Reconstructing Criminality in Latin America. Edited by CARLOS A. AGUIRRE and ROBERT BUFFINGTON. Jaguar Books on Latin America, no. 19. Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 2000. Notes. Bibliography. xix, 254 pp. Cloth, $55.00. Paper, $19.95.

This volume brings together an effectual and lively collection of articles on crime, criminality, and law enforcement in Latin America, with case studies set in five different nations from the late eighteenth century to contemporary times. While three of the ten broad-ranging essays have been previously published, most are original essays produced with the theme of "reconstructing criminality" in mind. Like most collections, cohesion around the controlling theme is a problem at times, but in this case, I feel the volume's eclecticism strengthens its appeal and utility.

Robert Buffington introduces the volume with a thought provoking comparison of Michel Foucault's and Jürgen Habermas's approaches to criminality and authority as a theoretical matrix in which he situates the approaches of different essays to bring more cohesion to the volume. The reader should not assume, however, that each author takes up a clear position in relation to these two theorists' ideas. Another way that one might situate the approaches of the contributors to this volume is the manner in which they envision the relation between the law, law enforcement, and political authority. Two essays in the volume explore how law and law enforcement practices came to define criminal behavior. Thomas Holloway and Laura Kalmanowiecki provide intriguing analyses of the development of policing practices in Brazil and Argentina respectively. Holloway emphasizes that law enforcement on the streets of Rio de Janeiro in the 1800s punished both behaviors that were legally proscribed as well as those that the police considered unacceptable. Kalmanowieki stresses the political ties to incumbent parties that shaped what police defined as criminal in Buenos Aires. In both cases, the police often defined political opposition to incumbent leaders as criminal activity.

In a similar vein, but from a different angle, Ricardo Salvatore shows that the most commonly recorded crimes committed by rural Argentines in the Rosas era were not offenses against property or individuals, but against the state. The most prevalent rural crime in Buenos Aires province boiled down to resistance to military impressment. Salvatore convincingly argues that this evidence belies Unitarist characterizations of the inherently violent "nature" of the rustic Argentines, a view subsequently adopted by many historians of the Campaña. Instead, most recorded crime marked a dispute between authorities' views of an ordinary citizen's duty to the state and the campesinos' attempts to resist what they saw as abuses of their traditional rights by government officials and powerful ranchers. Likewise, Richard Warren demonstrates how Conservatives and Liberals in early Republican Mexico City exploited ill-defined vagrancy laws to demobilize and to punish poor

men with coercive military service in most instances. Thus, "criminals" ironically became agents of the state. Taken as a group, these four essays stress how authorities and powerful patriarchs used police forces and the military to defend the interests of incumbents and their supporters. Common citizens often came to see the police and criminal justice as partisan defenders of powerful interests instead of an impartial tool of normative law enforcement. These studies complement and provide an important historical prelude to Martha Huggins's *Political Policing: The United States and Latin America* (1998). Huggins's pathbreaking book examines how the expansion of U.S. security concerns in the form of "professional" police missions to Latin American governments came to encourage a style of law enforcement that defined most members of political opposition to an incumbent government as subversive "criminals." Like Warren and Salvatorre, Huggins points to the connections between police and military forces, a relationship that deserves more attention in the historical research on crime, policing, and state building.

Arguing against the grain of the essays noted above, Michael Scardaville asserts that Spanish lower court reforms in Bourbon Mexico City brought legitimacy to colonial authorities and a stronger sense of the impartial rule of colonial law among urban plebeians. For Scardaville, this is an overlooked factor that helps to explain why New Spain's most important urban center experienced few riots or revolts in contrast to the colony's rural regions. This contrasting view of criminal justice and political legitimacy should stimulate interesting discussions of colonial versus national governance and the impact of the rural/urban divide on the attitudes and practices of citizens and officials.

Sarah Chambers's analysis of criminal justice in Arequipa in the mid 1800s and Pablo Piccato's case study of Porfirian authorities attempts to reform the urban poor in Mexico City lead these authors to stake out more of a middle ground between the two approaches outlined above. They emphasize the unequal tug-of-war between rulers and ruled. The authorities used the language of liberalism and science both to justify their rule and to keep lower-class citizens subordinate. Common citizens fought back using the liberal language of equality and in some instances cementing alliances with more powerful actors to defend successfully their interests and their lifestyles.

Only two essays deal with gender analysis, and as one might predict, both focus on women. Kristen Ruggierro provides an insightful exploration of mothers, midwives, and authorities grappling with assigning guilt for the crime of infanticide. Katherine Bliss delivers a highly original analysis of the efforts of Mexican prostitutes to organize and to lobby the postrevolutionary government for legal protection and respect as mother, workers, and revolutionaries. Both Bliss and Ruggiero offer model explorations of how poor women manipulated ideas of motherhood and female expertise to protect their interest in the face of public

prosecutors (this locates them in the "unequal tug-of-war" camp with Chambers and Piccato). Gender-conscious explorations of the largest category of criminal perpetrators, males, remain underdeveloped in Latin American literature on crime, penology, and law enforcement. Historians have lagged behind anthropologists, sociologists, and literary critics who have more rigorously applied gender theory to examine the unmarked masculine category as a means to deepen understandings of race, status, honor, and sexuality. Because the majority of those that state authorities and society came to consider "criminal" were youths and young adult males, this is a category that cries out for a more thorough exploration of how conceptions of masculinity and age influenced changing perceptions of criminality and vice versa. Still, it is far too easy for a reviewer to fault authors for not addressing issues that they did not set out to explore; instead, I hope my observations indicate the thought-provoking strength of this collection. The juxtaposition of the different approaches in this volume should stimulate students and scholars to debate and assess current trends in this field in a comparative context. For this and other compelling reasons, *Reconstructing Criminality in Latin America* is a useful collection for graduate and undergraduate seminars on historiography, state building, crime, and law enforcement.

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Everyday Life and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Mexico: Men, Women, and War. By MARK WASSERMAN. Diálogos. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000. Illustrations. Maps. Tables. Notes. Bibliography. Index. xiii, 248 pp. Cloth, $39.95. Paper, $19.95.

Mark Wasserman has taken on the considerable task of making sense of the history of the turbulent nineteenth century in Mexico. The author also proposes to revive "lively narrative" and "colorful biography" as tools of the historian in order to achieve a "balance" (p. 4) between analysis and narrative. As a result, Mexico comes to life in his new study, *Life and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Mexico.* The book weaves together three watersheds (independence, reform, and revolution) and the lives of three prominent politicians (Antonio López de Santa Ana, Benito Juárez, and Porfirio Díaz) with three principal themes.

The first of these themes, "the struggle of the common people to retain control over their everyday lives" (p. 3), dominates the book. Relying on recent regional histories, the author stresses two fundamental points: that politics in the nineteenth century was, above all, local and regional, and that the common people participated actively in political life (p. 126). Although the author also describes lives of the middle and upper classes, a vivid and sobering portrait of daily life for the common people takes shape, from the grinding of tortillas to religious proces-