essentially as captions, for its many photos. The work focuses upon the evolution of chronometers and their creators with emphasis upon the German contribution to these complex and elegant instruments. The term in the subtitle Three Centuries of Cutting Edge Chronometers “Cutting Edge” has a double meaning. A significant portion of the book is devoted to the sophisticated tools used to create these marvels at the hands of skilled European watchmakers. The bilingual legends start by briefly outlining the early measurements of the earth, the efforts of physical scientists such as Tobias Mayer, Johannes Kepler, Isaac Newton, and Christiian Huygens. The theme then switches to the need for a chronometer to establish longitude at sea and the competition for a monetary prize. Ultimately, John Harrison won the contest but others, such as John Arnold and Ferdinand Berthoud, made subsequent substantial contributions.

Sauer also briefly addresses the development of “timeballs,” huge balls set on towers adjacent to waterfronts that dropped at very precise times, enabling a ship’s captain to calibrate his chronometer. (This likely was the maritime origin of the similar annual Times Square New Year’s Eve event.) At sea, vessels would often hail each other to compare calculated positions and the accuracy of their chronometers. Once the cost of these devices became reasonable, it was not unusual for ships to carry two and sometimes as many as four chronometers, to make sure that they could calculate their position correctly. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, mariners gained confidence in their mechanical devices and prices tumbled. After the Second World War, inexpensive quartz timers replaced the mechanical clocks, followed by radio signals and finally, very accurate and easy to use GPS systems. In recent years space-based technology has made mechanical chronometers obsolete.

As a publication of the German maritime museum, this work is largely centered upon German contributions to the development and advances in the chronographs. The photograph captions that make up the prose are short, tightly written, and informative; the quality of the photography and the paper upon which they are printed is outstanding. Sauer’s small but excellent book would appeal to a limited audience, those interested in the history of chronometers. Dava Sobel’s best selling Longitude covers this topic in greater detail and has better prose, but Sauer’s work is a complement to Longitude containing many facts about German contributions to the science of horology in general and chronometers in particular.

Louis Arthur Norton
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Tangled in the internecine power struggles of the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth-century Atlantic world was the heterogeneous North American territory bordering the Gulf of Mexico. In Nexus of Empire: Negotiating Loyalty and Identity in the Revolutionary Borderlands, 1760–1820s, editors Gene Smith and Sylvia Hilton tie together 14 monographs about the Gulf Coast region during America’s early period of formation. By weaving the thread of loyalty through the chapters, Smith and Hilton present an interesting link to a disparate region consisting of numerous stakeholders.

Extensive historiography exists
regarding the development of America's original thirteen colonies; less study has been devoted to the diverse ethnic groups who staked claims along the nation's southern perimeter. Prior to joining the Union, the states of Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas flew numerous flags representative of shifting dominions. The governments of Spain, France, Britain and, after the 1803 Louisiana Purchase, the United States, all laid claim to the Gulf Coast. Before the arrival of European settlers, Native Americans, most notably the Mississippians, occupied the land. East Coast tribes, including the Creeks, sought refuge from encroaching settlers in the Gulf Coast frontier. These borderlands also offered sanctuary to free blacks and escaped slaves. Home to ancient peoples, refugees, settlers and opportunists, the Gulf Coast was a cacophony of cultures.

Divided into four sections — Changing Flags and Political Uncertainty, Dilemmas Among Native Americans and Free Blacks, Building Fortunes through Family Connections, and Local Community and Personal Ambition in Government and Military Service — Smith and Hilton's *Nexus of Empire* examines how different sets of people adapted to the changing environment along America's Gulf Coast. Each monograph focuses either on a single character or on a small group of people who lived in the borderlands during the sixty-year period beginning from just before the onset of the American Revolution until the Adams Onis Treaty transferred West Florida to the United States (1760-1820). Exploring how the inhabitants negotiated their way through the perpetually shifting political climate enlightens the reader to the complexities faced by those who tried to maintain their footing in a constantly shifting world.

Both Smith and Hilton question the ways a nation secures loyalty and how individuals determine their allegiance. In the first chapter, "Loyalty and Patriotism on North American Frontiers: Being and Becoming Spanish in the Mississippi Valley, 1776-1803," Hilton explores Spanish loyalty oaths. In an effort to deter American encroachment, Spain offered liberty in exchange for loyalty. Those liberties included freedom of religious worship and expanded rights to anyone willing to settle in Spanish West Florida. Arguing that historians have dismissed those loyalty oaths as perfunctory, Hilton asserts that they were part of Spain's larger plan to maintain its empire in the New World. What components ensure loyalty? Does loyalty stem from the government down to its people or does it emerge out of personal interests such as agency, family, land, and wealth? Spain offered citizenship to everyone who settled in Spanish West Florida, yet loyalty remained elusive because residents developed no shared history, religion, language, or culture.

In chapter six, "Dehahuit: An Indian Diplomat on the Louisiana-Texas Frontier, 1804-1815," F. Todd Smith delves into attempts by Dehahuit, chief of the Kadohadacho Indians, to form peaceful alliances with their white neighbours, the Spanish, and then, with the Americans. Negotiations and compromise by the indigenous peoples along the Texas and Louisiana borders demonstrate the difficulty faced by a native group trying to maintain their ancestral lands amid the shifting powers’ quest for hegemony.

While Meriwether Lewis and William Clark explored the northern part of America, William Dunbar surveyed the Red River area of southern Louisiana. Andrew McMichael's chapter, "William Dunbar, William Claiborne, and Daniel Clark: Intersections of Loyalty and National Identity on the Florida Frontier," appraises the intentions of Thomas Jefferson to extend the boundaries of this newly acquired land
well before he fathomed its expanse. William Dunbar, with ties to both the Spanish and American governments, was the ideal choice for the inspection. Dunbar was a landholder and thus, a stakeholder in stability. His reconnaissance not only encompassed flora and fauna, it reported on Spanish fortifications along the American frontier.

Historians are the contributors to the book. Each author documents his or her monograph with solid primary and secondary evidence. Researchers will find the book thorough with an extensive index. The editors’ conclusion unites the monographs by discussing the nuances of each chapter and how each one underscores national fealty. The stories of settlement along the Gulf Coast borderlands accentuate the struggle for position amid the complex Atlantic world. The selected essays demonstrate how individuals dealt with their own issues of loyalty during a time of great change. Underlying the frequently explored history of United States’ expansion to its natural borders is the micro-history of diverse people caught in the changing tides of political domination.

Cynthia Catellier
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The U.S. Navy’s most well-known contribution to Allied victory in the Second World War is the war in the Pacific. The famous fast-carrier task forces and amphibious landings from Guadalcanal to Okinawa are emblematic of the Navy’s wartime role. Robert Stern’s The U.S. Navy and the War in Europe seeks to redirect historical attention to the Navy’s contribution to Allied operations in the European theater. Stern identifies several themes in the introduction, including an emphasis on the Navy’s decidedly “non-neutral” operations in 1941 prior to the December attack on Pearl Harbor and how the Americans could, and should, have learned from the Royal Navy’s greater experience in anti-submarine warfare (ASW). Stern returns to these themes at points throughout the book, though he does not develop them thoroughly.

The work begins by tracing the transformation of the Patrol Force into the Atlantic Fleet under Admiral Ernest King. The Atlantic Fleet grew rapidly throughout 1940 and 1941, though not fast enough in the eyes of its commander, due to the even more rapid increase in operational responsibilities. Neutrality patrols and growing escort duties stretched King’s resources to the limit. Throughout this period, the United States gradually extended increasingly more aid to Great Britain, culminating in the Lend-Lease Act of March 1941. Stern notes that one of the results of this act was that American shipyards were opened up to repair damaged British warships.

After the United States entered the war, a series of poor decisions by American commanders, combined with inadequate convoy escorts, brought about a massive rise in sinkings of cargo ships and tankers by German submarines off the American coast. In particular, Stern notes that King and his subordinate commanders failed to institute coastal convoys to protect merchant shipping. He rejects, however, the argument that King did so because of deep-seated animosity towards the British in general, and the Royal Navy in particular.

As operations in the Atlantic continued, the U.S. Navy sent a series of heavy warships to Britain for temporary service with the British Home Fleet. The