This course is for people who like to read, who like to grapple with changing interpretations of the past, and with how people have located themselves in a time and place. The place in this case is western North America, which has helped define national identities and that crosses the national borders of Mexico, Canada, and the United States. The course introduces some key interpretations of the Canadian and U.S. Wests, and explores borderlands and transnational histories that cross the 49th parallel. Concepts of frontiers, borders, borderlands, and social boundaries operate in both U.S. and Canadian historical narratives. For Americans, the frontier has loomed large in the national imagination. For Canadians, images of (U.S.) frontier lawlessness and (Canadian) orderly western settlement have separated Canada from the United States and Canadians from Americans. Historians in both countries debate the accuracy and significance of these imagined pasts.

As the title suggests, the course explores drawing lines and crossing boundaries. The process of drawing borders, and of expanding them, has everything to do with creating nations. So does how historians describe these processes. What have frontiers and national borders meant for national histories, and for the people who meet at these humanly imagined and constructed boundaries? What other lines divide the experiences and the histories of people who inhabit a common space? Can we imagine histories and identities that cross these lines?

We will explore these topics through the works of some influential Canadian and U.S. historians, novelists, and at least one filmmaker. Through their work, we will compare historical interpretations and other forms of story telling. Some of the reading will focus on two geographic borderlands: the areas on both sides of the Canada/U.S. border along the 49th parallel, and, to a lesser extent, the U.S./Mexico border. Both borderlands invite us to explore what connects and separates people inhabiting a common landscape, and sometimes a common history, to consider different ways of telling their pasts, and to compare the historical construction of borders and borderlands.

The primary activities in this class are reading and talking. The course is based on texts. The instructor will lecture minimally to establish context. The reading, though sometimes long, is often fun—at least if you like history and literature. And sometimes we watch movies and visit museums.

The class is open to both undergraduates and graduate students.
The assigned readings and requirements differ slightly for graduate students, who do additional readings and assignments. Requirements for undergraduates include keeping a journal, three short (5-10 page) papers, and regular reading and class participation. Two of the papers require no reading beyond class assignments; the third requires one recommended text. There are no exams. Graduate students will also keep a journal, and will produce two short (5-10 page) papers and one longer paper.

The primary requirements are careful reading, thinking, and discussion.

**Reading:**
Texts have been ordered through the University of Calgary Bookstore, and are available in the University of Calgary Library. In addition, the instructor has extra copies of many texts, and will be happy to loan them to students.

Additional readings are posted on Blackboard.

**Assigned (all or part):**

Beth LaDow, *The Medicine Line: Life and Death in the North American Borderland*
Sarah Deutsch, *No Separate Refuge*
Albert Hurtado, *Intimate Frontiers*
Sheila McManus, *The Line Which Separates*
Wallace Stegner, *Wolf Willow*
Guy Vanderhaeghe, *The Englishman's Boy*

**Recommended (see below):**

Gloria Anzaldua, *Borderlands/La Frontera*
Theodore Binnema, *Common and Contested Ground: A Human and Environmental History of the Northwestern Plains*
James F. Brooks, *Captives and Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands*
Sterling Evans, ed., *The Borderlands of the American and Canadian Wests: Essays on Regional History of the Forty-ninth Parallel*
Elizabeth Jameson and Sheila McManus, eds., *One Step Over the Line: Toward a History of Women in the North American Wests*
Samuel Truett, *Fugitive Landscapes*

**Requirements:**
The primary requirement is class participation: do the assigned reading before class, participate in class discussion, be an active and respectful listener.

The remaining requirements are:

1. Journal

Keep a journal of your responses to readings. The journal will be collected periodically throughout the term, and should show that you have read and thought about the assignments. Beyond that, the form is up to you. It should be a place for you to connect the readings, class discussion, and your own interests in the topics covered. The journal will not receive a letter grade. You will receive full credit if you respond to all readings (indicated by a check on your journal). Inadequate journals or particularly fine journals can raise or lower grade averages, but the primary intention is to allow for written comments and responses between students and the instructor. Journals may be submitted in a notebook in longhand, or may be typed.

Graduate students may substitute a weekly two-page paper that responds to the assigned reading, and raises questions or concerns for possible class discussion. If you choose this option, reaction papers are due at class each week. These papers, like the journal, are not graded. Their function is to help you focus discussion and to provide an opportunity for the instructor to respond to what you're thinking. I do not expect an encyclopedic summary of all readings. Rather, I am interested in what conceptual issues excite or puzzle or confuse you, and, as the term progresses, in connections that strike you with other readings and previous discussions. They are "think pieces"--a way to focus, a springboard for discussion, a place to risk. They can be been useful for students reviewing for comprehensive exams.

2. Short Essays (5-8 pages, typed, double-spaced)

2.1 Compare the concept of frontier and its historical significance in the works of any three of the following historians, based on the assigned reading: Frederick Jackson Turner, Walter Sage, George F. G. Stanley, Paul Sharp, Albert Hurtado, Sarah Deutsch. You may substitute another historian with the permission of the instructor. Due November 12

2.2: Museum Analysis (See week of September 24)

Choose one of the following options:

2.1) Visit the Blackfoot exhibit at the Glenbow Museum. Analyze how the team that created the exhibit told the story. Pay attention to the narrative or narratives the exhibit tells, to who tells the stories, and to how frontiers, borders, nations, and social boundaries operate in the exhibit.

2.2) Visit the Mavericks exhibit at the Glenbow Museum. Analyze how its themes and narratives might reflect influential Canadian or American interpretations of frontiers and the West. For instance, are they elements of the interpretations of Frederick Jackson Turner, Harold Innis, Walter Sage, or George F.G. Stanley in the themes of the exhibit? Is this a metropolitan interpretation? A frontier thesis for Alberta? Due November 26
2.3: Text Analysis (Undergraduates Only)

In consultation with the instructor, select one of four recommended texts: Binnema, Brooks, Truett, or Anzaldua. Analyze your text with respect to how the author defines and interprets frontiers and/or borderlands. You may substitute another text with the permission of the instructor. Due in the History Department by 4 PM December 10

3. Final Essay (15-18 pages) (Graduate Students Only)

In consultation with the instructor, select a topic related to the course. Prepare one of the following:

3.1) a 15-18 page historiographic essay reviewing relevant literature on your topic
3.2) a syllabus for a course on the topic, with an 8-12 page explanation of why you chose particular topics and readings
3.3) a 15-18 page research prospectus reviewing relevant literature in the field, defining a new question for scholarly inquiry, and the sources, methodology, and categories of analysis to be employed
3.4) a 15-18 page essay on the topic based on original research

The choice of topic and of the approach should be made in consultation with the instructor and should support each student's course of graduate study. The topic may overlap with one of your other papers.

You may propose any other topic relevant to the course, with the consultation and approval of the instructor. Due in the History Department by 4 PM December 10

All essays must conform to the Department of History Essay Guide available on the Web (http://www.ucalgary.ca/HIST/).

Grades:

Grades will be determined as follows:

Undergraduates:

Class Participation: 20%
Journal: 20%
Essays: 20% each

Graduate Students:

Class Participation: 25%
Students may find the following essay useful as it reviews much of the historical literature we’ll be reading:

September 10: Introduction

September 17: Creation Stories

Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," in Ridge, ed., History, Frontier, and Section; also in Turner Frontier and Section (on reserve)

Harold Innis, "The Importance of Staple Products in Canadian Development," Chapter VI, "Conclusion,” The Fur Trade in Canada (on reserve); also in Innis, Staples, Markets, and Cultural Change, 3 23 (on reserve)

September 24: Representing the Western Story

Class will meet in the lobby of the Glenbow Museum. To be explained in class.

Please note: This week might be a good time to read ahead a bit, looking forward to October 8, when Wolf Willow is assigned.

October 1: Revisions: From Wild to Mild

Walter Sage, "Some Aspects of the Frontier in Canadian History," Canadian Historical Association, Annual Report, 1928 (Blackboard)

George F. G. Stanley, "Western Canada and the Frontier Thesis," Canadian Historical Association, Report of the Annual Meeting, 1940, 105-114 (Blackboard)


Journals Due

October 8: Creation Stories of the Borderlands
October 15: Postwar/Cold War Frontiers and/or Metropoles

Earl Pomeroy, "Toward a Reorientation of Western History: Continuity and Environment," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 41 (1955), 579-600 (Blackboard)

Paul F. Sharp, "When Our West Moved North," *American Historical Review*, 55 (1950) (Blackboard)

J.M.S. Careless, "Frontierism, Metropolitanism, and Canadian History," *Canadian Historical Review*, 35 (1954), 1-21 (Blackboard) (Recommended for all; required for graduate students)

October 22: Engendering New Frontiers

Sarah Deutsch, *No Separate Refuge*

October 29: Intimate Frontiers

Albert Hurtado, *Intimate Frontiers*

November 4: The Medicine Line

Beth LaDow, *The Medicine Line*

Journals Due

November 12: Lines Drawn/Lines Crossed


Cheryl Foggo, “Excerpts from *Pourin’ Down Rain*,” in Jameson and McManus, *One Step Over the Line* (Blackboard)


Jeremy Adelman and Stephen Aron, "From Borderlands to Borders: Empires, Nation-States, and the Peoples in Between in North American History," *American Historical Review* 104:3 (June 1999), 814-841 (JSTOR and Blackboard) (Graduate Students Only)
Comparative Frontiers Essays Due

November 19: Borderlands of Differences
Sheila McManus, *The Line Whose Separates*

Susan Armitage, “Making Connections: Gender, Race, and Place in Oregon Country,” in Jameson and McManus, *One Step Over the Line* (Blackboard) (Required for graduate students)

November 26: Step Across that Line
Film: "Lone Star"

Glenbow Exhibit Essays Due

December 3: Frontiers of Imagination
Guy Vanderhaeghe, *The Englishman’s Boy*

Journals Due

December 10: PAPERS DUE IN HISTORY OFFICE BY 4:00