

Even though historians of Mexico are therefore not necessarily the target audience for this book, the arguments Fowler advances are nevertheless useful for understanding how and why the War of Reform came to happen in 1857 and for studying the numerous other civil wars that have taken place in Latin America since then. The book begins with a presentation of Fowler's proposed "grammar," a series of tables or "small-scale map" (14) that outlines the geopolitical context, political actions, and social, cultural, and economic issues that condition the outbreak of civil war, its development, and its resolution. This multifaceted list of causes and consequences highlights the interaction between individuals (their will, action, and planning) and their circumstances (social, racial, economic, and cultural structures). It suggests that civil wars, in common with all historical events, derive from a complex interdependency of factors. As the disciples of the Annales School insisted, "total history" is needed if we are to comprehend any civil war fully.

Fowler makes clear that not all civil wars exhibit all the elements of his framework, and he cautions against his "grammar" being understood prescriptively. Instead, he hopes to offer a "starting point" (13) for studying civil wars. Nevertheless, the book then proceeds to analyze the Mexican War of Reform in function of the elements identified in the introduction. This of course has the effect of transforming the Mexican experience into a paradigmatic example. All the elements of Fowler's grammar are found in Mexico's War of Reform, and it thus becomes an example with which other civil wars can be usefully compared.

Although there are obviously downsides to this approach, not the least of which is the fact the grammar proposed looks less universal and more local than the author probably intended, the detailed discussions of the different elements and how they played out in Mexico places the proposed framework of analysis on a firm empirical footing. As a result, his book will be essential reading for all those interested in understanding Mexico's War of Reform.

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CROSS-BORDER RESISTANCE TO THE PORFIRIATO

Bad Mexicans: Race, Empire, and Revolution in the Borderlands. By Kelly Lytle Hernández.
 New York: Norton, 2022. Pp. 352. \$30.00 cloth; \$26.23 e-b00k.
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Beginning with the title, this study is a provocative, compelling, and engaging book that proposes to reorder the way people in the United States think about US-Mexico relations, the police state, immigration, activism, and the history of the Mexican Revolution. Lytle

Hernández argues that those in the United States cannot understand US history without a knowledge of Mexican history, which is often treated as a footnote in schools. Moreover, Hernández asserts that those in the United States cannot comprehend Mexican history without learning about the history of the Mexican Revolution and argues that it was a cataclysmic event that “remade Mexico . . . [and] also remade the United States” (7). Additionally, the book provides a new way of thinking about the US-Mexico borderlands as a geographic and symbolic space of US designs as a global power. This epistemological frame centers the lived experiences of Mexican Americans and other Latinx communities and their central role in US history.

As a way to provide a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the complex history of the revolution “as a seminal event in US history [that] changed who we are as people” (8), Hernández chooses as her subjects the anarchist brothers Ricardo and Enrique Flores Magón and other revolutionaries at the center of the loose organization La Junta, which denounced the corruption and abuses of dictator Porfirio Díaz and the US companies and industrialists that supported his regime. The author chronicles the many challenges, triumphs, and failures of the brothers and this group. Despite their inability to organize an armed revolution, their work as journalists, spies and political agitators set the intellectual stage for ousting Díaz. Writing in an engaging and vivid language—for example, she shares that Ricardo Flores Magón “looked more like a girthy professor than a gutsy revolutionary” (5)—the author humanizes the brothers and offers complex portraits of the other main players.

The book is divided into four sections, each containing multiple chapters organized chronologically, beginning with Díaz’s dictatorship. The second section narrates the founding of the *magonistas*, their initial organization, and their work as journalists and activists. The third concentrates on the negative consequences of publishing critiques of the Díaz regime’s crimes, corruption, and illegitimacy in their newspaper *La Regeneración*. The newspaper kept the movement afloat, and its publication led to the persecution of the brothers Flores Magón by both US and Mexican organizations, including the US Federal Bureau of Investigation. As Hernández underscores, the FBI weaponized against them and other political ‘radicals’ and anarchists to protect US economic interests in Mexico. The final section discusses the beginnings of the Mexican Revolution and the broader legacy of the brothers Flores Magón and others in La Junta.

This is an engrossing and page-turning account of a seminal moment in Mexico’s history. Its witty and refreshingly candid tone (“Revolutions are hard to schedule,” 279) will engage a wide readership, from Mexicanists and Border Studies scholars to undergraduate students. It provides a robust set of notes that lists the extensive secondary source materials used to craft this story. The index also includes a short list of aliases used by the rebels, as collected by the Furlong Secret Service Company, one of the surveillance and intelligence organizations hired by authorities to eliminate radicals

agitating for revolutionary change in Mexico. The list is helpful in keeping up with the narrative, which moves along with a sense of urgency, perhaps mimicking the idealism of the rebels and the dire conditions in which they often found themselves.

A number of photographs are scattered throughout the chapters. One of note is that of Josefina Fierro de Bright, a leading Mexican American civil rights activist who helped organize the Sleepy Lagoon Defense Committee in the 1940s. Her mother, Josefa Fierro, was a vital member of La Junta. Among other things, she smuggled guns into Mexico in support of insurgent actions. This, along with a long and tangled cast of characters and events, compels careful and engaged reading. Those who undertake it are rewarded by sentences like “Corral hung a cloak of falsehoods over the raids” (246) and “It was the Twitter feed of the printing press era” (255).

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FILMS ABOUT LATIN AMERICA

Latin American History at the Movies. Edited by Donald E. Stevens. Pp. 346. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2022. \$110.00 cloth; \$39.00 paper; \$37.00 e-book.
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Carl Sandburg, the celebrated writer who served in Puerto Rico during the War of 1898 as a young man, once purportedly observed that “Hollywood was a more effective educational institution than Harvard.” Teaching Latin American history through film leads one to conclude that Sandburg may not have been far off in his high estimation of film’s pedagogical potential. In this exciting volume edited by Donald Stevens, which brings together a varied roster of Latin Americanists to discuss films pertaining to their country or period of expertise, readers will find insightful commentary on some of the most prominent films released in Latin America in recent decades that deal in some way with memory and the historical past. Fifteen chapters proceed chronologically from the pre-Columbian period (Mel Gibson’s *Apocalypto*) through the Bolivian Water War that marked the turn of the last century (*También la Lluvia*, directed by Icíar Bollaín). Well-known films like *Motorcycle Diaries* and *Four Days in September* are discussed by Thomas C. Field Jr. and James N. Green, respectively. There is also attention to titles not widely known across the variety of disciplines in which Latin Americanists work.

Obviously, no book of this kind can cover every film, but a future edition might update the discussion of Che Guevara to include Steven Soderbergh’s two-film epic in the same way that Green’s earlier essay on *Four Days in September* has been revised here to include analysis of Wagner Moura’s *Marighella*, released in 2019. Indeed, the book features a few essays previously published in another collection edited by Stevens in 1998 and titled *Based on*