finding pockets of radical support, interviewing veterans of left-wing movements, and prowling cemeteries for socialist iconography, combined with scouring FBI records and research in Moscow makes this book an engaging tale of a historian's journey. His path also led to the Canadian prairies where he explored, in particular, the United Farmers of Alberta and the Saskatchewan Farmer-Labour Party as it evolved into the CCF. While this chapter lacks some of the historical texture derived from the author's grassroots research, he provides a helpful broader vantage, placing these movements in the context of a region which transcends the 49th parallel. Pratt places emphasis on the ways in which local political cultures, forged through decades of experiment and struggle, shape this history differently from place to place. This ability to combine an understanding of wider farmer and socialist movements with an appreciation of local contexts is an invaluable skill for historians – and for the activists he studies.

The farmers' movements Pratt explores did not exist in isolation. Socialists, in particular, understood that change would come through an alliance with the working class. The history of farmer-labour alliances and parties was, however, fraught; institutional success was only achieved in Minnesota and Saskatchewan, and never without conflict between the allies. In the case of the Communist Party, farmers were, at best, an afterthought. Broader alliances were also forged with urban liberals, particularly in the popular front era – ties which persisted until they buckled under the pressure of the Cold War. Through all of this, as Pratt successfully argues, leftists played important – sometimes key – roles in building and guiding farmers' movements.

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Andrew C. McKevitt, *Gun Country: Gun Capitalism, Culture & Control in Cold War America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2023)

The history of gun ownership and use has attracted much scholarly attention in the United States in the last quarter century. There are popular, legal, and academic reasons for this work. High profile murders and mass shootings grab the public's attention, spurring a desire to understand the roots of the challenges America faces in mitigating the risk of widespread gun ownership. Recent decisions by the United States Supreme Court necessitates historically informed legal scholarship since the constitutionality of gun regulations now requires the identification of historical antecedents to modern gun control measures.

Much of the scholarship on the history of firearms and gun control in the United States focuses on developments before World War II. However, in *Gun Country: Gun Capitalism, Culture & Control in Cold War America*, Andrew McKevitt invites us to shift our attention to the postwar period, a time when the rate of per capita firearm ownership spiked, and when, according to McKevitt, the modern American attitude to firearms formed and cemented. McKevitt suggests that the reasons for this postwar boom in gun ownership are "shrouded in myth" as most gun histories "assume a natural state in which the supply of guns is simply always there, or the consumer demand is unswervingly insatiable, or both." (x)

McKevitt challenges this popular assumption. He argues, "the postwar world forged the gun country as much as did the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century developments that typically get all the credit." (262) McKevitt asserts that to understand modern American gun culture it is necessary to "turn to the Cold War and consumer capitalism," which he says

are the "interconnected forces that produced America the Gun Country in the second half of the twentieth century." (x) The Cold War forged a connection between firearm ownership and patriotism, anticommunism, and anti-globalism. Capitalism "transformed a lethal commodity like war surplus guns into collectible curios advertised in young men's magazines, cheap European rifles into tools for self-defense and spectacular homicide, and, later, Armalite Rifles into a whole culture, politics, and identity readily available for purchase." (9)

After the World War II, enterprising American businesspeople such as Samuel Cummings scoured the globe for war surplus guns, brought them to the United States, and sold them to men in massive numbers. The American government allowed this flow of weapons, believing it was better to have them in the United States than sold off in nations prone to leftist revolutions. By the 1960s, however, many Americans expressed fear about combining racial tensions with cheap foreign guns, and the use of such a rifle in the assassination of President John F. Kennedy made evident the need for legislative action. Efforts to stem the import of cheap foreign guns led to the *Gun Control Act* of 1968, which slowed businesses from importing firearms, but sparked substantial opposition to future gun control measures.

McKevitt also examines the endeavors of pioneering gun control advocates to push for the prohibition of handguns, which were deemed particularly dangerous because they were concealable. He highlights ironies in the fight for gun control, noting, for example, that the rhetoric of gun control advocates acted as an accelerant to the gun lobby, as opponents to gun control weaponized calls for firearm safety by telling members that this would lead to firearm confiscation. Early grassroots gun abolitionists, many of whom were women, were often replaced by gun control advocates, mostly men, who proved willing to accommodate gun ownership by 'law-abiding' citizens. Gun businesses meanwhile "sold a fantasy of guns as tools for self-defense and individual empowerment, and increasingly in the 21st century as instruments of war against domestic enemies and even one's own government." (16) McKevitt also considers groups advocating for the rights of gun owners. He casts light on early right-wing organizations, many now forgotten, that pressed the National Rifle Association to take a more radical turn in the 1970s. Finally, McKevitt explores international implications of the changes in American gun ownership and culture, highlighting efforts of the NRA and some politicians to shape the international response to the proliferation of small arms to accord to American views.

Gun Country is aimed at both academic and popular audiences. McKevitt has produced a beautifully written, accessible, and thought-provoking book that will be required reading for those interested in understanding the history of firearms, while scholars of globalization and consumer culture will also find this a fascinating work. He employs a broad range of primary sources that include documents produced by groups such as the Civic Disarmament Committee for Handgun Control, government records, politicians' papers, newspapers, and publications that catered to gun owners like *Guns & Ammo*.

One result of his effort to speak to a popular audience is that McKevitt eschews extended historiographical discussions, though he peppers the text with quotations from leading interdisciplinary gun scholars, such as Saul Cornell, Jennifer Carlson, and David Yamane. Avoiding historiographical discussions results in a lack of clarity about the extent to which McKevitt builds upon or

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departs from existing scholarship. For example, *Gun Country* makes a very important contribution to the history of gun marketing, a topic that has received surprising little attention, and McKevitt could have been explicit about how his work builds on existing literature, such as Pamela Haag's 2016 book *The Gunning of America: Business and the Making of American Gun Culture* (Basic Books).

For critics of American gun culture, *Gun Country* is a depressing read. In his introduction, McKevitt suggests that gun control advocates in the late 1960s worried that a failure to act might allow so many firearms to flood into the United States that future governments would be unable to meaningfully address the problem of gun violence. He says these advocates concerns "proved prescient." "There was no turning back," he suggests. (17) However, in the epilogue of *Gun Country*, McKevitt teases a more hopeful future. "Meaningful reform is possible," he offers, though "it will require confronting mythologies and material reality head on." "If the gun country of the postwar era could be made, it can be unmade. Other worlds are possible." (263) Given the preceding 262 pages of analysis, however, readers may find this hopeful ending unrealistic.

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Sheryllynne Heggerty, *Ordinary People, Extraordinary Times: Living the British Empire in Jamaica, 1756* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2023)

On 21 December 1756, the *Europa* – a modestly-sized merchant ship on a return voyage from Jamaica to Dublin laden with sugar, rum, cotton, coffee, mahogany, and logwood – was taken by *Le Machaut*, a French privateer, in one minor incident of what was to become the Seven Years War. However, in a stroke of good fortune, two days later the *Europa* was retaken by Captain Dyer and the crew of the *Defiance*, and was sailed the short distance to Falmouth to be adjudicated on by the Admiralty's prize court. Midshipman Andrew Mitchelson, who navigated the *Europa* to England as prize master, testified that he had searched the ship to find "what papers might then be on board her." (xii) He had "at Last found hid and Concealed under one of the Guns in the Cabin," presumably by Captain James Cooke, "A Bagg Containing a Great Number of Letters or Papers, which he immediately took into his Custody." (xii) These letters, the ship, its crew, and its cargo would all be evidence that would help divide the profits from the *Europa* among the different claimants. Over two hundred and fifty years later these letters have provided a very different sort of evidence about profit and loss.

The 407 documents from the *Europa*'s postbag are now part of The National Archive's (UK) High Court of the Admiralty series of "Prize Papers." Given the nature of warfare and privateering it is unsurprising that most documents in this wider series are in many languages other than English. These are being worked through by a variety of scholars, most notably the Göttingen Academy of Sciences and Humanities' Prize Papers Project (2018-2037), and are revealing a great deal about 'the global entanglements of the early modern world' (https://www.prizepapers.de/the-project/the-prize-papers-collection). The cache from the *Europa* is, therefore, an extremely rare survival: a set of documents in English – including letters, bills of exchange, bills of lading, sales of enslaved people, prices current, one inventory of the enslaved, and one copy of the *Jamaica Courant* – produced between September and November 1756 by planters, merchants,