

April 12, 1861" (p. 23). While daily business activity surely halted while thousands stopped to consider the consequences of the events at Fort Sumter, "economic growth," a long-term development, surely did not. Later (p. 49), a reference to a smallpox "pandemic" likely means, "at best," an epidemic and further (p. 88) the use of the phrase "exorbitant prices" is not placed in its wartime context and again shows a lack of analysis of standard social and economic changes in times of military conflict. Throughout the text, small word-use issues like these and lack of historical perspective periodically mar the writing and lessen its impact. Generally, such instances simply indicate some lack of larger context into which the comments might have been placed or a lack of critical approach to some sources. Wingert's documentary style is quite well developed. He has used manuscript sources from across Pennsylvania and the country. His footnotes are abundant and often highlight the strengths and weaknesses of his evidence. In many cases, rather than make claims well beyond what his evidence can support, Wingert indicates the extent to which some evidence can be believed and where potential biases of interpretation exist.

For what it is, a small work in the popular local history genre, *Harrisburg and the Civil War* is strong. Not a work of historical analysis, rather it is a descriptive work, providing elements of the story of one city in Pennsylvania that played a key role in this difficult period. Wingert is to be congratulated for this contribution to the literature and encouraged to continue to develop his skills as a historian.

TIMOTHY CUFF

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Donna Merwick. *Stuyvesant Bound: An Essay on Loss across Time* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013). Pp. 219. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$59.95.

Through the centuries Peter Stuyvesant has been described in many ways. He is often portrayed as an uncompromising tyrant whose failures cost the Dutch their colonial American holdings. At the other end of the spectrum Washington Irving presents a congenial figure unable to adjust successfully to a changing world. In *Stuyvesant Bound* Donna Merwick describes

Stuyvesant as an experienced and savvy leader who for seventeen years capably performed his duties despite many difficult circumstances.

An Australian scholar who has built a distinguished career analyzing the Dutch experience in early America, Merwick portrays Stuyvesant as a company man whose military and political skills helped transform a settlement on the verge of ruin into a vibrant commercial outpost. Along the way Stuyvesant, while serving as New Netherland's director general, adroitly maneuvered through several specific constituencies that regularly challenged his administration. Perhaps Stuyvesant's most problematic test came from his fellow Dutchmen. The author describes the local population as a bit less rambunctious than she did in an earlier work, *Possessing Albany* (1990). Nevertheless it was a collection of avaricious entrepreneurs who periodically attempted to undermine their leader's authority. Employing conciliation and compromise Stuyvesant was able to maintain civility. When dealing with another regular hurdle, the local Native American population, his policy was one of deterrence, essentially attempting to segregate as much as possible his countrymen from their Native American neighbors. Confronted by steady British encroachment Stuyvesant effectively resorted to diplomacy and avoidance. Ironically, it was his employer, the Dutch West Indies Company, which ultimately sealed Stuyvesant's failure. Merwick convincingly argues that Stuyvesant expertly promoted the company's interests despite minimal support. Finally, in 1664, amidst an imminent British attack, his employers all but ignored Stuyvesant's pleas for assistance. Instead the Company formally accused him of negligence and initiating attacks that resulted in the transfer of New Netherland to the British.

At the heart of Merwick's work, as the subtitle announces, is a story of loss. The author proposes to use "the trope of loss as a way into evaluating Stuyvesant's career and that of New Netherland generally" (p. xii). She begins her evaluation near the end and a low point of Stuyvesant's journey. A bound captive of local Native Americans, humiliated and powerless in the eyes of his countrymen, he awaits his British conquerors. In explaining how Stuyvesant fell to such depths the author uses three themes—duty, belief and loss—to assess his leadership. What emerges is a picture of a conscientious but wary employee of the Dutch West Indies Company who "learned to identify himself as the States' and company's servant" (p. 7). In fulfilling the duties embodied by the company's oath, an oath he considered sacred, Stuyvesant used the authority that he believed came with his position.

The relationship between Stuyvesant's secular and spiritual administrative responsibilities is particularly interesting. The author narrates several episodes when Stuyvesant's church related duties collided with local spiritual conduct. The solution required Stuyvesant to find a satisfactory middle ground that at times was impossible. During his initial five years in New Netherland Stuyvesant's autocratic leadership proved successful but as conditions in New Netherland stabilized his methods became less productive. Ultimately it was his inability to evolve with circumstances he had helped to create that led to his loss. Stripped of his position and scorned by his countrymen Stuyvesant spent the last five years of his life as a humble farmer under British authority in New York.

In telling Stuyvesant's story Merwick adeptly combines extensive primary research material with the interpretative techniques of a cultural historian and a dash of her own creativity. Part of that journey included wading through the voluminous collection of documents (which Merwick describes as "flat, repetitious, perhaps boring-maybe like most papers fed to a committee"; p. 132) that Stuyvesant used to defend himself against company accusations. The result is a compelling description of Stuyvesant and his world. Going well beyond works like Russell Shorto's recent monograph, this is not a book for the casual reader. Instead, it is a weighty scholarly assessment of the circumstances that motivated Stuyvesant. Merwick presents her interpretation by employing a narrative style sprinkled with touches of her own imagination that periodically transforms the narrative into a conversation between the writer and the reader. It is a technique that will engage some readers more than others but one that effectively presents the author's conclusions.

Though this must be considered an outstanding example of scholarship a couple of additions might strengthen the work. The author acknowledges that understanding Stuyvesant and New Netherland requires a contextual understanding of the Atlantic world as a whole. However, Merwick falls a bit short of providing that context. For instance, there is scant discussion about British and Dutch relations. This includes minimal assessment of the ramifications in New Netherland of the Civil War, the Navigation Acts, or specifics about the steady British expansion in colonial America. Likewise, while Stuyvesant's interaction with local Native American populations plays a prominent part in Merwick's New Netherland, there is little analysis of the effect that the Native American relationship with the British and French had on Stuyvesant and New Netherland in general. Finally there is no mention of

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slavery and minimal discussion about how Dutch interests in the Caribbean affected Stuyvesant and New Netherland.

In final analysis, *Stuyvesant Bound* is an impeccably researched, detailed, and imaginative picture of Stuyvesant and his world. It certainly adds new dimensions to our understanding of Stuyvesant and New Netherland. As such it should be considered required reading for scholars exploring the Dutch experience in colonial America.

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