

good is, then, according to an analogy offered by Fouillée, nothing more than a new aspect of the old equivalence of forces; and, in the same way that motion is transformed into heat, elements of spiritual excellence may also be obtained from material benefits.

As yet, however, North American life has not offered us a new example of that incontestable relationship, nor even afforded a glimpse of a glorious future. Our confidence and our opinion must incline us to believe, however, that in an inferred future their civilization is destined for excellence. Considering that under the scourge of intense activity the very brief time separating them from their dawn has witnessed a sufficient expenditure of life forces to effect a great evolution, their past and present can only be the prologue to a promising future. Everything indicates that their evolution is still very far from definitive. The assimilative energy that has allowed them to preserve a certain uniformity and a certain generic character in spite of waves of ethnic groups very different from those that have until now set the tone for their national identity will be vitiated in increasingly difficult battles. And in the utilitarianism that so effectively inhibits idealism, they will not find an inspiration powerful enough to maintain cohesion. An illustrious thinker who compared the slave of ancient societies to a particle undigested by the social system might use a similar comparison to characterize the situation of the strong Germanic strain now identifiable in the mid- and far West. There, preserved intact—in temperament, social organization, and customs—are all the traits of a German nature that in many of its most profound and most vigorous specificities must be considered to be antithetical to the American character. In addition, a civilization destined to endure and expand in the world, a civilization that has not, in the manner of an Oriental empire, become mummified, or lost its aptitude for variety, cannot indefinitely channel its energies and ideas in one, and only one, direction. Let us hope that the spirit of that titanic society, which has until today been characterized solely by *Will* and *Utility*, may one day be known for its intelligence, sentiment, and idealism. Let us hope that from that enormous crucible will ultimately emerge the exemplary human being, generous, balanced, and select, whom Spencer predicted would be the product of the costly work of the melting pot. But let us not expect to find such a person either in the present reality of that nation or in its immediate evolution. And let us refuse to see an exemplary civilization where there exists only a clumsy, though huge, working model that must still pass through many corrective revisions before it acquires the serenity and confidence with which a nation that has achieved its perfection crowns its work—the powerful ascent that Leconte de Lisle describes in “Le sommeil du condor” [The Dream of the Condor] as an ascent that ends in Olympian tranquility.

## Wild People in Wild Lands: Early American Views of Latin Americans

*Fredrick Pike*

*Fredrick Pike's masterful The United States and Latin America: Myths and Stereotypes of Civilization and Nature (1992) draws on decades of scholarship involving a wide variety of themes. Pike earned his Ph.D. at the University of Notre Dame in 1963 and has written extensively on church-state relations in Latin America, and political/cultural relations between the United States and Latin America. His The United States and the Andean Republics: Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador (1977) is considered a classic and Pike's work on Peruvian populist leader Victor Raul Haya de la Torre (The Politics of the Miraculous in Peru: Haya de la Torre and the Spiritualist Tradition, 1986) demonstrate the range, depth, and creativity of his scholarship. In the excerpt below Pike combines literary, artistic, and historical interpretations to show the complexity and history of negative U.S. stereotyping of Latin Americans. His work illustrates how during the nineteenth century most Americans viewed Latin Americans as “hopelessly inept and chaotic in their economic practices as in their politics.” Many of these stereotypes, cogently analyzed by Pike, remain a central feature of modern U.S.–Latin American relations.*

Since ancient times, groups or “races” arriving at some sense of identity or “peoplehood” have turned to nature-and-civilization imagery as the basis for stereotyping. To those beyond the pale of their own peoplehood, they have attached pejorative stereotypes. Often for the Western world’s Christian people, the Jew became the reviled Other who somehow could not measure up to the standards required by civilization. In the nineteenth century when unabashed anti-Semitism thrived among North Americans, Gentile native sons and daughters categorized newly arriving Jewish male immigrants as sneaky and conniving, resembling such denizens of the wild as weasels and foxes—the predators of wilderness or jungle rather than the noble and courageous killers. According

to the stereotypes of American nativism, Jewish women were lascivious creatures of unbridled sexuality. In different ways, then, both Jewish men and women were dismissed as unredeemed creatures of nature.

The time finally came when Jews had the chance to avenge the decades and centuries in which they had suffered rejection as despicable Others. In the second half of the twentieth century, the Jews of Israel took to depicting Arab adversaries as "primitive and tribal," as brutal and bloodthirsty and less-than-human predators, as people who "don't respect reason," as emotional creatures easily incited and manipulated by monstrous leaders, as wily and cunning in battle but basically cowardly and not truly manly, as undisciplined, illogical, unable to distinguish between fact and fantasy, as threatening machos lusting after pure and refined Jewish women. On one hand, according to Jewish stereotypes, the Arab might benefit from contact with Israeli "civilization"; on the other, the Arab might be hopelessly refractory to civilization and therefore basically undeserving of full-scale human rights. In consequence, agents of progress could kill the Arab with impunity.

Jewish stereotypes of Arabs resemble those that Americans attached to Negroes and also to the Indians and Latins who at one time ringed their borders and held the land the emissaries of civilization coveted, ostensibly because they alone understood how to improve that land and thereby fulfill the moral injunctions of the true religion. Indeed, Jewish stereotypes of the Arab bear striking similarity to those that virtually all colonialists have attached to colonials. In approaching American stereotypes of the Latin American, what I wish to stress is their lack of originality. Human evil, it has been suggested, exhibits the traits of ordinariness, commonness, and banality; it is seldom unique and larger than life in its dimensions. With stereotypes, it is the same. Rather than reflecting original responses to unique situations, they have become part and parcel of day-in, day-out, humdrum existence; they are the ordinary creations of human nature at its most typical. With almost boring regularity they rest upon the distinction between what in the eyes of the would-be exploiters of other humans is the civilization of the former and the unmitigated naturalness (meaning savagery or barbarism) of the latter. Just as stereotypes become normal, routine, and taken for granted, so does the terrorism perpetrated in their name. Soon the terrorists become capable of remembering only those incidents that reinforce the stereotypes that in turn justify terrorism, and utterly incapable of heeding other instances that challenge the stereotypes and cast doubt on the moral acceptability of terrorism.

Stereotyping is by no means the exclusive habit of stronger groups that assert themselves in one way or another over weaker ones. Invariably, the weaker elements in asymmetrical relationships devise sweeping stereotypes with which to defame the stronger, not unlike the way some present-day Arabs distortedly depict the Jew. Similarly, in their generalized criticism of Americans during much of the past century and a half, Latin Americans have seemed blind to the fact that

"differences in a population are often greater than the differences between populations." By their stereotyping, Latin Americans have also confirmed that "the most prevalent form of racism in the world in recent decades has been anti-Americanism."

Most especially, large numbers of Latin Americans, along with Africans set upon disparaging various nationalities of white imperialists, like to contrast their own spirituality and concern with "higher values" to the alleged cloddishness and calculating, cold-hearted materialism of the Caucasian Other. Throughout history, in fact, the tendency of underlings to contrast their spirituality with the base creatureliness of aggressors is just as much a constant as the imperialist's resort to contrasting his civilization to the colonial's primitivism. Someday, I trust, a comprehensive study will set forth the various facets of Latin American stereotyping of the North American. When it appears, the study will, I am confident, show that Latins have been just as bigoted, extreme, irrational, and self-serving in impugning the character of the gringo as North Americans have been in their collective character assassination of the generalized greaser. Undoubtedly it will also confirm that, as Mexico's grand old man of letters and Nobel laureate Octavio Paz has suggested, Latin Americans have been as divided in their assessments of norteamericanos as Yankees have been in their appraisals of the Latins with whom they share the hemisphere. According to Paz, his countrymen and their fellow Latin Americans feel an "unambivalent fascination" about the United States, "the enemy of our identity and the unavowed model of what we [want] to be." It is ambivalence on both sides of the Rio Grande that has saved stereotyping in the Americas from sinking to the levels it has reached elsewhere.

Latin American elites frequently have sought to define themselves and to strengthen their own sense of identity and peoplehood by contrasting themselves to the negative identity imputed, most of the time, to North Americans. Before Yankee-baiting became the preferred method for establishing identity, Latin elites bolstered self-awareness by reviling the inhabitants of sister republics along their borders, with whom they frequently engaged in armed hostilities. Furthermore, elites nourished a racism that contributed to white and whitish upper-class cohesiveness by disparaging the dark-skinned masses (Indian, black, mestizo, and mulatto) that comprised a majority of the population in almost all republics. In justifying their own power status, Latin elites tended to use the same sort of civilization-barbarism stereotyping whereby North Americans contrasted themselves to allegedly inferior peoples. All the while Latin America's privileged sectors expected that North Americans would go along with local Latin customs that dictated perpetuation of a gulf between the *gente decente* (decent people) and the dusky masses.

Disappointed in expectations of acceptance as equals by North Americans, frustrated because all too often they were lumped together with the unwashed

herd by insensitive gringos, Latin America's *gente decente* responded with anti-American stereotyping. Often the intensity of their anti-Americanism bore a direct relationship to the strength of their disdain for their own lower classes with whom, they felt, gringos tended to lump them. Needless to say the *gente decente*'s anti-Americanism soared to new heights when, during the course of the twentieth century, various Americans (many of them the champions of blacks and Indians in their own country) began to side with the downtrodden elements of Latin society as they protested against ongoing exploitation.

### NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICAN STEREOTYPING OF THE LATIN OTHER

Prior to the mid-nineteenth-century gold rush, early Anglo settlers in California, and even short-term visitors, distinguished between the cultured, gracious, hospitable ranch owners and the rabble. The prosperous *Californios* (original Hispanic occupants) they referred to as Spanish, and the ragged, dirty masses they designated Mexicans. That this division had long-lasting consequences is suggested by what passed for a joke still in circulation in the 1990s. Question: When does a Mexican become a Spaniard? Answer: When he marries your daughter.

The Anglo ability to distinguish between worthies and unworthies, which initially delighted upper-sector *Californios*, fell victim to the huge influx of fortune-hunting immigrants arriving on the scene just as the second half of the nineteenth century began. Rough, tumultuous hordes of Anglo gold-seekers arrived in the region, and so did scruffy hordes of Latin American adventurers from as far away as Chile and Argentina. Before long the first group branded all those in the second (together with Orientals afflicted by gold fever) as wild and depraved. Next, the Anglos extended their pejorative evaluations to the old-line, property-owning *Californios*. All the more did these persons of substance cease to be Spanish and become Mexican when Anglos embarked upon wholesale procedures to strip them of their old political powers along with their property. To justify such stripping, racist stereotyping proved highly useful.

Lumping all Latin Americans together and tarring them with the same brush was not confined to America's roughneck elements. With notable exceptions, influential men of affairs and letters shared in the tendency to see all Latin Americans as little removed from barbarism. In his most widely read novel (*The Yemassee*, published in 1839) William Gilmore Simms, "the greatest story-teller the Old South produced," pontificated that when a higher race encountered a lower, the great danger was that the higher would sink to the level of the lower. Southerners, and Americans in general, contrasting themselves to ordinary mortals, assumed that when *they* met inferior races they did not sink. But, when it came to Latin Americans, the civilized cities had clearly begun their descent into the surrounding morass of barbarism.

In his 1858 account of travels in Mexico, an American writer captured the prevailing mood of his countrymen when he criticized the upper classes for having succumbed to the "passionate and emotional" and "lighthearted" approach to life that also characterized the masses. Nor did the social polish of Latin upper classes fool William Gilpin toward the end of the century. An enormously influential soldier, politician, visionary writer, and prophet par excellence of the Anglo American's mission to uplift the world, Gilpin had Latin America partially in mind when in 1890 he disparaged societies that had "grown to be polished and enervated without emerging from semi-savage barbarism."

Emerson encapsulated the prevailing national wisdom of his age—and subsequent ages as well—when he declared: "All great men come out of the middle classes." Already in the age of Emerson Americans had begun to conclude that the trouble with Latin America lay in the absence of a middle class. The area to their south seemed populated by profligate elites and a vast herd of rambunctious wastrels. Unlike their counterparts in Europe, members of an emergent U.S. middle class did not have to struggle against an established aristocracy or fret over the risks posed by a large marginalized class. But, they shared the anti-aristocratic bias and also the suspiciousness of shiftless lower classes that characterized Europe's rising bourgeoisie. This bias and suspiciousness inevitably poisoned their attitudes toward the sort of people who, in their imagination at least, populated Latin America.

Above all, American middle-class men esteemed the so-called manly qualities, as opposed to feminine weakness and emotionalism and childish fecklessness and fantasizing. Qualities that Americans admired, they consistently failed to find among Latin Americans. The appraisals that led a mid-twentieth-century U.S. diplomat to dismiss Dominicans already flourished at least a century earlier in the attitudes of Americans toward Latin Americans in general. "The longer you worked with Dominicans, the more you . . . disliked the weakness of the men, and, searching for explanations, you noticed how pampered are the infant males in Dominican families, how undisciplined the schoolboy males, how feckless the teenage males, and how vain and proud and sometimes absurd the adult males. They were not men, many of them, only spoiled brats grown up." Even some Latin Americans have concurred in the gringo diplomat's appraisal and have applied it more broadly than just to Dominicans. I remember an ambitious, upwardly mobile Venezuelan student whom I knew in the mid-1960s. He assured me that the pampered permissiveness in which the upper-class male children were raised in his country turned them into weak, self-indulgent, effeminate *animalitos* (little animals).

About the time of the American Revolution, Patrick Henry, "with wonder in his voice," proclaimed to an audience: "We are in a state of nature." If Americans had started in a state of nature, already in the early nineteenth century they had begun to take inordinate pride in overcoming and defying nature. Even their democracy, which had become the object of their smug satisfaction, seemed to

attest to their ability to triumph over nature; for many Americans, among them Edgar Allan Poe, recognized that democracy, being a "system nowhere observable in nature," emerged only out of the ability to transcend nature. Latin Americans, in contrast, seemed incapable of progressing toward democracy or anything else worthwhile precisely because they simply could not get the upper hand over nature—either within or without.

An observer in California in 1848, shortly before it became a part of the United States, saw only an indolent Hispanic and Indian people. In California, he averred, "nature [was] doing everything, man [was] doing nothing." One year later another American commented on the widespread conviction among his countrymen that *Californios* grew "as the trees, with the form and character that Nature gives them." About a decade later, a U.S. traveler to Brazil noted that there "nature has done everything . . . but as yet man has done next to nothing." So, while Americans had started in but shortly emerged out of a state of nature, Latin Americans remained in the original state.

The first Latin Americans that significant numbers of Americans encountered resided in territory that ultimately became a part of the United States—among them the already-mentioned *Californios*. Historian Francis Parkman when engaged in research for his classic study *The Oregon Trail* (1849) encountered a group of Mexicans from New Mexico on the banks of the Missouri River. Here is how he describes the scene: "On the muddy shore stood some thirty or forty dark, slavish-looking Spaniards, gazing stupidly out from beneath their broad hats." Crossing the river he encountered a boat in which "the rowers, swarthy, ignoble Mexicans, turned their brutish faces upward to look, as I reached the bank." A while later, Parkman came upon some "squalid Mexicans, with their broad hats and their vile faces overgrown with hair." About the time Parkman encountered the Hispanic occupants of New Mexico, who obviously impressed him as animal-like, fur trapper Rufus Sage visited Taos. Here is his impression of its Mexican residents: "There are no people on the whole continent of America, whether civilized or uncivilized, with one or two exceptions, more miserable in condition or despicable in morals than the mongrel race inhabiting New Mexico." Another trapper found the Mexicans in his part of the country "depraved, indolent, untrustworthy, dishonest, cowardly, servile, ignorant, superstitious, and dirty"—among other undesirable traits. An American army officer on duty in the Texas–New Mexico region believed that the Indians he encountered were actually superior to the Mexicans. These latter, allegedly, "were content if they could satisfy their animal wants."

The French-born Jean-Baptiste Lamy, appointed first as bishop (1853) and later as archbishop (1875) of Santa Fe (on whose life Willa Cather based her enduringly popular novel *Death Comes for the Archbishop* [1927]), inclined sympathetically toward his Mexican-origin wards, in a paternalistic and condescending way. Toward the end of his life, though, even he revealed certain

prejudices common among native-born Americans. "Our Mexican population" he wrote, "has quite a sad future. Very few of them will be able to follow modern progress. They cannot be compared to the Americans in the way of intellectual liveliness, ordinary skills, and industry. . . . The morals, manners, and customs of our unfortunate people are quite different from those of Americans." He concluded that men of progressive spirit would have trouble understanding the spirit of "our Mexican population," for it "is almost too primitive."

A traveler from Connecticut who journeyed through Texas in the mid-1850s concluded that his countrymen would find it difficult "to harmoniously associate with the bigoted, childish, and passionate Mexicans" who comprised a good part of the state's populace. Reporting on the California scene in the early years after the gold rush, an editorial writer for the *National Intelligencer* assured his readers that the Hispanic portion of the inhabitants "are a thieving, cowardly, dancing, lewd people, and generally indolent and faithless." Another witness to life in California at this time commented on the coarseness and lasciviousness of the Mexicans as well as their "degraded tone of manners." A generation or so later, even the tolerant Californian Josiah Royce (1855–1916), who gained renown as a Harvard professor of philosophy, described his native state's Spanish Americans as "an essentially amoral and childlike people" who could scarcely be held morally accountable for their actions.

When Americans began to arrive in some number in Mexico during the latter part of the nineteenth century, many felt compelled to scale the heights of Popocatepetl. "Climbing and trekking became a kind of mania among them. Hardly would a party return with stories of its climb up Popo, before another individual reported the exploits of his party's climb." Scaling Popo became for Americans a way to manifest their concern for physical fitness, a concern that rested on the values of self-control and of the muscular Christianity by then deeply embedded in Anglo American culture. At the same time, the American mania for conquering Popocatepetl served as a reproach to Mexicans, who showed absolutely no interest in this pastime because they had no cult of muscular Christianity and evidenced scant concern for physical fitness as an end in itself. People without interest in disciplining their own bodies so as to be able to assert human mastery over nature lacked, so far as the American climbers were concerned, the basic prerequisites of civilization.

The relatively few Americans who journeyed farther south than Mexico in the nineteenth century often found little more to praise than their compatriots who had encountered the Latins of Mexico or the American Southwest. To many of the women who accompanied the Forty-Niners as they made their way to California across Panama's isthmus, Panamanians were swarthy-visaged, often half-breed racial mongrels, as repulsive in their features as in their actions. When in the proximity of the natives' stench, women had to hold their noses and keep their hands handy. According to one lady traveler, "The natives were so impetuous

and excitable that it was almost impossible to do anything with them." Their customary "tempestuousness was further aggravated by their tendency to drink, gamble, and fight," another lady averred. These judgments were rendered in 1849 and 1850. A few years later, in 1856, some other women made the Panama crossing and to their enormous relief discovered that safety was now assured "by a sizeable contingent of U.S. Marines. Like the U.S. Cavalry stationed throughout the American West, the Marines guarded the intrusive immigrants from the . . . native people." Thus were Panamanians equated with the savage Indian tribes of North America whose animality could be kept in check only through Uncle Sam's organized military might.

Those Americans who ventured still farther south generally recorded impressions of the natives no more flattering than those of travelers in Mexico or Central America. U.S. naval officers charged with defending their country's neutral rights during the Latin American struggle for independence from Spain and Portugal (1810-1824) often sailed as far south as Chile and Peru. What impressed them most was the pervasive lawlessness, the disregard for personal property rights, the venality of public officials, and the evasion of financial obligations by virtually all the natives. Naval officers also expressed disgust for the pagan superstitions that allegedly characterized the local practice of religion. Typically, a U.S. minister resident to the Republic of Ecuador commented on the beauty of upper-class women, who seemed largely free from the taint of race mixture. But, even among these females, the minister complained, "faces very generally lack the expression which intellectuality alone can give."

What Americans thought of Latin American men could be even more unflattering, as some of the material already presented indicates. What lay at the heart of the trouble with Latin American males as perceived by the gringo? Perhaps F. Scott Fitzgerald without intending to hints at an answer in his marvelous 1920 short story "The Ice Palace." Fitzgerald deals directly here with some of the cultural differences that led to a virtually unbridgeable gulf between North and South within the United States. In some ways, though, his probing of attitudes is just as applicable to the chasm between Americans and Latin Americans. At one point in the story Harry, the northerner, shocks the southerner Sally Carroll, to whom he is at the time affianced, when he says: "I'm sorry, dear . . . but you know what I think of them [southern men]. They're sort of—sort of degenerates. . . . They've lived so long down there with all the colored people that they've gotten lazy and shiftless."

Up to now I have used the scattergun approach in pointing to evidence of North American disdain for the Latin American, owing to the latter's alleged stagnation in a state of nature. Next (and there will be some overlapping here) I focus on some of the specific traits that purportedly attested to the Latin American's incompatibility with civilization.

## SEX AND ALCOHOL, AND LATIN AMERICAN PRIMITIVISM

For Victorian-age Americans, middle-class respectability came increasingly to be associated with control over the sexuality that aristocrats and riffraff alike ostensibly indulged all too freely. Sublimation of sexual desire emerged as the hallmark of bourgeois civilization, whereas sexual abandon became the sure indication of atavism. In his 1906 book *The Future in America*, English writer H. G. Wells cast his eyes overseas and found many qualities to admire in Americans. They had, he opined, shaped "an intensely moral land" by curbing all lusts save one, the lust of acquisition. In an era of industrial revolution and some of the most dramatic conquests over nature and its resources in all the annals of history, it seemed fitting, at least to self-admiring Americans, that by their very lust for acquisition they could tame all other lusts.

Control over the libido was by no means a new quest for Americans when they enlisted in its cause in the nineteenth century. Some truth inheres in the popular image of seventeenth-century Puritan attitudes toward sexuality. For example, Puritans did indeed arrest, fine, and even whip married couples whose first child had arrived too soon. If anything, though, concern with mastering sexual excesses had sharpened by the mid-nineteenth century as the remnants of Calvinist fatalism gave way to entrepreneurial faith in the self-made man whose self-control would yield treasure in this life and the next. Just as Americans became obsessive about improving the body so as to guarantee physical health, so they turned relentlessly to self-discipline as a means to economic and spiritual well-being. For many of them, at least to judge by their words, sexual self-control seemed the source of every other form of self-control.

Among men's and women's reform societies appearing early in the nineteenth century were those dedicated to seeking "social regeneration through sexual purification." The women's societies might seem especially hostile "to the licentious and predatory male," but men could sometimes be as zealous as women reformers in seeking to banish licentious conduct. Indeed, manliness came to be associated with sexual self-control. Theodore Roosevelt was by no means unusual in priding himself on an abundance of both virtues. Honoring manliness in himself and others, Roosevelt also exulted in his sexual continence. "Thank Heaven, I am at least perfectly pure," Roosevelt confided to his diary in 1878 when at the age of twenty he speculated on a future wife. "Two years later, by then engaged, he again 'thanked Heaven' and rejoiced that he could tell his fiancée 'everything I have ever done.'"

For the businessmen intent upon building America's economic foundations, thrift seemed a cardinal virtue; and thrift meant establishing strict control over spending—both dollars and sperm. Economic and sexual self-control, ostensibly, went hand in hand. Roosevelt, with the patrician's contempt for the businessman,

saw national strength and grandeur in far more than economic criteria. Just as much as with the businessman, though, Roosevelt's goals—including the military strength and the requisite power to discipline and uplift pauper classes and nations—demanded the kind of manliness and virility equated with stoic self-control, cold showers, and the stiff upper lip. Very possibly the more Americans proved incapable of living by the standards of continence, the more they reviled the Others who did not pay even lip service to the ideal and overtly indulged in "loose" life-styles.

Nineteenth-century defenders of American middle-class respectability assumed that excess spending of male sperm was bad both for the nation's economy and its morality. Beyond that, excessive sexual activity whether channeled into intercourse or masturbation resulted in race degeneracy, a gradual sinking into weakness, effeminacy, and—ultimately—barbarism. The antisex crusader Anthony Comstock (1844–1915) staunchly opposed birth control because it would encourage lust, which he saw as the basis of most evils that beset society. "Lust defiles the body, debauches the imagination, corrupts the mind, deadens the will, destroys the memory, sears the conscience, hardens the heart, and damns the soul." Impure and libidinous acts and even thoughts "unnerve the arm, and steal away the elastic step"; they "create rakes and libertines in society—skeletons in many a household. The family is polluted, home desecrated, and each generation born into the world is more and more cursed by the inherited weakness, the harvest of this seed-sowing."

John Harvey Kellogg (1852–1943), who eventually founded the food company that bears his name, agreed on all counts with Comstock, as did Sylvester Graham (1794–1851), whose name would be attached to a highly popular cracker. Both Kellogg and Graham sought to devise foods and diets for Americans that would curb the sexual appetite. According to Kellogg, "The reproductive act is the most exhausting of all vital acts. Its effect upon the undeveloped person is to retard growth, weaken the constitution, and dwarf the intellect." To Kellogg's litany of sexuality's evils, Graham added this wisdom: "It were better for you not to exceed in the [annual] frequency of your [sexual] indulgences the number of months in the year; and you cannot exceed the number of weeks in the year, without impairing your constitutional powers, shortening your lives, and increasing your liability to disease and suffering; if indeed, you do not thereby actually induce disease of the worst and most painful kind; and at the same time transmit to your offspring an impaired constitution, with strong and unhappy predisposition." Graham concluded that by abusing the sex organs through overindulgence of "instinctive appetites," man became "a living volcano of unclean propensities and passions. . . . He sinks himself in degeneracy below the brutes."

As they concerned themselves with stamping out sexual excesses among the male members of respectable, middle-class society, Americans also worried

about the sexuality of women. Frequently both women and men bandied about notions of the moral superiority of women. Invariably, the morally superior woman was a Madonna rather than an Eve, one who took no pleasure in the sexual act and accepted it only as a duty that must be stoically fulfilled in order to speed the propagation of society's better elements. Sometimes male obstetricians even intervened surgically to guarantee woman's indifference to sex by assaulting the clitoris. And, in fortifying both men and women psychologically against temptations of the flesh, conjuring up the unwholesome, sensuous Other proved helpful, or at least so it was assumed.

Nineteenth-century European imperialists divided humanity "into an Occident and an Orient, the latter being the sphere" of illicit sex and "fleshly delights." Europeans also divided the world into North and South spheres. Far to the south lay Africans, oversexed and not fully human; less far southward resided the Spaniards, Portuguese, and Italians, worthier than Africans but vitiated by their propensity for "un manly" conduct. Americans tended to place the libidinous Other either in the West (Indians, Latin Americans, and the debauched elements of white society) or in the South. Within their own country, the South was home not only to the mythically lustful black but to sexually uninhibited white upper-class males as well as profligate white trash. Especially as the tide of abolitionist fervor rose, northerners eroticized the entire South, picturing it as one "great brothel." Southern males, whether black, white upper-class, or white lower-class, afforded proof that "man reduced to a pure state of nature is not a Noble Savage but a neolithic satyr." Early in the twentieth century novelist Upton Sinclair, an antisouthern southerner and a sexual prude, still chose to depict the plantation of the slavery era, and even later, as a "house of shame, where black, half-naked girls, most of them harlots at heart, competed for sexual favors from the master (or anyone else readily available) and generally became pregnant by the time they reached age fifteen." In far less prudish manner, Mississippi's consummately great novelist William Faulkner developed this theme in such books as his 1936 classic *Absalom, Absalom!*

For many American northerners, the South lay also south of the border. The Other who occupied this South belonged both to morally dissolute classes (aristocracy and dependent peons) and to an inferior race. Both class and race shaped the Latin southerner as a lustful creature whose life-style challenged the accepted values of decent classes and races. As with Upton Sinclair's South, the Latin American South was dotted with plantation houses of shame where semi-naked, dark-skinned sluts pranced about and competed for the honor of satisfying the master classes' animalistic urges. Corruption of this sort served to justify Americans in their imperialist designs on Latin America, just as Europeans found moral sanction for imperialism in the Dark Continent by envisioning Africans as creatures of unmitigated savagery and licentiousness, the two qualities being inseparable.

After spending some time in Latin America in the early 1890s, an American writer remarked that the Anglo Saxon "is a monogamous animal, while at any given moment the Latin's horizon is apt to be occupied by a petticoat or a succession of petticoats." In this instance, the writer dealt light-heartedly with character blemishes that had provoked stuffy self-righteousness from earlier observers of Latin American sexual mores. Here are the words that the author of an 1838 romance put in the mouth of a Texan addressing a Mexican army captain: "In point of chastity . . . the most important and influential qualification of Northern nations, we are infinitely superior to you—Lust is, with us, hateful and shameful; for you, it is a matter of indifference. This is the chief curse of the South; the leprosy which unnerves both body and mind. It is what caused the Roman empire to sink. . . . The Southern races must be renewed and the United States are the *officina gentium* for the new Continent."

Josiah Gregg (1806–1850), a nine-year resident in Mexico and author of the classic account of the early Santa Fe trade, sympathized with certain aspects of the culture he discovered south of the border; but he professed outrage at the pervasive licentiousness. For Mexicans, he charged, "the institution of marriage changes the legal rights of the parties, but it scarcely affects their moral obligations. It is looked upon as a convenient cloak for irregularities." In his 1857 book *El Gringo*, W. W. H. Davis registered full accord with Gregg. Among Mexicans, he averred, marriage served "as a cloak to hide numerous irregularities" engaged in by both partners. While married men "support a wife and mistress at the same time," Davis added, "too frequently the wife also has her male friend." In Davis's estimation, three-quarters of the married population among Mexicans went in for adultery.

In trying to account for alleged lack of sexual restraint among Latin Americans, Americans sometimes drew on their knowledge of Indian culture. The "fact" that Indians conducted themselves like "brute beasts," flaunted the ties and obligations of marriage, and gave free rein to sexual appetites originated, according to some Caucasian Americans, in aboriginal child-rearing practices, especially the custom of "allowing the wild freedom and nudity of children." This custom not only gave rise to sexual abandon as children matured but also induced generalized social disorder and undermined respect for all restraint. In general, Americans took the nudity of Indians as sure proof that they were barbaric, and the pawns of their passions. A similar line of reasoning consigned Latin Americans to barbarism.

In a book he published in 1838, a Yankee traveler to Colombia registered shock over the fact that children, especially of the abundant poor classes, ran about naked. Susan Shelby Magoffin traveled the Santa Fe Trail in the 1840s and also spent some time in northern Mexico. An intelligent and tolerant observer, she responded positively to many aspects of Mexican culture, observing at one point: "What a polite people these Mexicans are, altho' they are looked upon

a half barbarous set by the generality of [American] people." Nevertheless, she found it "repulsive to see the children running about perfectly naked." Nor could she calmly accept the state of nudity or near nudity in which women casually allowed themselves to be seen. She found it "truly shocking to my modesty" to encounter such sights while in the company of gentlemen and noted: "I am constrained to keep my veil drawn tightly over my face all the time to protect my blushes." Set against the prevailing standards of her time, Magoffin's comments are significant.

[. . .] Nineteenth-century values in America equated modesty with culture, civilization, and Christianity. Those who lacked modesty, allegedly, had attained the moral development only of children.

Certain men, of course, especially those of "low social station," might respond with frank fascination to the Latina's casualness toward nudity. At the outset of the Mexican War in 1846 when Gen. Zachary Taylor's army arrived on the Rio Grande, the soldiers realized at once "that the Mexican women were different. Standing on the river bank in early morning or evening, they gaped as the young women of Matamoros came down to the river, disrobed without hesitation or embarrassment, and plunged into the stream." Later on during the war one soldier observed of Mexican women: "Nearly all of them have well-developed, magnificent figures . . . [and] dress with as little clothing as you can well fancy." A "sharp-eyed Indianan" noted of the Mexican women: "Their bosoms were not compressed in stays . . . but heaved freely under the healthful influence of the genial sun and balmy air of the sunny south." Here were attractions indeed, but probably many an American soldier assured himself he would not want to marry one of these natural and uninhibited women, especially given the often-remarked tendency of Mexican and Latin women in general to surrender to obesity well before middle age—a reminder of the unpleasant consequences that befell women who let themselves go.

Some American male observers of Latin women liked nothing of what they saw. Gilbert Haven, an American preacher who spent a winter in Mexico in the 1850s, found the women, especially of the lower classes, ugly, their physical features reflecting their debauched morals. One explanation as to why most women remained single was the fee the clergy charged to administer the wedding rites. The underlying explanation, though, according to Haven, was that debauchery and fornication resided "in their blood. There was no seeming sense of shame . . . to modesty."

An American geologist visiting Cuba and Puerto Rico in 1898 noted that the women had little regard for marriage, and this accounted for the fact that 40 percent of all births were illegitimate. He did not blame the situation so much on the basic immorality of the Caribbean women as on the worthlessness of the men. "What right-thinking woman would accept marriage to one of them? Still the notion that debauchery and fornication lived in the blood of Latin American

women persisted. Indeed, the image of Latin America as one extended brothel seemed deeply engraved in the minds of many Americans. In the 1850s an American official wrote that standards of female chastity were deplorably low among the Mexican populace of New Mexico, where "the virtuous are far outnumbered by the vicious. Prostitution is carried out to a fearful extent; and it is quite common for parents to sell their daughters for money to gratify the lust of the purchaser." Both in New Mexico and Mexico, American soldiers seemed to believe that the majority of women were "primarily prostitutes."

Early in the twentieth century women members of some forty interdenominational missionary societies felt a special need to convert Latin American women to Protestantism so as to rescue them from prevalently low standards of morality that led so many to take to prostitution. And, when the white-slave panic "reached its unaccountably hysterical peak in . . . 1913," the common assumption was that an American girl who disappeared (injected by the needle of some white-slave trafficker) "would wake up, helpless, in the brothels of Rio or Constantinople." Thus were Latin Americans and Turks lumped together as the worst offenders against sexual purity.

While some stereotypes may have remained constant, others have changed. No longer prevalent is the nineteenth-century conviction that smoking indicated a woman's uninhibited sexuality and probably her ready availability. Many a nineteenth-century American who traveled south of the border registered amazement not only at female immodesty but at the fact that women of all classes smoked—publicly and unabashedly. In appraising women, American males tended to agree with John Harvey Kellogg's assessment that smokers were likely to be addicted to sexual practices "still more filthy." A Yankee visitor to Colombia in the 1830s took female smoking as a sure indication of lack of willpower: if addicted to nicotine, it followed they were addicted to depravity in general. A woman visitor to Chile in the 1860s recorded her disgust not only with female but also male use of tobacco. The fact that Chilean men smoked provided a tip-off as to their "loose . . . notions of morality." [ . . . ]

Together with uninhibited sexuality and free indulgence in nicotine, excessive use of spices and condiments, of caffeine and chocolate struck many nineteenth-century North Americans as indicators of moral depravity bordering on barbarism. The "stimulant," though, that produced by far the worst effects on character and that undermined all of civilization's restraints when used to excess was alcohol. By what Americans believed to be pervasive alcohol addiction, Latin Americans dulled their intellectual capacity, loosened restraints on passions and instincts, and dropped out of the march toward progress. Americans themselves when their Republic was young had succumbed to alcohol addiction at an uncommonly high rate. Unlike Latin Americans, however, Americans liked to believe that they, or at least the decent elements among them, had overcome an addiction that consigned its sufferers to a state of nature.

Between the Revolution through which they gained independence and approximately the first quarter of the nineteenth century, American per capita consumption of alcohol registered an all-time high, as W. R. Rorabaugh documents in his book *The Alcoholic Republic*. Since then, consumption per capita has never come close to matching the early, heroic proportions of alcoholic intake. Helping to curb alcohol consumption was the rise of middle-class values of respectability. Increasingly, abstemiousness in drinking habits emerged as the recognized prerequisite for the "selfcommand, prudence and fortitude, and a strict control of the passions and appetites . . . [required] to maintain the empire of reason over sense." Freedom itself demanded the constant exercise of self-control through which humans liberated themselves from animalistic impulses. Out of self-denial issued independence, both from sin and from economic want.

By 1831, Rorabaugh has discovered, "the American Temperance Society reported more than 2,200 local organizations with more than 170,000 members; in 1834, 7,000 groups with 1,250,000 members." Together with men's and especially women's reform societies, Protestant ministers spearheaded the temperance movement, persuaded that salvation, and with it economic success, came only to those who withstood the temptations of demon rum. In the combined secular-religious campaign against alcohol abuse, Americans could draw cautionary tales from the experience of Native Americans. By their inability to withstand the temptations of alcohol, these children of nature blighted whatever potential they might once have had to advance to the civilized state. Chingachgook, Cooper's once noble red man of the *Leatherstocking Tales*, came in his besotted old age to embody for Americans of the respectable classes a frightening symbol of decadence.

Increasingly satisfied that ability to curb the intake of spirits evidenced not only religious but also social and even racial superiority, Americans grew increasingly censorious as they became acquainted with Latin American drinking habits—real and imagined; and remember that for most Americans initial contacts with Latin Americans got under way just as the zeal for temperance asserted itself in the northern republic. Americans who observed Mexicans in Texas, New Mexico, and California in the first half of the nineteenth century invariably commented on their addiction to drink—an addiction that men and women allegedly shared equally. Among the many Americans complaining about drunkenness as they crossed the border into Mexico itself was artist Thomas Moran. The natives delighted in filling themselves with pulque, and the more they drank, he complained, the more they voiced anti-American sentiments—sentiments that they emphasized by vulgar gestures. The same minister resident in Ecuador quoted earlier as he complained about the lack of intellectuality in the expression of upper-class women, attributed to alcoholism the "ugly, stupid, simpering look" that distinguished the community's Indian women. With utmost distaste, he observed that "the ruling passion of Indian women and men for drink" led them to "bacchanalian orgies." An

American traveler who made it all the way to isolated Paraguay toward the end of the nineteenth century commented on the lack of ambition that characterized its inhabitants. It did not occur to them to improve their circumstances, for with a bit of food, ample liquor, and "some cigars to smoke all day," they had all they wanted of life. An earlier traveler had scorned Bolivians, in part because of their drinking habits and addiction to coca-leaf chewing, but he had found the Chileans more to his liking. Perhaps because of the prevalence of white blood among them, he surmised, they seemed relatively free from alcohol addiction.

Few Americans traveled to Latin America, or even to the Hispanic Southwest. For impressions of their Latin neighbors, most Americans relied largely on travel accounts published by their more adventurous or wealthier compatriots. From these accounts they gleaned the impression that Latin Americans were largely Indian in racial composition and overwhelmingly in thrall to alcoholic spirits—even as North America's "savages." What is more, they learned from censorious travelers that the Catholic church, instead of fighting demon rum, as did North America's Protestant denominations, actually encouraged alcohol consumption as a means of honoring innumerable saints on their feast days. . . . The expression "Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion," coined by a Protestant clergyman during the political campaign of 1884, cast aspersions on the character of Irish Americans. But long before the Irish issue entered U.S. politics, many Americans had concluded that the true lair of rum and Romanism (or pulque and popishness) lay in South America, and that these two devilish forces contributed to another curse—chronic rebellion. The unholy trinity's power pretty much proved that Latin Americans were refractory to civilization.

## THE MONROE DOCTRINE AND ORIGINS OF U.S. EXPANSIONISM

Few individuals reflected on the Monroe Doctrine when it first came into being in 1823. Drafted by Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, the doctrine conveyed the preoccupation of the United States at a time when the future of the newly independent Latin American republics was far from certain. With the final battle of independence in 1824, it seemed clear that Spaniards would no longer be welcome in the region. The troubling issue for leaders in the United States involved the possible designs of other European powers, especially the British. The doctrine was intended to show that the United States would not look favorably on any European power's attempt to recolonize the new, weak nations of Latin America. The British feared the "Holy Alliance," made up of Austria, Prussia, and Russia, might have designs on Latin America. France was seen as yet another potential threat, and the United States—having concluded a major war with the British less than nine years earlier—could not trust the former mother country. The Monroe Doctrine, then, represented the U.S. attempt to define and broaden its political and economic sovereignty in the hemisphere.

The Monroe Doctrine would become increasingly useful to the United States, especially in the period after 1850 when economic and territorial expansion were key U.S. objectives in Latin America, particularly in Mexico and the Caribbean. Some argued that the Monroe Doctrine became nothing more than an argument in favor of U.S. intervention in the area and that its original goal (to keep out Europeans) had in fact become a sinister tool of exploitation. Others argued that the United States had become champion and protector of the Latin American nations and pointed to the similarities that bound the United States to Latin America (i.e., constitutional and political structures in Latin America modeled after the U.S. Constitution, strong presidentialism, and increasing levels of trade between the United States and Latin American nations).