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Contested Memories in the Southwest

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OÑATE'S FOOT

*Histories, Landscapes,
and Contested Memories
in the Southwest*

Douglas Seefeldt

IN EARLY JANUARY 1998, A THREE-AND-a-half-year-old bronze equestrian statue was vandalized at a visitor's center in Alcalde, New Mexico. While graffiti is presumably the most common form of damage inflicted upon public art, in this act the perpetrators worked without spray paint or markers, skillfully removing the right foot from the rider with a power grinder.¹ Like most attacks on public monuments, these vandals intended their act to be interpreted as a statement. In this case the befooting was a political statement, as this statue depicts Don Juan de Oñate (c. 1550–1626), celebrated by some as the “last conquistador.” However, this leader of the first Spanish efforts at settlement into what is today New Mexico is a controversial figure, simultaneously remembered as noble by some, yet vilified by others who remember him as a colonial butcher who ordered the right foot removed from two dozen Acoma Pueblo male prisoners in February 1599.²

The vandals' timing was as calculated as their message for 1998 marked the four-hundredth anniversary, or *cuarto centenario*, of the arrival of Oñate and his six hundred pioneer colonists. The occasion

inspired the organization of nearly two hundred projects throughout the state designed to celebrate New Mexico's Spanish colonial history and cultural legacy and address the prevalent Anglocentric view of the American past. Projects included public statues of Oñate in Santa Fe and Madrid, New Mexico, groundbreaking for a Camino Real museum in Socorro, and a Hispanic cultural center in Albuquerque.³ The vandals used the attention given to the year-long celebration to their advantage by issuing a statement, accompanied by a photograph of the amputated bronze foot, that stated, "we see no glory in celebrating Oñate's fourth centennial, and we do not want our faces rubbed in it." Estevan Arrellano, the director of the visitor's center where the vandalized Oñate statue is located, replied, "give me a break—it was 400 years ago. It's O.K. to hold a grudge, but for 400 years?"⁴

Anniversaries like the Columbian *cuarto centenario* make excellent platforms for both commemoration and dissent. Plans presented to the Albuquerque City Council in the winter of 1997–98 by Hispanic leaders that proposed to spend \$255,000 to construct another publicly subsidized memorial to Oñate in the city's Old Town met with vociferous protest from representatives of a variety of cultural groups including Mexican Americans, Native Americans, and Anglo Americans. Negotiations resulted in the monument design responsibilities being divided between two Hispanics and a Native American. Although the project was eventually approved, plans now call for a Holocaust memorial to be located at the original site intended for the Oñate memorial.⁵

While Oñate's colonization of the American Southwest as an actual event is long since past, controversies surrounding its interpretation continue to occur because publicly articulated views of the past remain contested so long as different groups remember different pasts and compete with others to shape public memory. As subaltern perspectives are encouraged to find voice in a shifting post-colonial discourse in the American Southwest, the reinterpretation of landscapes and memories reaches new audiences and becomes entangled in the larger questions associated with current debates over public memory and identity politics. This essay examines the fluid nature of the making of public memories, landscapes, and iden-

tities and the challenge of writing histories—on paper or in bronze—that are aware of these processes. History does not always adequately capture the multivocality and complexity of the Southwest's many cultures, their distinct places, myriad pasts, and evolving power structures that enable these groups to construct their own pasts. The significant challenge presented by these processes belies the seemingly clear-cut arguments espoused by many academic and public critics in today's climate of culture wars and other debates over memory and identity. Although the sculptor repaired the Oñate statue in Alcalde, the amputated foot was never returned and is still missing. Oñate's foot is a powerful symbol of the legacy of conquest reclaimed and held hostage, not unlike the very history of the region, by those attempting to reinterpret a disputed past commemorated by others in bronze.

Histories and Memories

The way groups create both private and public memory is an important part of social and cultural history. As David Thelen observes, "the historical study of memory opens exciting opportunities to ask fresh questions of our conventional sources and topics and . . . create[s] points for fresh synthesis." Investigations into memory construction can reveal how politics, culture, and ethnicity factor in the process. For as Thelen reminds us, "memory, private and individual as much as collective and cultural, is constructed, not reproduced." Individuals negotiate in and between groups to shape public memory at the community, state, and national levels.⁶ Because individuals invested in a particular interpretation of the past influence the construction and negotiation of collective memories, the historical study of memory can shed light on the important role of persons and perspectives that might otherwise be overlooked. On the other hand, as Thelen cautions, memory can be a veritable minefield: "Since people's memories provide security, authority, legitimacy, and finally identity in the present, struggles over the possession and interpretation of memories are deep, frequent, and bitter."⁷

The key to the successful construction of memory is power. Therefore, contemporary social, political, and cultural values and interests are a significant part of the public memory negotiation

process. Traditions and their attendant memories are arranged and rearranged to fulfill the particular needs of particular groups at particular times, often resulting in a process where competing memories exist side by side.⁸ Historian Michael Kammen defines “collective memory” as what is remembered by the dominant culture, and “popular memory” as what is remembered by the common folk, while historian John Bodnar identifies two groups at work, the “official culture,” concerned with social unity, continuity, and the status quo, and the “vernacular culture,” concerned with diversity, special interests, and change. Bodnar contends that at the junction of these cultural expressions is “public memory,” which he defines as “a body of beliefs and ideas about the past that help a public or society understand both its past, present, and by implication, its future.”⁹

While such studies effectively portray public memory as a tool in the struggle between various groups for interpretive authority, they can oversimplify the variety of vernacular voices and the multiplicity of perspectives often found within seemingly homogeneous groups. Rather, as public historian David Glassberg argues, “there are multiple official histories as well as multiple vernacular memories.”¹⁰ In fact, sites of memory like the statue at the Oñate Monument and Visitor’s Center do not really represent a homogeneous public memory or collective memory at all but rather a heterogeneous “collected memory,” as historian James Young demonstrates in his study of Holocaust memorials. These memorials gather countless individual memories into a common space and assign them a common meaning. Or, as Glassberg observes, “Since it is nearly impossible to reach a consensus on the public interpretation of a historical event that anyone still cares about, public historical representations such as an exhibit, war memorial, or commemorative ceremony are often deliberately ambiguous to satisfy competing factions.” Maya Lin’s Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., is perhaps the most recognizable example of what French historian Pierre Nora has termed *lieux de mémoire*, or sites of memory. According to Nora, these places are simultaneously material, symbolic, and functional; they are, “simple and ambiguous, natural and artificial, at once immediately available in concrete sensual experience and susceptible to the most abstract elaboration.”¹¹

Sites that interpret only one perspective are often the focus of prolonged debate and rancor—as aptly demonstrated by the former Custer Battlefield National Monument, now rechristened the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument—or, at the very least, are the subject of ironic condemnation.¹² As social and cultural attitudes change, so do public memories of past events, a revision fueled by present concerns of identity and heritage. According to geographer David Lowenthal, “the past is not a fixed or immutable series of events; our interpretations of it are in constant flux. What previous groups identify and sanctify as their pasts become historical evidence about themselves.” Like the present, the past is always changing. Real and imagined, remembered and forgotten, multifarious events from the past can at once be carefully perpetuated and irreverently manipulated by tradition bearers or civic boosters. And because of this, Lowenthal warns, “when we identify, preserve, enhance, or commemorate surviving artifacts and landscapes, we affect the very nature of the past, altering its meaning and significance for every generation in every place.” With each new ascendant layer of history applied to the cultural foundation of a constructed past, other perspectives become obscured. This process is significant, for as Lowenthal concludes, “every trace of the past is a testament not only to its initiators but to its inheritors, not only to the spirit of the past, but to the perspectives of the present.”¹³

Pasts have been constructed in the American Southwest just as they have wherever and whenever humans strove to create a sense of place and validate particular memories. New Mexico's past is truly multidimensional, containing layer upon layer of distinctly different culturally specific landscapes and memories. The beliefs and attitudes about the past contained within these interlacing strata find expression in sites of memory through such diverse forms as statues, memorials, markers, plaques, national parks, national monuments, and even the most seemingly mundane vernacular landscapes. Each site of memory is the result of the combination of dynamic space containing a unique group of people and their particular landscapes, identities, and distinct memories of past events.

The Place of the Past

Most geographical interpretations of the past tend to frame a static ethnic history rather than a truly dynamic, hybrid past. A rigid categorization of human groups by their connection to the land can misrepresent the fluid nature of the ways various groups interact with their surroundings. Humans have always moved through dynamic physical space, pausing to make them into distinct places. To cultural geographer Yi-Fu Tuan, place is the result of getting to know undifferentiated space. So in a general sense, places are made when space and culture meet. Cultural variation is, of course, one of the primary factors that influences how place is imagined, constructed, and valued. While Tuan emphasizes that space and place can be defined only in reference to each other, they are certainly not synonyms. To demonstrate the interdependence of the two terms, Tuan employs an analogy that is particularly useful to the project of understanding cultural references to space and place: "If we think of space as that which allows movement, then place is pause; each pause in movement makes it possible for location to be transformed into place." Or, as eloquently put by writer Wallace Stegner: "A place is not a place until people have been born in it, have grown up in it, lived in it, known it, died in it—have both experienced it and shaped it, as individuals, families, neighborhoods, and communities, over more than one generation."¹⁴

To the cultural geographer, this process of place making results in what are termed "landscapes." Here the term "landscape" is used in its generic sense, as defined by Carl Sauer three-quarters of a century ago as "an area made up of a distinct association of forms, both physical and cultural." These forms are created by the lived experiences of specific cultures in specific places at specific times. Sauer explains landscape as process: "The works of man express themselves in the cultural landscape. There may be a succession of these landscapes with a succession of cultures. They are derived in each case from the natural landscape, man expressing his place in nature as a distinct agent of modification."¹⁵ Tuan, elaborating on Sauer's man as agent of change concept, contends, "Landscape is more than nature superposed by the material expressions of human living. It

signifies more to us than the sum of the material facts of hills and valleys, fields, roads, bridges, churches and houses; for besides scientific and economic appraisals, we have imputed to the landscape contents that can only be described as 'psychological, religious, esthetic and moral.'" To Tuan, the fact that landscape contains both objective (scientific and economic) and subjective (psychological, moral) characteristics means that it is an imaginary construct. The fact that landscape is not merely real, in a tangible sense, makes it necessary to distinguish between environment and landscape. Perhaps geographer Leonard Guelke puts it best: "The underlying idea is that a landscape is the creation of the historical mind—which is a product of the unique historical experiences of the inhabitants of the earth's regions."¹⁶

History is one effective way to connect stories of the past to landscapes of the present. In addressing the importance of cultural resource management, David Glassberg argues that "historical consciousness and place are inextricably intertwined; we attach histories to places, and the environmental value we attach to place comes largely through the memories and historical associations we have with it." The creation of sense of place is an important part of the struggle between groups for control of the past. Therefore place making is a way of constructing history, and sharing "place-worlds" is a way of reviving and revising the past. Ultimately, according to anthropologist Keith Basso, "we are, in a sense, the place-worlds we imagine."¹⁷

The Southwest has long been the setting for many such imaginary place-worlds. For more than three hundred years, from Christopher Columbus's first footfall in the Caribbean in 1492 until Mexican independence in 1821, Spaniards searched the Western Hemisphere for riches and wonders. Tales of Cíbola's seven cities of gold, Sierra Azul's vast veins of silver, and the Strait of Anian's passageway through the North inspired the rarely glorious, often tragic era of Spanish exploration of North America. While the Admiral of the Ocean Seas may not have found earthly paradise, and Vázquez de Coronado certainly failed to find streets paved with gold in Kansas, these intrepid frontiersmen, and the multitudes who followed them, encountered novel landscapes and inhabitants that inspired detailed

description and often challenged their own cultural vocabulary. From Vázquez de Coronado's explorations in 1540 to the arrival of Oñate's colonists in 1598, Spanish explorers and military officers crossed western terrain in search of minerals and passageways only to return with little more than fantastic stories and crude maps of their encounters with the land and its peoples. But on these maps they inscribed new names for places already known to a wide variety of Native Americans; in this way, place naming is also history making.¹⁸

Histories Collide: New Landscapes and New Identities

Expedition journals provide important firsthand insights into how Spanish explorers perceived and imagined the lands of northern New Spain. In his study of how geographical images are created, geographer John Logan Allen contends that "since virtually all geographical lore is some mixture of empirical and non-empirical data and since neither the recording nor the interpreting of that data can be fully objective it follows that the processes by which images are formed must be, at least partially, subjective."¹⁹ Visitors see natural surroundings differently than do an area's native residents. Tuan explains the tendency of the former to dominate the latter: "The visitor's viewpoint, being simple, is easily stated. Confrontation with the novelty may also prompt him to express himself. The complex attitude of the native, on the other hand, can be expressed by him only with difficulty and indirectly through behavior, local tradition, lore, and myth." Tuan argues that the visitor or outsider's perception of the environment is an aesthetic one that compares what it sees to some culturally specific idea of beauty. In contrast, those who have settled, and in the process have become native to an area, do not tend to make comparisons.²⁰

Spanish explorers and colonialists brought a venerable, distinctly Western vision of time and space to northern New Spain beginning in the late sixteenth century. Long before Don Juan de Oñate won the coveted appointment to explore and colonize New Mexico in 1595, the far northern landscape of New Spain had captured the imagination of explorers and traders. Throughout the era of Spanish rule in this region (1598–1680, 1693–1821), many Hispanic governors, soldiers, and clerics—led by Native American guides—explored the vast

terra incognita from their base of operations in Santa Fe. Their expedition journals contain firsthand descriptions of strange landscapes and curious inhabitants and expose the Spaniards' immediate impressions of the places and people they came into contact with in the contest for what was to them unknown land.²¹

The explorers' descriptions of commodities and the names they gave to particular places reveal the landscape attitudes and values they brought with them. Indeed, the vast majority of the Spanish explorers of the northern *Nuevo México* recorded observations of useful resources. On July 13, 1706, General Juan de Ulibarrí, sergeant major of the kingdom of New Spain, encountered the Arkansas River and its surroundings and made the following observations: "We arrived at the large river which all the tribes call the Napestle. . . . It runs from north to east. It is much more than four times as large as the Río del Norte [Rio Grande] and bathes the best and broadest valley discovered in New Spain. It has many poplar trees and throughout the upper part most beautiful open stretches. The plain on our side is a strand of a long league of level land and extremely fertile as is shown by the many plums, cherries, and wild grapes which there are on it."²² Ulibarrí recorded impressions of a more cultivated landscape at the *rancherías* of El Cuartelejo, commenting on harvests of Indian corn, watermelons, pumpkins, kidney beans, and wheat: "because of the fertility of the land, the docility of the people, and the abundance of the herds of buffalo, and other game, the propagation of our holy Catholic faith could be advanced very much." The sergeant major wasted little time renaming and claiming these Indian agricultural settlements for the king of Spain.²³

Some of these Spaniards saw Native American agricultural products as resources free for the taking. The journal of Antonio Valverde y Cossío's expedition, however, recorded how the captain protected Apache crops from his large retinue: "They found some fields of maize, frijoles, and squashes which the Apaches had planted. Moreover, as soon as the fields were noticed, the governor gave the order that under no circumstances should anything be seized, so that the military chiefs proceeded with great care."²⁴ Ulibarrí also "permitted no injury to be done" to the fields of corn, frijoles, and pumpkins planted by the Penxayes Apaches he encountered along the Río

de Santa Ana.²⁵ These Spanish observers perceived a landscape that was filled not only with indigenous crops and game but one that, if protected rather than pillaged, also held the potential for the cultivation of both crops and Apache souls.

Timber, minerals, and other extractive resources also caught the eye of opportunistic Spanish explorers. In 1765, Juan Maria Antonio de Rivera described finding a mountain of metal: "We tethered the horses and climbed to the top where we saw such a variety of ore lumps, of various colors, as to be uncountable. Because of it one can say, without hesitation, that the whole mountain is composed of pure metal everywhere the eye can see." He also paid particular attention to commodities such as pasturage, water, and firewood during his two expeditions.²⁶ Francisco Atanasio Domínguez and Francisco Silvestre Vélez de Escalante also noted promising locations for future Spanish colonies. In one entry the fathers described a "very large meadow, which we named San Antonio, of very good land for farming with the help of irrigation, together with all the rest that a settlement requires by way of firewood, stone, timber, and pastures—and all close by."²⁷

Spanish explorers and colonists saw some wildlife as curiosities. While governor of *Nuevo México*, Juan Bautista de Anza carried out orders to trap elk and ship them back to Madrid for exhibit in the royal zoological park.²⁸ Antonio Valverde y Cossío's journal described hunting distinctive local fauna as sport: "A bear came out of the thicket and threw the entire camp into an uproar. The people took great delight in teasing it for some time until they killed it." And again two days later he described the killing of a mountain lion, a wildcat, and another large bear. These Spaniards also saw other animals as commodities and recorded their abundance. Governor Valverde's men hunted deer, prairie hens, and, of course, the abundant bison.²⁹ Ulibarrí also noted enough bison to provision the entire camp and fish in the streams in abundance and variety.³⁰

Explorers are driven, in part, by the fame that comes with being the "first" to discover and name something. These Spanish adventurers were no exception. Even expedition leaders engaged in punitive missions took the time to give every river, plain, and mountain a new name. Explorers are often motivated to risk life and limb by a

desire to possess the landscape both materially and spiritually; their journals can provide a vista into such motivations.³¹ In 1765, upon reaching the destination of his second expedition, Juan Maria Antonio de Rivera recorded his creation of the following memorial: "I left on the banks of the *Gran Río de el Tison* [Colorado River] in a new growth of white oaks, as a sign, a large cross with *viva Jesus a la Cabeza*, my name, and the year, at the foot, so that anyone can at any time benefit from our arrival there."³² Whether searching for valuable minerals, food, and shelter along the trail, or envisaging future Spanish settlements in the wilderness, these explorers recorded the sources of essential commodities and mapped far northern New Spain, making known the unknown.

Humans see the environment through the lenses of their time and culture. One particularly evident example of these cultural filters can be found in the very different kinds of names that Native Americans and Europeans gave the land. Throughout the Southwest, Indian names tend to describe particular activities, such as *Pojoaque*, which means, "drink water place" in Tewa. Spanish explorers occasionally gave places descriptive secular names. However, many of the most descriptive labels were simply Spanish translations of Native American names, such as Río Colorado (red river), Río Florida (river of flowers), and El Lobo Amarillo (the yellow wolf). The majority of Spanish place names noted in these expedition journals, on the other hand, commemorated religious, political, and military people, places, and events from their own New World cultural history, such as Albuquerque, which is named for don Francisco Fernandez de la Cueva Enriquez, Duque de Alburquerque, the thirty-fourth viceroy of New Spain.³³

Although some place names chosen by explorers honored political figures, most had religious significance, as demonstrated by Ulibarrí: "After we had quite descended the mountains, we reached, at the foot of it, a river which is very pleasant with groves of poplar and other trees. To this I give the name of Río de San Francisco Xabier under whose protection I was marching across unknown land, barbarously inhabited by innumerable heathens."³⁴ The secular often became the sacred, as it did when Valverde renamed the river the Apaches call "La Flecha" (the arrow), calling it "Nuestra Señora del

Rosario.”³⁵ To Rivera and Anza, even event-associated names had religious significance: “That night we suffered a furious storm of wind and rain; because of that, and what was related before, we called this campground El Purgatorio,” wrote Rivera.³⁶ After defeating hostile Indians, Anza returned to a simple campsite and transformed it into a site of memory by giving it a new name: “To this place the name of Río del Sacramento was given, this expedition having been dedicated to this most Holy mystery.”³⁷

Through the way they envisioned the land and the very names they bestowed on its features, these Spanish explorers effectively imposed their own unique cultural values on the indigenous landscape of northern *Nuevo México*. By recording and circulating their peculiar thoughts and impressions, these adventurers and their audience contributed to particular cultural constructions of place. The geographical features of imperialism mark such places. Spaniards imported foreign and invented new spatial systems, locational distributions, man-land relationships, social ecologies, and cultural landscapes in northern New Spain. As geographer D. W. Menig argues, these patterns and processes reflect the changes wrought and exacerbated by imperialism, including power shifts, dependency, culture changes, new economic relationships, and landscape transformation.³⁸

The landscapes and memories—both real and imagined—that resulted from these colonial Spanish encounters with northern New Spain set the stage for identity politics and are in this sense directly connected to the current memory wars between Hispanics and Pueblo peoples in the Southwest. For many of the landscapes the Spanish explorers possessed and the subsequent colonials remade in their own image were often important places to a variety of Indian cultures—cultures that violently resisted the Spaniards’ attempts to transform their indigenous cultural landscapes and memories.

Constructing Spanish Heritage in the Southwest

For much of the eighteenth century, Spanish colonists and the Pueblo populations of northern New Mexico feared nothing more than Comanche raids. The thinly populated, remote villages and hamlets of the colonists proved no match for the terror of Comanches on horseback as they, like the Spaniards, expanded their ter-

ritory and seemingly plundered at will. Many northern Pueblos fared no better. Because of its reputation as a trading center, Taos Pueblo was a favorite target. The Spanish colonial government was quick to respond, sending what few troops it had in New Mexico to chase down the raiding parties. Captain Antonio Valverde y Cossio led one of the region's earliest recorded punitive expeditions against marauding Utes and Comanches in the fall of 1719. After a Comanche raid on Pecos in 1746 left twelve dead, Governor Codallos and five hundred soldiers and Indian allies surprised the Comanches at Abiquiú the next year, killing over one hundred, capturing over two hundred more along with one thousand horses. After another defeat at the hands of Governor Codallos in 1748, the Comanches, seemingly broken, were allowed to trade at Taos. This peace would not last long, for by 1751 the Comanches were raiding villages and Pueblos again. The pattern of raids followed by punitive expeditions would continue for the next three decades. The success or failure of these retaliatory expeditions often determined whether a governor would finish his term or be replaced.³⁹

By the mid-1770s, there arose a series of Comanche leaders so feared and hated that their nicknames live to this day in folk drama, on mountains, rivers, and now, even on a highway rest area.⁴⁰ A series of Jupe Comanche leaders known by the name "Cuerno Verde" is mentioned in reports of three eighteenth-century Spanish skirmishes: the first occurred at Ojo Caliente on August 30, 1768, where "one who wore as a device a green horn on his forehead, fixed in a headdress or on a tanned leather headpiece" was killed by townspeople defending their plaza;⁴¹ the second clash, led by Don Carlos Fernández, occurred in 1777; the third battle, led by Lieutenant-Colonel Juan Bautista de Anza, took place in 1779.⁴² The final event proved to be the end of the mortal Cuerno Verde figure and the beginning of an enduring legacy that spread across the region through the folk tradition.

The Spanish-speaking villagers of what is now northern New Mexico and southern Colorado almost immediately canonized the legendary Cuerno Verde's demise in drama. The 515 octosyllabic verses of *Los Comanches* have been recited regularly by actors on horseback at Taos and elsewhere throughout the far northern region of

what was northern New Spain from some time between 1779 and 1800 to the present. On fiesta day in many small *placitas* in northern New Mexico, crowds gather at the village square to witness the staging of this drama, born out of the struggle of eighteenth-century Spanish colonial villagers to survive in the harsh environment of droughts and Comanche raids. On one side of the plaza are villagers dressed as Spaniards on horseback led by General Don Carlos Fernandez. On the other side are villagers dressed as mounted Comanches. The production begins with Cuerno Verde, chief of the Comanches, boasting:

Don your war paint, sound the war drums,
We must bring them to our feet.
I shall go and seek this general,
This foolhardy, impious man.
Let him meet me in this battle
And survive me if he can.
Who is he, what do they call him,
Whomsoever he may be.
I, *Cuerno Verde*, challenge him
To come and combat me.

Don Carlos Fernandez, the Spanish general, answers the Comanche:

Bide your time, Oh bloody heathen,
I will come without your call.
Your challenge is not needed
I will meet you one and all.
But first, tell me, who are you,
And whence those idle boasts.
Hearken to these words I utter,
You and your savage host.⁴³

Los Comanches is a local development of the traditional *Juegos de Moros y Christianos* (Jousts between Moors and Christians) performed frequently in Spain and its colonies. As is common in the colonial Southwest, from an Old World tradition came a New World variation: Moors were replaced with Comanches, and Christians with an army of soldiers, settlers, and Indian allies. The action of the

play itself is based largely upon Don Fernández's 1777 engagement of the Comanches on the Staked Plains near Las Orejas del Conejo. The only variation is the death of the second Cuerno Verde, who reportedly survived the 1777 battle only to succumb to Governor Anza two years later in the mountains of southern Colorado.⁴⁴ *Los Comanches* is one of only two secular historical folk dramas known to have originated in New Mexico, the other being *Los Tejanos*, a play that tells the story of General Manuel Armijo's expedition from Texas to New Mexico in 1841.⁴⁵

It is important to emphasize that Hispano folk dramas—both sacred and secular—are a part of the seasonal fiesta or festival, and are not stand-alone events. As folklorist Roger Abrahams notes, “the distinction between folk drama and other festival entertainment is one that seems to be fabricated by scholars.” He defines folk drama as a traditional activity that uses dialogue and action to tell a story that the audience already knows, such as the events related to the death of Cuerno Verde in the play *Los Comanches*.⁴⁶ However tempting it may be to seek similarities throughout the Spanish-speaking world and to draw sweeping generalizations about the role of folk drama in the lives of the community, the very nature of the art form makes it flexible and allows particular groups to articulate their own concerns and celebrate their unique experiences and achievements. This explains why a play like *Los Comanches*, part of a *santo patrón* fiesta, would not play in California, Arizona, or Peoria for that matter. Those places have their own Cuerno Verdes to venerate.

In New Mexico, Spanish-speaking people who identify with the Spanish colonials and seek to establish Spanish American, or “Hispano,” cultural heritage employ such invented or recovered traditions as folk dramas and historical pageants in their efforts to create public memory. Two such seasonal public festivals that commemorate historical events include the Fiestas del Valle de Española, where the Hispanic community pays tribute to the first Spanish colonial settlement of New Mexico by Oñate in 1598, and the Santa Fe Fiesta, an event that celebrates the reentry of the Spanish into New Mexico in 1692. Beginning in earnest with the arrival of the Santa Fe Railroad in 1880, later-arriving Anglos joined with local Hispanos to construct Spanish heritage in New Mexico through the invention or revitaliza-

tion of Spanish-influenced architecture, arts and crafts, literature, drama and pageantry.⁴⁷ The first Santa Fe Fiesta was presented in 1919 as a tourist attraction designed by Anglo boosters to attract other Anglos to the region to enjoy a southwestern lifestyle that included Indian and Mexican cultures. However, as anthropologist Sarah Horton has demonstrated, throughout the twentieth century Hispanic leaders have “re-appropriated” the Santa Fe Fiesta from the tourism promoters and have shaped its message to one that celebrates Hispano pride in their colonial New Mexico heritage by highlighting historical figures like Don Diego de Vargas. As people feel threatened they tend to become self-conscious about their identity, and as Horton points out, “the fiesta’s celebration of Hispano heritage only increased in importance as the number of Hispano residents of Santa Fe steadily declined during the 1990s.” In fact, as many Hispano residents are well aware, the 1990 census reported an Anglo majority in Santa Fe for the first time since the city’s founding in 1610.⁴⁸

Hispanic history is actively preserved and prominently displayed in numerous museums, universities, and state government facilities throughout New Mexico.⁴⁹ But the Santa Fe Fiesta’s historical figure of Don Diego, representing the heroic glory of Spanish imperialism, strives not to preserve the past but rather to perpetuate historical fantasy, as does the ahistorical figure of the Fiesta Queen, symbolizing the idealized myth of pure Castilian blood. These fantasies, Horton argues, project the image “of time and bloodlines forever frozen at the moment of Spanish colonization.”⁵⁰ But in New Mexico, as in much of the American West, culture is not static, but rather a fluid process constantly transformed by those using dynamic places and malleable pasts to create public memories and develop associated ethnic identities. Historians and other public intellectuals also participate in this process by contributing their authoritative voices to the negotiation of public memory and the recent surge in contentious debates over ownership of the past.⁵¹

Playing Politics with Pueblo Pasts

Writing in 1993, Ted Jojola, director of Native American Studies at the University of New Mexico, identified two concurrent abuses of images of Pueblo Indian culture by non-Indians:

The Pueblo Indians of New Mexico have been the subjects of a specific kind of mythologizing since the Spanish colonists arrived in the sixteenth century, but particularly so since the 1920s. There have been two distinct and often parallel aspects of this imagemaking. One is promulgated by social scientists in the fields of anthropology, ethnography, and history. The other is touted by entrepreneurs of tourism and popular culture. Among social scientists, New Mexico became a "living laboratory." Among entrepreneurs and state boosters, New Mexico became a "living backdrop." In both instances, however, the interpretations were and are dominated by outsiders (non-Pueblo) who seek, for their own affirmation, a primitive and exotic human landscape.⁵²

Both kinds of "imagemaking" can reckon as their forefathers the heinous racist and the well-intentioned ethnographer. The "living laboratory" type of mythologizing is an important topic that is outside the purview of this paper but ought not to be ignored. It is Jojola's second type of image making, the "living backdrop" type of mythologizing, that can best be seen in the cultural appropriation of Pueblo imagery by Anglos and Hispanos in such public events as the historical pageants of the Santa Fe Fiesta.

The increasing conflict between interest groups for control of the interpretation of the past may appear to suggest a current conceptual crisis in the fields of history and anthropology. But in truth, generations of historians and anthropologists have been and continue to be concerned with the misrepresentation of the past due to the lack of subaltern voices in historical representations of the past.⁵³ "Identity politics," "essentialism," and "nativism"—terms often used in a derogatory manner—are just a few of the labels that scholars and subjects bandy about in their attempts to conceptualize, rationalize, and criticize representations of the past. Identity politics employ gender, class, and ethnicity to define self, status, and culture. Essentialism holds the position that there is only one authentic experience, often claiming an insight particular to identity. Nativism specifically asserts the primacy of birthright in the process of understanding and interpreting a particular worldview, and "nativistic" is a term used to describe a particular indigenous versus colonial position. In short, identity is inclusive and can be appropriated in a polit-

ically correct manner, whereas essentialism and nativism are much more unambiguously exclusive.

The controversy surrounding Ramón Gutiérrez's multiple prize-winning book *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500–1846* is an intriguing example of the recent stalemate in the contest for legitimate interpretation of American Indian pasts. The book's generally positive academic reviews from its initial publication in April 1991 to its later well-articulated criticisms—in print and in public forums by both Pueblo and non-Pueblo scholars after mid-1993—reveal the roles of essentialism and identity politics in the struggle between scholar and subject for control of the past.

At the beginning of his study, Gutiérrez suggests its significance, especially to Pueblo Indians, by declaring: "This book, then, is profoundly a project in point of view. It gives vision to the blind, and gives voice to the mute and silent. The conquest of America was not a monologue, but a dialogue between cultures, each of which had many voices that often spoke in unison, but just as often were diverse and divisive."⁵⁴ This topic, one sure to appeal to a wide range of scholarly readers, reflects Gutiérrez's sensitivity to the plight of the Pueblo people, both at the hands of the Spaniards and the chroniclers who have come before him. In a postpublication interview, the author explained that he wanted "to show American historians that there was a vibrant center of social, cultural, and economic activity in the Rio Grande valley."⁵⁵ This was Gutiérrez's first book, a study that began as a promising doctoral dissertation completed in 1980 at the University of Wisconsin. *When Jesus Came* was awarded at least ten academic prizes, the most for any book published by Stanford University Press, and the acclaim launched Gutiérrez's career in spectacular fashion. The book arrived at a time when the "new western history"—as the press described the views of several younger western historians whose work focused more on race, class, gender, and the environment than did that of previous generations—had its moment in the public mind. Although in many ways the subject of Gutiérrez's book fits squarely into the tradition of the "old western history," many academics championed it as a worthy example of a

new way of thinking about the western past, assigning it in their courses in sufficient number to require a prompt second printing.⁵⁶

Although academic book reviews range from exercises in congratulatory back patting to vicious displays of petty backstabbing, in this case the scholarly review process played a key role in securing *When Jesus Came's* position as an academic sensation. No fewer than twenty-three book reviews and review articles appeared in a variety of professional journals in the first three years after its publication, indicating the subject's appeal beyond the limited circle of friends and foes. Contained within this corpus are many serious disagreements with the methods employed and analysis put forth by Gutiérrez, but overall the reviews tend toward the congratulatory.⁵⁷

Some reviewers did assess the book in less than glowing terms.⁵⁸ However, rather than critiquing content and analysis, most of the negative comments from the earliest reviewers focused on matters of personal preference or issues of professional style that can be boiled down to three main themes. First, some reviewers complained that Gutiérrez employed too much sociological jargon and statistical analysis, and that his thesis was obscured with overabundant factual detail.⁵⁹ Second, several reviewers asserted that he failed to compare his findings to similar work on marriage, sexuality, and gender in other parts of Latin America.⁶⁰ Third, many of his peers observed that a radical change in focus and style from the first two parts of the book to part 3 results in poor integration of the overall work and made his main theme difficult to follow.⁶¹

In contrast, three of the most distinguished reviewers—scholars who have made careers working among the various sources that Gutiérrez used to construct his book—share a common complaint that the author's facts “claim more than the sources warrant”; that “there are occasions when he overinterprets or claims too much for his limited data without acknowledgment”; and that he tends “to make a good story better.” “Some readers will wonder,” one these reviewers wrote, “if Gutiérrez provides an accurate picture of colonial life.”⁶² At first, however, the preponderance of ringing endorsements seemingly outweighed these negative comments to those multitudes that bought or assigned the book in their classes.

Obligatory general praise may be a convention of the genre of academic reviews, but many of these early reviewers misjudged or unwittingly endorsed some of Gutiérrez's fallacies of method and analysis that would draw later critics' fire.⁶³ The lone exception in reviews published prior to the spring 1993 backlash from Pueblo intellectuals is one by Patricia Seed. Writing in the *American Historical Review*, she astutely noted, "indigenous voices are predominantly represented by official records and hence are not present in an unmediated way in the sources."⁶⁴ Nearly all of the other reviewers missed this crucial point: by relying solely upon outsiders' descriptions of intimate sexual and social behavior recorded by early ethnographers and other non-Pueblos, Gutiérrez left the voices of the Pueblo peoples out of his telling of their history. Seed's concerns were soon reinforced by other non-native scholars and several Native American public intellectuals who had a more immediate connection to the quest for understanding the complexity of this particular past.

No Pueblo scholars were solicited to contribute reviews of Gutiérrez's book in academic journals or major newspapers, the established public forums for scholarly discourse. In the spring of 1993, however, during the annual meeting of the Organization of American Historians, several Pueblo voices were finally heard when a collection of statements by various Pueblo and non-Pueblo scholars was delivered.⁶⁵ Later that same year, two public meetings were held at the University of New Mexico where panels of Pueblo intellectuals again expressed their objections to the portrayal of Pueblo culture at the time of Spanish contact in *When Jesus Came*. Gutiérrez himself attended the second of these events, responding in person to the criticisms from the forums that one observer—University of New Mexico anthropologist Sylvia Rodríguez—characterized as "remarkable for their sheer emotional intensity."⁶⁶ One member of the group specifically addressed the failure of the academic review process, observing, "the gathering controversy over the book is provoking a more careful consideration of its merits, but that discussion will appear too late to influence the judging of the book in the ten prestigious competitions it has won."⁶⁷

The Pueblo complainants focused on the issue that most of the

academic reviewers had missed, namely that “absent a strong articulation by the Pueblo people themselves in the form of oral history, documented statements, and/or research conducted by Pueblo scholars, and a carefully laid thesis, one cannot and should not claim to be offering a historical dialogue that includes a Pueblo voice.” Many others echoed the opinion that for Gutiérrez’s approach to be more “authoritative,” “representative,” “ethical,” “legitimate,” and above all, “valid,” he should have used living Pueblo people as informants.⁶⁸ According to Rodríguez, Gutiérrez replied to his critics that being a historian and not an ethnographer, he chose not to consult Pueblo informants, claiming that oral historical memory is not valid beyond five or six generations.⁶⁹ One critic sums up this divergence in methodological approaches by noting that Gutiérrez “may not write history the way it used to be written, but we still practice our Pueblo ways the way they were handed down. Of course, he will not understand, because that part is not written.” Also called into question was Gutiérrez’s practice of applying ethnographic information from one pueblo to all the pueblos. As one respondent objected: “studying Indians as research objects denigrates us. Assuming that alleged sexual behaviors can be put forth as public information is humiliating to us! The Gutiérrez book does both.” Or, as another summed it up, “needless to say, Gutiérrez’s arrogance has no boundaries, not with any kind of customary or ordinary respect, anyway.” One critic went so far as to cast the author’s motive for writing the book as little more than self-serving careerism: “But more than anything, it has benefited Ramón Gutiérrez, who, after all, used the American educational system to achieve yet another American dream.”⁷⁰

Unsubstantiated generalizations, objectification of subjects, and an arrogant approach are surely among those sins historians should avoid at all costs. These transgressions, among others, appear on Alison Freese’s virulent lampooning list titled “New Western History Methodology as Practiced by Ramón Gutiérrez in *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away*.”⁷¹ As Sylvia Rodríguez observed in her treatment of this controversy, “more than a trace of bitterness, personalism, and even demonization of Gutiérrez has crept into much of the Native American public discourse about the book and, in-

terestingly, has surfaced as well among Anglo Indianist critics such as Freese herself.”⁷² Another problematic theme comes across in the Pueblo critics’ accusations that *When Jesus Came*, and Ramón Gutiérrez in particular, are guilty of intentionally perpetuating a procolonial view of New Mexico history.⁷³ Simon Ortiz vociferously asserted this point:

The treatise by Gutiérrez has been accorded the highest recognition by contemporary Western historians, and one wonders why. There is only one explanation: to justify European dominion over the indigenous Americans since 1492 and to continue to deny the massive genocide of Indian people, the theft of their lands and the further perpetration of theft, and the loss of vast portions of their Indian cultural integrity. Because the lie is told within the context of unquestioned and accepted Western cultural knowledge and with the tacit approval of Western historians, it must be assumed there is nothing noxious about it.⁷⁴

Gutiérrez refuted the idea that he wrote *When Jesus Came* in order to “justify European domination over the indigenous Americans” in his introduction: “This is not a history of Spanish men or of Indian men, or of their battles, triumphs and defeats. It is a history of the complex web of interactions between men and women, young and old, rich and poor, slave and free, Spaniard and Indian, all of whom fundamentally depended on the other for their own self-definition.”⁷⁵ Indeed, as Patricia Seed pointed out in her review, “this volume orients itself in terms of a vibrant area of contemporary interdisciplinary concern with an attempt to revive the histories of colonialism with a particular sensitivity to how colonial subjects are constructed by both themselves and by colonizing powers.”⁷⁶

By shifting our focus from issues of fact or fallacy in *When Jesus Came* toward the political rhetoric of “self-definition,” perhaps we can shed some light on its controversial reception. At the center of the essentialist’s objections to what are perceived to be cultural appropriations of places and pasts is the question of identity. Who is allowed to interpret Pueblo pasts? Several Pueblo educators, writers, and administrators raised the issue of Ramón Gutiérrez’s own ethnicity in the following statements:

The author claims, in this case, to be an “insider” by virtue of being a native New Mexican.

As a scholar who claims, as I have been informed, *genízaro* (peasant Indo-Hispano heritage) ancestry, he does not bring anything other than absurd attention to Pueblo culture. . . . As Pueblo people, we know the truth about European colonization and the establishment of dominion over our land and people.

Can he remove the lenses of a twentieth-century Chicano or Hispanic and be able to tell his story objectively? I cannot accept his book as an authoritative source. Any information on Pueblo community life—what we are about and what we perceive our past to be—should come from those people who are from the Pueblo communities themselves. . . . I do not recognize any authority from any culture except ours for a discussion of those foundations.

He is, for all practical purposes, an outsider to these teachings and therefore is very limited in understanding or interpreting the customs and practices that are unfamiliar to him.

In my opinion, he is obsessed with sexuality and places that personal obsession on the Pueblo people. . . . He is a product of the western European world of Puritanism that is still obsessed with sexuality.⁷⁷

As Sylvia Rodríguez succinctly emphasizes in her review, “not merely is the *truthfulness* of Gutiérrez’s claim to ‘give voice to the mute and silent’ challenged, but his very *right* to utter such a claim.”⁷⁸

Beyond the questions of truthfulness or right, Gutiérrez should have realized that if his primary aim was truly to “give voice to the mute and silent,” no amount of archival research could prepare him, as an outsider, to speak for those who are, in fact, anything but mute. After all, the main thrust of the Pueblo critics’ protest seems primarily to protect both the medium and the message of their various local traditions by controlling the messenger. Rodríguez describes this situation best: “The Pueblos have long claimed the exclusive right to transmit, represent, and evaluate authentic Pueblo culture. So in one sense, their objection to Gutiérrez’s tale is nothing new and entirely predictable. But in today’s context of postcolonial, postmodernist, and feminist debates about positionality, viewpoint, authority, power, and voice, the issue resonates more loudly than ever before.”⁷⁹ As

Patricia Seed notes in her review, this kind of essentialist reading of what is a shared past can cause a condition where “the equally complex story of accommodation and the forging of a hybrid order is thus obscured in the strongly drawn story of subaltern cultural resistance and survival.”⁸⁰ This is significant because by insisting on strictly essentialist criteria, or any other identity politics-oriented agenda in our quest to understand the past—be it through the lens of tradition or history—we will most certainly obscure its complexity. The politics involved in the very ways we understand the past are an essential part of the historian’s challenge. Or, as historian Steve Stern puts it, “the quest for a higher understanding untainted by politics is a profoundly misleading illusion.”⁸¹

Gutiérrez erred by claiming special essentialist status as an insider to interpret the story he sought to tell, while simultaneously ignoring or overlooking indigenous sources of information. As Sylvia Rodríguez astutely points out, essentialism and identity politics cut quite thin: “The very hybridity of their perspectives, not unlike that of Gutiérrez himself, is what generates the original urge to question or give voice to the subaltern. This impulse, and the projects it gives rise to, cannot but provoke reaction and challenge from those subaltern to the interlocutor, whoever she or he may be.”⁸² The long-standing mingling of Spanish and Indian blood in the Southwest may have created a hybrid cultural geography and a recognizable region, but the numerous combinations of ethnic identity that even the Spanish colonials grappled with by defining *castas* in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries provide seemingly endless opportunities for sub-subaltern identities and alternative perspectives on the past.⁸³

Gutiérrez’s methodology attempted to force the round pegs of the various complex Pueblo social systems into the square holes of an alien theoretical framework. Ultimately, he should neither be blamed nor credited for calling the methods of history into question; that was not his intention. His controversial book simply provided the stage for various players to act out their roles and brought greater attention to the long-standing debate over who can legitimately interpret the past.

Beyond Essentialism, or, Toward “a Truly Honest American History”

Identity politics are *de rigueur* in academe. Today, in any discussion of the past, who it is that tells us about the people, places, and events, is seemingly just as important as what we are being told. Much of today's academic and public rhetoric—from both dominant and subaltern groups—would have us believe that this is a new phenomenon, one born out of either a deteriorating postcolonial cultural hegemony and the attendant legitimization of subaltern perspectives. However, words printed on a page or uttered from the podium are not solely responsible for today's contentious academic essentialist climate. Larger social and cultural influences have contributed significantly to this trend for some time, from such sweeping changes as the cultural passages through romanticism, realism, modernism, and postmodernism, to the national mobilization for World War II, the public discomfort over the Cold War, as well as this century's ongoing struggles for civil rights and environmental responsibility.

Other contributing factors are that the Southwest is intimately associated with the much larger mythos of the American West, and many of the Old West's most cherished myths have failed to withstand the tests of these changing times. For example, most of us now know that the West was not simply a masculine proving ground for Anglo immigrants to become Americans. Recent scholarship has demonstrated that women, ethnic minorities, and other foreigners often found opportunities in the West. Even bison and American Indians—those most “western” of Old West images—have managed not only to survive the millennium but to thrive while other “traditional” western resources and peoples such as underground mines and cowboys are vanishing from view. Taken together, the innumerable experiences of a wide variety of races, classes, ethnicities, and genders reveal an altogether different West, one that calls for reinterpretation both within the academy and without.

From the nineteenth-century emergence of the “frontier” folklore of Davy Crockett and Buffalo Bill Cody later popularized by turn-of-the-century modern mass media, to the mass-market satura-

tion of Old West, Civil War, and general military history magazines, books, and films—created by both professional historians and popular writers—the popularity of frontier and westward expansion themes has ensured that the romantic history of the American West continues to thrive. But to be fair, the blame for this perception should not rest solely on interpretations developed outside of the academy. As late as the last two decades of the twentieth century, scholars of the American West had just begun to “catch up” to the rest of their American history colleagues by making cautious first attempts at developing multicultural frameworks for significant research questions. Through these studies, western scholars are only now constructing detailed analyses of the region’s past that integrate the perspectives of Native Americans and others who had for so long appeared as tokens or have been left out of the story of the West entirely.⁸⁴

By the early 1990s, however, the most dramatically revisionist works failed to present a truly multivocal perspective on western history, preferring instead to tear down traditional methods, sources, and interpretations and replace them with similarly monovocal alternatives. Alan Trachtenberg found this to be the case in his critique of the 1991 National Museum of American Art exhibit *The West As America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier, 1820–1920*. He contends that “what was missing was the effort to construct a different way of thinking about the nation itself, one which would take diversity and multiplicity as much into account as distortion and ideological rhetoric.” Trachtenberg suggests a litany of alternatives, including vernacular art by Native Americans, graphics by opponents of the Mexican War, art produced by working cowboys and homesteaders, art produced by blacks on the range, art produced by Hispanics in the Southwest and California, and graphics by the Wobblies. “Too often,” he concludes, “the curators simply repudiated official art, instead of reaching beyond it to a positive alternate vision.”⁸⁵

This was not a phenomenon limited to the field of western art, for as the decade wore on, scholars working in other fields called for radical departures from the methods, sources, and subjects of even the new western history. For example, a 1992 article by Antonia Castañeda threw down a gauntlet by proclaiming that “most feminist

scholars write the history not of women, but of white women in the West." She challenged historians of all fields to "examine their assumptions as well as their racial, class, and gender positions as they redefine historical and other categories of analysis." Castañeda cited the profound lack of history doctorates taken by women of color as one of the primary reasons for a lack of scholarly studies treating women of color in the nineteenth-century West.⁸⁶ This argument, while reflecting the recent influence of essentialism and identity politics pervading graduate programs in women's history, Indian history, and many other fields in the humanities, does accurately reflect the pressing need to represent more voices in the histories of the American West.

But are these additional voices to simply articulate the "useful" histories akin to those created by Carl Becker's metaphorical "Mr. Everyman?" Pragmatic rather than malicious, this Mr. Everyman is not out to deceive, "but he necessarily takes the facts as they come to him, and is enamored of those that seem best suited to his interests or promise most in the way of emotional satisfaction." Becker concluded that while each of us professional historians has a bit of Mr. Everyman in us, we must strive to be more than simply our own historians.⁸⁷ In 1974, Alfonso Ortiz, an anthropologist from San Juan Pueblo, admitted that the extreme reaction by some Indian peoples against history written by non-Indians bothered him, but he suggested that "it should bother historians more, for it shows that some Indian people have come to distrust historians to the extent that they feel a need to assert total sovereignty over their traditions and their past." Ortiz recognized that many Indians feel that they must proclaim: "You, whitey, you ripped me off, therefore I am not going to let you come onto my reservation; furthermore, I am going to write my own history and do my own thing."⁸⁸ While Ortiz believed that there certainly has been ample justification for adopting this position, he cautioned that "to continue such a split between Indians and historians would be tragic, for it would preclude a new dialogue, a kind of creative mutually rewarding partnership between Indians and sympathetic historians." Instead, he prescribes collaboration as the means to "a truly honest American history."⁸⁹ The goal of this collaboration is to create a synthesis of Indian traditions and non-

Indian histories that promises a much richer reading of what is a multivocal past.

Several legal attempts to protect indigenous cultural definition and identity have emerged in recent decades. Such legislation includes United Nations efforts to establish rights for indigenous peoples across the globe, and United States federal legislation such as the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1991 (P.L. 101-601) and the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-341). Ted Jojola asserts that these legislative achievements serve primarily “to lay the foundation for the development of a patent on culture and historical interpretation.”⁹⁰ Hoping to build upon these gains in federal recognition of tribal sovereignty, some Indian scholars and professional organizations are working to extend such protections to Indian intellectual property. Organizations like the Native American Archives Coalition are seeking to establish a set of guidelines designed to protect Indian interests by controlling access to tribal archives by promoting “an awareness of Native Americans’ concerns regarding the appropriate use of Native American records, especially with respect to privacy rights, intellectual property rights, and cultural property rights.”⁹¹ Historians may soon be facing similar kinds of access restrictions that anthropologists and archaeologists have been accustomed to for the past decade. Establishing one’s own political identity, be it via ethnicity, gender, class, or any combination thereof, is key to self-definition, but should it be the dominant characteristic through which access to the materials necessary for understanding the past is determined?

Anthropologists attribute the genesis of nativism, or “culturalism,” to the eighteenth-century German *Kultur* theories developed to define and empower a people who were disenfranchised by the rising cosmopolitan Franco-Anglo imperial civilization.⁹² Marshall Sahlins notes in his work *How “Natives” Think: About Captain Cook, For Example*, “now, two hundred years later, a marked self-consciousness of ‘culture’ is reappearing all over the world among the victims and erstwhile victims of Western domination—and as the expression of similar political and existential demands.” Nativism is a global issue of utmost importance to historians and anthropologists working today. Sahlins astutely noted the irony of this trend, whereby, as

“a response to the planetary juggernaut of Western capitalism, their struggles recreate, if on a wider scale and in more critical form, the opposition to bourgeois-utilitarian reason that first gave rise to an understanding of cultures as distinct forms of life.” Sahlins suggests that rather than being liberated by hitching their cart to this post-modernist theory, proponents of a nativist agenda find “at this transitional moment, the notion of culture is in jeopardy: condemned for its excessive coherence and systematicity, for its sense of boundedness and totality. Just when so many people are announcing the existence of their culture, advanced anthropologists are denying it.” Sahlins goes so far as to proclaim: “‘Culture,’ it seems, is in the twilight of its career, and anthropology with it.” It is becoming increasingly apparent that in addition to anthropology, we might add history, ethnohistory, American Indian history, and any other kind of identity history to Sahlins’s list as well.⁹³

At the same time, postmodernist cultural anthropology is questioning the very possibility of objective truth. Adam Kuper observes, in reference to nativism, that “this line of argument feeds readily into a current political discourse that links identity, culture and politics.” He further warns of the dangers inherent in a literal interpretation of the postmodernist agenda: “We must beware lest the question of whom we study, who should make the study, and how it should be conducted is answered with reference to the ethnic identity of the investigator.”⁹⁴ Public debates between academics over identity politics and essentialism can be as exceptionally ugly as they are useless to the project of understanding the past. This is not to say that we cannot derive some benefit from examining them, but rather that we must be careful not to get so caught up in the debates that we lose sight of our larger project.⁹⁵

What then is the future of the past? Kuper suggests one possible course of action: “What is required is a reconsideration of the whole project of which nativism is simply the culmination. We must ask fundamental questions about the nature of ethnography and its uses. We must remember that there are alternative definitions of our project available.”⁹⁶ Sahlins expands on this idea, suggesting “one cannot do good history, not even contemporary history, without regard for ideas, actions, and ontologies that are not and never were our own.

Different cultures, different rationalities.”⁹⁷ History and tradition are two distinctly different ways to understand the past, but they are not incompatible. They should not be placed in opposition to one another, nor should one be used to verify the validity or accuracy of other. Furthermore, historians must recognize that although the American government often treated all Indian people as if they were one culture, there are significant differences from group to group that preclude the idea of a singular Indian history or methodology. As Ortiz observed: “each tribe, band, or community has its own sovereign history. . . . [L]ikewise, each people has its own traditions and viewpoint to the past.”⁹⁸ One must make the important distinction between acknowledging that every social unit has its own way of interpreting the past and concluding that only Indian people should write Indian histories, characterized by the increasing tendency toward exclusive essentialism as demonstrated by the specific identity-related criticisms leveled at Ramón Gutiérrez discussed above and toward other more recent non-Indian scholars who attempt to study Native American pasts.⁹⁹

What then is the next step? In his article “Significant to Whom?: Mexican Americans and the History of the American West,” David Gutiérrez proposes that scholars of the social history of the West are currently in a position to create “a fundamental reconfiguration in the ways minority peoples are conceived of, categorized, and analyzed in history and contemporary American society.” There is little to be gained by simply describing the differences between communities or contributing essentialist renderings of these communities. Instead, he argues, “close attention to the structures that internally stratify and divide communities must be a central component of any project that aspires to render human *all* of the historically subject peoples who have lived and now live in the West.”¹⁰⁰ Projects of this sort promise to reveal the complexity of the human experience, effectively rendering moot the questions of a so-called minority people’s significance and making obsolete the production of “recognition histories” that simply acknowledge their contributions to the American past.

In her recent book *Something in the Soil: Legacies and Reckonings in the New West*, historian Patricia Nelson Limerick points out that

stories and memories have also transformed the West. Obscured by a litany of other more conspicuous agents of change, such as plowing, irrigating, grazing, mining, and developing, these narratives have, according to Limerick, “piled themselves up into moraines, deltas, and heaps of memory” at conspicuous places like National Parks, battle sites, and both natural- and human-made wonders. The American West, she contends, “is composed of layers and layers of accumulated human activity and thought.” These “strata of memory,” as she calls them, serve to orient her personal and professional explorations of the western past.¹⁰¹

As Limerick and others have shown, historians of all stripes need to stop arguing about where the West is or is not, who did what first, and who is and is not eligible to write what kind of history, and try to move together toward a greater understanding of how the very perception of the western past is created—and always has been created—by multiple voices for numerous reasons. In order to do this most effectively we should focus on local variations in the struggle over identity and the construction of public memories that occur in the distinct places that various humans have made from the western spaces they have encountered. By combining the theory and methods of the academic study of history and memory with the experiential work of public history and public memory, the fluid nature of the ongoing construction of the past emerges from what previously appeared to be a static set of accepted facts. Rather than a focused narrative of national or regional themes that necessarily leave out multiple perspectives, the western past is more akin to an interrelated web of individual and group memories: memories in the landscapes; landscapes containing values; values embedded in stories; stories told in public; public memories continually constructed and debated.

NOTES

1. The \$108,000 sculpture, created by “Sonny” Rivera of Albuquerque, New Mexico, is a central feature of the Rio Arriba County’s \$1.5 million Oñate Monument and Visitor’s Center opened on April 29, 1994. For national and international reporting on the vandalism, see James Brooke, “Conquistador Statue Stirs Hispanic Pride and Indian Rage,” *New York Times*, Feb. 9, 1998, sec. A; Tina Griego, “A Foot Note to History: Amputation of N.M. Statue Underlies 400-

- Year-Old Grudge," *Denver Rocky Mountain News*, June 21, 1998, sec. A; and Mary Dejevsky, "Ancient Relations Fail to Get Off on the Right Foot," *Independent* (London), July 22, 1998.
2. The prisoners taken at Acoma were charged with "wantonly killing" Oñate's nephew, Don Juan de Zaldivar Oñate—*maese de campo general* of the expedition—two other officers, eight soldiers, and two servants. For English translations of documents pertaining to the Oñate period, including an account of the trial and sentencing of the rebel Acomans, see George P. Hammond and Agapito Ray, eds. and trans., *Don Juan de Oñate, Colonizer of New Mexico, 1595–1628*, 2 vols. (Albuquerque, 1953), 477–79. Captain Luis Gasco de Velasco reported to the viceroy on March 22, 1601: "More than six hundred prisoners were taken. Twenty-four Indians had their feet cut off as punishment; all those more than twenty years of age were taken as slaves; those younger were put under surveillance for twenty years" (Hammond and Ray, *Don Juan de Oñate*, 615). Oñate was himself tried and stripped of his command and banished from New Mexico for his cruel actions toward the native inhabitants.
 3. *Ibid.*, and James Brooke, "An Anniversary Brings Pride and Resentment," *New York Times*, May 3, 1998, sec. 1.
 4. As reported in Brooke, "Conquistador Statue Stirs Hispanic Pride and Indian Rage."
 5. *Ibid.*; Scott Baldauf, "New Mexico's Year of Fiestas Dampened by a Divisive Past," *Christian Science Monitor*, May 27, 1998; Griego, "A Foot Note to History"; and Patrisia Gonzales and Roberto Rodriguez, "Bridges Needed to Unite Cultures," *Denver Post*, April 4, 1999, sec. G.
 6. David Thelen, "Memory and American History," *Journal of American History* 75 (1989): 1117, 1119, introducing a special issue on memory and American history. See also the influential essays in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition*, (Cambridge, UK, 1983), 1.
 7. Thelen, "Memory and American History," 1126–27.
 8. See Michel-Rolph Trouillot's *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston, 1995) for a fascinating study of the role of power in the production of historical narratives.
 9. Michael Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture* (New York, 1991), 5–10; John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, 1992), 13–16, 17. Other important works in this vein include Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Mémoire*," trans. Marc Roudebush, *Representations* 26 (1989): 18–19; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (New York, 1991); John R. Gillis, ed., *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity* (Princeton, 1994).
 10. David Glassberg, "Public History and the Study of Memory," *Public Historian* 18 (1996): 11–14.
 11. James E. Young, *The Texture of Meaning: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning* (New

- Haven, 1993), xi–xii; Glassberg, “Public History and the Study of Memory,” 13–14.
12. The legacy of the Custer/Little Bighorn Battlefield was the topic of a dynamic symposium held at the national monument in 1994 and continues to be the focus of intense debate as a monument to the Indian participants is under development. See two essays in *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 42 (1992): Robert M. Utley, “Whose Shrine Is It?” 70–74; and Douglas C. McChristian, “In Search of Custer Battlefield,” 75–76. On inaccuracies at national monuments, see James W. Loewen, *Lies Across America: What Our Historic Sites Get Wrong* (New York, 1999); and John Seelye, *Memory's Nation: The Place of Plymouth Rock* (Chapel Hill, 1998).
 13. David Lowenthal, “Age and Artifact: Dilemmas of Appreciation,” in *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes: Geographical Essays*, ed. D. W. Meinig (New York, 1979), 103, 124, 125. See also Lowenthal's *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History* (Cambridge, UK, 1998); *The Past Is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge, UK, 1985); and “Past Time, Present Place: Landscape and Memory,” *Geographical Review* 65 (1975): 1–36.
 14. Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis, 1977), 5–7; Wallace Stegner, “The Sense of Place,” in *Where the Bluebird Sings to the Lemonade Springs: Living and Writing in the West* (New York, 1992), 201. See also Lewis Binford, “The Archaeology of Place,” *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 1 (1982): 6, 28: “I am interested in sites, the fixed places in the topography where man may periodically pause and carry out actions.”
 15. Carl O. Sauer, “The Morphology of Landscape,” *University of California Publications in Geography* 2 (1925): 25–26, 37.
 16. Yi-Fu Tuan, “Man and Nature: An Eclectic Reading,” *Landscape* 15 (1966): 31; Yi-Fu Tuan, “Thought and Landscape: The Eye and the Mind's Eye,” in *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes: Geographical Essays*, ed. D. W. Meinig (New York, 1979), 90, 100; Leonard Guelke, “Historical Geography and Collingwood's Theory of Historical Knowing,” in *Period and Place: Research Methods in Historical Geography*, ed. Alan R. H. Baker and Mark Billinge (Cambridge, UK, 1982), 194.
 17. Glassberg, “Public History and the Study of Memory,” 17; Keith H. Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language among the Western Apache* (Albuquerque, 1996), 7.
 18. John L. Allen, “Exploration and Creation of Geographical Images of the Great Plains: Comments on the Role of Subjectivity,” in *Images of the Plains: The Role of Human Nature in Settlement*, ed. Brian W. Blouet and Merlin P. Lawson (Lincoln, Neb., 1975), 5; Donald A. Barclay, James H. Maguire, and Peter Wild, eds., *Into the Wilderness Dream: Exploration Narratives of the American West, 1500–1805* (Salt Lake City, 1994); William Brandon, *Quivira: Europeans in the Region of the Santa Fe Trail, 1540–1820* (Athens, Ohio, 1990); George P. Hammond, “The Search for the Fabulous in the Settlement of the Southwest,” in *New Spain's Far*

- Northern Frontier: Essays on Spain in the American West, 1540–1821*, ed. David J. Weber (Albuquerque, 1979); John L. Kessell, “‘To See Such Marvels with My Own Eyes’: Spanish Exploration in the Western Borderlands,” *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 41 (1991): 68–75.
19. Allen, “Exploration and Creation of Geographical Images of the Great Plains,” 3.
 20. Tuan further contends that “occasions to voice environmental values seldom arise; values are implicit in the people’s economic activities, behavior and style of life” (Yi-Fu Tuan, *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values* [Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1974], 63–64, 67–68).
 21. Several surviving Spanish journals and letters record the daily activities of punitive and exploratory expeditions into the region of northern *Nuevo México*. The discussion below relies on the documents collected in Alfred Barnaby Thomas, ed. and trans., *After Coronado: Spanish Exploration Northeast of New Mexico, 1696–1727; Documents from the Archives of Spain, Mexico, and New Mexico* (Norman, Okla., 1935). For a general overview of Spanish exploration into the region, see Thomas, “Spanish Expeditions into Colorado,” *Colorado Magazine* 1 (1924): 289–300; Joseph J. Hill, “Spanish and Mexican Exploration and Trade Northwest from New Mexico into the Great Basin,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 3 (1930): 2–23; and J. Manuel Espinosa, “Governor Vargas in Colorado,” *New Mexico Historical Review* 2 (1936): 179–87; Frederic Athearn, *A Forgotten Kingdom: The Spanish Frontier in Colorado and New Mexico, 1540–1821*, 2d ed., Cultural Resource Series, no. 29 (Denver, 1992). For an overview of the current state of many of these resources, see Lawrence A. Clayton, ed., *The Hispanic Experience in North America: Sources for Study in the United States*, (Columbus, Ohio, 1992).
 22. Ulibarrí journal, July 29, 1706, in Thomas, *After Coronado*, 65–66.
 23. Ulibarrí journal, Aug. 11, 1706, *ibid.*, 72–73.
 24. Valverde journal, Sept. 22, 1719, *ibid.*, 113.
 25. Ulibarrí journal, July 25, 1706, *ibid.*, 64. The 1680 Spanish legal code, *Recopilación de Leyes de los Reynos de las Indias*, stipulated that no grants or grazing permits would be issued in the proximity of Indian lands to ensure that Spanish livestock would not destroy their crops (Myra Ellen Jenkins, “Taos Pueblo and Its Neighbors, 1540–1847,” *New Mexico Historical Review* 41 [1966]: 95).
 26. Rivera journals, July 19, 1765, in Thomas, *After Coronado*, 141–43; June 29, 1765, *ibid.*, 103; Oct. 8, 1765, *ibid.*, 192. See also *ibid.*, 95–97, 184–86, 190.
 27. Domínguez journal, Aug. 7, 1776, in Ted J. Warner, ed., *The Domínguez-Escalante Journal: Their Expedition through Colorado, Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico in 1776* (Salt Lake City, 1995), 10.
 28. Kessell, “To See Such Marvels,” 74.
 29. Valverde journal, Oct. 2, 1719, in Thomas, *After Coronado*, 121; Oct. 4, 1719, *ibid.*, 123; Oct. 3, 1719, *ibid.*, 122; Oct. 16, 1719, *ibid.*, 129.
 30. Ulibarrí journal, Aug. 15, 1706, *ibid.*, 67; Aug. 2, 1706, *ibid.*, 75.
 31. Kessell, “To See Such Marvels,” 69.

32. Rivera journal, Oct. 21, 1765, in Austin Nelson Leiby, "Borderland Pathfinders: The 1765 Diaries of Juan Maria Antonio de Rivera" (PhD diss., Northern Arizona University, 1985), 220, 227. According to Leiby, "Long Live Jesus at the Head of the Cross!" led many of the Spaniards into battle during the Reconquest of Spain from the Muslims.
33. T. M. Pearce, ed. *New Mexico Place Names: A Geographical Dictionary* (Albuquerque, 1965), xi-xii, 5.
34. Ulibarri journal, July 21, 1706, in Thomas, *After Coronado*, 62.
35. Valverde journal, Sept. 22, 1719, *ibid.*, 113.
36. Rivera journal, Oct. 14, 1765, *ibid.*, 206.
37. Anza journal, Aug. 31 1779, *ibid.*, 131.
38. D. W. Meinig, "Geographical Analysis of Imperial Expansion," in *Period and Place: Research Methods in Historical Geography*, ed. Baker and Billinge, 72-74.
39. Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Arizona and New Mexico* (San Francisco, 1889), 234-36, 249.
40. "Colorado's Newest Rest Area—Cuerno Verde," *Milestones* (Sept./Oct. 1995): 1-2. Newsletter published bimonthly by the Colorado Department of Transportation. Cuerno Verde Rest Area project files, Public Information Office, Colorado Department of Transportation, Denver, Colorado. This topic is the subject of a forthcoming journal article by the author and is discussed in a conference paper, "Constructing Comanche Pasts: Public Memory and the Cuerno Verde Rest Area," presented at the Western History Association annual meeting, San Antonio, Tex., Oct. 2000.
41. Alfred B. Thomas contends that "Chief Greenhorn was not killed on this occasion. He met his death at the hands of Governor Anza in 1779" (Thomas, *The Plains Indians and New Mexico, 1751-1778: A Collection of Documents Illustrative of the History of the Eastern Frontier of New Mexico*, Coronado Cuarto Centennial Publications, 1540-1940, vol. 11, ed. George P. Hammond [Albuquerque, 1940], 166-67). Elizabeth A. H. John disagrees, concluding "that the fallen chief left a son who dedicated his own life and those of his followers to vengeance for his father" (*Storms Brewed in Other Men's Worlds: The Confrontation of Indians, Spanish, and French in the Southwest, 1540-1795* [Lincoln, Neb., 1975], 469), and recent scholars endorse her position. See Thomas W. Kavanagh, *The Comanches: A History, 1706-1875* (Lincoln, Neb., 1996), 79, 92; and Stanley Noyes, *Los Comanches: The Horse People, 1751-1845* (Albuquerque, 1993), 62, 323 n. 2.
42. Alfred B. Thomas, *Forgotten Frontiers: A Study of the Spanish Indian Policy of Don Juan Bautista de Anza, Governor of New Mexico, 1777-1787* (Norman, Okla., 1932), 66-71. In addition to leading settlers to Alta California, Anza is remembered for defeating Cuerno Verde on Sept. 3, 1779, and for creating lasting peace and alliance pacts with the various Indian peoples while governor of the Province of New Mexico (1777-87). For studies of Anza's tenure as governor, see Thomas, *Forgotten Frontiers*; and Ronald J. Benes, "Anza and Concha in New

- Mexico, 1787–1793: A Study in New Colonial Techniques,” *Journal of the West* 4 (1965): 63–76.
43. Gilberto Espinosa, trans., “Los Comanches,” *New Mexico Quarterly* 1 (1931): 136.
 44. Aurelio M. Espinosa, *The Folklore of Spain in the American Southwest: Traditional Spanish Folk Literature in Northern New Mexico and Southern Colorado*, ed., J. Manuel Espinosa (Norman, Okla., 1985), 219; see also Aurelio M. Espinosa, “Los Comanches: A Spanish Heroic Play of the Year Seventeen Hundred and Eighty,” *University of New Mexico Bulletin*, Language Series, 1 (1907); Gilberto Espinosa, trans., “Los Comanches,” 133–46; A. L. Campa, “Los Comanches: A New Mexican Folk Drama,” *University of New Mexico Bulletin*, Language Series, 7 (1942); and Beatrice A. Roeder, “Los Comanches: A Bicentennial Folk Play,” *The Bilingual Review/La Revista Bilingüe* 3 (1976): 213–20. For general studies of New Mexican folk drama, see works by A. L. Campa: “Religious Spanish Folk-Drama in New Mexico,” *New Mexico Quarterly* 2 (1932): 3–13; and “The New Mexican Spanish Folktheater,” *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 5 (1941): 127–31; works by John E. Englekirk: “Notes on the Repertoire of the New Mexican Spanish Folktheater,” *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 4 (1940): 227–37; “The Source and Dating of New Mexican Spanish Folk Plays,” *Western Folklore* 16 (1957): 232–55; and Edwin B. Place, “A Group of Mystery Plays Found in a Spanish-Speaking Region of Southern Colorado,” *University of Colorado Studies* 18 (1930): 1–8.
 45. For more on this drama, see Aurelio M. Espinosa and J. Manuel Espinosa, “Los Tejanos: A New Mexican Spanish Popular Dramatic Composition of the Middle of the Nineteenth Century,” *Hispania* 27 (1944): 291–314; and Aurelio M. Espinosa and J. Manuel Espinosa, “The Texans: A New Mexican Spanish Folk Play of the Middle Nineteenth Century,” *New Mexico Quarterly Review* 13 (1943): 299–308.
 46. Roger D. Abrahams, “Folk Drama,” in *Folklore and Folklife: An Introduction*, ed. Richard M. Dorson (Chicago, 1972), 355.
 47. Charles Montgomery, *The Spanish Redemption: Heritage, Power, and Loss on New Mexico’s Upper Rio Grande* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2002), and his article, “The Trap of Race and Memory: The Language of Spanish Civility on the Upper Rio Grande,” *American Quarterly* 52 (2000): 478–513. For the appropriation of Spanish colonial culture by Anglo artists and writers in particular, see also Dean Rehberger, “Visions of the New Mexican in Public Pageants and Dramas of Santa Fe and Taos, 1918–1940,” *Journal of the Southwest* 37 (1995): 450–69.
 48. Sarah Horton, “Maintaining Hispano Identity through the Santa Fe Fiesta: Re-Appropriating Key Symbols and Resisting Anglo Dominance,” *Kiva* 66 (2000): 251, 254–55. Other important works on the Santa Fe Fiesta include Sarah Horton, “Where is the ‘Mexican’ in ‘New Mexican’? Enacting History, Enacting Dominance in the Santa Fe Fiesta,” *Public Historian* 23 (2001): 41–54; Chris Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe: Creating a Modern Regional Tradition* (Albuquerque,

- 1997); and Ronald L. Grimes, *Symbol and Conquest: Public Ritual and Drama in Santa Fe, New Mexico* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1976).
49. Jon Hunner, "Preserving Hispanic Lifeways in New Mexico," *Public Historian* 23 (2001): 29–40.
 50. Horton, "Maintaining Hispano Identity," 263–64.
 51. For a discussion of this trend, see Steve J. Stern, "Paradigms of Conquest: History, Historiography, and Politics," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 24 (1992): 1–34.
 52. Jojola, "When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sex, and Power in New Mexico, 1500–1846, by Ramón Gutiérrez," in *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 17 (1993): 141.
 53. In fact, Native Americans writers, whom cultural scholar Scott Michaelsen terms "organic intellectuals," have written and published accounts of their own people from the very emergence of the discipline of American anthropology, often in collaboration with non-Indian ethnographers (Michaelsen, *The Limits of Multiculturalism: Interrogating the Origins of American Anthropology* [Minneapolis, 1999]).
 54. Ramón A. Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500–1846* (Stanford, Calif., 1991), xvii.
 55. Liz McMillen, "Hot Young Author and a Fresh Slant on U.S. History Add Up to Much-Honored Book on American Southwest," *Chronicle of Higher Education* (Dec. 2, 1992): A8.
 56. These awards include the Herbert E. Bolton Prize in Latin American History and the Frederick Jackson Turner Prize from the Organization of American Historians, two of the most prestigious prizes in the field of history. McMillen, "Hot Young Author," A8; Sylvia Rodríguez, "Subaltern Historiography on the Rio Grande: On Gutiérrez's *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away*," *American Ethnologist* 21 (1994): 892; John R. Wunder, "What's Old about the New Western History: Race and Gender," pt. 1, *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 85 (1994): 57.
 57. *When Jesus Came* is variously described as "theoretically sophisticated": John L. Kessell, *Pacific Historical Review* 62 (1993): 364; Patricia Nelson Limerick, "Stop Dancing or I'll Flog Myself," *New York Times Book Review* (July 12, 1992): 21; David J. Weber, *Western Historical Quarterly* 22 (1991): 473; "profound": Sarah A. Radcliffe, *Journal of Historical Geography* 18 (1992): 490; Roberto M. Salmón, *Journal of American History* 78 (1992): 1410; and as an "important," a "major," and a "significant" contribution: Peter L. Steere, *American Indian Quarterly* 16 (1992): 574; Susan Kellogg, *Hispanic American Historical Review* 72 (1992): 430; Muriel Nazzari, "Relations between the Sexes in Spain and Its Empire," *Journal of Women's History* 4 (1992): 147. The praise ranges from the stolid: "impressive," "thoroughly rewarding," and "a useful addition to the historical record": Barbara Bush-Slimani, "American Eves," *History Today* 42 (1992): 59; Asunción Lavrin, *The Americas* 49 (1992): 95; S. J. Kleinberg, *Journal of American Studies* 28 (1994):

- 93; to the exuberant: "unquestionably a work of great importance," "a model of scholarly expertise and erudition," "one of the best ever written on the Pueblo culture," and "the influence of *When Jesus Came* will extend beyond New Mexico and the Southwest": Sarah Deutsch, *Journal of American Ethnic History* 13 (1994): 98; Herman W. Konrad, *Canadian Journal of History* 26 (1991): 542; Alvin R. Sunseri, *Journal of the West* 32 (1993): 105; Albert L. Hurtado, "The Underside of Colonial New Mexico: A Review Essay," *New Mexico Historical Review* 68 (1993): 188.
58. Examples of faint or qualified praise include: "it is a useful addition to the scant literature on these general topics"; "Despite the problems, *When Jesus Came the Corn Mothers Went Away* deserves careful attention as an innovative, thoughtful, and persuasive study"; and "an important and provocative, if slightly flawed, contribution to the historiography of the Southwest": Paul E. Hoffman, *The Historian* 54 (1991): 158; Jesus F. De La Teja, *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 97 (1993): 385; Vista K. McCroskey, *Social Science Quarterly* 73 (1992): 712.
59. McCroskey, 712; Bush-Slimani, 59; Nazzari, 147.
60. Particularly comparisons to Patricia Seed's book *To Love, Honor, and Obey* (1988). Nancy A. Hewitt, *William and Mary Quarterly* 50 (1993): 607; Kellogg, 430; Nazzari, 147; Patricia Seed, *American Historical Review* 97 (1992): 968.
61. Bush-Slimani, 59; De La Teja, 385; Hoffman, 158; Nazzari, 147; Cynthia Radding, *Ethnohistory* 41 (1994): 468.
62. Ralph H. Vigil, "Inequality and Ideology in Borderlands Historiography," *Latin American Research Review* 29 (1994): 163; Weber, 471; Kessell, 364; Hurtado, 187.
63. Most notably, several reviewers believed that Gutiérrez had ample documentation in a solid base of sources: see Konrad, 542; Radding, 468; and Salmón, 1410. Some claimed that he represented a wide range of perspectives by using methods and sources from many disciplines: see De La Teja, 384; Steere, 573; and Weber, 474. One reviewer went so far as to proclaim *When Jesus Came* as "ethnohistory at its most detailed, fascinating and well-researched" (Radcliffe, 488). Others wrote that Gutiérrez "successfully combines the story of the invaders with 'the vision of the vanquished'" (McCroskey, 712), and that "the analysis in this book is sensitive to time and place and clearly reconstructs a historical panorama of New Mexico that is long overdue" (Salmón, 1410).
64. Seed, *American Historical Review* 97 (1992): 968.
65. S. Rodríguez, "Subaltern Historiography on the Rio Grande, 892. The commentaries were compiled by the Native American Studies Center at the University of New Mexico (hereafter UNM) and published later that year as, "When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sex, and Power in New Mexico, 1500–1846, by Ramón Gutiérrez," in *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 17 (1993): 141–77 (hereafter this collection of commentaries is cited as Native American Studies Center compilation). The contributors include: Ted Jojola (Isleta Pueblo), director, Native American Studies, associate professor, School of Architecture and Planning, UNM; Alison Freese, information special-

- ist, Native American Studies Center, UNM; Simon J. Ortiz (Acoma Pueblo), writer; Joe Sando (Jemez Pueblo), director, Institute of Pueblo Indian Study and Research Center, Albuquerque, New Mexico; Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz, professor of Ethnic Studies, California State University, Hayward; Susan A. Miller (Seminole Nation of Oklahoma), doctoral student, University of Nebraska, Lincoln; Rina Swentzell (Santa Clara Pueblo); Penny Bird (Santo Domingo Pueblo), education consultant, NM Department of Education, Indian Education Unit, Santa Fe, NM; Glenabah Martinez (Taos Pueblo), chair, Social Studies Department, Rio Grande High School, Albuquerque, NM; Jimmy Shendo (Jemez Pueblo), student resource specialist, Native American Studies, UNM; Diana M. Ortiz (Acoma Pueblo), Center for the New West, Albuquerque, NM; and Evelina Zuni Lucero (Isleta / San Juan Pueblo), writer and instructor, UNM.
66. S. Rodríguez, "Subaltern Historiography on the Rio Grande," 892.
 67. Susan A. Miller, in Native American Studies Center compilation, 162–63.
 68. Lucero, *ibid.*, 176; Bird, *ibid.*, 169, 171; Freese, *ibid.*, 145; Jojola, *ibid.*, 165; D. Ortiz, *ibid.*, 174; R. Ortiz, *ibid.*, 161; Swentzell, *ibid.*, 166–67.
 69. S. Rodríguez, "Subaltern Historiography on the Rio Grande," 898.
 70. Shendo, in Native American Studies Center compilation, 173; Martinez, *ibid.*, 171; Swentzell, *ibid.*, 169; D. Ortiz, *ibid.*, 174; S. Ortiz, *ibid.*, 151; D. Ortiz, *ibid.*, 174.
 71. Freese, *ibid.*, 150.
 72. S. Rodríguez, "Subaltern Historiography on the Rio Grande," 895.
 73. Bird, in Native American Studies Center compilation, 170; Jojola, *ibid.*, 165–66; R. Ortiz, *ibid.*, 158; S. Ortiz, *ibid.*, 151.
 74. S. Ortiz, *ibid.*, 151.
 75. Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came*, xvii–xviii.
 76. Seed, *American Historical Review* 97 (1992): 967.
 77. Jojola, in Native American Studies Center compilation, 143; S. Ortiz, *ibid.*, 151, 152; Martinez, *ibid.*, 172; Bird, *ibid.*, 169, 170; D. Ortiz, *ibid.*, 173; Swentzell, 167, 169.
 78. S. Rodríguez, "Subaltern Historiography on the Rio Grande," 895.
 79. *Ibid.*, 898.
 80. Seed, *American Historical Review* 97 (1992): 968.
 81. Stern, "Paradigms of Conquest," 6.
 82. S. Rodríguez, "Subaltern Historiography on the Rio Grande," 898.
 83. See such recent works as James F. Brooks, *Captives and Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands* (Chapel Hill, 2002); Curtis Marez, "Signifying Spain, Becoming Comanche, Making Mexicans: Indian Captivity and the History of Chicana/o Popular Performance," *American Quarterly* 53 (2001): 267–307; Anne Fairbrother, "Mexicans in New Mexico: Deconstructing the Tri-Cultural Trope," *Perspectives in Mexican American Studies* 7 (2000): 111–30; and Joseph A. Rodríguez, "Becoming Latinos: Mexican Americans, Chicanos,

- and the Spanish Myth in the Urban Southwest," *Western Historical Quarterly* 29 (1998): 165–85.
84. The literature is vast. Important recent syntheses include Patricia Nelson Limerick, *Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York, 1987); Richard White, *"It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own": A New History of the American West* (Norman, Okla., 1991); Walter Nugent, *Into the West: The Story of Its People* (New York, 1999); and Robert V. Hine and John Mack Faragher, *The American West: A New Interpretive History* (New Haven, 2000).
85. Alan Trachtenberg, "Contesting the West," *Art in America* 79 (1991): 121.
86. Antonia I. Castañeda, "Women of Color and the Rewriting of Western History: The Discourse, Politics, and Decolonization of History," *Pacific Historical Review* 61 (1992): 533, 507–8. Castañeda reports, "statistics reveal that between 1975 and 1988 there were 192 doctoral degrees in history awarded to women of color: 8 to Native Americans, 42 to 'Asians,' 101 to African Americans, and 41 to 'Hispanics.'"
87. Carl Becker, "Everyman His Own Historian," presidential address delivered before the American Historical Association, 29 December 1931, *American Historical Review* 37 (1932): 230.
88. Ortiz's commentary was part of a symposium held at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association in December 1974. Alfonso Ortiz, "Some Concerns Central to the Writing of 'Indian' History," *Indian Historian* 10 (1977): 20, 21. On the state of the field, see Donald L. Parman and Catherine Price, "A 'Work in Progress': The Emergence of Indian History as a Professional Field," *Western Historical Quarterly* 20 (1989): 185–96; R. David Edmunds, "Native Americans, New Voices: American Indian History, 1895–1995," *American Historical Review* 100 (June 1995): 717–40; Donald Fixico, ed., *Rethinking American Indian History* (Albuquerque, 1997); Russell Thornton, ed., *Studying Native America: Problems and Prospects* (Madison, Wis., 1998); Devon A. Mihesuah, ed., *Natives and Academics: Researching and Writing about American Indians* (Lincoln, Neb., 1998); and Donald Fixico, "Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee and the Indian Voice in Native Studies," *Journal of the West* 39 (2000): 7–15.
89. A. Ortiz, "Some Concerns Central to 'Indian' History," 21.
90. In addition to being director of Native American Studies, Jojola (Isleta Pueblo) is an associate professor of planning in the School of Architecture and Planning at the University of New Mexico. Jojola also lists the Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-644) and the Native American Languages Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-477), to which one could add the Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-471) and the Indian Arts and Crafts Enforcement Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-497) (Jojola, in Native American Studies Center compilation, 142).
91. Founded in 1997 by members of the Society of American Archivists, the Native American Archives Coalition is a division of the Archivists and Archives of Color Round Table of the Society of American Archivists. Native American

- Archives Coalition, "Proposed Mission Statement," April 10, 1999, www.landclaimsdocs.com/conferences/pdf/nativeamericanarchivescoalition.pdf. See also Devon A. Mihesuah, "Suggested Guidelines for Institutions with Researchers Who Conduct Research on American Indians," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 17 (1993): 131–39.
92. Adam Kuper, "Culture, Identity, and the Project of a Cosmopolitan Anthropology," *Man* 29 (Sept. 1994): 545.
 93. Marshall D. Sahlins, *How "Natives" Think: About Captain Cook, For Example* (Chicago, 1995), 13–14.
 94. Kuper, "Culture, Identity and Cosmopolitan Anthropology," 542–43, 545.
 95. For some recent public examples, see Donald A. Grinde Jr., "Teaching American Indian History: A Native American Voice," *Perspectives* (newsletter of the American Historical Association) 32 (1994): 11; James Axtell, "'Personal Vendetta' Undermines Native American Goals," *ibid.*, 31–32; Donald A. Grinde Jr., "Donald A. Grinde, Jr., Replies," *ibid.*, 32–33; Francis Paul Prucha, "The Challenge of Indian History," *Journal of the West* 34 (1995): 3–4; and Vine Deloria Jr., "The Struggle for Authority," *Journal of the West* 34 (1995): 3–4.
 96. Kuper, "Culture, Identity, and Cosmopolitan Anthropology," 547.
 97. Sahlins, *How "Natives" Think*, 14.
 98. A. Ortiz, "Some Concerns Central to 'Indian' History," 17.
 99. See Richard White, "Using the Past: History and Native American Studies," chap. 9 in *Studying Native America: Problems and Prospects*, ed. Russell Thornton (Madison, Wis., 1998), 217–43.
 100. David G. Gutiérrez, "Significant to Whom?: Mexican Americans and the History of the American West," in *A New Significance: Re-envisioning the History of the American West*, ed. Clyde A. Milner (New York, 1996), 78, 82; emphasis in original.
 101. Patricia Nelson Limerick, *Something in the Soil: Legacies and Reckonings in the New West* (New York, 2000), 13–14.