



# Comparing and Exploring Frontier Myth and Reality in Latin America

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## Abstract

Frontiers around the world have long attracted attention, both scholarly and popular, owing to their exoticism and often ‘larger-than-life’ qualities. In Latin America, scholars have deployed a range of concepts to convey the realities and complexities of frontier life. Frontiers have given rise to a wide range of often contradictory myths and images which complicate the search for their true nature. Looking at and comparing conceptual frameworks for interpreting frontiers and the variety of myths they have engendered illuminates our understanding of the interplay between myth and social reality across time and space.

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Frontiers and frontier imagery in Latin America have spawned awe and comment since the earliest days of European exploration. Given their distance from centers of political power and record keeping, frontiers present special research challenges in terms of available sources.<sup>1</sup> Further, the highly mythologized nature of frontiers means cutting through centuries of misinformation. This essay reviews some of the ways in which Latin American frontiers have been conceptualized in popular culture and by scholars. It also reviews recent literature dealing with frontiers and concludes with suggestions for future research.<sup>2</sup>

Conceptualizing and characterizing frontiers remains a substantial intellectual challenge. Scholars have defined and analyzed frontiers in a number of ways. The more traditional definition of a frontier, still commonplace in Europe, is the line demarcating boundaries between different nations. Stephen Aron and Jeremy Adelman have suggested changing this definition. ‘By frontier we understood a meeting place of peoples (in which no single political authority had established hegemony and fixed control over clearly demarcated borders). We reserved the designation of borderland for the contested boundaries between colonial and/or national domains’.<sup>3</sup> By relabeling the traditional European term ‘frontier’ as ‘borderland’, they possibly introduce more confusion than clarification.

A second definition conceives of a frontier as contested space, where European and indigenous influences pass back and forth, as through a membrane. In both cases, frontiers often serve as theaters of political, social, economic, and cultural clashes. World systems theorists conceptualize frontiers in relation to core and periphery regions. In yet another incarnation, the frontier takes on symbolic or mythological significance, as a site of past glories or future triumphs.

Under the narrowest definition, discussions of frontiers revolve mainly around interstate conflicts involving imprecise locations of boundaries. Yet even this limited definition has yielded considerable literature for Latin America. The fuzziness of national boundaries in the region began with the Treaty between Spain and Portugal concluded at Tordesillas, Spain, on June 7, 1494. The line of Tordesillas, running 370 leagues west of the Cape Verde islands, produced centuries of conflict, first between Spain and Portugal

and later between Brazil and Argentina, over who controlled territory in southeastern South America. British intervention in 1826 which turned the Banda Oriental (aka Provincia Cisplatina) into Uruguay finally resolved the issue. Frederick M. Nunn provides a convenient review of several books treating such military conflicts, including those between Argentina and Chile, Argentina and Brazil, Chile, Peru, and Bolivia (War of the Pacific), and Argentina, Paraguay, and Brazil (Paraguayan War).<sup>4</sup>

In some cases, even clear natural features, such as rivers, failed to prevent conflict. War erupted between Mexico and the United States in the mid-1840s, because each claimed a different river, the Rio Grande and Nueces respectively, as the boundary between Texas and Mexico. That dispute and consequent war has yielded an immense historiography, and the loss of half its national territory remains a sore point among Mexican nationalists. A search of Amazon.com for books on the history of the Mexican War yields more than 700 items.

Conflicting land claims, often over remote and lightly populated regions, continue through the present. The late 20th century featured a number of conflicts over national boundaries. Wars erupted between El Salvador and Honduras (1969), Argentina and the United Kingdom over the Falklands/Malvinas (1982), and Ecuador and Peru (1995). Serious disputes not resulting in warfare included Argentina and Chile (1978), Chile versus Bolivia and Peru (late 1970s); and Colombia and Venezuela (1987). Tensions remain over longstanding disputes between Venezuela and Guyana and between Guatemala and Belize.<sup>5</sup> A meta-study comparing the reasons for and outcomes of these many boundary disputes would make an excellent addition to the historiography of the region.

Many factors exacerbate frontier boundary disputes. Natural resources, such as oil, can fan conflict, as between Ecuador and Peru, nations that exchanged gunfire in 1981 and 1995. Revolutionary groups and drug traffickers have fomented shootings near the long border between Colombia and Venezuela. Cross-border migration heightened the tension between El Salvador and Honduras, and Nicaragua experienced tensions with Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Honduras. Illegal immigration and drug trafficking across the Mexican-US border has cost thousands of lives in both urban and remote areas.<sup>6</sup> Clearly 'who is in charge?' remains an open question in many frontier areas.

Frontier demographics and social composition pose a considerable challenge to researchers, given the relative lack of records and distance from seats of political power. Nonetheless, scholars have probed the lives and actions of many frontier groups. Despite the likelihood of ethnocentric bias, the observations of external actors offer valuable insights into indigenous cultures. The key, as in all historical research, is comparison and corroboration with other sources. So rather than dismissing out-of-hand foreign observations, researchers would do well to pore carefully over the writings of travelers, military and religious officials, and other outsiders. At the very least, their views offer insights into the rich mythology that grows up around frontier regions around the world.<sup>7</sup>

Thanks largely to Eric J. Hobsbawm's theory of social banditry, outlaws across the globe have been examined and compared with his model.<sup>8</sup> Many of these bandits operated in the nether region between frontiers and more settled areas. The evidence for Latin America generally fails to conform to Hobsbawm's assumption of peasant support for bandits.<sup>9</sup> Even if Hobsbawm's model lacks empirical support, the real question of how and why bandits established such mythical properties and imputed characteristics remains an important area of research. The twin paths of bandits in reality and mythology remain fertile areas of exploration, as shown by continuing fascination with bandits from Robin Hood to Joaquin Murrieta to Butch Cassidy.

Frontiers have long been viewed as areas of danger and violence. Runaway slaves who gathered in frontier villages represent another intriguing and significant population, a very frightening one to slaveholders of the time. Kathleen Wilson has detailed the complicated relations between white planters and Maroons of Jamaica.<sup>10</sup> The actual incidence of violence on the American frontier compared with settled eastern urban areas remains in debate. Scott William Hoeffle of the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro suggests that we need a much more analytical approach to past frontier violence as well as the way in which putative violence influences contemporary behaviors and violence. As do many other scholars, he strongly critiques 'the myth of a Minuteman-Gunfighter Nation as a product of the frontier experience'.<sup>11</sup>

Throughout the Americas, frontier regions have served as membranes through which trade goods and intercultural exchanges passed in both directions. The collection of essays edited by Donna J. Guy and Thomas D. Sheridan illustrates these interactions for the northern and southern extremes of the Spanish colonial empire.<sup>12</sup> Filling the historiographical void for the middle of South America, Erik D. Langer shows similar patterns of frontier permeability and native-non-native interactions in the eastern Andean regions of Bolivia and northern Argentina during the 19th century.<sup>13</sup>

Vicente de Zaldívar, for example, noted in 1598 that the Apache of northern New Spain 'sell meat, hides, tallow, suet, and salt in exchange for cotton, blankets, pottery, maize, and some small green stones'.<sup>14</sup> In Uruguay, Argentina, and southern Brazil, gauchos and gaúchos adapted many elements of native language, cuisine (mate), dress, and riding equipment. Similar borrowings occurred on the llanos of Venezuela and Colombia and in southern Chile.<sup>15</sup> Indians likewise adopted elements of European culture. Navajos, for example, took up sheep raising. Horses, metal knives, and firearms became important elements of material culture for many native groups. Examinations of such cultural exchanges and adaptations add important dimensions to the overall Conquest narrative.

However, the policy of domination by colonial powers quickly turned natives from cooperation towards resistance and conflict. Competition for resources, including livestock, water, land, and salt precipitated Indian-white conflicts. Resistance became even more formidable after native groups acquired horses that turned Indians from the pampas of Argentina to the Great Plains of the United States into highly successful hunters and cavalymen. J. Ignatius Molina observed that the Araucanians of the pampas, 'perceiving the great advantage which their enemies derived from cavalry, they soon began to discipline themselves in the same manner. Their first care was to procure a good breed of horses'.<sup>16</sup> Not surprisingly, equestrian Indians resisted longer than sedentary groups, in Chile, Argentina, the United States, and Mexico.<sup>17</sup>

Frontier missions served as a major tool for pacifying and acculturating native peoples. Scholars have made tremendous strides in recent decades in moving away from the traditional Eurocentric, triumphalist view of priests 'civilizing the barbarians' to a more nuanced vision of Native-European interactions.<sup>18</sup> Writing in *History Compass*, Caroline A. Williams recently reviewed the literature on what we might call mission revisionism, so I will not repeat her arguments. As Williams sees it, this new literature emphasizes 'the degree to which Indian peoples participated in the process of shaping their lives following contact with Europeans'.<sup>19</sup> The essays edited by Erick D. Langer and Robert H. Jackson provide a good sampling of the new mission history as does Langer's recent monograph.<sup>20</sup> Other frontier institutions and interactions call for similar revision.

Likewise, the military history of frontiers has moved from 'civilization battling barbarism' to looking more closely at European-Native interactions and the possibility of other policy alternatives. For example, Spanish colonial frontier policy might have opted for a

more cooperative model of trade and coexistence rather than the emphasis on military subjugation and religious and cultural assimilation.<sup>21</sup> In *The Forbidden Lands*, Hal Langfur has probed conflict and violence in Minas Gerais, Brazil, among Luso-Brazilians, Afro-Brazilians, and semi-nomadic indigenous peoples during the late colonial period.<sup>22</sup> In addition to Langfur's work, books by Alida C. Metcalf and David McCreery also give major attention to Brazil's frontier conditions in their analyses.<sup>23</sup>

Not surprisingly, the Spanish Borderlands receive the lion's share of frontier research whether focused on the colonial era or modern-day issues such as drug trafficking, immigration, and gun running. As Carla Gerona has suggested, 'borderlands scholars have moved away from nationalistic models that failed to integrate United States, Latin American, and Indian histories and historiographies'.<sup>24</sup> Irving W. Levinson has briefly surveyed Spanish policy on the northern frontier, concluding that the largely failed goals stemmed mainly from 'their sense of superiority'.<sup>25</sup> Ken Owens has published documents on Mexican concerns over the Russian presence in the far northern reaches of the Borderlands-California during the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>26</sup>

As Brian DeLay ably demonstrates, Indian nations, notably the Comanche, further complicated matters by disputing and disrupting Spanish and then Mexican settlement in what is now the Borderlands region from the late eighteenth through the mid-19th century.<sup>27</sup> DeLay's work represents a good example of scholars transforming their vision of indigenous peoples from passive victims to active agents, much as revisionist work on frontier missions has done. Andrés Reséndez adds to the discussion with his examination of *Changing National Identities at the Frontier: Texas and New Mexico*.<sup>28</sup> In 2004, Josiah McC. Heyman and Howard Campbell penned a review of recent monographic literature on the contemporary Borderlands.<sup>29</sup>

In addition to serving as sites of conflict and cultural exchange, frontiers in Latin America have taken on a range of symbolic and mythical images, also in need of further exploration. One vision is the 'Golden Frontier of Treasure, Abundance, and Opportunity'. Beginning with the wanderings of Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca (1528), we have tales of a land 'abounding in gold and silver, with (seven) great cities whose houses were many stories high, whose streets were lined with silversmiths' shops, and whose doors were inlaid with turquoise'. A decade later, Francisco Vasquez de Coronado, after traveling for months in the wilderness, reached the so-called Seven Cities of Gold in the land that he named Cibola. In South America, the wealth of the Chibchas or Muiscas of the Andes created a vision of 'El Dorado', the gilded one.<sup>30</sup> How did such visions appear? What European myths or cultural values gave rise to these utopian visions? Columbus, we will recall, thought he had stumbled upon the Garden of Eden in South America. The cultural and ideological roots of these myths await further probing, along the lines of recent scholarship on the American West.<sup>31</sup> Thanks to the globalization of knowledge, all historiographies can benefit from cross-fertilization by works focused on frontiers elsewhere.

A second incarnation is the polar opposite of the golden frontier, the 'Desert Frontier of Barbarism and Emptiness', devoid of civilization. Dangerous frontiersmen inhabited these distant reaches. Myths of one-breasted Amazons, female warriors of incredible ferocity, trace their roots to Greek mythology. The novel flora and fauna of the New World confounded early Europeans, who forced what they observed into pre-existing (often wildly inappropriate) categories. In this vision, danger, not opportunity, characterized frontier regions of the Americas.<sup>32</sup>

Frontier barbarism took on its most famous vision thanks to Argentina's Domingo F. Sarmiento who provided a paradigm of frontiersmen in *Civilization and Barbarism*. He

described the pampas frontier in unflattering terms: 'the evil from which the Argentine Republic suffers', 'desert', 'wastes containing no human dwelling', 'savages ever on watch'.<sup>33</sup> Also writing in the mid-nineteenth century, Ramón Páez, a European-educated Venezuelan, found many shortcomings in the 'barbarous' life of the llaneros, the 'mongrel breed' inhabiting the plains. In *Doña Bárbara* (1929), Rómulo Gallegos reprised Sarmiento's theme of civilization versus barbarism, this time set in the Venezuelan llanos. Gallegos has his protagonist describe the frontier: 'Wild plains! Wild vastness! Illimitable deserted prairies'.<sup>34</sup>

Yet a third symbolic incarnation posits the 'Frontier as the Future'. Horace Greeley famously proclaimed this vision with his advice to ambitious North Americans, 'go West, young man'. The nineteenth-century American West seemed to hold boundless opportunity and riches ready to be plucked by the brave and ambitious. A century later, Brazilian politicians acted on the same myth with their push into the Amazonian wilderness. From constructing the new national capital of Brasília in the 1960s to the subsequent road-building projects throughout the Amazon, Brazil's leadership staked future national greatness on its tropical frontier. A remaining question begging inquiry is where did their vision of the Amazon come from? Put another way, what is the nexus between early frontier reports and mythology to subsequent images of the same region?

However, the Amazonian myth of riches has a material foundation. Brazil experienced its first major gold rush beginning in the 1690s when bandeirantes stumbled upon large deposits in the mountains of Minas Gerais. Since the 1970s, miners (*garimpeiros*) in the Amazon, most working illegally, have created another gold rush and new environmental hazards. 'Informal miners use mercury to amalgamate fine gold and their ignorance about adequate technical procedures and toxicology have caused considerable occupational hazards and contamination in other communities'.<sup>35</sup>

Other areas of the Amazon are undergoing similar development. Jeffery Andrew Hoelle provides an anthropological inquiry into 'The Cattle Culture of the Amazon: The Rise of Ranching, Acre, Brazil.' He examines cattle-raising in the western Amazon state of Acre, 'where decades earlier the rubber tapper social movement confronted cattle ranchers and became a global symbol of environmentalism, we can gain a deeper understanding of the economic, social, and cultural changes occurring in one of Amazonia's most politically significant regions'. In addition, he offers comparative perspectives on ranching frontiers in Africa and elsewhere in Latin America, an excellent methodological model for future inquiries.<sup>36</sup>

The influx of people and development in the Rondonia region, to the southeast of Acre, has prompted one scholar to label the area 'post-frontier'. According to land use expert Percy Manuel Summers, a frontier region becomes post-frontier when 'urbanized centers' achieve significant presence and influence and global markets have 'an increasing influence over land use decision patterns in the properties of small landholders'.<sup>37</sup> Geographers Roy Ryder and Lawrence A. Brown go even further, arguing that 'Amazonia may be considered an "urbanized jungle" (Becker 1996, 91) because the majority (55.2 percent in 1991) of Brazil's Amazonian inhabitants are not small, rural producers but live in towns and participate in urban activities'.<sup>38</sup> Following this logic, scholars should try to date the 'closing of the frontier' for other areas, as Frederick Jackson Turner did long ago for the United States.

Hoping to emulate Brasília's seeming frontier success, Argentina briefly renamed its currency the *austral* to point national energy south toward its vast, still sparsely settled Patagonian frontier. In similar fashion, Venezuela pins its hopes on the remote inland Orinoco River Basin. In each case, politicians visualize the frontier as the key to future

national greatness.<sup>39</sup> Thus, huge areas of frontier reality and imagery remain to be explored. Myths of the America West have been catalogued and analyzed.<sup>40</sup> Frontier mythology has poured forth from politicians, advertisers, novelists, filmmakers, and fakirs. A similar project of analyzing mythical origins as well as the motives of the mythmakers awaits scholars of Latin America. That accomplished, we can then embark on a comparative global analysis of frontier mythologies, their origins and impacts.

In addition to examining frontier demographics, we should also probe frontiers as discrete regions with their own distinct multi-level interactions, involving humans, nation states, animals, and the natural environment. Thomas Miller Klubock's work on the Rancquil rebellion movements in southern Chile during the 1920s and 1930s represents such a broadening of our vision of frontiers. Klubock brings 'together a social history of the southern frontier's rural labourers, both mestizo and indigenous Mapuche, with an examination of the history of Chile's southern forests, unpacking the dialectical relationship between social and ecological change on the frontier'.<sup>41</sup> His work demonstrates that one can evaluate ecological factors without falling victim to the environmental determinism that marked some early writings on the frontier.

Efforts to refine our knowledge of frontiers also encompass the types of activities that take place in such regions. Scholars distinguish 'settlement frontiers' colonized by farmers who migrate from the established heartland of a nation to thinly populated margins in search of land' from 'extractive frontiers' that 'do not involve permanent rural settlement but are penetrated primarily to extract minerals, fuel, or timber for export'.<sup>42</sup> As David McCreery demonstrates for nineteenth-century Goiás, Brazil, efforts to build a frontier extractive economy do not always succeed.<sup>43</sup> In general, populations associated with settlement frontiers persisted over longer periods of time; extractive frontiers being prone to boom-and-bust cycles.

However frontiers are defined, comparative studies, whether between different areas of Latin America, between North and South America, or global, further illuminate variations and constants across vast reaches of time and space. For Latin America, the work of Robert H. Jackson and Guillaume Boccara is especially noteworthy.<sup>44</sup> Bernd Schröter has provided a comparative historiographical study of colonial frontiers in Latin America.<sup>45</sup> Lasse Holck and Monika Saiz Contreras have compared educational policies for the late colonial and early national periods in southern Chile and Sonora, Mexico.<sup>46</sup> Hartmut Keil and Michael Riekenberg examined the relative incidence of frontier violence in 19th-century Latin America and the United States.<sup>47</sup> In a wide-ranging essay, Silvia Ratto reviews the 'New Western History' of the United States and its implications for Borderlands and frontier studies in Latin America. Ratto concludes that despite the rejection of the Turnerian frontier by the New Western History, elements of Turnerianism continue to influence the study of Latin American frontiers.<sup>48</sup>

Frontiers, real and imagined, have played a huge role in Latin American history, culture, and mythology. Scholars have long rejected Frederick Jackson Turner's thesis imputing the formation of American national character to the frontier experience. Nonetheless, Ruben George Oliven proposes that the rural frontier experience remains a central element in the identity of *riograndenses* in southern Brazil.<sup>49</sup> Sergio Luiz Prado Bellei argues that 'peripheral cultures (Brazilian culture, for example) surviving in the frontier between the powerful and the dispossessed tend to produce cultural experts in mediation'. He suggests that this propensity to mediate rather than resist and the imbalance of power between center and periphery has had a negative impact of Brazilian identity, indeed on all peoples of Latin America.<sup>50</sup> Clearly, post-Turnerian concepts of the frontier remain powerful analytical agents.

Other scholars have quantitatively tested the impact of the Turnerian concept of 'free land' on subsequent economic development in Latin America. 'Historical evidence suggests that even if most countries in the Americas had an open frontier, how that frontier land was allocated differed a lot. For example, while the United States, Costa Rica and Colombia passed Homestead Acts or something approximating them, in places like Argentina, Chile or Guatemala, political elites allocated frontier lands to themselves or associates in a very oligarchic manner. This indicates that the impact of the frontier might be conditional on the existing political institutions which influenced how the land was allocated'.<sup>51</sup> Thus political economy, notably power differentials, explains more about Latin American development than Turner's thesis.

Future incarnations of frontier imagery will continue to influence the region's culture and politics. Writing in 1995, E. Bradford Burns laid out the 'three most salient characteristics of the Brazilian frontiers. First, the frontiers provided Brazil with its transcendental historical epic. Second, the dynamic of the frontiers was its own contradictions. They remain unresolved. And third, the frontiers reflected and strengthened ideologies, pervasive and characteristic of Brazil across nearly half a millennium'.<sup>52</sup> These characteristics could serve as fertile research agendas for any number of Latin American countries. Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Colombia, and Venezuela have relatively well developed frontier historiographies, but the literature remains thin for many other nations.

Scholars must continue to broaden their reading and thinking in conceptualizing future research on frontiers. One such example is Cynthia Radding's *Landscapes of Power* which conjoins the environmental and cultural history of colonial Spanish America.<sup>53</sup> We cannot all be world systems analysts, but some of their tools and models can assist in placing our own work into a broader context. Frontiers readily lend themselves to comparative study because of their ubiquity. World systems analysis offers a convenient means of ordering a rational truly comparative perspective. Sociologist Thomas D. Hall has offered excellent methodological guidance as well as case studies for comparing frontiers. Hall explains the rationale for his approach: 'Since all world-systems expand and incorporate new territories and new peoples, they create, transform, and destroy frontiers. Thus, it is a valuable form of analysis to study frontiers. Furthermore, world-system analysis, when done well, studies such interactions from the bottom up as well as from the top down'.<sup>54</sup>

The reality of post-frontier life in Latin America in no way diminishes the significance of frontiers in the region's past, present, and future. Many frontier regions await research. However, given the extant literature, we are ready for broader cross-fertilizing comparative studies. Frontiers in Russia, southern Africa, the Americas (to include Canada), and Australia cry out for sweeping comparative analysis. As the work of Hoelle, Klubock, and Radding illustrate, multi-tiered research into social, political, and environmental issues deepens our understanding of the complexities of frontier development. Given its allure, malleability, and persistence as metaphor, myth, historical category, place, and process, the study of frontiers shows few signs of passing. Nor should it.

### *Short Biography*

Richard W. Slatta is professor of history at North Carolina State University, where he has taught since completing doctoral work at the University of Texas at Austin in 1980. He has researched frontiers throughout the Americas (including Hawaii), since the late 1970s. Slatta specializes in the comparative history and culture of frontier, cowboy and ranch life throughout the Americas. His books include *Cowboy: The Illustrated History*

(2006), *Simón Bolívar's Quest for Glory* (2003, coauthored with Jane Lucas De Grummond), *The Mythical West* (2001), *Comparing Cowboys and Frontiers* (1997), *The Cowboy Encyclopedia* (1994), *Cowboys of the Americas* (1990), and *Gauchos and the Vanishing Frontier* (1983). His books have won prizes from the American Cowboy Culture Association, American Library Association, *Library Journal*, National Cowboy and Western Heritage Center, and Pacific Coast Council on Latin American Studies.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> See examples in R. Slatta, *Comparing Cowboys and Frontiers: New Perspectives on the History of the Americas* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997, 2001).

<sup>2</sup> This essay expands on concepts introduced in R. Slatta, 'Frontiers in Latin America', in J. Kinsbruner and E. Langer (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Latin American History and Culture*. Vol. 3, 2nd edn. (Detroit: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2008), 326–8.

<sup>3</sup> S. Aron, 'Do Borderlands Still Have Borders', *Journal of the West* 47/3 (Summer 2008): 5.

<sup>4</sup> F. Nunn, 'Peace and War in Latin America: Changing Perspectives on Military–Civilian Relations', *Latin American Research Review*, 39/2 (2004): 291–9.

<sup>5</sup> J. Domínguez et al., *Boundary Disputes in Latin America* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 2003), 18–9. [Online]. Retrieved on 13 June 2011 from: <http://www.usip.org/files/resources/pwks50.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> Domínguez et al., *Boundary Disputes*, 29.

<sup>7</sup> Slatta, *Comparing Cowboys and Frontiers*, 162–6.

<sup>8</sup> The social bandit concept goes back to Hobsbawm's *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1959), later expanded in Hobsbawm, *Bandits* (New York: Pantheon, 1961, rev. ed., 1981).

<sup>9</sup> See case studies and critiques in R. Slatta (ed.), *Bandidos: The Varieties of Latin American Banditry* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1987).

<sup>10</sup> K. Wilson, 'The Performance of Freedom: Maroons and the Colonial Order in Eighteenth-Century Jamaica and the Atlantic Sound', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 66/1 (January 2009): 45–86.

<sup>11</sup> S. Hoeffle, 'Bitter Harvest: The Frontier Legacy of US Internal Violence', *Critique of Anthropology*, 24/3 (2004): 278.

<sup>12</sup> D. Guy and T. Sheridan (eds.), *Contested Ground: Comparative Frontiers on the Northern and Southern Edges of the Spanish Empire* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1998).

<sup>13</sup> E. Langer, 'The Eastern Andean Frontier (Bolivia and Argentina) and Latin American Frontiers: Comparative Contexts (19th and 20th Centuries)', *The Americas*, 59/1 (2002): 33–63.

<sup>14</sup> Quoted in R. Slatta, *The Mythical West: An Encyclopedia of Legend, Lore, and Popular Culture* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2001), 71.

<sup>15</sup> R. Slatta, *Cowboys of the Americas* (New Haven: Yale University Press, Western Americana Series, 1990, 1994), 160–1.

<sup>16</sup> Quoted in Slatta, *Mythical West*, 41.

<sup>17</sup> Slatta, *Cowboys of the Americas*, 161–2, 170–1.

<sup>18</sup> See the literature review by S. Deeds, 'Pushing the Borders of Latin American Mission History', *Latin American Research Review*, 39/2 (2004): 211–20.

<sup>19</sup> C. Williams, 'Opening New Frontiers in Colonial Spanish American History: New Perspectives on Indigenous–Spanish Interactions on the Margins of Empire', *History Compass*, 6/4 (2008): 1123–4.

<sup>20</sup> E. Langer and R. Jackson (eds.), *The New Latin American Mission History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995); E. Langer, *Expecting Pears from an Elm Tree: Franciscan Missions on the Chiriguano Frontier in the Heart of South America, 1830–1949* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009).

<sup>21</sup> R. Slatta, 'Spanish Colonial Military Strategy and Ideology', in Guy and Sheridan (eds.), *Contested Ground*, 83–96.

<sup>22</sup> H. Langfur, *The Forbidden Lands: Colonial Identity, Frontier Violence, and the Persistence of Brazil's Eastern Indians, 1750–1830*. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008).

<sup>23</sup> A. Metcalf, *Go-Betweens and the Colonization of Brazil, 1500–1600*. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005); D. McCreery, *Frontier Goiás, 1822–1889* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2006).

<sup>24</sup> C. Gerona, 'Review of Weber'. [Online]. Retrieved on 13 June 2011 from <http://www.hnet.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=22897>.



- <sup>25</sup> I. Levinson, 'Spanish Policy on the Northern Frontier: Limited Resources and Varied Responses', *Journal of the West*, 49/3 (Summer 2010): 103.
- <sup>26</sup> K. Owens, 'The Russian-Mexican Frontier: Mexican Documents Regarding the Russian Establishments in California, 1808–1842', *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 90/4 (November 2010): 709–11.
- <sup>27</sup> B. DeLay, *War of a Thousand Deserts: Indian Raids and the U.S.-Mexican War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, in association with the William P. Clements Center for Southwest Studies, Southern Methodist University, 2008).
- <sup>28</sup> A. Reséndez, *Changing National Identities at the Frontier: Texas and New Mexico, 1800–1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
- <sup>29</sup> J. Heyman and H. Campbell, 'Recent Research on the U.S.-Mexico Border', *Latin American Research Review*, 39/3 (2004): 205–20.
- <sup>30</sup> Slatta, *Mythical West*, 96–7.
- <sup>31</sup> R. Slatta, 'Making and Unmaking Myths of the American Frontier', *European Journal of American Culture*, 29/2 (2010): 81–92.
- <sup>32</sup> Slatta, *Mythical West*, 97–9.
- <sup>33</sup> D. Sarmiento, *Life in the Argentine Republic in the Days of the Tyrants; Or, Civilization and Barbarism*. Spanish edn., 1845. trans. Mrs. Horace Mann. 1868. Reprint (New York: Hafner, 1971), 2.
- <sup>34</sup> R. Gallegos, *Doña Bárbara*. Span. edn. 1929. trans. Robert Malloy. Reprint (New York: Peter Smith, 1948), 17.
- <sup>35</sup> M. Veiga and J. Meech, 'Gold Mining Activities in the Amazon: Clean-Up Techniques and Remedial Procedures for Mercury Pollution', *Ambio*, 24/6 (September 1995): 371–5.
- <sup>36</sup> J. Hoelle, "The Cattle Culture of the Amazon: The Rise of Ranching Acre, Brazil." PhD thesis (University of Florida, 2011), 18.
- <sup>37</sup> P. Summers, 'The Post-frontier: Land Use and Social Change in the Brazilian Amazon (1992–2002)'. PhD thesis (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, 2008), 3.
- <sup>38</sup> R. Ryder and L. Brown, 'Urban-System Evolution on the Frontier of the Ecuadorian Amazon', *Geographical Review*, 90/4 (October 2000): 512–3.
- <sup>39</sup> Slatta, *Mythical West*, 24.
- <sup>40</sup> R. Athearn, *The Mythic West in Twentieth Century America* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1986); Slatta, *Mythical West*; 'Making and Unmaking Myths'.
- <sup>41</sup> T. Klubock, 'The Nature of the Frontier: Forests and Peasant Uprisings in Southern Chile', *Social History*, 36/2 (May 2011): 121–42.
- <sup>42</sup> Ryder and Brown, 'Urban-System Evolution', 512.
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