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Review: Bootleggers and Borders: The Paradox of Prohibition on a Canada-US Borderland

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Bootleggers and Borders: The Paradox of Prohibition on a Canada-U.S. Borderland. By Stephen T. Moore. (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2014. xxiv + 239 pp. \$40 cloth)

Voters in Oregon and Washington approved measures that would end the production and sale of alcoholic beverages in 1914, and Idaho followed suit in 1916. Wartime patriotism prompted British Columbia voters to approve a referendum against the sale of alcohol in 1917. In 1918 and 1919, the legislatures of forty-five of the forty-eight U.S. states ratified the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which prohibited the manufacture, sale, transportation, importation, and exportation of intoxicating liquors. A year after prohibition went into effect in the United States, British Columbia became the second Canadian province to abandon prohibition in favor of a system in which the provincial government controlled the sale of alcohol.

In this impressive and persuasive book, Stephen T. Moore explores the paradoxical ways in which prohibition affected a transnational regional identity in the Pacific Northwest. He shows that prohibition strengthened connections between many Americans in Idaho, Oregon, and Washington and many Canadians in British Columbia. During prohibition, millions of Americans traveled to Canada in order to drink legally. Some Americans moved to British Columbia to open hotels and roadhouses catering to tourists from the United States. Canadian entrepreneurs also established hotels, and British Columbian social and political leaders actively encouraged American tourism. Moore also points out that prohibition provided a market for British Columbian brewers and distillers, tax revenue for the Canadian and provincial governments, and employment for people who smuggled liquor across the border during the early years of the Great Depression.

At the same time, prohibition highlighted differences between Canadians and Americans. U.S. officials recognized that they could not successfully restrict the flow of alcohol into the United States without the cooperation of Canadian officials. Most Canadians, however, were unsympathetic to U.S. pleas for assistance until September 1924, when the rum-runner William Gillis and his son were murdered aboard their vessel, the *Beryl G.* The killing of Canadians by Americans led some Canadians to conclude that liquor smuggling threatened not only neighborly cross-border relations but also the staid Victorian order embraced by many British Columbians. Customs scandals that brought down the Canadian government of William Lyon Mackenzie King in 1926 also led many Canadians to

rethink their opposition to cooperation with the United States to prevent smuggling. Finally, in 1930, Canada's parliament prohibited the export of alcohol to the United States.

Moore could have devoted greater attention to the statements of indigenous people and to the relationship between racial ideology and expressions of provincial, regional, and national identity. In his first chapter, Moore points out that the north-south transportation and economic patterns fostered the growth of a transnational regional identity, but he says little about the significance of whiteness to this identity. Even if Moore neglects some dimensions of this regional identity, he offers strong evidence to show that such an identity developed and shaped the ways in which British Columbians and Americans interacted in the Pacific Northwest during prohibition.

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Alien Nation: Chinese Migration in the Americas from the Coolie Era through World War II. By Elliott Young. (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2014. xci + 360 pp. \$29.95 paper)

Contributing to the rapidly growing field of Asians in the Americas, Elliott Young has produced an ambitious transnational history of Chinese migration and exclusion from 1840–1940. Instead of focusing on any particular nation, Young allows the trajectories of Chinese migrants to draw the geographical bounds of his study. As readers, we follow Chinese migrants and anti-Chinese programs through Cuba, the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Peru. Young invites his readers to “see Chinese migration to the Americas without the blinders of the nation-state” (p. 17). Though Young critiques nation-bound histories of the Chinese diaspora as parochial, he draws heavily from this earlier scholarship in order to compare and connect across national borders. In addition, Young uses Spanish and English sources from archives in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Cuba, and Spain.

The central concern of *Alien Nation* is why Chinese migrants became cultural and legal aliens in the Americas and how Chinese communities responded to this alienation. Young emphasizes the role of nation states in the production of the Chinese alien and illegal alien, focusing on state-sponsored labor contracts, national immigration laws, and nationalistic grassroots movements against the Chinese. Much of Young's vision of the Chinese response to this alienation will