Peskin, Lawrence A. and Edmund Wehrle. *America and the World: Culture, Commerce, Conflict.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012. 302 Pp.

With this book, Lawrence Peskin and Edmund Wehrle take on a daunting task. They propose to offer a comprehensive account of America's interaction with the world since the 15th century. In the process, this will "reconceptualize" American history by placing it in the larger historical context of globalization. (xii) Finally, they intend it to be accessible to general readers and university students; in sum, they promise a readable book.

The authors clearly present their ideas and aims in a concise preface. They assert that the phenomenon of globalization has defined America's interaction with the world since the time of Columbus. Thus, American history cannot be "told in a vacuum." (p.x) Yet instead of avoiding the pitfall of exceptionalism by ignoring national history, as some have done, the authors intend to steer a "middle course" by "organizing [this] narrative around American history" while showing how the outside world shaped America, and, in turn, how it shaped the world. (p.xii) To this end, they divide the book into four chronologically-defined parts. Each has three chapters focused on the categories of culture (e.g. religious and demographic developments), commerce (e.g. economic developments), and conflict (e.g. military and diplomatic developments).

Part I of the book covers the period from 1492 to 1763. Columbus' arrival in the Americas would lead to their "integration into the rest of the world" and the start of "full globalization." (p.1) Ultimately, the Americas would become an extension of Europe, as the latter would incorporate the former into growing empires. Commerce was the driving force in this process, as various parties on both sides of the Atlantic sought advantage through exchange. This would have profound effects on such things as populations, diet and economic development. Culturally, the Europeans would pursue the religious and cultural conversion of Native Americans, with mixed results; in turn, Native Americans would influence European philosophical thinking. For much of the period, conflict was commonplace in the Americas, but had

limited implications elsewhere. However, by the 1700s, conflict in the Americas had become integral to larger global clashes, most notably the Anglo-French rivalry.

Part II covers the period of 1763 to 1898. The American Revolution would trigger a "series" of revolutions in the Atlantic world, and thus prove influential. (p.70) In addition to political independence, it fostered a desire for economic independence in the United States. This led Americans to pursue a vision of continental expansion, which promised the means to build an independent economy. Yet in reality, the nation remained linked to outside markets, investors, and technology. Likewise, while Americans tended to focus inward, the United States was embroiled in foreign affairs. Culturally, Americans were out of step with the rest of the world with regard to slavery, though ultimately the tide of abolition would prove irresistible.

Part III covers the period of 1898 to 1945. The first half of the 20th century confronted Americans with a number of challenges, such as economic depression, hostile ideologies and two world wars. Americans were divided in their response. Some believed the nation had a duty to spread American democracy and capitalism. Others saw this as betrayal of a traditional aversion to entangling foreign commitments. The reality was that the United States was entangled. It had an "informal empire" built on commercial investment and cultural influence in the Western Hemisphere. It exercised military power in various parts of the globe. Meanwhile, technological advances were binding the world more tightly together. This fostered the spread of American products, methods, and influence abroad. While this presented problems to Americans, and many resisted involvement, by the end of the period, the world looked to them to usher in a brighter future, and Americans came to see this as their calling.

Part IV covers the period of 1945 to 2010. Confronted by global devastation and determined to avert more catastrophes, Americans sought to reorder the world according to their ideals. This met with "mixed results." (p.197) Ongoing technological advancement bound the world still further together. This facilitated an American agenda built on free enterprise, free trade, and democracy. This resulted in American goods, investment, and economic influence proliferating around the

world. Coupled with American military power and cultural influence, this shaped globalization along American lines. Yet this also roused resistance both abroad and at home, most notably during the Cold War. More recently, concerns about the economic and cultural implications of globalization has led to new objections. Ultimately, American attitudes about America's role in a globalized world "remain profoundly ambivalent." (p.199)

Peskin and Wehrle offer a very useful survey of America's global role in the last few centuries. Their work merits praise for a number of reasons. Most notably, it follows through on its stated purpose, which is to offer an account that re-conceptualizes American history by placing it in the context of globalization. The narrative sustains this focus throughout. In part, this is due to the book's structure. The four chronologically-defined sections are generally well-conceptualized and executed. The authors also fulfil the stated desire to produce a text that is accessible to a general reader or university student. Their narrative is clear and easy to follow, devoid of jargon or jarring transitions. It generally relies on common knowledge, but places this in a new context. In the process, it points to the complexity of subject, citing contending viewpoints of both contemporaries and historians. Considering the breadth of the subject and the relative brevity of the book, this is no mean feat.

The work is not without shortcomings. The four-section, three chapter format can be restrictive; on occasion, obvious links between two categories (e.g. "culture" and "commerce") are given insufficient attention because of this. Also, in some places it is notably lacking in nuance. For example, the third chapter opens with a sweeping statement about European cultural imposition in the Americas, specifically in the form of "missionaries, backed by powerful European armies and the invisible weapon of communicable disease." (p. 48) While this point is subsequently well-argued with regard to Latin America, the effort to apply it to the English colonies is unsatisfactory. In sum, there are instances of over-generalization.

Still, in light of the scope and stated objectives of the book, expecting a perfectly nuanced account on such a broad topic in such a short span would be unreasonable. On the whole, it is compelling and

well-balanced. It is a comprehensive account that avoids simplistic or myopic emphases. Ultimately, it achieves its stated aims of presenting an accessible account that reorients the reader's understanding of American history. It would serve well as a survey of American economic and diplomatic history in an undergraduate course.

Erik Benson
Cornerstone University
United States

Millard, André. *Beatlemania: Technology, Business, and Teen Culture in Cold War America.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012. 223 Pp.

One might ask why another book on the Beatles is necessary, or why such a book should be reviewed in an economic and business history journal. André Millard, the author of Beatlemania: Technology, Business, and Teen Culture in Cold War America, addresses such questions by arguing that the band's success was not just due to fact that they were incredibly talented musicians and songwriters. According to Millard, other usually overlooked elements were also crucial to their success, especially their ability to capitalize on changes in technology and the transatlantic networks already established by multinational entertainment businesses. This linked them to the mass consumer economy in postwar America and the largest, most affluent teen cohort in the world in the mid-1960s--white middle class teenage girls.

Millard organizes his book in an interesting manner. In the first two chapters he focuses on the significance of the vinyl record and the emergence of Beatlemania before devoting four chapters looking at crucial pre-1960s developments in England, such as the influence of American music and film on British youth culture, the social and economic conditions in the Beatles' hometown of Liverpool, and the British music craze known as "skiffle," which helped lay the foundation