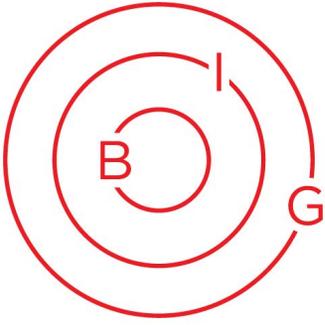




BORDERS IN GLOBALIZATION





Borders in Globalization Research Project 69

**The Prairies and the Northern Great Plains
Borderland: Themes and Issues from the Interior
North America**

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Book Prospectus**

Book Prospectus for Prairies/Plains Borderland

Proposal Form

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Purpose

The Prairies and Northern Great Plains Borderland: Themes and Issues from the Interior of North America attempts to extend our understanding of this little understood borderland region. From a geographical perspective, the Prairie Provinces and the northern Great Plains appears to be the most homogeneous of all the borderland regions, characterized by a physical uniformity in its grassland ecosystem and continental climate; a predominantly rural, resource and agrarian economy; low population density; and geographical isolation from markets. Nevertheless, over time political, economic and cultural forces differentiated the Prairies from the northern Plains and in doing so reconfigured this particular borderland. Seven chapters as well as an introduction (first draft included) and conclusion will be included in the manuscript.

Organization

The chapters in this book cover the six themes addressed by the Borders in Globalization (BIG) project: history, culture, flows, sustainability, governance and security. A brief description of the content is provided in the introductory chapter which is included in this package.

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Original Nature of this Work

While the authors will include ideas and references developed in other publications, the majority of the product consists of original work. A better idea as to what the book will entail is provided in the introductory chapter that is included in this package.

Choice of Press

The manuscript is intended for the *Politics, Public Policy and Globalization* series. It will comprise one of the six thematic books to come out of the BIG project. Together, UPO and Dr. Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly, the PI for the project, have arranged to produce a series of thematic and regional books that convey the research which is being produced by participants in BIG. This particular manuscript is intended to support our belief that good policy-making needs to be sensitive to the unique characteristics of and challenges facing each borderland region within the large Canadian-American borderland zone. This would enable policy-makers to understand and respond better to regional particularities.

Theories and Empirical Support

The authors draw upon a number of theories, concepts and ideas (e.g., border construction and reconstruction, territoriality/territory, the exercise of power, territorial borders and cultural boundaries, spaces of flows, human agency and human experience, the idea of borders as ontological and epistemological constructions, etc.). As well, the authors draw upon a number of sources (e.g. government policy literature) and methods (e.g. survey questionnaires, in-depth interviews) to develop their arguments.

Temporal Coverage

My essay provides an historical overview of the evolution of this borderland region. A larger and *longue durée* view allows us to grasp the meaning of the present day configurations of this transnational region. The other chapters focus on contemporary issues.

Intended Market

This book is intended for a diverse audience, including policy-makers and university students, both graduate and undergraduate, interested in Canadian-American relations and borderlands.

The 49th Parallel and Axes of Development: Some Introductory Remarks

Randy William Widdis

“The 49th parallel – itself a synecdoche, a rhetorical part standing for the rhetorical whole – at once joins and divides two nation-states, permits contact, influence, choice, trade ... and difference as well” (New, 1998, 6).

At just under 1,200 kilometres, the 49th parallel separating the Prairie Provinces (Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta) from the northern Plains (North Dakota, Montana) is part of the longest continuous boundary line in the world. The 49th parallel bisects a borderland region characterized by physical uniformity in its grassland ecosystem and continental climate and by socioeconomic affinity in its predominantly rural, resource and agrarian economy; low population density; and geographical isolation from markets. In the past, migration flows, the diffusion of technology and ideas, and cross-border capitalist relations further added to the synthesis that many view as prominent within this part of North America. Nevertheless, over time the robust north-south axis of development was increasingly counterbalanced by east-west forces that differentiated the Prairies from the northern Plains, thus reconfiguring this international region. Today, the 49th parallel serves as a major symbol of the predominant east-west development in both Canada and the United States, and for Canadians in general, as well as Prairie inhabitants, it takes on added importance as a territorial axis, defined in terms of their relationship with the U.S. In this context, this artificial line has become a matrix for Canadian culture, at least an Anglo-Canadian culture, which is by its nature regional in composition as well as origin.

However, at the same time, the 49th parallel as a spatial metaphor has become blurred in a world where the forces of new technologies, globalization, and time-space compression have challenged the traditional Canadian view of the border as a territorial symbol of sovereignty and

separation. At the same time that regional differences are strengthening, they are similarly diminishing in the face of homogeneous economic forces and a global culture, as is the importance of cartographic lines and compass points that enable inhabitants of this international region, regardless of which side of the line they inhabit, to orient themselves in time and space. This book recognizes the complexities presented by parallel axes of development that have served to configure and reconfigure the northern Plains and Prairies borderland over time and attempts to understand and question the “new” bordering principles that appear when culture, history, governance, flows, security and sustainability contribute to contemporary bordering processes.

In the second chapter, I argue that while relative similarities in physical landscape, geographical position, resource exploitation and historical experience have created a transnational formal culture region, a relative lack of economic integration and cross-border organizational connections have at the same time impeded the development of a transnational functional culture region. The following chapter by David Miller considers the manner in which Assiniboine communities on both sides of the international border negotiate the demands of the two nation- states of Canada and the United States. Cultural concerns remain paramount, and the nature of these concerns is addressed. Sarah Zell and Mya Wheeler’s paper focuses on the regulatory systems that seek to manage the intensification of flows of capital, labour, commodities, and ideas across the 49th parallel within the Plains and Prairies Borderland. Two case studies, the first addressing international labour migration and recruitment to the Prairies region and the second exploring the production and mobilization of oil, through hydraulic fracturing, as a socio-technical development in the borderland, demonstrate how borders are

constructed, mutable, and “performed”. Particular emphasis is placed on of how policy tools in these cases contribute to the facilitation and regulation of transborder flows.

Doug Ramsey and Tatjana Thimm compare and contrast cross-border shopping between a densely populated, weakly secured region with tax incentives straddling the Germany-Switzerland border and a sparsely populated region with a secured border lacking tax incentives spanning the North Dakota-Manitoba border. The following chapter by Bruno Dupeyron and Catarina Segatto shows how a long-established eugenic border policy that excludes imperfect migrants and refugees has been re-engineered and re-legitimized by neoliberal reforms and implemented through a combination of federal and provincial policies throughout the Prairie provinces. Their analysis demonstrates the flawed nature of these policies and offers corrective recommendations.

Danny Blair and Adrien Ducharme’s chapter remind us that environmental matters cross boundaries in ways that make governing change using territorial borders very difficult. In particular, they address the challenge presented by flows of water across provincial and international jurisdictions that are subject to different political agreements. Complicating this issue is the question as to how climate change might affect the ability of water managers to comply with long-standing apportionment agreements. Blair and Ducharme identify those agreements that are most likely to be problematic in a future in which we are more likely to see an aggressive conservation of water in response to droughts and the purposeful release of water across borders during floods. The penultimate paper by Christina Leuprecht, Todd Hataley and Alex Green addresses the question of border security in the Plains and Prairies borderland, noting that the approaches taken differ considerably than those followed in other borderland regions across North America. Specifically, small numbers, limited mobility and the relative

importance of cross-border movement of agricultural goods necessitates unique methods such as a pre-clearance approach to security. In the conclusion, I summarize some of the major arguments made in the preceding chapters and present reflections on the current state of cross-border relations in this part of North America. Of particular importance are the perspectives offered relating to the continuing challenge of distance and isolation to commerce, trade and mobility, and the challenges facing cross-border cooperation and governance in an international region traditionally mired in political and economic peripherality.

Reference

New, W.H. (1998). *Borderlands: How We Talk About Canada*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 1998.