The Spatial Grammar of Borderlands

Randy William Widdis
University of Regina
Supervised by
History
Final Version
Conference Version April 2015
PowerPoint Presentation
I Introduction: Theory and Historical Approaches to the Study of Borders and Borderlands

While the expansion of border and borderland studies into a broad interdisciplinary field has given rise to new combinations in approaches, there still exists uncertainty as to the role of theory in such research. Despite the fact that there is an obvious need for theorizing borders and borderlands, the variegated nature of borders with their own contextual features, power relations and unique histories make the development of a general theory virtually impossible.¹ In addition to the absence of a universal theory, distinctions between disciplines in terms of their epistemologies make it even more difficult for scholars to communicate and engage in meaningful dialogue and cooperative research.

Although borderlands scholarship has long been recognized as a field of history, there exists only a handful of works that have attempted to construct theory. Richard White’s concept of the “middle ground”, which replaces the traditional concept of the frontier as place and/or process with that of a space in which groups developed systems of negotiations and exchanges perceived as mutually beneficial, represents one such attempt.² The middle ground, as White describes it, is a liminal hybrid space, “the place in between: in between cultures, peoples, and in between empires and the nonstate world of villages.”³ In such a setting, made possible by the fur trade system, economic negotiation and cultural accommodation took place, and native agency played a major role in dictating the evolution of the space-economy even though the system was managed by and catered to the demands of distant metropoles. The middle ground establishes a geopolitical background from which to understand aboriginal-white relations prior to the collapse of the fur trade system, the decimation of native societies by disease, warfare and alcohol, and the subsequent
dispossession of indigenous peoples from their traditional lands in the face of European and North American imperial powers.

In terms of borderland evolution, the development of stage models appears to be the paradigmatic strategy followed by those who attempt to construct theory. In this context, the heuristic models offered by Oscar Martinez⁴ and Michiel Baud and Willem van Schendel⁵ stand out in particular. Martinez distinguishes four types of border regions based on the degree of cross-border cooperation, relations between the respective countries and interactions between communities: alienated border regions, coexistent border regions, interdependent border regions and integrated border regions. Baud and van Schendel criticize Martinez’s models, arguing that while they collectively suggest an evolutionary process, they do not allow for different patterns of change. Instead, they offer a five-stage model based on the concept of the ‘life-cycle’ to make sense of the historical evolution that is the product of such interactions: infant borderland, adolescent borderland, adult borderland, declining borderland, and defunct borderland.

While these models and their constituent typologies are useful in analysis of different layers of time in the evolution of borders, the complexity and uniqueness of historical events ensures that stages and types are never found in their pure form, regardless of the model. It may be the case that certain borderlands at different times in their evolution do not fit into the stages identified in the models or that they exist somewhere in between them. Stage models also overemphasize discontinuity in historical processes; the focus perhaps should be more on transitions rather than the stages themselves.

These concerns have discouraged the development of general theoretical models in history. Yet while theorizing borders remains a daunting task, there are a number of works that have been somewhat successful in this endeavour, at least in terms of border studies that focus more on the
recent past and/or present. However, as Tony Payan points out, these attempts are limited because they depend for the most part upon single heuristic concepts such as order, “othering”, power or income inequality. The key to theory construction, Payan maintains, rests on developing methods “that can enhance our explanatory and predictive power.” However, in such work, one must carefully consider the differences that exist between explanation and prediction. They are similar in some ways and yet different in others. Both explanation and prediction are necessary for generating and testing theories, yet each plays a different role in doing so. The goal of explanatory theory is to explain observed facts as the effects of their causes while the goal of predictive theory is to explain the future. Because causes precede effects, explanatory theory necessarily incorporates the dimension of time. Prediction also incorporates the temporal dimension but in this case, the projection is forwards, not backwards in time. Because the concern is with forecasting and not cause and effect, predictive theories may have no real explanatory power. And the best explanatory model does not necessarily make the best predictive model. This distinction is vital in any attempt to theorize borders as they have evolved over time and will continue to transform in the years to come.

However, while this temporal distinction between explanation and prediction impacts theory construction, the concept of path dependence has been offered as a theoretical bridge that serves to link the past with the future. James Mahoney argues that “path dependence characterizes specifically those historical sequences in which contingent events set into motion institutional patterns or event chains that have deterministic properties. The identification of path dependence therefore involves both tracing a given outcome back to a particular set of historical events, and showing how these events are themselves contingent occurrences that cannot be explained on the basis of prior historical conditions.” Simply put, path dependence conveys the
idea that prior historical events in a sequence have an impact on present and future events.\textsuperscript{9} Or in other words, history is a continuum unfolding towards a particular purpose or telos.\textsuperscript{10}

While there are strong grounds to believe that contingent events in the past reverberate right through the present and into the future and to entertain the idea that because borders and borderlands are dynamic, their evolution is governed by their own particular “paths” of history, there are methodological and conceptual challenges that face the application of this concept. Most notably, critics point out that such an approach downplays the role of agency and fails to acknowledge that outcomes are the result of complex events and conditions that are subject to contingency and conjuncture. In addition, path dependency says little about how one determines “the mechanisms that animate that structure of events, and the place institutions have in that causal chain”.\textsuperscript{11} Because there are no fixed laws that govern historical events, historical causation remains subject to the decisions made by the researcher as to what factors are to be emphasized in explanation. Historical outcomes are rarely determined by discrete sets of antecedent conditions. Instead, the outcome that occurs is the result of an extended series of events and conditions, many of which are random and contingent.

Yet while there are no causal laws or universal generalizations within human affairs, human agency and the constraints and/or possibilities of institutions and structures present multiple causal dimensions and emphasizes epistemic variables that present many opportunities for theoretical reasoning. The concept of borderlands has entered the mainstream of historically oriented scholarship but it remains under-theorized as a spatial and historical framework. Instead, it has been considered as more of an approach or methodology. While this paper makes no attempt to develop either a general theory of borders or to devise a methodology that transcends disciplinary boundaries, it does outline an approach which I call spatial grammar that offers a
framework for studying and explaining the evolution of borderlands over time. I wish to tender a
discussion that considers in a more nuanced way the spatial-temporal dimensions of borderlands
using the particular example of the Canadian-American borderlands to empirically illustrate
some of the larger theoretical and conceptual arguments I wish to make. A description of spatial
grammar is preceded by a brief discussion of some of my views on the historical study of borders
and borderlands, particularly as they relate to the Canada-United States case.

II Brief Reflections on Borderlands History

In their lead essay in a *Journal of American History* special issue entitled “Margins to
Mainstream: The Brave New World of Borderlands History,” Pekka Hämäläinen and Samuel
Truett claim that borderlands history has moved “from the margins to the mainstream.”12 Indeed,
in this most thoughtful assessment of the state of borderlands history, the authors demonstrate
that borderlands and transnationalism are at the forefront of much historical research undertaken
today. And yet, Hämäläinen and Truett argue, while many recognize the importance of
borderlands, the field still is characterized by unsettled centrist paradigms and continues to
preserve long established distinctions between imperial and modern histories, immigrant and
indigenous subjects, and state and nonstate realms. They encourage borderland historians to
move the spaces and narratives of borderlands history across these divides, drawing on new
insights in indigenous and transnational history. By challenging state-centered teleologies,
borderlands history, they contend, “gives us a new way to navigate the past.”13

Hämäläinen and Truett’s argument compliments calls for histories that are less centred on
the nation-state14 and geographies that avoid what John Agnew has termed the “territorial trap.”15
However, while they emphasize the importance of space and power in borderlands history,
Hämäläinen and Truett make no reference to geography even though they draw upon certain
ideas that historical geographers have considered for quite some time. While there have been relatively few studies on North American borderlands conducted by historical geographers, particularly when compared to the research that has been carried out by historians, the work that has been done should not be ignored, especially when one considers the theoretical understanding of space, environment and place which geographers can bring to the subject.

History is ‘messy’ but absolutely necessary in any consideration of borders and borderlands, including that shared by Canada and the United States. There are three ideas about borders and borderlands in particular that are relevant to this discussion. First, while borderlands are primarily a territorial concept, the temporal factor is of fundamental importance in defining its role as a place. Borderland histories diverge over time as groups of people responded differently to changing environments around them and to the people and places they interacted with on a frequent basis across the border. Like borders, borderlands also must be situated in their temporal and geographical contexts in order to investigate the relations between territory, identity and sovereignty, a point made clear by Jason Ackleson who declares: “In order to understand the current context of new late modern geographies of identity, order, and change in the borderlands, we must first contextualize this within the historical evolution of the borderlands – and importantly, the process of modernity that constructed these boundaries.”

As borderlands change, so do their capacity to reterritorialize and rescale place and identity. Borderlands can expand to become significant regions and narrow to become not much more than lines, depending on particular historical circumstances. Global shifts in imperial power, technological revolutions and social transformations, as well as national and continental expansion all play an important role. In the end, both agency and structure influence the evolution of borderlands.
Second, the Canadian-American borderlands are not a singular homogeneous region but rather a heterogeneous zone composed of several borderland regions that, while sharing functional similarities resulting from cross-border interaction, nevertheless retain distinct identities arising from local settings. Further, these borderlands are organic; they evolve over time to become different kinds of places.

In other words, Canadian-American borderland regions have developed along both similar and different historical-geographical axes. While much of the literature on European and the U.S.-Mexico borderlands presupposes that borderland peoples and spaces are marginal, this hasn’t always been nor is currently the case for certain borderlands, including some lying within the broader Canadian-American borderland zone. Borderlands that were once marginal might now be more central to the economic, social and political life of nation-states, or vice-versa. Also, it might be possible that borderlands are simultaneously central and marginal, essentialist and hybrid. Finally, I share Liam O'Dowd’s view that contemporary border studies often fail to acknowledge historical reflexivity, i.e., the historical “positioning” or context (why and where) that is so important in understanding the distinctiveness of contemporary state borders and how they differ from other borders in their complexity and globality.

III A Spatial Grammar of Borderlands

While borderland histories and historical geographies provide essential insights into the borderlands of today, like others, I argue that historical and geographical research can benefit from the study of contemporary borders and borderlands because researchers engaged in the latter have been generally more active and successful in conceptualizing and theorizing borders and borderlands than those engaged in the former. Three approaches and concepts in particular -
postmodernism, time-space compression, and the deterritorialization/reterritorialization paradox of globalization – serve as foundations upon which to build the syntax of a spatial grammar framework. This spatial grammar can provide insights into the historical analysis of the Canadian-American border regions and more broadly contribute to the comparative and transnational approaches to borderlands history.

I A Postmodern Perspective

According to Victor Konrad and Heather Nicol, much of the work in borderlands, particularly in the Canada-United States context, has benefited from a postmodern point of view.23 Ironically, this argument runs counter to the postmodernist contention that globalization threatens the particularity of places, borders, and territoriality. In terms of borders, many argue that postmodernism’s emphasis on hybridity makes the notion of boundaries obsolete, an idea which leads to the conclusion that the nation-state has become irrelevant as a unit of analysis.24 Postmodernists also question the representation of history and cultural identities and challenge the traditional belief that it is possible to establish the truth about the past. Given these proclivities, one might well ask what postmodernism can offer to any historical study of borderland evolution and transnational relations.

While postmodernists see history as an artificial construction and question historians’ claims to historical truth, postmodernism does not necessarily point to the disappearance of history, only to more complicated ways of grasping the past.25 History is essential to postmodernism because postmodernism, a philosophical approach that questions conventional epistemologies, seeks to understand itself as a historical condition through theoretical means.26 While postmodernists talk about the end of the nation-state and a borderless world, their emphasis on culture and identity has paradoxically stimulated a rethinking of borders,
borderlands, and transnationalism. Despite their arguments for the abandonment of conventional concepts such as center, periphery and hierarchy, postmodernists support alternative concepts including flows, nodes, and networks that serve as useful tools to help us see, think and speak about borderland processes and landscapes. In addition, the postmodern suspicion of the meta-narrative has reinforced an approach to borders and borderlands that is sensitive to regional and local differences and the idea that borderland identities are multilayered and responsive to scale.

Finally, a postmodern perspective lends itself to a view of the borderland as a *liminal* geographical space/historical time, a place of ambiguity and indeterminacy that is constantly in a state of evolution. Such an outlook does not necessarily have to limit itself to the view that the nation-state is declining in its ability to shape identity and to have an impact on peoples’ lives. Throughout modern history, as Jean-Francois Lyotard points out, the nation-state has been re-oriented to meet the needs of capitalism and borders and borderlands continue to play an important role in this regard.\(^{27}\) In particular, the postmodern lens raises questions regarding borders’ functions in terms of ordering, othering and interactions.\(^{28}\) Its emphasis on difference and case studies also implies that there exist separate practices and experiences of bordering.

Borderlands are hybrid spaces of flows, always changing and responding to multiple influences. Flows occur in both space and time and have both volume and direction. Because they often illustrate *asymmetrical* relations, they have the potential to reveal much about cores and peripheries and the reciprocal movement of people, goods, ideas and capital that connect them. The identification of corridors, which serve as the main spatial paths of movement across borders, is essential to our understanding of borderlands as functional entities transcending boundaries. They can be viewed as the vertebrae of borderlands – linking major hubs across the border and connecting tributary areas on one side with core areas on the other. Hubs are
dominant distribution centres from which major transportation routes radiate to their hinterlands. Gateways are specific nodes often situated at the margins of their regions that promote the continuity of circulation within corridors. Gateways, hubs and corridors articulate the spatial structures of cross-border regional flows of people, goods, ideas and capital. They are temporally and spatially dynamic and are seen to be integrators of space that bind communities on both sides of the boundary into interrelated international regions.

The discussion of flows is better understood when viewed as regional and local networks of economic, political and cultural power trajectories that traverse specific nodes, link cores and peripheries, concentrate within specific corridors, and as argues, congregate in certain regions and not others. One can view borderlands as arterial systems pulsating with the circulation of persons, goods, money, and ideas and as networks connecting a series of corridors and core and periphery nodes where decisions are made, policies applied, transactions negotiated, and goods exchanged. Because the most recent phase of globalization has reconfigured past systems of movement into new sets of mobilities, it is important to comprehend what flows, corridors and networks existed previously in order to understand what is happening currently and to appreciate how people have experienced and adapted to such change.

The social practice of migration, the economic systems of trade and investment, and the transmission of communication figure in the life histories of people living in the borderlands. While most of the traditional sources (e.g. censuses, assessment records) that historical researchers use are better suited for synchronic as opposed to diachronic analysis, there do exist some sources (e.g. Canadian and American border crossing records, customhouse records, Dun & Bradstreet records) that give us some idea as to the flows, corridors and networks of
movement that took place across the Canada-United States borderland. The following maps illustrate this point.

*Migration Examples*

(Insert Figure 1)

Figure 1 is based on the number of Canadian-born migrants from a random sample of 5,000 individuals collected from the US Soundex Index to Canadian Border Entries entering into the United States during the period 1895-1915. A remarkable 45.5% of the migration sample of 5,000 crossed through four border points that I classify as first order migration gateways: Detroit (20.1%), Port Huron (10.9%), Niagara Falls (7.8%) and Buffalo (6.7%). Detroit was by far the most important entrance to America, not only serving as the terminus for what might be termed as the southwestern Ontario corridor but as the major entry point and destination for those from other parts of Canada as well. It served as a portal for migrants journeying to Michigan destinations, the most important being Detroit itself, as well as locations elsewhere in the Midwest and farther west. Buffalo (Figure 2) was an important gateway in the Great Lakes transportation/investment/migration corridor connecting central southern Ontario, the Niagara Peninsula, the Niagara Frontier, and the Mohawk Valley. This channel of movement connecting two proximate areas with relatively large populations was facilitated by a well established cross-border transportation infrastructure (see Figure 12).

(Insert Figure 2)

Much of the American flow into Canada during the early years of the twentieth century was directed toward the newly opened Prairie Provinces, although there was a significant movement into southern Ontario cities and northern Ontario mining communities as well. The migration fields funneling into western Canada via the selected border-crossing points (Emerson,
Manitoba; North Portal, Saskatchewan; Coutts, Alberta) were wider than those for Ontario
border communities, although significant numbers of American-based migrants bound for
western Canada entered Canada in the east, presumably to catch the transcontinental Canadian
Pacific Railway westward. Just over 54% of the North Portal sample of 500 (Figure 3) came
from the northern Plains with 38% last residing in North Dakota, 15% from Minnesota, and less
than 1% from Montana.

(Insert Figure 3)

b Investment Examples

Aggregate statistics on American investment are deficient in terms of detailed understanding
of specific channels of investment. A more historically and geographically specific view is afforded
by data presented in the R. G. Dun and Company (later Dun and Bradstreet) published credit
reports for Canada. Data on foreign owned companies in Canadian centres with populations greater
or equal to 1,000 people were collected for the first month of the first year in each decade
between 1880 and 1950, except for 1890 because the records for that year were destroyed by fire.
Despite some limitations, these records do provide proxy information on geographical locations of
Canadian businesses owned by American. Over time, capital flows linking particular American
centres with specific Canadian cities created clearly defined corridors and networks that served
to integrate to varying degrees communities and areas across the border. This investment was
most evident in the Great Lakes borderland where southern Ontario in general and Toronto in
particular (Figures 4-5) were the focal points of such activity.

(Insert Figures 4-5)

c Trade Examples
Customhouse records are used to chart the changing geography of cross-border marine commerce taking place within the Great Lakes, Atlantic and Pacific Northwest borderland regions during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Marine trade within the Great Lakes borderlands is illustrated here. Early on, cross-border marine trade was much more important in the lower than upper lakes, and much of this traffic was local in nature, although a few centers on both sides developed strong gravitational pulls that translated into wider commerce fields. Further integration occurred during the middle of the century when a number of factors, including the repeal of the Corn Laws and the negotiation of reciprocity, resulted in increased flows of goods between Ontario and the Great Lakes states. It was also during this period that railways began to replace boats as the primary mode of trade transportation and lake traffic connecting ports such as Rochester, Toronto, Hamilton, Port Hope and Kingston declined significantly (Figures 6-7).

On the upper lakes, cross-border trade between the ports of this region and the lower lakes increased in response to the growing demand for lumber, minerals, and other resources by expanding cities and industries. Duluth, Minnesota emerged as a major hub in this developing network of activity (Figures 8-11). Increasingly, the asymmetrical character of cross-border trade became apparent as the volume of flows favoured the United States. In this context, new corridors developed as older gateways continued to prosper or decline. Specific channels of trade linking geographically proximate communities on both sides of the St. Lawrence and the lakes continued to exist, but for most of these centers, commerce via waterborne transportation faded considerably. Within the larger trade network of the Great Lakes basin, certain arteries of trade became clogged or closed up whereas others were opened.
2 Time-Space Compression

Time-space compression, a term first coined by David Harvey, but an idea that can be traced back to Ralph Waldo Emerson, is used by geographers when considering how societies have used transportation and communication technologies to reduce the friction of distance and facilitate the interaction among places. Harvey argues that “the process of annihilation of space through time ... has always lain at the center of capitalism’s dynamic.” While geographers understand that space- and time-adjusting technologies have existed for centuries, they also recognize that the nature, impact and pace of such developments have rapidly accelerated during the transition to modernity and post-modernity. Carried to an extreme extent, this concept has been used by those who argue for the “end of history” and the “end of geography,” the “death of distance”, the “borderless world,” a “flat world”, the “vanishing of distance”, and the “spaces of flows” replacing the “spaces of places”.

Yet space still matters. Technology may reduce the friction of distance but it does not place us all into one location. There are many kinds of spaces just as there are multiple distances and they all differ according to scale. Because differences exist in space, space cannot be annihilated by time. In fact, one could argue that while time has been compressed, space has been extended, at least for those who live in circumstances where it is more likely they can take advantage of such technologies. Technology has created a space paradox as it simultaneously has reduced the friction of distance, thus shrinking space, and expanded the scope of interaction, thus extending space. Space is elastic and its elasticity varies among different groups and across different places over time. Processes of time-space compression/space-extension have
reconfigured nations, regions, communities and individuals but the nature of such transformations has varied because they occur in different settings. Globalization has not produced a “homogeneous plain,” an “isotropic surface,” or even a “flat world.” An uneven geography ensures such differentiation exists even in the face of mobilities that reshape but do not eliminate territories, and by association, borders.

Before the major technological transformations brought about by the industrial revolution, transport technology was limited to harnessing animal power for land transport and wind power for maritime transport. This meant that human movement and trade for the most part were local in scope. As a result of and in addition to limited transportation, communications between human communities were restricted; few had the opportunity to see or hear beyond their own village or town. At the turn of the nineteenth century, certain flows and networks, some in place for centuries for both aboriginal and non-aboriginal peoples, crossed the newly created political borders that separated the United States from the remaining British North American colonies. Nevertheless, life for most people was circumscribed by the shared spatial and temporal context of the local. In general then, people, at least those of European descent, lived on the farm or in villages and small towns, working the land and relying upon the local community to provide for them. Those who did emigrate usually moved with well-defined streams to nearby places with which they were familiar either through visits or through the reports of family and friends. Indeed, it was more likely at this time that certain indigenous groups, especially those involved in pursuing the buffalo and participating in the fur trade, were the most mobile people on the North American continent. At this point, a non-native borderland zone did exist but it was more or less a territory characterized by a limited degree of interaction between people, businesses and communities that were geographically proximate.
Industrialization developed vehicles of communication and transportation that triggered a shift in the capture of time-space relationships, expanding the experience and cognition of space and time and, by default, increasing the size and reconfiguring the shape of the borderland in spite of any impediments (e.g. immigration or tariff policies) that might serve to hinder interactions taking place across the border. During the nineteenth century, turnpike roads, followed by canals, steamboats, and railroads, along with the telegraph, not only reduced time-space and extended space among communities and regions within Canada and the United States, they also operated to develop and strengthen connections within the borderlands. This increased the capacity of people, businesses and communities to orient themselves with other people and places beyond the local, the regional, and even the national. This annihilation of time and space, in turn, increased the ability of capitalism to expand markets, overcome the costs of distance, and, most importantly, increase profits.

This increased cross-border traffic in trade, as well as migration and investment, took place during a period in which mercantilism and the protectionism it engendered in certain circumstances was giving way to a new world order. No country was better placed to take advantage of this new order than the United States. Even while supporting protectionism, the U.S. successfully engaged in the process of acquiring power both within the hemisphere and elsewhere. An outward diffusion of political ideals, cultural values, investment, and trade consolidated its’ paramount position in the hemisphere and eventually led the country to a position of dominance among global powers. Improvements in communications made possible by transatlantic cables and telegraph links allowed American businesses to expand their markets. The inexorable movement towards globalization combined with America’s imperialistic designs and leadership in industry, technology and intellectual property to increase support for trade
liberalization and a more open economic system. Ironically, the protective policies of Canada, designed to counteract the protectionism practiced by its neighbors to the south, stimulated increased American direct investment in manufacturing activities north of the border. While Canada did develop a domestic manufacturing sector, it functioned primarily in the larger continental system as a supplier of valued staples, while U.S. industries provided technology and finished goods. Industrialization created unprecedented flows of people seeking work in borderland cities, mostly on the American side, and increased mobility afforded by improvements in transportation and higher wages led to greater choices as to where to shop and seek recreation. These new modern mobilities reduced the friction of geographical distance and the psychological hurdle imposed by the concept of the border. As a result, cross-border traffic increased and the nature of the borderland transformed.

Space and time were further unbounded during the early years of the twentieth century when the automobile, the airplane, the telephone, the radio, and other inventions accelerated human interaction and which further entangled the multiple Canada-United States borderlands. Despite restrictive tariffs and other barriers to integration, along with efforts to strengthen national links on the Canadian side, the border became even more porous as the wave of transportation and communication revolutions, combined with the economic attraction of geographical propinquity, promoted an accelerated cross-border interaction. Development in both countries took place during a period of rapid globalization, i.e., a time when “capital and labour flowed across national frontiers in unprecedented quantities, and commodity trade boomed as transport costs declined sharply.”

Much of this traffic took place in an asymmetrical frame where, with a few notable exceptions, labour moved south from Canada to the United States and investment moved north. Borderland cores expanded beyond their initial
restriction to proximate places while borderland peripheries diminished in extent. That is to say, borderlands expanded from spaces immediately on the border to include large regions such as southern Ontario, western New Brunswick, western New York, and most of Michigan, to name just a few examples.

The time-spaces of modernity, constantly accelerating with each advance in capitalism and technology, were mediated but never impeded by the international border. The remarkable growth of the American economy together with a developing economic integration with Canada made possible by increasing trade, technology transfer, investment and labour migration arguably produced some degree of convergence between the two countries. This integration, it might also be claimed, generated significant economic growth and industrial development in Canada, a country that previously was largely a primary product-producing economy. Furthermore, while one might also contend that such integration encouraged convergence - and, by extension, cultural homogenization and economic dependency - across the border, it might also be said that increasing competition with the U.S. and other industrial powers also encouraged Canada to exploit its own strengths and pursue its own development path.

As personal mobility increased, transportation networks expanded, markets developed, and investment accelerated, American-Canadian borderlands became regions of opportunity. More and more, spaces and places on both sides of the international boundary overlapped and both communities and individuals expanded their perspectives beyond the local. American and Canadian industry became increasingly interdependent, but in an asymmetrical fashion. Yet paradoxically, the integrative forces of investment, trade, migration and communication that combined to reshape and further establish a functional borderland zone were increasingly drawn towards other places beyond that of these transnational regions. The opening up of vast spaces
beyond the local, the regional, and the national made possible during the late-twentieth century through new information and communication technologies such as the television, the satellite, the personal computer, and the internet have created what Barney Warf calls a “postmodern time-space compression” and what Fredric Jameson terms a “postmodern hyperspace.” The mobilities created by these new technologies have reconfigured the borderlands, diversifying and accelerating the circulation of peoples, goods, investment, and information and creating, at least at one level, an even more integrated entity. At the same time, however, these technologies along with the deterritorialization of flows of goods and capital resulting from the opening up of countries to global firms, markets, and transactions, have further compressed time-space and extended space so that cross-border connections, once circumscribed by the friction of distance and oriented more towards the borderlands, now have expanded well beyond the border.

During the drive to modernity, the railroad functioned as one of the most important technologies which produced the *time-space compression* that reconfigured cross-border spaces in northern North America. As such, it warrants extra attention. Throughout this period of national expansion in Canada and the United States, the border became permeable and fixed - permeable in the sense that in their plans to expand operations, railway companies on both sides made a number of penetrations into each others' territories; fixed in the sense that both Canadian and American lines operated within tariff-protected home markets. Yet those railways built on both sides paralleling the international boundary were as much borderland railways as those that crossed this same geopolitical border because they were often built in response to what was transpiring on the other side. Lines built specifically to tap cross-border flows of resources and goods or to take advantage of shorter distances paid little attention to the geopolitical division.
However, the nature of such transformations and the relative impact of railroads on borderlands varied because they occurred in different settings and involved different kinds of connections. Because the impact of railways was most pronounced in the Great Lakes transnational region and word space is limited, I will focus on this particular borderland. Along with the development of its own internal network of railway lines, Ontario, particularly the southern peninsula, served as an extraterritorial appendage of American lines connecting the East with the Midwest. The transnational character of transportation within the Great Lakes borderland was apparent even before mid-century when an established canal system combined with rapidly developing rail lines to create a cross-border transportation network that facilitated the movement of goods. As early as 1851, Israel Andrews, Consul of the United States for Canada and New Brunswick, noted that Ontario, or Canada West as it was then known, had a much greater interest in trade with the U.S. than other parts of Canada and in this context was advantaged by superior rail connections to American markets.\textsuperscript{44}

In the early 1850s, lines were built on both sides that paralleled the lakes; in many cases they were built in order to compete with railways on the other side. Toledo and Buffalo were connected by rail in 1852 and in 1854, the Great Western (GWR), linking Buffalo and Detroit via southern Ontario, was finished. The GWR carried American freight across the border while the Grand Trunk Railway (GTR), its major competitor, transported Canadian goods to the U.S. Certain branches of the GTR such as the Buffalo & Lake Huron line, played a key role in this passage. The Erie & Ontario Railway, beginning and connecting with the GTR at Fort Erie, linking with the GWR at the Suspension Bridge, and terminating at Niagara-on-the-Lake, served, in the opinion of Freeman Blake, U.S. Consul at Fort Erie Ontario, as "an important link in the railway system of this province for carrying merchandise to Buffalo, the most convenient port of
entry, to be conveyed from thence without changing of cars or breaking of bulk over the various railways diverging from that natural center of trade, to the principal cities of the United States.”

Even those lines not designed to carry trade back and forth across the border were in many cases built in order to compete with railways on the other side. For example, according to James Little, the Welland Railway, running parallel to the Welland Canal, and carrying goods between Lakes Ontario and Erie, was built exclusively to secure the western trade to and from the St. Lawrence route. Businessmen and politicians on both sides of the border recognized the basic geographical fact that in some locations American outlets formed the best corridors for Canadian trade, whereas in others, Canadian outlets formed the best corridors for American trade.

By the 1870s, railroads dominated transportation in the region and several lines connected communities within and between Ontario and adjacent states. Canadian lines relied for much of their gross revenue on through American traffic between New York and Michigan states. Consolidation of American lines reduced costs and forced the GWR and GTR to amalgamate in 1882 in order to remain competitive. By this time, a dense network of cross-border lines connected just about every part of the Great Lakes borderland region (Figure 12). The end result of this development was a compression of time and space, thus further integrating Ontario communities and businesses with those in the Midwest and Northeast. Yet as evidenced in Figure 12, the spatial reach of the province and the adjacent states via railroads also reached well beyond the borders of the transnational region.

By the turn of the twentieth century, Ontario was emerging as the primary target for American investment in resources and branch plants and often this investment resulted in the construction of rail lines. For example, the Cobourg, Peterborough and Marmora and the
Belleville and North Hastings railways were built in order to service American financed mining ventures north of Lake Ontario. Conversely, Ontario capitalists invested in railways in order to ship resources highly valued in American markets. By this time, transportation and communications technologies were key instruments in the integration of the North American market and railroads, especially those that operated from and within the Great Lakes borderland, played a major role in this transformation. A maze of railway connections facilitated cross-border flows of capital investment within this international region, leading to what Neil Brenner terms reterritorialization, i.e., the reconfiguration and rescaling of forms of territorialisation occurring under specific features of globalization.\textsuperscript{48} Despite protective tariffs, cross-border investment, primarily from the United States and particularly from within American states comprising the Great Lakes borderland, served to “thin” the border and extend socioeconomic, if not geopolitical, territory. Gateways (Detroit-Windsor, Buffalo-Niagara) and corridors created in part by cross-border rail connections enabled market expansion and access to resources and in this context operated as key components of functionally integrated supply chains within the cross-border region. In particular, railways helped create the Toronto-Windsor-Detroit-Chicago transborder trade corridor that is so prominent today.

During the early years of the twentieth century, the automobile, the airplane, the telephone, the radio, and other inventions accelerated human interaction and further unbounded space and time. Trucks would replace trains as the dominant mode of transportation for cross-border commodities. Road and bridge infrastructure in Ontario and across the border provided significantly greater access to major north-south U.S. highways. Highway corridors facilitated the movement of goods within and beyond this busiest of borderland regions. Yet somewhat ironically, towards the end of the twentieth century within the context of globalization and
increasing trade liberalization, railroads have become once again a key component in cross-border trade.

There are fewer trans-border rail connections now, but many of them are still important, at least in some of the borderland regions. The most important change taking place is the expanded geography of distribution well beyond the traditional borderlands. A restructuring of North American transportation corridors following the free trade deals and deregulation has occurred in response to increased trans-border freight traffic and a strengthening of north-south regional corridors that were established previously. These include in terms of rank: the Toronto-Windsor-Detroit-Chicago corridor, the Vancouver-Seattle corridor, and the Montréal-New York corridor, which connects the Quebec-Windsor corridor to the Boston-Washington megalopolis. Key to this development has been the creation of an intermodal transportation system designed to more efficiently transfer goods, usually within containers, and people between different systems of transportation during the course of movement between origin and destination. While earlier railways usually were designed to carry freight and people from specific origins to destinations, often within borderland regions, modern companies operate large networks that cover great distances and connect many places, something that rail transportation does particularly well because of its fuel efficiency over long distances and its ability to carry significantly large volumes of goods.49

The continent’s largest companies, including CN and CP, have extended their spatial reach through purchases and mergers and the net result has been a much more integrated system with Kansas City and Chicago consolidating their positions as key hubs. Much of the traffic coming from Canada via the CN and CP is exchanged between carriers in Chicago. With their purchase of Illinois Central in 1999, CN extended its reach southwards to New Orleans. CP has
moved beyond its traditional Midwestern base and extended its operations into the northeastern U.S. The end result has been the extension of railways and the traffic they carry well beyond the spatial confines of the borderlands zone.

3 The Deterritorialization/Reterritorialization Paradox of Globalization

The radically changing time-spaces of postmodernity now make it much easier for individuals, businesses and communities to interact simultaneously in different places, thus unbounding flows and networks, both digital and non-digital, and, as a consequence, challenging territoriality and the coherence of national units and changing the functions of borders. These new postmodern spatialities and temporalities produce unequal effects that are manifested in space and experienced in different ways by borderlands which vary in terms of history and geography. Here I draw attention to what Doreen Massey calls the power geometry of time-space compression, a phrase she uses to examine the different ways in which groups and individuals are inserted into time and space, assisted or hampered by the ways they are constantly being reconfigured through the dynamics of capitalist development and its associated technologies. To this list, I would add communities and regions, both within national and transnational frames, because they differ as to where they “fit” into the new world order and as a consequence embody different power geometries. However, as many scholars have noted, processes of deterritorialization, caused by globalization, are always connected to movements of reterritorialization. Although deterritorializing influences are felt everywhere, so are reterritorializing forces which attempt to cope with the impacts of globalization and its associated spatialities and temporalities.
The particular historical circumstances of nation-states are of central importance in understanding how the processes of deterritorialization and reterritorialization operated in the context of forces of globalization. Certainly in the case of Canada’s relationship with the United States, the rise of the latter as a global imperial power was crucial in shaping the variable borderlands shared by both countries. Donald Meinig argues that imperial behaviour for the United States dates at least to the Louisiana Purchase, which he describes as an “imperial acquisition – imperial in the sense of the aggressive encroachment of one people on the territory of another, resulting in the subjugation of that people to alien rule.”

While European powers built overseas colonies during the nineteenth century, the United States directed its efforts to conquer space and develop institutions and infrastructure to stabilize and extend that territorial control. It was this focus on national, or what may more appropriately be termed transcontinental, expansion that, in Jason Moore’s opinion:

“... gave American capital tremendous advantages. National-continental expansion was considerably cheaper than overseas colonial expansion. More significantly, the creation of a continental economy—unprecedented in modern world history—gave the U.S. a distinct competitive advantage in the struggle for world supremacy that attended the crisis of British hegemony in the later 19th century.”

However, the end of the frontier, the economic recession of the 1890s, and the internationalization of investment stimulated a change in direction. More and more “it was believed that expanding overseas markets could remedy sagging domestic demand (though expansion need not be by military force), while ‘social imperialists’ argued that expansion abroad could deflect domestic class and ethnic conflicts into a common patriotism.” The implementation of laissez-faire trade policies following the repeal of the Corn Laws (1848) resulted in a rapid internationalization of the world economy, before the United States led the
movement back to more protective regimes during the last two decades of the century. “After 1887,” David Lake contends, “the United States began actively to promote exports through bilateral reciprocity treaties and duty-free raw materials while maintaining the essential structure of protection.”

It was this kind of sustained interaction and resultant integration of world regions via large-scale immigration, free trade and capital mobility that has prompted some to believe that a rudimentary form of globalization was at work. New technologies improving the efficiency of steam engines allowed ships to carry more freight than coal, resulting in increased volumes of international trade and a greater degree of world economic connections.

Even while supporting protectionism, the United States successfully engaged in the process of acquiring power both within the hemisphere and elsewhere. An outward diffusion of political ideals, cultural values, investment, and trade consolidated its’ paramount position in the hemisphere and eventually led the country to a position of dominance among global powers. A generous resource base combined with production and technological innovations and capital exports to ensure that the country was well positioned to compete with Europeans in the international marketplace. While Central America and the Caribbean are generally viewed to be the initial arenas for U.S. imperialism during this time, an experiment in power assertion that proved to be largely unsuccessful, Canada would also feel the impact of the rapidly expanding American empire.

In point of fact, this impact was already felt earlier in the century when the United States was involved primarily in transcontinental expansion. By 1866 the grand imperial design of the United States was on the point of realization, with all geopolitical competitors either driven militarily from the desirable parts of North America (Mexico), bought out (France, Mexico, Russia) or suppressed (the Mormons, indigenous Americans, and the Confederacy). The Alaska
Purchase and Confederation removed the last two geopolitical competitors of the United States from the stage, the most serious of which was Britain. The emergence in the Civil War of a new class of American warships, the monitors, removed Britain’s ability to control American harbours with ships of the Warrior class. The victory of the Union in the Civil War affirmed the position of the United States as a great regional power that Britain would no longer be able to challenge on the North American continent. Unchallenged in the hemisphere, Americans were well situated to expend their energies on consolidating the country’s internal empire and then extending America’s reach beyond geopolitical borders. Eventually the country would readjust its attitudes towards protectionism, especially in the face of a weakening British hegemony on the world stage:

“Between 1897 and World War I, America's recognition that its policies could and did affect the international economy was primarily reflected in the pursuit of the Open Door abroad. After 1913, the United States undertook a greater leadership role within the international economy. It lowered its tariff wall at home and, at the end of the war, attempted to create and maintain a new and fundamentally liberal international economy based on the Open Door principle.”

Despite the failure on the part of both the Canadian and American governments to achieve reciprocity, the magnetic attraction of the leviathan to the south would eventually prove too great for Canadian capitalists and politicians to resist, especially after the U.S. began to lower its protective walls. American industrialization exerted a much greater demand for new staples that Canada had in abundance, thus facilitating a fundamental redirection in Canadian exports. Foreign investment in resource extraction combined with the establishment of U.S.-controlled branch plants designed to produce for a growing Canadian market furthered the level of economic integration between the two countries. The time-spaces of modernity, constantly
accelerating with each advance in capitalism and technology, were mediated but never impeded by national borders. The remarkable growth of the American economy together with a developing economic integration with Canada made possible by increasing trade, technology transfer, investment and labour migration arguably produced some degree of convergence between the two countries. This integration, it might also be argued, generated significant economic growth and industrial development in Canada, a country that previously was largely a primary product-producing economy. Furthermore, while one might also contend that such integration encouraged convergence - and, by extension, cultural homogenization and economic dependency - across the border, it might also be said that increasing competition with the U.S. and other industrial powers also encouraged Canada to exploit its own strengths and pursue its own development path.

As personal mobility increased, transportation networks expanded, markets developed, and investment accelerated, American-Canadian borderlands became regions of opportunity. More and more, spaces and places on both sides of the international boundary overlapped and both communities and individuals expanded their perspectives beyond the local. American and Canadian industry became increasingly interdependent, but in an asymmetrical fashion. While Canada did develop a domestic manufacturing sector, it functioned primarily in the larger continental system as a supplier of valued staples, while U.S. industries provided technology and finished goods. Industrialization created unprecedented flows of people seeking work in borderland cities, mostly on the American side, and increased mobility afforded by improvements in transportation and higher wages led to greater choices as to where to shop and seek recreation. These new modern mobilities reduced the friction of geographical distance and
the psychological hurdle imposed by the concept of the border. As a result, cross-border traffic increased and the nature of the borderlands transformed.

With the passing of time, Canada and the United States developed an increasingly interdependent and asymmetrical relationship. Nation-states reverted to protectionism during the 1930s as governments focused on dealing with internal problems resulting from the global economic collapse. This gave rise to Keynesian liberalism which supported the principle of a free market but also recognized that because the market did not always work in the best interests of those from the lower socioeconomic strata of society, it was incumbent upon the state to protect these groups from the harshest consequences of capitalism. Yet even while Keynesian liberalism remained the dominant paradigm over the next few decades, it “existed alongside the American government’s desire to move towards the vision inspired by FDR’s Secretary of State Cordell Hull: global free trade and an expansion of the long-standing American policy of the open door to foreign investment.”

Leo Panitch and Sam Gindin claim that by taking the responsibility for the creation of a world of liberal trade and capitalist accumulation, the American state was pursuing the historical path of imperialism that can be traced back to what Thomas Jefferson called ‘extensive empire and self-government.’ The construction of the military-industrial complex, they contend, enabled the United States to develop sufficient capacity to globalize its imperial reach. It was through foreign investment that America was able to establish networks of integrated production across borders. Certainly Canada, as the recipient of considerable American investment, was greatly influenced by this capitalist imperialism. “American investment in Canada and Canadian investment in the U.S.,” Panitch and Gindin maintain, “are both expressions of American imperialism: on the one hand the American penetration of Canadian social relations, and on the
other the determination on the part of Canadian business to be directly inside the core of the empire and under the direct protection of the American state (e.g. to benefit from the property rights and labour relations regime, and to gain access to American markets and achieve security against possible protectionist measures).’’

Increasing corporatization and American foreign ownership further strengthened by the pro-investment policies of C.D. Howe, the American-born Minister of “Everything” in Mackenzie King’s and Louis St. Laurent’s governments, led to an accelerated degree of interdependence and convergence, or what many label as continentalism, between the two countries even though the junior partner continued to seek ways and means to ensure its political and cultural sovereignty in the face of the integrative forces coming primarily from south of the border.

However, a number of developments occurring over the course of the last four decades have signaled a relative change in this relationship. There is sufficient evidence to support the contention that even before the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) decided in 1973 to restrict oil output, thus driving up the price of oil, causing inflation, and triggering a recession that lasted throughout the 1970s and extended into the next decade, the primacy of the United States in the global economy was already diminishing. Certainly it was during the Vietnam War that the U.S. quickly expanded both its’ national debt and the amount of dollars accumulating abroad, a trend that has continued largely unabated since that time. An increasing trade deficit, a declining dollar, and the collapse of supportive international regimes such as the Bretton Woods system also served to weaken U.S. pre-eminence in the 1970s, even though America continued in its position at the top of the economic ladder. Yet its’ grip on that rung was starting to slip somewhat.
The Reagan administration of the 1980s initiated a number of policies that included deregulating financial markets and businesses, lowering corporate tax cuts, attacking unions, and increasing military spending, which together led to rising interest and exchange rates that triggered massive trade deficits. Furthermore, James Crotty maintains that accelerated capital mobility resulting from globalization increased the threat that firms would shift production outside the country unless workers accepted lower wages and benefits. In fact, it was the United States, Crotty argues, that led the movement to remove barriers to the movement of goods and money across borders so that American multinational corporations could take advantage “of rapidly growing economies and cheaper labour in countries whose technology was advancing, in part due to rising U.S. investment.” This move towards, or more accurately, return to laissez-faire liberalism took place within an international environment transformed by quantum-shifting transportation and communication technologies. Also important was the increasing pressure that rapidly rising economies in China, India, and various eastern Asian countries put on the United States.

As a consequence, the United States and other western industrial countries adopted the view that Keynesian economic policies should be abandoned in favour of neoliberal strategies that privileged the market and facilitated the flow of capital and goods. The development of unrestricted trade and the open flow of financial capital across borders, facilitated by postmodern time-space compression-space extension technologies, increased the relative strength of western-based multinational corporations and international economic and technological interdependencies, leading many to believe that a process of deterritorialization was taking place at the expense of the nation-state. Such a development can be judged to be revolutionary in light of the argument which holds that “modern territorial states, and then nation-states, emerged as an
integral part of the rise of capitalism."[^68] As Mark Berger elaborates: “between the mid-1940s and the mid-1970s the dominant development discourse was grounded in the assumption that nation-states were homogenous and natural units of a wider international politico-economic order and that state-mediated national development could, should and would lead to economic, and eventually even political, outcomes beneficial to, or at least in the best interests of, virtually all citizens.”[^69] This confidence in the inviolability of the nation-state was given a further boost as former colonies fought for independence. Yet at the same time, Paolo Cuttita points out, “the great economic and technological developments [gave] ... more solid bases for the multiplication of international subjectivities and of their interdependencies, as well as for the de-territorialization of power relations and for the end of the international state-based order. The crisis of such an order, based on nation-states and on territoriality, becomes evident only in the last part of the century, in the years after the end of the Cold War, but it actually started long before ....”[^70]

Yet even as this newest phase of global capitalism was taking form during the 1970s and 1980s, when the globalizing impulse could be seen as trending towards greater homogeneity, unified culture, and what V S Naipaul termed a universal civilisation,[^71] nation-states, and in particular, the United States, continued to play an important role. One might argue that supra-territorialization, rather than de-territorialization, is a more exact term with which to describe the results of technologies and business practices that reduced the friction of distance and expanded the space of commerce but it is important to recognize that all of this did not occur in a vacuum. While there are strong arguments supporting the position that globalization has further empowered the position of multinational corporations at the expense of nation-states through their increasing ability to integrate national economies into global networks, there are also
formidable grounds supporting the view that nation-states, at least the more powerful ones, still have the means by which they can control their responses to globalization. Through negotiation, nation-states develop regulatory frameworks that both enable and limit transborder flows of capital and goods. Indeed, one could argue that neoliberalism requires the nation-state to establish the conditions necessary to implement neoliberal policies. While neoliberalism promotes the extension of markets and criticizes collectivist strategies, it is neither monolithic in form nor universal in effect; rather it exists in historically and geographically contingent forms and so can be interpreted and acted upon in divergent ways.  

As discussed, the most important factors contributing to globalization include the growth of multinational corporations, new communication and transportation technologies that reduce the barriers of time and distance and expand the spatial reach of commerce, and the combination of tariff reductions and the growth of free trade. All of these factors which contribute to economic and other kinds of integration operate within global networks that have expanded in variable and uneven ways. They also operate within the framework of trading blocs (e.g. the European Economic Community, later rebranded and reshaped as the European Union, and the association created when the United States and Canada signed the Free trade Agreement in 1988) accompanying the spread of global capitalism in the latter part of the twentieth century. This paradox created by the simultaneity of globalization and regionalization processes has generated much debate.

On the one hand, there are those who maintain that regional trade blocs encourage and speed up globalization while on the other, there are individuals who believe that such associations support regional, as opposed to global, interests thus facilitating the move towards an even more fragmented world economy. The United States initially favoured multilateral
liberalization through the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) but changed its position after encountering resistance from Europe, in particular, the European Economic Community (EEC), and poorer member countries during the 1982 GATT Ministerial Conference in Geneva. The U.S. subsequently supported “a ‘two-track’ approach – reaching bilateral agreements with individual countries while at the same time pursuing multilateral accords to achieve an open trading system. This move toward bilateralism led to the 1984 Caribbean Basin Initiative granting trade preferences to countries in the region, a trade pact with Israel a year later, and the Canada–United States Free Trade Agreement (FTA) (1988), extended to Mexico in 1994 by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).”

Canada, which had long vacillated over the question of reciprocity, experienced what is arguably the most passionate debate in its history but ultimately voted in favour of free trade. While the discussion covered a wide range of economic, political, cultural, and ideological themes, at its very core, it pitted those who argued for against those who were critical of neoliberalism. Advocates reasoned that free trade was a necessary step if Canada was going to succeed in a new, i.e., neoliberal, global economy. Specifically, they maintained that the country needed a greater volume of trade and capital flowing through the economy.

Ironically, this debate was taking place during a transitional period in which Canada was moving farther away from a position of dependency to one in which it was extending its own imperialistic tendencies beyond its borders. Tom Naylor and Wallace Clement argue that during the 1950s and 1960s, American multinationals established a continental structure of corporate power, with headquarters in the United States and Canadian branches managed by a ‘comprador’ elite. Yet as William Carroll has so effectively demonstrated, this changed during the transition to post-Keynesian globalization taking place during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s when a
weakening of interlocks between Canadian and U.S. corporations, and an expansion of ties between Canadian and European firms increased concentration and integration within North America.\(^7\) Carroll illustrates that during the period 1976-1996, the Canadian-based financial capital segment gained greater control over domestic industry, became more transnational in its operations, and actively participated in global policy circles through membership in organizations like the Trilateral Commission. His work suggests that during this time, there was “a resurgence of Canadian capitalist control of big industry” and that Canadian capital was strong enough and sufficiently independent enough from American imperialism to finance investments both at home and invest abroad.\(^6\) Canadian finance capital, Carroll shows, is no longer dominated by a comprador class but is actively engaged in the globalization process. In other words, by the end of the 1980s and the beginning of Canadian-American free trade, Canada was well on its way to becoming a full member of the global imperialist club even as the stage was set for increasing trade and economic integration with the United States.

Although this summary is far from thorough, it does highlight the historical context of the developing Canadian-American relationship with particular emphasis on the impacts of time-space compression/extension and changing phases of globalization over time. Presently, there are many kinds of deterritorialization and reterritorialization processes at work. One evident trend is that which involves the relocation of some components of state sovereignty to supranational bodies both located in and oriented towards specific cross-border regions. Central to this process is the implementation of various cross-border cooperation schemes aimed at re-defining and extending traditional connections and developing new economic linkages and cross-border governances that on one hand recognize state sovereignty but on the other hand understand the greater need for communities and regions to cooperate with their counterparts along and across
common borders in the face of increasing global competition. The devolution of some powers to and the support of transnational regions, along with the greater support for cross-border cooperation, is evidence that all levels of governments and business groups recognize that the bordered territorial state is struggling to meet the requirements of a world of flows and networks and that a new kind of spatial fix recognizing other types of territorial organizations is needed. Yet while the spatial fix of the postmodern era may mean that the nation-state may be giving up some traditional powers of control, it is not dying. The “new identities” of postmodernity, Hastings Donnan and Thomas Wilson suggest, are still shaped by state structures. Also, there is evidence to suggest that the development of new technologies has in a variety of ways increased the need for highly specialized regions, places and localities for the production and use of those technologies. Indeed, it may be argued that underneath modern consumer culture a significant, and, perhaps, an increasing degree of localism exists. It has proven to be flexible enough to adjust to deterritorialization tendencies and cope with the changes that have occurred. In this context, flows may serve as instruments in creating new kinds of territorial units and therefore new types of borderlands.

IV Conclusion

An increasing interdisciplinary focus has resulted in the widening of the ontology and epistemology of borders and borderlands. But as the scope of study has expanded and new approaches have been invented, it appears ever more obvious that no one theory or approach can adequately address the increasing range of interests and questions that characterize this growing field. Yet while there is no single border theory, nor is there likely to be such a theory, there is value in attempting to develop a set of concepts that transcend disciplinary boundaries and
provide a common frame of reference that help guide researchers in their work. I have argued that a spatial grammar based on the precepts of postmodernism, time-space compression, and the de/re-territorialization paradox provides a constructive basis for historical research on the Canadian-American borderlands. While transnational histories acknowledge the importance of states, they focus attention on the flows and networks of peoples, goods, ideas, capital and institutions that transcend politically defined spaces. Such flows and networks and the resulting corridors, hubs and gateways they produce are constantly transforming as circumstances, both internal and external, change. This spatial grammar serves as a useful framework in which to understand this ongoing evolution and thus may prove of value in studying borderlands beyond the ones shared by Canada and the United States.

List of Figures

Figure 1. Great Lakes Borderland Region: Canadian-Born Migrants Entering the U.S. at Detroit, Michigan, 1895-1915

Figure 2. Great Lakes Borderland Region: Canadian-Born Migrants Entering the U.S. at Buffalo, New York, 1895-1915

Figure 3. Prairie Borderland Region: Migration into Canadian Prairie Provinces through North Portal, Saskatchewan, 1908-1919

Figure 4. Great Lakes Borderland Region: American Parent Locations for Branches in Toronto, 1900

Figure 5. Great Lakes Borderland Region: American Parent Locations for Branches in Toronto, 1930
Figure 6: Great Lakes Borderland Region: Canadian Vessel Entries at Rochester, New York, 1866-1870

Figure 7. Great Lakes Borderland Region: Canadian Vessel Entries at Rochester, New York, 1871-1875

Figure 8. Great Lakes Borderland Region: Canadian Vessel Entries at Duluth, Minnesota, 1872-1876

Figure 9. Great Lakes Borderland Region: Canadian Vessel Entries at Duluth, Minnesota, 1877-1881

Figure 10. Great Lakes Borderland Region: Canadian Vessel Entries at Duluth, Minnesota, 1882-1886

Figure 11. Great Lakes Borderland Region: Canadian Vessel Entries at Duluth, Minnesota, 1887-1892

Figure 12. The Grand Trunk and Great Western Railway System, 1885
Figure 1
Figure 2
Great Lakes Borderland Region: American Parent Locations for Branches in Toronto, 1900

Number of investors
1. MD
2. MA

Within Great Lakes Region
Number of branches
- 50

Number of investors
- 1 - 5
- 6 - 10
- 11 - 20

Source: Dun & Bradstreet Records

Figure 4
Great Lakes Borderland Region: American Parent Locations for Branches in Toronto, 1930

Source: Dun & Bradstreet Records

Figure 5
Figure 6
Great Lakes Borderland Region: Canadian Vessel Entries at Rochester, New York, 1871-1875

Within Great Lakes Region

- 1 - 20
- 21 - 40
- 41 - 62
- Total vessel entries

158

Source: U.S. Custom-House and Port Records

Figure 7
Great Lakes Borderland Region: Canadian Vessel Entries at Duluth, Minnesota, 1872-1876

Source: U.S. Custom-House and Port Records

Figure 8
Great Lakes Borderland Region: Canadian Vessel Entries at Duluth, Minnesota, 1877-1881

Outside Great Lakes Region

Number of vessels
6 Montreal

Within Great Lakes Region

Number of vessels
1 - 20
222
200
50
50

Total vessel entries
565

Source: U.S. Custom-House and Port Records

Figure 9
Great Lakes Borderland Region: Canadian Vessel Entries at Duluth, Minnesota, 1882-1886

Outside Great Lakes Region
Number of vessels
21 Montreal

Within Great Lakes Region
Number of vessels
1 – 20
61 – 100
178
222
Total vessel entries
677

Source: U.S. Custom-House and Port Records

Figure 10
Great Lakes Borderland Region: Canadian Vessel Entries at Duluth, Minnesota, 1887-1892

Outside Great Lakes Region

Number of vessels
20 Montreal

Within Great Lakes Region

Number of vessels
- 1 - 20
- 21 - 40
- 41 - 60
- 101 - 200
- 256
Total vessel entries

Source: U.S. Custom-House and Port Records
Figure 12. The Grand Trunk and Great Western Railway System, 1885
Endnotes


3 ibid, x.


10 Arturo Rosenblueth, Norbert Wiener and Julian Bigelow. “Behavior, Purpose and Teleology,”

*Philosophy of Science* 10 (1943), 18-24.


13 ibid, 361.

14 For example, see: Ian Tyrell, “American Exceptionalism in an Age of International History,”


15 John Agnew, “The territorial trap: The geographical assumptions of international relations theory,” *Review of International Political Economy* 1, 1 (1994), 76-77. This trap involves three assumptions: “The first assumption, and the one that is most fundamental theoretically, is the reification of state territorial spaces as fixed units of secure sovereign space. The second is the division of the domestic from the foreign. The third geographical assumption is of the territorial state as existing prior to and as a container of society.”

16 Hämäläinen demonstrates his understanding of space in his book *The Comanche Empire* in which he categorizes empire as spatial organization and examines how the Comanches employed spatial strategies to assert their political and cultural hegemony and control trade and resources.


the American and Canadian Wests: Essays on Regional History of the Forty-Ninth Parallel


19 In my work, I employ the typology suggested by McKinsey and Konrad, who identify five specific borderland regions: the Atlantic, the St. Lawrence, the Great Lakes, the Prairies/Plains,

20 My use of the term organic in no way resembles the organic state analogy held by Frederich Ratzel and Rudolf Kjellen. Influenced by Social Darwinism, Ratzel argued that it is the natural condition of states to grow like an organism. Yet while Ratzel saw the development of the state as an evolutionary process and political geography as a part of the natural sciences, he was always careful to employ biology only as an analogy. Rudolf Kjellen, on the other hand, viewed the state as a living organism, arguing that the interdependence and people and land creates an organic state. I see the borderland as an organism only in the sense that it is malleable and can expand or contract with changing internal and external forces that promote integration or disintegration. For a discussion of Ratzel’s and Kjellen’s view of the state, see: Richard Croker, “Organic State Theory.” in R.W. McColl, ed., *Encyclopedia of World Geography* (New York: Golson Books, 2005), 109.


Konrad and Nicol, *Beyond Walls*, 92.


Fredric Jameson opens two of his books on postmodernism with the following sentences: “Always historicize!” and "It is safest to grasp the concept of the postmodern as an attempt to think the present historically in an age that has forgotten how to think historically in the first


32 Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*, 293.


40 Time-space compression/extension is an idea that is closely related to the concept of *time-space distanciation* advanced by Anthony Giddens. * Time-space distanciation describes the
process whereby remote interaction has become an increasingly significant feature of human life, and through which social systems that were previously distinctive have become connected and interdependent because of technological advances in communications and transportation. See:


42 Warf, *Time-Space Compression*.


44 United States, Department of the Treasury, *Communication from the secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, in compliance with a resolution of the Senate of March 8, 1851, the report of Israel D. Andrews, Consul of the United States for Canada and New Brunswick, on the trade and commerce of the British North American colonies, and upon the trade of the Great Lakes and rivers; also notices of the internal improvements in each state, of the Gulf of Mexico and straits*

45 Canada, Sessional Papers Vol. 5, No. 6, Report of the Minister of Agriculture for the Calendar Year 1889, Freeman Blake, U.S. Consul, Fort Erie, to William Seward, Secretary of State, July 5, 1865 (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1890).

46 James Little, A Warning to Capitalists, Railway Brokers, and Investors in Canadian Railway Securities: The Great Southern or; Niagara and Detroit Rivers Railway (Caledonia, Canada West: Thomas Messenger, printer, 1859), 22.


60 For discussion of the attempts made by both countries to reverse protectionism and develop free trade, see: Randy William Widdis, “'Across the Boundary in a Hundred Torrents’: The Changing Geography of Marine Trade Within the Great Lakes Borderland Region During the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries,” *Annals, Association of American Geographers* 10, 1 (2011), 356-379.


ibid, 10.


ibid, 86.


ibid, 889.


81 This privileging of the local is central to the concept of glocalization, a neologism that conveys the exploitation of the local at the same time of the pronouncement of the global. Glocalization is
the passing of power downwards in several ways (e.g. the decentralization of markets, devolution in authority to regions and communities, etc.).
INTRODUCTION (CONFERENCE VERSION)

MUCH ABBREVIATED VERSION OF THE LARGER PAPER

While the expansion of border and borderland studies into a broad interdisciplinary field has given rise to new combinations in approaches, there still exists uncertainty as to the role of theory in such research. Despite the fact that there is an obvious need for theorizing borders and borderlands, the variegated nature of borders with their own contextual features, power relations and unique histories make the development of a general theory virtually impossible (Paasi, 2011). In addition to the absence of a universal theory, distinctions between disciplines in terms of their epistemologies make it even more difficult for scholars to communicate and engage in meaningful dialogue and cooperative research.

While this paper makes no attempt to develop either a general theory of borders or to devise a methodology that transcends disciplinary boundaries, it does outline an approach which I call spatial grammar that offers a framework for studying the evolution of borderlands over time. I hope to demonstrate the usefulness of this approach especially as it relates to the Canada-United States case.

A SPATIAL GRAMMAR OF BORDERLANDS

While borderland historical geographies provide essential insights into the borderlands of today, like others (e.g. Wynn, 2005; Konrad and Nicol, 2008), I argue that historical and geographical research can benefit from the study of contemporary borders and borderlands because researchers engaged in the latter have been generally more active and successful in conceptualizing and theorizing borders and borderlands than those engaged in the former. Three approaches and concepts in particular - postmodernism, time-space compression, and the deterritorialization/reterritorialization paradox of globalization – serve as foundations upon
which I build the *syntax* of my spatial grammar framework. This spatial grammar can provide insights into the historical analysis of the Canadian-American border regions and more broadly contribute to the comparative and transnational approaches to borderlands history.

**i) A Postmodern Perspective**

According to Victor Konrad and Heather Nicol (2008, 92), much of the work in borderlands, particularly in the Canada-United States context, has benefited from a postmodern point of view. Ironically, this argument runs counter to the postmodernist contention that globalization threatens the particularity of places, borders, and territoriality. In terms of borders, many argue that postmodernism’s emphasis on hybridity makes the notions of boundaries and, by extension, the nation-state, obsolete. Postmodernists also challenge the traditional belief that it is possible to establish the truth about the past. Given these proclivities, one might well ask what postmodernism can offer to any historical study of borderland evolution and transnational relations.

While postmodernists see history as an artificial construction and question historians’ claims to historical truth, postmodernism does not necessarily point to the disappearance of history, only to more complicated ways of grasping the past (Dirlik, 2000). History is essential to postmodernism because postmodernism seeks to understand itself as a historical condition through theoretical means. While postmodernists talk about the end of the nation-state and a borderless world, their emphasis on culture and identity has paradoxically stimulated a rethinking of borders, borderlands, and transnationalism. Despite their arguments for the abandonment of conventional concepts such as center, periphery and hierarchy, postmodernists support alternative concepts including flows, nodes, and networks that serve as useful tools to help us see, think and speak about borderland processes and landscapes. In addition, the postmodern suspicion of the meta-narrative has reinforced an approach to borders and
borderlands that is sensitive to regional and local differences and the idea that borderland identities are multilayered and responsive to scale.

Finally, a postmodern perspective lends itself to a view of the borderland as a *liminal* geographical space/historical time, a place of ambiguity and indeterminacy that is constantly in a state of evolution. Such an outlook does not necessarily have to limit itself to the view that the nation-state is declining in its ability to shape identity and to have an impact on peoples’ lives. In particular, the postmodern lens raises questions regarding borders’ functions in terms of ordering, othering and interactions (Warf, 2008). Its emphasis on difference and case studies also implies that there exist separate practices and experiences of bordering.

Borderlands are hybrid spaces of flows, always changing and responding to multiple influences. Flows occur in both space and time and have both volume and direction. Because they often illustrate *asymmetrical* relations, they have the potential to reveal much about cores and peripheries. The identification of those corridors, which serve as the main spatial paths of movement across borders, is essential to our understanding of borderlands as functional entities transcending boundaries. Hubs are dominant distribution centres from which major transportation routes radiate to their hinterlands. Gateways are specific nodes often situated at the margins of their regions that promote the continuity of circulation within corridors. Gateways, hubs and corridors articulate the spatial structures of cross-border regional flows of people, goods, ideas and capital. They are temporally and spatially dynamic and are seen to be integrators of space that bind communities on both sides of the boundary into interrelated international regions.

The discussion of flows is better understood when viewed as regional and local networks of economic, political and cultural power trajectories that traverse specific nodes, link cores and peripheries, concentrate within specific corridors, and as Donna Haraway (1991) argues,
congregate in certain regions and not others. One can view borderlands as *arterial systems* pulsating with the circulation of persons, goods, money, and ideas and as networks connecting a series of corridors and core and periphery nodes where decisions are made, policies applied, transactions negotiated, and goods exchanged. Because the most recent phase of globalization has reconfigured past systems of movement into new sets of mobilities, it is important to comprehend what flows, corridors and networks existed previously in order to understand what is happening currently and to appreciate how people have experienced and adapted to such change.

**SHOW FEW EXAMPLES OF MAPS I HAVE CREATED THAT DEMONSTRATE CROSS-BORDER FLOWS AND NETWORKS**

**ii) Time-Space Compression**

Time-space compression is used by geographers when considering how societies have used transportation and communication technologies to reduce the friction of distance and facilitate the interaction among places. While geographers understand that space- and time-adjusting technologies have existed for centuries, they also recognize that the nature, impact and pace of such developments have rapidly accelerated during the transition to modernity and post-modernity. Carried to an extreme extent, this concept has been used by those who argue for the “end of geography” (Fukuyama, 1992) and the “end of history” (O’Brien, 1992), the “death of distance” (Cairncross, 1997), the “borderless world” (Ohmae, 1995), a “flat world” (Friedman, 2005), the “vanishing of distance” (Reich, 2001), and the “spaces of flows” replacing the “spaces of places” (Castells, 1996-1998).

Yet space still matters. Technology may reduce the friction of distance but it does not place us all into one location. There are many kinds of spaces just as there are multiple distances and they all differ according to scale. Because differences exist in space, space cannot be annihilated by time. In fact, one could argue that while time has been compressed, space has
been extended, at least for those who live in circumstances where it is more likely they can take advantage of such technologies. Technology has created a space paradox as it simultaneously has reduced the friction of distance, thus shrinking space, and expanded the scope of interaction, thus extending space. Space is elastic and its elasticity varies among different groups and across different places over time. Processes of time-space compression/space-extension have reconfigured nations, regions, communities and individuals but the nature of such transformations has varied because they occur in different settings.

Before the major technological transformations brought about by the industrial revolution, transport technology was limited to harnessing animal power for land transport and wind power for maritime transport. This meant that most human movement and a good deal of trade were local in scope. As a result of and in addition to limited transportation, communications between human communities were restricted; few had the opportunity to see or hear beyond their own village or town. At the turn of the nineteenth century, certain flows and networks, some in place for centuries for both aboriginal and non-aboriginal peoples, crossed the newly created political borders that separated the United States from the remaining British North American colonies. Nevertheless, life for most people was circumscribed by the shared spatial and temporal context of the local. In general then, people, at least those of European descent, lived on the farm or in villages and small towns, working the land and relying upon the local community to provide for them. Those who did emigrate usually moved within well-defined streams to nearby places with which they were familiar either through visits or through the reports of family and friends. Indeed, it was more likely at this time that certain indigenous groups, especially those involved in pursuing the buffalo and participating in the fur trade, were the most mobile people on the North American continent.
Industrialization developed vehicles of communication and transportation that triggered a shift in the capture of time-space relationships, expanding the experience and cognition of space and time and, by default, increasing the size and reconfiguring the shape of the borderland in spite of any impediments that might have served to hinder interactions taking place across the border. During the nineteenth century, turnpike roads, followed by canals, steamboats, and railroads, along with the telegraph, not only reduced time-space and extended space among communities and regions within Canada and the United States, they also operated to develop and strengthen connections within the borderlands. This increased the capacity of people, businesses and communities to orient themselves with other people and places beyond the local, the regional, and even the national.

Space and time were further unbounded during the early years of the twentieth century when the automobile, the airplane, the telephone, the radio, and other inventions accelerated human interaction and further entangled the multiple Canada-United States borderlands. Despite restrictive tariffs and other barriers to integration, along with efforts to strengthen national links on the Canadian side, the border became even more porous as the wave of transportation and communication revolutions, combined with the economic attraction of geographical propinquity, promoted an accelerated cross-border interaction. Much of this traffic took place in an asymmetrical frame where, with a few notable exceptions, labour moved south from Canada to the United States and investment moved north. Borderland cores expanded beyond their initial restriction to proximate places while borderland peripheries diminished in extent. Yet paradoxically, the integrative forces of investment, trade, migration and communication that combined to reshape and further establish a functional borderland were increasingly drawn towards other places beyond those of the transnational regions.
The opening up of vast spaces beyond the local, the regional, and the national made possible during the late-twentieth century through new information and communication technologies such as the television, the satellite, the personal computer, and the internet have created what Barney Warf (2008) calls a “postmodern time-space compression” and what Fredric Jameson (1998) terms a “postmodern hyperspace.” The mobilities created by these new technologies have reconfigured the borderlands, diversifying and accelerating the circulation of peoples, goods, investment, and information and creating, at least at one level, an even more integrated entity.

iii) The deterritorialization/reterritorialization paradox of globalization

At the same time, however, these technologies along with the deterritorialization of flows of goods and capital resulting from the opening up of countries to global firms, markets, and transactions, have further compressed time-space and extended space so that cross-border connections, once circumscribed by the friction of distance and oriented more towards the borderlands, now have expanded well beyond the border. The radically changing time-spaces of postmodernity now make it much easier for individuals, businesses and communities to interact simultaneously in different places, thus unbounding flows and networks, both digital and non-digital, and, as a consequence, challenging territoriality and the coherence of national units and changing the functions of borders (Appadurai, 1996). These new postmodern spatialities and temporalities produce unequal effects that are manifested in space and experienced in different ways by borderlands which vary in terms of history and geography.

However, as many scholars have noted (e.g. Deleuze and Guattari 1980; Ó Tuathail and Luke, 1994), although deterritorializing influences are felt everywhere, so are reterritorializing forces which attempt to cope with the impacts of globalization and its associated spatialities and temporalities. One such coping strategy is that which involves the relocation of some
components of state sovereignty to supranational bodies both located in and oriented towards specific cross-border regions. Central to this process is the implementation of various cross-border cooperation schemes aimed at re-defining and extending traditional connections and developing new economic linkages and cross-border governances that on one hand recognize state sovereignty but on the other hand understand the greater need for communities and regions to cooperate with their counterparts along and across common borders in the face of increasing global competition. The devolution of some powers to and the support of transnational regions, along with the greater support for cross-border cooperation, is evidence that all levels of governments and business groups recognize that the bordered territorial state is struggling to meet the requirements of a world of flows and networks and that a new kind of spatial fix recognizing other types of territorial organizations is needed. Yet while the spatial fix of the postmodern era may mean that the nation-state may be giving up some traditional powers of control, it is not dying. It has proven to be flexible enough to adjust to deterritorialization tendencies and cope with the changes that have occurred. In this context, flows may serve as instruments in creating new kinds of territorial units and therefore new types of borderlands.

CONCLUSION

An increasing interdisciplinary focus has resulted in the widening of the ontology and epistemology of borders and borderlands. But as the scope of study has expanded and new approaches have been invented, it appears ever more obvious that no one theory or approach can adequately address the increasing range of interests and questions that characterize this growing field. Yet while there is no single border theory, nor is there likely to be such a theory, there is value in attempting to develop a set of concepts that transcend disciplinary boundaries and provide a common frame of reference that help guide researchers in their work. I have argued that a spatial grammar based on the precepts of postmodernism, time-space compression, and the
de/re-territorialization paradox provides a constructive basis for historical research on
borderlands. While transnational histories acknowledge the importance of states, they focus
attention on the flows and networks of peoples, goods, ideas, capital and institutions that
transcend politically defined spaces. Such flows and networks and the resulting corridors, hubs
and gateways they produce are constantly transforming as circumstances, both internal and
external, change. This spatial grammar serves as a useful framework in which to understand this
ongoing evolution.

(17 minutes)
The Spatial Grammar of Borderlands

RANDY WILLIAM WIDDIS
UNIVERSITY OF REGINA
Introduction

• uncertain role of theory (Paasi, 2011)
• different disciplinary epistemologies make cooperative research difficult
• present an approach I call *spatial grammar*
A Spatial Grammar of Borderlands

• historical and geographical research can benefit from the study of contemporary borders and borderlands (Wynn, 2005; Konrad and Nicol, 2008)

• *syntax* of spatial grammar:
  • postmodernism
  • time-space compression
  • deterritorialization/reterritorialization paradox of globalization
A Spatial Grammar of Borderlands

• A Postmodern Perspective
  • Konrad and Nicol, 2008, 92): much of the work in borderlands, particularly in the Canada-United States context, has benefited from a postmodern point of view
  • irony:
    • argument runs counter to the postmodernist contention that globalization threatens the particularity of places, borders, and territoriality
    • postmodernism’s emphasis on hybridity makes the notions of boundaries, and by extension, the nation-state, obsolete (Sadowski-Smith, 2002)
    • postmodernists also question the representation of history and cultural identities and challenge the traditional belief that it is possible to establish the truth about the past
  • so what can postmodernism can offer to any historical study of borderland evolution and transnational relations?
A Spatial Grammar of Borderlands

• A Postmodern Perspective
  • postmodernism points towards more complicated ways of grasping the past (Dirlik, 2000)
    • “Always historicize!” (Jameson, 1981, 9)
    • "It is safest to grasp the concept of the postmodern as an attempt to think the present historically in an age that has forgotten how to think historically in the first place." (Jameson, 1991, iii)
    • “The postmodern reply to the modern consists of recognizing that the past, since it cannot really be destroyed, because its destruction leads to silence, must be revisited: but with irony, not innocently.” (Eco, 1994, 67)
A Spatial Grammar of Borderlands

• A Postmodern Perspective
  • emphasis on culture and identity has paradoxically stimulated a rethinking of borders, borderlands, and transnationalism
  • alternative concepts including flows, nodes, and networks serve as useful tools to help us see, think and speak about borderland processes and landscapes
  • suspicion of the meta-narrative has reinforced an approach to borders and borderlands that is sensitive to regional and local differences and the idea that borderland identities are responsive to scale
  • view of the borderland as a liminal geographical space/historical time
  • raises questions regarding borders’ functions in terms of ordering, othering and interactions (Warf, 2008)
  • emphasis on difference implies that there exist separate practices and experiences of bordering
A Spatial Grammar of Borderlands

• A Postmodern Perspective
  • flows
    • volume and direction, asymmetrical relations, vertebrae of borderlands
  • hubs
    • dominant distribution centres
  • gateways
    • specific nodes promote the continuity of circulation within corridors
  • regional and local networks of economic, political and cultural power trajectories that traverse specific nodes, link cores and peripheries, concentrate within specific corridors
  • Donna Haraway (1991): networks congregate
  • *arterial systems*
Great Lakes Borderland Region: Canadian-Born Migrants Entering the U.S. at Detroit, Michigan, 1895-1915

Outside Great Lakes Region

Canadian births
1 AB, BC, PEI, SK
3 NL
5 NB
21 NS
37 PQ

American destinations
1 AK, GA, ID, LA, MT, ND
NJ, NV, TX, UT, WA
2 CO, OR, WY
4 FL, MO
16 CA

Within Great Lakes Region

Port of Entry
Canadian births
1 - 5
6 - 10
11 - 20
21 - 25

American destinations
1 - 5
6 - 10
11 - 20
41+ 20

Source: Soundex Index to Canadian Border Entries
Great Lakes Borderland Region: Canadian Vessel Entries at Duluth, Minnesota, 1887-1892

Outside Great Lakes Region
Number of vessels
39 Montreal

Within Great Lakes Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of vessels</th>
<th>Symbol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - 20</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 - 40</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 - 60</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101 - 200</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>235</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total vessel entries
703

Source: U.S. Custom-House and Port Records
A Spatial Grammar of Borderlands

• Time-Space Compression (Emerson, 1844; Harvey, 1989)
  • transportation and communication technologies are used to reduce the friction of distance and facilitate the interaction among places
  • rapid acceleration during the transition to modernity and post-modernity
A Spatial Grammar of Borderlands

Time-Space Compression

• the “end of history” (Fukuyama, 1992)
• the “end of geography” (O’Brien, 1992)
• the “death of distance” (Cairncross, 1997)
• the “borderless world” (Ohmae, 1995)
• a “flat world” (Friedman, 2005)
• the “vanishing of distance” (Reich, 2001)
• the “spaces of flows” replacing the “spaces of places” (Castells, 1996-1998)

(1500-1840) Average speed of wagon and sail ships: 16 km/hr

Industrial Revolution
1850-1930 Average speed of trains: 100 km/hr. Average speed of steamships: 25 km/hr

1950 Average speed of airplanes: 480-640 km/hr

Modern Era
1970 Average speed of jet planes: 800-1120 km/hr

1990 Numeric transmission: instantaneous
A Spatial Grammar of Borderlands

- **Time-Space Compression**
  - space still matters
  - because differences exist in space, space cannot be annihilated by time
    - while time has been compressed, space has been extended
    - a *space paradox*
    - space is *elastic*
    - reconfiguring of nations, regions, communities and individuals
A Spatial Grammar of Borderlands

• Time-Space Compression
  • the North American historical context
  • time-spaces of modernity, constantly accelerating with each advance in capitalism and technology, were mediated but never impeded by the international border
  • the time-space paradox
  • Barney Warf (2008): “postmodern time-space compression”
  • Fredric Jameson (1998): “postmodern hyperspace”
A Spatial Grammar of Borderlands

• the deterritorialization/reterritorialization paradox of globalization

  • radically changing time-spaces of postmodernity now make it much easier for individuals, businesses and communities to interact simultaneously in different places, thus unbounding flows and networks, both digital and non-digital, and, as a consequence, challenging territoriality and the coherence of national units and changing the functions of borders (Appadurai, 1996)

  • processes of deterritorialization, caused by globalization, are always connected to movements of reterritorialization (Deleuze and Guattari 1980; Ó Tuathail and Luke, 1994)

    • coping strategy (devolution, cross-border cooperation)
A Spatial Grammar of Borderlands

- the deterritorialization/reterritorialization paradox of globalization
  - *spatial fix*
  - yet while the spatial fix of the postmodern era may mean that the nation-state may be giving up some traditional powers of control, it is not dying
  - it has proven to be flexible enough to adjust to deterritorialization tendencies and cope with the changes that have occurred
  - flows may serve as instruments in creating new kinds of territorial units and therefore new types of borderlands
Conclusion

• widening of the ontology and epistemology of borders and borderlands

• no suitable single theory

• value in attempting to develop a set of concepts that transcend disciplinary boundaries and provide a common frame of reference

• spatial grammar serves as a useful framework in which to understand this ongoing evolution of Canadian-American borderlands