

increase our understanding of the lives of ordinary people in the Delaware Valley in the late eighteenth century. More careful attention to the questions concerning the primary texts would have increased the usefulness of Whitehead's and Buettner's biographies for students and scholars alike.

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*The British-Atlantic Trading Community, 1760–1810: Men, Women, and the Distribution of Goods.* By SHERYLLYNE HAGGERTY. (Leiden, Neth.: Brill, 2006. xiv, 287 pp. Maps, figures, tables, notes, appendices, bibliography, index. \$120.)

Sheryllyne Haggerty's *The British-Atlantic Trading Community, 1760–1810* uses Liverpool and Philadelphia as models for understanding the scope and complexity of the business community before and after American independence. Haggerty deliberately eschews familiar "colonial" and "early national" periodization not only because "historical 'eras' as set out by historians have little meaning" (p. 7) for the people in her analysis but also because the American Revolution was but one of many conflicts in the long eighteenth century that, she concludes, left no unique imprint on how business was done. Instead, commercial change was incremental and steady; some entrepreneurs risked much, but Haggerty finds more evidence of continuity between eighteenth- and nineteenth-century trading patterns than rapid transformations.

Haggerty offers a two-part analysis. In the first three chapters she explains why she chose Philadelphia and Liverpool, offers her definition of trading, and discusses the roles traders played in the two ports. Her next three chapters explore movements of goods, systems of credit, and risk-management strategies to show how these discrete locales fit within larger regional structures. A final chapter presents microstudies of individual traders, giving faces to some of the phenomena Haggerty outlines in previous chapters.

Haggerty's most significant contribution is her expansion of the definition of "trader" to include smaller brokers, retailers, and peddlers who did, after all, significantly outnumber their larger, wealthier merchant counterparts. But her analyses of the size and composition of Liverpool's and Philadelphia's commercial districts comes from business directories—sources she acknowledges include less than a fifth of the total working population. Tax lists, at least for Philadelphia, list head-of-household occupation for a broader segment of the community so might have provided a larger sample and balanced some of the striking differences in Haggerty's data. While the world of commerce on both sides of the Atlantic may have shared understandings about the roles different kinds of traders played, her data on relative frequency of specific occupations is

provocative. Why does Liverpool have so many mercers, drapers, and haberdashers, for example, while Philadelphia has substantially more grocers? Haggerty suggests that the proliferation of Liverpool dealers reflects their role as middlemen between the city and “country or small-scale shops” (p. 87). But again, the seeming lack of such middlemen in the much larger Pennsylvania hinterland raises interesting questions—particularly about the relationship of port city to surrounding towns and counties. It is a point worth pursuing; while Haggerty correctly notes that historians have left most businessmen and women out of their interpretation of the commercial world by focusing on the wealthy few, the relationship of port cities to their overland rather than maritime trade has received even less scrutiny.

Haggerty also left me wanting more about women’s roles and limitations in both cities. She opts not to focus on women in a separate chapter but to weave “them into their place in the trading community” as some of the many lesser traders facing a common commercial arena (p. 13). The rise and fall of Philadelphia grocer Margaret Moulder and trader-turned-debtor James Astair, she argues, placed them on a continuum—“It was only the scale of success or failure that differed” (pp. 17–19). Yet in subsequent chapters she repeatedly characterizes certain kinds of traders, such as dealers and victuallers, as lower status because of “the involvement of women,” suggesting that gender fundamentally shaped women’s economic opportunities (p. 51).

In the end, the “community of interest” Haggerty pieces together is much like the models of Thomas Doerflinger and David Hancock, the historians she most positions herself variously against or alongside. She expands rather than overturns existing historiography but in so doing reinstates the smaller traders, retailers, grocers, and hucksters into the business of the larger Atlantic world.

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*Founding Corporate Power in Early National Philadelphia.* By ANDREW M. SCHOCKET. (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2007. xiii, 274 pp. Illustrations, notes, works cited, index. \$42.)

All politics is local. As Andrew Schocket demonstrates in *Founding Corporate Power in Early National Philadelphia*, the debate over the creation of corporations in the wake of the American Revolution had less to do with deeply held ideological beliefs than with individual and local self-interest—despite the rhetoric employed by both the proponents and opponents of incorporation. Throughout Schocket’s study of the major early corporate entities in Philadelphia and its environs, constantly shifting factions of politicians, merchants, and entrepreneurs—as well as the average citizen—might denounce the incorporation of banks, canals, waterworks, and municipalities as antirepublican