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JUDY MATTIVI MORLEY

In American mythology, the West means a frontier of wide open spaces, not urban skylines. Yet after World War II, the West was the most ur-ban region of the nation, with more than half of the United States' fast-est growing cities between 1950 and 1980.[1] The war transformed the West from a region dependent on eastern capital to a center of an ur-ban-based, global economy. As western cities grew, they became more architecturally and culturally similar to the East.[2] Western tourism also increased after World War II, and post-war travelers expected to find the "Wild West" of popular culture.[3] In this era of overwhelming ex-pansion and increasing tourism, western cities faced the problem of defining a regional identity. Although regional character is usually taken for granted, the post-war milieu caused newcomers to the urban West consciously to seek a sense of place.[4] The combination of growth, stan-dardization, and tourism potential led western city planners to attempt to define unique civic identities.

One tool city planners used to create civic identities in the post-war period was historic preservation. Although the relationship between historic preservation and identity formation began in the nineteenth century, the nature of historic preservation changed after World War II.[5] Prior to the war, the people active in historic preservation were elites trying to preserve their cultural authority: Boston Brahmins de-scended from wealthy textile merchants, progeny of southern planters, millionaires like John D. Rockefeller and Henry Ford, and well-to-do progressives wanting order in urban life.[6] Federal, state, and city agen-

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cies did not enter the historic preservation arena until the New Deal, and then only in a limited capacity.[7]

After 1945, urban expansion brought new players to the historic preservation stage. As urban renewal programs of the 1950s and 1960s threatened historic buildings in inner cities, urban residents formed political coalitions to battle the business interests and government programs that were tearing down their neighborhoods.[8] Young, upwardly-mobile professionals living downtown joined low-income, ethnic residents and high-income residential investors to preserve historic cityscapes from developers promoting highway rights-of-way, skyscrapers, and parking lots.[9] Because many of the preservationists were newcomers to the city, they shaped historic districts based on their expectations for the city, preserving architecture and neighborhoods that fit their preconceived notions of the region. Thus, preservationists in New Orleans protected the French Quarter, while in Santa Fe preservationists maintained Pueblo style architecture.[10]

As the desirability of historic buildings for residential and investment property increased, city planners implemented policies to create and govern historic districts. By establishing historic districts, city planners exerted some control over ethnically diverse and unwieldy postwar cities. Historic districts could be regulated more easily than privately-developed property. City commissions could dictate architectural styles and building usage more comprehensively in a historic district than they could elsewhere in a city.[11] With governmental support from local to national levels, the number of historic districts in the United States escalated. In 1955, only twenty cities had historic district commissions; by 1982, historic districts existed in nine hundred cities nationwide.[12]

Historic districts also proved profitable, especially with the advent of "heritage tourism." Defined as tourism based on an area's history, heritage tourism became a major economic consideration for city planners as historic districts multiplied. These districts catered to tourists by allocating old buildings for commercial uses. Thus, nineteenth-century warehouses became bookstores, and old blacksmiths' shops found new life as gift emporia. Visitors frequented historic districts to partake of the city's heritage as well as to shop and dine, thus reinforcing a city's identity by commodifying and displaying it. The economic viability of historic areas created by tourism further convinced city planners to change policy away from urban renewal and in favor of historic preservation, especially in the West, where urban economies depended increasingly on out-of-town visitors.[13] Santa Fe's plaza area and Denver's Larimer Square developed from this impulse.

A Case Study: Albuquerque, New Mexico

Albuquerque exemplifies the way city commissioners, planners, and historic preservationists used historic preservation to create a civic identity after World War II. Albuquerque originated in 1706 as a Spanish village along the Rio Grande. The village was a small, agricultural settlement when the United States took control of New Mexico with the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Growth in Albuquerque remained slow until the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad arrived in 1880. The railroad's owners built the depot one-and-a-half miles southeast of Albuquerque's plaza, creating two towns: Hispanic Old Town and Anglo New Town.[14] After 1880, New Town grew like a relatively typical western railroad town, although it was set against the unique geographic and cultural landscape of New Mexico. Boomtown conditions of the nineteenth century gave Albuquerque a western identity, while Native American pueblos and Hispanic villages along the Rio Grande enhanced that identity to give residents of Albuquerque a sense of living in a place unlike other western cities. Although the arrival of the railroad brought Anglo American settlers and supplies from the East, growth was slow enough that people arriving in the region in the early twentieth century still felt a strong sense of place.[15]

Like its western neighbors, Albuquerque experienced incredible growth at mid-century, which weakened the city's historic cultural identity. Albuquerque led the nation in proportional population gain for the decade of the 1940s, with the population doubling between 1940 and 1950, and again between 1950 and 1960.[16] One factor in Albuquerque's expansion was its position as part of the Sunbelt. The sunny climate and booming economy created by Department of Defense installations brought people to the Sunbelt in unprecedented numbers in the 1950s.[17] Sandia National Laboratories and Kirtland Air Force Base emerged as major employers in Albuquerque. With the population boom, Albuquerque sprawled to the north and east of the historic downtown. Growth also changed the ethnic composition of the city, as arriving Anglo Americans soon outnumbered native Hispanics who had helped define the region's identity.

The city's changing architecture also contributed to a breakdown of identity. As national builders developed Albuquerque, the architecture and overall look of the city became indistinguishable from other western and Sunbelt cities. In 1954, Albuquerque's first International Style skyscraper, the Simms Building, rose downtown.[18] Residential developers in the Northeast Heights also departed from the regional building materials of stucco and adobe in favor of wood siding. With the exception of the Watson subdivision, just east of Old Town, the residential architecture of Albuquerque began to resemble that of Los Angeles, Phoenix, or Denver.[19] The city's first strip mall, Nob Hill,

along East Central Avenue, went up at the edge of town using a stan-
dardized art deco design popularized in southern California.[20]

Additionally, urban renewal projects in Albuquerque changed the
character of the city. The Albuquerque City Commission initiated these
projects in the 1950s, trying to give the aging city a face-lift to attract
commerce back to downtown. The project had unintended consequences,
however, as the Commissioners approved the destruction of some of
Albuquerque's most distinctive buildings and further depopulated the
center city.[21] In 1955, for example, developers bulldozed the historic
Castle Huning on West Central Avenue. The stately mansion had been
a symbol of Albuquerque's railroad era, but the City Commission let
potential development money influence their decision, and allowed the
landmark to be leveled.[22] The razing of Castle Huning caused native-
born New Mexicans and newcomers alike to re-evaluate the policy of
unregulated development.[23]

The City Commissioners were also concerned about the tourist
economy that spread throughout the West after 1945. The loss of his-
toric landmarks such as Castle Huning threatened Albuquerque's tour-
ist potential. Clyde Tingley, the chairman of the City Commission during
the 1950s, understood the importance of a regional image to the city's
tourist economy. Tingley had been chairman of the City Commission
during the 1920s, giving himself the ex-officio title "Mayor of Albu-
querque." He went on to serve two terms as governor of New Mexico,
from 1935 to 1939, then returned to his position as chairman of the
Albuquerque City Commission in the 1940s and 1950s. Tingley worked
to bring New Deal money to the state, and to improve Albuquerque so
that it would be a place where people wanted to live and visit.[24] The
city already had a viable tourist trade, channeled through the heart of
downtown by Route 66 (Central Avenue). The loss of landmarks along
the way threatened the character of the city, however, precisely at a
time when "heritage tourism" was growing nationwide.

Reacting to the significant changes of growth, homogenization, and
tourism potential, the City Commission began looking for ways to pre-
serve the uniqueness of Albuquerque. According to former Albuquer-
que planning director Jack Leaman, growth had to be controlled to
preserve "the special sense of place and diversity of life styles which
make Albuquerque different from other major growth cities." Leaman
also expressed his hope that Albuquerque would not become just an-
other Phoenix, Dallas, Denver, or 'Anywhere, USA.'[25] In this capacity,
historic preservation helped Albuquerque manufacture a civic identity.
The identity the City Commission hoped to adopt was that of Old Town,
which in 1945 still lay outside the city limits in unincorporated
Bernalillo County. In 1949 the City Commission annexed Old Town,
and in 1957 designated it as the city's first historic zone. By designat-
ing the Old Town Historic Zone, a coalition of City Commissioners,

Old Town property owners, and historic preservationists established political control over Old Town in order to create a distinctive civic identity for Albuquerque and to promote tourism in the city. The irony was that the identity preserved in Old Town was *not the identity being lost to development*, but rather a created identity based on preconceived notions of the area's heritage.

Reuniting a Divided City

Until 1949, Albuquerque was two towns, sharing a name but otherwise separated by distance, ethnicity, architecture, and economics. The original village of Alburquerque, spelled with two "r"s, began in 1706 as a Spanish settlement along the Rio Abajo, or "lower river" region of the Rio Grande valley. Named for the Duke of Alburquerque, Viceroy of New Spain, the *villa* grew as the garrison for all the settlements in the Rio Abajo.[26] The plaza stood where it does today, five hundred yards from the Rio Grande to minimize the risk of flooding. With the exception of San Felipe de Neri Church, the buildings on the plaza were predominantly homes of settlers who farmed the land between the town and the river. In the 1790 Spanish census, occupations of Old Town residents varied from sheepherder to sexton, but there was not a merchant in the bunch.[27]

The town did not grow until the 1820s, when Alburquerque benefited from the Santa Fe trade. Although the trade did not venture south along the Camino Real to Alburquerque until the markets to the north were saturated in the late 1820s, the introduction of American goods caused a spurt of growth on the plaza, and merchants and store fronts became common sights in Old Town. The American presence in Albuquerque became official in 1846, after General Stephen Watts Kearney marched into Santa Fe during the Mexican-American War and peacefully claimed New Mexico for the United States. Sometime after the arrival of the Americans, the first "r" was dropped from Albuquerque's name.

The American acquisition of New Mexico, formalized under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, brought Albuquerque under the dominance not only of the United States government, but also of American land speculators and merchants following the frontier. Although some settled around Old Town, many pioneers had bigger plans for Albuquerque. In 1880, speculators convinced representatives of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad to build the rail depot one-and-a-half miles southeast of the plaza. Drawn in part by the financially attractive deals offered by land speculators like Franz Huning, the railroad representatives also shunned a location near Old Town for fear of flooding. Indeed, an 1872 flood had devastated the plaza, wiping out a number of buildings. In 1881 the first train arrived at the new settlement, also called Albuquerque, and New Town was on its way to dominance over

Old Town. After 1880, New Town became the political and economic center of the region, while Old Town reverted to a predominantly residential and farming settlement.

There was an ethnic dimension to the split city as well. New Town was overwhelmingly Anglo, with capital, goods, and settlers coming from the United States. The architecture and layout of New Town looked like other western railroad boom towns. The photos of early New Town show Victorian-style two-story buildings, false fronts, and a simple grid pattern of the streets.[28] Old Town, in the meantime, remained more ethnically diverse and representative of the tri-cultural heritage of the region. Although most residents were native-born Hispanics, some American immigrants, like Herman Blueher, built houses around the plaza. By 1900, the plaza was a mixture of traditional, low-slung adobe buildings with *portales*, Territorial-style brick buildings with flat roofs and dentated cornices, and Queen Anne brick homes, complete with gables and gingerbread trim.[29]

The two settlements grew separately until the 1940s, when New Town launched a campaign to annex Old Town. The annexation movement was part of a greater strategy to consolidate surrounding settlements into Albuquerque. Beginning in 1943, the City Commission sought jurisdiction over nearby communities, purporting to provide those areas with city services. Because of restrictions on incorporation, annexation was also the primary way that the City of Albuquerque could grow.[30]

Motives for annexing Old Town went beyond growth and services, however. Converging with Albuquerque's consolidation strategy was an ethos the anthropologist Renato Rosaldo called "imperialist nostalgia." In studies of cultures around the world, Rosaldo found that citizens of imperial powers have a longing for the traditional culture of a region, especially "a culture they had intentionally altered. People mourn the passing of what they have transformed."[31] While perhaps too heated a term, imperialist nostalgia suggests how Albuquerque's city government, and how Anglo residents of New Town in general, felt about Old Town. As New Town grew at the end of the nineteenth century, there was very little interest in the old plaza area. If business or political leaders paid any attention to it at all, they viewed the plaza as competition to the growing railroad town. By 1945, however, it was clear that Old Town posed no threat to New Town. The Anglo-dominated downtown had been the center of economic and political power for six decades, and the plaza was little more than a residential backwater compared to the urban behemoth to the southeast. Once New Town's dominance was ensured, however, residents and politicians began to long for an association with that old Hispanic village. Indeed, Commissioner Clyde Tingley argued for annexation on the grounds that "the city of Albuquerque will get a historical background of great impor-

tance . . . we could advertise that the city was founded in 1706."[32]

Annexation, however, was not as popular in Old Town as it was in New Town. Residents of Old Town did not want to pay higher city taxes and lose local control. New Town's City Commission tried three times to bring Old Town under city jurisdiction before finally succeeding.

In its first attempt, the City Commission justified annexation under an ordinance allowing the city to annex areas of less than five acres without a vote. Residents stopped this, however, since Old Town was over twenty acres.[33]

The second attempt came in the form of a petition of property owners claiming to advocate annexation. This petition caused a furor in the City Commission. Initially, property owners signing the petition represented over 54 percent of the land of Old Town, more than the simple majority needed for annexation. Old Town residents who had signed the petition however, almost immediately claimed that they did not fully understand what they were signing. They believed they were signing a petition for "improved city services," not realizing that meant annexation to New Town and the corresponding taxes.[34] The City Commission appointed a three-member Board of Arbitration, composed of two city commissioners and the Old Town residents' lawyer, G. W. Hannett, to review the validity of petition signatures.[35] The Commission set a time limit of two weeks for the review. At the end of the time limit, the Board of Arbitration requested a one-week extension. The City Commission denied it, claiming that any delay would give opponents of annexation another week to convince petitioners to withdraw their signatures. Hannett resigned in protest, but the now two-member Board of Arbitration declared the petition valid anyway. The next day, the Commission annexed Old Town, passing the resolution by the close vote of three to two. Old Town residents immediately filed a lawsuit against the city.[36]

Finally, to settle the dispute, the City Commission held an election on annexation in Old Town. Old Town voters elected three members to a new seven-member Board of Arbitration. The City Commission also appointed three members, and a district judge chose the seventh member. Six candidates ran for the three positions from Old Town, half in favor of annexation, half opposed. When the election returns were tallied, Old Town residents voted two-to-one against annexation, with anti-annexation candidates receiving 395 votes to the pro-annexation candidates' 178 votes.[37] Despite the election of opponents to annexation to the Board of Arbitration, the other four members voted to uphold the city's annexation declaration, and Old Town became part of the city in 1949.

Establishing a Historic Zone

Annexing Old Town was only the first step in creating a civic identity. Next, the city had to preserve the plaza's uniqueness and keep it from falling prey to the development occurring throughout the city. During the 1950s, Old Town residents witnessed signs of growth for the first time since the 1880 civic split. The City Planning Commission, which was established in 1953, was overwhelmed with zoning and signage issues in Old Town by the second half of the decade.[38] Growth in Old Town prompted some residents to lobby the Planning Commission for zoning protection.[39]

A group of Old Town property owners had already formed a community in favor of maintaining the historic character of the plaza and environs. Nelda Sewell, who owned La Placita Restaurant in the historic Armijo House, and Mr. and Mrs. Richard Bennett, who ran shops out of the Springer House, had been vital in establishing the Albuquerque Historical Society. Richard Bennett served as its first president in 1947.[40] In 1950, Robert Hooton and his wife Margaret moved to Albuquerque and bought the Fred Stueckel house at 306 San Felipe. They joined Sewell and the Bennetts in trying to preserve the character of the old neighborhood. According to Hooton, they wanted to maintain the "small-town atmosphere" of the area.[41]

The property owners of this community, however, differed from the Hispanic community centered on the congregation of San Felipe Church. Sewell, the Bennetts, and the Hootons belonged to a set of predominantly Anglo newcomers whose property concentrated around the plaza. They had a different perspective on the character of Old Town than the native residents. The way these Anglo preservationists wanted to protect the area was through city control, specifically through the regulation of architectural changes that might alter the look of the plaza and threaten property values. Although major architectural changes had to be approved by the city's Board of Adjustment, the Anglo residents feared that the Board's ignorance of historic architecture would dramatically change the area.

The chair of the Board of Adjustment, Hugh Graham, also realized the need for both an expert in historic architecture and more city control over Old Town. The formal creation of the Old Town historic zone began when Hooton approached the Board of Adjustment about architectural changes to his building. Breaking with tradition, Hooton wanted to restore the western Victorian gingerbread trim around the front of his building. Because most of the changes to buildings in the area were in the Pueblo Revival style, Hooton's proposal was inconsistent with the rest of the plaza. The Board approved Hooton's plans, but the incongruity of the change prompted Graham to support stronger city regulation in Old Town.[42]

Hooton and other local historic preservationists, with the sanction

of the Board of Adjustment, proposed a change in the zoning laws in 1956 to protect the historic architecture of Old Town. After studying the possibilities, the Planning Commission created a new zoning category for historic districts, "H" zones, in 1957. Although not nearly as controversial as annexation, the establishment of an "H" zone in Old Town did not pass without opposition. Nick Garcia, a native property owner around the plaza, opposed the historic district, mainly because of the restrictions it put on land usage. Garcia owned "Nick's Wood Lot," next door to his residence, and feared that the "H" zone ordinance would keep him from promoting his business effectively.[43]

Opposition appeared during the public hearing on the zoning change. The minutes record a large group of "native residents" at the hearing.

Mr. Doloritas Lucero, 416 Romero Street NW, rose to object to the establishment of a Historical Zone. He felt that Old Town is "getting along all right as it is, so why not leave it alone." He also objected to the inclusions of the word "color" as written into the ordinance.[44]

Residents also protested the fact that there were no representatives from Old Town on the City Board of Adjustment. At the end of the hearing, however, the only victory scored by opponents of the "H" zone was the removal of the words "color" and "texture" from the ordinance.[45] The law passed the City Commission with ease, although it did not make much of a splash with the general public. The day after the City Commission adopted the law, the *Albuquerque Journal* ran a small, two-paragraph article on page fifteen, announcing the creation of the Old Town historic zone along with another zoning change.[46] Hardly an auspicious beginning.

After establishing the "H" zone, the Planning Commission formed an advisory committee to consult on proposed architectural changes within the zone. Bob Hooton was instrumental in creating that group, called the Old Town Advisory Committee (OTAC). In conjunction with the Planning Commission, Hooton chose committee members who were "authorities on preservation." The ethnic and socioeconomic composition of the OTAC, however, resembled New Town more than it did Old Town. The committee had only one resident of Old Town, Pete Duran, who was also the only member of Hispanic heritage.[47] Otherwise, architects, an art history professor, and historic preservationists filled the committee. Initially, the OTAC merely advised the Board of Adjustment on the propriety of structural alterations.[48] The OTAC became an autonomous city board in 1967, however, called the Old Town Architectural Review Board (OTARB), with the power to make final decisions on architectural changes in Old Town.

Inventing a Common Heritage

With historic Old Town under city control, New Town had to create a heritage in Old Town that reinforced the identity that city planners, commissioners, and preservationists wanted to project. In the last twenty years, cultural historians have argued for a distinction between "history" and "heritage." "Heritage," historian Michael Kammen suggests, differs from "history" in that it celebrates only those aspects of history agreed upon and valued by a group, leaving out any problematic information. Thus, "heritage" recreates the past as a time of innocence and consensus.[49] Heritage is mythic, using symbols rather than facts to convey historical meaning.[50] Historian David Lowenthal compares heritage to religious faith; people have no real proof that the events occurred, but accept them based on a feeling that they must be true.[51] Heritage also forms shared memories, and in this capacity, facilitates identity formation.[52] One need not be a Hispanic villager, for example, to adopt the heritage of a Spanish-colonial past.

Thus, residents of greater Albuquerque used Old Town as part of their regional identity by co-opting (and in part inventing) the district's heritage. Although none of the members of the Planning Commission lived in Old Town or had Hispanic surnames, they resolved that

> Whereas, the original site of the City now referred to as "Old Town" is the repository of history, the field of legend, a reverent spot—one to be preserved, to be seen, to be experienced by Americans as one of the matrices of their civilization . . . BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE CITY COMMISSION [appoints the Advisory Committee to aid in] . . . [p]roviding for public facilities and improvements to enhance the availability, protect the historic monuments, preserve the character, and maintain the integrity of this ancient community for future generations to enjoy.[53]

Similarly, the City Commission, in passing the Old Town Historic Zone ordinance, claimed that preservation was "to promote the cultural and economic general welfare."[54] Clearly, Albuquerqueans were to adopt Old Town as part of their birthright.

Establishing heritage meant inventing a tradition. Invented traditions usually mask fundamental political and social changes.[55] Although Old Town was supposed to appear as it had in the nineteenth century, for example, the power dynamic was dramatically different. Power in Old Town had shifted from Hispanic local control to Anglo city control. Economic power changed, also, as fewer native Hispanics owned property around the plaza by the late 1950s. According to city directories, the Hispanic population in 1957 was concentrated farther away from the plaza, north of Church Street, than it had been in 1940. Fewer
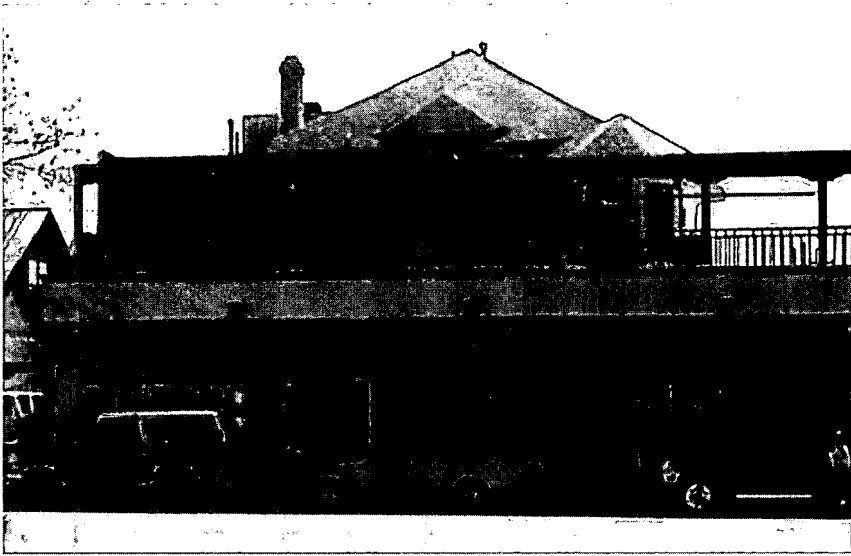
The Manuel Springer house in 1999. The Queen Anne style is still barely visible on the second story. Photo courtesy of the author.

people lived around the plaza in general, as owners of historic homes sold or converted them to shops and restaurants. In 1957, the names of shop owners listed in the city directories were generally non-Hispanic names. The nature of businesses around the plaza changed as well. Whereas in 1940 there had been a locksmith, printer, interior decorator, and grocery store alongside the gift shops around the plaza, by 1969 the groceries and community-based businesses were north of the church, leaving the area around the plaza more concentrated with curio shops, Indian trading posts, and Mexican-food restaurants.[56]

Since Old Town was no longer a quaint Hispanic village, the people promoting Old Town as the mainstay of Albuquerque's heritage had to re-invent it as one. Invented traditions take materials from the past with symbolic power and graft them onto the present to give the illusion of continuity.[57] Old Town only worked as a basis for regional identity, for example, if it appeared, visually and culturally, like a nineteenth-century Spanish village. Thus, City Commissioners, the OTARB, and the Old Town Association of Merchants used architecture as their primary symbols. By standardizing the style of buildings around the plaza, these groups invented a tradition in Old Town.[58]

Invented traditions, ironically, claim authenticity. Although visitors to an area crave authenticity, a facsimile will usually do.[59] According to *New York Times* architectural critic Ada Louise Huxtable, inventing traditions in historic districts set up a Catch-22. Once designated, a historic district begins a process of "homogenization, an economic, cultural, and physical upgrading in which everything is made to

The rectory of San Felipe de Neri Church, c. 1920. Stucco replaced the brick and vines in the 1940s. Photo courtesy of the Albuquerque Museum, neg. no. 1978.50.13.

resemble what it might have once been—only better."[60] The contradictory implications of this phenomenon are illustrated in the ordinance creating the historic zone. Although the law dictates acceptable architectural styles for Old Town, the ordinance is only concerned with the way a building *looks*. The law's wording addresses only the elevations of buildings, the use of external materials, and the overall facade. A building does not need to be made of adobe to be considered historic. A cement building with a stucco facade qualifies.[61]

The "faked authenticity" of Old Town perpetuated the fallacy that the area was an architectural snapshot of an earlier day. Although the historic zone portrayed a previous era, the buildings revealed more about the 1950s than the 1880s, the decade supposedly preserved in Old Town.[62] Old Town in 1957 looked considerably different than the village of the nineteenth century. The primary difference was that the building exteriors were more homogeneous by the 1950s than they had been in the 1880s. From the Progressive Era through World War II, Pueblo Revival architecture was the dominant style in New Mexico. Pueblo Revival was part of the picturesque tradition in American architecture, and emphasized the use of local materials and vernacular styles.[63] New Mexico's most famous architect, John Gaw Meem, added Territorial and art deco influences to Spanish and Pueblo styles, creating the Territorial Revival style, which quickly became the unofficial architecture of the state, especially in Santa Fe.[64] Property owners in Old Town followed the trend, renovating buildings to reflect the popularity of the Pueblo and Territorial Revival styles. Since Bernalillo County did not require building permits for most minor renovations, it is impossible to know when the buildings on the plaza were altered, but photographic

The rectory of the Church in 1999. Photo courtesy of the author.

evidence suggests that the bulk of the changes occurred between the 1940s and mid-1950s.[65]

Thus, the Old Town preserved by the OTARB did not faithfully represent the way it looked before the turn of the century, but rather was much more architecturally uniform. Around the turn of the century, for example, brick Queen Anne houses shared the plaza with Prairie Style homes, Italianate stores, and buildings with Greek Revival trim. The Rectory of San Felipe de Neri Church began as a one-story adobe building, but had a brick second story and a wooden verandah added in the 1880s. In the 1940s, the wood was turned into an adobe *portal* and the brick was stuccoed.[66] The Manuel Springer house, on the corner of South Plaza and Romero, came into existence in 1913 as a brick Queen Anne house, complete with gabled roof and projecting bay windows. In 1943, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Bennett bought the house and changed the first story to a Pueblo Revival style, while keeping the second story truer to its Queen Anne look. The second story is now hidden, however, behind a wooden portal that obscures any of the Queen Anne portion of the building from the street.[67]

Ironically, Cristobal Armijo built his house on South Plaza of adobe carved to look like brick. Begun in 1880, the builder added a brick second story in 1886. Armijo, a successful merchant who settled in Old Town because of family ties, easily moved between Anglo and Hispanic worlds. He claimed he faked the brick construction of the first floor, and added brick to the second, in order to make the building look more pretentious.[68] Armijo's motivation shows how values in architecture have changed, and that the OTARB's guidelines were more con-
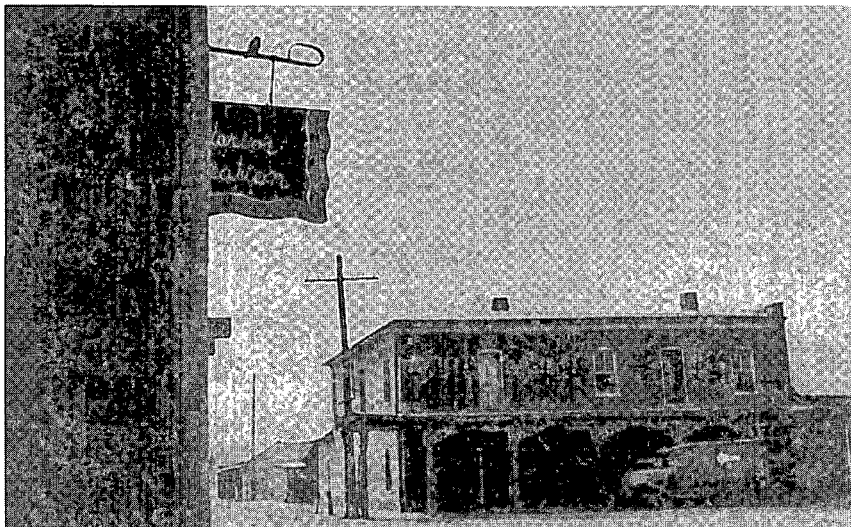
The Cristobal Armijo house, c. 1930. Notice the brick second story and the ornate, Victorian-style trim on the porch. Photo coutesy of the Albuquerque Museum, neg. no. 1980.018.001.

The Cristobal Armijo house in 1999. The brick is now covered in stucco, and fake vigas adorn the porch. Photo courtesy of the author.

The Herman Blueher house, c. 1900. This imposing structure was an ornate example of the architecture popular in American cities around the turn of the century. Photo courtesy of the Albuquerque Museum, neg. no. 1978.50.737.

The Herman Bleuher house in 1999. The flattened roof, stucco exterior, and portal built to the street would make this building unrecognizable to the builder, but projects the appropriate southwestern style. Photo courtesy of the author.

gruent with contemporary ideas about the past rather than historical architectural preferences.

The most radical change in architecture on the plaza, however, was the Herman Blueher house at 302 San Felipe. Originally a brick Queen Anne, this imposing structure would have been the pride of any Victorian American city. Separated from the street by a spacious yard, the two-story building was further heightened by a gabled roof. The porch, laden with gingerbread trim, surrounded the home on both stories. During the "puebloization" of the 1950s, however, new owners adapted the home for use as a restaurant, and altered it radically. They flattened the gabled roof, creating a Territorial look. They removed porches, as well as all window trimming. Finally, the new owners built an extension on the first floor, bringing it right to the sidewalk and adding a low-slung, covered, wooden portal. This building would be completely unrecognizable to Herman Blueher.[69]

By preserving a homogenized exterior, the Old Town Architectural Review Board created the illusion that Albuquerque was now culturally homogeneous as well. Uniform architectural styles reduced any signs of cultural contestation. Buildings of both Anglo and Hispanic architecture might imply the uncomfortable phenomenon of conquest. By assigning Hispanics in Albuquerque a place in the city's *past*, city institutions and Anglo Albuquerqueans could more easily ignore their existence in the *present*.[70] The strategy of historicizing an ethnic group denied the fact that Hispanics still lived, worked, and worshipped in Old Town. The buildings became symbols of larger cultural systems that ensured the hegemony of the dominant social powers.[71] Members of the OTARB, for example, were the only ones "qualified and sympathetic enough with the problems of Old Town" to regulate the architecture, failing to consult native residents before establishing building guidelines.[72]

The OTARB members' decision to ignore the input of the residential community in Old Town proved to be a mistake. Centered around San Felipe Church, the Hispanic community in Old Town maintained its own identity, separate from the Anglo property owners allied with the various city boards. Although some of the residents were merchants who leased their plaza stores from absentee owners, many residents shunned Albuquerque's promotion of Old Town altogether.[73] The residents and local merchants, however, united in opposition to the architectural restrictions required by the OTARB.

The conflict between Hispanic residents in Old Town and the Anglo-dominated OTARB erupted in 1978, in an incident fraught with ethnic overtones. The disagreement pitted Father George Salazar and the congregation of San Felipe de Neri Church against Betty Sabo and the OTARB. When a water leak damaged the front of the church, the Hispanic maintenance supervisor of San Felipe recommended to Father

The Permastone around the entrance of San Felipe de Neri Church in 1999. Photo courtesy of the author.

Salazar that it be repaired using Permastone, a synthetic building material widely used in Hispanic vernacular architecture, but not a building material approved by the OTARB. Father Salazar agreed to the repair, and parishioners donated the material and their time on a Saturday to fix the church. Considering this a repair, Father Salazar did not seek approval from the OTARB before acting. When the chair of the OTARB, Betty Sabo, heard of the alteration, she sent a zoning representative to cite Father Salazar for failure to comply with the "H" zone ordinance. A long court battle ensued.

The so-called "Permastone Controversy" illustrated the way OTARB members denied Hispanics a role in determining the look of the neighborhood. When being interviewed about the controversy a year after it

happened, Sabo quoted another OTARB member, Joe McKinney, as saying that in the case of the church, the OTARB found itself "in a position that we are trying to protect the culture of these people from them."[75] She went on to claim that San Felipe's congregation contained Anglos, as well as Hispanics, and that the church should belong to all of them, insinuating that historic preservation was for Anglos, not Hispanics.[76] When the interviewer, historian Chris Wilson, pointed out that Permastone was widely used in private homes and vernacular architecture, Sabo countered by claiming she did not know of its being used in the historic preservation of any churches, and therefore it was not an acceptable material.[77]

Passions were no cooler on the other side of the issue. Father Salazar lambasted the "artists and architects" who wanted to keep everything old just for appearances. "I'm not going to heat the church with coal and wood, I'm going to heat it with gas . . . I'm not going to put little sheets of paper with lard on them in the windows and take out the windows, because that's the way they used to do them in the olden days."[78] He pointed out that San Felipe was a living congregation, and that congregants should be able to repair the church however they saw fit. Finally, he invoked the separation of church and state, claiming that the city government could not dictate the religious practices of people, including how they fixed their church.[79]

In 1978, the Albuquerque Municipal Court declared the OTARB unconstitutional because its guidelines were too vague, and the Permastone around the door of the church remained. The City Commission rewrote the "H" zone ordinance, re-organized the OTARB, and renamed it the Landmarks and Urban Conservation Commission, with more specific guidelines and greater responsibilities.[74]

The increasing success of tourism on the plaza exacerbated the Permastone controversy. The OTARB had to maintain the illusion of authenticity to appeal to tourists, so they strictly prohibited any vernacular changes.[80] The architects and city appointees on the OTARB safeguarded the Anglo-invented tradition in Old Town against the vernacular tradition of the residents to create an area that resonated with tourists' expectations.[81]

Reinforcing Identity through Tourism

Heritage tourism was an important way for Albuquerque to solidify its identity with a Spanish heritage. By commodifying Albuquerque's image, the city's tourism bureau reinforced and broadcast that image. To promote the city as a tourist destination, the tourism bureau exaggerated the area's Spanish flavor and portrayed the plaza as the center of the city's activity.[82] A typical excerpt from a tourist brochure of the 1970s read, "Old Town is the heart and soul of Albuquerque's heritage, where the first colonial families settled near the banks of the Rio Grande

in 1706 . . . There remains a tranquillity, a serenity about Old Town. We welcome you to our neighborhood."[83] Another brochure from 1980 suggested that visitors "take a walk through history around Albuquerque's Old Town Plaza, the serene village which has been the focal point of the community since 1706."[84]

As the tourism bureau's advertising perpetuated Albuquerque's image, non-residents accepted that definition of the city. An article in the 1961 tourism section of the *New York Times* romanticized Old Town the same way as the tourist literature published in Albuquerque. The headline read, "Albuquerque's Old Town: Historic Site Recalls Era When Both City and West Were Young." The article continued:

> About two miles west of downtown Albuquerque and but a few hundred yards from the banks of the Rio Grande is an image lost in the capsule of time. It is Old Town . . . Visiting Old Town by day or night, one is aware of the sudden slowing of time . . . Many unusual glimpses of the past are to be had on visits to the distinctive shops and restaurants that fringe the Plaza.[85]

Local merchants in Old Town joined the city's tourism bureau in their promotion of the area. The Old Town Association of merchants printed its own guide to the zone, highlighting the heritage of the plaza.[86] The Hispanic merchants even co-opted a little heritage themselves, sponsoring a Wild West-style gunfight on the plaza every Sunday afternoon to bring locals and visitors alike into their stores.[87]

The merchants around the plaza also catered to tourists' expectations in the goods they carried. Old Town shops sold things that most Americans associated with the region.[88] Indian jewelry, pottery, and rugs became mainstays in plaza shops, along with toy drums, beaded belts and leather barrettes. All this reinforced Albuquerque's southwestern image. It was not that merchants in New York could not market kachina dolls—the dolls were made mostly in Japan and could be shipped anywhere. Kachinas would not sell in New York, however, because they did not fit the public perception of the region.

The question of public perception in vending led to a controversy in 1990 over who could sell jewelry under the portal of La Placita Restaurant. The merchants around the plaza and the Planning Commission allowed Indians to sell jewelry off blankets laid out along the sidewalk, similar to the practice in front of Santa Fe's Palace of the Governors. Non-Native American vendors were not allowed permits to sell their wares, however, because members of different city boards felt it would jeopardize the authenticity of Albuquerque's "top tourist attraction."[89] After non-Indian craftspeople from Mexico protested, the controversy was solved with a change in the wording of the ordinance that allowed

hand-made goods to be sold on the plaza, regardless of the ethnicity of the craftsperson. The city hired a patrol officer, however, to regulate the vendors and "protect . . . the historic district's distinct flavor."[90]

Although tourism in Old Town solidified Albuquerque's regional identity, it also created something different from anything the founders of the historic zone ever imagined. Historian Hal Rothman has called tourism a "devil's bargain." According to Rothman, "[s]uccess creates the seeds of its own destruction as more and more people seek the experience of an 'authentic' place transformed to seem more 'authentic' . . . these seekers of identity and amenity transform what they touch beyond recognition."[91] Heritage tourism in Albuquerque commercialized urban space and co-opted cultural strategies for tourism and entertainment.[92] As an originator of the Old Town Advisory Committee, Bob Hooton feels that the success of Old Town has been bittersweet. Instead of preserving the village atmosphere that attracted him and his wife to the area, he helped create a tourist attraction that divided what he perceived as a harmonious community.[93]

Despite the transforming influences of historic preservation in Old Town, the historic zone did indeed create an identity for post-war Albuquerque. Although post-modern critics bemoan the commodification of historic districts and the exploitative nature of economic relationships within them, historic zones preserve a city's historic exterior.[94] Instead of mass-produced, urban-renewal-inspired buildings in city centers, historic preservation allowed buildings to be recycled, creating diversity within the cityscape. In the West, historic preservation provided a way to update a city's frontier heritage and incorporate it into a civic identity.

Using historic preservation to create a civic identity for Albuquerque transformed Old Town. Just as anthropologists cannot help but change the cultures they study, so historic preservationists cannot help but transform the identity they seek to preserve.[95] As more Anglos from New Town claimed Old Town as their own, the area not only lost local political and economic control, but its uniqueness as well. It became instead a repository for an invented architectural and cultural tradition. Rather than protecting the residential Spanish village, historic preservationists created a homogenized district dependent on tourism. Visitors to Albuquerque find a re-creation of preconceived notions of Albuquerque's history, packaged just for them.

NOTES

1. Carl Abbott, *The Metropolitan Frontier: Cities in the Modern American West* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1993), 191.

2. Gerald D. Nash, *The American West in the Twentieth Century: A Short History of an Urban Oasis* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973). See also Abbott, *Metropolitan Frontier*; Christopher Tunnard and Henry Hope Reed, *American Skyline: From Log Cabin to Skyscraper—How the American City is Shaped By, and Shapes, American Life* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1953).

3. Robert G. Athearn, *The Mythic West in the Twentieth Century* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1986), introduction.

4. David M. Wrobel and Michael C. Steiner, eds., *Many Wests: Place, Culture, and Regional Identity* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997): 8–9. See also Richard W. Etulain, *Re-Imagining the Modern American West: A Century of Fiction, History, and Art* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1996).

5. Mitchell Schwarzer, "Myths of Permanence and Transience in the Discourse on Historic Preservation in the United States," *Journal of Architectural Education* 48 (September 1994), 2.

6. Mike Wallace, *Mickey Mouse History and Other Essays on American Memory* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996), 181–86.

7. Schwarzer, "Myths of Permanence," 3.

8. Alexander J. Reichl, "Historic Preservation and Pre-Growth Politics in U.S. Cities," *Urban Affairs Review* 32 (March 1997), 515.

9. Ibid., 516–17; Schwarzer, "Myths of Permanence," 191–93.

10. John M. Findlay, *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture After 1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 271. See also Chris Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe: Creating a Modern Regional Tradition* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997), 232–34; Michael Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), 538.

11. Findlay, *Magic Lands*, 5.

12. Wallace, *Mickey Mouse History*, 191–93. The National Historic Preservation Act was passed in 1966 to save properties of national interest, but the bulk of historic preservation legislation came from cities and states. See *National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, United States Statutes at Large* 80 (1966): 915–19.

13. Hal Rothman, *Devil's Bargain: Tourism in the Twentieth Century West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 23. See also Earl Pomeroy, *In Search of the Golden West: The Tourist in Western America* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1957); Wallace, *Mickey Mouse History*, 188–91; Reichl, "Historic Preservation," 518–19.

14. The fact that two settlements share the same name is confusing. Unless otherwise stipulated, "Albuquerque" refers to New Town, or the combination of New Town and Old Town, while "Old Town" refers to the original plaza area. Marc Simmons, *Albuquerque: A Narrative History* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982).

15. V. B. Price, *A City at the End of the World* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1992), 25.

16. The city's total population in 1940 was 35,449. By 1950 it had grown to 96,815, and in 1960 stood at 201,189. For a composite of census data on Albuquerque, as well as growth projections, see University of New Mexico Bureau of Business and Economic Research, "Population Profiles of Incorporated Places and Cities in New Mexico, 1910–2015," prepared for the New Mexico Department of Highways and Transportation, 1994; see also Abbott, *Metropolitan Frontier*, 26.

17. Raymond A. Mohl, ed., *Searching for the Sunbelt: Historical Perspectives on a Regions* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1993), 6.

18. Price, *City at the End of the World*, 17.

19. Ibid. See also Susan DeWitt, *Historic Albuquerque Today: An Overview Survey of Historic Buildings and Districts* (Albuquerque: Historic Landmarks Survey of Albuquerque, 1978), 27.

20. Price, *City at the End of the World*, 17.

21. Simmons, *Albuquerque*, 369–77.

22. Ibid., 374. Editor's note: see Ann Massman, "'Recollections of the Daughter of Pioneers': The Memoirs of Clara Huning Fergusson," *New Mexico Historical Review* 74 (January 1999), 47, for a photo of Castle Huning.

23. Ibid. See also Robert P. Hooton, interview with author, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 15 April 1998.

24. Price, *City at the End of the World*, 16. See also Simmons, *Albuquerque*, 360–67.

25. Jack Leaman quoted in Price, *City at the End of the World*, 7.

26. The best account of Albuquerque's early history is Simmons, *Albuquerque*. The subsequent narrative of Albuquerque's early history comes from this source. See also DeWitt, *Historic Albuquerque Today*.

27. DeWitt, *Historic Albuquerque Today*, 20.

28. Cobb Memorial Photography Collection, Center for Southwest Research, Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM.

29. Byron A. Johnson, *Old Town, Albuquerque, New Mexico: A Guide to its History and Architecture* ([Albuquerque]: City of Albuquerque, 1980). Johnson wrote this book for the Museum of Albuquerque. It includes excellent photos from the museum's collection. See also DeWitt, *Historic Albuquerque Today*, 24–25.

30. Howard N. Rabinowitz, "Growth Trends in the Albuquerque SMSA, 1940–1978," *Journal of the West* 18 (July 1979), 65–68.

31. Renato Rosaldo, "Imperialist Nostalgia," *Representations* 26 (Spring 1989), 107–8. See also Ann Fabian, "History for the Masses: Commercializing the Western Past," in William Cronon, George Miles, and Jay Gitlin, eds., *Under an Open Sky: Rethinking America's Western Past* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1992), 232.

32. *Albuquerque Journal*, 18 February 1948.

33. *Albuquerque Journal*, 11 April 1949.

34. Ibid.

35. It is unclear whether the lawyer representing Old Town residents, Hannett, was any relation to the former governor. Although the *Albuquerque Journal* claimed that Old Town's lawyer *was* the former governor, A. T. Hannett, the City Commission minutes refered to him as "G. W." or "George" Hannett in numerous places.

36. *Minutes of the Albuquerque City Commission*, January 1949, 8, 23–29. See also *Albuquerque Journal*, 19 February 1949.

37. *Albuquerque Journal*, 13 April 1949.

38. *Minutes of the Albuquerque City Planning Commission*, 1956, 1957. See also Price, *City at the End of the World*, 17.

39. Robert P. Hooton, interview with author, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 15 April 1998. See also Chris Wilson, interview with author, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 8 April 1998.

40. Ann Carson, Albuquerque Historical Society President, telephone interview with author, 10 February 1999.

41. Robert P. Hooton, interview with author, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 15 April 1998.

42. Ibid. Hooton, a proponent of preserving all forms of historic architecture, restored the Victorian look of his building, which is not directly on the plaza. Hooton, however, was a minority, since most other preservationists wanted to protect only Pueblo and southwestern architectural styles.

43. Ibid.

44. *Planning Commission Minutes*, 29 July 1957. No original copy of the ordinance with the objectionable word "color" exists, but from the context of the rest of the minutes, I interpreted it to have been used like the phrase "local color," meaning character.

45. Ibid.

46. *Albuquerque Journal*, 11 September 1957.

47. Robert P. Hooton, interview with author, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 15 April 1998. The first members of the OTAC were: Robert P. Hooton, William R. Leslie, Dr. Ward Alan Minge, Dr. Ralph Douglass, George Clayton Pearl, and Pete Duran. Although Hooton owned property in Old Town, he was not a resident. See *Minutes of the Old Town Architectural Review Board*, 1967, 1.

48. *Planning Commission Minutes*, 24 June 1957.

49. Michael Kammen, *In the Past Lane: Historical Perspectives on American Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 219–20. See also Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory*.

50. David Lowenthal, *Possessed by the Past: The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History* (New York: The Free Press, 1996), 128–30. See also Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory*, 3.

51. Lowenthal, *Possessed by the Past*, 2.

52. Clyde A. Milner, II, "The View from Wisdom," in *Under and Open Sky*, 209–15; Kammen, *Mystic Chords*, 10.

53. *OTARB Minutes*, 9 June 1967. Although the OTAC was formed with the historic zone in 1957, it advised the Board of Adjustments. It did not become a separate board until 1967.

54. *City Commission Minutes*, 10 September 1957.

55. Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction," in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 4–5.

56. *Hudspeth's City Directory for Albuquerque* (El Paso, TX: Hudspeth Directory Company of El Paso). Old Town was not included in Albuquerque city directories until 1940, so I consulted directories between 1940 and 1969. See also Sanborn Map Company, "Insurance Maps of Albuquerque, Bernalillo County, New Mexico," (New York: Sanborn Map Company). For this study, I used the maps for 1891, 1908, 1924, 1931, 1952, and 1957.

57. Hobsbawm, "Introduction," *The Invention of Tradition*, 6, 9.

58. Those people inventing a tradition via Old Town's architecture were following the precedent set in Santa Fe earlier in the century. Beginning with New Mexican statehood in 1912, city planners in Santa Fe had consciously stripped the city of Anglo, Victorian influences in favor of Pueblo, Territorial Revival, and Spanish Colonial architectural styles. See Wilson, *Myth of Santa Fe*.

59. Ada Louise Huxtable, *The Unreal America: Architecture and Illusion* (New York: The New Press, 1997), 6.

60. Ibid., 25.

61. *Planning Commission Minutes*, 8 July 1957. See also *Albuquerque Landmark and Urban Conservation Ordinance*, revised, 1994.

62. The exact period of Old Town's preservation is not even agreed upon by those in historic preservation. Former OTARB chair Betty Sabo claimed the architecture was true to the period before 1912, but current Landmarks and Urban Conservation Commission chair Chris Wilson, more of an authority on historic architecture, sets the date at 1875, before the arrival of the railroad. Wilson interview; see also Chris Wilson, "Artificial Stones/Precious Stones: The San Felipe Facade Controversy of 1978" (Paper for Seminar in Art History, University of New Mexico, 1979), 10.

63. Wilson, *Myth of Santa Fe*, 112.

64. Ibid., 281.

65. Johnson, *Old Town*, 58.

66. Ibid., 62.

67. Ibid., 97. See also Robert P. Hooton, interview with author, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 15 April 1998.

68. Ibid., 99–101.

69. Ibid., 116–18.

70. For an enlightening account of this phenomenon in Los Angeles, see William Deverell, "Privileging the Mission Over the Mexican: The Rise of Regional Identity in Southern California," in Wrobel and Steiner, *Many Wests*, 239–49. See also Sarah Deutsch, *No Separate Refuge: Culture, Class, and Gender on an Anglo-Hispanic Frontier in the American Southwest, 1880–1940* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 190.

71. Schwarzer, "Myths of Permanence," 2–3.

72. *OTARB Minutes*, 7 January 1969.

73. Millie Santillanes, telephone conversation with author, 5 May 1998. See also *Albuquerque Journal Magazine*, 30 December 1980, 4–8, 12–13.

74. Wilson, "Artificial Stones/Precious Stones."

75. Betty Sabo, interviewed by Chris Wilson, in "Artificial Stones/Precious Stones," 12.

76. Ibid., 13.

77. Ibid.

78. Father George Salazar, interviewed by Chris Wilson, 7.

79. Ibid.

80. Simmons, *Albuquerque*, 374–75.

81. Wilson, "Artificial Stones/Precious Stones," 12. See also Huxtable, *Unreal America*, ch. 1.

82. Jim Hoffsis, telephone interview with author, 24 March 1998. See also Price, *City at the End of the World*, 55–57.

83. "Keepsake Map of Old Town, Albuquerque," Albuquerque Vertical Files, Center for Southwest Research, Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

84. "Visit Historic Old Town" pamphlet in ibid.

85. *New York Times*, 8 January 1961.

86. Jim Hoffsis, telephone conversation with the author, 24 March 1998.

87. *Albuquerque Tribune*, 29 May 1980. See also Millie Santillanes, telephone conversation with author, 5 May 1998.

88. Wrobel and Steiner, *Many Wests*, 2–4.

89. *Albuquerque Tribune*, 2 August 1990.

90. Ibid., 12 August 1991.

91. Rothman, *Devil's Bargain*, 27.

92. Reichl, "Historic Preservation," 515.

93. Robert P. Hooton, interview with author, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 15 April 1998.

94. See, for example, Huxtable, *Unreal America*, 27–32; Michael Sorkin, ed., *Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1992).

95. Rosaldo, "Imperialist Nostalgia," 120.