

understanding of the Caribbean away from a region dominated by the European-focused sugar plantations into a fully complex zone of cultural and economic exchange. Notably, the sea trades, including turtling, drew heavily from the free and freed populations—few Cayman slaves participated in the maritime trades. Much as Skip Finley notes in *Whaling Captains of Color*, these trades opened doors to economic and social prosperity that would have been otherwise largely closed to those populations, thereby enabling some amount of advancement.

The historical significance of the Cayman turtlers can also be seen in the rise of modern conservation efforts, particularly those related to sea turtles. The notable and alarming depletion of sea turtle populations by the 1960s meant that preservation of those species was folded into the first international conservation movement—preventing even greater harm to be done before the need for help was noted. While the efforts of conservationists, along with the increasing hostility of various circum-Caribbean nations aimed at protecting their remaining natural maritime resources for themselves, served to end the Cayman turtlers' industry, it is inarguable that they were able to be proactive rather than merely reactive. Thus, turtlers inadvertently can be credited in part with the preservation of the very species they primarily profited from the deaths of.

This illuminating and significant text has been assembled from a variety of sources including oral histories held at the Cayman Island National Archive, diplomatic correspondences, and the papers of Dr. Archie Carr, who was the leading sea turtle conservationist of his time. Marking the beginning of new roads for research and consideration in the history of the Caribbean world, this

text certainly would have a spot in any environmental history course, as well as those focused on Atlantic and Caribbean world histories. Pushing away from the traditional plantation-based history of the Caribbean to consider the significances of its maritime world promises to be a major step in achieving a deeper and more profound history of the region as a whole. If nothing else, it is a vital reminder that the maritime world is the often-forgotten component of histories the world over and that as historians we would be well served to rectify those omissions.

Michael Toth  
Fort Worth, Texas

Jesse Cromwell. *The Smugglers' World: Illicit Trade and Atlantic Communities in Eighteenth-Century Venezuela*. Williamsburg and Chapel Hill, NC: Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture and University of North Carolina Press, [www.uncpress.org](http://www.uncpress.org), 2018. 336 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, index. US \$39.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1469636887. (E-book available.)

We often think of smugglers as shady people lurking on the outskirts of society, driven by greed and a certain disregard for authority. Cromwell's *The Smugglers' World* convincingly flips that stereotype on its head by demonstrating that virtually everyone in eighteenth-century Venezuela had connections to the illicit world of smuggling. Government officials, religious leaders, merchants, ship captains, sailors, waterfront workers, and every-day consumers created a vast network of illegal trade that brought in foreign manufactured goods and foodstuffs in exchange for cacao, Venezuela's cash crop. In other words, Venezuelan society and its economy could not function without

smugglers and smuggling. Through a combination of rigorous primary and secondary source research and academic argumentation, Cromwell effectively places smuggling at the centre of eighteenth-century Venezuelan society, while carefully negotiating the complexity of law enforcement efforts, inter-imperial struggles, and the vicissitudes of an unforgiving Atlantic economy.

Cromwell organizes *The Smugglers' World* thematically, except for Chapter Eight. While allowing for a comprehensive analysis of each aspect of smuggling in Venezuelan society, this approach has a few drawbacks, which will be discussed below. The first three chapters also have a certain chronological coherency. The first chapter explains Spain's closed system of Atlantic trade prior to 1700 and how that led to scarcity and large-scale smuggling operations in Venezuela. We consequently learn in Chapter Two that the Venezuelan consumer developed a cultural acceptance of and economic dependency on smuggling during the early eighteenth century, becoming, in effect, a smuggler society. The third chapter examines the creation of the Caracas Company in 1728 by imperial authorities to harness the growing profitability of cacao and to address the rise of illicit trade in Venezuela.

The next four chapters focus on the groups most active in Venezuelan smuggling, including foreign smugglers (Chapter Four), Venezuelan merchants and officials (Chapters Five and Six respectively), and free and enslaved people of colour (Chapter Seven). These chapters have little chronological awareness but rather seek to demonstrate continuities within the Venezuelan system of smuggling. Beginning with foreign smugglers, Cromwell explores how primarily Dutch and English

seafarers navigated Spanish American waters to unload their illicit cargoes and retrieve precious cacao, tobacco, and hides. During this most treacherous leg of the smuggling journey, foreign seafarers confronted the possibility of death through combat with Spanish vessels, imprisonment, disease, and forced labour. Cromwell then moves ashore to examine merchant smuggling rings and the tactics employed to avoid detection. He presents the interesting case study of Luciano Luzardo and the merchant Nicolás Rodríguez, who found support and protection for their smuggling within religious circles. Unlike captured foreigners or lower-class Venezuelan smugglers, Luzardo's smuggling network faced few, if any, consequences for their actions. Cromwell explains this discrepancy and leniency towards merchant elites by linking Venezuelan government officials to rampant smuggling in Chapter Six. The final thematic chapter explores the complex relationship of free and enslaved people of colour to the system of smuggling. Enslaved Africans participated in the system as both smugglers and smuggled. Meanwhile, Cromwell argues, free people of colour captured in the act of smuggling endured the added risk of potential enslavement.

Cromwell's chapter on people of colour is not only informative, but it also best illustrates the organizational difficulties of *The Smugglers' World*. Cromwell's thematic approach dissects and compartmentalizes Venezuela's system of smuggling. As a maritime historian, I was particularly interested in Chapter Four's focus on the lives of smugglers at sea and the ships they sailed. Unfortunately, it left me dissatisfied, in part, because some stories and aspects of the maritime world had been placed in other chapters. For instance, both enslaved and free people of colour held important

roles on board smuggling vessels, especially enslaved seafarers hired out by their owners. Having no choice in their employment, they served an important role in filling out smuggler crews. This information, however, should have been included in Chapter Four to obtain a more complete understanding of “Foreign Smugglers” and their crews. I was also disappointed by the lack of specific stories about individual seafaring smugglers. Yet two chapters later, there was the excellent story of John White or “Juan Blanco,” a captured Irish smuggler, who could have added a human face to foreign seafarers (206-207).

This organizational critique can be extended to other themes and chapters. For example, in Chapter Six, we learn the fascinating story of Governor García de la Torre, who developed a web of friendships and obligations among smugglers due to his leniency. By regularly pardoning smugglers or overlooking their activities, he garnered respect from many Venezuelans who enjoyed increased access to European goods, alcohol, and food. His activities prompted the creation of the Caracas Company and led to his removal from office and incarceration. De la Torre’s story would probably have fit better in Cromwell’s analysis of the Caracas Company in Chapter Three rather than a hundred pages later. As historians, we often have to make difficult organizational decisions with material, but like Cromwell’s, placement can disjoint the narrative flow, impede analysis of important topics like maritime workers and the development of the Caracas Company, and create unnecessary redundancies.

*The Smugglers’ World* is a well-researched, informed, and academically-inclined study. Despite the efforts of talented smugglers to remain hidden from the historical record, the au-

thor has admirably discovered their networks, both at sea and on land, and told their stories. Organizational issues aside, Cromwell’s argument for placing smugglers and smuggling at the centre of Venezuelan society is an important contribution to our understanding of colonial Venezuela and its place in the Atlantic world.

Steven J. J. Pitt  
West Falls, New York

Jim Crossley. *Churchill’s Admiral in Two World Wars: Admiral of the Fleet Lord Keyes of Zeebrugge and Dover, GCB KCVO CMG DSO*. Barnsley, S. Yorks: Pen and Sword Maritime, www.pen-and-sword.co.uk, 2020. 200 pp., plates, maps, index. UK £25; US \$49.95, hardback; ISBN 978-1-52674-839-3.

Author Jim Crossley has written a new book about one of the lesser-known twentieth-century Royal Navy admirals, Roger John Brownlow Keyes. Born in 1872, Keyes’ career spans the first half of the twentieth century, coinciding with a period of British naval supremacy. Crossley’s account paints an ambivalent picture of Keyes as an admiral who was popular and well-recognized for his noteworthy accomplishments, yet someone who failed to reach the pinnacle of the career envisioned for him and whose accomplishments appear more lacklustre in hindsight.

Keyes’ life and service reflect the challenges and activities typical of other naval officers who rose to the senior ranks of the Royal Navy in the years bracketed by the two World Wars. Despite Keyes’ many accomplishments, he never became First Sea Lord when he was eligible for that top position of naval command in the 1930s, though he was later made an Admiral of the Fleet