now the major interests of the underworld were really all one mob" (80). Critchley has written the most thoroughly documented account of a conflict that consisted of around a dozen shooting deaths in New York and possibly three more in Detroit and did not change the internal organization of the New York families let alone the structure of organized crime in America.

Critchley completes his analysis by dismissing the alleged "Americanization of the Mafia" brought about by Charles "Lucky" Luciano as an "empirically unsupported myth" (233). Many writers claimed that Luciano orchestrated a nationwide purge of old-style Mafia leaders (so-called "Moustache Petes") and established a more orderly, businesslike, and Americanized underworld government. As the journalist Fred Cook expressed it in *Mafia!* (1973), Luciano's "conduct of affairs would have horrified the old Moustache Petes, so completely did it break with the clannishness and exclusivity of Sicilian traditions; for Luciano and the new national commission of crime under his aegis dealt impartially with racketeers of various ethnic backgrounds" (89). Critchley simply demolishes such bunkum by showing that the alleged nationwide purge did not happen and that traditionalist bosses remained leaders of their New York families until the 1960s.

Above all, the depth of research in *The Origin of Organized Crime in America* captures the diversity and modesty of scale and outcomes that characterized New York City's Mafia in its formative years. It should hopefully give honest scholars pause before making glib assumptions about the history of organized crime. However, it is unlikely to prevent governments and media outlets continuing to resort to the many simplifications and stereotypes that underlie the term "organized crime" and the more recent "global security threat" of transnational organized crime.

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Elizabeth Jameson and Sheila McManus (eds.), *One Step over the Line: Toward a History of Women in the North American Wests* (Edmonton and Athabasca: University of Alberta Press and AU Press, 2008, $34.95 (CAD)). Pp. 462. ISBN 0 88864 501 5.

This ambitious collection seeks to redress dominant histories of the US and Canadian Wests where considerations of gender and cross-border similarities and distinctions are concerned. The collection attempts to "take a first step" towards refiguring the masculine historical narratives of the West that have unfolded in exclusively national, rather than comparative, terms. Many essays engage with race as well as gender in a crucial recognition that the experiences of white women in the West have not spoken for all Western women. Other subjects tackled include sexuality and sex work, education (both as an object of history and through a discussion of cross-border pedagogy), class and union politics.

The collection is based on material from the 2002 Unsettled Pasts: Reconceiving the West through Women's History conference held at the University of Calgary, "the first major conference to emphasize comparative and transborder histories of women in the Canadian and US Wests." Despite the conference's – and indeed, the

collection's – groundbreaking mandate, however, there are times when *One Step over the Line* does not quite transcend its conference origins. The essays work best when they reflect the comparative framework of the collection itself, but this framework is not always maintained. For instance, Margaret D. Jacobs's attention to the removal of Native American children to boarding schools would have been enriched by some comparison with residential schools in Canada, either in the essay itself or if another essay on residential schools north of the border had been included. Curiously, although Jacobs invokes comparisons between the American schools and the Australian schools to which the Stolen Generation of Aboriginal children were subject, Canada goes unmentioned. Similarly, Helen Raptis's engagement with the role of white women in the education of interned Japanese Canadian children during the Second World War cries out for a comparison with the education of Japanese American children during this time period. A further puzzling exclusion in the collection is the fact that, amongst the several important discussions of mixed-race society developed as a consequence of the fur trade, references to British Columbia Governor James Douglas omit the fact that he himself was of mixed-race descent.

Essays primarily focussed on retelling the lives of Western women would have benefited from further analysis of these lives and their implications, as the fascinating personal histories are often left to speak for themselves a little too much. An exception to this quibble is the inclusion of excerpts from Cheryl Foggo's *Pourin' Down Rain*, which effectively and eloquently punctures the myth of Canada's racial tolerance through Foggo's experiences of growing up African Canadian in Alberta.

On the whole, however, these first steps across the lines of nation-state and gendered borders successfully argue for a dislodging of the primacy of male-centred approaches to the histories of both Canadian and American Wests. Perhaps most effectively, several essays foreground the methodological challenges of focussing on the histories of women in the North American Wests, exhibiting a self-reflexivity and a desire to proceed as ethically as possible in this emerging field of women's cross-border history.

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Luis Alvarez, *The Power of the Zoot: Youth Culture and Resistance during World War II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008, £24.95/$34.95). Pp. xiv + 318. ISBN 978 0 520 25301 8.

The flamboyantly tailored zoot suit, with its wide shoulders, cinched waist, and ballooning trousers, was one of the most outlandish fashions of the 1940s. Worn primarily (though not exclusively) by African American and Mexican American youth, it was emblematic of a culture that emphasized style, pleasure and recreation, which blurred racial boundaries, and which developed amid the leisure and consumer opportunities afforded by the wartime economy. For those in authority, however, it symbolized juvenile delinquency and the threat of home-front instability, and was a fad that needed to be repressed. In this excellent book, Luis Alvarez explores the significance of zoot culture in the United States, and places it into a