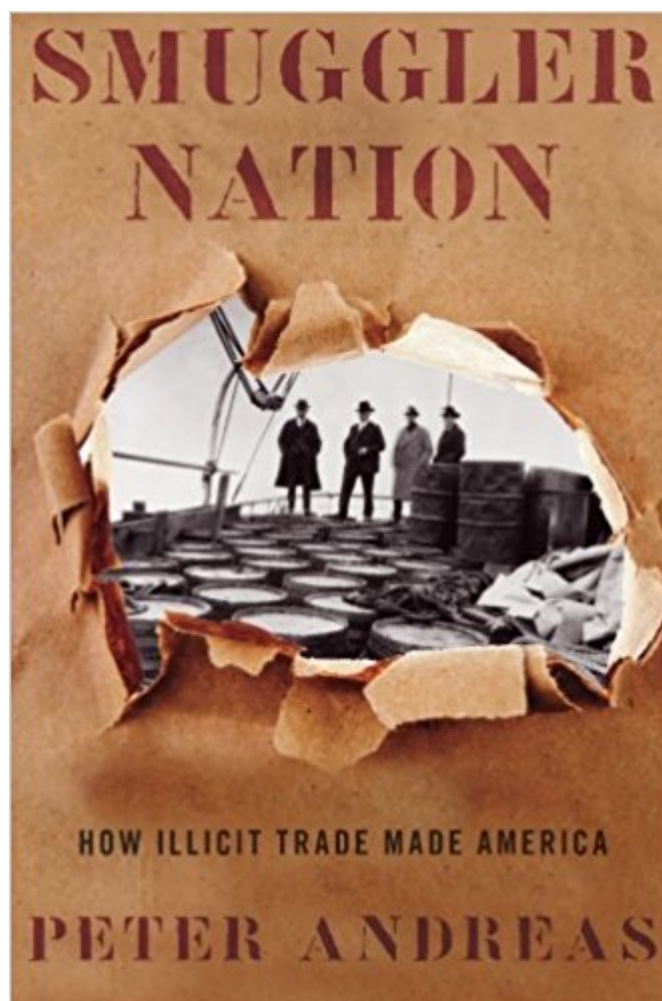


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# Smuggler Nation: How Illicit Trade Made America



## Synopsis

America is a smuggler nation. Our long history of illicit imports has ranged from West Indies molasses and Dutch gunpowder in the 18th century, to British industrial technologies and African slaves in the 19th century, to French condoms and Canadian booze in the early 20th century, to Mexican workers and Colombian cocaine in the modern era. Contraband capitalism, it turns out, has been an integral part of American capitalism. Providing a sweeping narrative history from colonial times to the present, *Smuggler Nation* is now available in paperback to retell the story of America -- and of its engagement with its neighbors and the rest of the world -- as a series of highly contentious battles over clandestine commerce. As Peter Andreas demonstrates in this provocative and fascinating work, smuggling has played a pivotal and too often overlooked role in America's birth, westward expansion, and economic development, while anti-smuggling campaigns have dramatically enhanced the federal government's policing powers. The great irony, Andreas tells us, is that a country that was born and grew up through smuggling is today the world's leading anti-smuggling crusader. In tracing America's long and often tortuous relationship with the murky underworld of smuggling, Andreas provides a much-needed antidote to today's hyperbolic depictions of out-of-control borders and growing global crime threats. Urgent calls by politicians and pundits to regain control of the nation's borders suffer from a severe case of historical amnesia, nostalgically implying that they were ever actually under control. This is pure mythology, says Andreas. For better and for worse, America's borders have always been highly porous. Far from being a new and unprecedented danger to America, the illicit underside of globalization is actually an old American tradition. As Andreas shows, it goes back not just decades but centuries. And its impact has been decidedly double-edged, not only subverting U.S. laws but also helping to fuel America's evolution from a remote British colony to the world's pre-eminent superpower.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"[A] readable synthetic study of smuggling and attempts to police it... Moving swiftly through more than three centuries, the narrative resembles its more proficient subjects, cutting across subfield borders to reveal Americans' historical entanglements with illicit trade." --Journal of American History

"In Smuggler Nation, Peter Andreas recounts the well-worn story of American independence less as a lofty quest for freedom per se than as a struggle for freedom from onerous trade restrictions. He points out that many of the important freedoms protected by the Constitution, though they owed their intellectual pedigree to Locke and Montesquieu, had their origin in the travails of colonial smugglers trying to get molasses or gunpowder or Madeira past British customs agents." --Eric Felten, The Wall Street Journal

"Deftly explains how the battle lines of the American War of Independence were drawn largely because of people's varied and often self-serving relationships to smuggling... Smuggling is here to stay, and how we cope with this most American of practices will define our destiny in the years to come." --Cam Martin, The Daily Beast

"In this captivating new history, Brown University political science professor Andreas documents smuggling in America from the colonial 'golden age of illicit trade' through the Industrial Revolution and on into the current 'war on drugs'... Throughout the riveting text, Andreas also discusses the sociopolitical climates that gave rise to these storms of illicit commerce. Far from romanticizing or condoning illegal trade, Andreas convincingly argues that the flow of illicit goods has defined and shaped the nation, both in terms of who and what goes in and out, and how society reacts with regulatory policies. A valuable and entertaining read for historians and policymakers." --Publishers Weekly

"In this well-researched history, the author examines illegal commerce in the United States from its earliest days into the modern era... An illuminating look at the historical impact of America's illicit economy." --Kirkus Reviews

"In this terrific book, Peter Andreas shows that illicit trade is as American as apple pie." --Darrell West, Vice President and Director of Governance Studies, The Brookings Institution

"Smuggler Nation is a tour de force. Porous borders and the efforts to seal them are not new to the 21st century--Andreas convincingly shows they have defined the American experience." --James Goldgeier, Dean, School of International Service, American University

"Through his extensive historical research, Andreas shows us that illicit trade in America is not an aberration but has in fact

shaped the modern economy in fundamental ways. An extraordinary re-narrating of familiar episodes that makes visible America's hidden connections with underworlds and parallel worlds."

--Saskia Sassen, author of *Territory, Authority, Rights* "Americans have long projected national power through open, free, and legal markets. Andreas, one of the world's leading scholars of the dark side of globalization, presents us with a fascinating account of the role of illicit trade in the making of the American nation itself. This iconoclastic and timely book is an engaging and accessible primer for anyone seeking to understand the illicit dimensions of the global economy."

--Louis W. Pauly, Professor and Chair, Political Science, University of Toronto "An extraordinary retelling of the American epic. Peter Andreas shows us how smuggling shaped politics, economics and culture from colonial times to the present day. Meticulously researched and elegantly written, *Smuggler Nation* is an important contribution to the literature on American political development.

Fascinating, powerful, persuasive, unexpected, lively, deep, and highly recommended." --James A. Morone, author of *Hellfire Nation* and coauthor of *The Heart of Power*

Peter Andreas is a professor in the Department of Political Science and the Watson Institute for International Studies at Brown University. He was previously an Academy Scholar at Harvard University, a Research Fellow at the Brookings Institution, and an SSRC-MacArthur Foundation Fellow on International Peace and Security. Andreas has written numerous books, published widely in scholarly journals and policy magazines, presented Congressional testimony, written op-eds for major newspapers, and provided frequent media commentary.

This book by Peter Andreas looks at the constant undercurrent of an underground economy in America, and how in many ways, this nation was built on that very thing. In short, people don't like being told what they can and can't buy, and they don't like having to pay endless taxes for a government that they feel is largely out of their reach. I originally purchased "*Smuggler Nation*" as part of the research for my historical fiction novel, "*The Smuggler's Gambit*", which is set in 1765 right around the time the Sugar Act and Stamp Act first went into effect. It was during that period in American history when the seeds of Revolution were being planted and frustration with the Crown began to foment. "*Smuggler Nation*" doesn't stop its expose at the colonial era, of course, so I ended up learning so much more from it than I ever expected. It follows the smugglers (and the money) all the way through to modern times. I've still only scratched the surface of reading this hefty volume, but am glad to have it as a useful addition to my reference shelf.

An excellent overview of how America was created in no small part made thanks to smuggling. When one thinks of "old" money, smuggler should come to mind. Throw a dart at any book of American history and one is sure to find the name of a famous "patriot" who was involved in the smuggling trade. And regardless of which regime is in place, smuggling will always be an integral part of the underground economy. The author offers no solutions to the smuggling trade, which is by design since this is meant to be informative. Also, the writer shows that the growth of law enforcement has grown exponentially as a result of smuggling and the rise of the law-enforcement industrial complex. Incentives matter as the saying goes; for every type of demand, there is someone who willing to supply it whether that commodity is legal or illegal. For those who like the truth about American history, this is an excellent source.

I found the history so interesting and challenging I decided to lead a four week session OLLI class to help others understand and discuss this version of American history. Peter Andreas busted my high school version of American history. It's not about patriots and freedom , it's about evading tariffs and accumulating personal wealth. Smuggling has played a key role from our nation's birth to today. Andreas writes clearly and succinctly and transforms my understanding of the American Revolution, the Civil War and Manifest Destiny. Hint: All three relied on smuggling. Read this entertaining, readable history of our country

Dense with information - better to read one chapter at a time so you can absorb the material. While this book is not necessarily political (unless you are allergic to facts), you'll learn that a lot of the old money families in this country got their first money from various kinds of illicit activity (not news really, but this gives you a good overview). Please note in the first chapter who the original members of the Boston Tea Party really were. Ironic. You'll also learn a lot about prohibition and why and how pot became illegal, how money was made off of wars and how smuggling aided birth control. And don't forget America's original sin - slavery. I highly recommend this book.

Excellent description of how the real USA was formed and later expanded to what we have today. It is very detrimental to the conversations and controversies that we have in the USA about immigration and drugs fail to take into account our, American, entire history and formation as described in this book. Unfortunately we Americans choose to forget, rewrite or just ignore lessons from the past as we pour billions into the respective drug and immigration wars that are very similar to past failures. Yet we still choose to repeat the past? Doing the same thing over and over again is

the definition of insanity.

Intensively researched but about three quarters of the way through you realize the repetitive drum beat that everything the Government sets out to do is ill advised and self serving in their effort to expand government. has been that way for centuries and continues to this day.

I found this book to be very informative, awakening my mind both to the more truthful history of my country and to the consequences of trying to legislate morality. The more laws we pass, the more people will find ways to circumvent them as is clearly shown by today's issues along the Mexican-American border. It has been going on for centuries and will continue so as long as people refuse to learn from history.

This book put history more into perspective by adding how this industry helped to shape America. It is not something they cover in high school, which is unfortunate.

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