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Review of *The Indian Frontier, 1763-1846* By R. Douglas Hurt

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The Indian Frontier, 1763-1846. By R. Douglas Hurt. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002. xviii + 300 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$45.00 cloth, \$21.95 paper.

Frontiers have dominated American historiography ever since Frederick Jackson Turner placed the term into the academic lexicon in the early twentieth century. Historians such as Bolton and Webb built entire careers around the ideology of the American western frontier, and the concept has grown exponentially since the mid-twentieth century.

Today's scholar can choose from a host of publications focused on geographical frontiers. The American South, the Appalachians, Spanish Borderlands, colonial America, Canada, even Alaska and Hawaii, have all been dissected under the frontier scalpel. But surprisingly few scholars have focused on Native American frontiers.

Dale Van Every broke ground in the early 1960s, followed by Ray Brandes in the 1970s. J. Norman Heard, who has yet to receive the recognition he deserves, has published a five-volume work on Indian-white frontiers, and June Namias pioneered a gendered examination of Indian captivities on American frontiers in 1993. But it is in relation to Robert M. Utley that the value of R. Douglas Hurt's *The Indian Frontier, 1763-1846* becomes most evident. Utley, the dean of Anglo-Indian relations, published his analysis of Indian frontiers of the American West from 1846-1890 in 1984. Hurt's book fills in the historiographical gap by featuring the Indian frontier during the preceding eighty years.

Hurt's sweeping work examines Indian-white relations from the perspective of British, Spanish, and American exploration, along with a brief acknowledgment of Russian activity in the American West. But it is his regional analysis that makes Hurt's work most significant. The American northeast, the southwest, the Pacific northwest, the trans-Appalachian region, the Mississippi Valley, and the Far West are all examined in terms of confrontation.

Great Plains scholars will appreciate Hurt's approach to the significance of the opening of the Santa Fe Trail on Indian-American relations. Under his pen, the impact of the intersection of the Mexican northern frontier, the American southwest, and the Osage, Kiowa, and Comanche homelands is laid bare. As a military history, Hurt's study proves the inefficacy of American Indian policy in the region.

By way of criticism, Hurt's history is primarily a man's history, with only an obligatory nod in the direction of Native American women, an oversight emphasizing the need for a thorough analysis of an Indian women's frontier.

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