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Review of *North America: A Geographical Mosaic* Edited by Frederick W. Boal and Stephen A. Royle

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North America: A Geographical Mosaic. Edited by Frederick W. Boal and Stephen A. Royle. London: Arnold, 1999. viii+342 pp. Figures, notes, references, index. \$75.00 cloth (ISBN 0340692626), \$24.95 paper (ISBN 0340692618).

Boal and Royle, geographers from Belfast's Queen's University, have assembled a volume consisting of twenty-four individually authored chapters (essays) organized into seven sections. Section A, an introduction by the editors, relates the geologic process of continental drift (collision) and accretion to social processes involved in the cultural history of North America. This enterprising chapter neatly sets the stage for the ensuing sections and chapters. "The

Physical and Biotic Milieux" (Section B) consists of three chapters focusing on physiography and earth surface processes, weather and climate, and the relationship of culture to environment. The first of these chapters is a bit uneven, short on imagination, and offers some dated information. North American weather and climate are better presented in the next chapter, which nevertheless could have been organized more effectively (climographs, for example, are a dated way to display the exciting aspects of climate). Undoubtedly suffering from page constraints, these chapters lack a sure connection with subsequent ones. The third chapter, on nature and culture, concentrates on the timber industry and is well written.

Section C, "People and Culture," consists of four generally well-presented chapters organized in a temporal sequence: Native North Americans, post-Columbian population expansion, a look into the twenty-first century, and comparisons among Canada, the United States, and Mexico. "The North American Economy" (Section D) focuses on agriculture, manufacturing, and the service sector. All three chapters make their points and are copiously illustrated, though some readers may find the use of tables excessive and distracting. Section E, "The Urban Scene," examines macro- and micro-geography of the urban environment, presenting case studies—all rather abbreviated—of Atlanta, Los Angeles, Montréal, Toronto, and Boston. Section F, "Regional Vignettes," considers the Pacific Northwest, Atlantic Canada, the Great Plains and Prairies, the American South, the Canadian North, and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Lowland. The final section consists of a single chapter entitled "North America and the Wider World" which takes a chronological approach to the globalization of the North American continent. It is exceptionally well done and could be read first without giving away the ending.

North America: A Geographical Perspective is suitable for an introductory undergraduate course addressing the cultural geography of the continent. It is not, however, a book one would select as the primary text. For the recreational reader, it presents a reasonable overview and collection of readable essays, though its cartography is a bit crude, given the software presently available. **William C. Johnson**, *Department of Geography, University of Kansas*.