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Book Review: Comparative Frontiers: A Proposal for Studying the American West, by Jerome O. Steffen

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COMPARATIVE FRONTIERS: A PROPOSAL FOR STUDYING THE AMERICAN WEST, by Jerome O. Steffen, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980, 116 pp., \$12.95.

This book is an attempt to generate a larger approach to the study of western history. It is both highly speculative and based on selective documentation. The main focus is on comparative American frontier change and continuity and the historical processes involved in producing each of the conditions. Steffen considers four American frontiers: the trans-Appalachian Agricultural Frontier; the Fur-trading Frontier; the Ranching Frontier; and the Mining Frontier. The author states that the area of which we are a part was the only frontier that was insular in American historical development, because the number of interacting links between it and the main body of American civilization were few in number. This is a good book to read and mull over, for it places our region within the very widest bounds of frontier development; providing us with an overview of our own cultural heritage.

Editor

