incorporation into the United States with slavery to independence without slavery under British protection.

A volume in the David J. Weber Series in the New Borderlands History, *Seeds of Empire* jettisons the narrative of American exceptionalism that undergirds the "manifest destiny" framework for understanding American expansion and instead locates Texas's history within the larger story of the global cotton economy examined in the current scholarship of Edward E. Baptist, Sven Beckert, and others. Torget breaks through traditional scholarly boundaries by weaving together the intertwined histories of Native Americans, Mexico, Britain, and the United States in the Texas borderlands. Still, Indians and slaves as people are barely visible, lurking as background forces in an account devoted primarily to the political struggles over the legitimization of slavery in Texas. Torget's frank acknowledgment of slavery as foundational to Texas's history in the first half of the nineteenth century, though not as original as he claims, offers a refreshing antidote to the frequently romanticized, sanitized accounts of the state's past.

Torget marshals an array of archival evidence from both Mexico and the United States, newspapers, travelers' accounts, and other sources to craft his story. Three wonderfully rendered and useful maps, a pair of tables, a few graphs, and a variety of illustrations augment the text. The six chapters, divided into three parts, are long but well written. The book's pacing quickens in Part III, with the creation of the independent Republic of Texas.

"The emergence of the Republic of Texas is best understood," Torget contends, "as an effort among Anglo-Texans to establish a haven for American cotton farmers in a world increasingly hostile to slave labor" (p. 182). To underscore this point, Torget might have emphasized more than he does Anglo-Texans' overwhelming support for annexation in 1836 and the controversies over slavery that prevented it from happening. Texas's failed experiment with independence, Torget continues, exposed the limitations of cotton diplomacy, a lesson that the later Confederacy neglected to absorb. Torget speculates counterfactually that, had the Confederacy survived the Civil War intact, plummeting postwar cotton prices would have dealt the South the same economic catastrophe independent Texas suffered two decades earlier.

Seeds of Empire will appeal to political and diplomatic historians; scholars of slavery, capitalism, and global economics; and those interested in Texas and the southwestern borderlands. Who really ought to read this book are the modern-day Texas secessionists who have no clue that the U.S. government once rescued the independent republic from chaos, insolvency, and its own inept government.

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Old Wheelways: Traces of Bicycle History on the Land. By Robert L. McCullough. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2015. Pp. xv, 367. $34.95, cloth.
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The few economic historians who have written about the bicycle have focused on various aspects of its industrial development. For instance, Bruce Epperson (*Peddling Bicycles to America: The Rise of an Industry*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company, 2010) examined the growth and decline of the Pope Manufacturing Company. Roger

Lloyd-Jones and M.J. Lewis (*Raleigh and the British Bicycle Industry: An Economic and Business History*, 1870–1960. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2000) detailed the evolution of Raleigh and the broader trends of the British bicycle industry. In *Old Wheelways*, Robert L. McCullough provides us with a different perspective focused on the experiences of the bicyclists themselves, the narratives some of them created on their journeys, and the ways that efforts to create usable bicycle paths have impacted the landscapes around us. McCullough is not an economic historian, and this is not a work of economic history, but aspects of it may well persuade us to pay more attention to the impact of the wheelways on the land around us and to the observations of some chroniclers of the period. While their experiences were obviously more circumscribed than those of passengers on the great steamships or railroads, their "perceptive descriptions of American places" can provide historians with considerably richer detail. As McCullough points out, "A tourist on foot moves too slowly to see the country on a grand scale; a tourist by train moves too swiftly to see the individual significance of any particular features of it; and a tourist on horseback or in a carriage would probably find more physical pain than intellectual pleasure" (p. 13).

Old Wheelways was 12 years in the making and covers the period from just before the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876 to the beginning of WWII. While not its primary focus, the book opens with a number of ways in which the bicycle had economic consequences. Among them was the effort to improve the nation's roads—the sidepath campaigns are discussed in Chapter 7 and the New York campaign to build asphalt-paved paths in Manhattan is an important part of Chapter 10. Another is the contribution of the bicycle manufacturing industry to the modern machine and engineering technology that was central to both the automobile and aircraft industry in subsequent years. Those who are interested in the technology of the bicycle will find a nice overview of the design origins in France in the first chapter. The most interesting aspect of the book is McCullough's descriptions of the travel writings of those who explored the countryside on a bicycle. These self-described "slow-going and observant travelers" give us some unique glimpses into the changing landscapes of late nineteenth century America. As McCullough noted, "The routes they carefully documented can tell us much about the murky sequence of growth occurring at the edges of cities…" (pp. 6–7).

While some of the writers McCullough examines in the book were writing for their fellow cyclists, others had a broader audience and a different objective. For instance, McCullough describes the efforts of Timothy Dwight to "draw a picture of…[the] emerging [New England] society and its communities…The result is a comprehensive description of" a very large region in New England (p. 91). McCullough argues that Dwight's book "belongs to the extensive body of literature about travel and tourism in this country, which underscores the mobility that surely defines a key part of the American experience" (p. 93).

There are a number of other parts of the book that might be of some interest to economic historians. For example, McCullough explains that the annual tricycle tours organized by women were vehicles for female independence; and we are introduced to a number of periodicals, including *The Cycle,* which included Helen Drew Bassett's column, "From a Feminine Point of View." We also find a fascinating description of the Erie Canal in its twilight from Alfred Chandler's 1886 journey. By this time, the public imagination had shifted from the canals to the railroads, but Chandler provides some interesting descriptions of the canal as he rode along its perfectly level towpaths for 40 to 60 mile stretches (the canal towpaths seem to have been especially popular despite frequent edicts published by the canal companies declaring them off limits to the cyclists). The cyclists' quests for adequate roads led some of them to rediscover the early nineteenth century turnpikes and they yield some unique perspectives on these early transportation systems. There were also efforts to combine the bicycle with the rapidly emerging transportation modes of the early twentieth century. For example, there was a creative proposal to build an elevated bicycle path over the Brooklyn Bridge that ultimately failed, but that influenced the successful effort to build bicycle paths on the Williamsburg Bridge. Those interested in some unique perspectives on early twentieth-century transportation systems may find value here. The book also has a potentially useful list of New York state sidepaths along with estimates of total mileage.

Finally, there are fascinating illustrations throughout the book that are worth examining in their own right. Most of these were engravings that originally appeared in publications like *The Wheelman*, and they add a rich visual dimension to the book. In the end, McCullough largely succeeds in what he set out to do by providing readers with some often ignored perspectives on how certain American landscapes were shaped during the golden age of the bicycle.

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The Rise of the Military Welfare State. By Jennifer Mittelstadt. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015. Pp. 344. $29.95, cloth.
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Jennifer Mittelstadt's latest book provides welcomed insight into the relationship between military personnel and the amorphous U.S. welfare state, and the varied implications of the 1973 creation of the all-volunteer force (AVF). Mittelstadt maintains that an "elaborate social and economic safety net" attracted prospective service members to the military following the end of conscription, and "convinced them to reenlist" (pp. 3–4). Focusing particularly on the Army, Mittelstadt describes the economic and social ideals that shaped entitlements from the 1970s through the early twenty-first century.

Mittelstadt's story begins soon after the establishment of the AVF, when free market economists like Milton Friedman argued that potential recruits should be treated as rational economic actors, and offered competitive pay rather than costly benefits like free housing and medical care. Military officials, however, worried that model would usher in "the age of the mercenary" (p. 33). A committed force, they suggested, could only be built by service members who were convinced they were being supported by a cohesive and interdependent institution. That model of "masculine familialism" eventually won the day (p. 36).

Just as free market economists viewed the military as a front in a larger battle to rein in government largesse, the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) saw it as a site to wage a fight for workers' rights. AFGE's unionization effort of the 1970s was important, according to Mittelstadt, because it offered high-ranking military