

UCLA

American Indian Culture and Research Journal

Title

War of a Thousand Deserts: Indian Raids and the U.S.-Mexican War. By Brian DeLay.

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/4j86f7n5>

Journal

American Indian Culture and Research Journal , 33(3)

ISSN

0161-6463

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Publication Date

2009-06-01

DOI

10.17953

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“Living by the Bell,” documenting the rigorous regimentation and discipline of everyday life at the school, is symptomatic of this. Consequently, Vučković’s assertion that an “intertribal culture” flourished in this environment is weakened by the power of contrary evidence. In part, this is due to the reliance on archival documents rather than oral histories. Like Child, Vučković uses students’ letters as well as published oral accounts and the Haskell newspaper the *Indian Leader*, but, unlike scholars such as Lomawaima in her history of Chilocco, *They Called It Prairie Light* (1994), she does not interview former students and depends on rather too few student informants. Esther Burnett and Jesse Rowledge, both of whom describe positive experiences of Haskell, are quoted repeatedly. For example, Lottie High Whitefox who reported that she did not learn much at the school is not quoted directly at all while half the facing page is given over to a lengthy first-person account by Rowledge about an incident when he took another boy under his protection and ensured he was cleaned, had his hair cut, and wore an appropriately laundered shirt (88–89). Vučković does not remark upon the possible reasons why some students rather than the school took responsibility for the personal care of their fellows. She uses this story to support a claim that friendship enabled students to learn about their respective tribal cultures, but the story instead seems to indicate that friendship was, at least in this case, a mechanism of white socialization or even detribalization, especially around the highly sensitive issue of the cutting of students’ hair.

This history of the early years of Haskell may be best read as a complement to Child’s study of Haskell, Flandreau, and Pipestone schools. Where Child is rather more critical of the schools in terms of policies, operational practices, impacts on Native communities, and the need Native people experienced for these schools, which appear to have offered a haven during devastatingly difficult economic times, Vučković is more positive, writing from a less invested point of view and with an emphasis upon the mostly good intentions of those who worked in the school and the more positive outcomes for those students, like Burnett and Rowledge, who found lasting value in their educational experience.

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War of a Thousand Deserts: Indian Raids and the U.S.-Mexican War. By Brian DeLay. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008. 496 pages. \$35.00 cloth; \$25.00 paper.

War of a Thousand Deserts is a signal contribution to borderlands history, the history of Native peoples, diplomatic history, and our understanding of nineteenth-century America more generally. It focuses on Indian raids into Mexico in the years before and during the US-Mexican War of 1846 to 1848. But these are not the usual tales of Mangas Coloradas (though he appears here). Reaching far beyond the common focus on Apaches, Navajos, and

Yaquis, DeLay recovers a vast network of southern Plains peoples, particularly Kiowa, Kiowa-Apache, and Comanche, who regularly invaded Mexican territory in raids both economic and retaliatory in nature. The book expands our understanding of the cultural and economic geography of Plains people and argues that these raids were so pervasive and so destructive that they may aptly be described as a war—the *War of a Thousand Deserts*. For Mexico, this war, according to DeLay, precipitated and overlapped with the US-Mexican War that followed. This is a complicated book, but its argument is simple: “Indian raids mattered” (303).

By pushing the boundaries of Comanche and Kiowa history, DeLay shows how irrelevant and porous national boundaries were to Plains peoples and their geopolitics and economy. As DeLay notes, reading the present-day US-Mexican boundary backward means missing any real understanding of how “Americans,” “Mexicans,” “Texans,” and “Indians” actually understood their physical, geographic, and economic worlds in the first half of the nineteenth century. One might make the same claim about reading the boundaries of “Plains people” backward as well—a point made in a succession of works (most recently Pekka Hämäläinen’s *The Comanche Empire*) but worth reinforcing.

DeLay begins his study by pondering Article 11 of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848), in which the United States promised to “forcibly restrain” Indian raids across the border into Mexico. One Mexican diplomat called Article 11 “the only advantage” in the devastating blow to Mexico that was the treaty (which transferred nearly half of Mexico’s land mass to the United States) (xiii). DeLay thinks we should pay more attention to this article: in it, he sees the real significance of Indian raids in the making of the war and the Mexican nation.

Thanks to the work of several scholars, it has become fairly common knowledge that Native peoples were central to the diplomatic history of the Americas—particularly in the colonial era’s “interimperial conflicts,” the war for independence, and the War of 1812 (xiii). DeLay sees Article 11 as the portal through which one can connect the US-Mexican War to previous wars and conflicts in which Native peoples played a crucial role. The ongoing depredations (a word common to the era) of violent raiding into the northern provinces of Mexico caused a crisis for the young nation—but they also helped form it. Although the assumption has been that Mexico’s northern provinces were only tenuously tied to the nation-state, in their demands for federal assistance in the ongoing Indian wars, *norteños* (northern Mexicans) and their politicians used nationalist arguments to make their case. Mexico’s troubled young government was, at best, uninterested in helping and, at worst, helpless.

But Mexico City’s neglect of a growing problem came at the whole nation’s peril, not just the northern provinces’. By the time *norteños* convinced Mexico City that Indian violence was a truly national issue, it was too late. The region was too economically and demographically depleted to mount an effective campaign against the invading Americans in 1846. Northern Mexicans always saw the war of a thousand deserts and the US-Mexican War as intertwined, but they were not able to convince the Mexican state in time to

save their land from cession. In the end, DeLay points out, the depopulation and economic decline of the northern provinces precipitated by pervasive raids and violence between Mexicans and North American Indians reduced a region that was settled and stable in the Bourbon Era of the late eighteenth century to a desert—and not just one of aridity. The desertification of northern Mexico allowed Americans to make the argument that the Mexicans and Spanish were unable to govern northern Mexico or conquer its Indian antagonists. One US senator put it this way: northern Mexico “is essential to us, useless to her” (291).

This became the powerful argument for war—but it also was a convenient exaggeration. DeLay’s clever analysis of senate votes on the treaty reveals that the men who knew the most about Mexico (like the new senators from Texas) were those most likely to vote against Article 11. They knew that stopping the Comanches and Kiowas and ending the cycle of violence in the borderlands was far more complicated than simply asserting Anglo-Saxon superiority and sending out more troops. The Kiowas, Apaches, and Comanches fought the battles that would win the American war. Although Comanche, Kiowa, and Apache peoples did not have the kinds of state structures recognized by diplomats and diplomatic historians, they did have politics—and the power to undermine states. DeLay shows incontrovertibly that a people or nation does not need a European-style nation-state to be an indispensable player on the diplomatic stage.

War of a Thousand Deserts is as much for Mexican historians as it is for US historians, diplomatic historians, and American Indian scholars. DeLay’s research in Mexican archives is deep and wide. The book has an astonishing appendix that records hundreds of Indian raids into Mexico, including date, location, human and animal casualties, captives, and number of assailants. He gives special attention to Comanche raids involving more than one hundred warriors and breaks down numbers into charts and pie graphs. Even the most skeptical scholar of the qualitative bent will be impressed with this compilation of data, sure to be a resource for decades to come.

DeLay does not shy from the ugliest aspects of this story. Like most scholars of Indian peoples, he notes that Europeans and Mexicans were vicious and violent. But taking Native people seriously as political actors and diplomatic heavies also means taking their violence and cruelty seriously. He lays out in graphic detail—sometimes detail that Mexican sources shied away from—the torture, raping, burning alive, scalping, and mutilation that was endemic to frontier violence and all its participants. He insists that scholars acknowledge that Comanches and Kiowas went to Mexico “to hurt as well as to steal” (115). Both groups had other enemies—among them Texans, Lipanes, and other Native peoples—but northern Mexicans were the least well protected and the least prepared to retaliate. Because of northern Mexico’s geographic isolation and the Mexican central state’s neglect, borderlands Mexicans were easy targets.

DeLay engages the historiography of raiding by arguing that these forays into Mexico had important economic and political meaning. They were ways to gain horses and supplies and to undermine opponents. But they were also vengeance raids. Vengeance is the only thing that can explain the level of

destruction and violence that attended raiding south of the border. DeLay argues that in the Mexico raids, the classical distinction between economic and vengeance raiding is overdrawn. Vengeance “folded plunder into war” and was a “devastatingly effective organization tool” (134).

In recent years, research on both the US-Mexican War and borderlands studies have seen revivals. This book represents the nexus of these two overlapping but not synonymous developments. DeLay combines the attention to Native peoples as political actors and the contingencies of control at the border reminiscent of Juliana Barr and Hämäläinen’s recent work, with the attention to Mexican archives and motives that is representative of the best borderlands work of people like Andrés Reséndez and Samuel Truett. DeLay’s emphasis on American confidence that they would have better luck than the Spanish or Mexican government in vanquishing Native peoples adds nuance to the latest studies of manifest destiny (Amy Greenberg’s, for example) but also reflects the older insights of Reginald Horsman and even Frederick Merk.

There is more in this book: the machinations of presidents from Adams to Taylor; an intriguing proposition that Mexicans did not use race to demonize Indians as Americans were inclined to do; and a detailed dissection of diplomatic debates regarding the fate of independent Texas. DeLay does a lot here—sometimes exhaustingly so—but almost always convincingly.

The book is not flawless. It has many fine maps but none at the beginning. Unless the reader is deeply steeped in the history of northern Mexico, the litany of names and places can easily overwhelm. The book is aimed most directly at Indian scholars and nineteenth-century US diplomatic scholars, although Mexican historians might find the book the easiest to follow. Some names and details might have been omitted, especially because the appendix lists the raids under discussion. To be fair, DeLay walks a fine line here: to say that something is complicated often means *showing* it is complicated. And even where the book feels bogged down in detail, there is the argument, strong, clear, easy to grasp—and compelling, even irrefutable. This book will be required reading for many fields for many years to come. How many first books can claim the same?

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Yaqui Homeland and Homeplace: The Everyday Production of Ethnic Identity. By Kristin C. Erickson. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2008. 208 pages. \$50.00 cloth; \$24.95 paper.

Anthropologist Kristin Erickson contends that through the details of everyday life—particularly women’s lives—we see the interrelatedness of ethnicity, place making, and gender identity in the Yaqui community of northern Mexico. The book’s first part discusses Yaqui constructions of physical places that include traditional territory and borders, migration, oral traditions, and places with spiritual power. Part 2 focuses on how Yaqui ethnicity influences