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# Our Grandmothers' Stories: The Role of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana Women in the Settlement and Community Development of the Wagon Mound Area

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**OUR GRANDMOTHERS' STORIES:  
THE ROLE OF MESTIZA, MEXICAN, SPANISH, NUEVAMEXICANA WOMEN IN THE  
SETTLEMENT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OF THE WAGON MOUND AREA**

By

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B.A., Political Science, University of New Mexico, 2006

THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of

**Master of Arts  
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## **Dedication**

To Lupe Aragon Maestas-Martinez, Roque Jose Martinez, Bidilia Gallegos-Encinias,  
Julian Encinias, and all their semillas.

## Acknowledgements

This project was made possible by a community of family members who provided me and my family with a home life filled with love, food, laughter, and tears with a warm place to sleep and call home. I am thankful for all the support that I have received over the years starting with my parents Sofia Martinez, Nash Encinias, Richard Moore, and Georgia Martinez and my grandparents Lupe Martinez, Roque Martinez, Bidilia Encinias, and Julian Encinias. To my brothers, Jose Andres Martinez-Encinias and Eliseo Ricardo Martinez-Moore, we had a wonderful childhood and family life.

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**ABSTRACT**

The study addresses and deconstructs inaccurate historical images, perspectives, and interpretations of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, and Nuevamexicana women from northeastern New Mexico in the field of planning. Concerns for the way that Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women are portrayed, in the history of the United States, and my observations of the way that this population of women were treated and continue to be ignored as serious topics of research for study in higher education in mainstream U.S. planning efforts led me to reconstruct the position of the Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women in community and economic development, as community planners of the Wagon Mound area, a village in northeastern New Mexico, through the development of an oral history project. In this thesis, I argue that Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women were and continue to be active agents, leaders,

and experts in the planning and development of the Wagon Mound area in northeastern New Mexico.

I conclude that local customs and traditions continued well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Mestizo, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevomexicano people continue to operate from their traditional forms of planning and community building for community and economic development. These are not traditional planning methods stuck in the past, but rather they have evolved and adapted while attempting to stay true to their core values of land tenure and collective decision-making for the collective survival of their families and their neighborhoods.

## Table of Contents

List of Figures .....	ix
List of Tables .....	x
Chapter 1 Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2 Methodologies and Fieldwork .....	15
Testing for Validity .....	15
Research Participants.....	20
The Interviews.....	21
Field Notes, Data, and Personal Oral History .....	22
Chapter 3 World-views for Community and Economic Development .....	24
Developing World-views: Knowledge Creation .....	24
World-views Influencing Community Development .....	26
World-views Informing Customs and Legal Systems.....	32
Chapter 4 Reconstructing the History of the Wagon Mound Area and Her Story .....	39
Limitations Observed: The History of Wagon Mound .....	39
Emergence: From the Canyon, El Jardín to the Village of Wagon Mound .....	45
The Gallegos Ranch, Life in the Village of Wagon Mound, and La Bandita .....	54
Chapter 5 Findings: Active Agents in Community and Economic Development .....	62
Misperceptions and Distorted Depictions .....	62
Active Agents in Community Development.....	63
Active Agents in Economic Development.....	72
Cultural Preservation: Through Storytelling Weaving Collective Histories .....	76

Unexpected Findings Emerge through Storytelling .....	78
Chapter 6 Conclusion .....	80
Making the Invisible Visible .....	81
Planning for Community and Economic Development: The Role of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana Women .....	83
References .....	85

## List of Figures

Figure 1: Map of New Mexico highlighting Mora County.....	39
Figure 2: Map of New Mexico rivers.....	45
Figure 3: Hand-drawing of Pitarilla game played by Lupe Martinez and her family.....	51
Figure 4: Lupe Martinez.....	64
Figure 5: Bidilia Encinias.....	65
Figure 6: The Storyteller: Theory of Planning and Action.....	80

**List of Tables**

Table 1: Census Data for Wagon Mound, New Mexico, 1920 – 2010 ..... 44

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

Growing up, family was the center of our lives from aunts, uncles, cousins, adopted family members and friends. Family was our community. Our story starts in the Wagon Mound area and surrounding villages and ranches. Wagon Mound is a small village in northeastern New Mexico between Springer and Las Vegas, New Mexico.

When I asked my aunts and uncles, “Where do we come from?”.

They all said, “Wagon Mound”.

I would ask them again, “Where do we come from?”, and they would stare back at me, as if I was crazy. For them, the Wagon Mound area is the only place that they know as home. It is our place of creation for what we know and who we are as a people.

Wagon Mound and El Jardín were places full of life where our ancestral homes were filled with family, food, laughter and with four or five children to a bed. Outside there were beautiful gardens filled with corn, *calabacitas*, tomatoes, cucumbers, and much more. There were fields of fruit trees filled with prunes, peaches, and choke cherries. My aunt once told me that *El Jardín* was like a paradise. Anyone could come and pick the fruit. My maternal great-grandfather, Eliseo Maestas, only asked that you pay for a Mass at the Santa Clara Catholic Church in Wagon Mound and you could gather as many peaches as you needed. This research includes stories of emergence from the canyon to the village of Wagon Mound.

Horses, cows, sheep, goats, and chickens roamed the land. My dad told me that ranchers would rotate the cows in one field and the sheep in another. The actions resulted

because of the manner that the sheep eat the grass versus the cows, which complements each other and is good for the soil. This was a traditional form of land management.

Taking care of our elders was a priority. At this time, grandparents were not sent to nursing homes, but they were cared for collectively by the family. My maternal and paternal grandparents were hard workers, and this was a characteristic that they instilled in their children, yet they still found time to enjoy life, laugh, and tell a funny joke.

My grandmothers, Lupe Martinez and Bidilia Encinias, were very similar yet different. They were devoted to family, the land, Catholicism, and traditions. Lupe and Bidilia were very opinionated and they had no problems telling you what they thought.

Growing up, I was surrounded by family, food, and a warm home. I was the first generation born in Albuquerque, New Mexico, raised in the South Valley with a semi-rural way of life in a semi-urban setting, spending many summers in Wagon Mound. Although we were not cash rich, and I was a product of teenage parents, I never went without food, shelter, clothes, or love. It truly took a community to raise us.

I remember waking up to a warm breakfast that my grandma Lupe Martinez had just cooked and my grandfather, Roque Martinez, walking in with fresh eggs from the chicken coop after just finishing feeding the farm animals. They were organic farmers, long before it was trendy. We would spend the rest of the day playing in the garden or with the animals in the corral, while my grandfather watered the fields, and my grandmother would either be helping in the fields, preparing lunch, or sewing a new dress or blanket. I still have the dresses and blankets that my grandmothers Lupe Martinez and Bidilia Encinias made me,

including a Cabbage Patch doll that grandma Lupe made for me when my parents could not afford to buy me a “real” Cabbage Patch doll, in the 1980’s.

At the center of the Martinez and Encinias families were the women my maternal grandmother Lupe Martinez and paternal grandmother Bidilia Encinias. The Martinez and Encinias families were raised in households where women were at the center of decision-making in all aspects of life and were well-respected by family and community members. My maternal and paternal grandparents worked collectively to provide for the family. The successful survival of our families, in a rural setting, required the collective cooperation of all those involved. “Everyone worked in the fields, cooked food, watered the fields, fed the animals, fixed fences, herded the sheep or cows, branded, and harvested. Everyone did what they could to the best of their ability. Communal and community life were essential to their well-being” (Rebolledo 1992:13).

Lupe Martinez and Bidilia Encinias were only children and inherited land from their grandparents and parents. These women were ranchers, farmers, healers, storytellers, business women, social workers, and carriers of traditions and culture. Lupe and Bidilia organized households with eight and eleven children, in addition to grand-children, elders, and extended family members.

Reflecting back, two of the most important lessons that these women taught us were the importance of family, inclusive of extended family members and informally adopted members, and, second, the importance of land. The land was essential to survival of the family because it provided life, from the water that is essential to human survival to

its food resources. In *Historical Community Development in North Central New Mexico*,

Monica Abeita explains that:

Land was the central organizing element of life that related and guided all other aspects of community. People gained spiritually and socially from their interaction with the land, and in turn, used spirituality and social relations to enhance the land's productivity, and therefore their survival. Spain and Mexico had supported these complex relationships through the laws of the Indies and other regulations, which allocated and protected the land base (Abeita 1999:102).

It is this philosophy, or world-view, that guided the survival of families in the Wagon Mound area during the period from the 1850's to the 1960's when there was a regional network of small villages and ranches from El Canyon Largo to El Jardín, and ultimately the village of Wagon Mound. "There are common elements that comprise the world-view and which serve to define a community's identity in time, space, and place" (Jojola 2004:3). One of the common elements, amongst the families and small villages near Wagon Mound, was that of survival. Life in this area was isolated, rugged, and difficult therefore survival depended on cooperation and collectivism.

The culture of Nuevomexicanos, and especially of Nuevamexicanas, was distinct in many aspects from that of Central Mexico or other Mexican frontier territories because Spanish policy prohibited foreign commerce and kept New Mexico more or less isolated (Lecompte 1986:71). "New Mexicans developed traditions in response to this isolation, as well as in response to climate and terrain" (Lecompte 1986:71). "The world-view that Hispano settlers carried with them to north central New Mexico is impossible to define because the settlers came from a mix of Mexican Indian and European backgrounds, their world-view likely reflected two or more ancestral cultures" (Abeita 1999:39). The Wagon

Mound area is in the far northeast part of New Mexico. There were many small villages such as El Canyon Largo and remote ranches such as El Jardín and the Gallegos ranch within 15 to 20 miles of Wagon Mound. Most of these tiny villages and ranches, like El Jardín, the Gallegos ranch and El Canyon Largo were located along the Mora River and at the confluence, where the Mora River meets the Canadian River.

Many of the people in this area were descendants of the resettlement, following the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, most of whom, according to Spanish records, were racially and ethnically mixed from Mexican Indian, Spanish, Pueblo or other Native American tribes, including the Comanche who were in the region and eventually settled in Oklahoma. “Their partial Mexican Indian ancestry as well as their life experiences living off the land resulted in similarities in world-view with the Pueblos and other Indian tribes, as the organizing framework for life, world-views guide how communities develop both socially and physically” (Abeita 1999:1). This racial and ethnic mixture is referred to in the oral history collection portion of this thesis. One narrator shared, “They say that our maternal grandmother and her sisters were from Pojoaque.” Another narrator shared that, “They say our biological grandfather was the one connected to Spain and that he inherited land in Albuquerque, but he was not able to leave El Canyon Largo at the time, possibly he was an heir to the Atrisco Land Grant.” Finally, narrator CM1 shared, “Mexicanos, Indians, Spanish, we don’t know really know who we are.”

Part of this world-view included the practice of land tenure, as outlined by Ted Jojola, Professor and founder of the Indigenous Design and Planning Institute at the

University of New Mexico. He writes that in indigenous planning and community development:

Land tenure is distinguished by long and sustained patterns of ownership. In Indigenous communities, ownership is sustained over successive generations. Land became the embodiment of collective groups whose goal is to sustain the productivity of the land onto those who will inherit it. As such, land became a birthright and collective stewardship is the primary mode of maintaining it (Jojola 2000:4).

The concept and act of land tenure was maintained, passed down, and taught by Lupe Martinez her husband Roque Martinez and Bidilia Encinias and her husband Julian Encinias who took care of the land that they inherited. It was Lupe who inherited El Jardín with its lush gardens, orchards, and livestock from her adopted parents Eliseo and Isidora Maestas. Lupe and Roque then passed on ownership of El Jardín and their home in the village of Wagon Mound to their children and grandchildren who continue to maintain it collectively. Bidilia Encinias inherited her father's, Esequiel Gallegos, ranch and livestock. Bidilia's brother Francisco Gallegos died around the age of 13 due to appendicitis making Bidilia the only child. Esequiel inherited the ranch from his parents, Julian and Manuelita Gallegos. Bidilia and her husband Julian passed on the ownership of the Gallegos ranch and family home in the village of Wagon Mound to their children and grandchildren who continue to maintain the land and reside in the village home.

Being that the Wagon Mound area and the tiny villages such as El Canyon Largo and ranches like El Jardín were isolated and rugged, survival required thoughtful and intentional planning. As ranchers and farmers, they worked collectively to plan, build, and maintain the acequias to bring water to the gardens. They planned the rotation of the livestock from one

pasture to the other, and, at the same time, prepared for community gatherings such as brandings and religious holidays such as Easter.

“Community development is a manifestation of a larger organizing framework – or world-view – that represents the collective experience of a cultural group and guides every aspect of its daily life; so are patterns of social development, which focus on community at Pueblos, extended family with Hispanos, and the individual in American society” (Abeita 1999:7). The tiny villages along the Mora and Canadian Rivers, such as El Canyon Largo and ranches like that at El Jardín and the village of Wagon Mound formed a regional network of families and extended family members who worked in cooperation for survival. These regional networks, comprised of extended family networks, provided an opportunity to share food, water, culture, and traditions all based on a bartering system well into contemporary times. “Clearly, Pueblos and Hispanos did not plan for community by looking ahead, but rather by applying the lessons learned from centuries of experience and adaptation to localized conditions of north central New Mexico” (Abeita 1999:8).

Contrary to this home life and community life which I experienced first-hand, when I went to elementary school and became formally educated in the Western educational system, I was confronted with other conflicting images in history books and the educational system. The stories in the U.S. history books and during class lectures painted a picture of the passive, ignorant, and uneducated Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana woman who was or is the victim of her aggressive and overly-sexualized Mexican husband or the sexually-obsessed loose Nuevamexicana woman with her low-cut blouses and sultry ways. In her dissertation, *No Separate Refuge: Culture, Class, and Gender on an Anglo-Hispanic*

*Frontier in the American Southwest, 1880- 1940*, Sarah Deutsch writes, “The world of village women has scarcely appeared in the historical literature of Chicanas except as overgeneralized and stereotyped images of submissive, cloistered, and powerless women” (Deutsch 1987:42). This topic was also discussed in *Nuestras Mujeres*, “the “Americans”, both men and women, who first described the Nueva Mexicana’s were very disdainful and scornful of them” (Rebolledo 1992:20). The images and stories in history books and accounts by Anglos created the story of the dirty, ignorant, uneducated Mexican/Nuevomexicano home with kids running around half-naked and “uncivilized” ways of living. In this view, these were people who needed to be saved and taught to be civilized.

Up until the last few decades the roles and gender norms of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women have been ignored by historians or mistakenly discussed in the context of the British system of patriarchy from an East to West basis of history.<sup>1</sup> To gain an understanding of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women from New Mexico we must review the history of settlement from a South to North basis rooted in Indigenous and Spanish settlement patterns, customs, and legal traditions and then with an overlay of U.S. customs and legal traditions from the East to the West, such as Manifest Destiny. Prior to the arrival of Europeans, Indigenous communities conducted trade with other Indigenous communities across what is now known as the United States. These Indigenous communities were highly advanced planners from the physical design of their

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<sup>1</sup> Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, and Nuevomexicano were terms identified during the interview process for this thesis. They represent the multiple forms of ethnic self-identification of a population from northeastern New Mexico with a unique historical experience.

communities to community-development as evidenced at Chaco Canyon, Acoma Pueblo, Taos Pueblo, and Tenochtitlan in Mexico City.

With the arrival of representatives from the Spanish Kingdom in 1519 to Mexico City came the introduction of new forms of physical design, community-development, settlement patterns, and a written legal system. These new arrivals, representing Spain, ventured from Mexico City (Tenochtitlan), from the South to the North, reaching New Mexico in 1598 and ultimately gaining control of New Mexico until Mexican Independence in 1821, with the exception of the Pueblo Revolt in 1680. By 1848, New Mexico was taken control of by the United States and did not become a state of the United States until 1912. This brief historical overview displays the importance of studying the settlement patterns and community development of New Mexico from South to North and the hybridity and adaptability of these Indigenous and Spanish customs and legal traditions. The Indigenous and Spanish customs and legal traditions were very similar in their world-view of land, family, and community. Then overlay them with an East to West settlement pattern constructed by such policies as Manifest Destiny, individualism, and Capitalism perpetuated by the United States customs and legal traditions and their effects on Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, and Nuevamexicana women and Mestizo, Mexican, Spanish, and Nuevomexicano communities.

The article "*Spanish Borderlands*", illustrates:

Since the fourteenth century, women had been accorded the right to sue in a court of law, the right to own property in their family name and to retain it after marriage, and the right to make wills, secure inheritance, and sign documents throughout adulthood (González 1993:409).

All women, regardless of social status, race, or ethnicity were governed by these legal rights and customs under the Spanish government until 1821 when Mexico gained its independence from Spain. These legal customs continued in Mexico. Women in New Mexico were part of this legal system until 1848, when the United States took control of New Mexico, and what we know today as the southwestern part of the United States. Although New Mexico became a territory of the United States in 1848, and a state in 1912, many of the isolated rural communities in northeastern New Mexico continued to operate under a system of customs and traditions that were rooted in their Spanish and Indigenous concepts of land tenure and legal system whereby women could inherit and own land, engage in economic transactions, and make decisions regarding their family. “Despite the relegation of Hispanic culture to a position of second class status, Nuevo Mexicana’s clung tenaciously to their religion, their language, their rituals, their food, and their art” (Lecompte 1986:23).

The world-views, customs, traditions, and legal systems of the Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana practices in New Mexico set the foundation for the way that women like Bidilia and Lupita engaged and positioned themselves in the community and supported the economic development of their land, family, and communities. “Clearly, Pueblos and Hispanos did not plan for their communities by looking ahead, but rather by applying the lessons they learned from centuries of experience and adaptation to the localized conditions of north central New Mexico” (Abeita 1999:8). The world-views handed down to Lupita and Bidilia sharply countered the U.S. concept of land. The U.S. legal system, customs, and traditions viewed land as a commodity.

The inaccurate historical images, perspectives, and interpretations of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, and Nuevamexicana women from New Mexico continue to permeate in all areas of education, planning, and community and economic development in New Mexico. Concerns for the way that Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women were portrayed, in the history of the United States, and my observations of the way that this grouping of women were treated and continue to be ignored as serious topics of research for study in higher education, mainstream U.S. planning efforts, and community and economic development , led me to reconstruct the position of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women in community and economic development, as community planners, of the Wagon Mound area, through the development of an oral history project and historical research. In this thesis, I will argue that Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women were and continue to be active agents, leaders, and experts in the planning and development of the Wagon Mound area in northeastern New Mexico. Through the collection of oral stories and historical research, themes begin to emerge regarding the positioning of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women and their role in the community and economy, world-views, differing customs and legal systems, to differing forms of planning for community and economic development as compared to the United States paradigm of community development and planning. This reconstruction of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women's history, from a northeastern New Mexico perspective, will help to develop a new historical framework to understand the role of these women in the planning and land management of their communities and their active participation in community and economic development.

I realized that the stories of my grandmothers and great-grandmothers as well as other Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, and Nuevamexicana women from the Wagon Mound area were missing from history books and written documentation in general. “By giving voice to people excluded or ignored in the usual historical sources, oral history can provide a fuller, more honest picture of the past by answering the how’s and the whys of human actions” (Mercier and Buckendork 2007:2). Because storytelling was a part of everyday culture and life in my youth, I did not realize the lessons that I was being taught when my grandmothers said a *dicho* or shared a story from the past. It wasn’t until I was well into my adulthood that I realized the importance of those stories and *dichos*, but it was too late, as all my grandparents had passed away. My one living grandparent, Lupe Martinez was known for her storytelling, *dichos*, and sense of humor. But with her growing dementia in her early 90’s and death at the age of 96, one of our most important storytellers left this world.

It was at this point that I was determined to capture the story of my grandmothers and the Wagon Mound area by conducting a preliminary oral history project whereby I would interview their children, my aunts and uncles, to create a collective story. Storytelling in New Mexico, oral traditions, was essential to survival in rural communities like that of the Wagon Mound area. Tey Diana Rebolledo highlights the importance of oral traditions and storytelling, stating:

We know that women shared their experiences, their gossip, their needs. We know that from Mother to daughter entire generations transmitted their recipes, the rituals of food, and special occasions on which it was served. With the scarcity of medical personnel, it was essential that they pass their knowledge of herbs and cures (Rebolledo 1992:1).

Thus, it was through storytelling and oral history that traditions were handed down from one generation to the next. Storytelling and oral history were and are essential components to the Pueblo and Mestizo, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevomexicano world-view.

The interviews conducted for this thesis highlight the idea that these families and women operated with a world-view deeply rooted in a mix of Indigenous and Spanish ways of living, survival, and planning. This is evidenced through the collection of interviews, to develop a collective oral history of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women and their role in planning and community and economic development in the Wagon Mound area. Due to the lack of historical documentation on the history and development of Wagon Mound prior to the establishment of the United States, an oral history project provides an opportunity to give voice to living descendants of the Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women who were our ancestors. “Whatever its size or constituency, a community consists of individuals bound together by a sense of shared identity...often that identity is grounded in past experiences, in a shared history” (Mercier and Buckendorf 1997:1). The stories that emerged, from the interviews reaffirmed the need to reconstruct history of the Wagon Mound area, that is different from the dominant cultural perspective and documentation which primarily focuses on the experiences of Anglo men and women in the Wagon Mound area.

This thesis addresses issues of women’s agency and participation in the community and economic development and planning in their communities. In Chapter 2, I discuss the methodologies and field work used to reconstruct the history of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women in the Wagon Mound area. I conducted 15 interviews to document

the stories of Lupita Martinez and Bidilia Encinias. I took the findings from the interviews and compared them to historical documentation of the Wagon Mound area and of New Mexico in general. Chapter 3 continues to draw connections between the world-views of the Pueblo and Mestizo, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevomexicano people looking at how knowledge is created and shared and how world-views inform the legal system and customs. In Chapter 4, I will attempt to piece together an overview of the history of the Wagon Mound area. Chapter 5 will focus on the role of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women in the community and economic development of the Wagon Mound area, and highlight any additional findings. In Chapter 6, I will draw conclusions from the findings and discuss the role of Spanish, Mestiza, Mexican, Nuevamexicana women in planning for community and economic development and make recommendations for the planning field.

## Chapter 2

### Methodologies and Fieldwork

#### Testing for Validity

This study is an oral history project to document the stories, historical contributions, and roles of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women in the settlement and community and economic development of northeastern New Mexico, specifically the Wagon Mound area. “Whatever its size or constituency, a community consists of individuals bound together by a sense of shared identity” (Mercier and Buckendork 1997:1). “Often that identity is grounded in past experiences, in a shared history” (Mercier and Buckendork 1997:1). Although, since the 1980’s, there is a growing collection of documentation and oral history projects on women from New Mexico, the history of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women in Northeastern New Mexico has, for the most part, been left unwritten, undocumented, and unrecorded. In *Nuestras Mujeres*, Tey Diana Rebolledo states:

If there are no literary creations nor documents written by the women in this timeframe, how do we come to an understanding of what their lives were like? of their thoughts and dreams? of their struggles and triumphs? Where conventional documentary evidence is not available, we must turn to evidence of a different kind: folklore, ritual, religious ceremonies, and even the history of food preparation. And although no official “literary” texts written by women during this time period have been found, nevertheless we see glimpses and hints of their lives in songs and plays, dichos, cuentos, and memorate; popular stories of local origin in which people tell their own history...As oral tradition is written down, we hear the voices of women themselves (Rebolledo 1992:1).

There is limited historical documentation about the history and development of the Wagon Mound area and coupled with little to no documentation of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish,

Nuevamexicana women in the Wagon Mound area, this oral history project takes the opportunity to document key unwritten stories that have been handed down from generation to generation. In *From Memory to History*, Barbara Allen and William Lynwood Montell, explain that,

Orally communicated data can be employed both as a complement to formal records and as a rich source of new information, especially when the information obtained documents subjects about which little information exists. Researchers have come to realize that oral tradition is often the only available source of historical information, especially for American Indians and regional and ethnic groups, and that comprehensive and meaningful history can be written only when oral sources are researched as thoroughly as written ones (Allen and Montell 1981:67).

Building on a framework to reconstruct the historical contributions of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women, from the Wagon Mound area, I conducted an oral history project that included 15 interviews in addition to a historical research inquiry into the written work of the Wagon Mound area. I took these research elements and compared and contrasted them to reconstruct the history of the Wagon Mound area, researching the role of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women in an attempt to bring a new narrative forth and to formally document these cultural and historical experiences and perspectives outside of the dominant culture.

This project focused on capturing the stories of two families, who lived in the Wagon Mound area for multiple generations, looking at the role of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women in the settlement and community development of the area. In reconstructing the history of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, and Nuevamexicana women in the Wagon Mound area through an oral history project, I will prescribe to an evaluation

framework set forth in *From Memory to History*, where Barbara Allen and William Lynwood Montell describes:

Two kinds of tests can be applied to oral sources of historical information: Internal tests, which evaluate the material in terms of its own self consistency; and external tests, which compare and contract oral information with written accounts and physical evidence. These internal tests include: 1.) Identifying folklore themes, 2.) Collating divergent accounts, 3.) The logical nature of tradition, 4.) Conformity with established historical facts, 5.) Evaluating oral sources, 6.) Allowing for personal and group bias. The external tests include: 1.) Corroboration from material culture, 2.) Corroborating tradition from continuation in the same area, 3.) Corroboration from printed records, and finally, 4.) Corroboration from accounts in regional historical literature (Allen and Montell 1981:71).

The intent of this oral history project is to formulate a historical account of the experiences of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women, from the Wagon Mound area, grounded in academic methodologies of collecting oral history testimony and evaluation tests. In this thesis, I use both internal and external tests in evaluating the interviews that I conducted in reconstructing the history of these women and their role in the community and economic development of the Wagon Mound area.

Focusing first on internal tests that emerged from this project includes collating divergent accounts:

But when enough people are interviewed, trends develop, patterns unfold, and truth emerges. By gathering an ample number of oral accounts describing an event, the historian can likely discern the truth of the matter. While nine separate narrations about the same incident cannot each be accepted as accurate rendering of history, they can be placed side by side and analyzed to discern the basic common thread involved. For the sections of accounts where there is agreement among all nine informants, the local historian can without hesitation, accept these as factual history (Allen and Montell 1981:77).

During the interview process, patterns and themes began to emerge. All 15 of the narrators, in separate interviews, stated that Lupe Martinez and Bidilia Encinias were central to all

decision-making regarding the family and the land. Each interviewee clearly stated that at the end of the day no decisions were made without them. Another theme that emerged included the fact that Lupe Martinez and Bidilia Encinias were very opinionated women and they had no problem sharing their opinion with their family, extended family, and community. These two patterns and themes begin to illustrate that Lupe and Bidilia were active agents involved in the decision-making regarding their family, their land, and resources from their land such as the produce and livestock.

The information that emerged during the interview process was measured against three internal tests. “First the logical nature of tradition, among the basic questions the researcher should ask in analyzing oral historical sources is whether or not the information provided in a given text is logical” (Allen and Montell 1981:79). “And, is it in conformity with established historical facts, while oral sources can frequently illuminate, add to, or even alter our understanding of written history, orally communicated information that disregards or contradicts historical facts must be largely discounted in terms of accuracy” (Allen and Montell 1981:80). For the final internal test, evaluating oral sources, in evaluating oral evidence, the sources of that evidence must be carefully considered (Allen and Montell 1981:81). “Which accounts are based on personal experience and which are second- or third hand reports? While firsthand accounts are by no means infallible, they are generally more reliable than those derived from hearsay” (Allen and Montell 1981:81). In using these internal tests, I merged the logical nature of tradition with the conformity of established historical facts when evaluating the stories that emerged from the 15 interviews. I found when I compared the stories that emerged from the interviews to that of existing historical

documentation, that their stories were logical. Not only did they affirm the existing historical record, but they also added a new perspective to the history of the Wagon Mound area, specifically that of the contributions and roles of the Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women from the area. Finally, most of the stories that were shared were based on first-hand experiences of the narrators with their mothers Lupe Martinez and Bidilia Encinias, and their grandmothers Manuelita Gallegos and Isidora Maestas. For example, during the collection of oral stories, I learned that Bidilia Encinias was actively involved in electoral politics. One time, she ran for political office in Wagon Mound, but she did not win. Bidilia volunteered for almost every election to assist with the election ballots and the election itself. This meets the internal tests of logic, conformity with established historical facts, and first-hand experiences.

For this project, in testing the validity of the oral stories that I collected, I prescribed to some external tests. First, corroborating tradition through ethnic or racial groups. "The historical traditions of a group are usually known and passed along orally only among the group's members" (Allen and Montell 1981:85). Being that I am a member, a relative, of the oral history research participants I could engage with the participants from a starting point of trust. As pointed out by Theodore Jojola, this is a major tenant of Indigenous Planning:

Second- the essence of indigenous scholarship is native self. True indigenous scholars and activists do not suffer from cultural amnesia. In the spirit of idealism, indigenous people adapt their ideas from experience. As proven time in and time out, indigenous people excel in the process of deconstruction as characterized by reflection and introspection. Indigenous planners are not afraid to be part of their own community research and the role of the expert is tempered by the collective experience (Jojola 2000:14).

I was more than a researcher; I was an active participant in the lives of the research participants and of Lupe Martinez and Bidilia Encinias. I was constantly questioning my subjectivity to ensure that as I was documenting and collecting the stories, I was conscious of my bias as an insider.

The second external test to which I prescribed was the corroboration from printed records. I used printed records, census schedules, and other printed sources to corroborate information collected during the interview. An essential tool in developing a timeline was through use of baptismal records and death records.

The final external test, corroborating from continuation in the same area includes:

The mere fact that historical legends are still told does not make them historically accurate, of course, but that such recollections are collectible from persons who grew up in the cultural milieu in which the tales are passed along by word of mouth lends considerable credence to the possibility that these accounts may contain at least a core truth (Allen and Montell 1981:84).

With limited historical documentation on the Wagon Mound area, in particular regarding the settlement and experiences of the Mestizos, Mexican, Spanish, and Nuevomexicanos in the Wagon Mound area, we are left to reconstruct their experiences through oral accounts in search of a core truth using a combination of the other tests previously discussed.

### **Research Participants**

For this thesis, the oral history participants were recruited based on their relationship to Lupe Martinez and Bidilia Encinias. In developing this preliminary oral history project, I focused on the children of Lupe Martinez and Bidilia Encinias. I conducted 15 interviews, 13 of which were children of either Lupe Martinez or Bidilia Encinias, out of a total 19 of their children. There were only two interviews conducted with research

participants who were not children of either Lupe Martinez or Bidilia Encinias. I had an opportunity to conduct an interview with a much younger half-brother to Julian Encinias, the husband of Bidilia Encinias. As a researcher collecting oral history projects, it was essential to capture the story of Julian's half-brother who had first-hand experiences with Bidilia and Julian Encinias and life in Wagon Mound before any of my aunts or uncles were born. The second research participant, a family member by marriage, grew up in Wagon Mound with first-hand experiences of life in the area. All the participants were raised in the Wagon Mound area, El Jardín or the Gallegos ranch.

### **The Interviews**

In 2014, over the course of a year, in total I interviewed 5 children from Lupe Martinez and 7 children from Bidilia Encinias. I interviewed 1 daughter-in-law of Lupe Martinez. All the participants were interviewed one time. All the interviews took place at the homes of the participants, except for one uncle who was visiting and I interviewed him at another relative's home. The setting, length of time, and manner of how the interview was documented was decided upon by each individual participant. The interviewees ranged in age from 62 to 85 years old.

In collaboration with my committee members, I developed a questionnaire comprised of 8 key questions:

1. Can you share with me the story of when your family first settled near the Wagon Mound area and then the village of Wagon Mound? What brought them to this area of New Mexico?
2. Can you share with me any stories of what life was like growing up on your family ranch?
3. Can you share with me any stories of what life was like growing up in the village of Wagon Mound?

4. How were your grandmothers involved in the following? What was her role?
  - Land, live-stock, money/financial decisions, traditions/cultural identity, family gatherings, religious institutions, groups, societies.
5. How was your mother involved in the following? What was her role?
  - Land, live-stock, money/financial decisions, traditions/cultural identity, family gatherings, religious institutions, groups, societies.
6. Who did the mothers and grandmothers turn to when aid was needed, or during a family crisis?
7. Tell me about your grandmother? How would you describe her?
8. Tell me about your mother? How would you describe her?

The interviews were hand-written, as most of the interviewees felt uncomfortable with video or audio recordings. There were only 2 who would have been willing to be audio recorded. For the purposes of consistency and fairness, I decided to hand-write all interviews. I transcribed all the hand-written interviews. Transcribing the hand-written notes provided me the opportunity to refresh my memory with the details of each interview and it was at this point in the process where patterns and themes emerged from the interviews.

### **Field Notes, Data, and Personal Oral History**

In addition to the interviews, I kept field notes and I also recorded some of my personal memories and experiences with my maternal grandmother Lupe Martinez and paternal grandmother Bidilia Encinias. I was partially raised by my maternal grandparents, Lupe and Roque Martinez. They raised my older brother. There were moments in my life when we lived with Lupe and Roque, and ultimately just two houses away from their house in the South Valley of Albuquerque. Although my grandparents were in their sixties by the time I was born, my maternal grandmother lived to be 96 years old, which allowed me time to spend with her. I was also provided with the opportunity to spend time with my paternal

grandparents Bidilia and Julian Encinias who lived in Wagon Mound until the end of their lives. My dad would take me to visit them on a monthly basis. Unfortunately, my time was short with my paternal grandmother, Bidilia Encinias, as she died when I was 13 years old. I still have fond memories and I had to opportunity to see her in action first-hand.

Using the oral histories that I collected through the interviews, my field notes, my personal recollections, and historical research is the basis for the information presented in this thesis.

## Chapter 3

### World-views for Community and Economic Development

#### Developing World-views: Knowledge Creation

In conducting the interviews, research, and in writing this thesis I began to think about knowledge and the ways in which knowledge is shared and taught outside of written documentation and formal education. How does the transfer of knowledge create, inform, and maintain a community's world-view? Jojola, and colleagues define Indigenous world-view as a history of shared actions and experiences. It is through these shared actions and experiences that knowledge is created, taught, and shared from one generation to the next through oral tradition and day to day life. Knowledge is a process that can be acquired through hands-on experience, observation, and storytelling. "The bonds of community are most often a reflection of family and community traditions which convey a philosophy of life" (Rebolledo 1992:54). Based on the interviews, field notes, and research accomplished for this thesis, the passing of knowledge, the world-view, was passed down first and foremost through day-to-day interactions and storytelling.

For Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana families in the Wagon Mound area taking care of elders was a family and community responsibility, and fundamentally a core value of our world-view. A cyclical way of life is repeated inter-generationally and is taught through actions in day-to-day living in community. One day, parents are taking care of their children, and the next, those children become adults who care of their parents. Throughout the interview process, stories were shared of both Lupe Martinez and Bidilia Encinias caring for their parents and their grandparents. They were responsible for planning and

coordinating care taking for the elders. Just like it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a village to care for its elderly. Caring for elders was one of the core fundamental values that comprised the world-view.

The fundamental core value of “the community” noted by Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women from the Wagon Mound area community was its composition of family members, extended family members, and friends. They worked collectively with what the land provided, and so to speak, they lived off the land, helping each other to grow and harvest food, provide warm shelter by collecting wood for fuel, and creating a network of support when community members came together from El Canyon Largo, El Jardín, or the Gallegos ranch to the village of Wagon Mound. Survival was interdependent on community and on family. Through their day-to-day actions and lived experiences, Lupe Martinez and Bidilia Encinias taught their children the importance of family a fundamental core value of their world-view.

For rural communities, a place as isolated and rural as the Wagon Mound area, with no immediate access to doctors, knowledge of the location and use of herbs were essential to survival. A key strategy for survival was the transfer of knowledge about many medicinal plants as stated by interview participants when speaking about Bidilia Encinias and Lupe Martinez who knew the location of important herbs. Lupe and Bidilia knew where to locate these herbs that they needed to care for their children, elders, and community members. Knowledge of the land and where certain resources were located could only be handed down through actions. Lupe Martinez would take her family members to a location near the Wagon Mound Hill where they would collect white dirt. They would use this white dirt to

paint their homes. The land contained all the resources such as food, herbs, dirt to paint with, and the rocks and mud to build their homes. This knowledge was passed down through hands-on experience.

Repeatedly, throughout the interview process, it was stated that Lupe Martinez and Bidilia Encinias were extremely intelligent women. They were ranchers, farmers, herbalists, master chefs, master seamstresses, builders, storytellers, and very opinionated women. Their knowledge was gained through hands-on experience, handed down to them from the parents and grandparents, and lived experience. Their world-view was framed through adaptation of Spanish, Mexican Indigenous, and Pueblo ways of living and survival.

### **World-views Influencing Community Development**

To develop an understanding of the role that Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women played in the community and economic development of the Wagon Mound area, we must continue the discussion of world-views and concepts such as land tenure, which guided these communities planning processes. Monica Abeita, a professional planner from New Mexico, argues that:

Community development is a manifestation of a larger organizing framework or world-view-that represents the collective experience of a cultural group and guides every aspect of its daily life....I argue that world-views determine the way in which a community plans for its future...that the Pueblo and Hispano communities of my upbringing planned for themselves, in a manner quite different from that of modern planners...Clearly, Pueblos and Hispanos did not plan for their communities by looking ahead, but rather by applying the lessons they learned from centuries of experience and adaptation to localized conditions of north central New Mexico (Abeita 1999:7).

Ted Jojola promotes the view that:

Before indigenous authority had been usurped through colonial processes, tribal societies planned their communities...And unlike the western approach that relies principally upon regulating land-use, the indigenous planning approach basis its practice on dealing with land tenure (Jojola 2000:4).

To distinguish Western planning practice from indigenous traditions is absolutely critical. [Land Use] It serves to give form and shape to communities as based on upholding privileges associated with private property rights. Land use becomes the embodiment of the individual who develops it with the primary intent of raising its capital valuation when it is maximized, then it is resold. There is little incentive to hold land as property longer than necessary, especially if “loses value”. This behavior leads to ‘slash-and-burn’ economics and a reactive mode of community development (Jojola 2000:5).

For the Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nueva Mexicana women of the Wagon Mound area, like my great-grandmothers, Manuelita Gallegos and Isidora Maestas, and my grandmothers, Lupe Martinez and Bidilia Encinias, community comprised of family and extended family members formed a necessary network for survival, interconnected with the land. Land was handed down from one generation to the next. These were concepts, or world-views, that existed in both Spanish and Indigenous customs and traditions. The lives of Lupe Martinez and Bidilia Encinias demonstrate a way of life taught to them by their grandparents grounded in both Spanish and Indigenous shared world-views. “Multi-cultural situations world-views do not exist in isolation but interact with and are influenced by each other” (Abeita 1999:7).

Survival in the Wagon Mound area, in particular the small ranches like El Jardín and the Gallegos ranch, required that the gendered division of labor be cooperative and flexible (Abeita 1999:67). The gendered division of labor, another critical component of the world-view, guided the planning and development of communities, villages, and towns in

northeastern New Mexico. “In northern New Mexico and southern Colorado villages, the parallelism of Hispanic men’s and women’s work on the land, in religion, and in building was not competitive and stratified but mutually supportive” (Deutsch 1987:60). “Both mutuality and parallelism characterized the gendered division of labor” (Deutsch 1987:57). The concepts of mutuality and parallelism emerged through the interview process. Consistently, it was stated that, when it came to the gardens, Lupe and Roque worked together. Roque and the children would prepare the soil. Lupe, Roque, and family members would plant the seeds. Roque and family members were responsible for watering the garden. Harvesting was the responsibility of all family members including the grandparents, parents, and children.

Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevo Mexicana women were an essential component of the planning process. By applying their hands-on experience and acquired expertise, these women were lead planners in planting of gardens to ensure food for their family, management of the rotation and care-taking required for their livestock, and the coordination of family and community events such as branding, harvesting, and religious ceremonies. There is quite a bit of historical documentation where Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women who were widows would remain single and would manage their households and ranches. Adding to this historical documentation is the story of Manuelita Gallegos, paternal grandmother of Bidilia Encinias. Manuelita Gallegos husband, Julian Gallegos, died leaving behind their only child Esequiel Gallegos along with the Gallegos ranch and the house in Wagon Mound at La Bandita. During the interviews, the stories that were shared stated that Manuelita remained a widow for the rest of her life and

she took full responsibility for the management of the ranch, the livestock, and the house at La Bandita where she spent the rest of her life. In time, Esequiel was given the responsibility of taking care of the Gallegos land. Manuelita maintained decision-making control, with her son, of the land up until her death.

In contrast, the world-view and planning processes of the United States functioned very differently from that of land tenure and collective decision-making. The U.S. systematically ignored culturally based land tenure and communal ownership by creating policies that negatively impacted ancestral livelihoods. Expanding on this discussion by Theodore Jojola, Monica Abeita explains:

The U.S. government, however, approached the land differently by commodifying it and its products for sale within the capitalist system. "In the Anglo view the land possessed neither spiritual nor communal qualities. Land was simply a commodity, which like wheat or iron ore might be advantageously bought and still advantageously sold" (DeBuys, 1985). This American view of land would profoundly affect all the elements of the Hispano communities (Abeita 1999:102).

One of these major changes was the implementation of property taxes. For the United States, land was a commodity that was bought and sold for highest price possible, and its resources extracted for maximum benefit. This commodification of the land placed a financial value on the land that allowed for taxation according to the U.S. legal system. The taxation of land had a major impact on land loss for Mestizo, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevomexicano families in New Mexico. Fortunately for the community members in the Wagon Mound area, in particular in the small ranching communities of El Jardín and the Gallegos ranch, it was through their regional system of support and wise land management practices that the families collectively worked to pay their property taxes. Interestingly, it

was this issue that inspired Manuelita's granddaughter Bidilia Encinias to be actively involved in local elections and a member of the *Partido Republicano* of which many Nuevomexicano families were a part of due to land rights and taxation.

An interesting finding that occurred during the interview process and in my investigative research inquiry was that of the Great Depression of 1929 and its impacts in the Wagon Mound area. As I was conducting my academic historical research of written records, the Great Depression was a major factor in migration, poverty, and lack of food due to poor land management which led to the erosion of soil negatively impacting most the U.S. population. When I compared this to the oral stories that I collected, there is not one mention or reference to forced migration due to a lack of food or water. Rather the stories of El Jardín, for example, are of a lush beautiful garden along the Mora River with a beautiful orchard of fruit trees. The impact of the Great Depression was not a major issue for people in the Wagon Mound area owing to the collective and community spirit of helping one another there are no stories of starvation or lack of food.

Could this be attributed to the fundamental difference in world-views between the Pueblo, Mestizo, Mexican, Spanish, and Nuevomexicano versus that of the United States? On the one hand, there exists a system of land management based on a system of land tenure whereby applying the lessons they (Pueblo, Mestizo, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevomexicano) learned from centuries of experience and adaptation to the localized conditions of northeastern New Mexico. As compared to that of the commodification of land where its resources are extracted, using poor land management practices based on inexperience of the area, leading to 'slash-and-burn economics and a reactive mode of

community development (Jojola 2000:5). New Mexico did experience its share of poverty, hunger, poor land management practices, and migration but, for the oral stories collected for this project, the negative impacts of the Great Depression did not affect the network of rural ranches of Wagon Mound in the same way that it did rest of the United States. I believe that through the decades of local knowledge of the area and world-view of collectivism and land tenure which influenced the land management techniques, families and the regional network of ranches that comprised the Wagon Mound area successfully survived the impacts of the Great Depression.

“As collective societies extended their territories, they would border on other cultural groups, and when they interacted with other societies, they experienced new ideas and adapted them, this change is the process of transformation and adaptation” (Jojola 2000:4). For indigenous communities, of northern New Mexico, and the Mestizo, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevomexicano communities of northeastern New Mexico transformation was tempered by the need to assure the community that new ideas were mindful of the past, cognizant of the present, and suitable for the future. Contrary to the misperceptions and negative stereotypes perpetuated by the U.S. government and U.S. mainstream planner’s indigenous communities and Mestizo, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevomexicano communities understood that change and ability to adapt is a part of life and their survival. Their very existence today relied on their ability to adapt to changes while being mindful of their past and world-view. This is reflected in a story shared during the interview process regarding successful land management whereby new societies interacted with each other, experienced new ideas, and adapted them. Esequiel Gallegos taught his daughter, Bidilia

Encinias, and grandchildren the importance of rotation of the livestock. During a certain part of the year, sheep were kept in one pasture where they would eat all the weeds and grass, from the root. The eating habits of the sheep would help to clear a particular pasture and it was timed in a way that the clearing of the pasture would occur in time for the rainy season. The rain would bring a new growth of predominantly good feeding grass. At this point, the sheep were rotated to another pasture and the cows were relocated from their previous pasture to this new pasture, which contained mostly grass. This land management practice is a fusion of new ideas and lived experience through observations and hands-on experience passed down from one generation to the next. Cows and sheep are not indigenous to North America; they were introduced to this part of the world by the Europeans. These techniques required thoughtful planning, which directly impacted the potential economies of the family with the sale of the livestock and to provide food for the family and extended family members. This was community development.

### **World-views Informing Customs and Legal Systems**

In reconstructing the history of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, and Nuevamexicana women from the Wagon Mound area in part through the stories of Lupe Martinez and Bidilia Encinias who lived around the timeframe of 1910 to 2010 requires that we gain a historical and cultural understanding of the customs of Pueblo people of Northern New Mexico, the Spanish legal system, and the adaptation and survival of those customs under U.S. control.

In order to begin to construct a Pueblo transformative model, it is first necessary to understand the building blocks of Pueblo society. By and large, Pueblo villages are conglomerations of clanships. These clanships are traced by matrilineal lineage and

the mother's clan is usually denoted as the principal socio-religious milieu where birthright is attained. Although patrilineal birthright is also important, it has been suggested that it is secondary only because "a baby's" maternity is never in doubt (Jojola 2004:3-4).

In addition, it is necessary to make a distinction between the patrilineal clanships and patriarchies, the latter of which is exhibited in Pueblo governance. And although it may appear on face value that men are the ones that dominate and control as in the instance of the cacique (theocratic headman), it is the women (especially the clan mothers) that endorse and oversee the male roles (Jojola 2004:4).

For indigenous communities in what is now the state of New Mexico, the role of women was and continues to be central to the organizing framework for family and community development. Decision-making in Pueblo society required the endorsement of the women and men (Jojola 2004: 3-5). These customs and traditions were part of the Pueblo world-view and were integrated into the community development of the Pueblo.

With the arrival of the Spanish to the New Mexico area in the 1500's, they brought with them their own set of customs and legal traditions. Focusing on resettlement after the Pueblo Revolt of 1680:

Second, the new settlers themselves were cut from a different cloth than the conquistadors who had prospered by the forced labor of New Mexican Indians. Of those who resettled New Mexico with de Vargas in the late 1600's, fewer than forty families returned from exile in El Paso del Norte. The rest were selected from Mexican volunteers called Españoles Mexicanos. Their title indicated that "all were born in Mexico, that many...were partly descended from Mexican Indians, and that they were the cultural product of several generations of Hispanic adaptation to a New World (Abeita 1999:37).

Upon resettlement and expanded settlement a mixture of the Spanish legal system and Pueblo customs ruled the area until 1848.

The Spanish legal codes, contained key provisions supporting women's rights. Since the fourteenth century women had been accorded the right to sue in a court of law, the right to own property in their family name and to return it after marriage, and

the right to make wills, secure inheritance, and sign documents throughout adulthood (González1993:409).

The Spanish have an abundance of written records from baptisms to a multitude of court cases. Upon a historical review of these cases, it is clear, that all women regardless of their social status, race, or ethnicity exercised their right to a court hearing. Cases ranged from issues of domestic violence, divorce, and, of particular interest for this thesis, cases brought forth by Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nueva Mexicana women regarding property and decisions regarding property they inherited.

The documents of local courts in New Mexico, Texas, and California suggest that women accepted marriage contracts and sued those who were dishonored; they were known to reject marriage proposals and, sometimes, to commit adultery and shun matrimonial conventions entirely....In their relationships with men, who tended to control public institutions...Court cases demonstrate this trend...Understood as a communal ritual, the hearing, its participants, and its issues suggest that the concerns of litigating women were considered not only legitimate but worth hearing (González 1993:407-409)

Women of whatever station in life were aware of their rights and asserted them when they felt it necessary. In northern New Spain, they left a legacy of litigation civil and criminal as well as wills and powers of attorney, indicating the recourse to the law available to them... From areas immediately north of the Valley of Mexico which became mining frontiers, to the extreme northern outpost of Spanish civilization in the province of New Mexico, women quickly followed their men, and many were soon involved in business pursuits, the foremost being the trade of goods and property...Those from families of means not only had a dowry presented to the husband upon marriage, but retained for themselves maternally endowed property. Be this money, jewelry, clothing, other moveable goods, land, or livestock, it was the property of the woman and could only be utilized by her husband if she gave him express legal permission to do so (Rock 1993: 425-426).

Not only could and would Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, and Nuevamexicana women bring forth legal cases, but women were active agents in economic exchanges and decision-making regarding their property and their family. Women were not the property of their

husband, nor did the property that they entered marriage become the property of their husband. This was also true of their children. Custody of children was not only relegated to the man, women had just as much control and rights to their children as evidenced through legal court cases.

Due to a highly decentralized institutional framework in Spanish society, women were not relegated to the roles of passive wives and mothers, but rather they were actively involved in the control and administration of their property and family (Gauderman 2003). For the Spanish, family was at the core of their world-view and the basic elements for their community development. Decisions were made by the women and the men in the best interests of the immediate family and the extended family networks. Gender did not dictate who had power and who did not, but rather it was based on social status and family networks (Gauderman 2003). This is evidenced through naming patterns in Spanish customs. "She kept her family name even in marriage as symbolic of her identity with her father, brothers, and heritage in a hostile world" (Rock 1993: 425). Children were not automatically given the last name of their fathers but rather they were given the last name of the parent whose social status would be the most beneficial for that child.

Children could be assigned the last name of their mother, a combination of their father and mother's last names, or the last name of another relative whose social status was better than that of the parents of the child (Gauderman 2003). This was also the custom for Spanish women during marriage they could keep their last name or change their last name to that of their husbands. It was a choice that was primarily based on the social

and economic status of the last name and in the best interests of the family (Gauderman 2003).

These naming patterns carried over well into 1821 when Mexico declared its independence from Spain. But we began to see a shift in this custom of naming patterns amongst the Mestizo, Mexican, Spanish, and Nuevomexicano families as Mexico opened its borders to foreign commerce in 1821. Then, in 1848, with the annexation of New Mexico by the United States, the lives of the Pueblo, Mestizo, Spanish, Mexican, and Nuevomexicanos was forever changed, this is evidenced through a dramatic shift in the naming patterns of Mestizo, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevomexicano children. The children were assigned the last name of their father. Not only were children assigned the last name of their father, but Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana woman in New Mexico would now take on the last name of her husband.

According to the U.S. customs and legal system, rooted in English law, married women and their children were the property of their husbands, fathers, or male head of household. In the United States, married women could not own property nor could they acquire legal custody of their children unlike that of the Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, and Nuevamexicana woman.

These laws and customs primarily impacted married women. Once New Mexico became a territory of the U.S., the U.S. legal systems and customs were layered over preexisting customs and replaced any previous Spanish or Mexican legal system. "For example, the Homestead Act of 1861 provided land for single men and women who were at least 21 years old, married men, widows and women who were considered heads of

household, and were citizens of the United States” (Lindgren 1996:74). Head-of-household status was granted only to women who were separated from their husbands, who had been deserted, or whose husbands were severely handicapped or physically and mentally ill (Lindgren 1996:74). As the United States became concerned with settlement along frontier communities, laws such as the Homestead Act of 1861 on the one hand provided opportunities for single and widowed women while at the same time upheld married women as the property of their husband. This was affirmed in hearings and rulings. “A Government Land Office ruling as early as 1864 stated that a married women is prima facie incompetent to make a homestead entry” (Lindgren 1996:74). In another hearing, a decision in 1872 held that a woman would lose her preemption right if she married after filing: “I have to state that if a single woman marries after filing her D.S. (Declaratory Statement) she abandons her right as a pre-emptor under the act of 1841” (Lindgren 1996: 74-75). Into the late 1800’s married women, under the U.S. legal system were systematically denied their rights to property. Interestingly, widowed women and single women enjoyed more rights, as evidenced in the Homestead Act of 1862, compared to that of married women.

With increasing U.S. settlement into New Mexico starting with the Mexican Independence of 1821 and the opening of foreign commerce, expansion of U.S. frontiers through the Homestead Act of 1862, the arrival of the railroad in the 1880’s, and New Mexico statehood in 1912 the legal status of married Nuevamexicana women would take dramatic shifts. Regardless of this new legal system, Nuevamexicano families, in rural and

isolated communities like Wagon Mound and El Jardín, continued to operate using their customs and traditions based on their world-views.

## Chapter 4

### Reconstructing the History of the Wagon Mound Area and Her Story

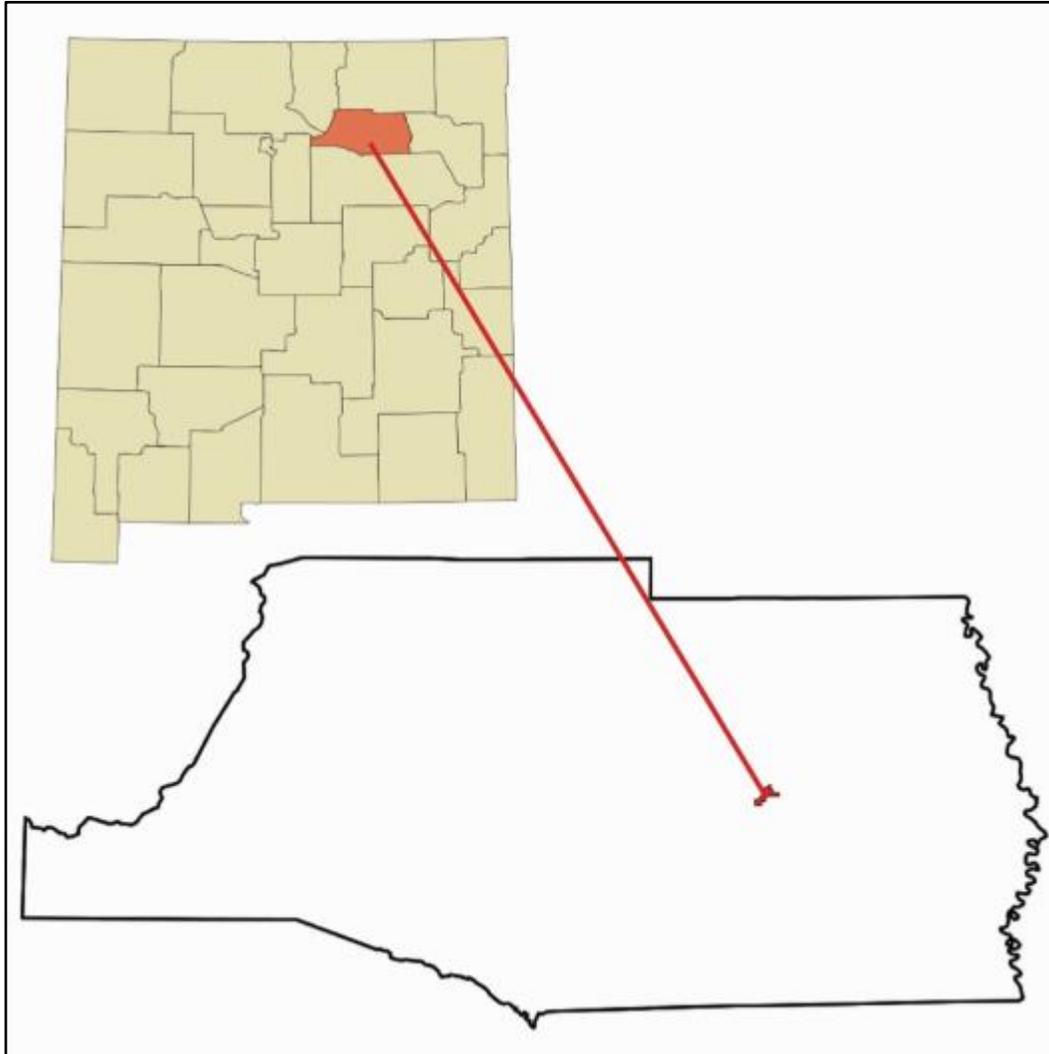


Figure 1: Map of New Mexico highlighting Mora County. Wagon Mound is highlighted at the end of the line within Mora County.

#### **Limitations Observed: The History of Wagon Mound**

Through an investigative research process, I came to the realization that there is very little written historical documentation of Wagon Mound. What does exist is limited, in that it is mostly from a U.S. Anglo-Euro perspective and it only documents the western

movement of settlements of settlers crossing the United States. Another aspect that arose in the research process through the collection of the oral stories for this thesis, caused me to realize that the settlement and history of Wagon Mound is also a story of the settlement of ranches, such as El Jardín, along the Mora River, and El Canyon Largo, a village at the confluence of the Mora River and Canadian River. For the purposes of this thesis any information on El Canyon Largo derives from oral stories collected during the oral history component of this project.

What we do know is that Wagon Mound had an abundant supply of water and rich grasses. According to local historian Leroy LeDoux, “Fed by an underground aquifer the waters of Santa Clara Spring once flowed abundantly around the base of the mound (Bean Day Commemorative Program 2010-2014: 24-25). “This area of lush green grasses, buffalo, migratory birds, and wildlife was known as the “Swamps of Santa Clara”, the Spanish named it the “Ojo de Santa Clara” (Bean Day Commemorative Program 2010-2014: 24- 25). In *The Wagon Mound Story*, William Stanley, asserts that “Long before the first Europeans gazed at it with amazement Plains tribes rendezvoused here for final preparations in visits to the trade marts at Taos, Picuris, Pecos, Jemez and other Pueblos. It was the dividing line between the claims of the Utes and Jicarilla’s against the Cheyenne’s, Arapahos, Kiowa’s, Comanche’s and Kiowa-Apaches” (Stanley 1968:3).

The Wagon Mound area became the buffer to the buffer zone between the Plains Indians, Pueblo Indians, the Mestizo, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevomexicanos, and the United States. It was the outermost frontier in northeastern New Mexico. “Attempting to protect the northeastern area of New Mexico, under Mexican rule, Governor Perez sent a group of

76 men and women to settle the Mora River Valley on into the Ocate Creek Basin” (An Overall Economic Development Program for Wagon Mound 1961:1). “They were encouraged to make permanent farming and ranching settlements through land grants from the Mexican government” (An Overall Economic Development Program for Wagon Mound 1961:1). Did settlement occur during this time in Wagon Mound, El Jardín, and El Canyon Largo? According to “An Overall Economic Development Program for Wagon Mound” report by Mora County, “In much earlier days this community (Wagon Mound) was known as El Pueblo de Santa Clara”. It states that Wagon Mound must have been settled prior to 1850, as, by the time before American occupation in 1845, the Mexican Government had already kept an established customs house there (An Overall Economic Development Program for Wagon Mound 1961:15) but in this same document it states El Pueblo de Santa Clara, was in reality, only a watering and camping spot on the old Santa Fe Trail of the early west (An Overall Economic Development Program 1961:15). In *The Wagon Mound Story*, Stanley contends, that “actual settlement” of the village of Santa Clara did not take place until shortly after the United States Civil War, from 1861 to 1865, and before the coming of the railroad which arrived in Wagon Mound in 1879 (Stanley 1968:4). “By the time the railroad arrived in 1879 the village of Santa Clara was a thriving community interested in mostly sheep and wool markets” (Stanley 1968:10). “And, by 1882 Wagon Mound had a population of 300” (Stanley 1968:16).

In the initial written documentation, Wagon Mound is referred to as “Ojo de Santa Clara” referring to its natural springs. In Spanish, natural springs are usually referred to as “ojitos”. Possibly, with land grant settlements under the Mexican government, it was called

“El Pueblo de Santa Clara”. The next name recorded from 1881 to 1882, is identified as Pinkerton. Finally, a United States Post Office was established in 1882 under the new name of Wagon Mound. Since 1882, the area has been called Wagon Mound. The reasoning behind the name change involved several factors. First, there already was a place called Santa Clara, Santa Clara Pueblo near Española, New Mexico. Second, from different angles, the mound where the village of Wagon Mound is located resembles a covered wagon being pulled by animals, hence the name Wagon Mound.

“Wagon Mound is located along the Old Santa Fe Trail and was a popular resting spot because of its easy access to water. Wagon Mound was an ideal location for ranching because there was plenty of water and flat plains with good arable land and pasture” (An Overall Economic Development Plan for Wagon Mound 1961:1). “In addition to land grants, homesteading played a very important role in the settlement of northeastern New Mexico in the late 1800’s and early 1900’s” (Mora Comprehensive Plan 2010:28). “Many families came from Texas, Oklahoma and elsewhere to stake their claims of 160 acres” (Mora Comprehensive Plan 2010:28). With the Homestead Act of 1862, increasing settlers entered the region for ranching.

In addition to accessible water and good land, with the arrival of the railroad in 1879, the access to shipping of wool and livestock made Wagon Mound an ideal location. At one point in history, shortly after the turn of the century, Wagon Mound was the second largest livestock shipping point in the state, second only to Clovis (Overall Economic Development Program for Wagon Mound 1961:17). Pinto beans, cows, sheep, and wool from Wagon Mound were shipped across the United States.

Wagon Mound, old Santa Clara, served as a gathering point for ranchers and farmers who lived in the ranches. Wagon Mound has become well known for its annual festival called “Bean Day”, which continues to be celebrated during the week of Labor Day weekend in September. According to local oral traditions, the first “Bean Day” was held in 1909, and it was called the “Mora County Farmers Harvest Jubilee”. A community member by the name of Higinio Gonzales and other community members cooked up a pot of beans in wash boilers behind the school house (Bean Day Commemorative Program 2010-2014:6-7). After that, in 1910, the name was formally changed to “Bean Day”. Harvest time brought people together from the surrounding ranches and villages to bring their produce and livestock to Wagon Mound to be sold and shipped by rail.

Harvest time for Mestizo, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevomexicanos is culturally significant because it brought extended family members and community together to share their harvest and livestock. There were also spiritual and religious significances during this time of year.

In 1909, the Santa Clara Catholic Church in Wagon Mound burned down and was rebuilt in 1910. Prior to 1909 and the first documented celebration of “Bean Day” harvest time in Wagon Mound and surrounding ranches like El Jardín and the Gallegos ranch, was celebrated on August 12<sup>th</sup>, the Feast Day of Santa Clara. The Feast Day of Santa Clara is rooted in a Catholic tradition. Why did this change occur from the harvest being celebrated on August 12<sup>th</sup> the Feast Day of Santa Clara to “Bean Day” during Labor Day weekend, the first weekend of September? Did this change occur because of an increasing American,

Presbyterian, and Mason presence? What types of traditions occurred with the Feast Day of Santa Clara? Further research needs to be conducted.

During an interview session, narrator NE1, shared an oral tradition that a devastating tornado struck Wagon Mound around the time of the Great Depression. After research on the internet, I found that the tornado occurred on May 31, 1930 at 5:10 p.m., killing 2 and injuring 13 people (tornadoproject.com). Although this natural disaster had just ravished the village of Wagon Mound and the United States was in the middle of the Great Depression, Wagon Mound experienced growth and resiliency previously discussed in the section on world-views and now evidenced in the following census data:

Table 1: Census Data for Wagon Mound, New Mexico, 1920 – 2010

<b>Census Data for Wagon Mound, New Mexico 1920 – 2010</b>										
<b>Year</b>	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
<b>Total Population</b>	875	852	979	1,120	760	630	416	304	369	314

The census data shows that Wagon Mound experienced an increase in population growth during the Great Depression. Unlike other parts of the United States, where rural communities were experiencing an outmigration due to overgrazing, erosion of the soil, and lack of food. Wagon Mound did not experience a decrease in population or outmigration.

According to narrator AM1, between 1940 and 1950, Wagon Mound had several bars, the Vorenberg store, the McArthur store, the Ford Drugstore, and a theater. Wagon Mound was a fun place to be, where everyone knew each other and there existed a sense of community and trust. People looked out for each other.

## Emergence: From the Canyon, El Jardín to the Village of Wagon Mound



Figure 2: Map of New Mexico rivers. Area in the square to the right highlights the area of El Jardín and the confluence of the Mora and Canadian River

“It was not known as Wagon Mound, but rather a lot of little communities that had names: Los Gueros, Rio Colorado, El Jardín, and Ranchitos.” According to narrator PM1, the story of the Wagon Mound area is really a story of the small villages and ranches surrounding the Wagon Mound area. The story of Lupe Martinez revolved around life in the canyon starting with El Canyon Largo to El Jardín. According to narrator SM1, Lupe Martinez was born in El Canyon Largo to her biological parents Gregorita and Juan Aragon. El Canyon Largo was a small community located near where the Mora River meets the Canadian River, the confluence. El Canyon Largo was a small village with a church and a mill. The farmers

and ranchers would grow cane for the cows, and they would mill the cane for human consumption. Today El Canyon Largo is a ghost town.

Prior to Lupe's birth, her life had already been predetermined based on her gender. Gregorita's sister, Isidora Maestas and her husband Eliseo Maestas were unable to have children of their own. According to oral tradition, one day as Gregorita and Isidora were picking piñon, Isidora asked her sister for her next baby, being that Gregorita and Juan already had quite a few children. Gregorita told Isidora that she would have to talk to her husband, Juan Aragon. After a discussion between Gregorita and Juan, Juan told Isidora and Eliseo "Si es hombre 'no', si es mujer afuera una vez" (If the baby is a boy no they will not give him away, but if it is a girl out the door at once).

SM1 shared an oral tradition regarding Lupe Martinez:

As soon as Lupe was born, Isidora (biological sister to Gregorita Aragon) and Eliseo Maestas went to El Canyon Largo to pick her up, right away. During this short journey, they bought a goat to provide milk for Lupe. She was raised on goat's milk. At this time, Isidora and Eliseo lived at La Cueva. When Lupe was 5 years-old, they moved to El Jardín along the Mora River, about 10 miles before the confluence.

Lupe would spend her childhood growing up at El Jardín, raised by her aunt and uncle, who became her mother and father, Isidora and Eliseo Maestas. This is where Lupe met a young boy, Roque Martinez, their neighbor who would eventually become her husband. Roque Martinez lived at the top of the canyon with his father Andres Martinez and step-mother Guadalupe Martinez. According to oral tradition, one day when Roque was a child, he took his parents' livestock for water at the bottom of the canyon, at El Jardín. It was there that Lupe, who as a little girl, threw a rock in Roque's direction and the donkey that he was riding bucked him off. After being tossed off the donkey, Roque began to cry and Isidora

heard him. Isidora went to help him, cleaning him up and taking him back to the house to feed him.

Roque Martinez was born in Holman, New Mexico to Andres Martinez and his biological mother Veneranda Martinez. The oral traditions were slightly different. One story stated that Roque's mother died in child birth and another shared that his mother died when he was 2 years-old. After the death of his mother, Roque's maternal grandparents raised him until about the age of 5, when Roque's father, Andres Martinez and step-mother Guadalupe Martinez stopped to visit him on their way back from a trip to Las Vegas, New Mexico. They convinced Roque to go with them by bribing him with candy. According to the oral tradition, Roque shared that he remembered his maternal grandmother crying as he rode off with his dad and step-mother. Roque would never see his maternal grandparents again.

Lupe and Roque spent their childhood amongst a tightknit community comprised of El Canyon Largo, El Jardín, and other villages along the Mora River and the confluence at the Mora River and the Canadian River where they were taught to live off the land through traditional farming and ranching methods. It was through this hands-on knowledge and the passing of traditions from their parents that Lupe and Roque would sustain a family of eight children and many grandchildren.

When Lupe and Roque were in their twenties, they got married at Santa Clara Church, in Wagon Mound. At first, they lived in a small house next to Roque's parents, on top of the mesa near El Jardín, but within a short time, they moved to El Jardín to the bottom of the canyon. They lived at El Jardín in Lupe's childhood home with her parents

Isidora and Eliseo Masetas. Their first five children were born and raised at El Jardín, from the early 1930's to the late 1940's. In the late 1940's, growing concerns regarding access to education, is what ultimately drove Lupe and Roque to emerge from the canyon, El Jardín, and move to the village of Wagon Mound with their five children and Isidora and Eliseo Maestas.

According to oral stories, life at El Jardín was hard work, but it was also a beautiful life, it was like a "paradise". There were huge fields where they would grow green beans, peas, carrots, garbanzo beans, chick peas, cabbage, watermelon, cantaloupe, squash, and many more vegetables. There was a big orchard where they grew apples, plums, peaches, and cherries. Between two of the fields, there was a big peach tree called "El Gran Poder de Dios," discussed earlier in this paper. Eliseo and Isidora were known as master farmers. People would come from other ranches and villages to trade livestock for the fruits and vegetables from El Jardín. Eliseo, Isidora, Lupe, and Roque made their living off the sale of the produce and their livestock.

Collectivism was essential to survival in a place as remote as El Jardín. Roque and Eliseo would plow the fields and Isidora, Lupe, and everyone in the family would plant the seeds, cut the weeds, water, and harvest. Narrator, JM1 shared, "Everybody would help with what they could, everyone would water, everyone would harvest." PM1 shared, "They worked together in the garden. Lupe and Roque worked side by side."

The fields were watered through a system of irrigation called acequias.<sup>2</sup> Everyone would assist in the maintenance of the acequias, “We would clean the acequias every year, 2 shovels wide and 1 shovel deep” (CM1). Through the collection of oral stories emerged the story of the connection to water and ceremony within the villages and a network system in the canyon. CM1 stated, “We would pray but we didn’t really go to church at the time. There were Velorios for rain, we would pray for the rain. The women would cook and the men would sing”. Velorios are a form of ceremony and prayer practiced by Spanish, Mestizo, Mexican, Nuevomexicanos and the Pueblo Indians in New Mexico.

Velorios at El Jardín were community events where family members and friends gathered to share food and conduct ceremony and prayer. The Velorios usually began in the evening and continued into the next morning. Lupe’s father, Eliseo Maestas, was a Penitente and would lead the Velorios along with a man by the name of Joe Muniz (CM1).<sup>3</sup> The coordination of Velorios involved Eliseo, Isadora, and the community at large, from outreaching to community members to attending and participating in the coordination of the food to feed everyone. These were religious, cultural, and traditional gatherings that usually occurred around Lent, when someone died, or during certain times of year such as prayers for rain and a plentiful harvest. Since the canyon and the ranches and small villages in the canyon were in such remote areas, the Penitentes and these ceremonial gatherings

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<sup>2</sup> An acequia is a system of water irrigation used in New Mexico.

<sup>3</sup> Penitentes are religious societies in northern New Mexico, also called Los Hermanos Penitentes. This society has had a strong influence on the culture and beliefs in Northern New Mexico. The roots of the Penitentes goes back over 800 years in Spain and over 400 in New Mexico. Penitentes provided leadership during religious ceremonies such as Lent and they provided support and assistance to community members.

provided an easily accessible opportunity to practice Catholicism and provided spiritual leadership in the absence of a Catholic priest. CM1 stated, “We would pray but we didn’t really go to church at this time”.

Consistently during the collection of the oral testimonies, the interviewees shared that life at El Jardín was a lot of fun and they would spend their days playing outside, although El Jardín required a lot of hard work. CM1 recounted, “I remember one time, Lupe was washing our clothes in the river, including our underwear, and she would joke around and play with us in the water, one of our brother’s underwear accidentally went down the river and she had to wrap him in her washed underwear.”

MG1 reminisced, “Growing up we played a lot of games. We played pitarilla using pinto beans and macaroni’s.” Pitarilla is a homemade board game, that could be made by drawing the game on a piece of paper and using beans and macaroni’s as the game pieces. Growing up my grandmother, Lupe, taught us how to play pitarilla. Lupe was known in the family as a champion at pitarilla. Upon preliminary research, according to [nativetech.org](http://nativetech.org), pitarilla is “A game adopted by Natives of New Mexico, California, and Arizona from the Spanish several hundred years ago... In the Pueblos of New Mexico this game was called pitarilla or picaria.”



general stores such as Vorenberg Mercantile Co. and the A.S. MacArthur Mercantile Co. store and a United States Post Office. These resources were conveniently accessible and did not require a long journey. The spaces also functioned as informal community spaces where community members would run into each other and exchange information.

Eliseo and Isidora lived in a house by the Wagon Mound school, down the street from Lupe and Roque. Then, Eliseo and Isidora bought the Romero's house, behind Lupe and Roque's house. This is where Eliseo and Isidora would spend the last few years of their lives. Lupe would have her older children stay with and help Isidora and Eliseo, AA1 explained, "We always took care of our elders. Lupe asked me to live with Eliseo and Isidora and to take care of them. Everyone lived by each other. Granpo Eliseo spent his last few days at the main house (Lupe and Roque's house) where he died." Lupe and Roque also took care of Roque's parents, Andres and Guadalupe during the last part of their lives. This story of elder care shows that Lupe was not only a decision-maker in how elders were taken care of, but that she coordinated other family members in taking care of their elders, which required planning.

It was during this time that Roque got a wage-earning job, first at the lumber yard and working for a rancher by the name of Alex Lubin while Lupe maintained the household and the new gardens at their home in Wagon Mound. They would continue to work the ranch, farm, and livestock at El Jardín on the weekends. Over time, Roque acquired a position as a bus driver for the Wagon Mound school system. His route included the ranches near and including El Jardín. This allowed Roque and the family the opportunity to be at El Jardín during the week days and the weekends so that they could continue to

maintain the gardens and livestock. SM1 shared, “As soon as the school day was over, we would go to the ranch to farm, water, and take care of the livestock. We did what was needed at the ranch, we would study, and then go to bed.” Through a collective form of living and a relationship of cooperation and mutuality, life at El Jardín persisted.

Family members, extended family members, and the strong network of community members from the canyon continued to gather at El Jardín to assist with branding and harvesting. SM 1 discussed that people would come to help with the branding of the livestock, share in the fruits of the harvest and celebrate with a Matanza.<sup>4</sup> “I remember when I was a little girl, there was a long line of horses tied up at the pole, from the corral all the way to the house at El Jardín. It was like a scene from a Western movie but in real life. We would get old cardboards and slide down the canyon wall where the red dirt is, it was fun.”

Life at El Jardín drastically changed. SM1 stated, “In 1969, there was a big flood at El Jardín and it completely destroyed the acequia system. Up until this point, Roque and Lupe had been farming and ranching at El Jardín even while living in Wagon Mound.” In addition, with the absence of people at El Jardín, the beavers took advantage and ate all the fruit trees, they didn’t leave one fruit tree (AA1). From this point on, the gardens at El Jardín came to a halt, but the livestock continued to exist and the ranching continued.

It was also around this time that Roque experienced health issues. After many discussions within the family, the relatives collectively decided that Roque and Lupe would

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<sup>4</sup> A matanza literally means a killing. Matanzas, in New Mexico, signify the killing of a pig, cow, sheep, or goat and baking the meat underground in preparation for a family or community celebration.

move to Albuquerque, New Mexico where their sons resided and hospitals and other healthcare resources were easily accessible. Around 1974, Lupe and Roque moved to the South Valley of Albuquerque where they built a corral to house some goats, chickens, and horses and they worked to develop beautiful gardens while maintaining several head of cattle at El Jardín and maintaining the house in Wagon Mound.

### **The Gallegos Ranch, Life in the Village of Wagon Mound, and La Bandita**

Using both the limited oral stories and research data I will attempt to weave the story of Bidilia Encinias. When did Bidilia's family first settle in the Wagon Mound area? Bidilia's paternal grandparents, Julian Gallegos and Manuelita Sanchez Gallegos, were seeking good grazing land for livestock (NE1). According to oral stories passed down, Julian Gallegos had a small ranch in Peñasco and Manuelita Gallegos was from Santa Fe. According to a record of Marriages, Volume 1 for La Junta Territory of New Mexico, Julian Gallegos and Manuelita Gallegos were married on June 22, 1891. The next time that Julian Gallegos name appears in any documents is on the New Mexico General Land Office documents stating that he had acquired 160 acres near Carrizozo Creek, paperwork dated April 1, 1899. Julian and Manuelita acquired this land through the May 20, 1862: Homestead Entry Origin Act. The Carrizozo Creek is the area just east of the Wagon Mound Hill and makes up part of the ranch which their granddaughter, Bidilia Encinias, ultimately inherited. The Gallegos ranch is a compilation of homesteading and land purchased from other ranches. They built a home and dug a well at the Gallegos ranch and they had a home in Wagon Mound in a part of the village called La Bandita (NE1).

According to shared stories, Julian Gallegos died at a young age leaving behind his wife Manuelita Gallegos their son Esequiel Gallegos and the ranch land a few miles from Wagon Mound and their home at La Bandita, a neighborhood in Wagon Mound. With the passing of Julian Gallegos, Manuelita remained a widow for the rest of her life and spent the rest of her time at the Gallegos ranch and lived at her home in La Bandita. Esequiel Gallegos married a woman named Delfinia Pacheco, the daughter of Cruz Pacheco and Dolores D. Pacheco (COLO1). She was from the Wagon Mound area. Unfortunately, there is not very much information known through oral stories regarding Delfinia or her family. Esequiel and Delfinia had two children, Francisco Gallegos and Bidilia Gallegos. Bidilia was born at the Gallegos ranch on August 9, 1911. According to oral stories collected during the interview process, Delfinia Gallegos died at a young age, around 27, leaving behind her husband Esequiel and her two children Francisco and Bidilia. According to stories Delfinia died of pneumonia (NE1). Then a few years later, Francisco Gallegos died at the age of 13 due to appendicitis. Bidilia was raised by both her father and paternal grandmother.

The Gallegos family made their living from cattle and sheep. Although the land and livestock belonged to Manuelita, her son Esequiel would take care of the ranch and the livestock. Over the years, Esequiel would acquire more land, and according to oral stories he lost large amounts of land due to business transactions. He lived at the Gallegos ranch while Manuelita lived at the house in La Bandita. Bidilia would spend her time at La Bandita and the Gallegos ranch assisting her father with the ranching duties and her grandmother with household duties. Bidilia's son shared a story during the interview process, "An elder from the community, Manuelita Salazar, told stories of seeing Bidilia and her dad (Esequiel) on

the mesa on horseback working the cows from one pasture to the next". Bidilia was taught the foundations of ranching, household, religious, and cultural values from her grandmother and father.

Julian Encinias, Bidilia's husband, was born to Antonio Jose Encinias and Cleotilde Medina Encinias on May 6, 1908. Cleotilde was from La Ciruela, just west of Wagon Mound near Turkey Mountain. Antonio was born in Tiptonville just west of Watrous and Loma Parda (COLO1). Antonio and Cleotilde were married on November 28, 1906 in Watrous and their marriage produced two boys, Julian and Victoriano Encinias. Victoriano was born on December 13, 1910. Antonio and Cleotilde divorced and by September 13, 1913, Antonio married Amalia Salazar. There are conflicting stories, but we do know that Julian and his brother were not raised by their mother or father. According to one story, Antonio's sister Alberia raised Julian and Victoriano (COLO1), and another story claims that they were raised by their paternal grandparents.

Julian's family lived at La Bandita near Bidilia's grandmother Manuelita. When Julian Encinias was a young man he worked for Esequiel Gallegos as a ranch hand. Julian and Bidilia Encinias were married on November 15, 1935. At first, they lived at a small house near the Gallegos ranch and then moved to La Bandita where they lived for a short time with Manuelita Gallegos. Within a few years, they purchased their own home in Wagon Mound right down the street from the Wagon Mound School. Julian and Bidilia had 11 children, 8 girls and 3 boys. The first few were born at Manuelita's house at La Bandita, then at Julian and Bidilia's home in Wagon Mound, and 3 of their children were born at a hospital in Springer.

From a young age, Julian Encinias worked a wage labor job. He did not come from a family with a ranch or livestock or a farm. Julian worked as a ranch hand for Esequiel Gallegos and then for the Sanford Saddle Company. Then he worked at the Vorenberg Merchantile Co. store where he was a store clerk and a butcher. After Vorenberg's closed, Julian retained a job working for the New Mexico Highway Department from where he retired. Bidilia ran a household of 11 children and 2 adults. She was the main farmer, and eventually ran the Gallegos ranch. Whenever Bidilia and Julian would have a baby, her dad and grandmother would give them a cow (COLO1).

While Julian was at work, Bidilia would run the house starting with a warm breakfast and sending their children off to school. Bidilia spent the rest of her day cleaning, cooking, baking, and sewing. According to one story, "Bidilia had the kitchen so clean you could eat off the floor." She would have everything coordinated so that all family members were aware of their chores and where their help was needed to maintain the household. During an interview, one of her children shared, "Bidilia would wake up at the crack of dawn to work on the garden. The garden was her space and she oversaw the family garden. She would turn the dirt and we would help maintain the garden and gather food during harvest time." Harvest time was a family affair. Everyone assisted with the drying of corn to make *chicos* and canned peaches, corn, and jelly.

Following in the footsteps of her grandmother and father, Bidilia and Julian were actively involved in electoral politics. Manuelita made voting a priority, she would get dressed up, like she did for Sunday Mass. Esequiel or Bidilia and Julian would pick Manuelita up and take her to vote (SH1). They were Republicans concerned with property taxes and

land rights. Bidilia was the elections secretary for 40 to 50 years. She would count the votes and take them to Mora (CF1). Bidilia would pick up elderly Republicans and take them to vote (CF1). One time, Bidilia had some political work to do so she sent her youngest son Nash (Ignacio) Encinias to school with his sister Cleotilde (CF1).

In addition to her electoral work, Bidilia maintained the accounting for the Gallegos ranch and worked for her dad at a little gas station that he owned (NE1). Esequiel owned a bar and a gas station with a little store where the family sold candy and pop (NE1).

Bidilia, Julian, and their children spent most of their days in Wagon Mound, and they helped with the Gallegos ranch. Every summer, Bidilia and Julian sent some of their children to live with Esequiel at the ranch. While at the ranch, the children would help maintain the fences and assist with rotating the livestock from one pasture to another. SH1 shared, "We spent the summers at the ranch with Manuelita and Esequiel. Esequiel was always repairing the fences and checking on the sheep, goats, and cows. Manuelita would be cooking inside the house. We would milk the cows, help with household duties, and carry water from the windmill to the house to wash dishes and ourselves." For the younger children, they stated that Esequiel was the one who did the cooking. At this point Manuelita was bedridden and could not help at the ranch.

Bidilia and Julian's children would help with ranching duties, JE1 stated, "We would help shear the sheep, the Braceros would shear the sheep and we would tie the wool with string and place the wool in long big sacks. Esequiel would seal the wool and take it to town (Wagon Mound) to sell. They would load the wool and sheep in the boxcars of the train. After the work was complete, everyone would get together at one of the ranches and

socialize”. At this point, in Wagon Mound’s history, there was a train stop. JE1 shared that people would get off and on the train at this stop, Wagon Mound was a hub of activity. This is where ranchers brought their livestock in the middle of August to September.

Branding the livestock was an essential component of life at the Gallegos ranch. NE1 shared that he, Bidilia, Julian, Esequiel, and a couple of men would help brand the animals. Family friends and neighbors would come over and visit. Maintaining the ranch was a collective effort.

The Catholic Church was deeply ingrained and integrated into the everyday lives of the Gallegos and Encinias households. Every Sunday, attendance at the Catholic Mass was the responsibility of all family members. It was a special family affair where everyone would wear their best outfits. Attending Mass was not the only form of their religious expression. Manuelita would conduct a special blessing. Every time Esequiel would visit Manuelita and get ready to head back to the ranch, she would give him “the blessing” for his journey (LT1). Family members were involved in the Catholic Church in different ways, for example Bidilia was in the church choir and she was selected as a Mayordormo. As a Mayordormo, she would help take care of the Santa Clara Catholic Church.

The Gallegos and Encinias families were actively involved in religious holidays and ceremony. Manuelita was a devout Catholic. She prayed the rosary every night (JE1). Esequiel was a Penitente. During Lent, the Penitentes would gather for all night ceremonies where they would sing and pray. They held a procession up the Wagon Mound hill where they would conduct ceremony. As a part of Lent, and in support of the Penitentes, community members cooked food (CF1). LT1 shared, “Easter (Lent) was a special time of

year. We went to church and we wore our best dresses.” During this time, Catholics were not allowed to eat meat, families prepared special food items such as huevos de torta and a thick pudding called panohca.

Another major religious celebration took place in May, May Devotions to the Blessed Virgin Mary, the May Crowning. According to the stories shared by multiple family members, community members gathered and would carry a statue of Mary around the village of Wagon Mound in a procession where they sang and offered prayers. All the young girls were dressed in their best dresses as they were the main feature of the procession, and one girl was selected to place the crown and flowers on the statute of Mary. As a member of the Legion of Mary, Bidilia and her family participated in community events and ceremonies at Santa Clara Catholic Church.

Life in Wagon Mound and the Gallegos ranch required hard work and collective, work but Julian and Bidilia found time to have fun. On the weekends, Julian Encinias performed with his band at community dances and for private parties for the wealthy ranchers. He played the drums and the guitar (CF1). Bidilia and the children went to Julian’s performances in Wagon Mound, Mora, and Springer (CF1). Bidilia loved to dance (CF1). “Dances were our source of entertainment on the weekends in Wagon Mound” (COLO1). Julian would partner with his dad, Antonio Encinias, Julian on the guitar and Antonio with the violin and they would play at dances held at some of the ranchers’ homes like the Wiggins, Holbrooks, and Henry Boiks (COLO1).

Essential to any story of Wagon Mound is that of a neighborhood in Wagon Mound called La Bandita. La Bandita was on the west side of town. Today I-25 runs right through La

Bandita. Julian's father Antonio Encinias and his second wife Amalia lived at La Bandita along with their children. Bidilia's grandfather and grandmother, Julian and Manuelita Gallegos owned a home at La Bandita. After the death of her husband, Manuelita made La Bandita her permanent home. Prior to purchasing their first home, Bidilia and Julian Encinias lived at La Bandita with Manuelita until they purchased their home across the train tracks.

Several of Bidilia and Julian's female children lived with Manuelita to provide her assistance with the house and company. One of their daughters who lived with Manuelita shared, "When Effie and I lived with grandma Manuelita we never did without. We had new dresses and shoes. Manuelita took us to Santa Fe to visit her sisters." The girls chopped wood, gathered coal, fed the animals, and watered the beautiful lilacs surrounding the house. The collective story is that Manuelita's house at La Bandita was beautiful, from its architectural features to the beautiful flowers. La Bandita was a neighborhood filled with families, children, gardens, and animals. The area was lush with beautiful green grass and other vegetation due to its proximity to watering holes.

Today, La Bandita is nothing more than two gas stations with a major highway that cut right through it, I-25, built in the late 1950's and early 1960's. NE1 insightfully shared, "Everyone was excited with the new Interstate, a new highway. Little did everyone know that it would ruin some of the little towns because traffic wouldn't go through the towns. It ruined the community of La Bandita. I was in 5<sup>th</sup> grade when this happened".

## Chapter 5

### Findings: Active Agents in Community and Economic Development

#### Misperceptions and Distorted Depictions

Submissive women, victims of their oppressive husbands or mutual partners working collectively for the survival of the family? Why were Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women portrayed in Western history books and documentation as submissive women? In *No Separate Refuge: Culture, Clash, and Gender on an Anglo-Hispanic Frontier in the American Southwest, 1880-1940*, Sarah Deutsch explains:

The (Hispanic) men's purview of external affairs included not just the cash sector and migrant labor, but Anglos, investigators or tourists, who came to the village. Most likely it was this allocation of external affairs to men which led to the first distortions in depictions of village sexual structure. This division of labor meant that when Anglos dined at Hispanic village homes, they ate with the men while the women and children ate later, whereas when the family was alone they usually all ate together. It also meant that virtually all impressions of Hispanic society received by Anglos were received through Hispanic men, who naturally had a stake in creating an image for themselves acceptable to Anglo notions of gender and to whom, most likely, it would not occur to volunteer information about the women's world...This is brought out particularly in obvious gaps in some sociological literature. Olen Leonard, places the labor of the woman firmly in the home, ignoring her garden duties, and insists that the father "is definitely the head," handling, for example, finances and provisions for the family (Deutsch 1987:61).

Let us revisit Theodore Jojola's theory, "Although it may appear on face value that men are the ones that dominate and control as in the instance of the cacique (theocratic headman), it is the women, especially the clan mothers that endorse and oversee the male roles" (Jojola 2004:4). By documenting the experiences of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women through oral stories and existing historical records, we begin to give voice to these unwritten stories and contribute to the reconstruction of the history of the

Wagon Mound area. What little is written about the history of the Wagon Mound area is predominantly through the lens of the dominant culture, Anglo society. As documented in this thesis and a growing body of academic theory and research on the lives of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women it becomes evident that they were active agents and leaders in their communities. This is evidenced through their participation in informal planning processes for community and economic development.

### **Active Agents in Community Development**

As evidenced in the oral stories collected through this project and the research conducted, the fundamental key to successful community development and survival in Mestizo, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevomexicano communities in the Wagon Mound area was the family network, extended family networks, and regional community network. “In maintaining community ties, women ensured the cohesiveness of the village as well as the welfare of themselves and their families” (Deutsch 1987:48). “In addition to the community of family, women shared in the larger community of the village, as mothers, wives, and daughters women bound the community with ties of kinship” (Deutsch 1987:48). Abeita states, “Extended families lived together, worked together, and together enjoyed the fruits of their labor, reflecting the cooperation that was necessary for survival” (Abeita 1999). Deutsch elaborates, “Women not only shared in the community, they were instrumental in creating it, socially and physically and in sustaining it”. This is illustrated through the lives of Isidora Maestas, Manuelita Gallegos, Bidilia Encinias, and Lupe Martinez as farmers, ranchers, healers, cultural preservationists, and storytellers where knowledge was passed

through daily life experiences and acts of informal community building. They were community-based planners and community leaders.



Figure 4: Lupe Martinez (on the right).

Lupe knew a lot about herbs, healing, and childrearing. PM1 shared, “Lupe was very helpful when I had my first baby. Lupe took care of me and the new baby when he was first born. If you were sick Lupe wanted to help. She knew a lot about herbs. Lupe used to make children’s cough syrup. Lupe relied on Punche Mexicano to help with a bad cold or cough.” CM1 explained, “If any of us got sick, Lupe would take care of us with herbs. She learned about herbs from her mother, Isidora. Lupe taught me about herbs. One time, my horse had a wound with a serious infection. Lupe instructed me to gather some mastranso and make it into paste. Within a few days, the herbs healed the infection on my horse.”



Figure 5: Bidilia Encinias.

Bidilia was an expert with herbs and healing. Bidilia was always growing, finding, harvesting, and preparing herbs. She collected osha, plumajillo, estufate, yerba buena, poleo (wild mint) and many more. Bidilia would use Piñon de Monte to treat boils. CF1 shared, “One time, Dolores (one of Bidilia’s daughter’s) broke her arm and Bidilia fixed it. Another time, Richard (one of Bidilia’s son’s) had a serious wound, where you could see the bone and Bidilia fixed it.” Another story shared by JE1 explained, “Bidilia was a doctor. She used herbs for everything, she would cure us with weeds. The only time that I saw a doctor was when I had to get an exam for basketball. Bidilia would help deliver babies. She was a midwife three times that I remember.”

The oral stories collected for this project illustrate the role that Lupe and Bidilia played as healers, doctors, midwives, and herbalists. This is highlighted in the book *Nuestra Mujeres*, “Women who lived in remote areas had to know about childbirth, curing stomachaches, colds, and healing wounds. Mothers and grandmothers were often the primary health care consultants in the family” (Rebolledo 1992:123). Lupe and Bidilia learned about herbs from their mothers and grandmothers, Isidora and Manuelita. What I find the most compelling is that Lupe Martinez had her first 5 children at El Jardín with the assistance of her mother Isidora and her last 3 children at their home in Wagon Mound once again with the assistance of her mother Isidora and all 8 of her children lived. In fact, 7 of 8 of Lupe’s children are still alive as of June 2017. She lost only one son to cancer when he was in his sixties. The same can be said for Bidilia Encinias. All 11 of her children survived childhood and all of them are alive to this day as of June 2017. Her first child just turned 80 years old in 2017. This qualitative and quantitative data shows that these women were experts in their field and it provides an alternative narrative to the survival of babies and life expectancy of Mestizo, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevomexicanos in rural communities.

Health and healing are closely connected to farming and access to vegetables and fruits. For example, a main staple in the diets of Mestizo, Mexican, Spanish, and Nuevomexicano communities in northeastern New Mexico was quelites, which in English is known as lamb’s quarters. Quelites are high in protein, iron, vitamin B1, vitamin B2, and calcium. This is very important for women because during pregnancy their calcium is depleted by the growing baby, and quelites can help provide the necessary nutrition.

As discussed in Chapter 3, El Jardín was a known in the Wagon Mound area for its lush gardens and fruit tree orchards. Eliseo and Isidora were also known in the area as master gardeners, a tradition and knowledge that they passed on to Lupe and Roque. They worked collectively to till, plant, weed, water, and harvest. They worked together to preserve many vegetables through traditional drying methods by making chile ristras, chicos, and drying herbs and fruits. The women took the primary responsibility of canning and preserving fruits and vegetables a new form of preserving food introduced by the Europeans in the early 1900's. Lupe, Isidora, Lupe's children, and their friends would gather to make jelly. The act of preserving food became a community effort and the products of this effort were collectively shared.

"Bidilia had a garden every summer. It was a family project but it was 'her garden'. Bidilia would get up early to weed before the sun came up" (JE1). Bidilia coordinated her children to assist with the garden from watering, weeding, to harvesting. Just like Lupe, Bidilia worked with her children and friends to preserve their fruits and vegetables.

Through the acts of farming and the preservation of food Lupe and Bidilia were informal planners and community builders. "Women's participation of food, like women's creation of neighborhood, was thus imbued with the communalism of the village and vital to it" (Deutsch 1987:53). "Perhaps the most fundamental work of women, the one most obviously allied to maintenance, centered around food in all its stages: production, processing, provisions, and exchange" (Deutsch 1987: 53). Through traditional farming techniques and collective operation of their gardens Lupe's and Bidilia's families never went without food. Farming, specifically growing a garden takes a considerable amount of

planning and years of knowledge sharing and lessons learned handed down from one generation to the next. For example, an experienced farmer understands the rotation of the sun to know which plants should go, where, and at what time of the season certain plants should be planted. Farming for Lupe and Bidilia provided a necessary tool for the collective survival of their immediate family, extended family members, and their regional community.

Regarding ranching, a consistent theme that emerged are the stories of butchering animals for food. Lupe and Bidilia were experts in the field of butchering from the killing of an animal, the skinning of the animal, butchering of the meat, to the preparation of the meat for food. My earliest memories of my grandmothers Lupe and Bidilia were observing them as butchers. When I was 5 years old, during a family gathering I watched Lupe kill a chicken by breaking its neck, pluck the feathers, and properly prepare it for food. Another story involved Bidilia. We were in Wagon Mound visiting my grandmother Bidilia and grandfather Julian. They had purchased a sheep. Some of my older male cousins, my dad, and grandfather Julian were preparing and securing the sheep. I could over-hear them debating who would be the one to kill the sheep, with no one willing to take up the responsibility, I heard my grandfather tell them to go and get their mother/grandmother Bidilia, and ask her if she could kill the sheep. I watched my grandmother Bidilia emerge from the house with her knife in hand as she walked down the path to where the men were holding the sheep. With one quick cut along the neck, she instantly killed the sheep while I covered my ears and my eyes. Bidilia stood there surrounded by men who held her in the highest regard and with the utmost respect as they skinned the sheep and worked with

Bidilia to prepare some of the meat for dinner that night and storage for future consumption.

Lupe and Bidilia were responsible for bringing life into this world and they also took life. Watching my grandmothers kill, skin, and prepare the meat of an animal to provide food for the family and community are memories that will be with me for the rest of my life. The most important lesson was the technique of a quick and swift killing to eliminate any pain experienced by the animal. Lupe and Bidilia mastered this technique. They were powerful women, and these actions made them well respected community leaders who were working to ensure the survival of their immediate families and extended community members.

After all their hard work, farming and ranching would culminate in family and community celebrations where they would share the fruits of their produce with immediate family members, extended family members, and their regional network of community members.

Lupe Martinez and Bidilia Encinias were actively involved in the decision-making, coordination, and planning for elder care. As previously discussed, Lupe delegated members of her family to live with and take care of Eliseo and Isidora Maestas, her parents. During that last few days of their lives, Lupe provided support and care for Eliseo Maestas, her father, and Andres Martinez, Roque's dad. AA1 shared, "At the end of his life, Andres Martinez, Roque and Lupe took care of him. Lupe asked him one day 'How are you feeling?' and Andres responded, 'Pagando los injusticias.'" I believe that this story is a great example of the circle of life. It is said that Andres was a very strict and selfish father, and throughout

his relationship with his son, Roque, and his daughter in-law, Lupe, they had quite a few differences of opinion. But in the end, Roque and Lupe helped to take care of him in his last days of life because they were humble people who understood their responsibilities in the circle of life, and in a sense by Andres stating “Pagando los injusticas” which, translated into English, means paying for my injustices they may have come to terms with the past. Andres seems to have displayed a sense of gratitude for the care that Lupe and Roque provided for him near the end of his life. Life comes full circle.

Bidilia took on the responsibility of care for her grandmother, Manuelita Gallegos, along with her father and family. Manuelita became a widow at a young age and she never remarried. Bidilia would send several of her daughters to live with Manuelita to help her with daily household chores and just to provide company. Bidilia provided care for Manuelita in the last few days of her life. Manuelita’s son, Esequiel, shared in the responsibility of caring for his mother. As the primary caretaker of the Gallegos ranch and livestock, he ensured that Manuelita did not go without.

Taking care of their grandparents, elders in the community, was a fundamental core value rooted in their culture, history, and traditions and deeply integrated into the day-to-day planning. The issue of caring for elders, senior citizens, is a major issue in community development and in the contemporary planning field in the United States. Contemporary planners, in the United States, should take the opportunity to study and research the ways in which families in northeastern New Mexico cared for their elders.

Another form of community building and development included religion. Deutsch proposed that religion in the Hispanic villages was clearly the property of both sexes

(Deutsch 1987: 55). The men gathered for special religious occasions and participated in the Penitente society. "Women maintained the community through their participation in religion" (Deutsch 1987:55). The women provided support to the Penitentes and they contributed to the cleaning and maintenance of the churches and led various community events and ceremonies, providing another opportunity for social networking and community building. Bidilia Encinias was actively involved in the Santa Clara Catholic Church. She was in the choir, she participated and helped with community events, and over time, she became the main person to conduct rosary prayers during the death of a community member.

Through the collection of oral stories another emerging theme was the fact that Bidilia and Lupe served as the Mayordomos of the Santa Clara Catholic Church. They were selected for this leadership position within their religious community, comprised of family and community. The role of a Mayordomo was to plan and coordinate spiritual gatherings, maintain the upkeep of the church, and to provide spiritual and community leadership.

This provides the perfect opportunity to revisit theories articulated by Sarah Deutsch and Theodore Jojola and to share oral stories reflecting these theories.

Most likely it was the allocation of external affairs to (Hispanic) men which led to the first distortions of village sexual structure (Deutsch 1987:61).

Although it may appear on face value that men are the ones that dominate and control as in the instance of the cacique (theocratic headman), it is the women especially the clan mothers that endorse and oversee the male roles (Jojola 2004:4)

Bidilia and Lupe were devout Catholics and their connection to spirituality was deeply entrenched in their day-to-day lives, a fundamental aspect of their world-view. This is

revealed through the consistent patterns that emerged from the collection of oral stories and historical investigative process. But contrary to the image portrayed in Western culture these women would assert their power as community leaders and cultural preservationists. SH1 explained, “Bidilia was very opinionated. She told it like it was, for example, Sunday church. The priest gave a sermon about his dog being run over by a car. After mass, Bidilia told the priest that it was not appropriate to talk about a dog at mass.” Bidilia asserted her power not only against a man, but against an Anglo priest and what she perceived as Anglo culture.

A similar story of an interaction between Lupe and a priest revealed itself during the interview process. According to the story that I was told, “Lupe was upset because the priest had been mean to Eliseo and scolded him. After hearing of Eliseo’s experience, Lupe gave the priest a piece of her mind.” Lupe was well known for her sharp tongue and mastery of words. “Although it may appear on face value that men are the ones that dominate and control as in the instance of the Cacique, it is the women especially the clan mothers that endorse and oversee the male roles” (Jojola 2004:4). Everybody loved Bidilia and Lupe and wanted to be with them from their husbands to their children and community members. These women were the center of the universe, the key that held the family and community together.

### **Active Agents in Economic Development**

How wealth in a community is acquired and redistributed as well as how decisions are made is at the core of how communities evolve. Such actions over a long and sustained period translate into distinctive ideologies. And these ideologies are used to justify either individual or collective actions toward change (Jojola 2004:2).

Based on the collection of oral stories for this project and investigative research of historical documents, I conclude that Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women exercised their power through a combination of Pueblo and Spanish customs and traditions of informal economies in northeastern New Mexico. These women inherited land, they made decisions regarding their land and livestock, and they sustained their family, extended family members and regional network through collective forms of decision-making, planning, and wealth distribution.

Lupe and Bidilia present unique case studies. Lupe was adopted by her uncle Eliseo and aunt Isidora. Being the only child, she inherited hundreds of acres of land rich in resources including natural springs, access to the Mora River, livestock, and lush gardens known as El Jardín. Roque entered the marriage with no land or livestock. Lupe's family was not cash rich, but they had sufficient land and resources to live sustainably. Bidilia, ended up being an only child after the death of her only brother. She inherited hundreds of acres of land, the Gallegos ranch, the house at La Bandita, another house in Wagon Mound, and other land in the village of Wagon Mound. Julian entered the marriage with no land or livestock.

While living at El Jardín, at the bottom of the canyon, removed from the Western culture and economies, the collective survival of Eliseo Maestas, Isidora Maestas, Lupe Martinez, and Roque Martinez was based on an economy of trade and the redistribution of wealth. As previously stated, community members from across the Wagon Mound area and the surrounding ranches and small villages would go to El Jardín to trade their sheep, cows, other farm animals, or services for vegetables and fruits. El Jardín and the collective

contributions of the family members allowed for self-sufficiency, sustainability, and economic independence outside of a capitalistic economy. In addition, this economic independence depended on the fact that El Jardín did not have electricity or plumbing, which cost money. While they lived at El Jardín, Eliseo, Isidora, Lupe, and Roque made their living off a bartering system and the sales of their produce and livestock.

Once they moved to Wagon Mound, they acquired a home with electricity and participated in the U.S. economy. Roque pursued wage-paying employment from working at a lumber yard, being a ranch hand, and finally a bus driver for the Wagon Mound school system. This provided an opportunity for Roque to share his resources with Lupe and other family members. Roque and Lupe benefited from Roque's social security benefits acquired through his job as a bus driver. Regardless of their participation in the capitalistic economy, Roque and Lupe maintained their core values of collectivism and wealth distribution. For example, every year, Roque and Lupe gave each of their adult children a cow. Their children could sell their cow, or they could kill the cow and have meat to feed their family for the rest of the year. Then, sold the remaining cows and used the money to provide food and shelter for their immediate children, grandchildren, and extended family members.

Decisions regarding livestock and land management were made collectively between Lupe and Roque. At the end of the day, Lupe had the final say, but she would always include and involve Roque. They were equal partners. PM1 shared, "Lupe never thought of it being separate. It wasn't more mine than yours. It was just 'theirs'." The emerging theme in the collective oral stories proclaimed that Lupe and Roque were very giving people and shared their food and resources with others. For Lupe, land tenure was a foundation to her world-

view. They had a collective responsibility to maintain the land and the livestock and leave these resources to their children to attempt to ensure their sustainability. El Jardín, now called the Martinez ranch, is taken care of through a collective process and mutual agreements amongst all their children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.

Manuelita Gallegos and her son, Esequiel Gallegos, collectively owned and managed the land and all its resources. They ensured the collective survival of their family members through a shared distribution of wealth. COLO1 shared, “Every time Julian and Bidilia had a baby, Manuelita and Esequiel would give them a cow.” Esequiel, Manuelita, Bidilia and her family never went without food, shelter, or clothing.

Once Manuelita and Esequiel died, Bidilia inherited all the land. Bidilia had her own bank account and she made decisions regarding the selling and leasing of the land and the livestock. Bidilia negotiated leases with white male ranchers, illustrating her active engagement in economic decision-making. Bidilia sold most of the land and the livestock. She kept a small tract of land where the Gallegos ranch continues to exist to this day and is held collectively by her children.

Bidilia and Lupe took slightly different approaches in the decision-making and finances of their inheritance but they ultimately used their resources to contribute to the collective well-being of their families, extended family members, and ties of kinship in the regional community. Bidilia and Lupe were active agents in the local economy in different forms at different phases of their lives, which brings us back to the theories asserted by Deutsch and Jojola and expanding them.

The (Hispanic) men's purview of external affairs included not just the cash sector and migrant labor, but Anglos, investigators or tourists, who came to the village. Most likely it was this allocation of external affairs to men which led to the first distortions in depictions of village sexual structure. This division of labor meant that when Anglos dined at Hispanic village homes, they ate with the men while the women and children ate later, whereas when the family was alone they usually all ate together. It also meant that virtually all impressions of Hispanic society received by Anglos were received through Hispanic men, who naturally had a stake in creating an image for themselves acceptable to Anglo notions of gender and to whom, most likely, it would not occur to volunteer information about the women's world (Deutsch 1987:61).

Although it may appear on face value that men are the ones that dominate and control as in the instance of the cacique (theocratic headman), it is the women especially the clan mothers that endorse and oversee the male roles (Jojola 2004:4).

I would argue that by maintaining the Mestizo, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevomexicano male external role, Bidilia and Lupe asserted their power to distance themselves from world-views that were in sharp contrast to their own, a form of resistance against the assimilation of U.S. Anglo European world-views. For example, although Lupe knew how to speak some basic English she refused to speak it because she did not want to participate in Western Anglo culture. Lupe intentionally put herself in a position where she did not have to interact with Anglos, rather her husband was given that responsibility.

### **Cultural Preservation: Through Storytelling Weaving Collective Histories**

Community education was transmitted by word of mouth, sometimes, in stories, as in Pueblo tradition. Children were taught to help their relatives and neighbors early on, and they quickly became skilled in farming, livestock herding, cooking and gardening through hands-on experience (Abeita 199:66).

Storytellers- those who have lived the experiences and had intimate knowledge of the facts. Thus, the emphasis is placed on "communal history" not on the individual one. All of these voices make the "collective experience (Rebolledo 1992:46).

The hands-on experiences of farming, ranching, cooking, gardening, and ceremony were taught to the children of the community, the future generations and caretakers of the family, extended kinship network (the community), and the land by both men and women, their mothers and fathers, their grandmothers and grandfathers. The core of who they were and are, our world-view, was transmitted through storytelling and life experiences. The stories that have emerged during the interview process for this project is part of the oral tradition and history of the community, comprising stories of the land, the people, traditions and customs, and the collective survival of these families.

Lupe Martinez was well-known within her community, her extended family network, and regional kinship ties for her storytelling whether they were in the form of *dichos*, riddles, or jokes. Lupe carried forth the tradition taught to her by her spiritual and physical father and mother, Eliseo and Isidora Maestas, the core value of collectivism. Revisiting a story shared by PM1, “Lupe never thought of it being separate. It wasn’t like this is more mine than yours. It was just ‘theirs’.” PM1 continued, “Regarding the land, Lupe had a say in what was going on. She was always out there. They worked together in the garden, Lupe and Roque worked side by side.” In another instance, PM1 shared, “Lupe loved to joke around, she knew a lot of jokes and riddles”. Lupe tried to tell us that you lose your heritage when you don’t speak your language. For Lupe, language was an essential component of who we were and are as a people.

During another interview, SM1 explained, “Lupe was a strong storyteller. She would tell us stories to guide us and our choices. She would tell us stories that taught us values. Her storytelling was a powerful tool to educate her children.” Through these stories they

have transmitted to us their consciousness, their life experiences, our history handed down from generation to generation, and techniques for survival (Rebolledo 1992:14). Effective planning for community and economic development requires a collective understanding of the past and present to inform the future.

### **Unexpected Findings Emerge through Storytelling**

Previously highlighted, there were a few unexpected findings such as the collective survival of Mestizo, Mexican, Spanish, and Nuevomexicano from the Wagon Mound area during the Great Depression. During the interview process, comments were made stating that Bidilia or Lupe did not have a “real job” or a “traditional job” like their husbands. I was confused. What did they mean by these statements? Rather than jumping to any conclusions, I made the decision to hold off on any speculation or further analysis as a researcher because it would require that I conduct a second interview where I could ask clarifying questions. But I think it is appropriate to acknowledge that these comments were made and to make a recommendation for a potential research question in any further research regarding these women and the value of their work in the home and community.

Finally, another interesting theme that came out of all the interviews was the collective sentiment and statements that we were made out of love and that we came from a family of love and a community where everyone felt safe. In each interview, it was stated repeatedly that Lupe and Roque married each other out of love as did Bidilia and Julian. These families and the larger community of extended and regional family members and friends created a community where children and families felt safe.

This is a complicated issue because Western history tells us over and over again that we are the products of conquest, genocide, and rape and although that is part of our history somehow and somewhere our creation story also became one of love nurtured by our immediate family, extended family, regional community and world-views.

## Chapter 6

### Conclusion

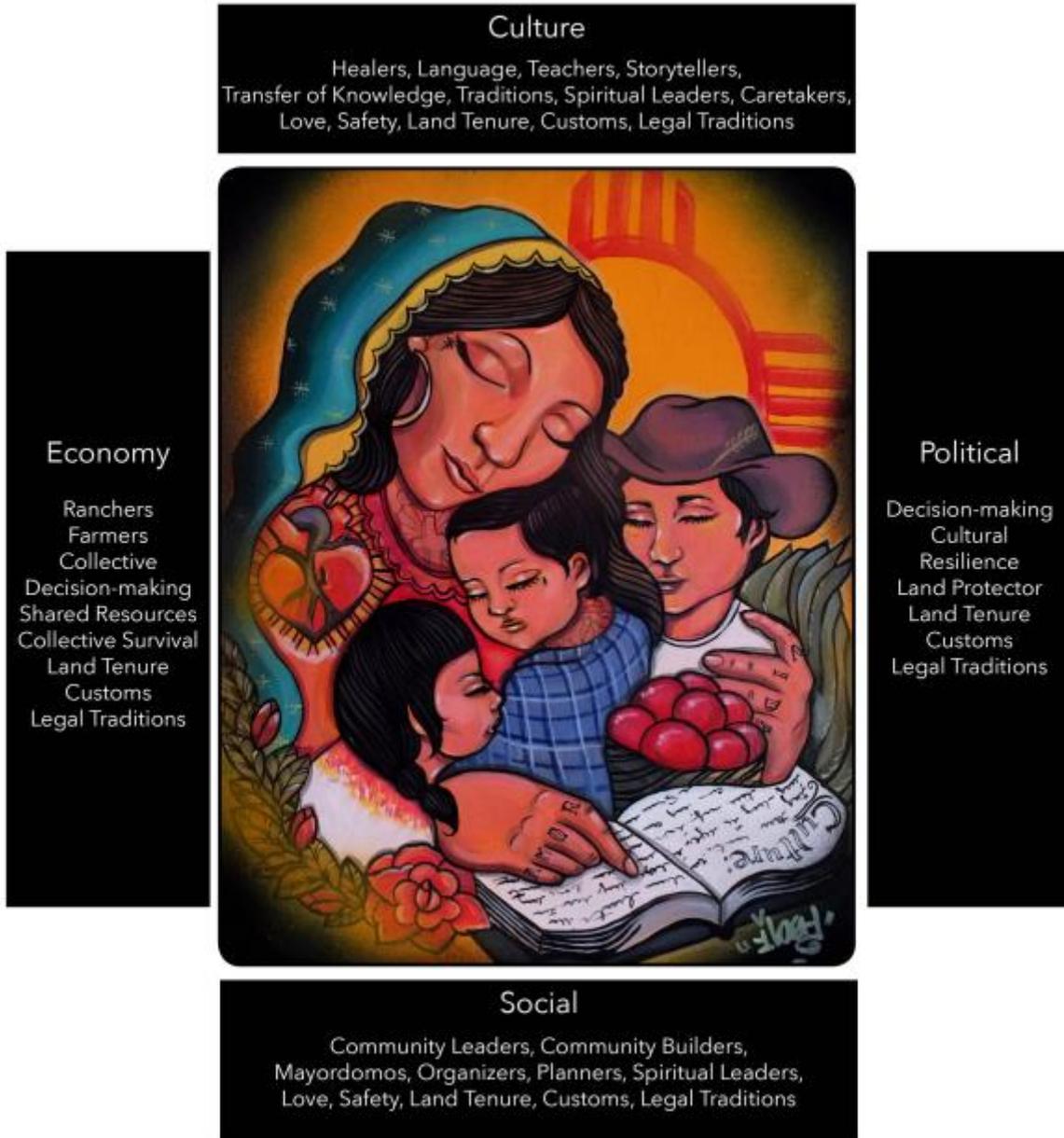


Figure 6: The Storyteller: Theory of Planning and Action.

## **Making the Invisible Visible**

We prefer to think of oral history, therefore, not only as a method of acquiring information but as a body of knowledge about the past that is uniquely different from the information contained in written records (Allen and Montell 1981:23).

Regarding the history of northeastern New Mexico, the Wagon Mound area, most if not all written records are written from the perspective of the U.S. Anglo European experiences of settlement and community and economic development. To reconstruct the history of settlement and community and economic development of the Wagon Mound area, I conducted an oral history project. Documenting and recording the history and roles of Mestiza, Mexicana, Spanish, Nuevamexicana in the settlement and community development of the Wagon Mound area served as the primary goal for this thesis. But upon closer examination and research, this project afforded the opportunity to reconstruct and contribute to the documentation of the history of the settlement and community development of the Wagon Mound area from the perspectives and experiences of Mestizo, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevomexicano communities prior to U.S. Anglo European settlement.

Through the collection of individual oral stories, and investigative historic research, a collective history emerged of the experiences and perspectives of two women, Bidilia Encinias and Lupe Martinez, and their immediate family, extended family networks, and their regional community. The process for this thesis made me realize the need to further study, research, analyze, and conduct a larger oral history project of the Wagon Mound area.

The settlement patterns and community development of Mestizo, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevomexicano communities in the Wagon Mound area is a hybrid of their Indigenous and

Spanish world-views of land tenure, customs, and traditions layered with the legal system of the United States. These communities looked to the past and the present to inform their future. Their survival relied on the passing and sharing of traditional knowledge of the area and the collective work and contributions of all members of the community, regardless of gender.

What emerges is a story of sustainable and self-reliant communities, where both women and men worked side by side planting food and taking care of their collective gardens, maintaining the livestock, building community, sharing resources, participation in religious and ceremonial activities, and the formation of strong networks of kinship ties. By collecting oral histories and conducting historical research of Mestizo, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevomexicano communities, I learned more about their (our) traditional settlement patterns and processes, and I came to the realization that these Mestizo, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevomexicano communities in the Wagon Mound area were self-reliant and sustainable communities. As they became integrated into the U.S. economy and culture, Nuevomexicanos were forced into a world-view and economic structure based on individualism and the commodification of land.

To develop an understanding of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women and their role in planning and community and economic development requires that we understand their history of settlement, customs, norms, and legal system from an Indigenous and Spanish South-North historical framework and then layered with the United States East-West legal and historical framework. Many of these isolated communities in northeastern New Mexico continued to operate under a system of customs and traditions

that were rooted in their Spanish and Indigenous concepts of land tenure and a legal system whereby women could inherit and own land, engage in economic transactions, and make decisions regarding their family.

### **Planning for Community and Economic Development: The Role of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana Women**

The history, experiences, contributions, and roles of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, and Nuevamexicana has remained invisible not only to historians but to planners. This is fundamentally concerning being that planners are provided the responsibility to plan our cities, counties, and villages. In planning for successful, healthy, and sustainable community and economic development that is inclusive, it is necessary for planners working in New Mexico to understand the historical experiences of these women.

This thesis reveals that Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women in the Wagon Mound area, were actively engaged community leaders in the decisions regarding their families, their land, and the larger community. This is evidenced through their participation in farming, ranching, land management, religious and ceremonial activities, planning and caring for elders, creating place, and building community.

For planners educated in Western planning theories and operating under Western planning paradigms, it is necessary that planners working in New Mexico consider the following recommendations:

- Study and understand the history of Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women from a South-North historical pattern of land settlement based on Indigenous and Spanish customs and legal traditions. Then add the layer of East-

West pattern of land settlement based on the U.S. legal traditions and policies such as Manifest Destiny.

- Re-educate planners to gain an understanding of the world-view of land tenure versus the commodification of land under the U.S. paradigm of land use and land management.
- Planners need to understand that Mestiza, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevamexicana women are experts in planning for community and economic development in their communities based on concepts of land tenure, collectivism, and mutuality.

I conclude that local customs and traditions continued well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Mestizo, Mexican, Spanish, Nuevomexicano people continue to operate from their traditional forms of planning and community building for community and economic development. These are not traditional planning methods stuck in the past, but rather they have evolved and adapted while attempting to stay true to their core values of land tenure and collective decision-making for the collective survival of their families and their neighborhoods.

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