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Review of *One Step over the Line: Toward a History of Women in the North American Wests.* Edited by Elizabeth Jameson and Sheila McManus

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One Step over the Line: Toward a History of Women in the North American Wests. Edited by Elizabeth Jameson and Sheila McManus. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press; Athabasca, AB: AU Press, 2008. xxvii + 446 pp. Photographs, notes, index. $34.95 paper.

Ever since western women's history emerged as a distinct field of study in the 1980s, collaborative efforts have produced some of the best and most innovative works in the discipline. *One Step over the Line* continues this fine tradition. Elizabeth Jameson and Sheila McManus's anthology, based on scholarship presented at the 2002 "Unsettled Pasts: Reconceiving the

West through Women's History" conference, explores the complex role the nation-state plays in the lives of women on both sides of the politically real, physically invisible, yet historically porous U.S.-Canadian boarder. With essays from a wide array of scholars, the volume's exploration of the role of nation as framework broadens and enriches knowledge of women's lives on both sides of the line, connects parallel histories, and challenges assumptions about the role of the nation in the construction of each country's history.

Divided into seven sections, the book moves from theory, to analysis, to teaching advice; each section begins with an introduction emphasizing the balance given to U.S. and Canadian authors, topics, and essays. Jameson and McManus's essays in section 1 provide their rationale for a transnational framework; in section 2, Susan Armitage and Sylvia Van Kirk explore how the history of Oregon Country, jointly claimed by the U.S. and Canada until 1846, might be rewritten placing race and gender at the center of the story. Essays by Jean Barman, Molly Rozum, and Joan Jensen in section 3 illustrate the power of biography and how the lives of not-so-famous women can reshape traditional national narratives. In section 4, Margaret D. Jacobs and Helen Raptis examine the role of white female educators in facilitating or rejecting racist nationalist attitudes. In five, Char Smith, Nora Faires, and Cheryl Foggo focus on diverse groups of American women (prostitutes, middle-class club women, and blacks) who crossed—or transgressed—the Canadian border, and how concepts of nationality shaped their experiences. The role of women in the U.S./Canadian labor union, Mine Mill, forms the basis for essays by Laurie Mercier and Cynthia Loch-Drake in section 6. In the final section, Margaret Walsh and Mary Murphy provide how-to advice for teaching a Canadian and American women's history course.

One Step over the Line is an excellent book. It continues the work of multiethnic, cross-class explorations of women's experiences within an innovative framework that does more than "add a Canadian woman and stir." While not every essay deals explicitly with the Great Plains, national policies or attitudes relevant to the Plains are generally found in each chapter, making this book useful to anyone interested in women, gender, and the Great Plains.

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