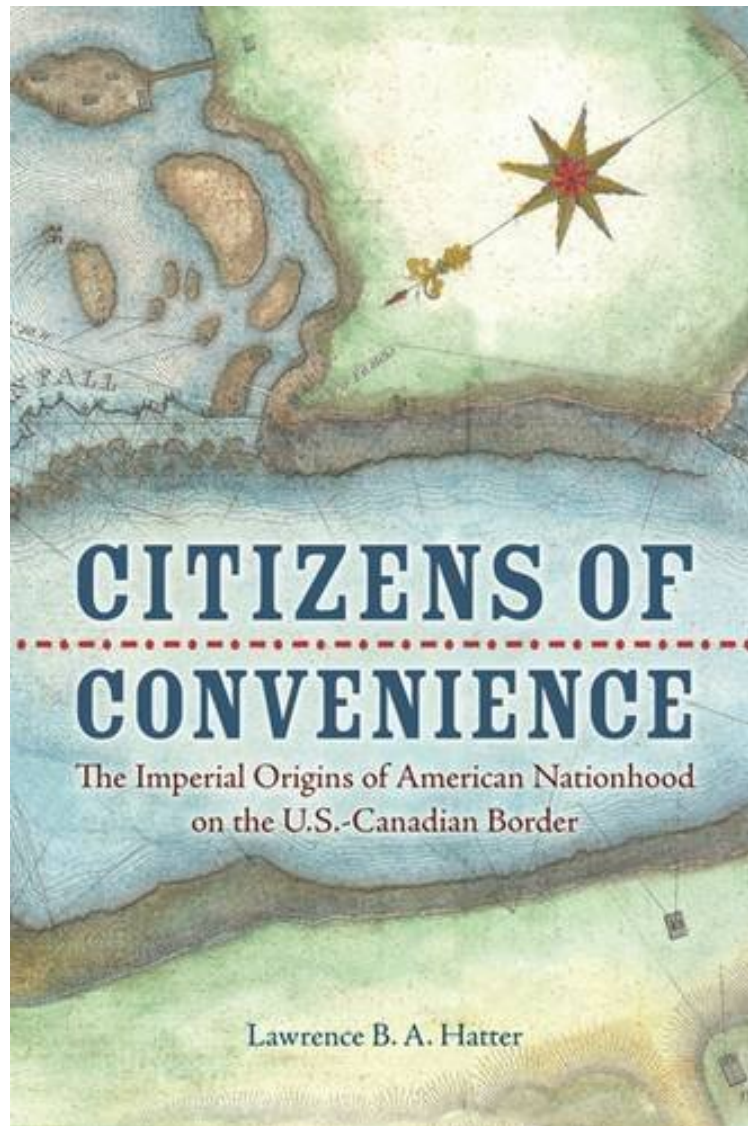


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Citizens of Convenience: The Imperial Origins of American Nationhood on the U.S.-Canadian Border (Early American Histories)

Lawrence B. A. Hatter

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Lawrence B. A. Hatter : Citizens of Convenience: The Imperial Origins of American Nationhood on the U.S.-Canadian Border (Early American Histories) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be

worth my time, and all praised *Citizens of Convenience: The Imperial Origins of American Nationhood on the U.S.-Canadian Border* (Early American Histories):

Like merchant ships flying flags of convenience to navigate foreign waters, traders in the northern borderlands of the early American republic exploited loopholes in the Jay Treaty that allowed them to avoid border regulations by constantly shifting between British and American nationality. In *Citizens of Convenience*, Lawrence Hatter shows how this practice undermined the United States claim to nationhood and threatened the transcontinental imperial aspirations of U.S. policymakers. The U.S.-Canadian border was a critical site of United States nation- and empire-building during the first forty years of the republic. Hatter explains how the difficulty of distinguishing U.S. citizens from British subjects on the border posed a significant challenge to the United States founding claim that it formed a separate and unique nation. To establish authority over both its own nationals and an array of non-nationals within its borders, U.S. customs and territorial officials had to tailor policies to local needs while delineating and validating membership in the national community. This type of diplomacy balancing the local with the transnational helped to define the American people as a distinct nation within the Revolutionary Atlantic world and stake out the United States imperial domain in North America.

Citizens of Convenience is an important book in a number of fields: early American history, early Canadian history, diplomatic history, international relations, and Atlantic history. Hatter's scholarship on the impact of the Jay Treaty on intercultural trading relations and governance in the Great Lakes region is pathbreaking and will invigorate research in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century North American and Anglo-Atlantic history. It is a deeply researched and eloquently written study of a critical era in North American history. (Elizabeth Mancke, University of New Brunswick, author of *The Fault Lines of Empire: Political Differentiation in Massachusetts and Nova Scotia, ca. 1760-1830*) *Citizens of Convenience* explores both a people and a place that have never received adequate historical inquiry. Hatter's work constitutes the first cohesive analysis of the ambiguous status of the residents on the U.S.-Canadian borderlands. This book also constitutes a model execution of the recent international turn in early American history; it is clearly an important book in U.S. history, but it involves a clear analysis of Canadian and British history. A truly original work that offers revealing conclusions based on careful research and executed with crisp prose. (Peter J. Kastor, Washington University in St. Louis, author of *William Clark's World: Describing America in an Age of Unknowns*) Through mastery of a complex period of time and of a place that defies easy categorization, Lawrence Hatter has written a book that reminds us how contingent the birth of a nation, especially after revolution, can be and how the simple act of drawing a border could have profound implications for culture, economy, and power. *Citizens of Convenience* is a very important and timely piece of work. (Patrick Griffin, University of Notre Dame, author of *America's Revolution*) About the Author Lawrence B. A. Hatter is Assistant Professor of History at Washington State University.