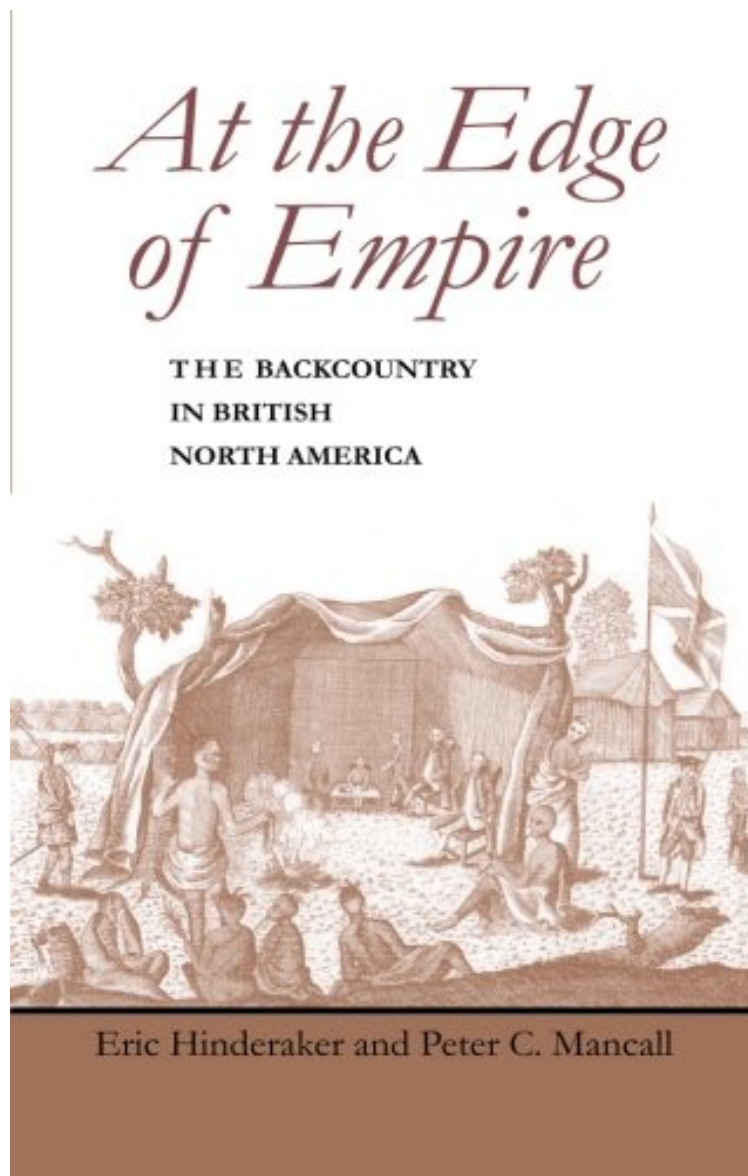


(Free) At the Edge of Empire: The Backcountry in British North America (Regional Perspectives on Early America)

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Eric Hinderaker, Peter C. Mancall

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Eric Hinderaker, Peter C. Mancall : At the Edge of Empire: The Backcountry in British North America (Regional Perspectives on Early America) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised At the Edge of Empire: The Backcountry in British North America (Regional Perspectives on

Early America):

13 of 13 people found the following review helpful. A good view of the first wild west By Jason G When an American thinks of the frontier of history, modern day Ohio, Kentucky and the Appalachian mountains are hardly the first thing that comes to mind. When a British subject thinks of the effects of the nation's past in Ireland or Scotland, dealings with Cherokees or Mohawks hardly come to mind. But Professor's Hinderaker and Mancall make the case in their comprehensive yet concise story about the edge of the first British Empire and the first American frontier. The back country of America is often approached from a modern, American standpoint, from the perspective of the early Americans, like Daniel Boone. This book makes the case that the American back country should be instead be likened to the English experience in Ireland and Scotland in the 16th century, rather than being likened to the American experience in western and Rocky Mountain states in the 19th century. Though to a large degree, it is impossible to understand the later American historical experience of the Wild west without understanding the wild mid-west. This book can be understood well from three perspectives: the relationship of the settlers along the American frontier to the native Americans, the relationship of the British Empire to the settlers, the relationship between Britain and France in their longstanding struggle for supremacy. As the 170 years or so of the first British Empire in North America rolled on, the conflicting attitudes, alliances and interests of all the parties involved made the time period one of constant change with at times brutal results in economic deprivation and war. What emerged was perhaps the most unlikely event possible, a continental republic where authority flowed from the bottom up, as much as it has at any point in human history. The authors do a fine job of showing just why the interior of North America was so valuable to all parties involved, and why confusion and misunderstanding often carried the day. The Pennsylvania backcountry is a prime example. Founded by Quaker businessman and pacifists, ruling from far away Philadelphia, they simply had no framework for understanding the disputes, claims and issues involved among the German and Scotch Irish settlers in today's central Pennsylvania. And these decades of misunderstandings often led to unnecessary conflict among the natives, settlers and rising disputes with the ruling class. The familiar events leading to the American Revolution are told from the perspective that disputes in the backcountry largely led to the conflict that founded the United States. Even given several decades to solve the situation politically, the British Empire could never effectively design systems to deal with trade, backcountry political representation and native disputes. The worldview of the day and the distant London government could never quite understand just how complex a situation they were dealing with. How the early American Republic was able to solve the issues that were raised by the backcountry disputes with London so quickly, such as the removal of nearly every colonial capital from the coast to the interior and the means of creating new interior territories, is told well, with the only losers being the native tribes who were seen as a problem to be pushed away until later by the British and a problem to be swept away by the backcountry settlers. This is a short book, worth a reader's time, as it shows just how dramatic and incredible the changes were in eastern North America during the 16th and 17th century. Things that began small: land speculation, Indian conflict, individual settlement apart from an often disinterested justice system grew up into something completely unexpected. Few of the actors of the day escape unscathed from this 170 year time period, and the misunderstandings of the time period often met their end in civil war in the American Revolution. In about a 180 pages, the authors map out a pattern of settlement by Europeans, unlike anything that had happened before, one that was unruly, controlled from the ground up and led to the modern world. This book is highly recommended. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By R. Yerby Ray Well written and very informative. Used lots of facts from this book to hit on women with 4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Good Book - rehash of old information By Carl Kramer In general this is a good book. The problem I have with this book is that it is just a compilation of old information a reader of eighteenth century America can find elsewhere. Another problem with the book I have is that there are no foot notes. There is just a section in the back where the author explains his sources. As a historian, this is a problem because then research done by the authors can not be replicated or be fact checked. I would recommend this book for someone that is interested in eighteenth century American history and wants something quick to read. For something more in depth read books that are particular to the subject that interests you.

During the course of the seventeenth century, Europeans and Native Americans came together on the western edge of England's North American empire for a variety of purposes, from trading goods and information to making alliances and war. This blurred and constantly shifting frontier region, known as the backcountry, existed just beyond England's imperial reach on the North American mainland. It became an area of opportunity, intrigue, and conflict for the diverse peoples who lived there. In *At the Edge of Empire*, Eric Hinderaker and Peter C. Mancall describe the nature of the complex interactions among these interests, examining colorful and sometimes gripping instances of familiarity and uneasiness, acceptance and animosity, and cooperation and conflict, from individual encounters to such vast undertakings as the Seven Years' War. Over time, the European settlers who established farms and trading posts in the backcountry displaced the region's Native inhabitants. Warfare and disease each took a horrifying toll across Indian country, making it easier for immigrants to establish themselves on lands once peopled only by Native Americans.

Eventually, these pioneers established economically, culturally, and politically self-sufficient communities that increasingly resented London's claims of sovereignty. As Hinderaker and Mancall show, these resentments helped to shape the ideals that guided the colonists during the American Revolution. The first book in a new Johns Hopkins series, *Regional Perspectives on Early America, At the Edge of Empire* explores one of British America's most intriguing regions, both widening and deepening our understanding of North America's colonial experience.

"Mr. Hinderaker and Mr. Mancall successfully challenge the negative reputation that has clung to the backcountry. They demonstrate that it was an economically vital part of colonial American society... Thanks to the authors' impressive scholarship we now understand how a place once despised as a 'backcountry' quickly became the dynamic frontier of economic and social development in the United States." (Evan Haefeli *Washington Times*) "This short, engaging text provides a useful survey of key themes for an often-neglected region, the backcountry... Particular attention is focused on the numerous wars of the period; the book has excellent short discussions of Bacon's Rebellion, Metacom's War, the Yamasee War, and the Seven Years' War, among other conflicts. Although the idea of the 'backcountry' is by definition a European concept, the authors skillfully outline the impact of trade and war on both Native and Colonial communities." (Choice) "A fine synthesis of a vastly complex subject, and students assigned this volume will benefit from the authors' successful integration of the backcountry into the broader history of English imperialism in America... Extremely informative and useful." (Michael Leroy Oberg *History: s of New Books*) "An acutely written, meticulously researched, scholarly history which closely examines the manifold causes of conflict between Native Americans and Europeans, as well as the ordinary situations of daily life which were to significantly contribute to the American Revolution." (Midwest Book) "Eric Hinderaker and Peter Mancall have written a concise, synthetic narrative of the backcountry from Georgia to Maine. In the process, they successfully argue for its centrality in colonial American history. " (Krista Camenzind *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*) "Sophisticated but straightforward, *At the Edge of Empire* is an excellent introduction to the vital role that the backcountry played in colonial American history." (Kathleen DuVal *New England Quarterly*) "This is undoubtedly the best brief synthesis available on the interactions between Native and European groups on the colonial frontier. Scholars will admire its sophistication, scope, and conceptual strength; students will appreciate its brevity and readability. A compelling story, engagingly told." (Fred Anderson, University of Colorado, Boulder) "Eric Hinderaker and Peter Mancall follow the western periphery of the British empire across two hundred years of shifting terrain. Their collaboration has produced a superb new synthesis that brings clarity to the chaotic history of the colonial backcountry, mapping the collisions and collusions that occurred 'at the edge of empire,' and making clear that the evolution of the backcountry decisively shaped the legacy of colonialism in North America." (Stephen Aron, UCLA, Director of the Autry Institute for the Study of the American West) "Takes a fresh approach to its subject matter... sheds light on the wider Atlantic context in which eighteenth-century British America developed... Hinderaker and Mancall describe the rapid and often violent mixing of cultures on a frontier that imperial authorities could barely control." (Timothy J. Shannon *William and Mary Quarterly*) "Eric Hinderaker and Peter C. Mancall have successfully synthesized the complex world of British backcountry resettlement in a brief, readable format. Eric Hinderaker and Peter C. Mancall" (Gray H. Whaley *Journal of World History*) " *At the Edge of Empire* is undoubtedly the best available introduction to its difficult subject for scholars and students alike." (Michael Ziser *Eighteenth-Century Studies*) "Intriguing book." (Gregory Evans Dowd *North Carolina Historical*) "Hinderaker and Mancall write a compact synthesis of recent historical monographs that open the reader to the diversity of new scholarship concerning two hundred years of British colonial history." (David Curtis Skaggs *Journal of Northwest Ohio History*) "Sophisticated but straightforward, *At the Edge of Empire* is an excellent introduction to the vital role that the backcountry played in colonial American history." -- Kathleen DuVal, *New England Quarterly* About the Author Eric Hinderaker is an associate professor of history at the University of Utah and author of *Elusive Empires: Constructing Colonialism in the Ohio Valley, 1673-1800*. Peter C. Mancall is a professor of history at the University of Southern California and author of *Deadly Medicine: Indians and Alcohol in Early America* and *Valley of Opportunity: Economic Culture along the Upper Susquehanna, 1700-1800*.