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Common Purposes, Worlds Apart: Mexican-American, Mormon, and Midwestern Women Homesteaders in Cochise County, Arizona

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Women homesteaders were much more diverse than the "classic" image would suggest. A case study of Anglo midwestern, Mexican-American, and Mormon homesteading women in Cochise County, Arizona, reveals commonalities and differences obscured by promotional efforts to cast homesteading as the salvation of white America in the early twentieth century.

CONJURE UP THE CLASSIC image of a woman homesteader. Someone stalwart, independent, and hardy comes to mind. She is probably on the Plains somewhere, and she is almost definitely white, likely Protestant, and either native- or European-born. Even if she is part of a family group—as much scholarship has shown her to be—she still appears as an icon of female individualism in the West, evidence that the frontier offered freedom for women as well as men.[1] 1

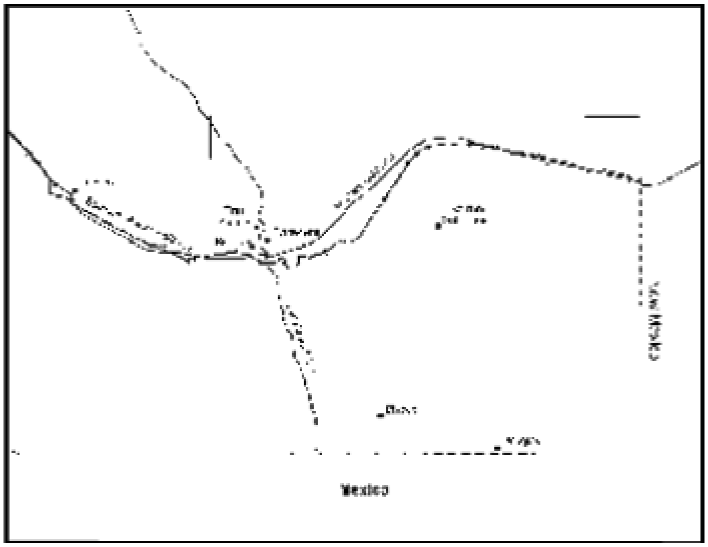

Figure 1. Map of Cochise County, Arizona. Tres Alamos, Pomerene, and Kansas Settlement were among more than a dozen rural communities (not shown) created by the arrival of homesteaders to Cochise County. The opening of the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1879–1880 nearly obliterated Tres Alamos, which became absorbed into Benson. Pomerene and Kansas Settlement survive as tiny communities today. Map designed by Sarah E. Hinman, Louisiana State University-Baton Rouge.

The classic single woman homesteader is a creation of western mythology, just like the lone cowboy and prospector. As historians such as Dee Garceau have shown, securing "independence" through homesteading had diverse meanings for women. Moreover, careful investigation uncovers a broader range of women than just the classic type. Recasting the historical and cultural context of homesteading reveals the racial and gendered underpinnings of women's images. Some women matched the stereotype, but many did not. A few historians, including H. Elaine Lindgren, have acknowledged the diversity of the women themselves, but this heterogeneity needs more analysis.[2] 2

The American Southwest—an area where historians have rarely considered homesteaders, either male or female—is a great place to look for the variety of women homesteaders.[3] Mixed groups of Anglo Protestants, Mormons, and Mexican Americans homesteaded in several areas of Arizona, including the Santa Cruz River Valley outside Tucson, the town of Florence in Pinal County, and the St. Johns area in northern Arizona's Apache County.[4] Other parts of the Southwest, including the San Luis Valley of southern Colorado, had similarly diverse settlement patterns.[5] Yet the stories of these places remain little known. 3

A case study of three homesteading communities in Cochise County, 4

Arizona, demonstrates the commonalties and differences among midwestern, Mexican-American, and Mormon women homesteaders. Following a review of national and local promotional campaigns, this article first examines a classic homesteading case: Kansas Settlement, Arizona, a product of chain migration of Euro-Americans from the Midwest to Cochise County in 1908–1909. Kansas Settlement's story contrasts with the earlier example of Tres Alamos, a largely Mexican-American settlement dating to the mid-nineteenth century, and the simultaneous tale of Pomerene, a Mormon farming village founded in 1908.

All the women of these communities, regardless of race or religion, had much in common: they lived in cluster settlements among people of similar background, they participated in family strategies to expand land-holdings, and they used land and inheritance laws creatively to bolster their personal and familial financial standing. Yet these women homesteaders had their differences, too, some of which have been obscured by the legacy of early-twentieth-century promotional hype. In some places, Mexican-American and Mormon women homesteaded at rates similar to, or even greater than, their Anglo Protestant counterparts. Mexican-American women homesteaded, but were less likely than other women to head their own households. Some Mormon women finessed homesteading law to accommodate plural marriage or to help children born in Mormon colonies in Mexico to obtain land in the United States. Only the first group matched the classic image of the woman homesteader. The others have barely survived in the historical record. The public relations campaign that held out homesteading as the salvation of the American family is one reason why. 5

The number of women homesteaders in the United States grew dramatically in the early-twentieth century, part of a massive revival of homesteading spurred by aggressive promotional campaigns and newly relaxed legal requirements. National dry-farming and irrigation movements promised the salvation of the white American family by going back to the land. Anglo-Protestant women—either as homesteaders or homesteader wives—figured prominently in these campaigns, because they were essential to creating "homes on the land" and bearing the children to occupy them. Anglo-Protestant women benefited from this new propaganda, whether or not they endorsed it. Their high profile and their centrality to the boosters' ideology help explain why we know so much less about other homesteading women. 6

The promotion of homesteading in the early-twentieth century relied on scientific language to advance a cultural agenda of racial improvement, national reinvigoration, and gendered definitions of opportunity. Progressive optimism—the conviction that with a scientific system and a little sweat, anything was possible—buoyed homesteaders' belief in the claims of dry-farming and irrigation promoters, although they relied on wishful thinking as much as science. The dry-farming movement stressed crop rotation and deep plowing. The movement and its "science" developed during an unusually rainy cycle in the American West. It began in the Great Plains in the late-nineteenth century and quickly moved westward. In the long term, its methods were hopeless, but the language of 7

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"scientific farming" and the enthusiasm for homesteading made migrants eager and willing to believe.[6] The Enlarged Homestead Act of 1909, which doubled the maximum size of homestead claims and was meant to encourage dry farming, spurred a surge in homestead claims in Cochise County and elsewhere.[7]

At the same time, the irrigation movement was inspiring almost evangelical zeal. The crowning achievement of the irrigation lobby was the Newlands Reclamation Act of 1902, which used federal land sales to finance mammoth dam projects. Although Cochise County never received any large federal dams, the motif of reclamation as redemption permeated promotional efforts there.[8] 8

Both the irrigation and dry-farming movements used the language of homemaking to convey the relevance of their causes to everyday Americans. In 1901, the journal *National Irrigation* became *The National Homemaker*, then, two years later, simply *The Homemaker*.[9] Its counterpart, *Dry-Farming*, had become *Dry Farms and Rural Homes* by 1911. In Cochise County, local newspapers targeted men with special "homeseeker" editions.[10] One local editor extended an "invitation of welcome to every homeseeker."[11] Pitches like these refigured talk of plowing, wells, and flowage into a far more compelling image of "homes on the land."[12] 9

This domesticated image also brought complexly gendered language to agricultural promotion. "Homemaking," far from referring only to women, generally referred to a vision of manly independence and national unity through rural land ownership and farm production. George Maxwell, the nation's leading irrigation promoter, promised that the Reclamation Act of 1902 would create "the man who is free from all the uncertainties of a wage-earner's employment."[13] In Cochise County, an advertisement commanded readers, "Don't be a Wage Slave all your life. Get on Easy Street. The Road to Independence Leads to a Bowie Valley Farm Tract."[14] These independent men, so the propaganda went, would save the nation as well as themselves. A boilerplate quotation from Theodore Roosevelt in each issue of *The National Homemaker* proclaimed, "Throughout our history the success of the homemaker has been but another name for the upbuilding of the nation."[15] 10

Talk of upbuilding the nation invoked not just gendered ideas, but also racial ones, steeped in the quasi-science of eugenic race improvement. The back-to-the-land movement was propelled by Roosevelt and other national leaders, who were wary of urban immigrants and lamented the declining reproductive rate among the Anglo-Saxon middle classes.[16] In 1907, a prominent speaker at the National Irrigation Congress told his audience, "The greatest need in arid America is desirable white settlers."[17] 11

Roosevelt echoed him that same year when he warned: "It would be a calamity to have our farms occupied by a lower type of people than the...manly and womanly men and women who have hitherto constituted the most typically American, and on the whole the most valuable, element in our entire nation. Ambitious native-born young men and women who 12

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now tend away from the farm must be brought back to it...."[18] In 1912, an assistant secretary of agriculture instructed the Women's Congress at a dry-farming convention: "If our best blood will here [in rural America] multiply more rapidly on the average; and if the worst blood will remain in the city and will multiply less rapidly," farms could supply the cities with a better "race," as well as better crops.[19]

White women did not need to participate directly in this racialized rhetoric to benefit from it. They realized that if men could be homemakers and homeseekers, then women could be homesteaders. When a 1912 *Collier's Magazine* article praised single white women (such as the "girl from Omaha") who homesteaded on the Rosebud and Pine Ridge Indian Reservations in South Dakota, it uncritically implicated these women in the white triumph over the West.[20] Women homesteaders became the subject of dozens of laudatory articles.[21] 13

As Dee Garceau has shown, the iconic single woman homesteader was a rural version of the emergent New Woman, independent and self-supporting.[22] She was a female counterpart to the masculine frontier image trumpeted by Roosevelt and others, and she popped up all over national and local magazines and newspapers.[23] The most famous image-maker was Elinore Pruitt Stewart, a homesteader in Wyoming who published romanticized testimonials in the *Atlantic Monthly*, which were compiled in a popular book in 1914. Firmly engaged in the Back to the Soil movement, the former laundress urged "troops of tired, worried women...scared to death of losing their places at work" to leave the cities to take up their own homestead claims. Stewart's work served as entertainment and ideological fodder for eastern New Women, and her literary self became the model for the idealized woman homesteader.[24] Although these images often did not reflect the far more complex reality, they provided positive affirmation for women who appeared to come close to the ideal. 14

Many tried. One reason for the flood of publicity was that before 1900 women counted for less than 10 percent of American homesteaders, but in the twentieth century, their ranks grew significantly. In some places in the twentieth century, up to one-third of claimants were women, although 10 to 18 percent was more common.[25] In Cochise County, even in the nineteenth century, women had made up a fairly high proportion (13 percent) of successful Anglo homesteaders. From 1900 to 1918, the peak years of Cochise County's homesteading rush, 14 to 21 percent of the homesteaders were women.[26] Not coincidentally, these were the peak years of publicity about single woman homesteaders. These homesteading women, in Cochise County and elsewhere, faced the same steep odds and daunting hard work as their male counterparts, but they also rode a wave of public support for a new kind of womanhood—one that was always assumed to be white. 15

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The case of Cochise County's Kansas Settlement demonstrates the challenges, goals, and strategies of the prototypical women homesteaders, a useful benchmark for comparing other women. Nationally, the number of homesteaders exploded in the twentieth century. Landseekers descended on Cochise County, where 97 percent (2,826) of all homestead patents were 16 made after 1900.[27] By 1918, the peak of the homesteading movement, perhaps two dozen rural settlements dotted the county.[28] One was Kansas Settlement. The women there formed a homogeneous group and balanced personal financial stability with familial economic strategies.

Cochise County's rural newcomers created small, homogeneous settlements organized by place of origin and family relations, patterns typical of chain migrations. The plurality, if not majority, of the migrants came from the Great Plains, the Midwest, and the Upper South. In 1910, almost half of Kansas Settlement's heads of households were born in Kansas, and all but one came from the Great Plains, Midwest, Kentucky, or Texas.[29] 17

In the vast Sulphur Springs Valley, people like Kansas widow Mary Cowen, her three daughters, and her father were filing on homesteads, buying land, planting crops, and helping create a community. During 1908 and 1909, the Southern Pacific Railroad delivered enough families to build the first schoolhouse, where Cowen's daughter Nellie taught the fall term. Before long, Kansas Settlement boasted a Sunday school, ice cream socials, and community dances.[30] By 1910, Kansas Settlement had 89 residents.[31] 18

Cochise County had its own promoter of women homesteading in Lortah Stanbery, a transplanted New Yorker who homesteaded in the town of San Simon. In the local *Artesian Belt Homeseeker Edition*, Stanbery argued in 1914 that men's and women's goals were fundamentally similar—to acquire a home and a self-sufficient independence through land ownership. The major difference between the sexes, in her opinion, was their access to these goals. Men were choosy about what land they might own, according to Stanbery, but women saw land ownership in itself as precious: 19

> After years of living in other people's houses...the prospect of sitting down and getting up, sleeping and waking, working or idling on MY land was a new and seriously absorbing sensation. Men who come to the valley homeseeking go about in critical attitude, disdaining this, discarding that, objecting to something else, but not I. I took the first claim I found, and sat down on it at once....[32]

Women, she explained, wanted a place of their own, and they should seize the opportunity to have it.

In contrast to the vision laid out for male homeseekers, Stanbery, who was a teacher and principal, promoted a distinctly female independence attained through property ownership, rather than self-employment *per se*.[33] She benefited from the recognition among homesteading boosters that women were not just ornaments, but *workers*, and that their labor was valued and necessary. The Back to the Soil movement urged city-dwellers to "build up a home and an independent fortune," but Stanbery emphasized the home, not the fortune.[34] She assumed women homesteaders would still work for wages. She was not alone. National and local magazines celebrated single women homesteaders' wage labor, as well as the work they did on their own claims. A 1912 Arizona magazine article about 20

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women homesteaders described them as "energetic bachelor maids [who] are contributing...to the common good." They contributed not just by improving their claims, but also by working as "waitresses, nurses, stenographers, [and] teachers."[35] Meanwhile, Cochise County gossip columns also reported women's work on their own homestead claims, just as they did on men's.[36]

21 Clearly, some women did find new opportunities in the West, politically as well as economically. In 1912, the Arizona legislature approved women's suffrage (even as it simultaneously enacted poll taxes and literacy tests to disfranchise Mexican voters).[37] In 1916, twenty-four-year-old Elsie Toles successfully campaigned for county superintendent of schools by clattering across rural Cochise County driving her own Model T and courting many female voters and homesteaders.[38] Her running mate, assistant superintendent Helen Benedict, a single woman homesteader, proved to be one of Toles's best political assets. Benedict proudly publicized her homestead ownership and bragged that, "she could plow more acres of a dry farm in one hour than any other female homesteader in the valley."[39] Here was a direct appeal to other women homesteaders, and to the new breed of female voters, married or unmarried, in rural areas.

22 Toles and Benedict were unmarried, but political and economic independence were possible for married women too. The resolve of married women, according to Lortah Stanbery, was

> not to be overlooked or even noted indifferently. To hear a woman speak of her political activities, voting for one official while her husband favored the opposing candidate, gives an impression of moral courage quite as distinctive in its way as that of another woman killing a rattler....[40]

Women in family groups could clearly achieve some measure of independence.

23 This was important, because for most women migrants, both single and married, homesteading was a family affair. It was not uncommon for several family members to homestead individual or shared claims, often contiguous.[41] In the early-twentieth century Congress eased land laws, which encouraged more women of all backgrounds to homestead. In addition to the Enlarged Homestead Act of 1909, modifications in 1912 and 1914 made it easier for homesteaders to prove up on claims. Full-time land occupants could attain ownership after three years, rather than five, and those who took five years could live elsewhere five months of each year. This change helped all homesteaders, but especially women, who often worked as schoolteachers or lived with their families for part of the year. Another 1914 change allowed homesteading men and women to keep their own claims after marriage, provided they had been filed at least a year previously.[42] Young, single women could thus file homesteads with the intent of bringing their property to a marriage.

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24 The vagaries of homesteading law—residence requirements, rules about wives' separate homestead entries—undoubtedly altered gender dynamics within many families.[43] Daughters found opportunities and even

new identities. Helen Benedict's father was a prominent minister and rancher, but her claim was miles from her parents' land. She proudly identified herself as a woman homesteader, while supporting herself as a teacher and administrator. Women like Benedict—and there were many—were "single woman homesteaders," whether they had relatives in the county or not. Many lived on the land and made the day-to-day decisions, even if the claim was part of a collection of family holdings.[44]

25 Take the case of Mary Cowen's youngest daughter Katie, who came to Kansas Settlement at age 17. Katie Cowen married nearby homesteader James F. Hulsey in late 1911, bore a child, and divorced a few years later. After running a boarding house with her mother, in 1919 Katie Cowen Hulsey patented her own desert claim, near but not contiguous to her family's. In 1921, she remarried, and eventually bore three more children. The family relocated several times, but, according to her descendents, throughout her life Katie continued to make the primary decisions about ranching and farming her land.[45] The new homestead laws subtly tilted the balance of household power.

26 Considering women homesteaders allows us to reconsider assumptions about manly independence, too. Historians have been quick to point out how few women match the single-woman prototype, but none acknowledges how few *men* were single homesteaders. Even a casual perusal of surnames in homesteading records makes this point clear. Consider the Cowen family story from a different perspective. At least seven family members—three of them women—bought or homesteaded a total of 640 acres of public land, much of it contiguous. After a couple years in Arizona, Mary Cowen's uncle deeded his land to her. Everyone relied on pooled family labor. Side by side, grandfather and granddaughter drove wagons of lumber to their first home, while another granddaughter taught the school that enticed other newcomers. Mary Cowen's father George Homrighausen was as dependent on his "dependents" as they were on him.[46]

27 Women's homesteading clearly shaped the gender dynamics of kin groups. In the past, some historians have dismissed the significance of women's homestead entries too easily, lumping them together as "non-resident dummies" or mere legal subterfuge, with no acknowledgment of women's agency.[47] On the other hand, hagiographies of the single woman homesteader put the Lortah Stansbery types on a pedestal and thus discount the nuances of individual and collective decision making and economic control by women in kin groups. Nationally known mythmakers like Elinore Pruitt Stewart contributed to this narrow view, as Sherry Smith has shown. Although Stewart presented herself as the iconic single woman homesteader, in reality she married her employer, with whom she lodged, less than a month after filing her claim, which she eventually relinquished and failed to patent. She recognized that a romanticized image of the single woman homesteader was more appealing to her eastern New Woman readers, and more redolent of western tropes of independence.[48] As the women of Kansas Settlement show, the reality was more complicated.

28 Mexican-American women—so often stereotyped as passive and dominated by patriarchy—complicate the image of women homesteaders

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even further. Many had been homesteading for decades before women like Mary Cowen arrived on the scene. Scholars Deena González, Yolanda Chávez Leyva, María Montoya, and others have shown that many Mexican-American women owned land, but we still know very little about such women as homesteaders. Mexican-American homesteading women set patterns of family enclave creation and legal maneuvering later repeated by others, like those at Kansas Settlement.[49]

Several Mexican-American homesteading women lived in the region around the nineteenth-century farming and ranching settlement of Tres Alamos, on the San Pedro River. By 1874, this crossing had an ethnically diverse population of two hundred, including 47 women and 52 children.[50] Before federal land surveys, the residents were technically squatters, but in 1876, the men and women there were among the first people in Arizona to begin buying federal land and homesteading.[51] Some women acquired public land by both purchase and homesteading; Jesús Maldonado de Mejia purchased a cash entry in 1891, and in 1900 received patent (title) for a forty-acre homestead claim on the San Pedro River. By the time she died in 1907, her estate included 200 acres, 5 horses, and 200 head of cattle. The sole heir of her estate was her daughter, Rafaela Mejia, so the legacy of women's land ownership continued.[52] Another member of the family, Francisca Comadurán Diaz de Mejia, had a homestead of her own by 1890.[53] Some land-holding women, including Maria Ruiz de Montgomery, also held water rights, even more valuable than land in such an arid region.[54] 29

Much of the historiography of the Southwest's transition from Mexican to U.S. control has centered on land loss, but the people of Tres Alamos prove that some Mexican Americans native to the region used U. S. laws to *acquire* land.[55] Before 1890 many Mexican families from Tucson—forty miles away—colonized the river. From the 1870s to 1889, people of Mexican descent purchased nearly one quarter of all federal land sold in Cochise County, mostly on the San Pedro. In the 1890s, this proportion fell, but it remained a sizable 14 percent; similarly, Spanish-surnamed individuals made up 13 to 15 percent of the successful homesteaders in the county.[56] Dozens more Mexican-American landholders lived just over the county line; together with those who filed claims but never secured ownership, they constituted a significant portion, if not the majority, of the population in the Tres Alamos area.[57] Like Anglo Americans, they were not taking up empty land, and were participants in the European colonization of the Southwest. Mexican-American homesteaders on the San Pedro River seized land once occupied by Pimas, Tohono O'odhams, and Apaches. In response, the Chiricahua Apaches engaged in raids on Tres Alamos at least until the 1870s.[58] 30

Across the West, the costs of filing fees and land improvement ensured that most homesteaders were of at least moderate means, but Mexican-American homesteaders in Arizona were particularly privileged in relation to their peers.[59] Those Mexican Americans who bought or homesteaded public land in Arizona Territory belonged to a select few families, several of whom claimed Spanish ancestry. Many of Tres Alamos's new farmers 31

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descended from the families of military officials who had lived in Tucson since it was a Spanish presidio, while others were associated with the freighting and teamster business. Francisca Comadurán Diaz de Mejia came from particularly esteemed stock; her father, José Antonio Comadurán, was a *criollo* (Mexico-born person of Spanish descent) who had been the *comandante* of Tucson during the Mexican years.[60] Anna Bonillas, a widowed laundress who in 1882 bought public land in Tres Alamos, probably belonged to an old Sonoran family that included a Mexican presidential candidate and a female relative who married an Anglo territorial governor of Arizona.[61]

Despite their prestige, however, these families lacked the wealth of many Anglo newcomers. Mexican military officials lost their posts after U. S. takeover, and freighting families watched their businesses disintegrate when the Southern Pacific Railroad arrived in 1879–1880. The smaller fortunes of Mexican-American elites could not compete with the greater wealth of American newcomers, but homesteading was a way for the Tucson elite to diversify into farming and ranching. These were potentially lucrative endeavors as American settlers and soldiers poured into the region.[62] 32

The ranks of Mexican-American homesteaders included women from the beginning. With rare exception, married women were not allowed to file their own claims, because homesteading was limited to heads of households.[63] Some single women and widows, however, did become homesteaders. Among the 28 Mexican land purchasers and homesteaders in Cochise County before 1900, four—or about fourteen percent—were women.[64] In some Mexican-American families, women may have homesteaded because they could prove they were American citizens. Family history suggests that Jesús Maldonado de Mejia homesteaded and purchased public land, while her husband did not, because he was a Mexican citizen.[65] Arizona's hybrid of Spanish civil law and Anglo-American common law gave not just single, but also married and widowed, women considerable authority over their own property, because they retained ownership of it and control of their earnings.[66] 33

Widowed women could acquire and manage land inherited from their husbands or parents. In an 1889 lawsuit over water rights on the San Pedro River, male property owners specifically stated that the widowed Maria Ruiz de Montgomery farmed her own land. Other than two years when she rented her land to Chinese farmers, she took charge of farming barley, wheat, and vegetables. She hired men to do farm labor, but Ruiz de Montgomery controlled her land and what was produced on it.[67] In 1879, she threatened to sue her neighbors over water use.[68] Many male landowners did not perform the labor on their own farms, either, and no one questioned their control of it. 34

It was also common for women to hold brands in their own name, as Tres Alamos rancher Guadalupe Saenz de Pacheco did as late as 1890.[69] Some Mexican widows found their inherited ranches to be a burden, according to one scholar. These women often contributed the land to the 35

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family's shared holdings, or they liquidated it to pay for family expenses.[70] This suggests that women did have control over their property, even when they did not want it.

After 1900, the proportion of women among Mexican-American homesteaders doubled, accounting for about one-third of both aspiring and successful homesteaders of Mexican descent in Cochise County. This was about twice the proportion of Anglo women during their peak years of homesteading.[71] Mexican-American landowners were taking advantage of the liberalized homestead laws that convinced so many Anglos to homestead in the early twentieth century. But changes in the law alone cannot explain why such a sizable segment of Mexican-American homesteaders were women. 36

Several reasons are plausible. In some families, the men may have already acquired all the public land for which they were eligible. Others, like Ramón Mejia, may have been stymied by citizenship requirements. Women's homesteading was a classic strategy for increasing family assets, as several historians have shown.[72] Married women could not make homesteading claims, so it made sense to encourage daughters to homestead, then marry. Widows, who may have already inherited land, could homestead, then re-marry. Such were the methods of the extended Apodaca family. Manuel, Ricardo, and Cleofa de Apodaca, along with three others, patented contiguous claims on the San Pedro River on the same day in November 1908. Blood or marriage ties connected all six. A few years later, Cleofa was married to Jesús Maria Sanchez, one of the six homesteaders. Another member of the group, female homesteader Dolores Lopez, married a Sanchez as well.[73] Judging from her name and her homestead claim, Cleofa de Apodaca was a widow when she married Sanchez. No doubt she brought to the marriage her homestead as well as her inheritance. 37

The decision of Mexican-American women to file more claims in the twentieth century may have reflected smart strategy in the face of a new threat. After 1900, the flood of Anglo newcomers vastly outnumbered the pioneer Anglos and Mexicans who had settled in the region before the Apache Wars ended in 1886. New pressures on land and community encouraged Mexican families to devise new strategies to augment their holdings. As Anglos poured in, Mexican Americans became a minority in parts of Arizona, and public displays of anti-Mexican attitudes increased dramatically. A poll tax passed in 1900, and literacy tests approved in 1909 and 1912, eliminated so many Mexican voters that half of Cochise County's political precincts lacked enough voters to hold primary elections.[74] Many Mexican-American landholders around Tres Alamos—including several women—managed to remain on the voting rolls, but clearly they faced an increasingly hostile environment.[75] Augmenting their landholdings was one way to defend against the onslaught. 38

Another way was to marry wisely. In nineteenth-century Tres Alamos the different ethnic groups had intermingled—and intermarried—freely. Maria Ruíz, who later farmed her own land as a widow, had married John Montgomery, her father's business partner. One of her relatives married a 39

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German-American toll-bridge operator nearby, and several other marriages followed similar patterns.[76] This trend matched Tucson's Pima County, where intermarriage peaked at almost 23 percent of all marriages in the 1870s, and averaged more than 15 percent before 1900.[77]

After 1900, the number of marriages between Anglo men and Mexican-American women declined, however, and the new patterns in marriage suggest that Mexican-American families like the Apodacas were using strategic unions to keep land in their own community. This pattern matched other parts of the Southwest.[78] On the San Pedro River, Mexican-American families began marrying their peers in greater numbers. The Soza family, for example, had fifteen adult children, only one of whom married an Anglo. At least eight married into neighboring Mexican-American ranch families, while the others joined similar landowning families outside Tucson.[79] Maria Ruíz, the widow of John Montgomery, married neighbor Severiaño Bonillas.[80] These intramarriages consolidated real property in the hands of Mexican Americans and fostered a close-knit family and community structure. 40

As a result, female-headed households were rare. Despite the high percentage of women homesteaders, in one Mexican-American settlement north of Tres Alamos called Cascabel, the census found no female heads of household in 1910 or 1920. No widows were listed.[81] Some widows may have chosen to move to nearby Benson or Tucson, as Doña Maria Jesús Moreno de Soza did after Antonio Campo Soza died in 1915.[82] Land-holding women like Cleofa de Apodaca and Maria de Montgomery made attractive marriage partners and did not remain single for long. 41

Mexican-American women homesteaded land and had legal control of it, and at least some of them managed it themselves. At the same time, their landholding contributed to family and community strategies that consolidated Mexican-American property in the face of an Anglo population explosion. The classic image of the single woman homesteader does not fit the women of the San Pedro River, where female-headed households were rare. Yet Jesús Maldonado de Mejilla, Cleofa de Apodaca, and similar women held homesteads in their own name. By combining personal financial security with family goals, Mexican-American women's activities look a lot like those of other homesteading women, even as their lives remain invisible in homesteading's history. 42

The most immediate threat to Tres Alamos was not from midwestern migrants, but from new Mormon neighbors in nearby Pomerene. Since 1877, when Mormons from Utah had founded the farming settlement of St. David and had begun building small dams and canals upstream from Tres Alamos, Mexican farmers had found that they lacked "sufficient water to irrigate the ground."[83] The problem worsened in 1908 with the creation of the Benson Canal Company, a large irrigation project that created the new Mormon community of Pomerene across the San Pedro River from Tres Alamos.[84] 43

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About 16 percent of Pomerene's homesteaders were women.[85] Like their Mexican-American neighbors, Mormon homesteading women tended 44 to live in homogeneous settlements, participate in family and community land consolidation, and use the intricacies of public land law to their own advantage. Unlike Mexican-American women, though, Mormon women headed nearly 20 percent of Pomerene's households. The legacies of anti-Mormonism, religious separatism, frequent migration, and polygamy made the experiences of these women homesteaders unique. Homesteading's rules left loopholes that allowed plural wives to claim their own land, and thus fostered a limited autonomy for women within the remnants of polygamy. The Mormon women homesteaders represent a fascinating "in-between" case, because they seemed to benefit from their whiteness even as they used homesteading to maintain a decidedly separate culture.

Mormons (or Latter-day Saints) occupy a unique and anomalous place in western culture and politics. Both internal dynamics and external pressures contributed to the famed insularity of their communities. Some scholars, including Patricia Nelson Limerick, have argued that Mormons functioned as a distinct ethnic group in the American West. Mormons encountered severe discrimination, settled in close enclaves with communalist economies, created distinct patterns of land and water use, and practiced a demanding religion that set them apart from other Anglos.[86] **45**

Still, they could blend into a larger Anglo community in ways Mexican Americans could not. Mormons faced bias and prosecution, including laws meant to disfranchise them or shape their marital practices, but they were also clearly "white," granting them legal and social power other minorities lacked.[87] Mormons also benefited from their reputation as skilled irrigationists, and their lush farming communities garnered lavish praise from everyone from John Wesley Powell, in his 1878 *Report on the Lands of the Arid Region*, to neighbors in Utah and elsewhere in the Mountain West.[88] In recognition of their irrigation expertise, early twentieth-century Arizona water law was based in part on a combination of Mexican precedents and Mormon customs.[89] Mormons shared with Mexicans a reliance on kin, close settlement patterns, and experience with irrigation farming, but they maintained a decidedly separate community. **46**

If defining Mormons' place in racial and political power structures is difficult, understanding Mormon women's access to power and autonomy is even more so. For Mormon women, an explicitly patriarchal religious and community culture combined with the legacy of polygamy in sometimes unexpected ways. Utah's Mormons were early and ardent supporters of women's suffrage.[90] And, as several scholars have noted, plural marriage could foster bonds of sisterhood among Mormon women. Yet, at the same time, long absences or even abandonments by husbands (especially after the Mormon church forsook polygamy in 1890) could demand financial and personal autonomy from plural wives and widows.[91] **47**

Polygyny also complicated inheritance, so many widows were left with little or nothing from their husbands. Utah inheritance law tried to accommodate plural wives by providing small shares for the mothers of "illegitimate children," but existing evidence suggests no other state or territory did the same.[92] Even when plural widows secured some form of **48**

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inheritance, most bequests would have been small after being divided among such large families. The experiences of Pomerene's women suggest that homesteading was one of the many economic survival strategies employed by Mormon women.

The bulk of Pomerene's new residents were returning from colonies in Mexico, where thousands had sought refuge from anti-polygamy raids by the federal government in the late nineteenth century.[93] Not all Mormons in Mexico were polygamists, but they occupied a world where plural marriage was neither criminal nor clandestine. John Fenn, for example, had two wives—Matilda, with twelve children, and Lucy, who had nine. Like many polygamous families, they fled to Mexico after years of being on the run. Second wife Lucy spent many of her married years in hiding, "always under threat and struggle," according to a granddaughter of Matilda.[94] By 1892, the Fenns settled permanently in Colonia Morelos, Mexico, where John Fenn and his adult sons raised cattle and ran a successful freighting business that contracted with nearby copper mines.[95] Most families in the Mexico colonies farmed and ranched, including the large household of John Conrad Naegle, a German immigrant and Mormon convert with six wives.[96] For more than two decades, the Mexican colonies offered a safe reprieve for American polygamists. All that changed in 1912, when the Mexican Revolution escalated in Chihuahua and Sonora, and Mormon authorities ordered most colonists to evacuate with just a few hours' notice.[97] 49

Many came to Pomerene, lured by local promoters from nearby St. David. The extended Fenn family moved to Pomerene. So did some of the Naegles. Pauline, John Naegle's fifth wife, had been widowed in Mexico in 1899 and moved with her children to Arizona in 1912.[98] In Pomerene she and others set up a refugee camp of tents, lean-tos, and rough cabins salvaged from abandoned mining areas.[99] Two years later, at least two-thirds of Pomerene's families with children were Mormon refugees from Mexico.[100] By 1920, 80 percent of the town's heads of households called themselves farmers.[101] Some homesteaded, while others purchased private land—perhaps because they were wary of attracting the attention of the federal government, or because they were not U. S. citizens.[102] 50

As boosters' rhetoric made clear, though, race as well as nativity was central to the homesteading enterprise, and here Mormons differed dramatically from Mexican Americans. Being born in Mexico did not necessarily mean being Mexican, just as being born in the United States did not guarantee Mexican Americans being considered American. The school census form contained explicit instructions to count ethnically Mexican children as white, since local officials clearly did not consider them to be. The federal census had the same rule, but local pollsters consistently placed an "M" for Mexican in the race column, only to have a supervisor replace it with a "W" for white. Mormons fared differently. In 1916, Cochise County's school census-taker recorded all of Pomerene's new schoolchildren as "native born to native parents," a flat lie. Their parents may have been natives of the United States, but most of the children were born in Mexico. The pollster for the federal population 51

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census did mark these children as born in Mexico, but he inserted the notation "American citizen" at the top of the nativity column. The racial status of the Mormons from the Mexican colonies was thus made abundantly clear.[103]

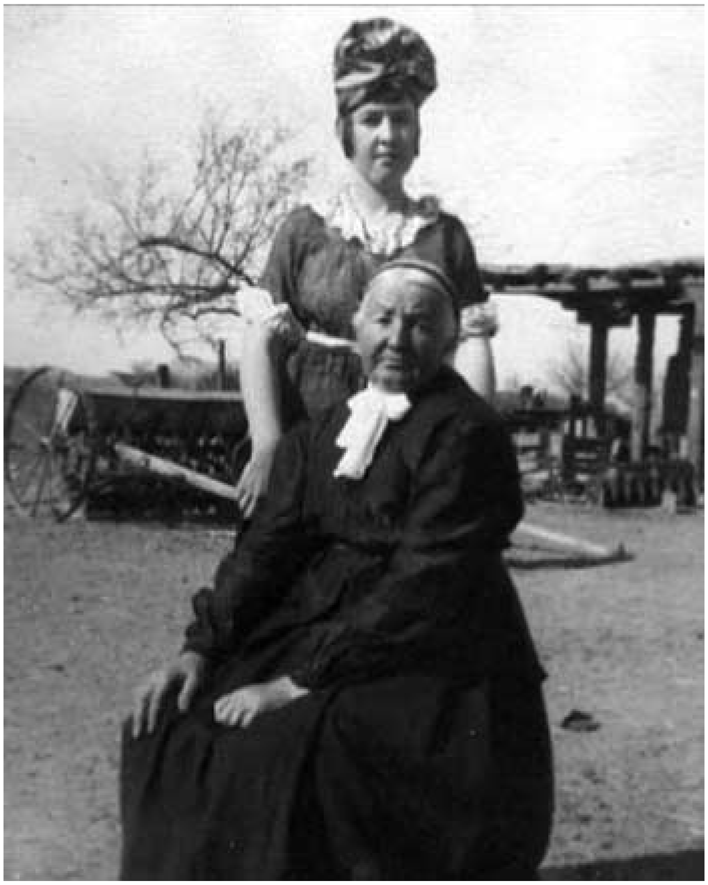

Figure 2. Woman homesteader and polygamist widow Pauline Beck Naegle and granddaughter Eva Mae Naegle Done on ranch near Pomerene, Arizona, c. 1920. The Naegle descendents were unaware until recently that Pauline patented a homestead in her own name. Photo courtesy of Boyd and Jeanette Done, private collection, Tucson, Arizona.

Pomerene's residents did share with the population of Tres Alamos a tendency to be closely related to one another. Pomerene boasted just 26 different surnames distributed among a population of 257. The Fenn family, for example, spanned five households and included twenty-two people.[104] At least two of them patented their own homesteads, both in 1922. One belonged to second wife Lucy, another to her son, Parley. 52

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Similarly, the Naegle family had three homesteads, two of them belonging to Pauline's sons, the third patented by her.[105]

In 1920, nearly 20 percent of Pomerene's households were headed by women—compared to none in Mexican Cascabel, near the Tres Alamos site.[106] In this, Pomerene was hardly unique. Many Mormon communities "were replete with women living more or less alone," according to one set of scholars. The presence of plural wives could also foster acceptance of widows, few of whom remarried.[107] In Pomerene, the legacies of polygamy and constant migration contributed to the high percentage of female heads of households. Eight of the ten female heads of household there were listed as widows, though it is possible a few were plural wives who lied to census takers.[108] Some, such as Pauline Naegle, were widows of polygamists. A few others might have been plural wives left to head their own households.[109] Such was definitely the case with Lucy Fenn, who stretched homestead law to fit the realities of polygamy. She lived with her four grown sons, and was listed as married in the census. John Fenn lived in Pomerene, too, but with his first wife, Matilda. Because Lucy Fenn filed her homestead claim before John Fenn died in 1921, she probably told the Land Office that she was single or widowed. Married women could not homestead, but, after all, she was not legally married.[110] 53

That Lucy Fenn and Pauline Naegle accumulated their own land by means of the Homestead Act puts an interesting twist on the meaning of plural marriage, because it is unclear how they experienced or felt about their "independence." Both owned land in their own names, but their sons farmed it. Lucy Fenn's homestead invites several possible interpretations: as a symbol of her independence, an emblem of John Fenn's abandonment of her, or as merely a legal fiction to expand family land ownership. Pauline Naegle's homestead appears to have been a family secret. Her descendents, well-versed in family history, knew of Pauline's son's ranch, but were unaware of her own homestead until they learned about it during this author's research.[111] 54

Both Mexican Americans and Mormons included women homesteaders among their ranks, but their individual circumstances created different kinds of households. Mormon women clearly contributed to family land, including engaging in invisible homestead ownership, as in the case of Pauline Naegle. Yet Mormon women were quite likely to head their own households, a sign of their autonomy (whether welcomed or not). Both Mexican-American and Mormon homesteading women belonged to close-knit communities thick with kin relations, and benefited in multiple ways from these ties. But Mormon women could dabble in the privileges of whiteness. Mexican-American women did not have that kind of choice. By the twentieth century, their community building was a defense mechanism rather than a source of celebration. In contrast, Mormon communities like Pomerene and St. David celebrate LDS Pioneers' Day even today. Although the holiday officially honors Brigham Young's arrival in Utah, its continued observance also taps into the nostalgic history of white pioneers, while the Mexican-American communities along the river have disappeared.[112] 55

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The story of Tres Alamos in the 1880s, or Pomerene in 1908, were little different from the story of Kansas Settlement in 1909, yet the celebration of Anglo-Protestant women's increasing freedoms hid the facts that women filed one-third of all Mexican homestead patents in the twentieth century, and that Mormon women often maintained their own households. 56

In Cochise County, the onslaught of Anglo homesteaders dramatically changed rural race and gender relations. As thousands of new settlers poured into Cochise County, the proportion of Spanish-surnamed homesteaders suffered a stunning decline. After 1900, Mexican Americans represented just over 2 percent of new homesteaders, and less than 1 percent of those purchasing public land. This, even while the absolute number of Mexicans acquiring federal land rose 75 percent.[113] Mormons are more difficult to count than Mexicans, but their handful of tiny communities hardly compared with the influx of new midwestern Protestants. 57

Anglo Protestant women homesteaders have captured much of the limelight, but they really should share the stage. A delicate balance of independence and interdependence characterized the lives of homesteading women *and* men—whether they were midwestern Protestants, Mexican Americans, or Mormons. Yet only the first group of women, through strength of numbers and a tremendous publicity campaign, came to represent the iconic homesteader experience. The two gendered streams of the homesteading movement—one celebrating a productive family anchored by a male head of household and the other offering women a chance at landed independence—converged when it came to race. The homesteading movement of the twentieth century celebrated white Protestant migrant families, rendering variation on the theme invisible. Cochise County's homesteading women offer a corrective to the usual tale. 58

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NOTES

[1] For an example of the liberation thesis, see Sheryl Patterson-Black, "Women Homesteaders on the Great Plains Frontier," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies* 1 (Spring 1976): 67–88; for an emphasis on family ties, see H. Elaine Lindgren, *Land in Her Own Name: Women as Homesteaders in North Dakota*, with a foreword by Elizabeth Jameson (1991; reprint, Norman, OK, 1996). An invaluable review of contemporary and historical literature on early twentieth-century women homesteading is Dee Garceau, "Single Women Homesteaders and the Meanings of Independence: Places on the Map, Places in the Mind," *Frontiers* 15 (Spring 1995): 1–26. Another good bibliography appears in Sherry L. Smith, "Single Women Homesteaders: The Perplexing Case of Elinore Pruitt Stewart," *Western Historical Quarterly* 22 (May 1991): 163–83, see esp. 163–4.

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[2] H. Elaine Lindgren found Christian Lebanese, Jewish, and African-American homestead communities in North Dakota. No Lebanese women in her sample filed homestead claims, while 9–16 percent of the Jewish homesteaders were women. She found a handful of black women homesteaders, *Land in Her Own Name*, 22–3. See also, Elaine Lindgren, "Ethnic

Women Homesteading on the Plains of North Dakota," in *Great Plains Quarterly* 9 (Summer 1989): 157–73. On Jews, see also *Rachel Calof, Rachel Calof's Story: Jewish Homesteader on the Northern Plains*, ed. J. Sanford Rikoon, trans. by Jacob Calof and Molly Shaw (Bloomington, IN, 1995). On African-American homesteaders, see http://www.nebraskastudies.org/0500/resources/0500_1040.html (accessed by author 19 December 2004).

[3] Literature on land tenure in the Southwest deals mainly with Spanish and Mexican land grants and land dispossession. See, for example, Albert Camarillo, *Chicanos in a Changing Society: From Mexican Pueblos to American Barrios in Santa Barbara and Southern California, 1848–1930* (Cambridge, MA, 1979); David Montejano, *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836–1986* (Austin, TX, 1987); Tomás Almaguer, *Racial Fault Lines: The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California* (Berkeley, 1994).

[4] Thomas E. Sheridan, *Los Tucsonenses: The Mexican Community in Tucson, 1854–1941* (Tucson, 1986), 55–74; Mark E. Miller, "St. Johns's Saints: Interethnic Conflict in Northeastern Arizona, 1880–1885," *Journal of Mormon History 23* (Spring 1997): 66–99; Roger Nichols, "A Miniature Venice: Florence, Arizona, 1866–1910," *Journal of Arizona History* 16, no. 4 (1975): 335–56. Edward Soza offers an encyclopedic record of Mexican-American homesteading in Arizona in *Hispanic Homesteaders In Arizona, 1870–1908, Under the Homestead Act of May 20, 1862 and Other Public Land Laws* (Altadena, CA, 1994).

[5] Virginia McConnell Simmons, *The San Luis Valley: Land of the Six-armed Cross* 2nd ed. (Niwot, CO, 1999), 132, 220–4.

[6] Allan Bogue, "An Agricultural Empire," in *Oxford History of the American West* ed. Clyde A. Milner, Carol A. O'Connor, and Martha A. Sandweiss (New York, 1994), 274–313, quote on 300; Robert B. Westbrook, "Dryland Farming," in *The New Encyclopedia of the American West*, ed. Howard R. Lamar, (New Haven, CT, 1998), 320–1. See also, Mary W.M. Hargreaves, *Dry Farming in the Northern Great Plains, 1900–1925* (Cambridge, MA, 1957), 85. On failure, see Gary D. Libecap, "Learning about the Weather: Dryfarming Doctrine and Homestead Failure in Eastern Montana, 1900–1925," *Montana, The Magazine of Western History* 52 (Spring 2002): 24–33.

[7] Pat H. Stein, *Homesteading in Arizona, 1862–1940: A Guide to Studying, Evaluating, and Preserving Historic Homesteads* (Phoenix, 1990), 7. Homesteading and federal land sales statistical data were created from databases of land patents created by the Phoenix office of the Bureau of Land Management for the author [hereafter BLM databases] in 2001. I then sorted and compiled by year of patent, sex, surname, location, and—where possible—religion.

[8] See Donald Pisani, "Reclamation and Social Engineering in the Progressive Era," in *Water, Land, and Law in the West: The Limits of Public Policy, 1850–1920* (Lawrence, KS, 1996), 180–94 and Laura Lovett, "Land Reclamation as Family Reclamation: The Family Ideal in George Maxwell's Reclamation and Resettlement Campaigns, 1897–1933," *Social Politics* 7, no. 1 (2000): 80–100. An example of local boosterism is "Bowie Valley Offers Cheapest Irrigation in the Southwest," *Bowie (Arizona) Enterprise*, 25 August 1916.

[9] Lovett, "Land Reclamation as Family Reclamation," 86.

[10] Douglas Chamber of Commerce and Mines, "Sulphur Springs Valley, Cochise County, Arizona" (Douglas, AZ, 1910–1911) and San Simon, AZ, *Artesian Belt Homeseekers' Edition*," 21 March 1914.

[11] "Bowie's Land as an Investment," *Bowie Enterprise*, 7 December 1917.

[12] The official motto of the National Irrigation Congress was "To save the forests, store the

floods, re-claim the deserts and make homes on the land." From address by Gifford Pinchot, *Official Proceedings of the Seventeenth National Irrigation Congress* (Spokane, WA, 1909), 96. For more on the discursive use of "home," see Karen Merrill, "Whose Home on the Range?" *Western Historical Quarterly* 27 (Winter 1996): 433–51.

[13] Quoted in Lovett, "Land Reclamation as Family Reclamation," 86.

[14] "State Land Sale Now On!" *Bowie Enterprise*, 12 November 1915.

[15] Lovett, "Land Reclamation as Family Reclamation," 86.

[16] On Roosevelt's role in this movement, see Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880–1917* (Chicago, 1995), 170–215.

[17] Address by Dr. Samuel Fortier, "The Greatest Need of Arid America," in *Official Proceedings of Fifteenth Annual Irrigation Congress*, ed. W.A. Beard (Sacramento, 1907), 119–20.

[18] Theodore Roosevelt, "The Man Who Works With His Hands," in vol. 16 of *The Works of Theodore Roosevelt*, national ed. (New York, 1926), 133.

[19] Hon. W.M. Hays, "Organization of Schools," *Dry-Farming* 6 (January 1912): 157.

[20] Joanna Gleed Strange, "The Last Homesteads," *Collier's* 50 (11 January 1913): 24, cited in Garceau, "Single Woman Homesteaders and the Meaning of Independence," 13.

[21] Smith, "Single Women Homesteaders", 182 and Garceau, "Single Woman Homesteaders and the Meaning of Independence," 12, 23, n. 50.

[22] Garceau, "Single Woman Homesteaders," 2.

[23] The author thanks Karen Merrill for this insight.

[24] Smith, "Single Women Homesteaders," 167, 169, 180 and on New Women, see Garceau, "Single Woman Homesteaders," 2, 13.

[25] James Muhn, "Women and the Homestead Act: Land Department Administration of a Legal Imbroglio, 1863–1934," *Western Legal History* 7 (Summer/Fall 1994): 282–307, esp. 283–4.

[26] BLM database.

[27] E. Louise Peffer, *The Closing of the Public Domain: Disposal and Reservation Policies, 1900–1950* (Stanford, CA, 1951), 134 and BLM database.

[28] Estimate compiled from Byrd Howell Granger, *Arizona's Names: X Marks the Place* (Tucson, 1983).

[29] 25 to 39 percent of residents in four sample homestead communities were midwesterners and Great Plains migrants. Samples compiled from U.S. Census bureau, *Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920*, Manuscript Census for Cochise County, Arizona, Enumeration districts [hereafter ED] 13, 27, 35, 36.

[30] Typescript of funeral announcement for Katie Flick, daughter of Mary Cowen, undated, in possession of author.

[31] *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910*, Manuscript Census for Cochise County, Arizona, ED 13.

[32] Lortah K. Stanbery, "Impressions by a New Arrival," *San Simon Artesian Belt*, 21 March 1914, 7.

[33] Elsie Toles to Harold Steele, Douglas, Arizona, 11 April 1919, box 3, MS 180, Cochise County Records, Arizona Historical Society Tucson, Arizona [hereafter AHS].

[34] Unnamed pamphlet, Douglas Chamber of Commerce and Mines.

[35] M. Margaret Shaw, "The Homestead Woman," *Arizona the New State Magazine* (February 1912), 8–9. For a national example, see Mabel Bates Williams, "The Woman Homesteader," *The Scientific Farmer* 2, no. 5 (1906): 20–3.

[36] See, for example, *Bowie Enterprise*, 21 March 1919.

[37] David R. Berman, *Reformers, Corporations, and the Electorate: An Analysis of Arizona's Age of Reform* (Niwot, CO, 1992), 54, 92.

[38] MS 789, Elsie Toles scrapbook collection, AHS.

[39] "Spent Fourth," *Courtland Arizonan*, 5 July 1917.

[40] Stanbery, "Impressions by a New Arrival," 7.

[41] Sorting the BLM database by name makes this clear.

[42] Muhn, "Women and the Homestead Act," 297.

[43] See Katherine Harris, "Homesteading in Northeastern Colorado, 1873–1920: Sex Roles and Women's Experience," in *The Women's West*, ed. Susan Armitage and Betsy Jameson (Norman, OK, 1987), 165–78.

[44] On this point, see also Smith, "Single Woman Homesteaders," 178.

[45] BLM database; letter to author from Carol Wien Brunner, 5 February 1999; Edna Marie Wien, interview by author, 10 February 1999, Dos Cabezas, Arizona, tapes in author's possession; Flick funeral announcement. Lindgren found that as many as 94 percent of women homesteaders in North Dakota controlled their land. Self-reporting skewed the sample, but the real figure must have been high. Lindgren, *Land in Her Own Name*, 118.

[46] "Local and Personal," *Arizona (Willcox) Range News*, 29 December 1911 and George Homrighausen obituary, *Arizona Range News*, 6 January 1911. But, see Smith, "Single Women Homesteaders," 180.

[47] Paul W. Gates, *History of Public Land Law Development* (Washington, DC, 1968), 640.

[48] Smith, "Single Woman Homesteaders," 167, 165, 175.

[49] Sarah Deutsch, *No Separate Refuge: Culture, Class and Gender on an Anglo-Hispanic Frontier in the American Southwest, 1880–1940* (New York, 1987) mentions homesteading only in passing: 18, 31, 115. On landholding, see Deena González, "The Widowed Women of Santa Fe: Assessments on the Lives of an Unmarried Population, 1850–1880," in *On Their Own: Widows and Widowhood in the American Southwest*, ed. Arlene Scadron (Urbana, 1988), 65–90; Deena González, *Refusing the Favor: The Spanish-Mexican Women of Santa Fe, 1820–1880* (New York, 1999); Yolanda Chávez Leyva, "'A Poor Widow Burdened with Children': Widows and Land in Colonial New Mexico," in *Writing the Range: Race, Class, and Culture in the Women's West*, ed. Elizabeth Jameson and Susan Armitage (Norman, 1997), 85–96; María Montoya, *Translating Property: The Maxwell Land Grant and the Conflict over Land in the American West, 1840–1900* (Berkeley, 2002).

[50] Henry F. Dobyns et al., *Los Tres Alamos del Rio San Pedro: The Peculiar Persistence of a Place Name* (Tucson, 1996), 44.

[51] Ibid., 41–2; Edward Soza, *Mexican Homesteaders in the San Pedro River Valley and the Homestead Act of 1862: 1870–1908* (Altadena, CA, 1993; rev. ed. 1994), 28; also available at http://parentseyes.Arizona.edu/booksbyedwardsoza/index.html (accessed 30 July 2004). Stein, *Homesteading in Arizona*, 5–7.

[52] Jesús is an unusual name for a woman, but census records show her to be a woman. BLM database; Jesus Maldonado, Probate Case No. 715, Cochise County Probate Court, Arizona State Library, Archives, and Public Records, Phoenix, Arizona (hereafter ASLAPR).

[53] The homestead patent was dated 1890, BLM database and Soza, *Hispanic Homesteaders in Arizona*.

[54] Grijalba et al. v. Dunbar et al. 1889, Cochise County District Court, 1st Judicial District, Case No. 1414, transcripts in Filmfiles 90.6.2 and 90.6.3, 82, 121–2, 421, ASLAPR.

[55] See, for example, Albert Camarillo, David Montejano, and María Montoya. See also, Martha Menchaca, *Recovering History, Constructing Race: The Indian, Black, and White Roots of Mexican Americans* (Austin, TX, 2001), esp. p. 1 and chp. 7.

[56] 9 of the 36 cash entries up to 1890 were by Spanish-surnamed individuals, 10 of 72 from 1890–1899, BLM databases.

[57] Mexican Americans' homestead claims in townsites adjoining Cochise County were compiled from Soza, *Mexican Homesteaders*.

[58] Dobyns et al., *Los Tres Alamos del Rio San Pedro*, chp. 1, and p. 44.

[59] On filing fees, see Gates, *History of Public Land Law Development*, 394, and Garceau, "Single Women Homesteaders," 7.

[60] James E. Officer, *Hispanic Arizona, 1536–1856* (Tucson, 1987), 326.

[61] Anna Bonillas, Serial Patent No. 011891, BLM database; see also, Edward Ellsworth, "Homesteaders in Tres Alamos Rio San Pedro, Pima County Arizona Territory, The Homestead Act of 1862," unpublished manuscript, 1998, copy in possession of the author, 31, 78; on Bonillas family, see Sheridan, *Los Tucsonenses*, 100–1.

[62] On the Spanish elite, see Officer, *Hispanic Arizona* and Sheridan, *Los Tucsonenses*, chapter 3.

[63] Muhn, "Women and the Homestead Act," 285.

[64] BLM database.

[65] BLM database. Non-citizens could file a homestead claim by signing a declaration of intent to become an American citizen, but many may not have wanted to. Oral history interviewee Katherine Mejia claimed that Jesús's husband was born in Mexico, and that he maintained family ties there. The elderly Mejia appears to confuse Jesús Maldonado de Mejia (also spelled Mejilla) with her daughter, Rafaela Mejia, but the dates of the homestead entry she mentions are accurate. See Katherine Mejia, interview by Liz Brenner, 18 April 1997, San Pedro Valley Arts and Historical Museum, Benson, Arizona [hereafter SPVAHM] See also, Jesús Maldonado, Probate Case No. 715, Cochise County Probate Court, ASLAPR.

[66] On women's property rights in Arizona, see Helen C. Carter, "Legal Aspects of Widowhood and Aging," in *On Their Own*, 271–301.

[67] Grijalba et al. v. Dunbar et al, 175–6. Descendent Edward Ellsworth corroborated this in personal correspondence to author, Benson, Arizona, undated, August 2001.

[68] Grijalba et al. v. Dunbar et al., 343.

[69] Rudy Pacheco, "The Story of a Pioneer Family," unpublished manuscript, Pacheco biofiles, AHS. Cochise County's book of recorded brands listed 81 brands in the early 1880s, 8 of them belonging to women (almost 10 percent). No women had Hispanic surnames, but since several were listed by married name (Mrs. G. Miller, etc.), it is possible there were Mexican-American women married to Anglo men. Bert Haskett, "Early History of the Cattle Industry in Arizona," *Arizona Historical Review* 6 (October 1935): 32.

[70] See the following articles in *On Their Own*: Donna J. Guy, "The Economics of Widowhood in Arizona, 1880–1940," 195–223, esp. 233, 239, and Martha Oehmke Loustaunau, "Hispanic Widows and Their Support Systems in the Mesilla Valley of Southern New Mexico, 1910–1940," 91–116.

[71] In the Tres Alamos region, there were 21 women out of 62 total cash entries, homestead patents, and stock-raising homesteads (320-acre non-irrigable plots available after 1916) made during the peak homesteading years from 1900–1918, BLM database. I used first names to determine sex, cross-checking census or oral history records, which uncovered some Mexican women with Anglo husbands. Another way to gauge women's land tenure is to track homestead claims, which may or may not have led to a patent (ownership). After 1900, there were 36 homestead claims by Mexican Americans in the San Pedro Valley. 13, or 36.1 percent, were made by women. Numbers compiled from Soza, *Mexican Homesteaders in the San Pedro River Valley*.

[72] Smith, "Single Women Homesteaders," 177–9; Garceau, "Single Women Homesteaders," 1; Lindgren, *Land in Her Own Name*, 13–4.

[73] BLM database; *Thirteenth Census: 1910*, ED 12. Blas Sanchez's widow was named Dolores, see Blas Sanchez, Probate Case No. 309, Cochise County Probate Court, ASLAPR.

[74] Berman, *Reformers, Corporations, and the Electorate*, 54, 92, 247, n. 24.

[75] Pool Precinct, Voter Register, Cochise County, 1914, County Recorder's Office.

[76] Dobyns et al., *Los Tres Alamos del Rio San Pedro*, 36, 26–7. See also, Katherine A.

Benton, "What about Women in the 'White Man's Camp'?: Gender, Nation, and the Redefinition of Race in Cochise County, Arizona, 1853–1941," (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2002), 41–6, 268–71.

[77] Sheridan, *Los Tucsonenses*, 149.

[78] On intermarriage across the Southwest, see Susan L. Johnson, "Sharing Bed and Board: Cohabitation and Cultural Difference in Central Arizona Mining Towns, 1863–1873," in *The Women's West*, 77–92; Rebecca McDowell McCraver, *The Impact of Intimacy: Mexican-Anglo Intermarriage in New Mexico, 1821–1846* (El Paso, 1982); Jane Dysart, "Mexican Women in San Antonio, 1830–1860: The Assimilation Process," *Western Historical Quarterly* 7 (October 1976): 365–75; Darlis Miller, "Cross-Cultural Marriages in the Southwest: The New Mexico Experience, 1846–1900," *New Mexico Historical Review* 57 (October 1982): 335–59; Peggy Pascoe, "Race, Gender and Intercultural Relations: The Case of Interracial Marriage," in *Writing the Range*, 53–65. A critique of this literature appears in González, chp. 3.

[79] "Genealogia," in Soza Collection, AHS; Soza, *Hispanic Homesteaders of Arizona*, 224–46, Benton, 268–70.

[80] Grijalba et al. v. Dunbar et al, 48.

[81] By 1919, Tres Alamos began to be absorbed into the nearby railroad town of Benson, so I chose Cascabel, another nearby settlement to analyze. *Thirteenth Census: 1910*, ED 12; *Fourtenth Census: 1920*, ED 29.

[82] Soza opened up several grocery stores and a gas station in Tucson, where she became a successful businesswoman. Sharon Johnson Mariscal, "The Sosa/Soza Family of Arizona," *Cochise Quarterly* 16 (Summer 1986): 21.

[83] Grijalba et al. v. Dunbar et al., 163.

[84] Dobyns et al., *Los Tres Alamos del Rio San Pedro*, 111.

[85] Seven of forty-three Mormon homesteaders in Pomerene area. Estimate based on cross-checking BLM database, known Mormon surnames in the area, and female first names. On national averages, see Muhn, "Women and the Homestead Act," 283–4.

[86] See Patricia Limerick's essay "Peace Initiative: Using the Mormons to Rethink Culture and Ethnicity in American History," in *Something in the Soil: Legacies and Reckonings in the New West* (New York, 2000), 235–55.

[87] Berman, *Reformers, Corporations, and the Electorate*, 16.

[88] Richard White, *"It's Your Misfortune and None of my Own": A History of the American West* (Norman, 1991), 153.

[89] R.H. Forbes, "Irrigation and Agricultural Practice in Arizona," *Arizona Agricultural Extension Service Bulletin* 63 (1911), 57.

[90] On woman suffrage in Utah, see Carol Cornwall Madsen, ed., *Battle for the Ballot: Essays on Woman Suffrage in Utah, 1870–1896* (Logan, UT, 1997).

[91] On sisterhood, see Jill Mulvay Derr, "'Strength in Our Union': The Making of Mormon Sisterhood," in *Sisters in Spirit: Mormon Women in Historical and Cultural Perspective* ed.

Maureen Ursenbach Beecher and Lavina Fielding Anderson (Urbana, 1987), 153–207. Examples of abandoned wives abound in the primary literature. For an example, see Annie Clark Tanner, *A Mormon Mother* (Salt Lake City, 1983). On legal matters, see Marybeth Raynes, "Mormon Marriages in an American Context," in Beecher and Anderson, 229, 233–234, and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, Carol Cornwall Madsen, and Lavina Fielding Anderson, "Widowhood Among the Mormons: The Personal Accounts," in *On Their Own*, 121–2, 124, 126, 127–8.

[92] Beecher et al., "Widowhood Among the Mormons," 124 and Barry Cushman, "Intestate Succession in a Polygamous Society," 23 *Connecticut Law Review* 281 (1990–1991): 281–332, esp. 291.

[93] F. LaMond Tullis, *Mormons in Mexico: The Dynamics of Faith and Culture* (Logan, UT, 1987), 91.

[94] Pearl Fenn Gashler, in *Stalwarts South of the Border*, ed. Nelle Spilsbury Hatch and B. Carmon Hardy (El Paso, 1985), 188, 191–2. On the trauma of fugitive life as a common theme in plural wives' personal histories, see Derr, 165.

[95] Gashler, *Stalwarts South of the Border*, 188, 191–2.

[96] Louise Fenn Larson, *Pomerene, Arizona and the Valley of the San Pedro* (Mesa, AZ, 1999), 417–8.

[97] James H. McClintock, *History of Arizona, Prehistoric, Aboriginal, Pioneer, Modern*, vol. I (Chicago, 1916), 270; Tullis, *Mormons in Mexico*, 91, 94; Louise Fenn Larson, interview by Nedra Sutherland, 15 January 1993, SPVAHM, page 8 of transcript.

[98] Fenn Larson, *Pomerene*, 417.

[99] Fenn Larson interview transcript, 15.

[100] Fairview School District Census Marshal's reports from 1911–1916 and ledgers for subsequent years, Cochise County School Records, ASLAPR. The author thanks Wendi Goen for compiling the 1916–1919 data.

[101] Fairview School District ledgers and *Fourteenth Census: 1920*, ED 7.

[102] Mormons filed perhaps 29 percent of the homesteads in the six townsites around Pomerene. Estimates were determined by cross-referencing homestead records with Pomerene Cemetery Records and the Pomerene Latter-day Saints Branch Directory for 1916, in Larson, *Pomerene*, 294, 300.

[103] *Fourteenth Census: 1920*, ED 7, ED 2 and 1916–1917 Fairview School District ledger, ASLAPR.

[104] *Fourteenth Census: 1920*, ED 7.

[105] BLM database.

[106] BLM database and 10 of 52 households were female-headed, *Fourteenth Census: 1920*, ED 7.

[107] Beecher et al., "Widowhood Among the Mormons," 123, 130.

[108] *Fourteenth Census: 1920*, ED 7.

[109] Hatch, 462 and *Fourteenth Census: 1920*, ED 7.

[110] For another example of Mormon homesteaders' refashioning of homesteading conventions, see Robert A. Sauder, "State v. Society: Public Land Law and Mormon Settlement in the Sevier Valley, Utah," *Agricultural History* 70, no. 1 (1996): 57–89.

[111] Email from Jeanette Done to Katherine Benton-Cohen, "Re: Your Call," 6 January 2005.

[112] The day consisted of a historical pageant, followed by a dance and sports. See, for example, "Robinson Items," *Benson Signal*, 24 July 1915. On Pioneers' Day in Pomerene, where it is still celebrated, see Louise Fenn Larson, *Pomerene*, 230.

[113] Spanish-surnamed homesteaders received 62 out of 2594 original and enlarged homestead patents between 1905 and 1923 (meaning they were filed by 1920), BLM databases.

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Winter 2005 Previous Table of contents Next