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Donald Cutter and Iris Engstrand, Quest for Empire: Spanish Settlement in the Southwest

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Quest for Empire: Spanish Settlement in the Southwest. By Donald Cutter and Iris Engstrand. (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 1996. ix + 358 pp. Illustrations, maps, glossary, bibliography, index. \$27.95 cloth.)

Donald Cutter and Iris Engstrand have produced an insightful narrative about the Spanish Borderlands based on their many years of research in Spanish and Mexican archives and on their university teaching. With their combined encyclopedic knowledge of the historical geography of New Spain and its northern frontier, the authors focus on Spain's occupation of the region now known as the Southwestern United States, emphasizing present-day California, Arizona, and New Mexico, as well as their corresponding Mexican states. Although the Mexican Period of 1821-1848 is only briefly touched upon, the book spans the prehistorical period to 1848.

Colonial economies and societies in each frontier area are addressed, including ranching, trade, agriculture, law, military affairs, and the founding of towns and missions. Also discussed is the development of religious, legal, political, social, and economic institutions that formed the backbone of Hispanic culture in the Southwest, which has continued to survive intact, with its family values, language, and lore, well into the twentieth century. Similarly, the authors discuss the ethnicity of the Southwest, which was

spawned in the Spanish period and transformed in the Mexican period with the immigration of Anglo-Americans into the area, and which continues to flourish in modern times. Cutter and Engstrand deftly and sensitively discuss the Native American story as it intertwines with the arrival of the Spanish, providing, as best as can be told, a balanced discussion about both conqueror and conquered. Colonial-native relationships are analyzed to reflect the cultural values of the period under discussion.

Quest for Empire provides outstanding and up-to-date bibliographical references and annotations as well as a very useful section titled "A Commentary on Sources," featuring bibliographic sources on standard as well as classic materials that every research library should have. Printed documentary sources in both Spanish and English are evaluated for their usefulness both to the general reader and the serious student of history. Additionally, a glossary of Spanish colonial terms can be found at the end. Ideally suited for classroom use, this book is an excellent resource for anyone interested in Spanish North America.

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