

Manuela Sáenz and the Independence of South America

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Manuela Sáenz was a heroine of the struggle for independence in South America in the early nineteenth century; but she has been known to history mainly as the dazzlingly beautiful lover of Simón Bolívar, the leader of the independence armies in Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia and Peru, who has become an iconic figure across the continent for his military prowess and his political vision. The struggle for independence from Spanish colonization was a drawn-out process in South America, and during the period 1808-1824 the region was in constant upheaval as patriots and royalists faced off in a cycle of advances and setbacks, that saw political boundaries frequently redrawn. The South American Revolution for Independence represented a key event in the Age of Revolution – its immediate spark was Napoleon’s invasion of Spain in 1808, and the patriotic movement drew heavily on the language and ideals of the American and French Revolutions. The role of women in the political and military struggles of the Age of Revolution, and the significance of this period for changing gender relations and gender identities has been a source of intense recent interest for historians. Looking at the life of Manuela Sáenz can provide us with a window into many of these important issues. In her background and prominence Sáenz was an exceptional woman, but she is also a representative of the wider engagement of South American women with politics who played a much greater role in the independence process than conventional histories have allowed for. Moreover, that she has been considered important only in the context of her relationship with a more powerful man – Bolívar – typifies the way exceptional women’s histories have been hidden: placed on the sidelines and used to add flashes of glamour and passion to the political stories of male actors. Certainly, Sáenz was emphatically not just the lover of Simón Bolívar; she was an

important actor in her own right in the liberation of South America. She served as a military strategist, a soldier, politician and archivist, and became a symbol of the Latin American search for independence, as well as an important figure in the early Republic. Even being the lover of Bolívar was not just a passive act, but an active one in itself – Sáenz pursued their relationship aggressively and struggled to keep it intact out of political ambition as well as love.

This article will explore the many facets of Manuela Sáenz as a political actor as a case study of gender and power during the Age of Revolution.¹

Simón Bolívar, The Latin American Wars of Independence and the Age of Revolution

The Spanish American Wars of Independence represented the essential collapse of the Spanish Empire, and were of momentous global importance. They resulted in the emergence of the first ‘post-colonial’ nation-states, ushered in a series of economic and political transformations throughout the Americas, and paved the way for the massive expansion of US territory and power. While the wars themselves took place from 1808-1824, historians have recently shown how the transition from Spanish subjecthood to Latin American citizenship was part of a wider process spanning from 1750 to 1850 in which the revolutionary ideals surging the globe in this period were engaged, applied and rethought to meet the domestic context. From the late 17th century Spain’s status as a European power was in rapid decline, and as economic depression and military defeat ravaged the domestic treasury, it became more and more dependent on its colonies for resources. This became a source of resentment as Mexico and Peru burgeoned as prosperous, well-ordered aristocratic societies. When the Bourbon dynasty replaced the Hapsburgs as rulers of Spain in 1700 they enacted an ambitious series of reforms in both metropolis and empire which curtailed the power of the Catholic Church, centralized political power and restructured the economy. The effect of these reforms on Spanish America was dramatic. Enlightenment ideas circulated for the first time, while economic and political reforms generated resentment and rebellion among elite and popular classes alike. But this resentment did not bubble over into separatist sentiment until Napoleon’s invasion of Spain in 1808.

Simón Bolívar emerged as the key military leader in Northern South America. An aristocratic Creole from Caracas, he had been exposed to revolutionary ideas during his education in Europe, and he was both a remarkably charismatic and audacious military leader, and a man of extraordinary intellectual vision. Bolívar was a prolific writer and has left behind more than 10,000 speeches, letters and diary entries in which he laid out his plans for a unified South America, modeled along the lines of the United States.² While he was successful in throwing off Spanish rule, he accomplished less than he had hoped for politically. The pan-American union he advocated was never

forthcoming, while the democratic and inclusionary ideals he had laid out in his early writings were later sidelined by instability and turmoil.

A Rebellious Youth

It is in this context of revolution, military struggle and dashed hopes that we must locate the story of Manuela Sáenz. She was born in Quito in 1797, the illegitimate daughter of a Spanish merchant and municipal official and an upper-class Creole mother. Her official baptismal records listed her as a foundling, or “*hija expósita*” – a child of unknown parents – the conventional manner in which the shame of illegitimacy was sidestepped in colonial South America. Yet notwithstanding this face-saving legal maneuvering, Sáenz’s father recognized her as his offspring informally, using his wealth and influence to provide her with a substantial dowry and to obtain her admission to the oldest and most prestigious convent in the city, where she would receive the best education available to elite women at that time. While convent life was central to her attainment of respectability and status, accounts of Manuela’s childhood suggest that she chafed against its confinements. She was often chastised for dressing like a boy, playing with weapons and riding horses astride rather than sidesaddle. Most circulating accounts of Sáenz’s life present a story of her scandalizing elite society by eloping from the convent in her teens with a young army officer, Fausto d’Elhuyar.³ The most recent and scholarly biography of Manuela found no archival or other written evidence to support the story, but the existence of the legend itself reflects her perceived desire for freedom as well as her scorn for social conventions.⁴

Marriage was essential to the life chances of upper class women in colonial Latin America, bringing with it honor, respectability, and enhanced legal rights and status. While Sáenz’s marital options were constrained by her illegitimacy, her father managed to negotiate her marriage to Dr. James Thorne, a prosperous English merchant more than twice her age, who was apparently attracted by her famous beauty and the opportunity to solidify his status by marrying into local society. The marriage confirmed Manuela’s status as a member of the elite, and gave her a modicum of power. Despite the disdain Sáenz apparently showed for the marriage, calling the whole affair “supremely ridiculous,”⁵ her position as a society wife in Lima was central to the role she would come to play in the independence process.

Early Activism: Becoming Involved in Independence in a Ladylike Fashion

Despite the historical imagery of Sáenz as an appendage to Bolívar, in fact she was active in the independence movement long before meeting the Liberator. Indeed, their later encounter was in part a result of her interest in independence ideals and politics. After her marriage she formed part of a privileged social circle with close connections to the political and economic powers. In the context of the burgeoning independence

movement, elite parties became awash with gossip about military strategy and political convictions. Sáenz was a regular guest at parties held in the ballrooms of the Spanish Viceroy. At these gatherings she befriended Rosita Campusano, the lover of José San Martín, who had successfully led the independence campaign in Argentina and Chile and at that time was heading up anti-Spanish forces in Peru. The two shared an interest in politics and a commitment to patriot goals, and as the connection developed, Sáenz offered herself and her slaves in the fight for the freedom of Peru, and agreed to provide information on Royalist strategies. Crucially, her decision to support the movement in this way emerged from her own beliefs, based on her reading of Enlightenment works and her own sense of discrimination as a Creole, likely filtered through the humiliations she had suffered as an illegitimate child. Her political convictions were in direct opposition of those of her husband and father, who as Europeans and merchants, felt threatened by the possibility of a Republic and subsequent socio-political Revolution.

While Sáenz's formulation of her own political ideas stood in contrast to widely held ideas about the capacity of women to think about and engage with politics, her actions at this stage fit into the dominant gender norms, and underscore the gendered nature of the ways through which women could involve themselves in politics or become nationalist actors. Feminine networks of gossip – whether those solely of the elite class or those mediated through slaves – were central to Sáenz's political agency. In support of San Martín, Sáenz relayed information overheard at the elegant Lima receptions she attended and held meetings in her home for male and female supporters of independence to meet and conspire against the Spanish Crown. She also used her slaves to send information to San Martín about what the Royalist elite was thinking, doing and planning. Not only did the slaves run messages for her, but they compiled information about the movements of royalist soldiers and relayed it back to her by talking in the plazas with other slaves and servants of the elite. Since such activity was based in the domestic sphere it did not break with traditional gender norms, but rather gently pushed at them, extending domestic roles beyond their conventional sphere of influence to make an impact on the male-dominated world of politics. There are also important class and race dynamics at play here. Sáenz had access to certain privileged information because of her status as an elite white creole woman; but she also depended on the help of slaves and without access to their information her effectiveness would likely have been more limited.

As recognition of the important role that she had played, San Martín appointed Sáenz a member of the Society of Patriotic Ladies and awarded her the title of Order of the Sun, for which she received a special medal inscribed with the slogan: "To the patriotism of the most sensitive." The existence of the Society and the Order demonstrates how widespread women's engagement with independence was, and that this activism was not seen as threatening, but on the contrary, was perceived as women working for the benefit of their societies in a manner supportive of male political

goals.⁶ However, this perception of Sáenz's actions would soon change after she met Bolívar and became involved with independence at a more military level.

In 1822 Sáenz traveled with her father to Quito, where the Bolívar-led struggle against the Spanish loyalists was at its peak. As the tide turned in favor of the pro-independence forces, Sáenz formed part of the committee that prepared the reception for Bolívar after his decisive victory at the battle of Pichincha, and coordinated the actions of cleaning and painting the houses that he would see on his way to the reception, again playing a traditional, feminine political role. It was in the context of this reception that the fateful meeting between Sáenz and Bolívar occurred. It is said that she was positioned in one of the balconies, watching the parade and throwing flowers to the soldiers as they marched to the reception. When Bolívar passed by she threw a floral decoration at him which landed directly in his lap. He looked up at her and saluted. At the reception, when Sáenz was introduced to Bolívar he purportedly quipped: "If all my soldiers had your aim, I would have won all the battles."⁷ They spent the rest of the night dancing, and this was the start of what has become a legendary love affair.

Bolívar was well-known as a womanizer, and at first it seemed likely that his encounter with Sáenz would be another fleeting affair. The letters they wrote to each other and the scandalized observations of elite society document the intensity of their connection from the start, but when Bolívar left Quito it seems that he imagined that the relationship would end. Instead, Sáenz pursued him, leaving her husband, an enormously radical undertaking at the time. While affairs were not uncommon in late-colonial Quito, leaving a marriage was not seen as an option for upper-class women. Divorce did not exist; and marriage was key to both physical and economic protection and honor. Moreover, a husband – even one who had been abandoned – had the right to sequester his wife in a convent if he felt she was undermining his reputation. Thus the power of Sáenz's actions in this regards should not be under-stated, and it is likely that political ambition as well as romantic passion was a motivating factor.⁸

Transgressing Boundaries: Manuela Sáenz as Military Actor and Politician

As her relationship with Bolívar developed Sáenz's political engagement became more overt, and she came to play an important role in both the struggle for independence and Bolívar's post-war efforts to assert his own political primacy. Her most notable formal role was as the official secretary of Bolívar's personal archive. This represented a key strategic responsibility, and prevented enemy forces from uncovering details about military plans. It also affiliated her officially with the Colombian Army, and entitled her to professional pay. Sáenz protected these letters and documents fervidly until her death, and procured their security even when she could not physically be with them.

There is debate as to what extent Sáenz participated in more direct military action. As primary source sidebar A shows, she actively sought to join Bolívar's campaign, overriding his early concerns about her ability to withstand long treks on

horseback in treacherous conditions. It is evident from primary source B that Bolívar valued the role she could play in bringing him information and intelligence, and that she became increasingly central to his military vision. We know that she followed the troops, and often nursed soldiers on the battlefield. Frequently she tended Bolívar himself back to health. After the Battle of Ayacucho in December 1824, which brought the military portion of the struggle for independence to a final end, Colombian General Antonio José de Sucre sent a letter to Bolívar describing Sáenz's contribution to the battle as "heroic", and detailing how she had organized the troops, healed the injured, and rescued soldiers that were shot in battle. Indeed, he nominated her to become a Colonel of the Colombian army, an action effected by Bolívar. (See primary source sidebar C).

Some writers have argued that her military role was deeper still, arguing that Bolívar tasked her with leading his soldiers through the cold and difficult inter-Andean route to Huarez in 1824, that she fought next to Bolívar at the battle of Junín the same year, and took up arms at the battle of Ayacucho. More recent work has suggested that her involvement in direct combat was more legendary than real, and that her nomination as a Colonel was an honorary gesture recognizing her important support role throughout the campaign rather than reflecting actions taken at any specific battle.⁹ This did not prevent the promotion from generating enormous controversy. The Colombian Vice-President Francisco Paula de Santander wrote an angry letter to Bolívar arguing that Sáenz attained this rank because of their relationship, and asserting that this promotion threatened the honor of Bolívar and the army alike. Bolívar defended Sáenz, and proudly proclaimed her bravery and heroism, emphasizing that it was Sucre's idea to make her a colonel. The furor underscores the scandalousness of Sáenz succeeding in a military and political role gendered as male.

Sáenz's political importance continued to grow after the wars for independence ended, and she took up residence in Bolívar's official home in 1826. She became recognized by the people around Bolívar as an important intermediary for anyone seeking his assistance, pardon or favor. She would also provide help to injured, sick or destitute soldiers in her own right. Pamela Murray has described her role as akin to that of Madame de Pompadour, the most famous of King Louis XV's official mistresses: defending the person and interests of a man she regarded as an indispensable leader.¹⁰

Sáenz's loyalty and commitment to Bolívar, as well as her political astuteness, were pronounced. In 1827 she played a key role in subduing a major rebellion by disgruntled army officers in Lima which took place while Bolívar was away and that sought to overturn the constitution he had imposed. She recognized the rank-and-file grievances such as food shortages and low wages that had made the troops open to the plans of conspirators with broader political motives. She visited the battalions that had remained loyal dressed in a colonel's uniform and personally appealed to them to stand behind Bolívar, distributing money to them as evidence that she recognized and supported their material concerns.¹¹ While Sáenz was arrested and ultimately expelled

from Peru for her actions, the episode demonstrates her ongoing commitment to the Boliviarian cause, and her continued importance to the implementation of Bolívar's political goals.

At times her actions saved Bolívar's life. Sáenz earned the title 'La libertadora del Libertador' (the Liberatrix of the Liberator¹²) for repeatedly thwarting assassination attempts against him. In August of 1828 Sáenz received news that Bolívar would be assassinated at a costume party to be held on August 10th at midnight, on the anniversary of his victorious entrance into Bogota. She repeatedly wrote to him begging him not to attend the party, yet he assumed her motives were jealousy (she was not invited) and ignored her warnings. Her actions on the night of the party have become famous. At around 11pm Manuela appeared at the doors wearing military uniform, and was refused entry by a guard (who turned out to be one of the conspirators) who insisted that she must be dressed in an elegant, feminine manner in order to be admitted to the party. Bolívar later acknowledged that the guard was aware that because of her relationship with Bolívar she was uniquely placed to disrupt the conspiracy. After Sáenz failed to gain entry to the party, she tried again with a different strategy: she came back dressed as an old crazy woman in dirty clothes and screamed outside the party: "Que viva el Libertador." Bolívar, angered and embarrassed by her antics, left the party to make her stop, and when the conspirators arrived at midnight to carry out their plan, Bolívar had already left.

A second life-saving intervention occurred six weeks later, when Bolívar and Sáenz were relaxing at a house in Bogotá off their guard. Sáenz had been warned about an attack, but had been unsuccessful in gaining Bolívar's attention. When she heard his would-be assassins enter the house, she ran into Bolívar's room, woke him up, gave him a sword and a gun, and forced him to jump from the window. He later explained that while his own instincts had been to stay and fight, Sáenz forced him to comply with her instructions, and ultimately he decided to trust her judgment. Sáenz detailed the rest of the story in one of the letters that she wrote many years later in exile in Peru. She said that after Bolívar escaped she confronted the intruders and insisted that Bolívar was not, and had never been there. She tried to convince them that she had opened the window when she heard the commotion and that she had been in bed, waiting for Bolívar to come. Her cover was destroyed when they took her downstairs to where a friend of Bolívar's was lying injured on the floor. He asked her if Bolívar was dead, to which she replied no, after which the conspirators tried to force her into revealing where Bolívar was; however, she was able to convince them that although he had been there, she did not know his whereabouts.

On both occasions, Sáenz was able to successfully intervene and protect Bolívar's life because of her sex. At the party she was able to draw him out by behaving in a manner that undermined his masculine honor – his mistress was behaving in a way that suggested she was out of his control, and thus she knew he would be compelled to

intervene. When she forced him to jump from the window, her life was spared (unlike that of his male companions who were also present) explicitly because she was a woman. One of the conspirators insisted that they could not kill a woman; thus the gender constraints that painted her as weak and defenseless effectively saved her life. It was also her status as a woman that allowed her to intercept the conspiracies – on both occasions Sáenz heard about the conspiracy from other women, who approached her to relay the news they had heard. Thus access to feminine networks of gossip and news again allowed her to act in a political manner. While of course Sáenz had personal reasons for desiring to save and protect her lover, she also acted out of political conviction, and the belief that the independence movement could not succeed without Bolívar's leadership.

Sáenz's interventions in this regard have often been presented as based on "feminine intuition," a strikingly unscientific category of analysis, rather than political astuteness. Yet Bolívar came to rely on Sáenz for political advice, and her convictions routinely impacted upon the political decisions he made. She frequently advised him as to political strategy, most notably in her efforts to defend him against the usurpation of power by Santander, who would ultimately overthrow him. It was Sáenz who first detected his disloyalty and intercepted and relayed the commands he had given to his confidants back to Bolívar. In particular, she became more aware of his efforts to isolate Bolívar in Peru and to leave him without troops or equipment, and advised him to sign all his letters as if he was not in Peru but rather inside the borders of Gran Colombian territory. These efforts stemmed from her role as his personal secretary with responsibility for his letters, and were successful in frustrating Santander's plans against Bolívar, at least in the short-term.

Significantly, Bolívar's opinion of women was at odds with the actions of Sáenz. Bolívar was ambivalent about Sáenz's involvement in politics, as well as the wider issue of women's activism. Despite his patronage of Sáenz within his army, and his acknowledgement of her contributions to the independence struggles, he wrote to his sister, Manuela Antonia, that: "A woman should be neutral in public matters. Her family and domestic duties are her first obligations."¹³ Catherine Davis has shown that in his writings Bolívar identified the feminine with weakness and masculinity with strength, unity and force, and repeatedly equated human rights with masculine virtues.¹⁴ This further discredits the idea that Bolívar was the primary motivating cause in Sáenz's politicization and activism.

It should also be noted that recent historical research has shown that Sáenz was far less exceptional in occupying such a role than was imagined at the time, and that South American women served the independence movement in a variety of ways with both high and low profiles. Not only did they give and raise money for arms, sew uniforms for the troops, and nurse wounded soldiers, but they also printed and distributed revolutionary propaganda, made public speeches against the Spanish, hid

refugees and worked as spies, passing on information of the occupying royalist troops to the insurgents in exile. Indeed, entire women's battalions were formed – most notably the Bolivian 'Amazons' – while others likely fought dressed or disguised as men. The stakes were high: many were executed, exiled or imprisoned as a result of their involvement.¹⁵ Sáenz embodies at a more high-profile level the experiences of this broader group of women.

Cultural Backlash: Exile in the Early Republic

Bolívar died in 1830, disillusioned and demoralized, his democratic ideals abandoned in place of a desperate attempt to retain and centralize power. Among his last writings were the immortal words “he who serves a revolution ploughs the sea.”¹⁶ Bolívar had forged the union of Gran Colombia from the territories of what are today Ecuador, Colombia and Venezuela, but on his death this collaboration ruptured, with Ecuador ceding in 1830, followed by Venezuela in 1831. Sáenz became caught in the cross-politics of this collapse of territorial union and progressive values. She suffered from a dual layer of discrimination in her efforts to remain a political force in the new republics: she was associated overwhelmingly with the figure of Bolívar, creating hostility from his enemies, while gender norms in general reverted to a much more traditional mould emphasizing home and domesticity for women – what scholars have referred to as the ideology of ‘republican motherhood.’¹⁷

Certainly, following Bolívar's death, Sáenz became the focus of anti-Bolivarian sentiment in Bogotá. She was exiled to Jamaica in 1833 by Colombian President Santander after she attacked a garrison where effigies of herself and Bolívar were being burned. She negotiated a return to Ecuador with the help of Bolívar's allies shortly afterwards by asserting her gendered vulnerability, stating that “there is nothing a poor woman like me could do” and insisting that her only crime was to have loved Bolívar.¹⁸ She was quickly re-expelled by President Rocafuerte who viewed her as a dangerous subversive. In his decision to exile her Rocafuerte asserted: “It is women who most foment the spirit of anarchy; because of this..... Manuela Sáenz must be made to leave the territory of Ecuador.”¹⁹ In such statements women's political agency was being presented as unnatural and destabilizing. Yet a strange double-play was at work here and the resurgence of ideas about feminine fragility meant that Sáenz was exiled in an era in which those defined as “enemies of the state” were routinely killed. Explicit mention was made of the need to treat her gently because of her sex. As corrígidor Antonio Robelli put it in a letter on the subject of her expulsion: “I have taken the smoother measures that women deserve, having only wanted to persuade her so that she would not be exposed to that the rigors of the force that the law requires.”²⁰

Sáenz sought to remain engaged in politics in exile, writing letters to key actors in Ecuador and entertaining political visitors. In particular she was interested in the demarcation of boundaries between Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, and in the rivalry

between Liberal and Conservative factions. While at first major figures seemed happy to correspond and meet with her (although she was never permitted to return), the increased isolation that she experienced from the 1850's represented not just the passing of time that made her connections less relevant, but also the emergence of a more traditional gender model in which the exclusion of women from the political realm was re-inscribed.

In the post-war context of extreme militarization and the institutionalization of violence, elites sought to reestablish political order by reinstating domestic order. In the face of such pronounced turmoil elites were concerned above all with the reestablishment of authority and control, and this meant the reimplementing of traditional paternalistic relations. Men were constructed as active citizens – soldiers and the defenders of the fatherland – while women were imagined as passive contributors to nationhood, their patriotic contribution limited to birthing and bringing up the next generation of (male) citizens. Thus militarized, politically active women such as Sáenz were seen as dangerously subversive, and bringing them under control was deemed essential.

Indeed, the very way in which her story – and those of others like her – has been marginalized reflects the way in which the political elite in the aftermath of independence sought to bury the participation of women. Denying the contribution of women like Sáenz was key to connecting military service to male citizenship and thus reasserting patriarchal boundaries. As Rebecca Earle has phrased it, women in Spanish America “occupied a contested seat at the revolutionary banquet,”²¹ and women's wartime activities were a source of anxiety and tension for the male political elite. Sáenz epitomizes these tensions and conflicts over gender identity.

Conclusion: Manuela Sáenz and Revolutionary Gender

Manuela Sáenz challenged patriarchal ideas about womanhood in every sector of her life. She contested the confines of the convent as a teenager, she left her husband for Bolívar, she fought in the military, she occupied a leadership role, and she continued to be an outspoken political critic even in exile. Yet she also reconfirmed the gender hierarchy. Her status as a woman was precisely that which enabled her to attain importance. She first found out about the independence struggle through feminine networks of friendship, and she first contributed to the process of independence by tapping into feminine networks of gossip. It was this female news-based connection that allowed her to be alerted to and to intervene in assassination plots against Bolívar, while she used the gender order to make her interventions to save Bolívar, and to appeal for clemency from Bolívar's enemies.

It is telling that Sáenz never advanced a gendered critique of politics or society – she made no specific demands for change in women's status in spite of her obvious radicalism and commitment. This underscores the extent to which these ideas were not

part of the revolutionary currents of the time at all. As Davies et al have argued: “As a social sector, South American women recognized, accepted and condoned their political exclusion as a sine qua non of their new societies; it was the consensus, the *doxa*, of their times.”²² A transformation of this exclusionary reality was not seen as within the remotest realms of possibility, and thus even the most sophisticated female thinkers did not try and reimagine it.

Sáenz pushed the limits of what women could achieve politically, first through her role in the military, and then through the establishment of herself as Bolívar’s consort. That this ultimately culminated in her exile and political exclusion is a demonstration of the finite boundaries that women experienced in trying to enter the political realm. As such the story of Sáenz is a story of power in the Age of Revolution.

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Notes

¹ Pamela S. Murray, “Of Love and Politics: Reassessing Manuela Sáenz and Simón Bolívar, 1822-1830”, in *History Compass*, 5, 1 (2007), 227.

² Catherine Davies, Claire Brewster, and Hilary Owen, *South American Independence: Gender, Politics, Text* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2006), 33.

³ Jerome R. Adams, *Notable Latin American Women: Twenty-Nine Leader, Rebels, Poets, Battlers and Spies, 1500-1900* (London: McFarland and Company, 1995); Alfonso Rumazo González, *Manuela Sáenz: La Libertadora del Libertador* (Buenos Aires: Almendros y Nieto, 1945); Victor W. Von Hagen, *The Four Seasons of Manuela: A Biography (The True Love Story of Manuela Sáenz and Simón Bolívar)* (Boston: Little Brown, 1952).

⁴ Pamela S. Murray, *For Glory and Bolívar: The Remarkable Life of Manuela Sáenz* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), 14.

⁵ Adams, *Notable Latin American Women*, 93.

⁶ See Claire Brewster, “Women and the Spanish-American Wars of Independence: An Overview”, *Feminist Review*, 79, 1 (2005), 20-35.

⁷ *Las Más hermosas Cartas de Amor entre Manuela y Simón: Acompañadas de los Diarios de Quito y Paita, Así como de otros Documentos* (Caracas: Ediciones Piedra, Papel y Tijera, 1998), 115. See also Von Hagen, *The Four Seasons of Manuela*, 46-48. It should be noted that Pamela Murray found no archival evidence to support this exact change of events, and the dialogue in particular is perhaps more grounded in popular legend than historical reality, but she agrees that it is likely that the affair began at the ball. *For Glory and Bolívar*, 30.

⁸ Murray, “Of Love and Politics.”

⁹ Murray, *For Glory and Bolívar*, 6. In post-independence Latin America the naming of women to honorary military ranks continued to be an important means of recognizing women’s support for difficult campaigns. See Nicola Foote, “Race, State and Nation in Early Twentieth Century Ecuador,” *Nations and Nationalism*, 12, 2, 2006, 266 for an example from the Ecuadorian civil war of 1895.

¹⁰ Murray, “Of Love and Politics,” 240.

¹¹ Murray, *For Glory and Bolívar*, 45-6.

¹² Christopher Conway’s translation. Christopher Conway, *The Cult of Bolívar in Latin American Literature* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003), 101.

¹³ Cited in Sarah Chambers, “Republican Friendship: Manuela Saenz Writes Women Into the Nation, 1835-1856.” *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 81, 2 (2001), 227.

¹⁴ Catherine Davis, “Colonial Dependence and Sexual Difference: Reading for Gender in the Writings of Simón Bolívar (1783-1830),” *Feminist Review*, 79, 1 (2005), 5-19.

¹⁵ Brewster, “Women and the Spanish-American Wars of Independence”; Evelyn Cherpak, “The participation of women in the independence of Gran Colombia”, in Asuncion Lavrin (ed.) *Latin American Women: Historical Perspectives* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1978), 219-234.

¹⁶ David Bushnell (ed.) *El Libertador: Writings of Simón Bolívar* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), xxxvi.

¹⁷ See especially Sarah Chambers, *Subjects to Citizens: Honor, Gender and Politics in Arequipa, Peru, 1780-1850* (Penn State Press, 1999); also Elizabeth Dore and Maxine Molyneux (eds) *Hidden Histories of Gender and the State in Latin America* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000).

¹⁸ Sáenz to Flores, Kingston, Jamaica, 6th May, 1834. Reprinted in *Las mas hermosas cartas de amor*, 155.

¹⁹ Rocafuerte, 21st October 1835. Quoted in Jorge Villaba F., *Manuela Sáenz en la leyenda y en la historia* (Caracas: Sociedad Bolivariana de Venezuela, 1988), 21.

²⁰ Reprinted in Villaba, *Manuela Saenz*, 23.

²¹ Rebecca Earle, “Rape and the Anxious Republic: Revolutionary Colombia, 1810-1830”, in Elizabeth Dore and Maxine Molyneux (eds) *Hidden Histories of Gender and the State*, 137.

²² Davies et al, *South American Independence*, 4.