

**Historical Studies 357
The University of Calgary**

**Wild West/ Mild West?
Comparative History of the U.S. and Canadian Wests**

Fall 2007

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Office Hours: Tuesday, 11-12:30; Wednesday, 1:30-3, and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course explores the separate and connected histories of the Canadian and U.S. Wests. Defining history as the story of nation states had generated remarkable ignorance of our connected pasts, of the people and economies that have crossed our national borders, and of how Canadians and Americans created separate nations and identities. Culturally and geographically, our pasts are connected, but hardly identical. The development and settlement of the Canadian and U.S. Wests involved similar policies, promises, and challenges: the ownership and use of natural resources; relationships with native peoples and among the many immigrants who settled the West(s); trade and transportation; creating communities; relationships with national governments. This course explores our connected pasts, our similarities, and also analyzes the differences in the histories of the Canadian and U.S. Wests from before Europeans arrived to the present.

Such a comparative course of necessity raises questions about myth and history, and about the ways that region and nation function in the ways we see the past. The Canadian and American Wests share much, including common landscapes, Aboriginal foundations, immigration patterns, economies, technologies, politics and religions. Yet historians of both nations have defined their Wests quite differently. Canadian historians have described their West as a peaceful and orderly region that developed under the influence of far-removed metropolitan centres. U.S. historians, by contrast, have at times seen the process of western settlement as the defining process in American history: a sequence of western frontiers *made* America and Americans. Even more powerfully, a mythic West creates an imagined America in both the U.S. and Canada. This course explores these imagined territories, and the underlying realities of what, and who, have crossed the boundaries that link and separate our respective Wests.

TEXTS:

Robert V. Hine and John Mack Faragher, *Frontiers: A Short History of the American West*
John Herd Thompson, *Forging the Prairie West*
Selected articles available on Blackboard and at the Reserve Desk in McKimmie Library.

REQUIREMENTS:

Students are expected to complete the assigned readings as outlined below, and to contribute to class discussion. There will be an in-class Midterm Examination, a Final Examination, and one required essay (see below).

GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

Discussion, Participation:	10%
Midterm examination (October 23):	25%
Essay (Due in class December 4):	30%
Final examination (To be scheduled by the registrar)	35%

The essay assignment is described at the end of the syllabus.

An extra-credit assignment will be distributed in class.

All exams and assignments must be completed in order to pass the course. Late work will be penalized except in extraordinary circumstances, such as illness or serious family emergency.

LECTURE OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS:

The following schedule is approximate. The dates of particular topics may vary occasionally from the list below. Students are expected to read from the assigned texts in preparation for lectures and for in-class discussion. Readings marked * are available on Blackboard and at the reserve reading desk of the library.

Week 1: Sept. 11 - 13: Creation Stories: Mythic Wests and National Histories

Read: Hine and Faragher, Introduction and Chpt. 15, "The Myth of the West," and Thompson, Introduction, "Imag[in]ing a Region"

Week 2: Sept. 18 - 22: Before the West, Before the Europeans -- And After "Discovery"

Read: Hine and Faragher, Chpt. 1, "A New World Begins," Chpt. 2, "Contest of Cultures," Chpt. 3, "The Struggle of Empires," Chpt. 4, "The Land and its Markers," and Thompson, Chpt. 1, "Ever ... Useless to Cultivating Man"

Week 3: Sept. 25 - 27: Colonial Wests

Read: Hine and Faragher, Chpt. 5, "The Fur Trade," and Thompson, Chpt. 2, "Cultures in Contact, 1670 - 1821"

Week 4: Oct. 2 - 4: The Ripples of Empire

Read: Hine and Faragher, Chpt. 6 "From Texas to Oregon," and Thompson, Chpt. 3, "Fur Trade to Settlement: 1821 - 1870"

Week 5: Oct. 9 -11: Manifest Destinies and Cities of Gold

Read: Hine and Faragher, Chpt. 7, "War and Destiny," Chpt. 8, "Mining Frontiers," and *Daniel P. Marshall, "No Parallel: American Miner - Soldiers at War with the Nlaka'pamux of the Canadian West" (Blackboard; also in John M. Findlay and Ken S. Coates, *Parallel Destinies: Canadian - American Relations West of the Rockies*, 31-79 (on reserve))

Week 6: Oct. 16 - 18: Expansion, Conquest, and Resistance

Read: Thompson, Chpt. 4, "Making the Prairie West Canadian: 1870 - 1900," and John L. Tobias, "Protection, Civilization, Assimilation: An Outline History of Canada's Indian Policy"(Blackboard; also in R. Douglas Francis and Howard Palmer, eds., *The Prairie West: Historical Readings*, 207-24 (on reserve))

Week 7: Oct. 23 - 25

OCTOBER 23: MIDTERM EXAMINATION

The Midterm Examination will cover the lectures and readings through Week 6.

Oct. 25: Laying the Tracks, Drawing the Lines

Read: Hine and Faragher, Chpt. 9, "The Power of the Road," and *Jeremy Mouat, "Nationalist Narratives and Regional Realities: The Political Economy of Railway Development in Southeastern British Columbia, 1895 -1905" (Blackboard; also in Findlay and Coates, eds., *Parallel Destinies*, 123 - 151 (on reserve)).

Week 8: Oct. 30 - November 1: Open Ranges, Fenced Fields

Read: Hine and Faragher, Chpt. 10, "Open Range" and Chpt. 11, "The Safety Valve"; Terry G. Jordan-Bychcov, "Does the Border Matter?: Cattle Ranching and the Forty-Ninth Parallel" (Blackboard; also in Sterling Evans, ed., *The Borderlands of the American and Canadian Wests: Essays on Regional History of the Forty-ninth Parallel*, 107-116 (on reserve))

Week 9: Nov. 6 - 8: Exclusion and Community; Violence and Order Revisited

Read: Hine and Faragher, Chpt. 12, "A Search for Community," *Rod Macleod, "Canadianizing the West: The North-West Mounted Police as Agents of the National Policy" (Blackboard; also in Francis and Palmer, eds., *The Prairie West*, 225-238 (on reserve)); and Michel Hogue, "Crossing the Line: Race, Nationality, and the Deportation of the `Canadian' Crees in the Canada - U.S. Borderlands, 1890 - 1900" (Blackboard; also in Evans, ed., *The Borderlands of the American and Canadian Wests*, 155-71 (on reserve))

Week 10: Nov. 13 - 15

Nov. 13: READING DAYS, NO CLASS

Nov. 15: Democratic Promises Considered

Read: Thompson, Chpt. 5, "The Twentieth Century Belongs to the Canadian West, 1901 - 1921," and Sheila McManus, "Gender(ed) Tensions in the Work and Politics of Alberta Farm Women, 1905-29 (Blackboard; also in Catherine A. Cavanaugh and Randi R. Warne, *Telling Tales: Essays in Western Women's History*, 123-46 (on reserve)

Week 11: Nov. 20 - 22: Whose Land Is It Anyway?: Agrarian Revolts and Federal Policies

Read: Hine and Faragher, Chpt. 13, "The Urban Frontier," Chpt. 14, "Plunder and Preservation," and Thompson, Chpt. 6, "Harsh Realities of Region, 1921 - 1939"

Week 12: Nov. 27 - 29: Watersheds: The Great Depression, World War II, and the New Wests

Read: Hine and Faragher, Chpt. 16, "The Frontier and West in Our Time" and Thompson, Chpt. 7, "Prairie Canada Recast, 1940 - 1970"

Week 13: Dec. 4 - 6 "Post-Western" Wests: Social Movements, Popular Culture, and the Mythic Wests Revisited

Read: Thompson, Chpt. 8, "The New West and the Nation"

ESSAYS DUE IN CLASS DECEMBER 4

FINAL EXAMINATIONS DECEMBER 10 - 19: TIME AND PLACE TBA

ESSAY:

Select a book from one of the titles listed below or a suggested alternative. Those listed below are available for purchase in the bookstore. A second and lengthier list will be distributed in class. The titles in the second list are available in the library or at a rare book repository such as the University of Calgary Special Collections (12th floor library tower) and the Glenbow library. These are all primary sources--collections of letters, diaries, or memoirs by a sampling of the diverse people of the American or Canadian Wests, including homesteaders, ranchers, missionaries, miners. Your essay will be an analysis of one of these titles with a focus on the question: **What difference did the border make?** Say, for example, you have selected the letters of a woman farmer who settled in Western Canada. In what ways would her life have been different, and in what ways the same if she had been located in the American West? To answer this question you will need to read carefully and evaluate the text. You will then need to understand the broader context by examining secondary sources on the history of farming/homesteading on both sides of the border. You will learn, for instance, through your research that while single women could homestead in the American West, they were not permitted to homestead in Western Canada and were instead obliged to purchase land if they wished to farm.

This essay will be approximately 10 pages, typed and double-spaced (2,500 words) and it is **due in class on Nov. 30, 2001**. All students should discuss their choice of text with **Dr. Jameson**.

Titles available in the bookstore:

Charles Alexander Eastman, *Indian Boyhood*
Monica Hopkins, *Letters From a Lady Rancher*
Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston, *Farewell to Manzanar*
Edith Eudora Kohl, *Land of the Burnt Thigh*
Frank B. Linderman, ed., *Pretty-Shield: Medicine Woman of the Crows*
Ellenor R. Merriken, *Looking for Country: A Norwegian Immigrant's Alberta Memoir*
John W. Niddrie, *Niddrie of the North-West*
Annie Clark Tanner, *Mormon Mother: An Autobiography*
Era Bell Thompson, *American Daughter*
Norbert Welsh, *The Last Buffalo Hunter*
Michael Usiskin, *Uncle Mike's Edenbridge*

RESERVE READING LIST:

Barman, Jean, *The West Beyond the West: A History of British Columbia*
Carter, Sarah, *Aboriginal Peoples and Colonizers of Western Canada to 1900*
Carter, Sarah, Lesley Erickson, Patricia Roome, and Char Smith, eds., *Unsettled Pasts: Reconceiving the West through Women's History*
Cavanaugh, Catherine and Randi Warne, eds., *Telling Tales: Essays in Western Women's History*
Cavanaugh, Catherine and Jeremy Mouat, eds., *Making Western Canada: Essays on Colonization and Settlement*
Chan, Sucheng, et al ed., *Peoples of Color in the American West*
Evans, Sterling, ed., *The Borderlands of the American and Canadian Wests: Essays on Regional History of the Forty-Ninth Parallel*
Findlay, John M. and Ken S. Coates, *Parallel Destinies: Canadian-American Relations West of the Rockies*
Francis, R. Douglas and Harold Palmer, eds., *The Prairie West: Historical Readings*
Friesen, Gerald, *The Canadian Prairies: A History*
Hirt, Paul, ed., *Terra Pacifica: People and Place in the Northwest States and Western Canada*
Jameson, Elizabeth and Susan Armitage, eds., *Writing the Range: Race, Class, and Culture in the Women's West*
Limerick, Patricia N., et. al., eds., *Trails: Toward a New Western History*
Milner, Clyde A., II, et. al., eds., *The Oxford History of the American West*
White, Richard, *"It's your misfortune and none of my own,": A History of the American West*

