

MID-ATLANTIC COLONIES, R.I.P.

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Abstract: For the period before 1760, the distinguishing characteristics of a Mid-Atlantic region have always been hard to define. Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Delaware are usually described in terms of social, ethnic, and religious pluralism. But pluralism is inherently problematic as a unifying concept for colonies composed of countless fractious local communities and groups. Other efforts to find coherence are just as vexed by a collection of communities that virtually no one in the seventeenth or early eighteenth century on either side of the ocean seems to have recognized as a region. Recent turns toward continental and Atlantic frameworks for interpreting colonial North American history make unifying factors for these colonies all the more elusive and indeed undermine the entire concept of region as an interpretive category.

Keywords: Mid-Atlantic historiography; Mid-Atlantic Colonies; Quakers, New Netherlands; Pennsylvania; Susquehannocks; Iroquois; Mid-Atlantic region

Every few years, historiographers try to discover and define a Mid-Atlantic region for the colonial era. Their essays often begin with a cliché about the “cliché among early American historians that a preponderant share of scholarship has been devoted to New England and the South.” Dangerfieldian complaints out of the

way, they usually find a rich literature on New York and Pennsylvania, a far thinner one on Delaware or New Jersey, and an infinitesimal output, except by historiographers themselves, on the region as a whole. Authors lament the difficulty of pinning down the nature of the collectivity that so few have written about, and sometimes they even question whether such a place existed at all in the colonial period.¹ Since the turn of the twenty-first century, these existential questions have become more profound, as the entire concept of region—whether for the Mid-Atlantic or elsewhere in the colonial world—has become increasingly problematic as an analytical category. Yet the zombie idea of the Middle Colonies as a coherent and distinctive region continues to roam the historiographical landscape. It is at last time to put the corpse out of its, and our, misery.²

The defining characteristics most often attributed to the Middle Colonies are ones that themselves defy definition, even by the people who lived there. “Who has ever heard citizens of New York, Philadelphia, and Wilmington in joyous affirmation of their common origin as Middle Atlantickers?” historian Richard H. Shryock complained as long ago as 1943. “The phrase is ‘merely a geographical expression’.” Two decades later, Frederick B. Tolles refused even to go that far. “There is,” he complained, “little or nothing about this area that would lead a geographer, looking at a map, to describe it as a region, save that it does lie between two well-defined regions,” New England and the Chesapeake. “Perhaps this is why,” Tolles concluded, “most historians, desperate to characterize it somehow, can only in the end refer to its ‘middleness.’”³ With this, Shryock’s and Tolles’s few scholarly predecessors would have agreed. What is generally regarded as the first monograph on the middle colonies, John Fiske’s *The Dutch and Quaker Colonies in America* (1899), in the best late-nineteenth-century just-the-facts-ma’am fashion, makes few generalizations at all. The next scholarly foray (and virtually the only one before Tolles’s time), T. J. Wertenbaker’s *The Founding of American Civilization: The Middle Colonies* (1939), was less interested in the region as a region than in how, “in the Middle Colonies the heterodox character of the population, the diversity of economic conditions, the isolation of certain racial groups from their mother countries, created[d] the perfect laboratory for observing a new civilization in the process of formation.”⁴

The diversity of that laboratory allowed a multiculturally inclined generation of historians that followed Wertenbaker and Tolles to posit something more than “middleness” to set these colonies apart. As Douglas Greenberg put it in 1979, “social diversity and ethnic-religious pluralism

were the Middle Colonies' mark of distinction," along with "a political life [that] assumes the aspect of a mystery novel."⁵ But, try as historians might, there was no single political mystery novel to be found, any more than there was a single social or ethnic-religious order that unified diverse middle-ness. Or so it appears from Alan Tully's careful comparison of the politics of New York and Pennsylvania, which concentrates on the inherently fragmenting realms of localism, factionalism, and self-interest. New York and Pennsylvania were, Tully concludes, societies where "the primary political arena for all but a few upper-level placemen was the provincial one, where imperial ties could best be exploited or circumvented in the interest of North American concerns," concerns that almost never crossed provincial boundaries to encompass anything like a coherent region.⁶

Diversity and pluralism and mystery, then, are concepts without form and void, weak glues to meld varied communities into a regional whole. They adhere no better at smaller provincial levels. In what remains one of the few serious studies of early New Jersey politics, Brendan McConville finds inhabitants unable to agree on anything, not even something as basic as "the origins and nature of property." At best, a form of tribalism he labels "ethnodeference" cut across divided "ethnic and religious groups" who "refused to acknowledge the authority of a culturally alien gentry."⁷ Similarly, John Smolenski's analysis of the "creolization" of Pennsylvania society finds little resembling a happy *mélange* of European, Native, and African cultures. Instead, Smolenski portrays the transmogrification of one of many transplanted cultures—English Quakerism—into a distinct North American variant that satisfied neither its creators nor the many minorities who comprised the fragmented non-Quaker majority.⁸ From a completely different perspective, Jack D. Marietta and G. S. Rowe find evidence of pluralism's dysfunctions in Pennsylvania's extraordinarily high crime rate, a rate that apparently set it apart from New York and other provinces in and outside the Mid-Atlantic zone.⁹

The incoherence evident at the provincial level extends downward to localities as well. Rural and inland communities tended to be monochromatic enclaves rather than rainbowed melting pots.¹⁰ The cities where peoples, religions, and commerce mixed most jarringly may have stumbled into some sense of order by the late eighteenth century, but in earlier decades they were, as Serena Zabin says of New York City, "dangerous economies." "The transience of the city's people, its goods, and its fortunes," she notes, "created a notably fluid social hierarchy, a structure that did not do away

with distinctions of status but made it difficult to establish one's own status or verify another's." New York was a city poised to release violence at almost any time, as it did in the pogrom against free and enslaved African Americans that followed a series of mysterious fires in 1741.¹¹ Even such a relatively small node of mixture as Carlisle, Pennsylvania, "had an infamous reputation as a disorderly place," writes Judith Ridner. The town, she says, "sat in-between regions and cultures," marking "a contested space between east and west, north and south, Europe and America, and European and Native American."¹² Meanwhile, in massively larger Philadelphia, diverse groups of inhabitants virtually gave up on collective governance in favor of voluntary associations that epitomized not just the chaotic diversity of the Mid-Atlantic but the lack of any broader structures that might have given the city or province, much less the region as a whole, some unity. As Jessica Choppin Roney concludes, "If the city was a vessel, its contents did not meld together, but smashed into and reacted off of one another, retaining their distinctiveness, their individual trajectories." This non-melting pot "was a city born and governed not out of brotherly love but a vigorous spirit of opposition."¹³

It is hard to find anything like a regional identity in such localized tales spun from diverse private interests, fragmented communities, and weak provincial governments. And whatever broader coherence that may have emerged in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries did little to set Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Delaware apart from Britain's other North American colonies. Thus Richard Beeman finds unity in diversity *everywhere* in British North America, not just in the colonies usually labeled Mid-Atlantic. On a parallel track, those who subscribe to John Murrin's concept of "Anglicization" trace a common eighteenth-century process whereby diverse British colonies "developed similar features and beliefs, not by copying one another . . . but by imitating the mother country." Anglicization is, as Murrin's student Andrew Shankman concludes, "a synthesis useful and compelling" for New York and Pennsylvania, but it is equally useful for Massachusetts (to which Murrin first applied the concept), Virginia, South Carolina, and elsewhere. "The colonists by 1760 inhabited a world that offered them three targets of political loyalty: their province; the continent, or 'America'; and the empire," Murrin explains. "Province and empire outweighed America in every respect." And, one might add, region hardly figured at all. Historians such as Brendan McConville and Owen Stanwood also emphasize transregional Anglicizing themes, most notably the unifying British symbols of a Protestant king and virulent anti-Catholicism.

Both authors are well attuned to local differences in the way those themes played out, but neither identifies much that would collectively set New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware apart from other provinces of British North America. From a very different perspective, Jack P. Greene similarly characterizes whatever “distinctive sociocultural configurations” marked the Middle Colonies as essentially “variations” on a general “developmental model” first developed in the Chesapeake colonies.¹⁴

If regional identity is to be found, then, it must reside in other registers. One possibility might be that old and still productive perennial of economic historians: the staple thesis. As summarized in the classic work of John J. McCusker and Russell R. Menard, the thesis posits a system in which “colonists can maximize income by producing resource-intensive goods for an external market.” This “strategy leads to regional specialization within colonies, with the particulars determined by the interaction of local resources and metropolitan demand.” Thus the Chesapeake region came to be defined by its reliance on staple tobacco, the West Indies on sugar, and so on. In this framework, the staple of the English Mid-Atlantic was foodstuffs, and it is undeniable that the export of food produced on small farms predominated nearly everywhere. Yet what eighteenth-century Philadelphians called “the provision trade” was as diverse as the Mid-Atlantic colonies’ populations and never reducible to a single commodity such as wheat. And so that trade, like other supposedly defining characteristics, divided more than united the region. Cathy Matson’s and Thomas Doerflinger’s standard studies of merchants in New York and Philadelphia, respectively, explicate not only intense rivalries for control of a variety of coastal and West Indian trades but also the very different ways in which the two cities’ merchant communities and economic systems were organized. The rival ports had distinct hinterlands and exploited overlapping but not contiguous catchment areas, and neither area confined itself to what is usually termed the Mid-Atlantic. New York’s involved much of New England, including the ports of Boston and Providence. Particularly after 1750, Philadelphia’s drew increasingly on wheat suppliers from Maryland and Virginia.¹⁵

All of these difficulties in identifying markers of regionality lead Wayne Bodle to argue that historians should “dispense altogether with the idea of regions as contiguous bundles of *characteristics*—whether identical, substantially similar, or merely comparable.” Instead they should “concentrate on regions as locuses of interactive behavior.”¹⁶ The founding English Mid-Atlantic behavioral locus was the Duke of York’s conquest of Dutch New

Netherland in 1664. A project of the Dutch West India Company, New Netherland welcomed—or at least put up with—a motley collection of colonists from continental Europe and the British Isles and elsewhere, along with substantial numbers of enslaved Africans. This accidental *mélange* bequeathed later English colonies their famous pluralism. Meanwhile, the West India Company never clearly decided if New Netherland's defining purpose was agricultural settlement or trade with Native people, contributing further to the region's many diversities. Whatever the case, New Netherland's hopes rested on the potential of two great river systems, the Hudson and the Delaware. Each led to the heartland of the Dutch colony's principal Native American trading partner, the Haudenosaunee, or Iroquois Five Nations. The far-flung Haudenosaunee networks of trade, warfare, and diplomacy, intersecting with the trading and settlement patterns of the Dutch, Bodle convincingly argues, set the terms for English colonization along the Mid-Atlantic coast during the postconquest period.¹⁷

But none of this occurred in a linear fashion or in a unifying direction. Instead fragmentation immediately set in. Under the royal patent that authorized his conquest, James, Duke of York, became proprietor of what was dubbed New York. Even before the conquest of 1664 was accomplished, however, James spun off what a few years later devolved into East and West New Jersey to courtiers George Carteret and John, Lord Berkeley. James's brother Charles II carved out Pennsylvania for William Penn in 1681, and the Three Lower Counties on the Delaware gradually assumed their ambiguously separate status in subsequent years. Those years saw a Dutch reconquest of New Netherland in 1673 and then a return of the region to the English in 1674. In this tangled way, what Bodle calls "interactive behavior" became shared experience. According to Ned Landsman, then, "perhaps the most important argument for the coherence of the Mid-Atlantic as a region is the extent to which those colonies shared a common history."¹⁸

From that common history, Bodle sees a Mid-Atlantic region emerging, in deed if not in word or landscape. It was "a *fabricated* spatial and cultural entity, one erected—to a degree perhaps unique in early American experience—by identifiable parties, agents, and interests from the rubble left by . . . imperial consolidation and colonial reorganization." People and things moved up and down the river systems, creating a network of alliances among otherwise disparate communities. "Formal legal or political boundaries . . . had little capacity to constrain many of the activities that most deeply shaped their identities: marriage, migration, economic exchange, or social opportunity."

As polities, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Delaware claimed few permanent loyalties, because “the formal *political* boundaries of the Middle Atlantic colonies never came close to containing or constraining even the high politics of their constituent provinces, much less the underlying socio-economic structural foundations on which we now presume ‘politics’ to lie.”¹⁹

There is much to Bodle’s argument, and, as his essay in this issue contends, for the mid- to late eighteenth century, it may even be persuasive. But for earlier periods, the Mid-Atlantic’s historical and geographical coherence, and distinctiveness, remain as elusive as its provincial and political boundaries. As much as Dutch and Native American experiences shaped New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware, they also shaped developments elsewhere in eastern North America. The historical tentacles of New Netherland stretched far beyond the Mid-Atlantic coast. In Virginia, the first recorded enslaved Africans arrived in 1619 on an English privateer flying a Dutch flag under letters of marque issued by the Prince of Orange. More important, before the 1660s most of the enslaved Africans who toiled anywhere in North America arrived in Dutch ships, which also carried much of the Chesapeake’s tobacco to Europe; the Chesapeake, no less than points northward, developed on a Dutch substrate. The thousands of Africans and their descendants who comprised 15 percent of New York City’s early eighteenth-century population and who labored on farms and what large operators revealingly called *plantations* in Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey knew that well.²⁰

So, too, though they seldom dared admit it, did New Englanders. Dutch traders introduced Plymouth colonists to the wampum trade and supplied most of the goods they exchanged with Native people in the colony’s earliest years. Contests between the English and Dutch over control of commerce with Indians and of trading posts on the Connecticut River helped spark the Pequot War of 1637. The intertwining of Mid-Atlantic and southern New England affairs continued through the English conquest of 1664, which was focused as much on rebellious Massachusetts as on pesky New Netherland; the same English officers who seized New Amsterdam also held royal commissions to investigate New England Puritans’ alleged misbehavior. Moreover, the Duke of York’s charter included lands that surrounded New England, on the north through Maine and on the south through Long Island, Martha’s Vineyard, and Nantucket. The pincers closed in 1685 when the entire region was incorporated into the Dominion of New England. It dissolved back into its various constituent fragments only when James’s reign ended with the Glorious Revolution of 1688–89.²¹

Like the shared experiences of Dutch, English, and African peoples, interactions between Native people and Europeans also refused to be confined to the colonies called Middle or to neatly defined Hudson and Delaware river systems. Only on the upper reaches of the Hudson, at what became the city of Albany, did Dutch-Iroquois relations predominate in New Netherland. Downriver, near Manhattan, Algonquian Munsee-speaking Native people lived in nearly constant friction with the people and government of Manhattan and points adjacent on both banks of the Hudson. On Long Island, meanwhile, the European population was largely English rather than Dutch and, unlike their compatriots across the sound in Connecticut, coexisted relatively peacefully with Algonquian groups.²²

To the west and south, Algonquian Lenape-speaking peoples dominated both sides of the Delaware River well into the post-English conquest period, and, until the mid-1670s, the major Iroquoian-speaking power was not the Haudenosaunee but the Susquehannocks. Their homeland was in the next river system to the west of the Delaware, the eponymous Susquehanna. That waterway empties into Chesapeake Bay, bringing English Maryland into the same interaction sphere as the portion of New Netherland that had originally been known as New Sweden. After the Dutch conquered the Swedes in 1655, Europeans in the Delaware River watershed were governed not by the West India Company but by the city of Amsterdam, from its North American capital at New Amstel, introducing further fragmentation. With the English conquest, New Amstel became New Castle, first as part of the duke's province and later as seat of one of William Penn's Three Lower Counties. If the jumbled European history of Delaware epitomized regional noncoherence, so too did that of its Susquehannock neighbors. Virtually conquered by the Haudenosaunee in the mid-1670s, they relocated to Maryland and points southward, where they found themselves in a war with Virginians that led to the political conflagration known as Bacon's Rebellion.²³ The disunited European and Native peoples of what we know as the Mid-Atlantic thus indeed shared a tangled and complicated history, but they shared it with many others in eastern North America as well.

Not surprisingly, before the mid-eighteenth century, few, if any, of those peoples imagined that they lived in something called a "Mid-Atlantic region" or "the Middle Colonies." It is of course difficult to prove the absence of something, particularly something as slippery as geographic consciousness.²⁴ Yet it is significant that keyword searches in several major databases of pre-1763 sources yield hits for only a single set of publications, Philadelphia

Lewis Evans's *A General Map of the Middle British Colonies in America* and its related book, both published in the 1750s. Evans's definition of the Middle Colonies, however, was not exactly the one that later took hold; it included *Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Pensilvania, New-Jersey, New-York, Connecticut and Rhode-Island*, as well as *Aquanishuonigy, the Country of the Confederate Indians*.²⁵ The contemporary invisibility of a Mid-Atlantic region is also visible in another, earlier map, the marvelously jumbled frontispiece to Nathaniel Crouch's 1685 compendium, *The English Empire in America*. No clear colonial boundaries, much less sharp regional divisions, appear there at all; the word "Philadelphia" nestles between "Virginia" and "Mariland," while "N. York" hugs the coast and "New England" sits well inland, apparently under assault from Native people and a very large moose.²⁶

Crouch's geographical imprecision was shared at the highest levels of metropolitan officialdom. In 1697 the president of the Board of Trade, John Egerton, Third Earl of Bridgewater, scrawled some notes during meetings devoted to a proposal to remerge the government of New York with those of the New England colonies. On one occasion, after inexplicably jotting that "Bosston is the Best place," he noted that "new yorke is not under the title of newIngland," before lumping together in a single list

Road Island

province: of main=

& the Jerseys

Two days after this unsuccessful effort to wrap his mind around a North American geography where Maine and New Jersey cohabited, Bridgewater again had to remind himself that "new yorke is of itt selfe & not in new IngLand." Wherever New York was, it was not in some place called the "Middle Colonies."²⁷

The absence of contemporary regional consciousness and experiential distinctiveness led Michael Zuckerman to declare in 1982 that the Mid-Atlantic's sense of itself was all but inseparable from that of the continent as a whole. "From the first," said Zuckerman, "the people of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York acted under conditions of cultural pluralism that only came to characterize the rest of the country in the nineteenth century." Same too with "religious liberty, partisan environments, economic ethics of legitimate self-interest" and countless other traits. "The Middle Atlantic did



FIGURE 1: This late-seventeenth-century map suggests the absence of any clear concept of a Middle Colonies region. R. B. [Nathaniel Crouch], *The English Empire in America: Or A prospect of His Majesties Dominions in the West-Indies* (London, 1685), frontispiece. Courtesy of the Library Company of Philadelphia.

not need a special history," he concluded, placing a positive spin on the what Shryock had lamented. The void existed "because 'American' history was so nearly the history of the Middle Atlantic configuration writ large."²⁸ More recently, Landsman echoes that "the Middle Colonies . . . may have been the region that best represented the diversity of American society." The region's lack of a strong sense of its own identity made it "all the more possible to extend the region's principal characteristics beyond its borders," with the result that "already by the second half of the eighteenth century, European observers and American writers were looking to the Mid-Atlantic region for the answer to the question, 'What is the American?'"²⁹

The first framer of that question was J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, who, in *Letters from an American Farmer*, adopted the literary pose of a Pennsylvanian. But he never actually lived in Penn's Woods. Born in Normandy, he subsequently lived in New France before taking up residence in Orange County, New York, where between 1769 and 1779 he compiled the journals on which *Letters* was based. He wrote the book itself in France, to which he had fled during the American Revolution, as evoked in the final chapter, entitled "Distresses of a Frontier Man." After the Peace of Paris in 1783, Crèvecoeur returned to North America for two stints as Louis XVI's consul to New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, before resettling permanently on a farm near Paris. This man who was born and died in France, who lived in New France and New York, who posed as a Pennsylvanian and "A Frontier Man," also happened to have a son who emigrated to New Jersey. What better exemplar could there be of the indistinctness of the Mid-Atlantic colonies, the porousness of their borders, and the elusiveness of the fabricators of their supposed identities?³⁰

Crèvecoeur's identifications with Paris and "the Frontier" are particularly noteworthy in light of recent historiography that tries to transcend the implied exceptionalism of the word "American" by employing instead the broader frames called "Atlantic" and "continental."³¹ Each perspective replaces narrow regional close-ups with wider-angle lenses that, almost necessarily, blur regional particularities even for areas more keenly resolved than Britain's coastal colonies.

It may no longer be true, if it ever was, that "We are all Atlanticists now," as David Armitage proclaimed in 2002. Still, Atlanticist goggles have become inevitable for the colonies between New England and Maryland, given their roots in the epochally Atlantic trading activities of the Dutch West India Company, their history of conquest by the rising English Atlantic empire,

and their economies anchored by great port cities, through which goods and people flowed in and out from Europe, the Caribbean, and Africa. Adopting what Armitage calls a “circum-Atlantic” perspective—envisioning “a particular zone of exchange and interchange, circulation and transmission”—is especially valuable for understanding the ethnic and religious diversity associated with New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware.³² An Atlantic framework for understanding both Dutch and later English governmental responses to religious diversity and toleration, for example, allows Evan Haefeli to make sense of things in ways no scholar rooted in North America alone could. Similarly, religious developments among Moravians, Lutherans, radical German Anabaptists, Ulster Scots, and others of various levels of zealotry achieve new clarity through the Atlantic-oriented scholarship of Aaron Fogleman, Katherine Engel, Gregory Roeber, Philip Otterness, and Patrick Griffin.³³ Yet the more one understands about the ongoing Atlantic connections of these groups—Moravians and Lutherans went to the Carolinas and Georgia, and Ulster Scots went nearly everywhere—the less their experiences appear in any way distinctively Mid-Atlantic. The nonregion becomes more a receptacle than a crucible of diversity.

Something similar occurs with what Armitage calls “cis-Atlantic” scholarship—which “studies particular places as unique locations within an Atlantic world and seeks to define that uniqueness as the result of in the interaction between local particularity and a wider web of connections.”³⁴ For historians such as Sarena Zabin, Christian Koot, and Daniel Hulsebosch, attention to New York’s networks of trade and politics explains the seeming chaos of the city, the enduring resistance of the area’s merchants to imperial trade regulations, and the ways in which empire was defined at the periphery as much as from the imperial center. But this is to portray New York as an Atlantic example, rather than as a distinctive Mid-Atlantic regional phenomenon. Tellingly, Zabin encourages her readers to consider “New Yorkers as Britons living on the edge of empire rather than incipient American citizens”; Koot begins his study of *Empire at the Periphery* by pairing turn-of-the-eighteenth-century engravings of New York City and Bridgetown, Barbados; and Hulsebosch places New York “on the edge of a vast ocean marketplace,” a position that made it “much like Bristol, its trading partner on the west coast of England.” Hulsebosch also compares New York to Georgia and to Massachusetts, after each, like New York, came under royal government.³⁵ New Jersey and Delaware, with their indirect imperial rule through proprietary governments,

and proprietary Pennsylvania, with its Quaker-dominated lack of any formal military establishment, do not so easily compare.

So New York as an Atlantic city no longer seems in any meaningful way part of a Mid-Atlantic region, and even the “middleness” to which Tolles clung slips away. When Gotham assumes its rightful place on the western periphery of the Atlantic, then, the modifier “mid-” must necessarily migrate well east from the coast of North America to attach itself to some other place more truly in the center of the Atlantic world. New Yorkers might like to have thought of themselves as dwelling “in the navel of his majestyes Territory,” but Bermuda had a stronger case for floating “almost in the middle of the King’s dominions in America” and “in the eye of all trade,” the true Mid-Atlantic.³⁶

If the New Netherland roots of New York and its neighbors draw an Atlantic lens, their Iroquoian origins demand a continental, North American scope.³⁷ From such a perspective, New York City and Philadelphia appear not in the middle but on the periphery of a landscape that the Iroquois and Susquehannocks dominated from the headwaters of the Hudson, Delaware, and Susquehanna river systems. For that landscape, the English conquest of 1664 may have been less transformative than the Iroquois conquests in their mid-century wars, which displaced, killed, and took captive thousands of people from the St. Lawrence Valley, the Great Lakes region, the Ohio and Mississippi watersheds, and the Appalachian highlands. Even more significant were unintended conquests by European viral diseases, which created what Robbie Ethridge and Sheri Shuck-Hall call a “shatter zone” across much of eastern North America and drove the Iroquois and others to ever-widening campaigns to restock their populations with captive people. Firearms, metal weapons, and other trade goods entered this Native continent from Atlantic peripheries at New York and Philadelphia, but they also did so from Charleston, New Orleans, Montreal, and other places that belied Mid-Atlantic distinctiveness.³⁸ Judgment about where this Native continent’s center might be found depends on where the historical lens is focused and for which decade it is calibrated. Perhaps the middle was Iroquoia; perhaps Anishanaabewaki in the Great Lakes region; perhaps Creek country in the Southeast; perhaps the Arkansas valley or Comancheria, closer to the continental heartland; perhaps North America’s literal geographical center in what is today North Dakota, the land the Mandans called “the heart of the world.”³⁹ It was certainly not Philadelphia or New York, whose only middleness lies in their location between Mandan country and Bermuda.

That kind of middleness, however, does provide a focal point to merge continental and Atlantic lenses into a binocular image.⁴⁰ As Landsman observes, “the Middle Colonies are well suited to combining these approaches” because “the Mid-Atlantic region was itself the creation of a series of contests for power and position in eastern North America, involving a succession of European and Indian nations and empires as well as powerful commercial companies.” The appeal of the Mid-Atlantic as a “Crossroads of Empire” seems nowhere more compelling than in efforts to understand the complicated stew of global and continental forces that combined during the eighteenth century to produce the Seven Years’ War. After all, in 1754 in what is now western Pennsylvania, a Native American named Tanaghrisson, accompanying an ill-trained force of British-American provincials, killed a Frenchman named Joseph Coulon de Villers de Jumonville and ignited a conflict between Britain and France for control of the continent and of much of the broader world.⁴¹ A shelf-full of brilliant studies finds in the region where Jumonville died the origins not just of global war but also of the racial formations that shaped Native and Euro-American interactions for decades to come. Iconic book titles tell the tales on continental, Atlantic, and human scales: *The Middle Ground*, *Into the American Woods*, *Promised Land*, and *Breaking the Backcountry*; *At the Crossroads*, *Elusive Empires*, *Crucible of War*, and *American Leviathan*; *Friends and Enemies in Penn’s Woods*, *Our Savage Neighbors*, *The Texture of Contact*, and *Setting all the Captives Free*.⁴²

Each of these books explores additional answers to the question, “What is the American?” and returns in new ways to Zuckerman’s “history of the Middle Atlantic configuration writ large.” American, yes, but Mid-Atlantic, not so much. Jumonville’s Glen lies between the Youghiogheny and Monongahela rivers, roughly 350 miles west of any ocean shore. The provincial troops whom Tanaghrisson accompanied were from Virginia, led by George Washington, no one’s idea of a Middle Atlanticker. And if the territories where they fought were unquestionably a vital, if not exactly Mid-Atlantic, “crossroads of empire,” so too were other places, among them the Lake George–Lake Champlain corridor, New Orleans and the lower Mississippi Valley, and the Gulf Coast.⁴³ So we are back not just to Americanness but to porous boundarylessness.

The problem may be less with the concept of a Mid-Atlantic region—which, at least since the days of Tolles and Greenberg, has been recognized as an interpretive fiction—but with the analytical concept of region more generally, a concept that continental and Atlantic perspectives each tend

to erase.⁴⁴ In the 1970s, much less in the 1890s, almost no one would have questioned Greenberg's assumption that the Mid-Atlantic sat between two British colonial regions that had distinctive identities.⁴⁵ Yet, in the 2010s, thanks to a generation of scholarship written through continental and Atlantic lenses, few would argue for anything as simple as the old regional dichotomies between *Puritans and Adventurers*, between *Religion and Profit*, between uniquely New England *Peaceable Kingdoms* and a distinctive *Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* through which the paradox of *American Slavery, American Freedom* revealed itself. Historian T. H. Breen thus followed his brilliant 1980 collection of essays contrasting *Puritans and Adventurers* in New England and the Chesapeake with an equally brilliant 1986 essay uniting of both regions in "An Empire of Goods," and then a 2004 survey of *Colonial America in an Atlantic World* coauthored with Timothy Hall. Meantime, Ira Berlin, April Hatfield, and John Coombs made it impossible to consider English enslavement of Africans in any way a distinctively Virginian ordeal.⁴⁶

Recent historians also remind us that Virginia had "Eschatological Origins" nearly rivaling New England's and that, at least rhetorically, there were such a thing as *Puritan Conquistadors*. Fittingly, then, *Religion and Profit* has become the title not of a comparison of the New England and Chesapeake regions but of a transatlantic study of Moravian communities in Pennsylvania. Region plays almost no analytical role in any of these recent works. Authors zoom in and out from the local to the continental or oceanic, with no loss of fidelity to the complexities or generalities of the human experiences they explore.⁴⁷

If—despite very real differences between local places—the distinctions between New England and the Chesapeake blur when seen through Atlantic and continental lenses, what then can set a Mid-Atlantic region distinctively apart, and what analytical work can region do? Pennsylvania's radical German sectaries demonstrate that New England held no monopoly on religious zealotry. Delaware's and New Jersey's plantations show that "the south" was not the only place that exploited enslaved agricultural labor. Penn's Woods' killing fields during the Seven Years' War belie fantasies of mid-Atlantic racial harmony. Even the nonregion's ethnic pluralism appears less extraordinary in the context of an everywhere-diverse Atlantic world. Its early politics remained opaque, but perhaps no more so than those of other colonies in their own ways. Even its rivers refused to confine themselves to a regional frame; as waters are wont to do, they gathered from diverse points in the continental interior

and spilled outward into the Atlantic. In this and other ways, nature always reminded residents that little inherently distinguished the area from points to the north and south; assaults by both nor'easters and hurricanes blew the message home. Other essays in this issue may argue that a human-fabricated Mid-Atlantic region later came into existence, but in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries there was no such place. Rest in peace, Middle Colonies.

NOTES

1. Douglas Greenberg, "The Middle Colonies in Recent American Historiography," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 36 (1979): 396–427 (quotation appears on p. 396); Michael Zuckerman, "Puritans, Cavaliers, and the Motley Middle," in *Friends and Neighbors: Group Life in America's First Plural Society*, ed. Zuckerman (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982), 3–25; Robert J. Gough, "The Myth of the 'Middle Colonies': An Analysis of Regionalization in Early America," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 107 (1983): 393–419; Wayne Bodle, "The 'Myth of the Middle Colonies' Reconsidered: The Process of Regionalization in Early America," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 113 (1989): 527–48; Bodle, "Themes and Directions in Middle Colonies Historiography, 1980–1994," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 51 (1994): 355–88; Bodle, "The Fabricated Region: On the Insufficiency of 'Colonies' for Understanding American Colonial History," *Early American Studies* 1 (2003): 1–27; Ned Landsman, "Prologue: Region and History," and "Essay on Sources," in Landsman, *Crossroads of Empire: The Middle Colonies in British North America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 1–7, 223–32.
2. I make this assertion despite proudly directing the McNeil Center for Early American Studies, which "facilitates scholarly inquiry into the histories and cultures of North America in the Atlantic world before 1850, with a particular but by no means exclusive emphasis on the Mid-Atlantic region" (<http://www.mceas.org/about.shtml>, accessed February 25, 2015). I also make this assertion acknowledging a debt to my friends and colleagues Wayne Bodle and Ned Landsman, who kindly offered their contrary thoughts on a draft of this essay, and Jessica Roney, who forced me to think about wheat. Other useful criticism came from generous audiences at Temple University and at the McNeil Center.
3. Richard H. Shryock, "Historical Traditions in Philadelphia and in the Middle Atlantic Area: An Editorial," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 67 (1943): 115–41, quotation appears on pp. 115–16; Frederick B. Tolles, "The Historians of the Middle Colonies," in *The Reinterpretation of Early American History: Essays in Honor of John Edwin Pomfret*, ed. Ray Allen Billington (San Marino, CA: The Huntington Library, 1966), 65–79, quotation appears on p. 66.
4. John Fiske, *The Dutch and Quaker Colonies in America*, 2 vols. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1899); Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker, *The Founding of American Civilization: The Middle Colonies* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1938), quotation appears on p. 347. It is difficult to pin down when "middle colonies" became a historiographical commonplace. The imperfect measure yield by a "Google Books Ngram" finds no published use of the term before 1910. That is demonstrably

- incorrect, yet apparently it was sometime around the turn of the twentieth century when the usage took hold. Samuel Adams Drake published a school text on *The Making of Virginia and the Middle Colonies, 1578–1701* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1893), as a companion volume to his books on New England and the West. Perhaps the first scholarly study to include a separate chapter on the region was Emberson Edward Proper, *Colonial Immigration Laws: A Study of the Regulation of Immigration by the English Colonies in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1900), 38–55. By contrast, the two standard early twentieth-century surveys organized themselves by chronology and form of provincial government, rather than by region: Herbert L. Osgood, *The American Colonies in the Seventeenth Century*, 3 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1904–7); Charles M. Andrews, *The Colonial Period in American History*, 4 vols. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1934–38).
5. Greenberg, "Middle Colonies in Recent American Historiography," 398.
 6. Alan Tully, *Forming American Politics: Ideals, Interests, and Institutions in Colonial New York and Pennsylvania* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), quotation appears on p. 416.
 7. Brendan McConville, *Those Daring Disturbers of the Public Peace: The Struggle for Property and Power in Early New Jersey* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999), quotations appear on pp. 2–4. See also Ned C. Landsman, *Scotland and Its First American Colony, 1683–1765* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985).
 8. John Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers: The Making of Creole Culture in Colonial Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010).
 9. Jack D. Marietta and G. S. Rowe, *Troubled Experiment: Crime and Justice in Pennsylvania, 1682–1800* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).
 10. Sally Schwartz, "A Mixed Multitude": *The Struggle for Toleration in Colonial Pennsylvania* (New York: New York University Press, 1987); Donna Merwick, *Possessing Albany, 1630–1710: The Dutch and English Experiences* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
 11. Serena R. Zabin, *Dangerous Economies: Status and Commerce in Imperial New York* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), quotations appear on p. 7. See also Jill Lepore, *New York Burning: Liberty, Slavery, and Conspiracy in Eighteenth-Century Manhattan* (New York: Knopf, 2005).
 12. Judith Ridner, *A Town In-Between: Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and the Early Mid-Atlantic Interior* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), quotations appear on pp. 3–4.
 13. Jessica Choppin Roney, *Governed by a Spirit of Opposition: The Origins of American Political Practice in Colonial Philadelphia* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), quotation appears on p. 10.
 14. Richard R. Beeman, *The Varieties of Political Experience in Eighteenth-Century America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); John M. Murrin, "England and Colonial America: A Novel Theory of the American Revolution," in *Anglicizing America: Empire, Revolution, Republic*, ed. Ignacio Gallup-Diaz, Andrew Shankman, and David J. Silverman (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 9–19, first quotation appears on p. 11, third quotation appears on p. 15; Shankman, "A Synthesis Useful and Compelling: Anglicization and the Achievement of John M. Murrin," in *Anglicizing America*, ed. Gallup-Diaz, Shankman, and Silverman, 20–56, second quotation appears on p. 20; Brendan McConville, *The King's Three Faces: The Rise and Fall of Royal America, 1688–1776* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006); Owen Stanwood, *The Empire Reformed: English America in the Age of the Glorious Revolution* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011); Jack P. Greene, *Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early*

- Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 124–51, quotations appear on p. 124.
15. John J. McCusker and Russell R. Menard, *The Economy of British America, 1607–1789* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), esp. 17–34, 189–208 (first and second quotations appear on p. 26); Cathy Matson, *Merchants and Empire: Trading in Colonial New York* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); Thomas M. Doerflinger, *A Vigorous Spirit of Enterprise: Merchants and Economic Development in Revolutionary Philadelphia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), third quotation appears on p. 97.
 16. Bodle, “Myth of the Middle Colonies’ Reconsidered,” 548.
 17. Bodle, “Fabricated Region,” 14–22. On New Netherland, see Oliver A. Rink, *Holland on the Hudson: An Economic and Social History of Dutch New York* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986); and Jaap Jacobs, *New Netherland: A Dutch Colony in Seventeenth-Century America* (Leiden: Brill, 2005). On the Haudenosaunee, see Daniel K. Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992).
 18. Bodle, “Themes and Directions,” 357–58; Landsman, *Crossroads of Empire*, quotation appears on p. 4.
 19. Bodle, “Myth of the Middle Colonies’ Reconsidered,” first quotation appears on p. 530; Bodle, “Fabricated Region,” second quotation appears on p. 3 and third quotation on p. 9.
 20. Engel Sluiter, “New Light on the ‘20. and Odd Negroes’ Arriving in Virginia, August 1619,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 54 (1997): 395–98; David Eltis, “The Volume and Structure of the Transatlantic Slave Trade: A Reassessment,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 58 (2001): 43; Daniel K. Richter, “Dutch Dominos: The Fall of New Netherland and the Reshaping of Eastern North America,” in Richter, *Trade, Land, Power: The Struggle for Eastern North America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 97–112.
 21. Neal Salisbury, *Manitou and Providence: Indians, Europeans, and the Making of New England, 1500–1643* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); Andrew Charles Lipman, “The Saltwater Frontier: Indians, Dutch, and English on Seventeenth-Century Long Island Sound” (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2010); Robert C. Ritchie, *The Duke’s Province: A Study of New York Politics and Society, 1664–1691* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1977).
 22. Merwick, *Possessing Albany*; Merwick, *The Shame and the Sorrow: Dutch-Amerindian Encounters in New Netherland* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006); Paul Otto, *The Dutch-Munsee Encounter in America: The Struggle for Sovereignty in the Hudson Valley* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006); Robert S. Grumet, *The Munsee Indians: A History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009); Tom Arne Midtrød, *The Memory of All Ancient Customs: Native American Diplomacy in the Colonial Hudson Valley* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012).
 23. C. A. Weslager, *The English on the Delaware: 1610–1682* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1967); Francis Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire: The Covenant Chain Confederation of Indian Tribes with English Colonies* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1984), 1–185; Amy C. Schutt, *Peoples of the River Valleys: The Odyssey of the Delaware Indians* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 1–59; Cynthia J. Van Zandt, *Brothers among Nations: The Pursuit of Intercultural Alliances in Early America, 1580–1660* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Jean Soderlund, *Lenape Country: Delaware Valley Society Before William Penn* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014); James D. Rice, “Bacon’s Rebellion in Indian Country,” *Journal of American History* 101

- (2014): 726–50; Matthew Kruer, “‘Our Time of Anarchy’: Bacon’s Rebellion and the Wars of the Susquehannocks, 1675–1682” (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2015).
24. As Bodle observes, “we still know almost nothing in a systematic way about the spatial consciousness of early Americans” (“Fabricated Region,” 3). The lack of contemporary recognition that there was such a place as the Mid-Atlantic helped Robert J. Gough to posit a “Myth of the ‘Middle Colonies’” that, he said, “may obscure more than clarify” profound local and provincial distinctions. Instead, he argued, there were two distinct Mid-Atlantics. On the one hand were “New York, parts of western Connecticut, eastern New Jersey, and the northeast corner of Pennsylvania.” On the other were “most of Pennsylvania, part of Maryland, and all of western New Jersey and Delaware.” The first was oriented more toward New England, the second toward the South; more fundamentally, differences in soils, climate, settlement patterns, politics, and countless other factors, he argued, made the two Middle Atlantics more different than alike (Gough, “Myth of the ‘Middle Colonies,’” 393–419, quotations appear on pp. 393–94). More different than alike, surely, but dividing the region into two imposes little more order on the many local characteristics that resist any coalescence.
 25. *A General Map of the Middle British Colonies in America, viz.: Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Pensilvania, New-Jersey, New-York, Connecticut and Rhode-Island, of Aquanishuonigy, the Country of the Confederate Indians . . . of the Lakes Erie, Ontario and Champlain and Part of New France* (London, 1756); Lewis Evans, *Geographical, Historical, Political, Philosophical and Mechanical Essays, The First, Containing an Analysis of a General Map of the Middle British Colonies in America . . .*, 2 editions, the 2d in 2 states (Philadelphia, 1755). “Middle colonies,” “‘middle’ and ‘colonies,’” and “‘middle’ and ‘America’” returned no other relevant hits in keyword searches for works between 1660 and 1763 in *Early English Books Online*; *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online*; *Early American Imprints, Series I Evans*; and *Colonial State Papers* (all accessed through the University of Pennsylvania Libraries, March 2–3, 2015). The term “middle colonies” does begin to appear in printed North American texts after the Seven Years’ War; there are ten hits between 1768 and 1776: *A Collection of Tracts from the Late News Papers, &c. . .* (New York: 1768), 430; *Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives of the Province of Pennsylvania . . .* (Philadelphia, 1769), 20; *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 1 (1771): 266, 274; *Directions for Breeding Silk-worms, Extracted from a Letter of Joseph Ottolenghe . . .* (Philadelphia, 1771), 3; Benjamin Rush, *An Address to the Inhabitants of the British Settlements in America, upon Slave-Keeping* (Philadelphia, 1773), 36; *The Substance of the Evidence on the Petition Presented by the West-India Planters and Merchants, to the Hon. House of Commons . . . 16th of March, 1775* (New York, 1775), 5, 44, 45, 48, 51, 53–54; James Chalmers, *Plain Truth; Addressed to the Inhabitants of America . . .* (Philadelphia, 1776), 100, 131; Chalmers, *Additions to Plain Truth . . .* (Philadelphia, 1776), 100; *Proceedings of the Provincial Conference of Committees, of the Province of Pennsylvania . . .* (Philadelphia, 1776), 20; John Morgan, *A Recommendation of Inoculation, According to Baron Dimsdale’s Method* (Boston, 1776), preface pp. 9, 13, and text pp. 11, 15.
 26. R. B. [Nathaniel Crouch], *The English Empire in America* (London, 1685), frontispiece.
 27. Notes, 1, February 4, 1697, Papers of John Egerton, Third Earl of Bridgewater, 1594–1700, EL 9652, Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
 28. Zuckerman, “Puritans, Cavaliers, and the Motley Middle,” 5–6.
 29. Landsman, *Crossroads of Empire*, 1–2.

30. J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer* (London, 1782); Katherine Emerson, "Crèvecoeur, J. Hector St. John de," *American National Biography Online*, <http://www.anb.org/articles/16/16-00853.html>, accessed February 9, 2015.
31. Landsman, *Crossroads of Empire*, 2.
32. David Armitage, "Three Concepts of Atlantic History," in *The British Atlantic World, 1500–1800*, ed. David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 11–27, quotations appear on pp. 11, 16. For general introductions to what has become a vast field, see Bernard Bailyn, *Atlantic History: Concept and Contours* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); and Jack P. Greene and Philip D. Morgan, eds., *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009). For discussions of Atlantic history's limitations, see Philip J. Stern, "British Asia and British Atlantic: Comparisons and Connections," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 63 (2006): 693–712; Peter A. Coclanis, "Atlantic World or Atlantic/World" *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 63 (2006): 725–42; Alison Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion, 1560–1660* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).
33. Aaron Fogleman, *Hopeful Journeys: German Immigration, Settlement, and Political Culture in Colonial America, 1717–1775* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996); Fogleman, *Jesus Is Female: Moravians and the Challenge of Radical Religion in Early America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007); Katherine Carté Engel, *Religion and Profit: Moravians in Early America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009); A. G. Roeber, *Palatines, Liberty, and Property: German Lutherans in Colonial British America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); Philip Otterness, *Becoming German: The 1709 Palatine Migration to New York* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004); Patrick Griffin, *The People with No Name: Ireland's Ulster Scots, America's Scots Irish, and the Creation of a British Atlantic World, 1689–1764* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001).
34. Armitage, "Three Concepts of Atlantic History," 21.
35. Zabin, *Dangerous Economies*; Christian J. Koot, *Empire at the Periphery: British Colonists, Anglo-Dutch Trade, and the Development of the British Atlantic, 1621–1713* (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 1; Daniel J. Hulsebosch, *Constituting Empire: New York and the Transformation of Constitutionalism in the Atlantic World, 1664–1830* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 2–3. On empire as defined from the periphery, see Jack P. Greene, *Peripheries and Center: Constitutional Development in the Extended Politics of the British Empire and the United States, 1607–1788* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986); David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000); and Christine Daniels and Michael V. Kennedy, eds., *Negotiated Empires: Centers and Peripheries in the Americas, 1500–1820* (New York: Routledge, 2002).
36. Richard Wharton to ?, September 24, 1673, CO 1/30, no. 66, The National Archives, Kew (first quotation); Isaac Richier to Lords of Trade and Plantations, February 4, 1693, J. W. Fortescue, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and the West Indies, January, 1693–14 May, 1696* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1908), 14 (second quotation); Michael J. Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade: Bermuda, Bermudians, and the Maritime Atlantic World, 1680–1783* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 4 (third quotation), and see also the Bermuda-centered map of the Atlantic, 3.

37. James Axtell, "A North American Perspective for Colonial History," *History Teacher* 12 (1979): 549–62. For subsequent discussions, see Daniel K. Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001); Alan Taylor, *American Colonies* (New York: Viking, 2001); Paul W. Mapp, "Atlantic History from Imperial, Continental, and Pacific Perspectives," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 63 (2006): 713–24; Claudio Saunt, "Go West: Mapping Early American Historiography," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 65 (2008): 745–78; Eric Hinderaker and Rebecca Horn, "Territorial Crossings: Histories and Historiographies of the Early Americas," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 67 (2010): 395–432; and Michael Witgen, "Rethinking Colonial History as Continental History," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 69 (2012): 527–30.
38. Richter, *Ordeal of the Longhouse*, 50–189; José António Brandão, "*Your Fyre Shall Burn No More*": *Iroquois Policy Towards New France and its Native Allies to 1701* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997); Daniel P. Barr, *Unconquered: The Iroquois League at War in Colonial America* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006); Paul Kelton, *Epidemics and Enslavement: Biological Catastrophe in the Native Southeast, 1492–1715* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007); Robbie Ethridge and Sheri M. Shuck-Hall, eds., *Mapping the Mississippian Shatter Zone: The Colonial Indian Slave Trade and Regional Instability in the American South* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009); Christina Snyder, *Slavery in Indian Country: The Changing Face of Captivity in Early America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010).
39. "View from Sault Ste. Marie, Map 8," in *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History*, ed. Helen Hornbeck Tanner (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 36; Michael Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations: How the Native New World Shaped Early North America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011); Joshua Piker, *Okfuskee: A Creek Indian Town in Colonial America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004); Kathleen DuVal, *The Native Ground: Indians and Colonists in the Heart of the Continent* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006); Pekka Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008); Elizabeth A. Fenn, *Encounters at the Heart of the World: A History of the Mandan People* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2014).
40. Axtell's original formulation explicitly married what we now call continental and Atlantic perspectives ("North American Perspective for Colonial History," 550–51). Nonetheless, many scholars since have questioned the possibility of doing so. For varied positions, see Mapp, "Atlantic History from Imperial, Continental, and Pacific Perspectives"; Paul Cohen, "Was There an Amerindian Atlantic? Reflections on the Limits of a Historiographical Concept," *History of European Ideas* 34 (2008): 388–410; Daniel K. Richter and Troy L. Thompson, "Severed Connections: American Indigenous Peoples and the Atlantic World in an Era of Imperial Transformation," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Atlantic World, 1450–1850*, ed. Nicholas Canny and Philip Morgan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 499–515; and Richter, "Tsenacomoco and the Atlantic World: Stories of Goods and Power," and "'That Europe be Not Proud, nor America Discouraged': Native People and the Enduring Politics of Trade," in Richter, *Trade, Land, Power*, 13–41, 53–68.
41. Landsman, *Crossroads of Empire*, 2–3 (quotation); Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754–1766* (New York: Knopf, 2000), 3–7; David Preston, *Braddock's Defeat: The Battle of the Monongabela and the Road to Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).
42. Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991); James H. Merrell, *Into the American*

- Woods: Negotiators on the Pennsylvania Frontier* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1999); Steven Craig Harper, *Promised Land: Penn's Holy Experiment, the Walking Purchase, and the Dispossession of Delawares, 1600–1763* (Bethlehem, PA: Lehigh University Press, 2006); Matthew C. Ward, *Breaking the Backcountry: The Seven Years' War in Virginia and Pennsylvania, 1754–1765* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003); Jane T. Merritt, *At the Crossroads: Indians and Empires on a Mid-Atlantic Frontier, 1700–1763* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Eric Hinderaker, *Elusive Empires: Constructing Colonialism in the Ohio Valley, 1673–1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Anderson, *Crucible of War*; Patrick Griffin, *American Leviathan: Empire, Nation, and Revolutionary Frontier* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007); William A. Pencak and Daniel K. Richter, eds., *Friends and Enemies in Penn's Woods: Indians, Colonists, and the Racial Construction of Pennsylvania* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004); Peter Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors: How Indian War Transformed Early America* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2008); David L. Preston, *The Texture of Contact: European and Indian Settler Communities on the Frontiers of Iroquoia* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009); Ian K. Steele, *Setting All the Captives Free: Capture, Adjustment, and Recollection in Allegheny Country* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013).
43. Ian K. Steele, *Warpaths: Invasions of North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); Daniel H. Usner, *Indians, Settlers, and Slaves in a Frontier Exchange Economy: The Lower Mississippi Valley Before 1783* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992); Cécile Vidal, ed., *Louisiana: Crossroads of the Atlantic World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014); Kathleen DuVal, *Independence Lost: Lives on the Edge of the American Revolution* (New York: Random House, 2015).
 44. Notably, Alan Taylor's recent distillation of his excellent effort to highlight regionalism in Atlantic and continental contexts omits the Mid-Atlantic from its otherwise regionally organized table of contents and instead folds material on New York and Pennsylvania into a chapter entitled "British America" (Alan Taylor, *Colonial America: A Very Short Introduction* [New York: Oxford University Press, 2012], 90–96; compare the "Middle Colonies" chapter in Taylor, *American Colonies*, 245–72).
 45. Greenberg, "Middle Colonies in Recent Historiography," 396–97.
 46. T. H. Breen, *Puritans and Adventurers: Change and Persistence in Early America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980); Engel, *Religion and Profit*; Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1975); Breen, "An Empire of Goods: The Anglicization of Colonial America, 1690–1776," *Journal of British Studies* 25 (1986): 467–99; Breen and Timothy D. Hall, *Colonial America in an Atlantic World: A Story of Creative Interaction* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2004); Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004); Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998); April Lee Hatfield, *Atlantic Virginia: Intercolonial Relations in the Seventeenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); John C. Coombs, "Beyond the 'Origins Debate': Rethinking the Rise of Virginia Slavery," in *Early Modern Virginia: Reconsidering the Old Dominion*, ed. Douglas C. Bradburn and John C. Coombs (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011), 239–78; Graham Russell Hodges, *Root and Branch: African Americans in New York and East Jersey, 1613–1863* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999).
 47. Douglas Bradburn, "The Eschatological Origins of the English Empire," in *Early Modern Virginia*, ed. Bradburn and Coombs, 15–56; Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *Puritan Conquistadors: Iberianizing the Atlantic, 1550–1700* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006); Engel, *Religion and Profit*.