during a difficult time. She supplemented her fieldwork with important primary sources, such as government documents and reports, as well as a wide variety of multidisciplinary secondary sources. Consequently, the book is well researched and discusses important theories and concepts, like Indigenous economic sovereignty, which Lewis defines as the ability of Native nations to choose economic development paths that they determine are best for them. Divided into five thematic chapters, plus an introduction and a conclusion, the book is logically organized, well documented, and clearly written.

The second chapter (“Tourism: ‘Where are the Indians?’”) will be of particular interest to business historians. In this chapter, Lewis traces the long history of the tourist industry in Cherokee, which began in the early 1900s and grew rapidly after the opening of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in the 1930s. According to Lewis, nostalgia tourism, which was based on Hollywood westerns and inaccurate stereotypes of Plains Indian culture, characterized much of the tourist industry on the Qualla Boundary in the postwar era. In the late 1960s and the 1970s, however, the Red Power movement forced many Americans to rethink the history and legacy of settler-colonialism in the United States. As a result, in the late twentieth century, many tourists sought a more culturally “authentic” experience when visiting Cherokee. Ironically, as Lewis points out, outsiders searching for cultural authenticity is a construct of the Western world and therefore is itself inauthentic. Nevertheless, this shift in the market forced Eastern Cherokees to rethink the local tourist industry.

The opening of a modern Las Vegas–style casino in the 1990s on the Qualla Boundary enabled the government of the Eastern Band of

Cherokees to alter the local tourist economy to meet the changing desires of the non-Indigenous tourist. Casino funds not only financed a dramatic transformation in the town of Cherokee but also gave Cherokee leaders the political clout to negotiate with state and federal governments. Lewis notes, however, that heavy reliance on a single industry can put the Eastern Cherokees in a precarious position. Indeed, the tourist industry has been historically volatile and dependent on external factors, such as the price and availability of gasoline. Moreover, dependence on large tribally owned enterprises can constrain and burden Indigenous governments. The Cherokees may also face increasing competition in the gaming industry, as new casinos are likely to open in the region. Consequently, Lewis concludes that small citizen-owned businesses can mitigate these issues and provide much-needed economic stability.

Lewis's primary objective is to tell the story of Cherokee small business owners in the twenty-first century. This is where *Economic Sovereignty* excels. Lewis is at her best when describing her interactions with entrepreneurs in Cherokee. She discusses several small businesses, including a coffee shop, a restaurant, a retail arts and crafts store, and a funeral home. Some of these businesses rely at least partly on tourists, while others primarily serve the local community. Lewis vividly describes and analyzes the complexities and obstacles that these Indianpreneurs must navigate to open and maintain a small business. This can be especially difficult when operating on Native American lands, which often requires additional bureaucratic processes. In the final chapter, Lewis analyzes how the government of the Eastern Band has offered support for older local businesses and for entrepreneurs seeking to open new enterprises on the reservation. In the twenty-first century, Cherokee leaders have used gaming funds to provide financial assistance, training, education, and marketing. Tribal leaders have also improved local infrastructure and health care, both of which help small businesses.

Sovereign Entrepreneurs is an outstanding book and an important contribution to the literature on Indigenous economics in general and the Eastern Cherokees in particular. The narrative is a little repetitive in places, and some jargon may be difficult for nonexperts, but these are very minor issues. This is an important study that can be used as a model for ethnographic case studies on modern economics and Indigenous nations.

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