



# UNDERSTORIES

THE POLITICAL LIFE OF FORESTS IN NORTHERN NEW MEXICO

**JAKE KOSEK** *Duke University Press Durham and London 2006*

SD566  
N6 K67  
2006

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Printed in the United States  
of America on acid-free paper ∞  
Designed by Amy Ruth Buchanan  
Typeset in Scala by Keystone  
Typesetting, Inc.  
Library of Congress Cataloging-in-  
Publication Data appear on the last  
printed page of this book.

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## PREFACE

At six o'clock on the morning of September 30, 1999, church bells rang throughout the village of Chimayó, as they do every morning. But on this uncharacteristically cold day, the bells instructed more than 150 law enforcement officers to begin simultaneous raids on eight different houses in this small town in rural northern New Mexico. As helicopters hovered overhead, heavily armed officers on the ground broke down doors, shot guard dogs, and stormed houses. All told, they dragged thirty-one suspected heroin dealers from their homes, seizing their weapons and drugs as evidence. Federal agents, wearing black jackets with "DEA" (Drug Enforcement Agency) emblazoned on the backs, worked alongside plainclothes FBI officers, uniformed state troopers, and local law enforcement officers as part of the biggest interagency heroin bust in U.S. history. The Chimayó raid was part of a larger national crackdown, in which two hun-

dred people were arrested in twenty-two towns and cities across the United States, and which was dubbed Operation Tar Pit for the black, unusually pure strain of heroin that had caused a large number of overdoses across the country.

After the raid, residents of the town watched from their trucks, from behind curtains, and over fences. Caravans of unmarked vans and patrol cars drove up and down the narrow two-lane highway and through the complicated labyrinth of the town's unpaved streets, collecting evidence and transporting suspects. Attorney General Janet Reno announced that the raids had "dismantled a major heroin-trafficking organization operation in this county." She singled out Chimayó as an example of a traditional community saved by the operation, noting that between 1995 and 2000, more than one hundred local overdose deaths had been attributed to heroin. In fact, the Española Valley, which is made up of eight small rural communities on the western flank of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, has the highest per-capita drug mortality rate in the United States—more than Los Angeles or New York or any other major city, and over four times the national average.<sup>1</sup>

For the residents of Chimayó, the bust was not much of a surprise; most people in this small, intimately connected valley know who is involved in these activities. Moreover, many smaller raids had been conducted over the past several decades, and there have been more in the few years since the "transformative" Operation Tar Pit. Residents of the valley live with constant news reports of someone's son or daughter having died from a drug overdose or a drug-related murder, traffic accident, or burglary. In fact, in this small area of fewer than fifteen thousand people, almost everyone I interviewed had lost someone they knew (dead or in prison) to substance abuse (figure 1).

But the issue of heroin use was not what had brought me to do my fieldwork in the neighboring town of Truchas. I came because some of the most intense rural resource conflicts in the country over the last century have occurred in northern New Mexico. Early struggles in the region manifested as explosive labor and racial movements, but recent conflicts, no less volatile, have coalesced more narrowly around forest resources, with two forests that dominate the region—the Carson and Santa Fe National Forests—emerging as the central battleground.

Since 1990, two U.S. Forest Service district headquarters have been burned and another bombed; three Forest Service vehicles have been torched; rangers have been shot at; environmentalists have been hung in



1. Ernie Archuleta injects some heroin on the grave of a good friend of his who died from a heroin overdose on May 31, 2004. Ernie visited several graves at the Holy Family Cemetery in Chimayó and took a shot of heroin on his last stop. "The valley is so beautiful you wouldn't even know what goes on here," Ernie said, referring to Chimayó as you look down on it when approaching it from State Road 520. "You are looking into hell." Photo by Luis Sanchez Saturn / *Santa Fe New Mexican*. Reprinted with permission.

effigy; old-growth stands have been intentionally cut and left to rot; and hundreds of signs and fences have been destroyed. Not surprisingly, this forest area is widely considered one of the most contentious federal landholdings in the nation: the Forest Service has described it as a "war zone," and the *New York Times* has called it a site of "low-level guerrilla warfare."<sup>2</sup>

Newspaper stories, institutional literature, and many academics argue that these recent conflicts have been sparked by resource disputes. Yet as violent conflicts over those resources are increasing, most rural communities in northern New Mexico are actually becoming less dependent on forest resources for their income. This trend is visible in Truchas, a small town at the upper end of the Española Valley surrounded by both national forests, where I spent twenty months conducting ethnographic research. Most of the employed residents of Truchas work at nearby Los Alamos National Laboratories, and most of the remaining residents work for, or rely on, the federal and state governments.<sup>3</sup> But in spite of this shift in the source of their support, Chimayó, Truchas, and other towns in northern

New Mexico have become, in the local and national imagination, models for rural, resource-dependent communities struggling to protect their "traditional" forest, agrarian, and artisan livelihoods.

This paradox raises the central, deceptively simple question that underlies this book: Why does the forest in northern New Mexico incite such intense passion and protest? Or, more puzzling, why has this forest become the central arena for conflict when the livelihoods of regional residents have become less dependent on these forest resources? Images of traditional woodworkers, wood-heated adobe homes, and generations of weavers and herders contrast sharply with the nuclear laboratories, heroin raids, and gigantic gambling casinos that characterize the region today. These and many other aspects of the life and politics of northern New Mexico have become bound up with contemporary forest struggles. Therefore, this is not a traditional environmental story. There are no universal declensionist narratives of ecological degradation or catastrophe, no evil corporate or government giants, no simple stewards with traditionally ecological, noble identities.

Instead, this is a story in which forest management, protection, exploitation, degradation, and restoration are inseparably tied to the social conflicts and cultural politics of class, race, and nation. This story is one in which mountain forests and Hispano bodies have become connected in surprising, troubling, and tenacious ways. The couplings are not defined only by resource dependence or use, though they are often formed through the material practices of production and consumption. They are more intimate than that; these linkages cross the boundaries between skin and fiber, and it is the multiple understandings of nature that make forests and bodies intelligible. Both forests and forms of human difference become infused with the logic of capital, racial biologies, and national boundaries. Polluted soils are related to degraded souls; national forests need to be protected from foreign bodies; board-foot quotas become the site of intense class politics.

This book examines the many forms these linkages take, their complex causes, and their powerful consequences: how they are produced—through which practices, strategies, and mechanisms they are formed—and why such strange and often audacious links are fashioned. In the course of their political struggles, social activists, Forest Service officials, environmentalists, and others create and contest these links in ways that not only shore up their various identities but reproduce their many inequalities. This book explores these assemblages of nature and difference

not as fixed phenomena but rather as contested articulations that are made and broken, remade and transformed, through the complex and passionate politics of everyday life.

The heroin raid in Chimayó became an unexpected watershed for me in the process of identifying these connections. The raids—and the subsequent conversations I had with residents about them—pointed to the close relationships between local forests and Hispano bodies. Some of these seemingly disparate topics became interconnected in the local, regional, and national discourses and practices surrounding the event. It was not as if the relationships had not been there before; it was merely that the apparent contrast between them had made them seem far more like separate worlds than like related topics. The material proximity was obvious. While working for La Montaña de Truchas Woodlot, a local restoration company that thinned forests and sold firewood, *latillas*, and *vigas*,<sup>4</sup> I saw my coworkers inject heroin in the forest after work. And as a volunteer for the Truchas Fire Department, I witnessed the overdoses of friends, their families, and our acquaintances.

More compelling than any simple connection due to proximity, though, were the ways in which the Operation Tar Pit raid was related to all kinds of discussions of the forest. My first interview after the heroin raids was with a retired Forest Service forester who had worked in the region for more than twenty-five years and now lived in the nearby suburb of Española. During the interview, the forester's long, narrow, mostly expressionless face would grow animated, and his well-worn hands would begin to shake, as he spoke disdainfully about the environmentalists who were "destroying the forest industry" and about the Hispanos who were "unable to manage the forest or themselves on their own." He cited the heroin raid as an example of this ineptitude, stating, "It is their nature [to be attracted to drugs]; they cannot help it—that's why they need us to manage the forest. If they did it themselves, the forest would end up just like the communities up here—badly degraded and impoverished." He went on to reassure me that he was "not a racist" and it was "not their fault," then added, "they are just a different stock." He drew direct connections between the management of the forest and the management of the Hispano community, saying, "It is our [the Forest Service's] responsibility to be more involved with caring for and improving the community as well as the forest."<sup>5</sup>

That same day, I met with one of the leaders of the most prominent and controversial environmental groups in the region. He is an articulate man

who has lived in the region for over thirty years, during which time he has been in so many battles, and stood his ground so often and with such resolve, that he has become something of a legend among environmentalists—as well as a deeply despised target of many Hispanos and other social activists of the region. His group has lobbied to stop all logging on federal land in northern New Mexico. This position has not made him popular. He launched our interview with the observation that the raid helped demonstrate that “these people [Hispanos] are not traditional resource users, but loggers and forest users like anyone else. . . . They may have once been traditional, but they’ve lost that now.” When I pressed him on what, in his estimation, had been lost, he said, “The people’s culture has been so contaminated by the dominant culture that they’ve lost any traditional ties to the land.” He went on to say, “This is tremendously sad. . . . What they need to do is reconnect with the land, but I think Monday’s raid demonstrated that it may be too late for that.” Rather than acknowledge people’s individual and collective historic rights to the forest, he maintained that “these forests belong to the whole country. I feel bad that they are so poor [and] that they have so many social problems. I really do. If their use of the forest was still traditional, I might be willing to consider it—but it is not. These lands belong to the whole nation; they are not meant to serve as welfare for the people of northern New Mexico.”<sup>6</sup>

Just two days later, I ran into Salomon Martínez, at that time a member of the board of directors of La Montaña de Truchas Woodlot, on the high mountain back road that winds between Córdova and Truchas. He waved me down, and we ended up sitting in the shade outside his double-wide trailer and talking all afternoon. He paused between cigarettes and stories to turn on and off the rusty green oxygen tank on which his failing lungs depended. He was born and raised in the area and has lived his entire life there, with the exception of the years he spent away as a soldier during World War II. He is retired and lives mostly on welfare, but still does some odd jobs—selling firewood that his sons gather and carving *santos*, which he sells at Los Siete, a roadside craft store in Truchas. He talked frankly about drugs in the community and the difficulty of getting “clean” crew members who would show up for work on time every day at the woodlot. He expressed deep animosity toward the drug dealers and what they were doing to the community; he blamed the drug problem partly on the hippies who had established many communes in the area during the 1960s.

He believes that “a few dozen rotten individuals pollute the whole community,” but he claimed that the larger problem was twofold. First, he

feels that “La Floresta [the U.S. Forest Service] has taken our land” and that “we have forgotten our ties to the land.” As a result, “people are forgetting how to do real hard work. . . . They are not out in the woods or in the mountains any more.” He lamented that “a lot of kids hardly know how to use a chainsaw any more. . . . They make more money cleaning up the Labs and working for the Pueblos [in the casinos], or selling drugs, than they do working in the woods.” He leaned back, looking out toward the mesa. “It may bring more money into some pockets, but it doesn’t last. And it makes us weaker as a people. . . . We fight more amongst ourselves, complain more, and work less. We need our land back.”<sup>7</sup>

As I thought about the connections, I decided to go and see Lauren Reichelt, who works for Rio Arriba County on public health issues and is very involved in the regional debate around drug consumption. Lauren is a longtime social activist, deeply involved in social and health-related issues not just in Rio Arriba County but across northern New Mexico. She is well versed in policy and frequently speaks at marches, on local radio talk shows, and at county meetings. I asked her about heroin addiction in the valley, and she pointed to what she considers its underlying causes: the lack of social services in the region and the class divisions between Los Alamos, home to the richest and best-educated New Mexicans, and the neighboring towns, home to some of the poorest and least educated people in the country. She believes, like many others here, that people remain tied to the land, and that if we are going to help them deal with their problems, we are going to have to help foster that connection. To Lauren, the basic issue is simple: locals need to get their land back.

“If they had a resource base, they would not be in the place they are in right now,” she told me. She sees a direct connection between individual health, social illness, and the land. She is also supportive of an effort to turn one of the drug dealers’ compounds into a type of back-to-the-land work camp for youth, modeled on the old Depression-era conservation work camps. The goal of these camps would be to take troubled youth “back” into the forest. She and others believe that this would “help build bridges between the past and the present,” “reestablish people’s ties to the land,” and “help restore the cultural and biological health of the region.” Lauren put it this way: “What is good for the community is good for the forest, and what is good for the forest is good for the community.”<sup>8</sup>

It was through the lens of the raid, and through these and hundreds of subsequent discussions, that the forest became visible to me in new ways. It became apparent that the seemingly separate topics of the heroin raids

and forest politics are held together by a resonance of images and phrases linking nature and body. The body, with its natural tendencies, affinities, and propensities, was repeatedly tied to the nature of the forest, with its conditions, processes, and health. The raid was articulated in the same context as longstanding conflicts over the forest—so much so that knowledge about the raid and its social implications informed the ways in which people talked about the forest and its management. In this way, the forest again became intelligible through the lived social practices of the Hispano community.

The history of production, distribution, and consumption of heroin across nations and borders, into the streets and arroyos of Chimayó, and through the veins of Chicano bodies, has had profound effects on the region, as has been chronicled by others.<sup>9</sup> Though a detailed analysis of the politics of these histories and economies is beyond the scope of this book, its presence is scattered throughout the stories in this book. For this reason I start the book with the raids and the subsequent conversations through which the centrality and connections between the natures of the forest and of Hispano bodies first became clear to me and radically changed the way I understood the nature of forest politics in the region.<sup>10</sup>

This book attempts to challenge the brazen claims about, and the undisputed silences between, the nature of bodies and the nature of forests. Nature and difference are held together by common social histories: nature's repression, management, and improvement form well-worn paths that have defined the savage against the saved, the wild against the civilized, and the pure against the contaminated. These common histories create possibilities for couplings that animate contemporary debates about colonial legacies in troubling ways. Moreover, they do so with such regularity that these couplings and dichotomies come to be understood as common sense.

These histories also provide a rich collection of material—in the form of idioms, metaphors, and practices—used to understand and make intelligible disparate natures. In this study, I try to follow nature on its traverse between the terrain of racialized bodies and bounded nations, to watch the way it makes sense of both federal institutions and fiery passions, to observe how it moves through international circuits of trade while at the same time reaffirming the boundaries of tradition. To do this, I question the assertions of these various linkages, the immense authority granted to nature, and the strict binding and fixing of social difference. The heroin raid in Chimayó, particularly people's voicing of it in terms of the forest,

points to ways in which nature spills beyond the boundaries of natural objects and shows how forms of difference exceed the narrow confines of skin, community, and class. The result is the transformation of seemingly mundane regional forest politics into an extraordinarily complex and incendiary site of deep passions, contradictory historical legacies, and intense social protest.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

**B**ooks take a long time to write. And it's a time during which one must rely on others, from families to foundations, for support of both body and soul, with little hope of offering immediate reciprocity, let alone any guarantees on long-term returns. The debts I have accrued during my extended wanderings through universities, archives, woods, and living rooms have left me deeply grateful to so many people that a full accounting, while warranted, is utterly impossible.

I want to start by thanking the many people in northern New Mexico who, with immense generosity and unending patience, were willing to let a stray researcher into their forests, kitchens, meetings, and marches. To my great good fortune, most took me in as a project, the way they might take in a mongrel dog: initially, with a mixture of apprehension and pity; over time, they made this gringo from Berkeley feel very much at home. In so doing,



they not only made this book possible but also made possible some of my closest friendships. I owe a special thanks to Max Córdova, who was the first to take me in and whom I have come to admire as an adept leader and generous soul. I owe a great debt to Mark Schiller and Kay Matthews, whose commitment, passion, and martinis I continue to find both humbling and inspiring. Likewise, I owe a similar debt to Clare Hertel and her furry friends of Camino Querencia, who so often restored my energy and faith with good wine, amazing food, and the best of friendship. Many people generously shared their time, passion, and wisdom, including Brian Byrd, Henry Carey, David Córdova, Sammy Córdova, Crockett Dumas, Lisa Krooth, Bill deBuys, Ike DeVargas, Malcolm Ebright, Jerry Fuentes, Chellis Glendinning, Scott Greenberg, Sam Hitt, Carol Holland, Santiago Juarez, Alfredo Padilla, Jessie Romero, Rosemary Romero, David and Patsy Trujillo, Jan-Willem Jansens, and Carl Wilmsen.

I also want to sincerely thank several mentors who oversaw early versions of this book. I am especially grateful for their many readings of this work, from its first appearance in a rough draft to this final document and everything in between, without once losing faith or patience. Michael Watts has served as a model of intellectual rigor, engaged scholarship, and more: his wit and brilliance have made him an inspiring mentor. Nancy Peluso, the person most responsible for getting me into this in the first place (for which I may never forgive her), has fostered my intellectual and personal growth and has been a friend and inspiration for as long as I can remember. Don Moore, with his generosity, friendship, and intellect (fueled by a limitless supply of banana chips), has profoundly deepened my understanding of theory and my commitment to politics. Allen Pred has taught me other possibilities and ways of understanding and has shown me how to engage with spirit in both the politics of knowledge and the practice of kindness. Finally, Dick Walker has continued to ground my theoretical tendencies with unstinting reminders that the politics of production are important—but the production of babble is a liability. To have worked under their guidance is an honor. I also owe a great deal to a number of friends, comrades, and co-conspirators who have supported and contributed deeply to this project and my well-being: Willa and Ben Akey, Ivan Ascher, Jennifer Bajorek, Amita Baviskar, Kate Bickert, Iain Boal, Aaron Bobrow-Strain, Michelle Bonner, Katrina Brandon, Bruce Braun, Brad Bryan, Joe Bryan, Bill Burch, Rob Campbell, Trini Campbell, Giulia Chillemi, Amity Doolittle, Elizabeth Dougherty, Bart Drews, Anne Fitzgerald, Louise Fortmann, Julie Guthman, Cori Hayden, Charles

Hirschkind, Nicky Irvine, Sarah Jain, Karen Kaplan, Jon London, Celia Lowe, Marian Mabel, Saba Mahmood, Finn Mann, Joe Masco, James McCarthy, Kyle Miller, Betty Moffitt, Sanjay Narayan, Monty Paret, Moira Perez, Nancy Postero, Hugh Raffles, Brie Reybine, Jeff Romm, Shalini Satkunanandan, Jonathan Sawyer, Susana Sawyer, Jim Scott, Jen Sokolove, Rebecca Solnit, Jim Spencer, Rebecca Stein, Janet Sturgeon, Charis Thompson, Susanna Wappenstein, and Sylvia Yanagisako. I owe a special debt to Andrew Fetter, Geoff Mann, Tim Mueller, and Anand Pandian, who over the last ten to twenty years have shared their wisdom and deepest friendship.

I also owe a large debt to talented readers who have gone above and beyond the call of duty: Polly Pagenhart, Christine Makalis, Judith Abrahms, Kay Matthews, and Mark Schiller, whose patience and skill made this a more readable document. For cartographic wizardry I have relied on the talents of Darin Jensen, who has helped make intelligible a very complex landscape. The best and most palatable parts of the document are the result of their close reads, thoughtful comments, and eagle eyes. I would also like to thank my comrades from the BFP Marxists annual retreat group for their candor, wit, and friendship, and my new colleagues and students at the University of New Mexico for welcoming me to their community and back to this enchanted landscape.

A good many institutions have helped keep this project afloat. For their support I want to thank the Ciriacy-Wantrup Postdoctoral Fellowship in the Department of Rhetoric at the University of California, Berkeley, the Lang Postdoctoral Fellowship in the Department of Anthropological Science, and a lectureship in the Department of Cultural and Social Anthropology at Stanford for the time and space to complete this book. I also owe thanks to the EPA for the STAR Fellowship, the Ford Foundation Community Forestry Program, The Switzer Foundation, the U.C. Berkeley Vice Chancellor's Research Fellowship, and the Michael Watts Fund for desperate writers. I also am grateful to the many libraries and archives and their dedicated staff, who opened their collections to me during the last few years. These include the New Mexico Records and Archive Center at the University of New Mexico, the National Records and Archive Center in Colorado, the National Records and Archive Center in Washington, D.C., the Bancroft Library at U.C. Berkeley, and the Santa Fe Public Library. I would also like to thank Ken Wissoker for his thoughtful insights and patience and the two anonymous reviewers who offered their wise, rigorous, and detailed comments on the manuscript.

Finally, there are people in one's life whose support goes well beyond what is possible to repay. My parents, Jon and Margaret Kosek, have been loving and supportive enthusiasts of my work since I came home with my first drawings from Edna's preschool. Their integrity, friendship, and love are what I hold most dear. Last, I want to thank my partner, Julie Greenberg, who has supported me and advanced this work through her love, wisdom, and patience, enduring the porous boundaries between work and life. It is to you, Jules, with love, that I dedicate this book.



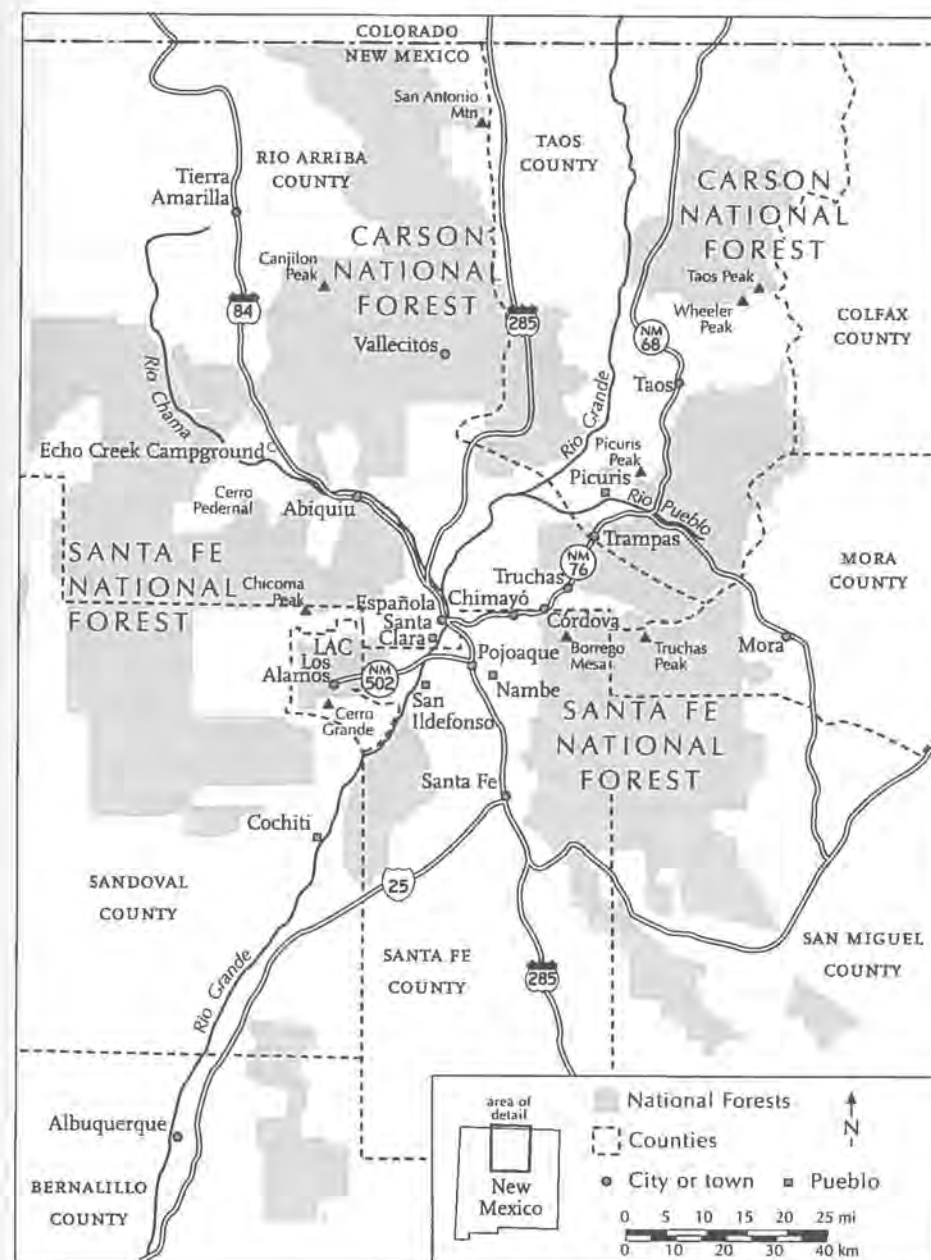
## INTRODUCTION

There is nothing more trying than the spring winds in northern New Mexico. They are dry, constant winds, aggressive remnants of winter that refuse to surrender to summer warmth and that turn away the much-needed rains from the cold, parched mountain landscape. The region is dominated by two national forests that span approximately 2.4 million acres of land and where some fifty thousand people live on a tapestry of reservations, land grants, and private property.<sup>1</sup> Eight legally recognized rural towns exist within the forest boundaries, along with thirty-eight "unincorporated settlements"; all are home to a mixture of Hispanos, Anglos, and Native Americans.<sup>2</sup> Most of the towns in and adjacent to Carson National Forest, such as Truchas, are among the poorest in the country, with an average annual wage of just over \$11,000 even with the inflated incomes from Los Alamos, which boasts one of the highest per capita

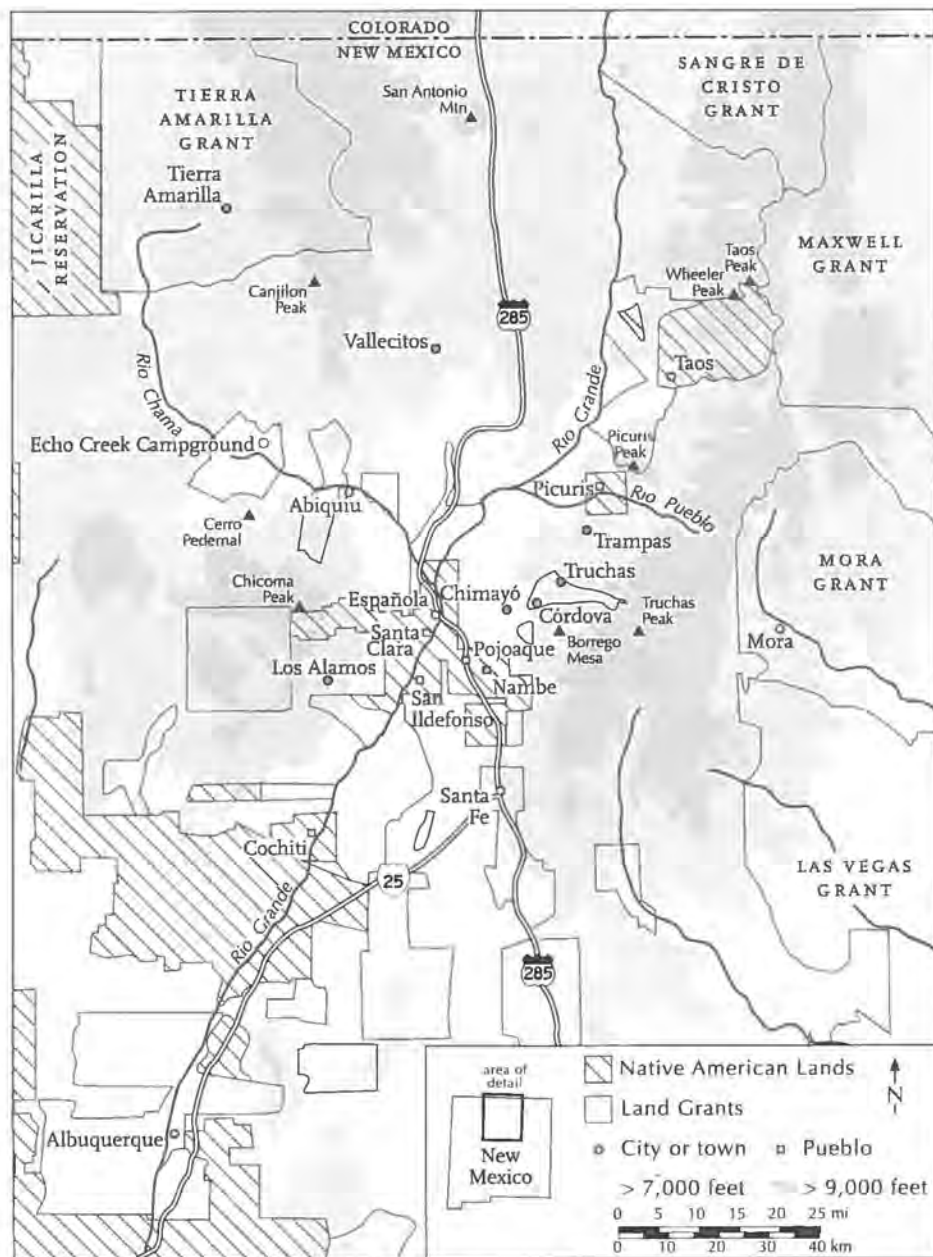
incomes in the state. The mostly Hispano residents rely largely on employment in the region's Pueblo-run casinos; at the Los Alamos National Laboratory; in federal, state, and county government; and in small-scale agriculture and cattle ranching. Federal welfare supports the remaining 20 to 25 percent, who are unemployed.<sup>3</sup>

I arrived in Truchas on a particularly windy day, stopping in to see Max Córdova, then president of the Truchas Land Grant, at an adobe-colored cinderblock building perched on the edge of Los Siete ridge. The building overlooks forests of piñon and juniper that lead down to the Española Valley to the west; to the east lie the snow-covered Truchas peaks, whose flanks are covered with dense ponderosa pine and, at higher elevations, fir and spruce. The building serves as crafts store, community center, wood-yard, informal visitors center, community activists' gathering place—and family home to Max and Lillian Córdova. At this time of year the oversized parking lot was still dotted with dirt-covered patches of snow. The Córdova home was the hub of local activity and would come to be the place where I spent much of my time listening and talking to people from all over the region.

When I arrived that day, no one was home, so I proceeded to look for the house I had rented on the northwest side of Truchas. This was not an easy task because few of the labyrinth of dirt roads are named or marked, and I had no street address to go by—only a photo and the names of my neighbors. I eventually spotted the house, but the direct road to it was flooded by a broken and overflowing irrigation ditch. I parked my truck and headed across some empty fields toward the house. About 100 yards into my trek I heard the sharp report of rifle shot, followed instantly by the whiz of a bullet over my head. I turned to see a small man pointing a large hunting rifle at me from some 50 yards away. At first I thought it was a mistake, that he thought I was something or someone else. But the second shot—even closer than the first—convinced me that it was not a mistake. Yelling at the top of his lungs in Spanish he suggested that I had better “fucking get [my] mother-fucking white ass off the grant and out of [his] sight” or he was going to put “a fucking hole in [my] head.” Pointing over my shoulder, I told him in Spanish that I was moving into the broken-down adobe house across the field and that the road to it was flooded. He responded in English, asking, “How long do you want to live for?” Then he laughed and took another shot, this time hitting the ground about 10 feet away from where I stood. After yelling at me some more, he went back into his house—which turned out to be directly next to mine.



Map 1. Counties, communities, and major roads of northern New Mexico. Map by Darin Jensen.



Map 2. Recognized land grants, pueblo reservations, and major mountains and rivers. Map by Darin Jensen.

I stumbled over the rest of the field, so scared that I ripped my shirt and cut my back while scrambling under the barbed-wire fence that surrounded my new home. Hands shaking, I fumbled with the key at the door for what seemed like an eternity. When I finally got into the boarded-up and broken-down adobe house, I sat down on a metal folding chair in that very cold room and tried to collect my thoughts. The first was: It is time to find a new field site; the second was: How the hell will I (a) get back to my truck and (b) get to my new, preferably safer and warmer research site? After about an hour, David, Max Córdova's eldest son, came by and offered to escort me back to my truck and then show me the way back to Los Siete. With a smile on his face, he said, "I heard you were back in town," no doubt referring to the gunshots. I was not in a joking mood about the incident. He said it was probably Pete Sandoval and tried to reassure me that "Pete's bark is worse than his bite." When I finally saw Max, I told him my neighbor was trying to kill me. Max declared flatly, "If he wanted to, he would have." I was not sure if this was in reference to Pete's aim or the ease with which anyone might be able to hit a 6'2" white guy in the middle of a plowed field, but I conceded the point. I also told him that I thought it might not be such a good idea for me to conduct my research here. He disagreed and told me that he would work it out. The next day he did, and neither Pete nor anyone else ever mentioned the incident again. And though Pete and I never became best friends, we did find a comfortable peace as neighbors and even had some lively conversations.

The incident was a powerful introduction to a number of themes with which I would become more familiar through my research. First, to my mind, there is nothing so clearly material *and* symbolic as a bullet flying toward one's head. Its racial and class politics were vested in Pete's anger and expressed materially through the barrel of his .30-06 rifle, and I witnessed their expression numerous times during my fieldwork. When many people tried to convince me, albeit in quieter tones, to stick to narrowly defined forest issues in order to avoid trouble, this incident and others—such as the heroin raids and Los Alamos labor politics—pushed me in the opposite direction, to address something whose avoidance has become a virtual national pastime: the racial and class tensions that powerfully haunt so many aspects of everyday life. And nowhere are these deep tensions more clear than within resource politics in northern New Mexico (figure 2).

No less impressive was the way the incident was addressed. I have no idea what Max and David said to Pete to make him leave me alone. Other



2. The sign reads "OUR LAND IS NOT FOR SALE NO VENDAN SU SANGRE PENDEJOS [don't sell your blood assholes] NO WHITE TRASH." There is a strong sentiment against gentrification by Anglos in much of northern New Mexico. Photo by author.

Anglos who moved into the area during my tenure found their houses burned or their windows smashed. The extent of Max's reach, I subsequently learned, was powerful, if sometimes precarious and limited in scope. The influence that persuaded Pete to back off was expressed not through formal law, but through personal ties, and these "internal" relations defined much of the politics both within Truchas and in the surrounding forest. Like other activists, Max constantly maneuvered between feuds, lawsuits, personal attacks, and public allegations from people in and around Truchas, while at the same time he negotiated with federal officials, donors, and politicians. Even after he lost a bitterly fought election to the land-grant board, he remained the person most central to interacting with "outsiders" seeking to contact the community.

In interviews with Truchas residents I often heard that impassioned anger directed not just at outsiders but also at different factions within Truchas. These chronic struggles, which are sometimes not just vitriolic but deadly, are commonly seen as isolated incidents, internal battles that are the product of social isolation rather than external politics. Moreover, popular discourses on cultural loss and the backward rural economy of northern New Mexico—spread by media, federal agents, and in popular

imaginaries—depoliticize Hispano poverty and racism and target their source as the "culture" and "tradition" of the isolated community rather than the political economy and the cultural politics that have produced the region's social conditions.

Nearly seventy people died directly from heroin overdoses in the Española Valley in a little more than a year; northern New Mexico has some of the highest poverty rates in the country; and Truchas has an unemployment rate of more than 20 percent. To many, these conditions are indicators of cultural pathologies rather than political histories. Following this diagnosis, the solution to the social ills and internal tensions becomes one in which relations of production remain unchanged and the lived injustices of difference go uninterrogated; instead, greater intervention is called for, and "federal experts" or "market-driven solutions" are proposed to "cure" the inbred, "native" cultural illnesses. This portrayal of community tensions renders political struggles invisible by portraying them as senseless expressions of rage, cultural isolation, and crime rather than as the consequences and expressions of politics.<sup>4</sup>

Certainly the "internal" community politics of Truchas are as real as the boundaries of the community; this is powerfully clear to anyone, particularly one who has been shot at while standing in the middle of an empty field. However, the internal and external, the traditional and modern, the isolated and the interconnected are products of the historic, sociopolitical relations of difference.

The myth of the region's isolation has served as the principal rationale for bringing one of the most defining sites of modernity, the Los Alamos National Laboratory, to the state. Constructions of isolated, backward communities held back by cultural pathologies have instigated some of the most intensive federal assistance programs in the country. These same myths of insular community and undeveloped nature have helped make the region home to one of the nation's most long-lived, avant-garde leftist communities; from artists such as Georgia O'Keeffe and D. H. Lawrence to hippie communes such as the Hog Farm, people have come to northern New Mexico to find the antidote to the modern. Yet while the myth of isolation is still a central defining factor of northern New Mexico, the region's landscapes and identities are littered with the residue of its contentious histories and economies and their attendant struggles.

This becomes painfully clear upon exploration of the tensions that first brought me to New Mexico. On August 25, 1995, as a result of pressure by regional and national environmental groups to protect the Mexican

spotted owl, a U.S. federal court halted extraction of wood from the national forests throughout the Southwest.<sup>5</sup> Outraged Hispanos from the mountain town of Truchas, who claimed dependence on the forest for small harvesting operations and fuelwood, responded by openly defying the federal injunction. The incident spawned numerous other actions, including the bombing of a Forest Service building, the attempted bombing of the headquarters of the region's most high-profile environmental group, Forest Guardians, and other incidents that I will discuss later in this book. The controversy quickly became enmeshed in regional histories as well as national debates around the nature of the forest environment. Truchas became an epicenter for the conflict, and Max Córdova became one of the most prominent spokesmen for the protection of tradition, culture, and access to the federal forests that surround the town of Truchas on three sides.

Max testified before Congress several times, appeared on television, and was quoted in the *New York Times* as well as in countless other national and regional papers. The controversy resonated in some ways with the national jobs-versus-the-environment debates that were raging in the wake of similar injunctions in the Northwest. Community foresters and advocates of environmental justice were joined in the battle by right-wing land rights advocates, members of ultraconservative wise use groups, and militia members. Astonishingly, "environmental" conflicts in New Mexico drew the attention of politicians as diverse as Newt Gingrich, who publicly supported locals as part of the private property movement, and Al Gore, who gave Max and others in the local community forestry initiative the prestigious Hammer Award for their efforts to promote sustainable use of forest resources. These conflicts made strange bedfellows and unlikely rifts: white supremacists lined up with radical La Raza activists in resisting federal intervention in local land use while deep divisions developed in long-term alliances between environmentalists and leftist social activists. These paradoxes led me to realize the need for new approaches to understanding environmental conflicts, as well as new understandings of nature and difference. Likewise, I saw that attention to these conflicts required attention to the practices and particularities through which identities and spaces are forged, contested, and remade through nature.

This could not be more apparent than in the battles over fuelwood and logging in northern New Mexico. It is almost impossible, for example, to imagine a local meeting concerning forestry in which the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo is not brought up at least once. Max said it himself as

we sat in front of his wood stove in the back room of Los Siete just a week after my original welcome to Truchas: "There is no more important document to us: it is our bible."<sup>6</sup> The treaty settled the Mexican-American War that began in 1846 when the United States sought to gain control of the area's Mexican territory and its anticipated mineral riches. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ceded control of thousands of miles of territory to the United States. However, it obligated the American government to legally respect all existing land grants and their attendant rights within this territory. Despite that commitment, the U.S. Surveyor General's Office and the Court of Private Land Claims often dismissed such preexisting claims, citing as a justification the "inexactitude" of Spanish and Mexican records and the resulting legal "ambiguity."

This convenient ambiguity was exploited by large, well-capitalized companies and individuals who purchased the "legal" titles to large grants (some of which encompassed hundreds of square miles of the most resource-rich land in the region) and then turned around and sold them at a profit. Between 1854 and 1891, only twenty-two of the more than two hundred Hispano communal land-grant claims were verified by the court, leaving 35 million acres of New Mexico's richest lands in legal limbo. Almost 80 percent of these remaining land-grant claims were never ratified. And although more Hispano land grants were validated in northern New Mexico than elsewhere in the state, much of what had been communal land found its way into the hands of the Forest Service.<sup>7</sup>

The loss of land and sense of injustice still actively haunt the region. Most notorious was a group of wealthy, largely Anglo lawyers and politicians known as the "Santa Fe Ring," whose exploits have been well documented. Their actions as well as the highly unjust role of the U.S. Surveyor General's Office and the Court of Private Land Claims in the loss of land tenure gave rise to an enduring sense of injustice that permeates almost any question about social change and resource management in the region. The twenty-two community land grants recognized by the state, which continue to exist, are the property rights equivalent of a stubborn stain: they are persistent remnants of a past that simply cannot be washed away. Max and others see the past in current events "because our past is our key to the future."<sup>8</sup>

One evening, a week after my arrival, Max told me stories of loss and theft, specifically in relation to the land lost by the Truchas Grant—formally known as the Nuestra Señora del Rosario San Fernando y Santiago Land Grant (Map 3). The grant's acreage has been reduced to one

sixth of the original amount granted by the king of Spain in 1754.<sup>9</sup> The storytelling lasted late into the night, with multiple cups of Sanka coffee as Max disappeared frequently into the back room to return with stacks of paper containing Spanish land claims documents, Mexican deeds, reports, testimonies, and newspaper stories—all of which he used to make the case for the grant's lost lands. It is a convincing story, one with which I would later become very familiar over many more cups of coffee, both with members of the Truchas Land Grant and other grantees who have similar claims, documents, and stories.

Not everyone in Truchas shares this interest in the details of the grant's history. For Jessie Romero, a friend of Max who is an active member of the grant, the exact details of the grant's history are vague, but the passion over the injustice and the sense of loss are deep. Jessie primarily harvests firewood, along with some *latillas* and *vigas*, and carves *santos* as well, which he sells at Max's shop. His trailer home, perched on the side of the hill, boasts one of the largest firewood piles in Truchas—a prestigious symbol of strength and masculinity (figure 3). He and his son Nova can thin an acre, pile the slash, block the wood, and load it on the back of one of their old Chevy trucks in a remarkably short period of time. As Jessie explains: "It's in my blood: my father was a hard worker, his father was a hard worker. We are not interested in becoming lazy or wrapped up in drugs. We like honest work." At the same time he sees the environmentalists as directly threatening his work: "There is a long history of racism in this country, which has to do with white men finding new ways to dominate brown ones. And the environmentalists are just the newest ones."<sup>10</sup>

Jessie, though less directly an activist, has been involved in protests over the land grant for a long time. He used to go to hear Reies López Tijerina, an ex-preacher and famous Chicano activist from Texas who tapped into the deep sense of loss surrounding land grants and racial and economic inequities.<sup>11</sup> Led by Tijerina, the Alianza Federal de las Mercedes demanded the return of millions of acres of land that had been designated part of the national forest. The Alianza described the Forest Service as an "army of occupation" and promised to carry out trials and punishment for any trespassers on what the members considered their lands. Members of the Alianza threatened forest rangers, burned hundreds of acres of forest lands, destroyed Forest Service property, and cut miles of Forest Service fences. Jessie likes to recount two favorite incidents. The first is the move by the Alianza to seize and occupy a Forest Service campground at Echo Creek. They temporarily reclaimed it for the land grant that used to occupy



3. Jessie Romero at his firewood pile in Truchas, New Mexico, with a recently carved cross and *latillas*. Photo by Author.

the area, and in the process they "arrested" and physically detained two Forest Service rangers for trespassing on their land.

The second and most well-known incident took place on June 5, 1967, when twenty *Alianzistas* raided the Tierra Amarilla courthouse, where local residents, including members of the Alianza, had been tried and convicted of illegal use of federal lands and resources. During the raid, an extended gun battle ensued, in which one federal official was shot and killed and another was kidnapped. The Alianza became the focus of the largest manhunt in New Mexico's history, involving the National Guard, the Forest Service, the state police, unofficial posses, and even cattle inspectors. Tanks, helicopters, small aircraft, and patrol jeeps were all put to use to capture the "criminals." Tijerina eventually turned himself in, but in a brilliant defense that captured the media's attention, he argued his own case before the court and was acquitted of direct involvement in the raid or the killing of the officers. The national media depicted the event as a return to the anarchy of the Old West, or the rise of a communist menace. The trial struck a chord nationally during the 1960s and early 1970s, galvanizing the racial fear of conservatives and government officials on the one hand and garnering sympathetic support from the left on the other.

The result was that northern New Mexico figured importantly in national debates about race and poverty.<sup>12</sup>

Tijerina became one of the most renowned Chicano activists in the country, marching and meeting with Martin Luther King Jr., César Chávez, Corky Gonzales, and Huey Newton, among others. Locally, Tijerina experienced difficulties because he was not from northern New Mexico; even though he was able to generate support around poverty and land loss he was never fully accepted as part of the northern New Mexico community. Jessie and others ultimately became disillusioned with Tijerina: "We were grateful that he brought attention to the injustices here, but let's just say he stayed a little too long." Jessie went on: "We agreed with a lot of what he said about the grants but he was more interested in Mexico [Mexican nationalism] than in getting our land back. My family fought for this country; I might not like everything about it, but I am certainly not a Mexican."<sup>13</sup>

Other local activists such as Antonio "Ike" DeVargas concur with Jessie's beliefs about Tijerina. Ike, who was fighting in Vietnam during the courthouse raids, came back and got involved with the national La Raza Unida Party and the Brown Berets. He lives in a trailer on the other side of the Rio Grande Valley from Truchas, and since the 1960s has been one of the most prominent and radical voices in the conflicts over the forest. Max credits Ike more than Tijerina for opening his eyes to the Forest Service and its contribution to the poverty of northern New Mexico: "Tijerina was a 'flash in the pan': he came and did a lot to open people's eyes. [But] Ike and others have never left, never given up."<sup>14</sup> While Max is not always comfortable with Ike's more radical tactics for direct confrontation with the Forest Service and environmentalists, their shared commitment to the politics of the region remains unchanged. Many Forest Service people whom I interviewed felt that Ike was in one way or another responsible for the bombing of the Española ranger station and the attempted bombing of Forest Guardians. Ike flatly denies both accusations, though he is very outspoken about his feelings toward these groups. In many ways, he regards the Forest Service as "the long-term enemy of people in New Mexico . . . they must be considered no less than an army of occupation of our lands."<sup>15</sup>

This animosity toward the Forest Service runs deep—in fact, disdain and distrust for the Forest Service may be the most universally held view of the local people I interviewed throughout the region, even though many depend on the agency directly or indirectly. The Forest Service owns almost 70 percent of the land in Rio Arriba County in northern New Mexico,

most of which was formally land grant. Some of the initial land loss was a result of the U.S. government's redefinition of land grant as lands in the public domain. But the greatest percentage of it had been bought. For example, parts of the Truchas Land Grant and the neighboring Francisco Montes Vigil Grant were bought by unsuspecting third parties from some of the shady lawyers mentioned earlier; other acreage was sold to the Truchas and Trampas lumber companies that in turn harvested the forest lands for the railroads. While many feel that the land was illegally taken, the most common understanding is that the land was taken legally but unjustly.

No matter what version of the complex history I heard, however, the most well-remembered fact is that the Forest Service now owns much of the land in the region. This massive land ownership is not the only means by which Forest Service presence is felt: it has also served in this remote area as the primary arm of the state, enforcing game laws, grazing restrictions, and timber and fuelwood harvesting regulations. And it has done so, as one longtime resident of Truchas put it, to "fatten the white man while the brown man starves."<sup>16</sup> The most visible sign of this has been the Forest Service's promotion of large-scale timber, mining, hunting, and grazing operations that profited Anglo "outsiders," while tightly restricting the use of these resources by people from the region.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Forest Service presence began modestly enough. Initially, Forest Service employees in the Carson National Forest were charged with extinguishing fires, building trails, and making sure that the boundaries that had been designated on maps were delineated on the land with markers and fences. But these responsibilities changed in 1908 under the influence of Gifford Pinchot, who espoused an economically efficient, scientific forestry. Pinchot reshaped the strategy of the early Forest Service based on principles of rational scientific management, and this policy change was felt directly in New Mexico. The overriding goal of the Forest Service's scientific forestry was "sustained yield"—the production of the largest number of board feet of high value timber over time.

This orientation of forest management toward the "greatest good for the greatest number" for the "overall good of the Nation" is still, in principle, the central tenet of Forest Service policy.<sup>17</sup> Ike redefines the policy in these terms: "This is how poor brown people's land gets stolen and is converted for corporate forestry and rich white outsiders' playgrounds." Max and others hold a somewhat different view, that "the grandmother



from Cleveland and other members of the 'public' are far better served by the community that knows and cares for the land than by the Forest Service, which has long mismanaged the forest."<sup>18</sup> From either standpoint, the Forest Service's founding premise is at odds with and vigorously challenged by activists in the region. Equally influential have been the anti-grazing and game management ideas introduced to the Forest Service by Aldo Leopold, who spent some of his formative years as a forest ranger in the mountains in and around Truchas, learning things that would help him define the field of ecology. His vigorous enforcement of the game laws and advocacy of a growing role of the Forest Service as the principal institution "caring for land" became a guiding light for the Forest Service in the middle of the twentieth century.

The result of these policy approaches in northern New Mexico was to further alienate people from their means of subsistence. In practice, notions of forest protection and care became bound up with a colonial racial prejudice; rangers' views of Hispanos as backward, uneducated, and lazy resurfaced in their estimation of Hispano land use practices. Sometimes this manifested itself overtly. Max's father remembers being badly treated by the rangers: "The rangers treated us like we were stupid and lazy, like we didn't know anything."<sup>19</sup> A 1926 ranger account confirms this; in his journal Allen Peters writes, "This is one of the most beautiful of places I have ever been, how unfortunate that it is populated by the most backward, dirty and brutish people I have ever come across."<sup>20</sup>

Contemporary expressions of racism have become less overt, but they are never far from the surface. For example, many contemporary writers and historians claim that the "tragedy of the commons" was averted by Forest Service intervention in the area, which effectively saved the landscape from local abuse at the beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>21</sup> These accounts fail to acknowledge, to cite just one example, the role of the largely Anglo sheep barons who had effectively appropriated the sheep industry, capitalized the venture, and made New Mexico one of the largest wool-producing regions of the West.<sup>22</sup>

Max frames this conflict in stark terms: "Every time La Floresta [the Forest Service] tries to save the forest, we end up losing our lands."<sup>23</sup> Moises Morales, a former county commissioner and a longtime activist who was directly involved in the raid at the Echo Creek Campground and who worked closely with Ike in La Raza, is even more direct: "Historically there has been nothing more dangerous and destructive to us [Hispanos] than a white man in a government job trying to protect the forest." What

took place was "more than just loss of land, grazing, and hunting rights. [The Forest Service's] efforts to manage the forest for the public's good or for its own good has led to large clearcuts, massive DDT spray programs, and the conversion of our forest into the playgrounds of wealthy Texans. None of which, in my mind, has been good for us or the forest."<sup>24</sup> The story is quite different according to Forest Service ranger Crockett Dumas, who says that there is "nowhere in the country that the Forest Service has bent over backward more to recognize the interests of the local people. . . . Most of the wood that comes off this forest now—almost eight million board feet—comes off for small fuelwood permits. We were the last National Forest in the country to charge for these permits. I understand why people are mad—we did some not so smart things in the past—but things have changed, they really have."<sup>25</sup>

In fact a great many changes have taken place. Most notably, after the raid at the Echo Creek Campground, the Forest Service released its "Region 3 Policy," which charted a new hiring policy for the Forest Service in northern New Mexico. Though its implementation was spotty at best, it did help set a tone that made the Northern New Mexico Forest Service much more racially diverse. In fact, the supervisors of both the Carson and the Santa Fe National Forests are Hispano, as are many of the rangers and staff, and the Forest Service has become a major employer in a rural region with few employment options. Moises acknowledges these changes but maintains that "the institution itself is still white, and most of the people are more interested in serving the institution and caring for their paycheck than positively changing the life of the people in the communities."<sup>26</sup>

The biggest changes in Forest Service policy, he argues, come from pressure by environmentalists. The spotted owl injunction unwittingly made allies of the communities and the Forest Service, neither of which are interested in stopping all extractive use on Forest Service land. Other environmentalists' injunctions effectively stopped almost all logging on Forest Service land in the two national forests, and new campaigns and lawsuits are trying to initiate a "zero-grazing" policy.<sup>27</sup> The Forest Service and the communities have actually teamed up to implement small-scale community forestry programs for fuelwood gathering, forest thinning, and fire prevention, activities that fall outside the scope of the injunctions. La Montaña de Truchas Woodlot, located next to Los Siete and run by Max, is one such model program. Though it is funded more by foundation grants than wood sales, the program has attracted attention and praise from all over the country. Max says, "It is necessity, not wisdom, that has

brought the Forest Service closer to the communities. . . . No one entirely trusts them, but they are better than the environmentalists."<sup>28</sup> Environmentalists are afraid of the public relations backlash that would ensue if they were caught attacking poor rural Hispanos' wood supply—a lesson they suffered after the first forest injunction—so for the time being these "community" programs have gone largely unchallenged.

This is less true of the sawtimber-harvesting operations. Ike DeVargas first fought the Forest Service and later the environmental community to gain access to the forest for his small-scale timber company. He won the right to log some of the land, leading to massive protests on the part of environmentalists and tension and anger on all sides of the struggle. After years of fighting the environmentalists, his company went bankrupt and he finally threw in the towel—as have almost all the other small operators in the region. The number of independent operators went from more than sixty in 1980 to fewer than ten in 1998.<sup>29</sup>

From the beginning of the twentieth century through the 1970s the area's culture and economy revolved almost entirely around natural resource extraction, as was the case in many other parts of the rural West. Both the grazing industry and later the forest industry radically transformed the region's landscapes and people. Livestock grazing in the area dates back to colonial Spanish times and became dominant in the region in the late 1880s through the 1940s. Up until the 1870s the industry was run largely by Hispanos, and the distribution of animals was broad, with many individuals owning just a few animals. After 1880, the industry was transformed when well-financed Anglos with new breeds of livestock entered the market. Working with the Forest Service, they were able to gain greater access and control of watering places and land, changing an industry that had long focused on the ownership of animals to one in which the strategic ownership of land and water—and not animals—would be the key determinant of success.

The case of the Bond brothers illustrates this well. They came to the Española Valley in 1883, opening a general merchandising store that was well positioned to grow with the rise of the railroad. The Bonds extended lines of credit and worked as middlemen for wool buyers and sellers; through their contacts to the railroad they extended northern New Mexico's ties to the national market economy. When the market fluctuated, people lost their sheep and the Bonds profited handsomely. By the late 1880s, the Bond Company directly owned twenty-five thousand sheep and was handling more than two hundred thousand more indirectly each year.

By this time, three-quarters of New Mexico's sheep belonged to just twenty families.<sup>30</sup> The industry would end up transforming Hispanos from sheep owners to the equivalent of livestock sharecroppers who bore all the risk and reaped few of the profits. The result was devastating to both the local economy and the landscape.

Juanita Montoya, a friend of Max who lives near the center of town and now works for the local health clinic, remembers her father's deep frustration as he tried to eke out a living in the livestock industry as late as World War II. He told her that "sheep herding used to be the base of our own economy, but now it's a disgrace to be a herder." He encouraged his son to work in construction for the then newly formed National Laboratory at Los Alamos because, as he put it, "there is no future in the past." His son did work as a janitor at the lab until he died in a drunk driving accident in 1984. Juanita said that her father deeply resented the Forest Service, which refused to renew his permits to herd sheep and goats throughout the 1950s. He tried to switch to cattle, as many others did, but he said they were "just too dumb and too ugly."<sup>31</sup>

In fact, many others did switch to owning cattle, and still do. Collectively, the forests of northern New Mexico have one of the highest numbers of cattle permit holders of any forest in the county, along with one of the lowest numbers of animals per holder. But while many own cattle to supplement their food and income, few own enough to earn a living. As Max says about his cattle, "I'm not sure why I still own them. They help us out a little—besides, it just seems wrong not to have a few around; it's part of who we are."<sup>32</sup>

The forest industry was a largely regional affair until the railroad became part of the economic transformation of the area in the 1880s, after which time tens of thousands of acres were cut for railroad ties, mining posts, and, later, sawtimber. People from northern New Mexico first became involved in the harvesting of wood for ties for the railroad and telegraph companies, later joining in all aspects of forest harvesting. At first the region had only small mills. People would cut trees, pull them to the mill with horses, and then saw them into ties, selling them to middlemen at the rate of a dime for an eight-foot-long, one-foot-square tie and a quarter for a sixteen-footer. Later, companies such as the Santa Barbara Pole and Tie Company would employ hundreds of men from the nearby villages in the harvesting and processing of timber for ties. Eventually, with help from the Forest Service, millions of board feet would be taken from all the way up to timberline. By 1950 almost 20 million board feet

were being harvested annually from the mountains around Truchas, and the forest industry was one of the largest industrial employers in the area. It was particularly valuable as an alternative to the Colorado mines, the northern potato and beet fields, and, later, the shipyards of California.

Today the forest industry has almost come to a standstill, plummeting from an annual high of well over 100 million board feet in production to less than 10 million a year in both the Carson and Santa Fe National Forests. This is due in part to foreign competition, but it is also due to shifting beliefs about the purpose and use of the national forests. Lawsuits brought by environmentalists have significantly complicated the extraction of timber from public lands and created serious consequences for the people of northern New Mexico. For over a century, the timber industry has been one of the central sources of income in New Mexico. Moreover, it has been a central means by which people have come to know themselves as workers and to understand their relationship to the forest. The forest industry helped shape the self-understanding of Ike DeVargas, for example, who cut timber for Duke City Lumber Company before starting his own community logging operation. Ike says that "more than anything else it was this experience in the woods cutting timber that made the forest part of who I am . . . my love for the forest is a by-product of my role as a worker being screwed by Duke City. . . . I got to know the forest in a way that you cannot from just walking through it."<sup>33</sup>

His sentiments are widely shared by many other people who continue to be involved in small forest products activities in the region, ranging from firewood to *vigas* and *latillas*. The industry brought people into contact with the forest in a complex way. Their experiences as laborers are almost always mixed, and there is little to glorify about the history of timber extraction in the region or its treatment of workers. But there is no denying that the relationships the industry forged between people and the landscape are deep.

What is left of the grazing and the forest industries are not just the remnants of a landscape of exploitation and extraction, but also the experience of people who became workers through the daily practice of their labor upon the landscape. These relationships were formed by virtue of what Karl Marx terms an "intricate metabolism" that mixes labor and landscape, remaking both in the process.<sup>34</sup> The failure of many environmentalists in New Mexico to consider the effects of this "intricate metabolism" of social history and material landscape has left the region bitterly divided between those who organize around protecting the environment

at any cost; and those who refuse to ignore the racial and class histories of New Mexican landscapes.

Other industries have further complicated these relationships, most notably Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), or, as it is often simply called, "Los Alamos" or "the lab." The laboratory at Los Alamos was founded in 1942 by the U.S. government as part of a race with what it thought were German ambitions to build an atomic bomb. In the effort to win the Second World War, J. Robert Oppenheimer, a physicist at U.C. Berkeley, was recruited to lead many of the top physicists in the world in what was known as the Manhattan Project. Many have never gone home. Los Alamos has continued to reinvent itself as a necessary crown jewel of security and high-tech research, from the arms race with the former Soviet Union, to contemporary genomic research, to the design of George W. Bush's new arsenal of "tactical" nuclear weapons.

Every day a long line of LANL-bound cars leaves Truchas early in the morning, winding past the old boarded-up adobes, new trailer homes, broken down cars, and small grocery stores that make up Truchas and neighboring Chimayó. The cars travel to the other side of the valley through Española and then along the main highway, passing low riders and pickup trucks, Wal-Mart, and old taco stands. They then pass through the open desert, past the casino and the mobile homes on the reservation, and up into the manicured lawns, sidewalks, and fountains of the white, wealthy settlement of Los Alamos, the "city on the hill." LANL is currently one of the largest employers in the region. In Rio Arriba County alone—where Truchas and Chimayó are located—the lab directly employs more than twenty-six hundred people and provides some of the region's best-paying jobs. Despite this, it generates a great deal of resentment, even on the part of the people working there. In chapter 6, I'll explore the striking contrasts and connections between one of the state's wealthiest counties—Los Alamos—and one of its poorest—Rio Arriba. One is the state's most educated, the other, one of its least; one is among the state's most well-funded counties, the other, its most underfunded; Los Alamos is predominantly Anglo, and Rio Arriba, Hispano. Such stark juxtapositions only increase tensions. Moreover, blatant histories of racial preference in job hiring and promotions, together with continued arrogance on the part of Los Alamos County and LANL toward the rest of northern New Mexico, have spawned long-standing animosities toward Los Alamos even by people who are dependent on the lab for their jobs.

Most of the people I interviewed had some connection with LANL. May

used to lay bricks there; Jessie's son Nova worked construction, as did Juanita's son and Ike's father, who held various jobs there his entire life. Ike points out the ironies: "The place is both our source of bread and the reason we can only afford bread. . . . It was built by the sweat of the people of northern New Mexico and it is us who clean up their fucking toxic slug and radioactive waste. Yet most people can't move beyond being a janitor. . . . Colonialism is far from dead here in northern New Mexico—it can be seen in the fallout of the nuclear industry."<sup>35</sup> In fact, the Rio Arriba County Commissioners released a report assessing the impact of LANL on the economics and culture in northern New Mexico; the report concluded that the relationship with LANL resembled a colonial system similar to apartheid.<sup>36</sup> As I will explore later, these claims counter the rhetoric casting LANL as the benevolent economic savior of the region. Whether one agrees with these claims or not, the fact remains that the poverty of northern New Mexico is not coincidental to but is intensely interconnected with the lab's history, making it an inextricable part of the nuclear landscape of Los Alamos.

Likewise, this tension between the lab and the locals cannot be separated from contemporary hostilities with regional environmentalists. The forest injunction and subsequent litigation by environmentalists are in direct conflict with community efforts to reclaim their lands. Sam Hitt, the former president of Forest Guardians, stated that he does not support communities regaining title to the land, nor does he support it being the source of their livelihoods. "Our first priority is protecting nature. Everything else, though it may seem important, is not our concern. . . . We speak for nature, for the forest, because it does not have a voice."<sup>37</sup> The arrogance of this statement and the presumption that his group enjoys a direct and exclusive communication line with nature resonates with the arrogance of LANL. Sam's deep and personal connection to the land is, given the history of exploitation of resources in the West, a valuable part of a critique of capitalist exploitation. However, though his concern may be genuine, it presumes that nature is separate from the social history of the region. As far as the communities are concerned, the environmentalists' forest injunctions and attempts to win grazing injunctions follow a direct line of U.S. colonial pressures, beginning with a corrupt government and greedy lawyers and continuing with the Forest Service and Los Alamos.

These tensions are not a new phenomenon in northern New Mexico. Only the form and location of expressions of anger have changed over the last hundred years. Northern New Mexico has always been represented as

the stepchild of the nation-states. It has been a remote colony of the Spanish Empire, an unstable borderland of the Mexican state, and the peripheral and final territory of the contiguous United States. From the loss of land grants to unsympathetic laws and unethical lawyers, to the rise of sheep barons and timber mills, to the creation of the first atomic bomb and the traffic in heroin, northern New Mexico and its forest politics have never existed in isolation from the international circuits of extraction and knowledge that have radically transformed the western United States over the last century. Quite the contrary: northern New Mexican forest politics are a direct result of these histories.

To attempt to understand forest politics as somehow separate from this history is to insist on a separation of the forest landscape from a landscape of extraction and exploitation and its deep cultural and political history. Pete Sandoval's violent reaction to my tall white presence in the abandoned field on that cold day, like the recent violence over the forest, is inextricably entwined with the formation of the complex relationships that have simultaneously made both the people and the landscapes of northern New Mexico. And it is the political life of the forest that is the central unifying theme of this study.

#### THE CULTURAL POLITICS OF NATURE AND DIFFERENCE

This book explores the linkages between nature and difference by examining the contentious forest politics, where social activists, Forest Service officials, environmentalists, and many others make and break links between forest stands and Hispano bodies in ways that form institutions and identities and reproduce inequalities. Scholars of cultural anthropology, American studies, political ecology, and critical human geography have shown that articulations of nature and difference are central to the formation of landscapes and the distribution of resources. However, few scholars have explored how cultural assemblages of nature and difference are also formative of subjects, sentiments, and regimes of rule. By attending to both the cultural politics of the making of natures and in turn the technologies through which institutions and individuals are constituted through these natures I hope to call attention to the broader political stakes of environmental politics.<sup>38</sup>

I understand cultural politics as an analytic that treats culture as an intense site of political struggle requiring attention to the practices and politics that forge and remake both artifacts (trees, bodies, landscapes, and

so forth) and effects (violent exclusions, united communities, entrenched inequalities, and so forth).<sup>39</sup> In relationship to nature and difference in this work, I explore how forms of difference—such as racial identities, class interests, and national imaginaries—in the U.S. Southwest are linked to the politics of nature, as well as how nature, in its broadest sense, is infused with forms of social difference.

This approach requires four conceptual commitments. The first is a *rethinking of nature* that disconnects forms of difference from biology and treats nature as more than an inert set of environmental objects. In relation to difference this means expanding notions such as race beyond skin, gender beyond sex, and nation beyond territorial boundaries. The purpose is to explore how culture connects these forms of difference to nature in ways that produce and essentialize arbitrary categories that nevertheless have powerful lived material effects. For example, the color of one's skin matters in significant ways, for racism is still powerfully and materially lived in everyday life. However, to deny this separation of race from biology and skin color is to deny the fixity of race, not the lived experiences of racism. In relationship to nature, it means attending both to the struggles between people over objects and to the intensely political process through which objects and subjects, their identities and meanings, are forged and discerned through daily practices. While focusing on access to and control of resources—the domain that has received the most attention in environmental politics—is an important political engagement, we need to enrich our understanding and approaches by extending what we consider relevant to environmental politics. I hope by changing approaches to environmental politics to reorient its focus from the politics of the protection of nature to the politics of nature's production. This requires that we pay attention to the complexity and contradictions of the ways in which nature itself is produced.

Methodologically this means putting seemingly disparate fields together within the same analytic approach. After the experience with the heroin raids in Chimayó as discussed in the preface, I was driven to explore the ways that natures crossed between different sites of their formation, for example, where the nature of plutonium informs the understanding of the nature of a forest fire. This has meant taking seriously metaphors, metonyms, and turns of phrase in conversations, interviews, and public records that linked different forms of nature across time and space. It has also meant being attentive to the ways people have practiced specific understandings of natures in prescribed burns, in healthy forest

thinning projects, in demarcating wilderness areas, and so on. Through attention to specific practices, I worked to avoid treating these natures as an abstraction and instead to demonstrate that what is "found" in nature in one realm can become the material from which we "forge" ourselves and others in another.

Second, exploring the cultural politics of race and nature requires a commitment to addressing the *consequential materiality of nature*. Here I insist that we take seriously the materiality of symbolic metaphors and the sociality of material facts. For a separation of nature from culture, and the material from the symbolic, simply does not adequately allow for a viable explanation of New Mexico's landscapes and politics. These categories might better be seen not as separate categories with independent lives, but as vessels in which elements of the world have been separately designated. This might create ontological facility, but as New Mexico demonstrates, these categories are vastly inadequate to contain the intricacies and overlappings of everyday struggles.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, these categories—nature and culture, the real and the symbolic, the object and the idea—in fact, reproduce their own actualization with lived material consequences.

At the same time that I want to insist on the inseparability of the material and the symbolic and their lived daily consequences, I reject collapsing nonhuman agency of material objects into the realm of the social. This constructionist logic only substitutes one universal (the natural) for another (the social). At stake here is no less than how we understand the *nature* of historical transformations. Specifically, how do we incorporate the consequential materialisms of the forest—the agency of nonhuman actors—while at the same time denying the possibility of universalizing any particular set of cultural translations of nature? How have these consequential materialities (the materiality of the social and the nonhuman) worked together to produce new social natures that are at the conceptual heart of this work? Moreover, whether this relationship is conceived as a knot, a web, an assemblage, or a cyborg,<sup>41</sup> grappling with their interrelatedness is central to the understandings and politics of this book. For in struggles over meanings and metaphors are material bodies that matter, and in changing bodies and materials are material differences that condition political possibilities. As such, I try to demonstrate in the following chapters—particularly in the conclusion—how these material, symbolic relationships legitimize injustices, constitute exclusion, and reproduce inequalities.

Third, I insist on attention to the *lived material practices of nature and*

difference. For it is through these historically and spatially specific daily practices that nature and difference are produced and consumed. Laboring practices that form, reproduce, and contest the nature of the forest and the nature of difference are carried out by Hispano activists and state officials, environmentalists and rural militias, loggers and scientists, heroin addicts and healthcare workers, lovers and priests. These forms of nature and their various couplings with difference have to be made and contested through the everyday actions of these agents. These practices by variously situated agents come up against the rigidity of categories that are undermined by their incompatibility: forest and fire refuse to behave naturally, Hispano subjects act against "their best interests," national boundaries extend beyond national territory. These unnatural acts refute the naturalized categories of nature and difference, pointing to ways that nature's hegemonies are anything but natural.

Fourth, this book draws implicitly from Foucault's conceptions of *governmentality*. Simply put, governmentality is an analytic concerned with the technologies of governance that are attentive to both coercion and domination of populations and individuals, as well as the process and practices through which they come into being and through which they come to conduct their own conduct. The reason for expanding this analytics is a desire to understand the intertwined process through which individual subjects and institutions (the Forest Service, environmentalists, activists, and others) are formed through the political technologies of managing and making nature.<sup>42</sup>

What Foucault blandly called "the qualities of the territory" have become more and more a central target of government, not just for the well-being of the human population but for nature's own well-being. The rise of biocentric approaches to management—evident in the emergence of fields such as population biology, which concerns itself with the dynamics of all populations, human and nonhuman alike—gave rise to contemporary forms of governance. Similarly, the recently emergent fields of resource management, conservation biology, and restoration ecology, among others, have become central sites for the production of knowledge of "natural systems," taking as their primary goal the proper management and improvement of these natural populations in order to optimize their diversity and longevity.

These nonhuman "systems" change in unpredictable ways and, therefore, require different forms and rationalities of governance to guarantee their protection, efficiency, or sustainable use.<sup>43</sup> Implied, of course, is

the pressing need to create regimes of rule for the conduct of individual and human populations. This proper management in turn requires the proper protection of nature and, through the proper governance of their conduct, creates "sustainable citizens" who, whether through sovereign acts of force or through the facilitating of that proper conduct, come to do as they ought. What is clear from this is that the "qualities of the territory" have taken on a different significance and have borrowed from the logic of human populations to make intelligible the process of managing and improving life in broader terms. New forms of "governmentalization" of the state and subjectivization of the individual have emerged through the rationalities of nature.<sup>44</sup>

Over the last century, nature has been at the center both in the making of racialized subjects and in the formation of institutions of governance in New Mexico. Whether supplying resources for exploitation, wilderness for conservation, degraded landscape for improvement, or nuclear research "for a better tomorrow," nature has been the primary target through which bodies and populations—both human and nonhuman—have been governed, and it has been the primary site through which institutions of governance have been formed and operated. Attention to an analysis of political reason surrounding nature in New Mexico affords a different approach to understanding the broader role of forest politics in northern New Mexico over the last century, as well as insight into its place at the center of many contemporary struggles. I hope the following chapters upset the universality of these concepts and point toward a more critical interrogation of the ways that nature and difference travel and make intelligible such different sites and such disparate times, how their different meanings are contested and how their various formations matter—materially and politically. More broadly, I hope that using these approaches entices the reader both to rethink the brazen claims that operate through nature and the possibilities that can come from their remaking.

#### MAPPING THE BOOK

The six following chapters all serve as a means of demonstrating, through divergent histories and daily practices, the different forms and articulations of nature and difference. At the same time, the collection and order of the individual pieces do add up to something larger: an assertion of a different approach to exploring a politics of nature. Understanding the material history of sentiments of longing in chapter 1, for example, will

help make sense of vitriolic reactions to the sometimes narrow nationalist overtones of the Smokey Bear campaign discussed in chapter 5. As such, this collection of chapters is meant to move beyond abstract critiques about the dichotomy between nature and culture to an exploration of the ways in which nature and culture are fused. What struck me about much of the ethnographic work in New Mexico, and what I have tried to illustrate in the following chapters, is the political ways that nature and culture are formed and linked, in both popular and scientific discourses, and in often troubling ways. This is a very dynamic fusion, wherein the one becomes the substance from which the other is built while it is itself transformed in the process. For example, during my first meeting with Max at Los Siete, he characterized Hispano people, in stereotypical manner, as crabs in a bucket from which none can escape because they pull each other down. I heard similar comments in discussions with white environmentalists who frequently explained contemporary battles using analogies to animal behavior—from wolf packs demonstrating Darwinian survival techniques to short-sighted lemmings. In both cases, insights from an isolated “nature” became the basis for understanding and explaining human behavior.

Constructions of race and nature rely on these dichotomies, but a coupling also takes place in which one will borrow from the other, shoring up support for or making discernable the meanings and sense of the other. The following chapters are an attempt to explore these coupled forms of nature and difference as they are made and broken, contested and silenced, in ways that form and legitimize truths, identities, and inequalities. In so doing, this book will hopefully contribute to our understanding of the relationships between nature and forms of difference, as well as the specific and grounded material and structural arrangements of power that result from the ways they are brought together.

Chapter 1, for example, examines how memories of dispossession and of longing for land constitute Hispano identity and cohere Hispano community. For this reason, the land itself and, by extension, the forest on it, operates simultaneously as a symbolic ground for the reproduction of identity and community, and as a material source of livelihood. Here, the land and forest are imbued with powerful sentiments of longing in ways that are key to understanding the deeply passionate responses to contemporary forest politics in northern New Mexico.

Chapter 2 steps back to examine the regional acts of force and managed care through which the Forest Service came to assume its various forms in northern New Mexico. At issue in this chapter is the role the Forest Service

has played in the shaping of this region, and how it has done so through the bounding and organizing of national spaces, the production and management of nature, and the targeting and formation of populations as distinct social units. At stake on a larger level is an understanding of the current debates over forest health and Hispano welfare and how they evoke seemingly contradictory responses, ranging from deep resentment and expressions of violence to pleas for greater Forest Service intervention and increased institutional budgets.

Next, I look at how “structures of feeling” have been built through histories of extraction and exploitation, through intense, shifting political struggles, and through collective ties to the land. Chapter 3 focuses on questions of belonging, arguing that the forest has a central role in the formation and naturalization of communities in northern New Mexico. It also explores how the naturalization of this link between community, place, and resource replicates race and class divisions and critically examines underlying assumptions about community and place, and the process through which their relationships have been formed in northern New Mexico.

The following two chapters, 4 and 5, focus on the different ways that debates over nature and the forest have become the means of forming difference and the mechanisms of exclusion. In particular, they explore how the forest has become both a locus of struggle over issues of purity and protection and a means of constituting hierarchical and exclusionary forms of nationalism and race. Chapter 4 examines the way that wilderness has been infused with racialized notions of purity and pollution, specifically how the movement for the protection of the forest from degradation and pollution in New Mexico drew off metaphors of threats of contamination of pristine white bodies and unsoiled bloodlines. In chapter 5, I explore post-1940 cultural formations of forest and fire, as produced through one of the nation’s most recognizable icons—Smokey Bear. I demonstrate how nationalist fears of external threats and internal enemies surrounding World War II became fused with cultural formations of forest and fire and explore the ways that the racially charged and exclusionary forms of nationalism embodied within Smokey and the forest became, for Hispano activists in northern New Mexico, the target of violence and antagonism.

In chapter 6, I explore the two seemingly disparate geographies of rural northern New Mexico and Los Alamos National Laboratory through a social transect that defies the seemingly distinct

connects the region through the colonial present. I argue that the communities surrounding LANI are intimately linked through flows of labor, radiation, and formations of nature. The chapter challenges framings of forest politics that take modern selves, natures, and communities as givens rather than as volatile terrains of political struggles.

Finally, in the conclusion, I examine the consequences for history and politics of taking seriously the materiality of the changing forest landscape of northern New Mexico, and close by discussing the possibilities enabled by placing the cultural politics of difference in the same analytical frame as the politics of nature, proposing that this move enables new understandings of social relations and radical political possibilities—both in New Mexico and in environmental politics generally.

In the wake of genetic revolutions, national fears of biological contaminants, apocalyptic proclamations of ecological degradation and catastrophe, and debates about the innate tendencies of terrorists and renewed racial profiling, nature, in its broadest sense, is at the center of contemporary concerns. As many move away from regarding nature as solely constituted by the material environment and instead begin to consider its cultural aspects, vast new conceptual and political possibilities are uncovered. But most of our critiques remain at the abstract level of ideology, pointing out that different formations of the natural are “in fact” social.<sup>45</sup> These moves leave critical reflection of the possibilities and politics of grounded social-natures largely unexplored. So while many, myself included, have committed ourselves to approaching nature as *always already* social, we have left some of the most important dimensions of this work—detailed histories, material characteristics, and lived effects—neglectfully unwritten. Similarly, race, class, and nation continue to be treated as fixed fields of difference by both conservatives and liberals alike, who explain essential tendencies, characteristics, and behaviors as outside the realms of culture, power, and history.

This book attempts to explore the complex entanglements of nature and difference through the specific sites, histories, and practices of a relatively small group of people engaged in political struggles over the forest. It is not meant to be a detailed history of a place but rather a place-based history of the articulations and politics of nature and difference. New Mexicans are no strangers to the cultural politics of nature; in their engagements with environmentalists, Forest Service officials, and others, they invent places, remember forgotten and unwritten histories, and construct and essentialize identities and traditions. Many of them are among

the most deft and strategic political thinkers and tacticians I have ever known. There is much to learn from these seemingly provincial struggles over the twisted juniper and knotted piñon forests in northern New Mexico. I maintain that if we carefully explore the equally twisted and doggedly knotted forest politics there, we will discover that nature plays a central role in the volatile politics of difference, and that the implications of this insight reach far beyond these high desert mountains.





## CHAPTER ONE

### THE CULTURAL POLITICS OF MEMORY AND LONGING

*Tenemos sangre de Indios. Tenemos raíces en la tierra. Somos Indígenas.* [We have Indian blood. We have roots in the land. We are indigenous people.]  
—Erwin Rivera, Chicano artist and activist<sup>1</sup>

“Even the land forgets,” Evila Garcia laments while walking slowly down the main street of Truchas toward the post office.<sup>2</sup> As she tells me about her past, she frequently stops and points to an empty lot next to a trailer park here, a boarded-up building there. In them, she sees a panorama of mills, schools, houses, stores, corrals, and the sites of marriages, mishaps, and tragic deaths. Many of these sites and events are no longer entirely visible on the landscape, but they form part of her vision—a vision com-

posed of memories that bind her to others who share them, even if what they share is uneven and passionately disputed.

Some of these memories are her own, like those of the intersection where she witnessed her cousin’s death in a car accident in the 1970s. Or those of the forest being carved into sharply delineated squares for logging, which are still visible on the lower pine slopes of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains thirty years later. Others memories have been inherited, but they belong to her nonetheless, and she guards them closely. One is of her family bloodline, which she traces back to a Spanish soldier who rode with the famous conquistador Don Juan Oñate. Indeed, she claims that her grandson Antonio “gets his energy and curiosity from the blood of the Spanish explorer in him.”<sup>3</sup> Another is of her ancestors, who, in the eighteenth century, were granted rights to the land where she now lives—and to the forest and watershed on what is now Forest Service land.

After our walk, I sit in her living room and she tells me of her role in bringing the healthcare clinic to town, of her fears about the movement of drugs from the nearby villages of Española and Chimayó into Truchas, and, most passionately, of the loss of land-grant land to lawyers, land barons, and the U.S. government. Unlike many active land-grant leaders, she is not an overtly political person; in fact, she is wary of many of the land-grant activists, of their strategies and personalities. The passion with which she talks about the land is not expressed in grand statements of nationalism or declarations of global injustices but through her memories, from which she forms a sense of herself and her commitment to the northern New Mexican Hispano community. She says, “If we lose the land, we lose our history. . . . We cannot let go.” When I ask her about the land that was lost, she reluctantly concedes, “We did lose most of it, but we have not let go of it. Not totally; not all of us. Not yet, anyway.”<sup>4</sup>

Evila’s small adobe house is near the middle of town. Her front yard is an empty lot where she and her husband used to garden. Behind the house rise the distant Truchas Peaks. To the west is the *acequia*, or irrigation ditch, and beyond it stretch open alfalfa fields spotted with neighbors’ old houses and double-wide trailers. All but one of her sons have left the region, enabled and emboldened by their involvement in military service: Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm. Their photos—along with those of her brothers who died in World War II—rest, carefully placed among small ceramic animals and religious candles, on a small wooden mantel covered with a hand-woven lace cloth. A wooden cross hangs above them. Unlike



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many others in northern New Mexico, Evila believes that "God and country will do what is right" and give back the land that was guaranteed to them after the Mexican-American War by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. For this reason, she is hopeful about the current investigation by the federal General Accounting Office and about bills in the state legislature that promise to address what has become known as "the land-grant question."<sup>5</sup> Many congressional hearings, state bills, federal investigations, regional studies, committees, court cases, legislative actions, and hearings have been mounted to research or resolve the "land-grant question." Some of them were undertaken with genuine concern; most amount to cynical political posturing to woo the powerful Hispano voting bloc.

Still, Evila maintains that she must remain hopeful and not forget the past. She believes that "our [Hispanos'] future is based on the past. If we forget the past, we have no future." Moreover, "Without the grant, we are just another group of poor people. With the grant, we are different. . . . We have a history that's older than this country and older than the Anglos' [history] here." She insists on continuing to support the land grant even if its management often leads to bitter conflicts and divisions within the community, for "even if we do not have all the land, at least we have part of it . . . [and] that's what holds us together."<sup>6</sup>

Indeed, the Truchas Land Grant lost some of its acreage in the late nineteenth century when the Court of Private Land Claims did not fully recognize the boundaries of the grant. Still, the Truchas Grant was more fortunate than most; only 6 percent of the Spanish land grants were recognized by U.S. courts in New Mexico, leading to the loss of millions of acres of land owned by Mexicans living in what is now the United States. Of the 6 percent that were recognized, much was lost—sometimes illegally, but more often through legal yet unjust methods of deceit and fraud. Though the memories are usually unspecific, people's passions concerning the loss of land are anything but fleeting. In fact, when I ask about the specifics of the grant, Evila and most others know few of the details. She knows generally where the boundaries are and that the land now under Forest Service management once belonged to *la gente del norte*—the people of the north. But the exact process by which it was lost seems unimportant: it has become enshrined as a common story—a general history of loss rather than a specific history of a particular piece of land. Moreover, as a people, *nortehños* (northern New Mexicans) have become a community united not so much by their ties to the land and shared practices of production but by their shared memories of loss and longing for the land.

Through these memories, the tragedies of earlier generations are linked to the lives of the present, thereby serving as a basis for claims through right of inheritance. This is a material legacy, and one that links poverty and the dispossession of land to the history of colonization in symbolically powerful ways. This history of dispossession, although it has taken many different forms over the last thirty years, is constantly invoked in public meetings with state representatives, members of Congress, federal agencies, and environmentalists. Conflict that was once framed as "a violation of Mexican nationalism"<sup>7</sup> and "a thorn in the side of American democracy"<sup>8</sup> has become "an abuse of international human rights agreements."<sup>9</sup> When I ask Evila about the different ways the land-grant struggles have been understood, she says they are all part of a "struggle against forgetting." But she does not see the remembering as a gesture to address historical injustices, or even as a means to substantiate contemporary claims to the land. Referring to a newspaper article about Hispano workers at Los Alamos, she says she remembers "because the same stuff [injustices] continues to happen today."<sup>10</sup>

Memories of dispossession and sentiments of longing for land help constitute Hispano identity and make the Hispano community cohere. For this reason, the land itself and, by extension, the forest on it operate simultaneously as a symbolic ground for the reproduction of identity and community, and as a material source of livelihood. In this chapter, I explore the work that is done to stem the tide of forgetting that would obscure these memories. I also explore how the brutal legacy that travels within these memories creates deep divisions and contradictions in Hispanos' identities and land claims; these memories also provide for powerful political possibilities. Ultimately, the land and forest are inextricably intertwined with powerful sentiments of longing in ways that are key to understanding the deeply passionate responses to contemporary forest politics in New Mexico.

I start by laying out the material history of land in and around Truchas as I learned it through interviews and archives. I would not pose this as the "real history of events," set in contrast with the "imagined memories of subjective individuals."<sup>11</sup> Instead, I see it as a *material imaginary* that has had deeply tangible and powerful political ramifications for the lives of people in northern New Mexico. Next, I explore the politics of a specific incident—one directly linking land struggles to forest lands—around which memories of the past and sentiments of longing have gathered, making it a powerful tool for uniting the Hispano community. Third, I look at some of

the contradictions inherent in these claims of community identity through the lens of a contemporary act of “vandalism.” I conclude by returning to the theme of the cultural politics of memory and longing and relating them back to contemporary forest politics in New Mexico.

#### ORIGIN STORIES

These histories, “real” and “imagined,” point to the materiality and injustice etched in the loss of land. But I want to examine them without portending a fixity, a single coherence, or a teleology: the past is a vibrant but volatile site for contemporary land and forest politics, and to imply that it can be so easily contained would be to miscast it entirely. I tell these origin stories not because they are the only way to understand the past, but because they are the way in which many people involved in contemporary land politics today understand and talk of the past. I find them particularly illuminating because of the audaciousness of the connections that are asserted between identity and the meaning of land, past and present.<sup>11</sup> The leaps between the character of a Spanish explorer and that of Evila’s grandson, between past claims and present assertions, seem to be long ones, yet their coherence across centuries remains remarkably clear and untroubled by the contradictions and nuances of New Mexico’s histories.

These stories of origins and the injustices associated with the land are both collective fictions and undeniable truths.<sup>12</sup> That is, they have been scrupulously researched by scholars and fortified with footnotes and anecdotes. More important, they are the material histories that people have suffered, often brutal histories that, as Evila says, “we *must* continue the struggle to remember.”<sup>13</sup> But these stories are also collective memories that are made and remade in the present. The history of conquest that I outline in the following section, for example, was told differently twenty years ago; it is not necessarily more accurate now, but it is nonetheless a very different story. A Hispana may describe her past as a member of the Spanish colony and not as a descendant of Ácoma. Even more interestingly, because of the identity she lives, she may not be authorized to claim and recount a history of her native ancestry. For these histories are important not as artifacts of the past, as I hope the two stories in this chapter will illustrate, but for the possibilities they afford for the future.<sup>14</sup>

The following history constitutes the material over which some of the most impassioned contemporary political battles occur.<sup>15</sup> As such, it is

profoundly selective and as indicative of contemporary politics and concerns as it is of the history of Spanish conquest and the creation and loss of land-grant lands.<sup>16</sup>

*Sentimental Reproductions: Land, Loss, and Community* | In 1540, Francisco Vasquez de Coronado drove a Spanish flag into what is now the soil of New Mexico and proclaimed that the king, the pope, and God possessed dominion over this new land.<sup>17</sup> Following these verbal proclamations came material ones, in the form of maps, titles, fences, settlements, and missions that helped make colonial aspirations brutally successful. Indeed, the success of the Spanish conquest brought immense changes to New Mexico for Native Americans, including dislocation from some of their most important agricultural and hunting grounds; enslavement; and the spread of diseases previously unknown in North America, resulting in a dramatic decrease in the native population.<sup>18</sup> In addition, newly introduced livestock, growing in numbers from a few thousand in the seventeenth century to more than two million by 1820, radically transformed the region’s economy and landscape.<sup>19</sup>

As the story commonly goes, the first permanent Spanish settlement in the area was the result of a compact between private enterprise—mainly mining interests—and the Spanish crown. The settlement was to aid, in the words of the conquistador Don Juan Oñate, in the “discovery, pacification and conversion of the said provinces of New Mexico.”<sup>20</sup> Oñate, who spent a great deal of time in the northern frontier, was well acquainted with commercial ventures of mining and animal husbandry and coercing and enslaving Native Americans for their labor. The king granted his request for the exploration and the creation of the first permanent settlement near what is now Española in 1598.

In the process of “discovery, pacification and conversion,” Oñate and his men occupied native pueblos, raided the natives’ stores of food and clothing, and engaged in acts of torture, rape, and murder.<sup>21</sup> I will return to some of these acts as well as to the Native American reprisals later, but for now it is enough to note that tensions and violence grew so extreme that many of Oñate’s men deserted. The colony would probably have disappeared if it had not been for the efforts of the Franciscan missionaries, who drastically exaggerated their successes, claiming to the king that they had baptized seven thousand “heathens.” They begged the king not to turn his back on the converts and to continue to fund the filling of these “vassals”

with deference to God and loyalty to the crown. His Majesty Philip III of Spain granted their request and kept the colony alive at the crown's expense.<sup>22</sup>

The Spanish established property relations that played a central role in the colonization of the region. One of the first and most notorious was the *encomienda* system, which extracted labor—in the form of material goods or personal servitude—in exchange for ostensible “protection” and “spiritual welfare.”<sup>23</sup> It was a system that attended to some of the basic concerns of conquest: rewarding the conquerors, defending the acquired land, and “protecting” the subjects. Granting a Native American pueblo as an *encomienda* to a Spanish conquistador ostensibly achieved all of these. It also gave soldiers loyal to the crown access to the most valuable commodity in the region at the time: labor. These acts did not go unchallenged.

In 1680, a unified alliance of pueblos launched a full-scale rebellion, provoked by the injustices of the *encomienda* system and the oppression of both the Spanish conquistadors and Franciscan missionaries. Popé, a religious leader in Taos who had been among forty-three religious leaders tortured for the crimes of sorcery and sedition, is widely acknowledged as the main coordinator of the rebellion. At the height of the rebellion, thousands of pueblo Indians surrounded Santa Fe, killing more than four hundred Spaniards, including twenty-one of the province's thirty-three Franciscan missionaries. They destroyed and looted every Spanish building in the territory, dismantling and systematically demolishing every Christian icon, and succeeded in driving all the Spanish from the region.

But, as conflicts with nomadic tribes weakened the alliance, the Spaniards, led by Don Diego de Vargas, were able to return thirteen years later. By exploiting these divides, de Vargas gained control over the territory and its labor force. This time, however, the Spanish government did not employ the *encomienda* system, but initiated a system of individual and communal land grants, or *mercedes*. Ignoring centuries of pueblo tenure, the Spanish granted territory from lands they had appropriated and considered their own, the so-called *tierras realengas y balidas*—royal and vacant lands.<sup>24</sup> Individuals or groups of settlers could petition the government for unclaimed lands that were suitable—in terms of water, soil, and location—for settlement. These requests were reviewed by the territorial governor and if he felt the petition had merit, if there were no competing claims to the land, and if the local *alcalde* (mayor) recommended it, a grant was made in the name of the Spanish crown.<sup>25</sup>

These land grants were a means of empire building: by granting land to

both *dons* and landless peasants, the Spanish were able to occupy the territory. Many of the individual grants were for thousands of acres, and the grantees were the region's small aristocratic elite. Communal land grants, in contrast, were made to the unskilled members of the lower class (rank-and-file presidio soldiers and *mestizos*), for whom there was not enough agricultural and pastoral land within the established settlements. These grants were primarily devised as buffers to provide protection from the bands of marauding nomadic Indians who attacked the established communities of the Spanish elites. Within these communal grants, Spanish authority assigned each male settler his own plot of irrigable valley land for agriculture and designated the upland areas as communal property reserved for resource extraction and grazing. In 1754, members of the thirteen original families of the Truchas area<sup>26</sup>—many of whose descendants, as Evila noted, still dominate the pages of the local phone book—obtained a grant on the ridges above the town of Española and built their settlement around a fortified plaza to defend themselves against attack. Their battles with Comanches and Apaches became a unifying aspect of the community's lore and helped people define themselves as *gente de razón*—civilized people—against the *indios bárbaros*—barbaric Indians. These distinctions between Native Americans and Spaniards became formalized through distinctions of blood.

At the top of the hierarchy were “pure-blooded” Spaniards, or *Españoles*, and *criollos*, or those born outside Spain. This designation partly hinged on property ownership and societal status. Then came *color quebrado*, meaning literally *broken color*, people with upper-class status who had darker skin or other Indian features. Below them in status came the largest class of the population, the *coyotes* or merged-blood offspring of Spaniards and Indians. The offspring of *Españoles* and *coyotes*, or later a Mexican and an Indian, were known as *mestizo*—mixed blood. *Genízaros* were Indians who had become partly “civilized through conversion to Catholicism” or who had adopted a “more Spanish” relationship to property and production. Less common but still prevalent were *mulattos*, who had African ancestry and who could be either *mulatto oscuro* (dark) or *mulatto blanco* (white). With this sort of phenotypic variation among New Mexicans, class distinctions could not be strictly maintained through the discourses of blood and race, leading to distinctions made by land use, property relations, production processes, and consumption practices (for example, the Indians ate corn flour and the Spanish wheat flour, and so on). The process of mixing or whitening (*blanquearse*) was also generally understood to serve as a

Pueblo  
Revolt

civilizing process over a growing *mestizo* population that began to consist of more people of Spanish ethnicity than of Indian ancestry. Or, as the New Mexican historian William deBuys puts it, "Blood featured remarkable variety in eighteenth century New Mexico."<sup>27</sup>

Even as "blood was mixed," stark distinctions were maintained along the lines of property and production, whereby modes of production and ownership of property became not just the markers of racial and ethnic difference but the markers of reasoned people and civilized society, in binary opposition to savages and barbarism. In this way, the ownership of land and the working of it were infused with a combination of race, class hierarchy, and *civitas*, as anthropologist Ana Maria Alonso has put it, making "civilized production the precondition for civilized subjects."<sup>28</sup> The result was often a contradictory caste system that bound blood, ancestry, place, and property in complex ways to class, race, and ethnicity. Central to my argument here is that land, its ownership, and the means through which it was worked became bound in important ways to blood, both as a bodily material and as a marker of difference.

*"Barefaced Robbery": The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo* | In 1821, eleven years after it had started, the fighting between Spain and Mexico ended and the territory of New Mexico passed into the domain of the Mexican state. Mexico quickly remapped the area and enacted laws that ostensibly recognized the existing land titles of citizens, and the settlers of Truchas became Mexican citizens. The transfer from earlier Spanish land titles was a messy one, even though Spanish and Mexican laws were compatible; over time, most Spanish grants were recognized, if sometimes reduced in size. The Mexican government, fearful of the growing American expansion to the north, increased the number of land grants that occupied the territory so that lands that had once been considered public were transferred largely into the hands of Spanish-speaking settlers.<sup>29</sup>

In August 1846, General Stephen Watts Kearny rode into the territory of New Mexico as part of the colonial conquest of the United States, which was an extension of its belief in the destiny of Anglo America to manifest its presence across the entire continent and, later, beyond. In a speech delivered from a rooftop, Kearny promised the people of Las Vegas, New Mexico, that "those who remain peaceably at home, attending to their crops and herds, shall be protected by me in their property, their persons, and their religion; and not a pepper, not an onion shall be disturbed or taken."<sup>30</sup>

It is worth noting that the governor of New Mexico had been bribed or deceived

into an agreement through an envoy sent by President Polk himself. The nature of the agreement is not known, but the subsequent occupation of the city of Santa Fe was completed without bloodshed. However, it was only after two years of brutal fighting in many parts of northern New Mexico that the United States was able to solidly occupy the entire region. This occupation shifted the governance of the region from one colonial power to another. Though U.S. imperial policy radically transformed the institutions of governance, Spanish and Mexican nationalism, property regimes, and cultural practices remained distinctly different from those of the other regions within the United States.<sup>31</sup>

More consequential than the end of the fighting was the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, perhaps the most important document in the living history of northern New Mexico. The direct manifestation of the treaty was the addition to the United States of more than 947,570 square miles of territory, consisting of what is now California, Utah, Nevada, Colorado, Texas, and New Mexico. In this single transaction, more than half of Mexico's territory passed into U.S. hands, and the American "destiny" of annexing the continent from sea to shining sea was realized. More than one hundred thousand people who lived in the territory were given a year to decide whether to stay and be granted U.S. citizenship or to move south into what is now Mexico.<sup>32</sup>

The treaty was forced on New Mexico and, as a Mexican historian noted, it was "one of the harshest in modern history."<sup>33</sup> H. H. Bancroft, a U.S. historian, called the treaty "nothing better than a barefaced robbery."<sup>34</sup> It was negotiated in Mexico, and the question of the land grants and General Kearny's promises concerning the protection of property were central aspects of the long and difficult negotiations. The Mexican government worked hard to protect the rights of residents living in the territory. Both sides began with treaties that constituted their basis for discussion; not surprisingly, the first draft of the U.S. version contained no mention of the land grants at all. But several drafts later, article VIII was clear: "Territories and properties of every kind, now belonging to Mexicans not established there, shall be inviolably respected. The present owners, the heirs of these, and all Mexicans who may hereafter acquire said property by contract, shall enjoy with respect to it guarantees equally ample as if the same belonged to citizens of the United States."<sup>35</sup>

Max Córdova, a land-grant activist and former land-grant president in Truchas, says that "the treaty [of Guadalupe Hidalgo] is a symbol of the long-term memory of people here that is second only to the Bible [in

importance as a written document] . . . and not by much.”<sup>36</sup> Robert Tórres, a former state historian, notes the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo as the moment “when we as modern New Mexicans were born”; he believes that “it is central not just to the future of the land but in who we are as a people.”<sup>37</sup> According to Moises Morales, a former Rio Arriba county commissioner and a longtime activist, “There is absolutely no document that plays a more important role in the minds of our people. . . . We are still living the injustices of it every day while at the same time we hold it out as the promise of some day being treated justly by the United States government.”<sup>38</sup> I will return to the treaty and the ways in which it haunts contemporary politics in northern New Mexico later. For now, it is enough to note that there is no document that looms larger or plays a more important role in the imaginings of those active in land-grant and forest battles, evoking a history of loss and injustice that continues to resonate in their lives.

*Ambiguous Lines and Lost Lands* | After the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo on February 2, 1848, the United States began dealing with land-grant adjudication in California almost immediately. But it was more than six years before the government established a branch of the U.S. Surveyor General’s Office in New Mexico. This was partly because New Mexico was only a territory and partly because it was so poor that it was less of a priority. The delay in setting up the branch office and the slowness with which adjudications progressed led to uncertainty about titles and a growing distrust between landowners and the federal government. Furthermore, the branch office was given many other tasks and a limited budget, making it largely ineffective in the confirmation of land grants.<sup>39</sup> Between 1854 and 1891, only twenty-two of the more than two hundred Spanish land-grant claims were verified by the court, leaving 35 million acres of New Mexico’s land unadjudicated. Even the first surveyor general, William Pelham, acknowledged the failure of the laws to accomplish the adjudication in accordance with the treaty, stating in his first annual report that “the present law has utterly failed to secure the object for which it was intended.”<sup>40</sup> Despite the commitment the United States had made to recognize the legitimacy of Spanish and Mexican property in the treaty, the U.S. Court of Private Land Claims often dismissed those claims, citing the “inexactness” of Spanish and Mexican records and a resulting legal “ambiguity.”<sup>41</sup> This perceived or constructed ambiguity was exploited both by the governments and the large, well-capitalized companies that could afford to purchase the “legal” titles to large grants—some of which encompassed

hundreds of square miles of the most resource-rich land in the region—and then sell the land for profit. Of the 176 land-grant claims in Rio Arriba County, where Truchas is located, only 43 were ever confirmed by the Court of Private Land Claims; of these, 33 saw their acreage reduced. In fact, only 60 percent, or 1,856,900 acres of the total 2,968,000 acres claimed by grant heirs, was recognized by the U.S. courts. This means that the average grant of 52,000 acres was reduced to fewer than 20,000 acres.<sup>42</sup>

The Truchas Grant was no exception. The original grant initially encompassed more than 22,800 acres. The land grant is located on the lower slopes of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, which become the mesas of the Española Valley. On the mountainside, at its highest elevation, the grant contains forests of fir and spruce with intermittently scattered mountain meadows and aspen groves. As the elevation drops, ponderosa pine becomes the dominant forest type. At the lowest elevation, closest to the town of Truchas, the piñon-juniper forest dominates the drier terrain, along with wild grasslands, alfalfa fields, and sage. It is a beautiful landscape of transitions. Only a portion of this land—14,876 acres—was recognized by the U.S. Surveyor General’s Office, and the U.S. Court of Private Land Claims in 1892 further reduced the total acreage to about 8,000, cutting off much of the highland areas and a portion of the ponderosa pine forest. These lands were included in the original Spanish deed, which stated that the boundary of the grant was located “Por el Sur el alto inmediato al referido Río Del Pueblo Quemado,” which the Court of Private Land Claims officially translated as “on the south the plateau or hill adjoining the said river of the Pueblo Quemado.” In 1892, the surveyor Albert Easley was directed to locate the boundary on the “top or ridge of the first hills south of said river.”<sup>43</sup> But Easley failed to follow these instructions. Instead, he located the boundary part-way up the slopes adjacent to the river, reducing the grant by more than 2,000 acres. He also illegally charged the community for this service, even though it was supposed to be paid for by the U.S. government. It is not clear what happened to the government payment, but the community, which could not come up with the entire \$250.00 (an immense sum for the time, especially for the residents of Truchas), sent Easley \$69.09, all that it was able to collect.<sup>44</sup> Whether this insufficient payment influenced his cutting down of the grant is a topic of much discussion. Regardless, Borrego Mesa, a traditional logging and grazing area, ended up in the hands of the Forest Service. Tensions were further exacerbated when, in the 1920s, the Forest Service installed a fence even

closer to the river than Easley's questionable boundary. These tensions have persisted to the present day, with a bitter standoff between the Forest Service and the land-grant heirs.

Although more Hispano land grants were validated in northern New Mexico than elsewhere in the state, by the beginning of the twentieth century much of this area was "set aside" as federal land. The creation of these federal lands, especially the national forests, amounted to an effective closure of the de facto commons of forest and pasture and the conversion of locally controlled and defined places into national "productive" spaces. This closure threatened not only access to resources but also the identity of indigenous Hispano communities whose national allegiance was tied more to Mexico or Spain than to the United States of America.

The popular histories of northern New Mexico are lived histories, but like many origin stories, they are undermined by silences that complicate them in significant ways. There is no question that the loss of grant land was a dramatic blow to people in northern New Mexico. Ultimately, the lands on which they had come to depend were no longer large enough to produce a sustainable income, and the loss forced many residents into the growing labor pool for railroad work, herding, mining, and timber production. But the loss of the land has come to mean more than this: people have also become less interested in working the land. In this way, these creative recollections of the past are about both the maintenance of the material possibilities that land affords and the reproduction of a community that is tied to these histories of longing even when many community people no longer farm or ranch the land. Evila's struggle against forgetting is a struggle to maintain not just the possibility of justice in the future; the history of loss and the sentiments of longing she shares with fellow residents of Truchas have become the very glue that binds her to a broader Hispano community in northern New Mexico.

#### ECHO CREEK: CAMPGROUND SHOWDOWN

This summer the people will take over San Joaquin del Rio Chama [an old Spanish land grant in Rio Arriba County] once and for all. The people . . . are aroused and full of ardor and longing not ever before seen in the history of New Mexico. The people of New Mexico have moved together in a miraculous manner which causes joy in the soul of the natives but far greater fear and terror in the strangers [Anglos] who arrived in New Mexico but yesterday.

—Reies López Tijerina, land-grant activist<sup>45</sup>

If these people [Hispanos] would let go of history a little they would get something done here. You cannot live in the past; you need to let go of the past to move forward. All people talk about is what they have lost; they cannot seem to get beyond this. It's sad. . . . It has become who they are.—Phil Smith, Forest Service ranger<sup>46</sup>

On October 15, 1966, with Forest Service rangers and other state officials watching, more than four hundred men, women, and children—many armed and most members of Alianza Federal de las Mercedes, a Chicano activist group in northern New Mexico,—drove one hundred vehicles into Echo Creek Amphitheater, a Forest Service campground, reclaiming what had once been the San Joaquin Land Grant.<sup>47</sup> Tension had been growing over the previous six months as the Alianza tried to get President Lyndon Johnson and Governor David Cargo of New Mexico to open an investigation concerning land grants and poverty in northern New Mexico. Neither was willing to meet with the Alianza, so the group decided to force the issue by creating a public spectacle and bringing a discussion concerning land grants and northern New Mexico into federal court.<sup>48</sup> After all, as the Chicano activist Reies López Tijerina claimed, "These are the true and direct descendants of Oñate and Zapata; they have every right to this land and we are going to see that they get back what was rightfully granted to them."<sup>49</sup>

Echo Creek Amphitheater, just north of Abiquiu on State Highway 84, is a large (300-foot), deeply concave sandstone cliff that creates acoustically impressive echoes and is emblematic of the dramatic landscapes of red-orange sandstone and piñon-juniper forest made famous by Georgia O'Keeffe. The Alianza wrote an eviction notice for the area and an impoundment notice for the infrastructure that existed within the area and sent it to William Hurst, then the Southwest regional forester. Titled "The Final Notice to the United States of America and the State of New Mexico," the notice stated:

Be advised that Final Notice is hereby being given unto you that, the HEIRS of the various land grants in Nuevo Mexico are fully resolved to exercise their Lawful rights to their lands and authorities. . . . NOW THEREFORE, these repeated violations of international law by the United States of America and its political subdivision the State of New Mexico must cease once and for all time. . . .<sup>50</sup>

The claims resonated powerfully with many Hispanos in the area. The activist Moises Morales stated, "People in northern New Mexico had received eviction notices and had their animals confiscated from federal



lands for a long time; it was justice served to reverse that trend."<sup>51</sup> Hurst refused to discuss the issues with the members of the Alianza who delivered the note. Instead, he wrote a response: "The property you propose to claim . . . belongs to the United States of America, and I will not, under any condition, allow it to be claimed."<sup>52</sup> He added, "The full resources of the U.S. will be used to prevent damage to government property or to prevent use of government property to the exclusion of the general public."<sup>53</sup> Hurst's response aligned Tijerina's actions with community memory of land-grant loss and widespread resentment of Forest Service practices and galvanized support for the Alianza. Jessie Romero, a woodworker in Truchas who was involved in the Alianza, put it this way: "The event made us feel like we were all in it together. . . . I had never seen such unity among people around here. Even if you did not agree directly with Tijerina, you supported what he was doing. Even when you hated your neighbor, you told him about a Forest Service patrol. We all had something to gain from working together."<sup>54</sup>

Tijerina and many others in the Alianza considered Hurst's response a direct threat and felt his unwillingness to talk with the Alianza was an insult. In response to Hurst's declaration, the Alianza sponsored a protest in Albuquerque a few days later, during which several hundred people picketed in front of the federal building. The group carried an American flag and placards declaring "The Land Belongs to Us under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo," "U.S. Violates International Law," "We Want Our Land, Not Powdered Milk," "W. Hurst Slanders U.S. Constitution," "W. Hurst Insults Spanish-Americans," "Down with Federal Anarchy," "We Are Not Covetous, We Claim Our Own," and "Down with the Land Grabbers."<sup>55</sup>

The growing momentum and the active media response to the protest began to make the Forest Service nervous. The agency set up a series of meetings with the U.S. Marshals Service and the FBI, launching an ongoing interchange of information between the FBI and the Forest Service that would significantly expand during the upcoming events.<sup>56</sup> The Forest Service decided to employ what Hurst and Carson Forest supervisor Stedman called a "hands-off policy." Whereas Hurst stated flatly, "We do not intend to aid them to get into the court," he was also privately concerned that some of the local rangers might get violent with the group.<sup>57</sup> The approach would be simple: the rangers would set up a road block to the amphitheater and require people to show their Forest Service campground access permits; if anyone lacked a permit, the rangers would offer to sell

that person one on the spot. This way, they would obtain the names and license numbers of people involved with the Alianza. Rangers would remove any illegal signs, and, finally, they would contact the Los Alamos and Santa Fe offices of the FBI and the Department of Justice in the event of any trouble.<sup>58</sup> The Forest Service would place a few officers, including rangers Smith and Taylor and forester Zamora, at the roadblock while Stedman and three other officers went to nearby Ghost Ranch to monitor the situation.

Members of the press arrived a little later, with a plain-clothes Forest Service investigator hidden among them. A few members of the Alianza drove up and parked outside the gate. Some sat in their cars and simply stared at the rangers; others went over and refused to buy the "Land and Water Conservation entrance permits" required for legal access to the campground. The first members to actually drive into the campground were two older men, one of whom was Pablo Rodriguez. According to Taylor, Rodriguez stormed back and forth across the edge of the cattle guard, "screaming, shouting, and jumping on his hat," claiming, "you Anglo bastards shot my grandfather in the back while he was herding. . . . We were here first and it's time you get out of our country."<sup>59</sup> The Forest Service officers, trying to "keep their cool," busied themselves by asking people to buy permits. At this point, according to a participant, "the *chotas* [cops] were already getting frustrated and more than a little bit nervous."<sup>60</sup>

Meanwhile, more Alianza supporters showed up at the gate, while a line of cars began to form farther down the highway leading to the campground. Eventually, everyone got out of their cars and headed toward the gate. According to one Alianza supporter, "You could hear that ranger's [Smith's] heart beating from across the highway."<sup>61</sup> At about the same time, a state patrolman radioed Stedman that a motorcade was forming southeast of Ghost Ranch; Stedman radioed Smith that the motorcade, consisting of about forty to fifty vehicles, was headed his way and that he and other Forest Service personnel were on their way to provide support. Back at the cattle guard, many of the thirty to forty people assembled there began to call out in support of the arriving motorcade. The rangers shoved people out of the way and stood in front of the blockade they had erected with stop signs at the sides of the cattle guard.<sup>62</sup> The motorcade was moving slowly; all the cars' lights were on and every horn was honking (figure 4). "It was like a big beautiful flock of 3,000-pound geese," said one observer. "People just started yelling and jumping at the gate."<sup>63</sup>

The cars first appeared to be slowing down, but then the first car, an old



4. The motorcade directed by Pablo Rodriguez proceeds to enter Echo Creek Campground against the orders of Ranger Smith. Courtesy of the USDA Forest Service.

white sedan, sped up and passed the rangers and police officers. Pablo Rodriguez, already inside the cattle guard, took a position near the middle of the road and proudly directed traffic into the campground as the growing crowd at the gate cheered the moving motorcade. Later, in his official report, Taylor said, "They were going pretty fast at this point and we had to jump off to the side to keep from being run down."<sup>64</sup> Taylor, who was in the middle of the road, did not want to move, but when the cars came speeding at him he was forced to leap out of the way, turning only to slam his clipboard in frustration on the bumper of the first car.

As Stedman traveled to the scene, he got a call from a very nervous Zamora, who reported, "It's getting pretty hot here." In the background, Stedman could hear the honking and yelling. Zamora later reported that there was "complete pandemonium, with people jumping and shouting everywhere."<sup>65</sup>

People from the motorcade parked their cars and came quickly back to the cattle guard. Taylor, now in a panic, attempted to get his radio and lock himself in his truck, but he was quickly surrounded by men wearing deputy sheriffs' badges. Chris Tijerina, Reies's brother, grabbed Taylor by the tie and when Taylor said "Look, Primo, don't you talk to me like that,"

Chris said, "Shut up, you son of a bitch, you are under arrest."<sup>66</sup> Taylor's account of the incident was that he was grabbed, pushed, pulled, and shoved more than a couple of hundred yards to the back of the campground toward the "judge's chamber," set up by Alianza members as a makeshift courtroom in which to "prosecute" the Forest Service. On witnessing this, Smith told a reporter to call the ranger station and have the rangers call the FBI; he started to protest Taylor's "arrest," but he too was grabbed by a "swarm of people" and was unable to free himself.<sup>67</sup>

The "judge's chambers" and "courtroom" consisted of a few old boxes and a typewriter on a picnic table. Taylor and Smith were seated next to each other on the bench with the hands of numerous "deputies" resting firmly on their shoulders. The picnic table was surrounded by at least one hundred observers. Some of the men, having been deputized in writing and wearing deputies' badges, were armed, mostly with hunting rifles. When Smith asked what was going on, Tijerina stated that they were being arrested and tried. When Smith asked what for, "Judge" Noll, a lawyer and land-grant supporter, responded, "For trespassing and creating a public nuisance."<sup>68</sup> When asked by a reporter why the deputies had been arrested, Tijerina reportedly said, "So they could find out how it feels to be arrested."<sup>69</sup> The trial was short: a number of complaints were filed against rangers Smith and Taylor for their numerous "illegal" and "unjust actions" in the area. The accused were sentenced to eleven months and twenty-one days in jail and fined \$500 each.<sup>70</sup>

State trooper Vigil finally arrived at the "courtroom" and tentatively asked Tijerina whether the men were free to go. Tijerina looked at Noll; they nodded to each other and said that under the laws of the republic the rangers were free to go. The state patrol then escorted them back toward the gate. As they walked, the rangers started to write down the license plate numbers of the vehicles in the campground and they were again threatened with arrest. When they asked if they could take possession of their truck, they were told that the two Forest Service trucks had been impounded. This was a very significant act, since many of the people present had previously had cattle impounded by the Forest Service. Taylor later stated, "In all honesty, I was in fear of my life. If the State Patrol hadn't been there, I believe they would have killed us."<sup>71</sup> It was clear to those involved that there was no intention of serious injury, but the event clearly shook up the rangers, as it did the entire Forest Service.

On the same day, Alianza members placed a new sign over the Carson National Forest sign outside the entrance to the campground. They cov-

ered both sides of the Carson National Forest sign with large white placards that read, "Pueblo Republica de San Joaquin del Rio Chama. Est. 1806." In the upper corner was a statement that declared the authority and the boundaries of the land-grant pueblo.<sup>72</sup> They placed other signs that read "Down with Federal Anarchy" (figure 5). Again Smith protested, but this time more diplomatically, telling them "they needed a special permit" to do this. Tijerina assured him, "It's all right. You boys have done your duty. You have been brave, like our boys in Vietnam, but we are in charge now."<sup>73</sup> Tijerina very wisely built the occupation around a preexisting organization called the San Joaquin Town Corporation, which had been established in 1940.<sup>74</sup> The organization's goals were to "protect" the heirs of the grant "from the injustices and tricks of tyrants and despots, of those who insult us and seize our lands . . . and to acquire, hold and possess and distribute . . . land, wood, waters and minerals which were deeded and bequeathed by our ancestors, their heirs of the grant."<sup>75</sup> This group had never been able to advance its agenda, but its work allowed Tijerina to organize the occupation around a set of deep-seated frustrations, increasing tensions with the Forest Service, and a sense of loss and injustice surrounding the land grants.<sup>76</sup> The contemporary *norteno* activist Santiago Juarez stated, "It [the Echo Creek Amphitheater incident] was a brown and white case of native versus outsiders. . . . It served to help people remember the injustices that they have faced as a community and the rights they have as heirs to the land."<sup>77</sup>

The 1966 Echo Creek Amphitheater takeover was not just a reoccupation of the land grant; according to Tijerina, the action was meant "to force the Federal Government to file Federal charges against us. Now that it is done we will carry the case to the Supreme Court." When the land-grant issue did not appear before the Supreme Court, Tijerina exclaimed, "It does not matter if it happens now or later. . . . These people will always remember how they lost the land. . . . They have not forgotten after hundreds of years. . . . They will never forget."<sup>78</sup>

Hundreds of people spent the night in the campground and continued to occupy the camp for a total of four days and nights. After Tijerina left on the final morning, the rest of the Alianza members also departed. It is unclear why the FBI and the federal marshals did not act more aggressively during the takeover, although the official report acknowledged that fear and confusion played a large part in the government's behavior. Warrants were served on five of the individuals involved in the occupation, and a restraining order was put in place to keep the Alianza from entering



5. A member of Alianza stands guard at the entrance to Echo Creek Campground in the Carson National Forest during the takeover of the campground. Photo courtesy of Peter Nalukov Collections, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, New Mexico.

Carson National Forest. A later injunction kept them from entering *all* Forest Service lands in the state unless they entered as "ordinary citizens obedient to and in compliance with all laws of the State of New Mexico and the United States."<sup>79</sup> The judge who issued the injunction went on to state that the accused must abdicate all self-proclaimed rule over the area. The Forest Service recommendation for action went further, proposing "that after all appeals, etc. have been exhausted, a permanent injunction be obtained against the 'Alianza Federal de las Mercedes' or any of its assigned members, prohibiting entry upon or use of any federal land in the state of New Mexico for any purpose."<sup>80</sup>

The Echo Creek incident and the subsequent trials would lead directly to the famous courthouse raid in which armed members of the Alianza took over the Tierra Amarilla Courthouse in search of Alfonso Sanchez, the district attorney who had issued arrest warrants for members of the Alianza in the Echo Creek trial. The National Guard employed tanks and artillery to quell the rebellion and launched the biggest manhunt in the history of the Southwest for those involved in the raid. When I asked Evila about the history of conflict over the land, her first two recollections were the stories of the campground and the courthouse raid; though she has

mixed feelings about Tijerina and the Alianza, she feels strongly that what went on was just and important, a part of *la gente's* struggle for the land.<sup>81</sup>

Echo Creek was by no means the first act of rebellion directed against the Forest Service; in fact, over the century since the creation of the Forest Reserves, disparate acts of violence have repeatedly marked changing federal land policies. The Alianza deliberately chose to stage its occupation on federal lands as a means to bring these issues into federal court. In doing so, the group also revitalized a deep sense of loss that was part of the public memory of land grants. These memories were connected with a growing sense of injustice concerning poverty and racial inequality in New Mexico, which resonated with other civil rights movements in the United States.<sup>82</sup> Finally, the memories of loss were connected with very old and very personal frustrations felt by many northern New Mexican residents about the Forest Service policy that strictly limited cattle grazing and wood gathering on forest lands. The Alianza strategically combined racial affinities, economic conditions, memories of loss, and frustration with the Forest Service into one overriding issue: an issue that found support both inside and outside the Alianza. Indeed, the Echo Creek takeover and the courthouse raid illustrate both the potential collective strength that stems from the depth of feeling for the land and the potential for conflict.<sup>83</sup>

What this history points to is the centrality of loss and longing for the land and how memory and heredity have become central sites around which people organize and protest inequalities. These links are powerful ones, whose boundaries are policed and whose substance is reiterated again and again—with an intensity that often frustrates federal officials and state politicians. It is a past that irritates selective memories and stimulates the forgotten history that travels with these claims and haunts these reiterations.

#### PIEDIAL POLITICS

##### *Remembering Oñate's Legacy*

Do you want to know why things are so screwed up here [in northern New Mexico]? . . . I'll tell you. . . . We've got both the blood of the colonizer and the blood of the colonized in our veins. . . . We're the conquerors and the conquered, the victors and victims.—Jerry Fuentes, Truchas activist<sup>84</sup>

The Body is . . . directly involved in a political field; power relations have an immediate hold upon it; they invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs.—Michel Foucault<sup>85</sup>

On the morning of July 11, 1601, Don Juan de Oñate, the king-appointed “governor, captain general and *adelantado* of New Mexico . . . of its kingdoms and provinces and those adjacent and neighboring, discoverers, settlers and pacifiers of them . . .,” nailed a cross to a living tree and declared, in the name of God and the Spanish royalty,

I hereby seize tenancy and possession, real and actual, civil and natural, one, two and three times . . . and all the times I can and should . . . without excepting anything and without limitations, including the mountains, rivers, valleys, meadows, pastures, and waters. In [King Philip's] name I also take possession of all other lands, pueblos, cities, towns, castles . . . and those that may be established in the future . . . together with their ores of gold, silver, copper, mercury, tin, iron, precious stones, salt, morales, alum . . . together with the native Indians in each and every one of the provinces, with civil and criminal jurisdiction, power over life and death, over high and low, from the leaves of the trees in the forests to the stones and sands of the river and from the stones and sands of the river to the leaves in the forest.<sup>86</sup>

Word of his arrival is said to have reached the Ácoma well before Oñate and the Franciscan fathers visited the old pueblo at the end of October of that same year. In a quest for subjects of the king and souls for God and church, Oñate assembled the people of Ácoma and, during a formal ceremony that was meant to create “obedience and homage,” asked the chiefs of the pueblos Coomo, Chaamo, and Ancua to pledge their allegiance and vassalage and that of the entire pueblo to the Spanish crown.<sup>87</sup> Oñate stated, “It was to their advantage to place themselves of their own free will under the authority of King Don Philip . . . who would maintain them in peace and justice and defend them from their enemies and employ them in positions and occupations in political and economic affairs, as would be explained to them in more detail later.” According to Oñate's records, the chieftains, having heard and understood the matter, replied with “spontaneous signs of pleasure and accord that they wished to become vassals of the most Christian king our lord.” With this, the chiefs were asked to display their new loyalty by bowing and kissing Oñate's hands and his right foot.<sup>88</sup>

With this ceremony officially documented and the number of new subjects for the king and church duly noted, Oñate left Ácoma for the Zuni and Hopi pueblos to recruit still more souls for the church and new subjects for Philip. Not long after, a smaller party of men, led by three of

Oñate's captains and including Oñate's own nephew, arrived in Ácoma and demanded large quantities of flour and other goods. The Ácoma responded by giving small amounts of flour and tortillas to the Spaniards; when they demanded more, the Ácoma attacked the party, killing all three captains as well as Oñate's nephew and ten other men.

The brother of one of the slain captains organized an avenging army that arrived in Ácoma on January 12, 1599. Carefully recording the events using witnesses and official scribes, they ordered the Ácoma chiefs to surrender. When they received no response, they laid siege to the pueblo for three days. There are conflicting stories and few details of exactly what happened in the battle, but according to the Spanish captain, they continued the siege after the Ácoma had surrendered because they were afraid the Ácoma would kill their own women and children. Other Spaniards countered that the captain placed the surrendering men in a closed-off area, brutally assassinated them one at a time, and threw them off a cliff. It is believed that in the end, more than five hundred Ácoma men were slaughtered and there were hundreds of additional casualties. In addition, the Spaniards took some five hundred men, women, and children as prisoners and marched them to a nearby settlement for trial.

The trial is considered one of the most remarkable in the Spanish archival record. The Spaniards took careful legal action to determine "responsibility," interviewing a great many Spanish soldiers and Ácoma prisoners. Unsurprisingly, it was determined that the Ácoma pueblo was fully responsible for the incident. As punishment, all captured Ácoma males over twenty-five years of age were sentenced to have one foot cut off and to serve twenty years of personal servitude. Other prisoners were sentenced to serve Oñate's captains and soldiers or turned over to the head Spanish friar for "distribut[ion] . . . where he thinks that they may attain the knowledge of God and the salvation of their souls." Beginning on February 12, 1599, in Santo Domingo Pueblo, and over the next three days in nearby towns, the sentence was brutally carried out in public. On February 15, Oñate delivered the slaves at San Juan Pueblo into the hands of his soldiers. Oñate was eventually banished from New Mexico, largely because of his brutality, which included the hanging of two Ácoma without just cause, the indiscriminate slaughter during the siege of Ácoma, and twenty other charges.<sup>89</sup>

*Dismembering Oñate's Legacy* | Late on a cold, moonless December night four hundred years after Oñate first set foot in New Mexico, a small group of Ácoma sawed through a recently installed bronze statue of Don Juan

Oñate, liberating the same right foot Ácoma "subjects" had been forced to kiss centuries before (figures 6 and 7). It is said that the foot was thrown in the back of a pickup truck and driven back to Ácoma Pueblo, where, in the dark, it was reportedly passed among many hands, photographed, and then unceremoniously buried. The abductors subsequently sent a note with a photo stating that the amputation was "done in commemoration of his [Oñate's] 400th year anniversary, acknowledging his unasked for exploration of our land."<sup>90</sup> Explaining that "we took the liberty of removing Oñate's right foot on behalf of our brothers and sisters of Ácoma pueblo," they went on to say, "We will be melting his foot down and casting small medallions to be sold to those who are historically ignorant."<sup>91</sup>

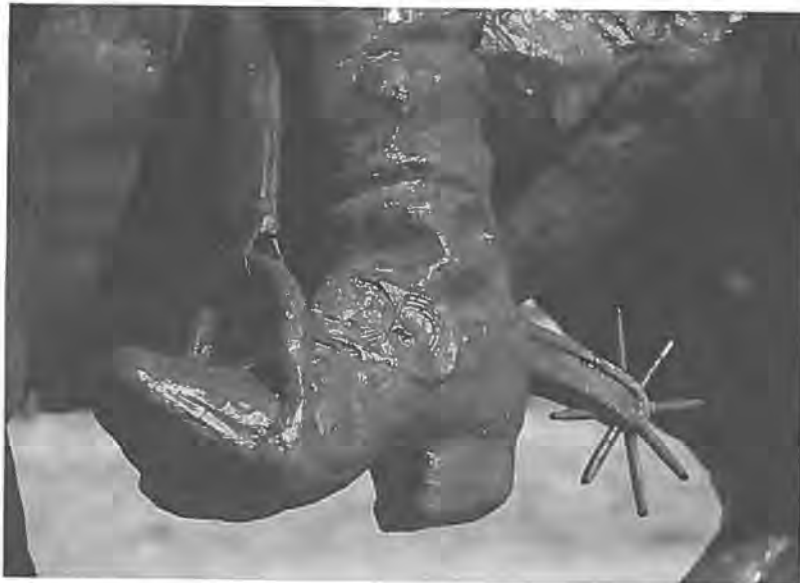
The year-long celebration commemorating Oñate's settlement of New Mexico consisted of 185 separate events, including reenactments of the settlement, academic conferences, the creation of a stamp, and the commissioning of Oñate statues, including the one just north of Española at the Oñate Monument and Visitors' Center. To get there, one follows Oñate's path north from Española, past run-down strip malls and trailer homes, the new Super Wal-Mart, and San Juan Pueblo's Ohkay Casino, through barren, open fields from which, entirely isolated, pops the \$1.8 million center. Above its fake adobe walls fly the Spanish, Mexican, American, and New Mexican flags.

In truth, the building seems more a testament to the politically strategic position that Hispanos occupy in New Mexico's politics than an effective mechanism for the "promotion of Spanish heritage," as it claims. Locating the \$108,000 statue of Oñate there was an attempt to bring more attention to the center and improve its image while further promoting its cause. More broadly, the statue and the year's celebrations were designed to attract attention to the often-neglected fact that European settlement of the United States did not move solely from east to west but also from south to north. As Thomas Chavez, the director of the museum at the Palace of Governors in Santa Fe, stated, "We are saddled with the history that England was the mother country—well, Spain was also a mother country."<sup>92</sup> Estevan Arellano, the former director of the Oñate Center, added, "When we go to school, we are told that our ancestors came from the East. I don't know of many Martinezes, Arellanos, or Archuletas who had any ancestors who landed at Plymouth Rock."<sup>93</sup>

The twelve-foot-tall, three-and-one-half-ton statue represents Oñate perched on his horse, hair blowing in the wind. In many ways, his image at this remote visitors' center is more evocative of another of his contem-



6. Statue of Don Juan de Oñate against the Sangre de Cristo Mountains at the Oñate Center just outside of Española, New Mexico. Photo by author.



7. The foot that was cut off and never returned. The one pictured here had to be recast and rewelded onto the statue. Photo by author.

poraries—the fictitious windmill-chasing Don Quixote—than it is of the hero figure Oñate has become in many parts of northern New Mexico. There is no visual record of him, and as a result, the statue was partly modeled on other Spanish explorers and partly created from the artist's imagination. It was assembled in Mexico and then trucked along Oñate's original route, with stops at schools and other public forums as it followed the Rio Grande back to the location of the first Spanish settlement, Santa Cruz de la Cañada, and finally to the Oñate Center.

Coincidentally, the quadricentennial celebration came at the same time as the 150-year anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Scholars and activists used the combination of events to draw attention to a 400-year history of colonial presence and to remind people of their longstanding ties to the land and the protracted struggle for their rights. As Roberto Mondragon, an activist, ex-lieutenant governor of New Mexico, and leader of the Land Grant Forum, stated, "This was the perfect opportunity to show our roots and how deeply embedded they are in the land and resources we are struggling for." The ceremonies were intended "to boost knowledge and pride in our Spanish traditions and culture, while at the same time building support and momentum for land-grant issues." He added that Hispanos' future as a community, and their claims to the land, depend on people's knowing "what we lost and how we lost it. . . . In northern New Mexico, more than any place I have ever known, you are your history."<sup>94</sup>

At first, no one even noticed that the foot was missing. The perpetrators anonymously called the *Albuquerque Journal* a week after the incident. When the paper called the Oñate Center to ask about the missing foot, the director quipped, "I think they are pulling your leg." He was pressed to examine the statue and, returning to the phone shaken, admitted that the foot was indeed missing.<sup>95</sup> The extent of the fervor in response to the severed foot surprised almost everyone. José Rivera, a Spanish archivist and historian, noted, "It seems like the entire celebration of the history of Spanish America revolved around Oñate's foot."<sup>96</sup> The event clearly struck a nerve and the result was an outpouring of anger, sorrow, and lament that was largely divided in interpretation by bloodlines differentiating those who trace their roots to the Spaniards from those who trace theirs to the Native American pueblos.

One tribal council member from Sandia Pueblo asserted, "Oñate was a ruthless killer, a man motivated by greed. . . . Hitler and Oñate would make good blood-thirsty partners."<sup>97</sup> He went on to write in the *Albuquerque*

*Journal*, "When I think of what Oñate did to the Ácoma Pueblo, I have a vision of Indian men lined up to have one foot cut off. . . . I see blood pouring from their legs as they crawled and hopped away. I see the bloody pile of feet left behind."<sup>98</sup> Another letter, written by a member of Ácoma Pueblo, claimed that the statue of Oñate portrayed "only the positive aspects of his expedition. What about our culture, our way of life? His expedition destroyed it."<sup>99</sup>

Arellano, when asked about Oñate's actions, remarked, "Give him a break—it was over 400 years ago. It's okay to hold a grudge, but for 400 years?"<sup>100</sup> Reynaldo Rivera, creator of the statue, stated, "He [Oñate] was the father of New Mexico. . . . He was a hell of a man."<sup>101</sup> The renowned New Mexican historian Marc Simmons weighed in as well, remarking that "Oñate was the George Washington of New Mexico. . . . It was because of him and his courage and his perseverance that we have New Mexico."<sup>102</sup> In an op-ed essay, he disputed claims that Hispano colonists were "butchers," arguing that "the Oñate descendants of the Founders and First Settlers of New Mexico will survive this assault. They have survived a century and a half of ethnocide in silence. They will survive the next century and a half in the light. You cannot kill a founding people in your midst without killing yourselves. Gov. Oñate symbolizes Spanish New Mexico and Spanish New Mexicans. That is a historical fact. No amount of historical revisionism, emotionalism or depravity can alter that incontrovertible fact. The fight over a memorial statue to founding governor don Juan de Oñate is a fight for the soul of New Mexico, and by extension, for the soul of America."<sup>103</sup>

Some placed the blame on Anglos for intentionally trying to divide the Native American and Hispano communities. Arellano and others claimed, "The ones that are fueling this debate are the Anglos. . . . They are trying to create the schism between Native Americans and the Indo-Hispanos, so they can exploit it. . . . I know . . . even though I cannot prove it . . . [that the incident] wasn't done by Native Americans or Hispanos, it was done by some extreme environmental group. . . . [They] are responsible because they don't want some of the things we are doing here at the center in relation to the land grants and water rights."<sup>104</sup> A subsequent note from an anonymous group claimed the incident was the work of Ácoma, and said, "There is neither racial motivation nor any attempt to disrupt any of our communities. This land was ours before Conquistadors, Mexicans or Anglos came here. We know the history of this place before their time, and we have not forgotten it since their arrival."<sup>105</sup>

The *New York Times* traced the most commonly held explanation of the

event in an article entitled "Spanish Pride Clashes with Indian Anger." It stated, "In Northern New Mexico, Indian, Hispano and Anglo residents are discovering that below their bland, homogenized landscape of franchise motels and restaurants, ancient history is exerting a powerful, subterranean pull."<sup>106</sup> The article identified the source of this tectonic movement in deep traces of a remembered past. In so doing, the article linked contemporary identity to a memory of a fixed past, one that was beyond daily politics but that would periodically shake the foundations of social order, as it had in connection with the taking of Oñate's foot. Regardless of exactly who perpetrated the sabotage, or what social cause lay beneath it, it represented a powerful challenge to the basis on which Hispanos have made their claims to the land and the ways in which they have constituted the bonds of community.

This challenge was made clear in another letter the "Indian commandos" sent, this time to the *Santa Fe Reporter*, in response to an effort by the paper to find out what had happened to the foot. The writers of the letter wrote, "Outside of 'Indian art' and 'Indian gaming' we have become an invisible people, even to ourselves. Our Hispano brothers have forgotten on whose land they dwell." They went on to say, "We have been here for thousands of years and there was plenty to share, but they claimed it all in the name of some faceless King or God, claiming it as theirs. . . . Isn't the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo really people whining about land taken unlawfully—people who took the land themselves? We have little or no sympathy there." They concluded the letter by stating, "To those of you who delude yourselves into believing you are of pure Spanish blood, shake that family tree and you will find many limbs with Pueblo roots."<sup>107</sup>

In my interviews with people following the event, these blurred boundaries of bloodline and their adherent rights became the central point of discussion. In other, more public forums such as land-grant meetings, city council meetings, and Forest Service planning meetings, it occupied a powerful if silent place in the middle of the room, an element tacitly known to all but never mentioned. At many of the land-grant meetings, people referred to themselves as "native New Mexicans" rather than natives. Others, following the tradition of 1960s activists such as Reyes López Tijerina, claimed Indo-Hispano, *mestizo*, or other forms of mixed-blood roots. In fact, featured prominently on the wall of the Oñate Center itself is a regional family tree of northern New Mexico, showing roots both native and Spanish. Arellano emphasizes the *mestizo* character of the populations of northern New Mexico, pointing out that Oñate himself married a

*mestiza*. "The *mestizaje* that was created here is something that is totally new. We are a mixture of a lot of different bloods and cultures. I think we lean in a lot of ways, more towards our Spanish roots, but we don't abandon our native roots either."<sup>108</sup>

The notion of the *mestizo* in New Mexico disrupts in many ways the three-culture myth (Native American, Hispano, and Anglo) that has been at the center of academic and popular discourse about New Mexico for more than a century. But these claims of mixed blood are made carefully, for the veins that divide people along bloodlines are still strongly reinforced and strictly policed, even by those who claim *mestizo* origins. For example, it is rare to hear Native Americans referred to as even half-brothers to Hispanos, and Hispanos who claim native heritage in the presence of Pueblo Indians are often met with harsh criticism, especially in public forums. The lines that mark Hispanos and Native Americans as separate are made and reinforced every day—spatially, historically, and legally—as populations become defined and redefined through abstract measurements and daily practices ranging from the census to the tourist industry.

Indeed, when considered useful, these lines of difference are exploited. The refrain "off the record" litters my interview transcripts in this regard. Particularly common are stories of the Native American trumping the Hispano with his nativeness, a trope employed by Anglo Forest Service officials, environmentalists, and politicians alike.<sup>109</sup> This tactic was applied particularly to Hispano efforts in Truchas and other areas of northern New Mexico to regain land rights or access to forests. As one retired Anglo Forest Service official remarked, "I am not sure why these people [Hispanos] think they have the right to this land. Their ancestors stole more land than we ever stole from them. . . . Besides, they are not natives, they are immigrants just like I am."<sup>110</sup> The director of one of the regional environmental groups echoed this same sentiment: "What gives them any more rights to the forest than I have? . . . They think they can cut down the tree with a chainsaw because they are natives. When I see the press making these claims, I want to pull my hair out. . . . They're not real natives."<sup>111</sup>

These statements are as instructive as they are disturbing. They simultaneously articulate and police the boundaries of identity, establishing singular origins and direct bloodlines, linking a strict temporal teleology to rights. The result of these divisions is that claims to history must be substantiated on the basis of bloodlines. Hispanos, though *mestizo*, cannot—

except in the most abstract sense—claim a "native" past. Their history has to follow a coherent narrative, such as the one that flows in Evila's memory from Oñate to her grandson. Indeed, locals' claims to land rights depend, in large part, on this type of uncomplicated coherence.

By coherence, I mean that northern New Mexicans claim a specific, unchanging, unified history, one that directly connects past individuals, characteristics, tendencies, and rights to present ones. These teleological histories form the "subterranean memories" of events that, while never directly experienced, nonetheless constitute the core of a cultural politics of land and community in northern New Mexico. These identities and meanings do not simply lie dormant beneath the social crust in a subconscious reservoir of knowledge; they are forged, remembered, and remade in contemporary social contexts, political struggles, and daily practices—such as the severing of Oñate's foot and the takeover of Echo Creek. However one recalls the history of Oñate's conquest and the expansion of the Forest Service domain, these events make clear that monuments and memorials have more to do with contemporary society and politics than with past history and inform contemporary identity with powerful material consequences, particularly regarding land and resource rights.

#### CONCLUSION: MIXED BLOOD AND CLEAR BOUNDARIES

The ruins of memory are subject to restoration, and we all become the alienated tourists of our pasts.—Paul Antze and Michael Lambek<sup>112</sup>

Evila Garcia's stories, the occupation of Echo Creek Amphitheater, and the diverse responses to the anniversary of Oñate point out just how central the past is to New Mexico. Evila's memories are neither an objective history nor some immaterial fiction. They are fabrications, loosely based on historical fact, that inform daily practices. They are both content and adhesive, binding together individuals' understandings of themselves and their relationship to others in northern New Mexico. These memories can stabilize social forms by creating continuity between the past and the present, but they can also threaten these very forms of self and community. When Evila says, "I remember when . . ." or states that "we [Hispanos in northern New Mexico] must struggle against forgetting," she is not just engaging in a description of the past.<sup>113</sup> Her stories and acts proclaim bloodlines and boundaries, testify to injustice, cast blame, and denounce arrogance and



greed.<sup>114</sup> She is not merely describing the past but is placing herself and her community in direct relationship to it; she is making claims that carry moral judgments, entitlements, and new political possibilities.

For many in northern New Mexico, acts of remembering land struggle produce a shared idiom of longing that has become central to the cohesiveness and boundaries of both community and individual identity. People remember and remake the past through acts of memory that bring the meaning of the past to bear on the conditions and politics of the present and vice versa. In stories told daily, the dead and mistreated ancestors are rescued and resuscitated; long-gone towns, buildings, and landscapes are rebuilt and maintained with great care; tragedies and passions are relived, judged, and rewritten. Pieced together with the viscous glue of the past, the pronouns *we*, *us*, and *ours* are formed, reshaped, and sometimes broken. People depend on this community to help them decide what to remember, how to interpret these memories—and what to forget.

However, as Oñate's missing foot illustrates, this process does not occur without limits, baggage, and political costs. In the telling of these stories as boundaries and the forging of tight, important relationships between experiences and memories of the self, between what Antze and Lambek call "the narrating self and the narrated self," individuals and communities can become mired between the simultaneous roles of subject and object of memory.<sup>115</sup> With powerful possibilities comes the recollection of the past, bloodline, inheritance, and status, but these memories also carry bloody histories of conquest and violence. The result is a constant "struggle against forgetting," as Evila put it, as well as uncomfortable silences connected with unforgettable acts of remembering. What these stories help us remember is that forgetting is not just an *absence* of memory but an active process. We are not merely what we remember, but also what we forget.

Hispano rights depend on their bloodlines to Spanish and Mexican pasts.<sup>116</sup> To deviate from this blood purity is to dilute the rights and claims that come with these pasts—the treaties, deeds, patrimony, and so on, and the powerful political possibilities that Tijerina and others tested at Echo Creek Amphitheater. The seamless, essentialized histories that reproduce rigid racial categories<sup>117</sup> miss the ways in which Hispano and Native American identities are made, as much through contemporary twentieth- and twenty-first-century racial politics as through disparate racial lineages and clearly delineated cultural traditions. Underestimating the centrality and contradictions of *mestizaje* as a central part of contemporary Southwest

racial politics leads to the complications of land claims that are predicated on the fiction of racially pure and distinct ethnic groups. In this sense, Hispanos are trapped between what they need to remember and what others will not let them forget. That is, they need to remember and remake a coherent past in order to maintain and regain their rights to land and resources and to reinforce the sentiments of loss that bind them together as a community.



## CHAPTER TWO

### SOVEREIGN NATURES

Our primary goal is simple here [in northern New Mexico]: it is to protect, manage, and care for the health and well-being of the forest and the local people.

—Gilbert Vigil, former forest supervisor of the Carson National Forest, U.S. Forest Service<sup>1</sup>

No area of the country has had so long a tradition of sustained programs for the benefit of the local people than northern New Mexico—ironically, no forest in the country has had a more contentious history between the Forest Service and the local population.

—William R. Hurst, former regional forester for the Southwest Region, U.S. Forest Service<sup>2</sup>

Late in the summer of 1999, Max Córdova, Alfredo Padilla, and I waited outside Los Siete, Truchas's local craft and community center, for the lime green trucks of the Forest Service to roll up the high desert road from Española and Santa Fe. The center is perched on a ridge that overlooks dry, red-dirt ridges spotted with twisted piñon and juniper trees, green cottonwoods lining the arteries of the Rio Grande, and a sprinkling of small fields and orchards. To the south, the shop affords a vista of the pine, fir, and spruce forests that make up Borrego Mesa and the snow-capped peaks of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, which rise to elevations of thirteen thousand feet beyond the mesa.

We planned to meet “La Floresta” at 8 AM for a field trip to two of the most contested areas abutting the Truchas Land Grant's Borrego Mesa. Max and Alfredo are on the board of La Montaña de Truchas Woodlot, a locally run firewood and *viga* operation and a central cite of forest-related political organizing in northern New Mexico. The trip was planned as a “field visit” (as the Forest Service explained it to me), in which we would go to the area of contention and “let nature speak for itself”—an attempt to resolve the disagreements that have developed over management of the area.<sup>3</sup> As we stood there, Alfredo commented to me that he had “been on a dozen of these trips, and either La Floresta makes promises they can't keep, or, worse, they make promises they do keep.”<sup>4</sup> He and Max laughed, but his comment echoed a dual sentiment that many people voiced during interviews and in numerous meetings—wanting the Forest Service and its agents to go away and wanting them to better address social and environmental issues in the region.

Just then, we saw the pale green vehicles winding their way up the valley. A few minutes later, they drove off State Highway 76 into the gravel lot of Los Siete. Three Forest Service officials got out. The first to greet us was Leonard Atencio, a northern New Mexican himself who had worked his way up through the Forest Service to become supervisor of the Santa Fe National Forest. With him were Gene Onken, the new Española district ranger (the fourth to hold this position in two years), and Bill Armstrong, a forest officer also from Española (figure 8). After the standard greetings, I opted to ride up to the mesa with the Forest Service personnel to discuss past land use practices and forest policy.

We followed Max and Alfredo through the town of Córdova, where people already had large piles of wood, some left over from last year but most still green; Gene remarked that this wood was most likely “poached” from the mesa.<sup>5</sup> A little farther up the hill, Bill pointed to the east where



Map 3. The Truchas Land Grant, recognized and actual boundaries. Map by Darin Jensen.



8. Forest Service official Bill Armstrong assessing the conditions on Borrego Mesa. Photo courtesy of Eric Shultz.

less than a year ago, his truck was set ablaze while he went off into the woods to show his forest work to a local reporter. We passed the area of the protest (described in chapter 3) where members of several surrounding communities had “forced” the Forest Service to make areas of fuelwood available for cutting during the court-ordered injunction on wood cutting from 1995 to 1996 to protect the spotted owl.<sup>6</sup> Max’s red pickup stopped in front of us and he got out to remove planks studded with dozens of protruding nails from the road before we reached the campground, which had been burned and vandalized numerous times. The area has experienced so many incidents that many of the regular Forest Service staff refuse to go there alone; the previous district ranger called it a “no-fly zone” where the Forest Service should avoid any active presence.<sup>7</sup>

As we followed Max along the deeply rutted dirt roads, the discussion in the Forest Service vehicle revolved around this contentious history. Gene, the new ranger, was interested in discussing with the others how he might improve relations with what he called the “local population.” Bill, who had been in the district for more than ten years, commented that “we [the Forest Service] have done so much for the people here, but no matter what we do, some people are always going to be unhappy with us.” Leonard agreed that “the amount of money we have poured into this area and these people is beyond belief.” Bill chimed in that

welfare forestry in the Southwest." Stating that "frankly these people and this land would be screwed if it was not for the Forest Service," he turned to me and said, "I've been here ten years and I know the history here and I work here even though it's considered one of the hardest posts around because I want to. . . . But you've got to know you're doing the right thing for them and the land, and you've got to stick to your guns, otherwise things will never improve here. . . . In the long run it's the best thing for both the land and the people."<sup>8</sup>

In a more cautious tone, Leonard added, "If we can manage the relationship between people and the forest better, our work will not only be easier, we will be doing our jobs better. This requires being strong and uncompromising when we need to for the land, but, even more, it requires that we educate and support the people so they enforce the rules on themselves by themselves. . . . We have a long way to go, Jake, but we too have a long history with this land and these people, and our jobs depend on fostering close relationships and making collaborative stewardship work."<sup>9</sup>

In northern New Mexico, the Forest Service has been central in almost every aspect of people's lives for one hundred years.<sup>10</sup> The Forest Service lays claim to 60 percent of the land in the region; it has been the land's primary caretaker and arbiter and the enforcer of access to the water, forest, grass, and resources that are bound up with that land.<sup>11</sup> This involvement in the daily lives of northern New Mexicans—through law enforcement, fire prevention, allocation of permits for timber products and grazing, the forest planning process, community development, and outreach and education initiatives, among numerous other programs and projects—makes it the de facto central governing body for the region. However, to think that the Forest Service simply arrived at the end of the nineteenth century, drew its boundaries, and became the legitimate governing authority is to be deeply deceived.

Many approaches to understanding the Forest Service are based on the limited idea that it is an established and static federal agency that manages variables such as populations and resources. In this formulation the Forest Service simply uses its monopoly over an area to make and enforce general rules across federal forested territories. Such approaches seem to infer that legitimate authority is either directly or indirectly authorized by the power residing in the state. For those more attentive to the formation of institutions, the Forest Service is still primarily the product of technocrats, charismatic leaders, and politicians, who exist far from the lived daily practices and routines of forest officers, scientists, managers, and cartographers

located in distant sites such as New Mexico.<sup>12</sup> In some of these analyses, the state is depicted as an oppressive regime that needs to be dismantled; in other accounts, it is portrayed as a benevolent but bumbling institution in need of small policy changes.<sup>13</sup>

Still other formulations have emphasized the ways in which the Forest Service is inextricably tied to capital accumulation.<sup>14</sup> This analysis has been fruitful in pointing to the ways that the Forest Service has benefited some at the expense of others and how the Forest Service is implicated in the production of nature as a commodity. However, such an analysis often forecloses an appreciation of the alternative influences upon state institutions that emanate from the relations of production.<sup>15</sup> As a result, this approach is often inattentive to other ways that the Forest Service is formed or operates, as well as to ways that the state might act independently of the relations of production. In other words, it overlooks alternative means—not just commodification or capitalization—by which nature is produced. In northern New Mexico, where there is not a commercially significant amount of timber removed from the Carson or Santa Fe National Forests, these theories fail to explain both the heightened antagonism toward the Forest Service or its expanding community support and welfare programs. Moreover, all of these explanations contain only tacit understandings of nature, power, and governance. By focusing analysis on where power lies, how it is legitimized, whose interests it serves, or how institutions that manifest power can be overthrown or resisted, such analyses miss the productive aspects of power in the formation of nature, subjects, populations, and institutions.<sup>16</sup> By treating institutions as fixed, these analyses not only naturalize normative forms of power but also miss the politics through which individual conduct and desires are shaped and institutions, territories, and populations are formed. These analyses of nature, power, and governance are dramatically challenged by contemporary forest politics in northern New Mexico and have resulted in an analysis of the Forest Service that is both critically inadequate and politically anemic.<sup>17</sup>

This chapter examines the regional acts of force and formation of governance as well as the contingent trajectories through which the Forest Service came to assume its various forms in this region. At issue is the role that the Forest Service has played in shaping modern northern New Mexico through the bounding and organizing of national spaces, the production and management of nature, and the targeting and formation of populations as distinct social units. The real and imagined concerns over forest degradation and poverty provide the field of social practices through which

the divisions, categories, and hierarchies of the Forest Service are lived and reproduced. The protection, management, and care of Hispano and Native American subjects and forest landscapes serve as the means through which the state has come to have its present and enduring legitimacy. At stake in a larger context is an understanding of the current debates over forest health and the welfare of Hispano and Native American communities and how it evokes seemingly contradictory responses, from deep resentment and expressions of violence to pleas for greater Forest Service intervention and increased institutional budgets. At stake for northern New Mexico are the future role and authority of the Forest Service and the fate of millions of acres of federally contested lands.

Foucault's treatment of governmentality in particular provides an alternative way of looking at contemporary regimes of governance, their histories, and their relationship to the forest politics of northern New Mexico. First, his analysis of political reason points to a contingent and nonlinear theory of the development of forms and institutions of governance. This opens up an understanding of the state and other forms of governance as subject to historical contradictions and more directly reflects the often strange and contingent coupling that has afforded the Forest Service its unique institutional position in the daily lives of northern New Mexico residents as well as the complex and sometimes contradictory subjects of governance that occupy northern New Mexico.<sup>18</sup>

For example, when the logging injunction effectively stopped all major logging operations in the Santa Fe and Carson National Forests, the role of the Forest Service in the region was seriously questioned. The agency was forced to relegitimize its authority in the region by demonstrating its commitment to working with communities rather than its efficiency in managing timber; the former then became a central tenet of its role in northern New Mexico. More specifically, this understanding of the contingencies that have brought the Forest Service to its current position, and upon which it legitimizes its claims, ultimately challenges the naturalized position the Forest Service has come to occupy in northern New Mexico.

Similarly, Foucault's analysis of governmentality points to the multiplicities of power that operate through Forest Service programs and allows us to understand acts of force, such as the persecution of "poachers" and the impounding of "trespassing" livestock, and acts of formation, both of nature (through mapping, statistics, and scientific monitoring of public lands) and subjects of governance (through work, education, and community health and welfare programs). The result is an ability to move from a

\* governmentality

dualistic understanding of relationships between the state and the Hispanos as one of domination and resistance (force versus emancipation) to an understanding of the complex and varied modalities of power that operate across these rigid divides. This expands the sites and politics of our analysis from legislative acts (federal laws) to specific practices of knowledge production and subject formation as central arenas for the analysis of governance.

Moreover, Foucault's approach allows for the conceptualization of acts of caring, improvement, and stewardship of the health of land and people not as simply benevolent acts of kindness but as pivotal to the formation and reproduction of institutions and subjects of governance.<sup>19</sup> In other words, it is through the "proper" care of bodies and populations, the improvement and development of individuals and environments, and the protection and management of their well-being that the powers of governance operate. More specifically, acts of nurturing nature, both forest and human, create the conditions through which subjects are hailed, natural essences become fixed, and regimes of rule are reproduced.

For example, at the beginning of the twentieth century justification for the establishment of the Pecos Forest Reserve (which later became part of the Santa Fe National Forest) and the formation of the institution to "properly care for the condition of the range and protect the well-being of the forest" was founded on these liberal, benevolent claims. Similar justifications underlie contemporary forms such as "collaborative stewardship" of forest resources for the "ecologically sustainable management of the forest and the long-term welfare of the people." Normative liberal categories of care and improvement have defined boundaries, shaped silences, and conditioned possibilities in profound ways both for nature and the Hispano subjects.

Finally, an understanding of governmentality affords different ways of conceptualizing the relationship between nature, the subject, and the state.<sup>20</sup> By looking at the ways that Foucault linked the formation of the state through the treatment of the subject and its relationship to nature, it is possible to develop different understandings of the relationship between Hispano subjects and the forest and how this relationship, in turn, relates to forms and forces of governance. In particular, this analysis points to the ways that the nature of the Hispano body—its health, its longevity, its degradation—works to make intelligible an understanding of forest health, longevity, and degradation. The Forest Service, through its mandate to care for, improve, and manage the land and people, has made both

the land and people intelligible, enabling the travel of this powerful discourse across individual bodies and populations, subjects and objects, the interior self and exterior environment.<sup>21</sup>

Moreover, and more importantly for the argument here, it has helped mediate the relationship between the two in such a way that leads to, in Foucault's terms, a "convenient end" for the Forest Service's own position and authority in northern New Mexico. Thus, in order to govern, to improve the condition of the population, it is not enough to rule territory or inhabitants. Instead, it is necessary to govern what Foucault calls the "relations between men and things." Governing, then, entails not just compelling people to behave but, through the development of instruments and tactics, it compels people "to do as they ought" for their own improvement and the improvement of the entire population. Governmentality concerns itself with the best way to exercise power through the "conduct of conduct" of individuals and populations for their security and improvement.<sup>22</sup>

#### FOREST MANAGEMENT

Maybe what is really important for our modern times . . . is not so much the State-domination of society, but the "governmentalization of the State."—Michel Foucault<sup>23</sup>

Conservation cannot be considered simply as a public policy, but, far more significantly, as an integral part of the evolution of the political structure of the modern United States.

—Samuel Hays<sup>24</sup>

After the two pickups arrived at a densely forested area of Borrego Mesa, and after a brief walk in the woods, Max and Leonard agreed that the area would be surveyed, marked, and opened for cutting by the fall. Max raised the issue that this area was traditionally part of the Truchas Land Grant, and Leonard commented that until the land is legally marked as such, he has responsibility for its management. Afterward, I hopped in the front of the truck between Max and Alfredo for the bumpy ride back down the mesa. As he closed the door of the truck and the Forest Service pulled out in front, Max looked over at Alfredo with a smile and said, "I get a little scared when they get that collaborative look in their eyes," and the two of them started laughing.<sup>25</sup> On the return trip, Max pointed to areas that had been clearcut and still had not regenerated after twenty to thirty years, and areas where "controlled burns" had become runaway fires that drastically decreased forest stand densities. He explained how the areas heavily hit by the Forest Service's DDT spraying program sustained decreases in their

bird and fish populations. He concluded by saying that after one hundred years "the Forest Service still has yet to do one thing right on the mesa." I asked the two men if and how the Forest Service had helped Truchas and other surrounding communities. Max felt that the Forest Service has done a few things for the community, citing the current example of collaborative stewardship, but he said, "Over the last hundred years, it seems that the more they [the Forest Service] have done for us, the worse off we end up."<sup>26</sup>

Max's fear of Forest Service attention is important because he is not questioning the intent; rather, he is doubting the organization's competence and fearing the result of its efforts. He recognized the commitment of all three of these Forest Service employees, who have dedicated their professional lives to the Forest Service. They were on Borrego Mesa that day in large part because they are genuinely interested in the long term "health" of the forest. It is easy to ascribe other more cynical motives to their presence, some of which at times have merit, but to do so is to miss the commitment that they have for the forest, which should be taken seriously. That is, to understand their motives as simply sinister authoritarian interests would be to miss the ways that authority and affect can be integrally intertwined in forms of sovereignty. Bill, for example, had spent a lot of time in underpaid jobs so that he could keep working in and around the forest. He has had opportunities to transfer to other posts and other positions but loves the forests of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains so much that he has given up money and status to be able to work in what is arguably one of the more difficult places to be a Forest Service employee in the country. He has carefully fixed signs, repaired fences, picked up trash, and labored to replant and thin and burn in ways that would "improve the forests' health." Leonard grew up in northern New Mexico and talking to him about poverty, the heroin epidemic, and people's ties to the land makes clear that he has an uncommon passion for the region. These passionate commitments are manifest in micro-practices by Forest Service employees and are at the heart of the Forest Service history in the region.

It was with a similar commitment that in 1897 Congress enacted legislation to "insure the proper care, protection and management of the public forests."<sup>27</sup> The act marked the culmination of a long battle, which can be traced back to 1873 when Franklin Hough made a presentation before the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).<sup>28</sup> His paper, entitled "On the Duty of Governments in the Preservation of Forests," began with a stern warning of environmental degradation leading to the downfall of civilization. Using the fate of the ancient Egyptian state as the

model for a fall from authoritative dominance, he declared that "the presence of stately ruins in solitary deserts is conclusive proof that great climatic changes have taken place within the period of human society in many eastern countries, once highly cultivated and densely peopled, but now arid wastes."<sup>29</sup> What made his speech particularly powerful to the members of the AAAS was that he attributed these changes to something quite other than general fluctuations in climate:

One cannot account for the changes that have occurred since these sun burnt and sterile plains, where these traces of man's first civilization are found, were clothed with a luxuriant vegetation, except by ascribing them to the improvement acts of man, in destroying the trees . . . which once clothed the surface, and sheltered it from the sun and the winds. As this shelter was removed, the desert approached, gaining new power as its area increased, until it crept over vast regions once populous and fertile, and left only ruins of former magnificence.<sup>30</sup>

In one image he gathered together nature, the well-being of the population, and the longevity of the state into a powerful alliance that deeply resonated with the anxieties of the late-nineteenth-century United States. The day following his presentation, the AAAS issued a formal petition to inform Congress "on the importance of promoting the cultivation of timber and the preservation of forests." Hough's position does not seem provocative or daring today, but, at the time, it made explicit a largely novel understanding of Americans' relationship to their forest.

These rationalities were central to the thinking of George Perkins Marsh, Hough, and Gifford Pinchot regarding the proper means of managing and governing the nature of the forest.<sup>31</sup> These understandings form the very roots of the Forest Service, both nationally and in New Mexico. This is not to claim that they are the only understanding of nature that shaped approaches to Forest Service governance in New Mexico. Rather, the conceptualization of nature they embodied enabled—even necessitated—a certain type of intervention on the part of the federal government. By moving between the general rationalities of American forest governance, and the history and relationships surrounding a particular area, Borrego Mesa, I hope to shed light on the Forest Service's central and contentious role in the region. More specifically, these underlying notions of nature help transform the relationship of governance between people and the forest and, combined with cultural and political economic particularities of place, help sculpt the animosity toward and the authority of the Forest Service in the region.

## NURTURING NATURE

To understand Hough's proposal for the creation of modern state forestry and what it meant for northern New Mexico, we need to look a little further back, to the work of one of the most influential environmental thinkers of the last two centuries. George Perkins Marsh is considered, in Lewis Mumford's words, "the fountainhead of the conservation movement," and by Stewart Udall "the beginning of land wisdom for this country."<sup>32</sup> Hough, much more than his contemporaries, carefully studied Marsh's work and considered him the first truly to understand and articulate the serious consequences of forestry practices in the United States. Hough was so inspired by Marsh's work that he asked Marsh to direct the forestry movement in the United States and made it clear that Marsh's ideas were the foundation for his own insights on forestry.<sup>33</sup>

It was Marsh's 1856 book *Man and Nature*<sup>34</sup> that most inspired Hough and others. Marsh echoed a prevailing notion that "nature left undisturbed . . . so fashions her territory as to give it almost unchanging permanence of form, outline and proportion," an apt product of the "Creator." However, Marsh broke with conventional wisdom with the idea that "man" can disrupt, indeed has disrupted, these "harmonies." Where most felt humanity was playing the role that God intended, Marsh believed that "wherever man plants his foot the harmonies of nature are turned to discords."<sup>35</sup> Though some had noted humanity's newfound power over nature, few had considered the notion that man could be a destructive force on the broader environment.

Marsh believed that "man" had stepped out of "his" proper place and that "nature did not heal herself" after man had utilized and deformed "her." Furthermore, he accorded "man" a direct responsibility for the care and governing of "her" well-being.<sup>36</sup> David Lowenthal, Marsh's principal biographer, points out that "Marsh's great lesson . . . was that nature did not heal herself; land once dominated and then abandoned by man, did not revert to its primitive condition but became impoverished."<sup>37</sup> Marsh was the first to define explicitly the relationship between "men and nature," to see nature, on a broad scale, as vulnerable to irreparable harm by humanity, and to suggest that humanity had a responsibility to protect, care for, and improve nature. At the same time, he believed that only mastery over nature—primarily through science—could free man "from the restraints which physical necessity now impose" on humanity.<sup>38</sup>

A dual characterization of nature emerges in Marsh's work: it is both

something that needs to be controlled and something that needs to be nurtured. These two forms of nature's governance are not at all incompatible; indeed, they have provided the Forest Service with its most central governing logic.<sup>39</sup> Behind this dual characterization, however, lie several key conceptual transformations.<sup>40</sup>

Marsh focuses on human *independence* as above and outside nature. This was not a commonly held idea during Marsh's time, but it was one that Darwin also embraced when he argued that natural history was distinct from human history.<sup>41</sup> Marsh made a similar conceptual leap when he framed nature's health as something that humanity acted *on* rather than from *within*.<sup>42</sup> In many ways Marsh saw this question as central to his work. He called the inquiry into "whether man is of nature or above her" the "great question." And when Marsh first sent the manuscript of *Man and Nature* to his editor, the editor wrote back immediately, inquiring "Is it true? . . . Does not man act in harmony with nature?"<sup>43</sup> Marsh replied that "nothing is further from my belief, that man is part of nature or that his action is controlled by laws of nature; in fact a leading spirit of this book [*Man and Nature*] is to enforce the opposite opinion, and to illustrate the fact that man, so far from being . . . a soul-less, will-less automation, is a free moral agent working independently from nature."<sup>44</sup> This independence from nature helps make possible a concern for governance separate from the care of human population that Foucault discussed. Much early attention to conservation was still directed on behalf of the health and well-being of the human population, so Marsh's position represents a break by suggesting that nature—its well-being and its improvement—be a separate target of government attention.<sup>45</sup> Ultimately, the governing of nature, while appearing separate from the direct management of human populations, in fact comes to be indirectly and powerfully connected to the governance of human conduct.

Ironically, Marsh made a separate, extra-human nature intelligible by anthropomorphizing it with sentiments and meanings. Marsh claimed that the "bubbling brook, the trees, the flowers, the wild animals were to me persons, not things,"<sup>46</sup> and that it "would be hard to make out as good a claim to personality as a respectable oak can establish."<sup>47</sup> These aspects of Marsh's work, as well as their relationship to the present conservation movement, are discussed in chapter 3. Here it is enough to note the emergence of this double move, positioning humans above and outside nature while simultaneously drawing from understandings of human relations to make nature intelligible.

Another of Marsh's key innovations was a shift in the *scale* of thinking about environmental problems. The rise of publicly financed surveys of the West—such as those of Hayden, Wheeler, King, and Powell<sup>48</sup>—brought an aggregation of statistics about nature and, with them, a new understanding of the environment.<sup>49</sup> As both a congressman and scholar, Marsh vigorously pushed to support not just these surveys but their institutionalization: he was central in directing James Smithson's bequest toward the formation of the national library and museum, whose charge would be collecting and organizing scientific research on nature.<sup>50</sup> As many have pointed out, these surveys were carried out not merely to advance science and map national territories but also to document the location and condition of resources for extraction. The attendant production of statistics on nature achieved a dual purpose: it helped create an image of nature as an amalgam of resources and commodities while simultaneously creating an assemblage of statistics that made the environment intelligible as a broader, separate object of concern.

Just as an evolving understanding of population led to new formations of governmentality, so did this statistical aggregation of nature lead to a whole new chapter in the governmentality of nature. The environment took on a new form through its intensive classification, ordering, and mapping. It became more than the sum of individuated natural objects with separate attributes, individual patterns, and specific physical characteristics—it became a unity with an existence all its own. The environment, like the notion of population, began to exist as a separate domain with its own regularities, cycles, aggregations, and behaviors irreducible to those of the individual species. In the work of Marsh and his contemporaries, the formulation of aggregate environments took on particular characteristics—the arid west, the mountain west, the arid plains, and so forth—each of which had particular characteristics and capacities that were forged by nature and threatened by "man." Marsh's biographer Lowenthal notes: "Anyone wielding a hoe or axe knows what he is doing, but before Marsh no one had assessed the *cumulative effects* of all axes and hoes."<sup>51</sup> Thus nature, for the first time, was seen as vulnerable to practices whose impact would be felt not just on the scale of the individual tree but on that of entire ecological systems.

Marsh's final conceptual shift in the understanding of nature derives from the first two: aggregated environments that suffer cumulative effects of an independent and often destructive "man" indicate that nature is in need of *stewardship*. For Marsh this relationship to nature was not ro-



romantic or sentimental; his approach to nature was one of dominance: "Whenever he [man] fails to make himself her [nature's] master, he can be but her slave."<sup>52</sup> Lowenthal summarized this position, saying that for Marsh "there is nothing sacred about nature; man must rebel against her demands, subjugate her and create his own order on the world."<sup>53</sup> The difficulty for Marsh lay not in humanity's control over nature, but in the fact that this power went unnoticed. He wanted "man" to recognize and take responsibility for the burden of the care and improvement of nature.<sup>54</sup> The geographer Thom Kuehls notes that in "reading *Man and Nature* . . . the emergence of a new role of man on earth is clearly evident. Marsh calls upon 'man' to become the ecological shepherd of the earth, to take responsibility for its . . . [environment]."<sup>55</sup>

Marsh felt that public ownership of the forest was not necessary for this shepherding to take place, however.<sup>56</sup> He suggested, instead, that "proper practices should be introduced among us" that rested on "enlightened self-interest" as a means "to introduce the reforms, check the abuses, and preserve us from an increase of the evils."<sup>57</sup> His view of the proper management of nature was different from Hough's in some key respects, as we will see. But both men's views on the matter—that to govern nature is to control and protect the public domain and cultivate "enlightened self-interest"—would shape the work of the Forest Service over the next century.<sup>58</sup> They would also directly shape the forms of Forest Service intervention on lands appropriated by the federal government that were once granted to Spanish and Mexican settlers in northern New Mexico.

Hough's dedication to Marsh's insights around the rational care of forests became part of the driving force and motivation behind his forestry work in the United States and a fundamental dynamic in the history of the Forest Service in New Mexico. Hough never received any formal training in forestry, but his training as both a physician and a statistician directly affected his understanding of forestry issues in the United States. Marsh's discussion of the environment and its "enlightened husbandry" fit very nicely with Hough's approach as a physician whose charge is to care for and improve his patients.<sup>59</sup> His training as a statistician helped transpose the familiar notion of the health and well-being of the population to the health and well-being of the forest. Both of these conceptual moves helped make the forest, as an aggregate, the target of scientific and governmental intervention.

Hough's 1897 presentation to the AAAS subsequently became a report that was sent to Congress, sparking considerable interest in that body.

Three years after Congress received the report, a rider was attached to the appropriations act calling for funding for a person with "proved attainment, who has evinced an intimate acquaintance with [forestry matters]."<sup>60</sup> As the one who sounded the alarm over the fate of U.S. forests, Hough was appointed to a task force that was to produce detailed statistics on their health and well-being. The inquiry was also to include information about such things as the consumption of forest resources, the national dependence on timber, probable future supplies of it, the means for its preservation and renewal, the influence of forests on climates, and forestry methods employed in other countries. The result of the inquiry was the 650-page *Report on Forestry*, which recommended that "the principal bodies of timber land still remaining the property of the government . . . be withdrawn from sale or grant." The report provided the blueprint for the emergence of the Forest Service and professional forestry in the United States. Later still, it would influence Pinchot and Graves, who would subsequently lead the charge for a new forestry built on science and morality.<sup>61</sup>

Hough was not the first to be preoccupied with forestry in the United States, nor was he alone, even if forestry problems were not yet of significant national concern. Still, his report and approach marked a significant departure from conventional wisdom. The American Forestry Association (AFA), founded in 1875, was by far the most significant forestry organization in the country at the time. Its membership was made up of estate owners, landscapers, gardeners, and botanists who shared a concern for arboriculture—the cultivation of trees for aesthetic purposes—and the AFA's focus was on the appreciation and protection of individual trees.<sup>62</sup> Hough, drawing together European forestry practices, Marsh's writings, and his own unique background, inadvertently shifted attention toward the new science of silviculture—a science that addresses the establishment, development, reproduction, and care of forest stands. The shift was extremely significant to the direction that U.S. forestry took at this point, but even more so for the form and authority of the Forest Service.

#### RATIONAL STEWARDSHIP

After the publication of the *Report on Forestry*, Hough was appointed commissioner, and then chief of the Commission of Forestry, an entity that would later become the Forest Service. Subsequent chiefs, such as Bernhard Fernow, would closely follow Marsh's and Hough's notions of forestry as they defined the agency's role in collecting scientific data on the

state of American forests. But it was not until Gifford Pinchot took over as chief of what was then named the Division of Forestry in 1898 that the Forest Service began to play a central role in the governance of land, forests, and populations.<sup>63</sup> Pinchot had already been deeply involved in the surveying of the U.S. forest, predicting its longevity, calculating its board feet of timber, and developing theories of scarcity and management. He also helped transform the function of Forest Reserves: whereas they once worked to protect trees, they now became means to organize the utilization of the forest based on principles of accounting (for example, cutting should never exceed annual growth) and economics (for example, the primary purpose of the forest is for sustained use for profit). The mechanism that made this possible was scientific forestry, which assured the efficient use of timber for the long term.<sup>64</sup>

Like Hough, Pinchot was deeply impressed with Marsh's work, calling it "epoch-making."<sup>65</sup> He built on Marsh's insights to develop the notion of conservation. Pinchot recounted an epiphany he had while riding through a park in Washington, D.C.: "Suddenly the idea flashed through my head that there was a unity in this complication—that the relation of one resource to another was not the end of the story."<sup>66</sup> He used this insight about the natural organization of nature as an organizing principle, consolidating his approach to both natural resources and government institutional structure.

There were no longer a lot of different, independent and often antagonistic questions, each on its own separate little island, as we have been in the habit of thinking. In place of them, here was one single question. . . . Seen in this new light, all these separate questions fitted into and made up the one great central problem of the use of the earth for the good of man.<sup>67</sup>

For Pinchot, "the use of the earth for the good of man" meant rational, scientific forestry.

Pinchot developed his interest in scientific forestry through early scientific surveys of the West and his own work on scientific surveys of U.S. forestlands as well as his experience with French and German forest practices.<sup>68</sup> He was an aristocratic forester, raised not by a poor family in the woods but by an extraordinarily wealthy one. He moved in the privileged world of grade-school tutors and the elite private schools Exeter and Yale. His family's wealth also enabled him to go to Europe, where he met world-renowned foresters, such as the German Sir Dietrich Brandis, and

studied at L'École nationale forestière—the French forestry school—in Nancy. There he spent time studying in detail the intensely managed scientific forestry practices of the European nations, including Germany and England. He took weekly excursions into the forest, where he "studied trees, measured them, learned how to mark them for cutting and how to manage them to the best advantage of man and tree."<sup>69</sup> Upon his return he acquired a job with Frederick Law Olmsted, who was landscaping George Vanderbilt's Biltmore estate. Pinchot was given charge of a 5,000-acre forested area on the North Carolina estate. His job was to manage these lands profitably and create a forestry estate that was, in his words, "worthy of Vanderbilt's wealth."<sup>70</sup> The estate became Pinchot's Walden Pond, where he developed the basic principles of forestry that he later used to build the Forest Service into one of the most powerful federal institutions in the West.<sup>71</sup> Pinchot laid out these principles in an exhibit he prepared for the 1898 Chicago World's Fair.

Pinchot was primarily concerned with the forest's profitable *production*. He propagated these principles by making the Forest Service into a consulting agency that dispensed free advice to large timber corporations on the principles and practices of scientific forestry, thereby tying the Forest Service directly to the interests of the timber industry. Companies such as Weyerhaeuser, Northern Pacific Railroads, Kirby, and hundreds of others learned how best to turn their lands into sustained yield units.<sup>72</sup> Pinchot's approach to the forest as profitable resource also gave him political support unheard of by most managers of public agencies. This fiscal-mindedness drove not only his approach to forestry but also his approach to surveying and evaluating the forests of the West. The link is important because, like many other surveys of the West, his forest surveys both located the resources available for production and helped make nature understandable, primarily as commodity production.

In New Mexico this primarily meant granting and managing concessions to the railroads. The Truchas area was first logged for railroad ties for the DR&G Railroad by a small mill on the Rio Medio, along the border of Truchas and the base of Borrego Mesa; it was one of dozens of small mills that sprang up to service the railroad tie and telegraph and telephone pole industry in the region. Mill workers cut ties to length and hauled them down the steep slope of the mesa to the mill with horses, squared the logs at the mill, and then floated them down the river, where they brought between 10 and 25 cents per log, depending on the type and length (figure 9). Most of this logging took place before the Pecos Forest Reserve was



9. Railroad ties from northern New Mexico in the Rio Grande for the DR&G Railroad circa 1915. Reprinted with permission of the Photo Archives, Palace of the Governors.

formed or its boundaries actively enforced.<sup>73</sup> However, as the larger timber companies, such as the Santa Barbara Pole and Tie Company, captured more of the market in ties, the small mills played less and less of a role. The federal government fostered the introduction of large operations, as one district ranger explained, because of “the superior technical abilities and ease of administration that was afforded by working with larger timber operations.” From 1910 until 1950, very little commercial logging took place on the Borrego Mesa, though it remained an important source of timber for local building and firewood. The Forest Service favored working with the large operators because of the ease of communications, which further contributed to the decline of small operators in the area.

In New Mexico it was not until 1950 that Pinchot’s dreams of “efficient” industrial forestry production were realized. But to focus on production as merely being the beginning of Pinchot’s benevolent rational *management* of nature is to miss the impact of evolving the forest into an object of production. Surveys of timber in the West mapped the regions in which forest stands existed and made nature visible as an amalgam of resources. Not only did the Forest Service define forests primarily in terms of potential profit, but it attempted to physically modify the age, class, spacing, and



10. Pachuella Ranger Station, Pecos Wilderness/Santa Fe National Forest, 1920. Photo by T. Harmon Parkhurst. Reprinted with permission of the Photo Archives, Palace of the Governors.

species of stands, thereby transforming these stands into a system of orderly, efficient forests.<sup>74</sup> The consequences of orderly scientific management stretch well beyond timber use and into a discursive transformation of the forest’s meaning. Measuring trees and defining units of timber has enabled the Forest Service to rationalize certain uses of the forest (such as commodity production) while representing others, either implicitly or explicitly, as “inefficient” or out of place.<sup>75</sup> It also redefined public lands as government-regulated spaces of production, a marked split with early notions that Forest Reserves were primarily intended for the protection of the forest itself. Much to the advantage of the timber industry, the Forest Service espoused a somewhat paradoxical position, which it called the “perpetuation of the forest by use.”<sup>76</sup> To this end, Pinchot helped replace the army, which had originally guarded the earliest timber reserves against trespass, with professional foresters—forest rangers—who could “manage” and “properly care for the forests” via the science of timber harvesting. By doing this, Pinchot avoided a great deal of potential opposition to increased federal control of forests.

Borrego Mesa itself was first inventoried by forest rangers in 1901 to outline the boundaries of the Pecos Forest Reserve (figure 10). It should be

noted here that Borrego Mesa, where Max, Alfredo, the Forest Service officials and I went on the field trip, was once, and some would argue still is, part of the Truchas Land Grant. The 1895 land survey by Albert Easley was commissioned to locate the boundary on the "top or ridge of the first hills south of said river."<sup>77</sup> Borrego Mesa ended up in the hands of the Forest Service, and its boundaries have a long and contentious history in which thousands of acres of land, depending on where the line has been drawn, lie in the balance.

But the boundary has hardly been the only issue of contention between the people and the Forest Service over Borrego Mesa. Animosity has a great deal to do with the Forest Service's management of the area, which resonates with the people's memories and relations to it. Salomon Martínez, who at the time was almost eighty years old, knew more about the history of Borrego Mesa than anyone else with whom I talked. An orphan, he spent his childhood doing odd jobs on the mesa, from collecting firewood to tending sheep; he has hunted, fished, and worked for timber operations there as well. What impressed me most was his anger toward the Forest Service. He accused the agency of having two approaches to Borrego Mesa—one being "we know what is best for the mesa, so don't touch it or we will fine you"; and the other being, as he said sarcastically, "to work together in the management of the area for 'your benefit.'" Salomon calls these two different approaches the "dual forks of the snake's tongue" and explains that they are "linked at the bottom but part of the same ugly beast."<sup>78</sup>

Regardless of the contested boundary, a forest ranger conducted the survey of the area and marked trees along the lines that Easley had laid on the map of the Truchas Land Grant. In his report to the forest supervisor, he made little mention of the event other than to say that it was done, that the possible timber and grazing resources "were above average," and that the area would be "particularly hard to enforce given that it is a very popular grazing area by the surrounding Mexican population."<sup>79</sup>

In 1907 and 1908 a "systematic program" of inventorying timber stock called "timber reconnaissance" was started in the national forest, coordinated by the Washington, D.C. office. According to A. C. Ringland, then the regional forester, "The need of definite data as to the amount and character of timber on the forest of the Southwest is imperative."<sup>80</sup> The then supervisor of the Santa Fe Forest Reserve was particularly pleased by the inventory work, stating that "the orderly use of the forest requires its survey and classification. . . . Once this is done we will be able to see

beyond small areas of trees or pasture and be able to coordinate the entire forest at once."<sup>81</sup> These surveys, which defined the boundaries of the forest and inventoried the resources within the territory, formed the basis for the creation of an aggregate forest—a forest that could have its health assessed, its profitability estimated, its carrying capacity for grazing and board feet of timber determined, and, most importantly, could be conceptualized and properly managed as a whole. This, Supervisor C. C. Hall believed, would not only facilitate the process of making timber from trees but would "improve" the forest by "better utilizing her resources" in a "regular and orderly manner."<sup>82</sup>

During the period from 1908 to 1912 there were three large groups in the field each year surveying in the Carson and Santa Fe National Forests. Surveys of the area were carried out by groups of ten to twelve men who worked together as long as the season would allow. The information they gathered was then transferred from notebooks onto grids and then eventually further abstracted and simplified onto maps of the area; these maps, in turn, become the baseline for all forest management—from the allotment of timber sales, to the demarcation of grazing areas, to the creation of wilderness areas. They also clearly marked the spatial boundaries of institutional authority by their location in relation to the boundaries of the map, determining whether someone was a criminal poacher or trespasser by his or her location in relation to the boundaries of the map. The mapping process began with the cruisers, who walked the forest measuring and estimating the amount of harvestable timber, and was then aggregated by draftsmen in one-mile sections. These were then linked together for a map of the entire forest and divided into what were called regions and later referred to as districts. There is mention of previous occupation of the space in some cruisers' notes on Borrego Mesa—mention of a "makeshift sheep coral" or "a well traveled trail"—but what is most interesting is how easily this history of use and ownership of an intensely used and managed area became silent or blank through each spatial abstraction from pages of surveyor notes to the final Forest Service maps.<sup>83</sup>

The foresters, surveyors, and cartographers worked on the region, measuring and monitoring the forest stands, making estimates of timber quality and quantity, and laying out plans for their harvest or protection. It was through these practices that the territory and the forest became known in its present forms, forms that both facilitated the production of resources and the formation of institutions to properly care for and manage the space. As the boundaries and surveys of the forest took shape, so did the

Forest Service's place in the landscape. The reconnaissance of the forest stands not only produced estimates of board feet but helped create the knowledge, meaning, and purpose of the forest as a site of extraction. The 1920s through the 1940s saw a consolidation of ownership by the Forest Service of this newly surveyed and classified land and an increasing enforcement of Forest Service authority over locals primarily through game laws and changing grazing regulations. Moreover, it made materially and spatially distinct Marsh's and Pinchot's conception of nature as being separate from human communities and needing to be protected through proper governance by an authority that works outside of nature for its proper care.

By any definition, sustainable forestry was far from the outcome. The large economic incentives for expanding forestry production came right after World War II and linked the well-being of the nation with the large-scale extraction of resources. It was during this time that the Forest Service strayed furthest from its original mandate and history of gearing forest use toward local forest users in the region. The focus of this stewardship shifted from a regional scale to one involving management for the "timber needs of the nation." For the timber program on Borrego Mesa this meant increased sales of forest units to relatively large timber mills<sup>84</sup> that left behind huge rectangular swaths of clearcut areas in what one forester termed "severely marginal conditions."<sup>85</sup> Though there have been numerous timber sales in the area, the biggest and most significant occurred in the 1950s and 1970s when two lumber companies, Bates and Hanson, were granted permits by the Forest Service to log the area. The primary rationale was that the sales were being offered to "improve the health of the forest" and "to increase economic opportunities for the surrounding communities."<sup>86</sup>

More specifically, the proposed goal of the timber sales was to "release what was thought to be an acceptable understory of seedling, saplings, and young pole-size trees and to 'sanitize' the mistletoe-infected overstory in order to prevent the spread of mistletoe to the understory." After the logging had taken place, it was discovered that the understories were already infected and were "not suitable as a management age class." The Forest Service's own 1993 review stated the area "should never have been harvested" in the first place. As a result of these sales, much of the area is now considered by the Forest Service to be "unproductive commercial forestland" and is recommended for removal from the productive commercial forestland base. Of the thirty total timber sale units, over two-

thirds, or twenty-one units, required "intensive restoration activities." Many units have been planted and replanted numerous times, with little success. The Forest Service deems some units "too expensive to regenerate due to overly harsh site conditions" and has abandoned them entirely. The review of this area by the Forest Service also stated that it was not regenerating well and needed to be restored, but no funding was allocated by the agency and the area has now been reclassified rather than reforested. Other parts of the area received such harsh treatment that it led to an "ecosystem type conversion" in which the "essential character" of the land was "pushed" from one ecological classification to a totally different one.<sup>87</sup>

In terms of the socioeconomic benefits of logging in the area, there have been no long-term benefits. As a result there is plenty of bad blood between the land-grant board, the Forest Service, and the logging companies. Hanson, for example, found much of its logging equipment riddled with bullet holes after one of the last sales. A former Forest Service employee stated that "the logging of the Sheep sale was some of the worst we did in the area. . . . I look back on that time and I am ashamed to have been involved in any way in that sale." He added, "People say we were just out to make money on those sales, but it's not true. . . . We really thought we were doing the right thing with those treatments. . . . I'm still not sure what exactly went wrong."<sup>88</sup> Since then, only a few very small sales have taken place, and the focus has been on thinning stands for firewood production for the surrounding communities.

Even during the 1950s and 1960s, the years of Forest Service tenure with the highest extraction rate from the forest, the Forest Service's sense of stewardship was central to its mission. As Fred Swetman told me, "We [the Forest Service] were helping the nation, the local poor people, and the forest by assuring the most efficient use of the forest to best serve the interests of all people. To do this we had to make the forest as healthy as possible, and, no matter what anyone says, that is what we did, if not in every case, in most cases."<sup>89</sup> The definition of a healthy forest is, of course, open to debate, and in the 1960s and 1970s the environmental movement challenged not the purpose of the Forest Service's caring for the land and helping the public, but its definition of "healthy."

The last but most significant of Pinchot's trio of principles that he laid out in Chicago was the *improvement* of the forest's condition. Pinchot felt that the improvement of "the present mediocre condition of the forest" was necessary, for without improvement "its future would be nearly hopeless."<sup>90</sup> From his vantage point, improvement entailed protecting the pub-

lic from the waste of forest resources, their degradation, and, above all else, their scarcity. This logic of improvement presumes the same positioning of humans as independent from the environment that was initially formulated by Marsh. But during Pinchot's tenure as chief of the Forest Service, this notion changed from a proposal to a comprehensive, underlying rationality, expressed by a charismatic proponent of scientific forestry. Under his guidance, a new class of scientists and managers linked forest stewardship to modernization and progress.<sup>91</sup> Using the most advanced knowledge and techniques, the Forest Service's strategy for rational forest management would, in the name of the common good, help create the best possible future for the nation. This utopian notion of improvement had at its core the presumption that the best way to "manage" nature was through commodity production, thus imprinting market logic onto the Forest Service's vision of government expansion.

As noted earlier, when Pinchot inherited the Forest Reserves and formed the Forest Service he began to change its focus from protection of government property and law enforcement to scientific management for the benefit of "the people," and the law was legitimated less through a discourse of protecting the property of the government and was now more about protecting the health of the range and forest and the well-being of the general population. In doing this, Pinchot institutionalized conceptions of the governance of nature that had been developed by Marsh and trumpeted by Hough and made them the guiding principles behind the Forest Service. He hired new, professionally trained foresters who conducted the first forest surveys, marked boundaries, and carried out grazing studies in the name of improving range for the herders and forest for the public.

Pinchot invoked populist images of forestry and conservation that he insisted "were to help the people, the plain people, to give the poor man a chance rather than to increase the profits of the well-to-do."<sup>92</sup> As part of this effort, Pinchot visited northern New Mexico in 1909, where he gave a speech to the legislature and convinced the governor, a longtime critic of the reserves, to support the National Forest Reserves for the welfare of the public. Pinchot pushed for the lifting of the ban on grazing, using the reopening of the forest lands as a means of garnering support for the reserves. On his visit to Santa Fe he declared that in "the allotment of grazing privileges, the man with a few head of sheep or cattle was always favored in preference to the owner of large herds."<sup>93</sup> He convinced the state to help carry out a "detailed scientific inventory" of the territorial resources because, as one reporter dutifully noted in support of the inven-

tory, "how can this commonwealth expect capital to take up the work of developing the latent resources of the region if it has no clear idea itself of the extent of the nature of these resources"?<sup>94</sup>

Like Pinchot's earlier notions of production, it would not be until the 1940s and 1950s that these notions of improvement would be made overtly manifest in forest practices. On Borrego Mesa, these took the form of heavy doses of spruce budworm treatments, from 1950 to 1970. Eliodoro Martinez from Córdoba remembers being up on the mesa and getting doused by the DDT spray from the planes, which left a "sticky liquid all over him."<sup>95</sup> Many people remember the clouds of spray that blew into the communities of Truchas and Córdoba: "We felt like we were being bombed, napalmed like we were some small village in Vietnam."<sup>96</sup> The Forest Service was supposed to avoid spraying large corridors near the communities, but, according to one ex-official, they "sprayed the hell out of the whole place. . . . We thought back then that DDT was like whisky, the more you have of it, the better. . . ."<sup>97</sup> And there was no way to control the drift if the wind picked up. Salomon Martínez told me that "they told us we did not have to worry about the spray, that it was not dangerous, and that it was good for the wildlife. But I knew it wasn't when things [fish and turkey] just started disappearing, and for what? The budworm is still there. The only thing that grew stronger was La Floresta."<sup>98</sup>

During an interview in Córdoba with Eliodoro, he produced a 1962 Forest Service brochure that was distributed at the time of spraying. Entitled "CONTROL," with a map of a bright red area covering much of the Santa Fe and Carson National Forests, the brochure stated: "Some morning early in June you may notice a lot of planes in the sky. These planes are on a mission for you. Loaded with DDT, they are out to kill the spruce budworm, an insect that is destroying the value of our National Forests." The brochure goes on to state that "if you are in the area when the spray is settling through the trees, DON'T BE ALARMED. [Emphasis original.] You and your pets will not be harmed by the insecticide in the air. You may notice eye irritation for a few minutes. . . . Insecticides can be removed from your clothing by washing or dry cleaning . . . and [you] are advised to cover exposed food."<sup>99</sup> In 1962 and 1963 alone, more than 1.1 million acres of the Carson and Santa Fe National Forests were sprayed with DDT; particularly heavy spraying was done in certain target areas, including the south side of Borrego Mesa. According to one retired forester, "We hit that area hard because we were afraid that contaminated areas of the land grant would spread onto *our* public lands."<sup>100</sup>

Treatments for control of the spruce budworm and mistletoe have been largely ineffective. Almost all the treated stands have signs of mistletoe, in some cases worse in the understory than in the overstory canopy. The budworm has receded, but it has also receded in areas never treated under the spraying program. The only areas where mistletoe has been controlled are the ten sale units on the mesa that are currently considered "nonforested" as a result of the timber operations and failed regeneration attempts.

The dimension of Pinchot's improvement campaign that addressed fears of scarcity was real: the notion of a "timber famine" centrally occupied the rhetoric around forestry in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Hough was one of the first to use this notion, which helped make the idea of tree loss intelligible to the American public via a powerful relation to human loss. The concept would appear in U.S. Department of Agriculture reports as early as 1875 and in speeches by the secretary of the Interior in 1879. It helped convince members of Congress to create and fund the forest management institution that Pinchot would later lead. But Pinchot took the notion of "timber famine" to a new level, making it "a near motto" in his appeals for the American public to support his actions to protect the forests.<sup>101</sup> Even with the surveys and studies being conducted in western forests, no reliable estimates of U.S. timber supply existed, and Pinchot knew this. It didn't prevent him from claiming that he was "certain that the United States ha[d] already crossed the verge of a timber famine so severe that its blighting effects [would] be felt in every household in the land."<sup>102</sup>

Not surprisingly, he believed that the best way to avoid a timber famine was through the scientific management and sustained use of resources on private and public lands.<sup>103</sup> He strongly believed that "the planned and orderly development of our natural resources is the first duty of the United States" and, further echoing Marsh's claims and Hough's speech to the AAAS, he held that "[scientific management and sustained use are] the only form of insurance that will certainly protect us against the disaster or lack of foresight that has in the past repeatedly brought down nations."<sup>104</sup> Later, President Theodore Roosevelt took up the phrase "timber famine" himself, claiming that the "forest problem is, in many ways, the most vital internal problem" and, as such, "the most weighty question now before the people of the United States."<sup>105</sup>

#### TIMBER FAMINES

From the beginning Pinchot was interested in government management of the forest. In his first public presentation on forestry after his return from Europe he presented a paper entitled "Government Forestry Abroad." He argued in the paper that "a far-seeing plan is necessary for the rational management of the forest," expressing his belief that this vision and the forests themselves are "safest under supervision of some imperishable guardian," namely the state.<sup>106</sup> Moreover, he believed that "the care of the forest" was one of the principal "duties of the nation."<sup>107</sup> Government heeded this advice by virtue of the formation of the Bureau of Forestry and the setting aside of public domain lands for management by the Forest Service. Up until the late 1800s, land in the public domain was largely held only temporarily by the federal government, on the assurance of its eventual disposition into the hands of private citizens. Small, essential withholdings were set aside for schools, post offices, mines, and a few timber reserves. But the rise of scientific forestry and the perceived threat of a "timber famine" paved the way for the argument that the land be permanently held by the government and managed by scientific foresters for efficient use. The meaning of "public" in the term "public lands" had, in the matter of a few decades, diametrically shifted.

The way was finally cleared for the creation of the National Forest Reserves by a timber survey carried out by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS). Five forestry experts, including the young Pinchot, were appointed to a commission whose charge was to "study the forest reserves in their relations to the general development of the welfare of the country" in order to determine whether permanent forests on public domain lands were indeed practical and finally to recommend specific legislation based on their findings. The head of the NAS used Marsh's *Man and Nature* to convince Joseph Cannon, then chair of the House Appropriations Committee, to grant them the funds for the commission.<sup>108</sup> The report argued for federal management of forests in order to ensure the rational management of the land. This argument was central to the formation of the federal government's obligation to "improve and protect" the forests for the citizens of the United States.<sup>109</sup> Though lands had been set aside before this point, this would be the first direct step toward what would become the federal government's deep involvement in federal lands management in the West. Many in the West responded harshly, claiming through a group of western senators that western states were being treated as colonies and

that the "gratuitous suggestions of . . . irresponsible strangers [the NAS committee], after a flying visit of a couple of days" were a "galling insult to local sovereignty." They went so far as to say that "King George had never attempted so high-handed an invasion upon the rights" of American citizens.<sup>110</sup>

Opposition to the creation of federally held lands would build, but there was strong support for the rational, scientific management of land for the public good. Pinchot, through letters and speeches, helped build support, just as his close relationship with President Roosevelt helped facilitate the development of the Forest Service. But in truth, the Forest Service's policy of scientific forestry that would benefit the general public was central to the late-nineteenth-century development of the federal government as well. The growth of Forest Reserves during Pinchot's and Roosevelt's era is impressive. When Roosevelt took office, 41 reserves stood on a little more than 46 million acres of land. In his first year as president, he added almost 16 million acres, and by the time he left office he had increased the number of forest reserves to 159, covering more than 150 million acres.<sup>111</sup>

Ultimately, however, this process involved more than the withdrawal of public lands and the creation of permanent federal spaces in the West. The notion of conservation became central to the state because its charge of maintaining the health and welfare of both the population and the forest served to rationalize the state's expanding control in the region. Through these acts grounded practices such as boundary making, research, silviculture, protection, management, fuelwood and grazing regulation, and community outreach, education, and support emerged. And it has been through these practices and the promotion of stewardship that the Forest Service became a major figure—in almost all aspects of people's lives—in places like northern New Mexico.

The environmental movement and Chicano activism challenged many of these claims, particularly the Forest Service's ideas about what constitutes a healthy forest. In so doing, these movements started to erode the Forest Service's claims to sovereign authority to manage public lands. Since then, though governance of the land is officially in the hands of the Forest Service, environmental groups' success at defining forest health has given them a great deal of de facto influence over the governance of federal lands. By most accounts, the Forest Service has its hands, if not tightly bound, severely limited on almost all management decisions affecting national forest lands. Many of the people I talked with cited environmental lawsuits as the culprit. Because the Forest Service built its authority

and based its legitimacy on notions of forest health and stewardship and the well-being of the public, it was vulnerable to challenges by environmentalists, social activists, and, at the time, even representatives of the forest industry.<sup>112</sup> As a result the agency has lost the authority to make unilateral management decisions, and its benevolent claims of care and stewardship have become more suspect and open to challenges.

#### FOREST HEALTH

These understandings of forest scarcity and degradation soon served as the template for understandings of other resources, particularly wildlife management and grazing. In New Mexico grazing soon became a similar crisis calling out for proper management. The man who sounded the alarm with regard to wildlife management in and around Truchas was none other than Aldo Leopold, who would later be credited with founding modern conservation biology. In developing the new science of wildlife management Leopold drew on his forest survey experience, his tenure as supervisor of the Carson National Forest, and his later experience as a promoter of wildlife preservation in New Mexico. It was not a casual linkage but a direct, overt borrowing of the rationalities of forestry applied toward wildlife management. In an article entitled "Forestry and Game Conservation," he laid out how game, like forests, can be systematically inventoried, protected, and harvested by directly applying Forest Service timber management rationalities to the management of game populations.<sup>113</sup> He believed that foresters were best suited for this job because "they are the only large body of scientifically trained men on the ground."<sup>114</sup> Similarly, echoing Marsh's conceptions of environmental degradation and anxieties of scarcity, he stated that if wildlife was not managed through these systematic, scientific procedures by these trained men, the forest would be permanently and seriously reduced.

He directly and explicitly compared forest stand estimates to game population estimates, sustained annual cut to sustained annual cull, growing stock to breeding stock, the protection of forests to the protection of animal species, sale contracts to game laws, and stumpage rates to license fees. In short, he built modern wildlife conservation directly upon the logic and rationalities of forest conservation. Protecting wildlife would require increased federal presence on the part of the Forest Service. It would not be the first time that people in the region were pushed off the land due to the enforcement of state game laws. Game laws and the lack of proper



hunting techniques had been the principal anxieties of the wealthy, primarily Anglo sportsmen who lived in and visited the Southwest. These anxieties had led to the formation of a New Mexican version of the Texas Rangers to help protect the game from "depredations of these [Indian] raiding devils."<sup>115</sup> The Forest Service played an active role in these early and often violent efforts at game protection, forming a central part of the policing efforts. Hispanos did not, at the time, suffer the same consequences as the Indians, but by the time Leopold arrived the "Indian problem" with regard to game, especially nomadic hunters of game, had largely ceased. Leopold helped turn attention to Hispano game practices and made it a priority for rangers to clamp down on unsportsmanlike hunting practices. The rangers' notes and the fine notices of the era indicate that after 1912 people were regularly fined for hunting and fishing without permits. To this day, people go to great lengths to avoid being caught by the rangers for illegal hunting.<sup>116</sup> As the historian Louis Warren explains, "To Aldo Leopold the mountains [of New Mexico] represented an arena for hunters who could afford licenses and the journey there. . . . In this way the national forests were a 'national environment,' a repository of democratic hunting liberties."<sup>117</sup>

Leopold saw the long-term federal role in wildlife protection as limited and, as is discussed in chapter 3, he was interested in the formation of an ethic for the land. In this way, he extended Pinchot's philosophy of care to a belief in the necessity of ethics. What is most relevant to the discussion here is how his philosophy envisioned proper governance of wildlife populations through proper stewardship of the land. He carried out this task by participating in and advocating for the extermination of the wolf to "improve" and better manage conditions for the deer and antelope. He would later deeply regret these actions, but this would not temper his desire to manage the relationship between men and nature through science or his belief in the need for governance of this relationship by fostering an ethic of care as a means of better governing people's relationships to the land.

The decline of game was only one of the dangers from which the Forest Service was supposedly protecting the forest. Another concern that was central to the Forest Service and Leopold was the proper management of the range. As they did with timber, early rangers carried out detailed surveys of the range following the forest supervisor's 1911 order to "collect as much data as possible" through "intensive reconnaissance" of range conditions.<sup>118</sup> These surveys described the condition of the range and led to the division of the forest into grazing allotments, on which a certain desig-

nated number of animals would be allowed to graze based on the land's assumed carrying capacity. This capacity was expressed in AMUS (animal month units). The first reports about Borrego Mesa determined that it was "excellent country . . . ideal for grazing."<sup>119</sup> But by 1906, the Forest Service's views on the health of the land had changed drastically, and the agency began to reduce the number of grazing animals on the allotment.

In fact, claims that the forest and range were severely degraded became the premise for public land being passed to the Forest Service rather than distributed as homesteads. Moreover, according to the supervisor of the Santa Fe National Forest, anxieties over the degradation of land "required the same treatment as a sick patient . . . the careful and systematic care by well trained scientists."<sup>120</sup> This became the explanation of and justification for Pinchot's prescriptions to both politicians and herders for the efficient improvement of the nation's public lands. As one 1909 Forest Service report put it, "Deforestation and soil degradation are two of the oldest causes of the fall of civilization and nations"; or as a more recent environmental history of the region states, "Overgrazing and deforestation are two of the most ancient plagues of mankind."<sup>121</sup> These sentiments echo those of Marsh as well as Hough's perceptions of nature and civilization and the need for nature's proper governance. This scientific and efficient improvement of the "degradation" of the region's resources required the proper diagnosis of the potential and current health of the region through scientific, objective observation, categorization, and organization of the region's resources. These studies pointed to the necessity of the omniscient overseeing and firm hand of the scientist and masculine manager to guide nature back to its proper course.

The first action of the Forest Service was to limit the number of domestic animals for grazing, which led to fierce opposition. Although the outright ban on grazing in the national forest had been lifted, and few real or systematic attempts had been made to enforce it while it was in effect, it was still fresh in people's minds. The ranger who was stationed in a cabin just above Borrego Mesa had his life threatened numerous times, and the meetings the Forest Service held with the residents of Truchas and the neighboring town of Pueblo Quemado (now Córdova) about reducing the numbers of livestock on the range were contentious. According to a researcher who worked in Quemado in the 1970s, "no single event or set of events stand out more clearly in the minds of elderly Quemadeños than these meetings" with the Forest Service over grazing.<sup>122</sup>

These efforts to regulate grazing rights were rationalized as being for

the benefit of the Hispanos as well as for the nation. As Forest Ranger Allens stated in a report to his regional supervisor in 1909, "We need to convince people that this is the best thing for them and the forest, that we will help take care of the forest so that they can graze more sheep."<sup>123</sup> The Forest Service promised it would improve the range and increase the opportunity for more or better pasture. Instead, the agency instituted the grazing permit program in 1910, and Leopold and many others made it a personal and professional challenge to reduce the number of livestock on the range by limiting the number of permits issued, more strictly enforcing grazing fees, and prohibiting traditional grazing practices.<sup>124</sup> All of this limited the ability of people to survive on herding alone and forced many of them into agricultural and migratory labor work.

The people from Truchas and Quemado who continued to rely primarily on herding were forced into a more dependent and exploitative relationship with Frank Bond, a wealthy sheep dealer and merchant from nearby Española who owned the Bond Company. As tighter restrictions on grazing went into effect, people became more indebted to Bond, who would either buy out their permits or make them *partidarios* (shareholders) who could graze their sheep but were then forced to sell the wool to Bond and deliver a percentage of their lambs.<sup>125</sup> In the beginning, the percentage that Bond received was around two pounds of wool per sheep, but by 1915 Bond had raised it to twenty-two lambs per one hundred ewes per year. This made it, according to one study of the region, "virtually impossible to turn a profit,"<sup>126</sup> leaving most of the *partidarios* deeply in debt to the Bond Company.

Though it was no longer profitable as a primary source of income, grazing continued on a reduced scale in the region—over 60 percent of the livestock permits between 1925 and 1954 were for families with one to nine head of livestock.<sup>127</sup> In 1918, 120,494 sheep and goats and 18,377 cattle and horses were permitted to graze in the Santa Fe National Forest. By 1929, the restrictions had reduced these numbers to 34,953 sheep and goats and 10,170 cattle and horses.<sup>128</sup> On Borrego Mesa the animal month units (AMUs) decreased from almost 1,000 to 320 between 1932 and 1940.<sup>129</sup> This cut the number of permitted grazing animals in half, and those remaining had more restricted grazing periods.

Not surprisingly, the number of trespassing cases increased—an estimated 200 to 300 AMUs in 1932 alone—and the Forest Service responded by instituting a new anti-trespassing program of "strict surveillance and prosecution"<sup>130</sup> for the "enhancement and management of the range" and

"the good of the native people."<sup>131</sup> Hundreds of animals from the area were impounded, and payment of both a fine and the cost of "boarding" was required for their release.<sup>132</sup> When animals were found in the forest, they were brought to a Forest Service impoundment area. Owners would be notified and if they did not respond or, as commonly was the case, could not pay the impoundment fee, the animals would be auctioned off by the Forest Service. If the livestock were not sold at the auction, the animals were destroyed.

Between 1964 and 1967 grazing restrictions were again increased. The Forest Service banned milk cows and workhorses on national forest lands. This, according to one USDA report, caused a decrease in the quality of the local diet since many people could not afford milk substitutes; in the case of workhorses, it put a greater strain on farmers because many could not afford tractors. Meanwhile, although new permits were being issued to outsiders in neighboring allotments, the number of permits for sheep declined, and many Anglo-American ranchers in the Southwest were permitted to graze their riding stock. All these new regulations targeted Hispanos directly and unfairly.<sup>133</sup>

Some rangers believed that people were too dependent on the Forest Service and that they spent too much time dealing with small scale, economically inefficient grazing. For example, Forest Service inspector McDuff's 1952 range inspection report states that "the dependency problem and small numbers permitted each permittee does not leave much room for aggressive action."<sup>134</sup> The average number of livestock per permittee in the Borrego Mesa area was 3.4, and frustration grew with the difficulty in dealing with the small-scale Hispanic sheep grazers. This led to increased tension, according to Truchas residents, and in response the Forest Service stated that "consideration of the needs and well-being of local residents is of primary concern when dealing with grazing issues in the area."<sup>135</sup> As a result, the Carson and Santa Fe National Forests have the highest number of individual permittees with the smallest number of cattle of any national forest in the country.

Pinchot, Leopold, and others would expertly mingle these principles of *welfare*, *scarcity*, and *science* together in their appeals to the public and politicians, garnering unprecedented federal support for the formation of the Forest Reserves. In this way, Pinchot offered a solution to the destruction and scarcity of resources by "man's" misuse, about which Marsh, and later many others, had warned, but for which none had found a solution. Pinchot claimed that trees could be harvested without destroying the forest,

and that proper scientific management could result in a sustained yield that promised an end to scarcity and "timber famine." Leopold claimed that land and community health could be best maintained through the utilization and proper technical management of wildlife. Thus, notions of improvement, historically associated with the provincial activity of gentry toward their gardens, became criteria for responsible governance and a means by which governments rationalized the expansion of their powers. In this way anxieties over the health of the population became transferred to the health of the aggregate forestlands, abetted by the use of metaphors such as famine. The result was that the proper governance of "the relationship between men and nature" appeared to be a moral necessity.

#### WELFARE FORESTRY

From the 1970s through the 1980s powerful alliances among several different groups, especially the leftist-leaning Anglo environmental community and the more radical Chicano activists, challenged the Forest Service's claims to authority over the public lands in northern New Mexico. The relationships worked because the environmental community had challenged the Forest Service, both regionally and nationally, over wilderness areas and preservation ideals, offering a different direction for the future stewardship of the national forests. The Chicanos had similarly challenged the Forest Service over the Echo Creek Campground incident and the courthouse raid that was discussed in the introduction. The fallout from these and other events led to numerous congressional hearings, a national conference,<sup>136</sup> research, and private foundation support, all of which forced the Forest Service to deal with what it called "the Spanish American problem."<sup>137</sup> Ironically, the Forest Service had obtained a considerable amount of land-grant land through New Deal projects that were intended to provide areas for impoverished Hispano and Native American communities to graze livestock and cut timber.<sup>138</sup>

Also during this time, William Hurst, then the southwest regional forester, had numerous conversations with the national Forest Service chief and attended many federal hearings. As a result the Forest Service received intense national and regional criticism for not doing more to alleviate the poverty and respect the cultural "resources" of the region. The secretary of agriculture visited the area and urged the chief of the Forest Service to "make an even stronger effort to work in rural development and poverty programs to help those Mexican-American people."<sup>139</sup> In response to this

pressure and the militant Chicano activities, Hurst directed Jean Hassell to write a report titled "The People of Northern New Mexico and the National Forests," which came to be called the Hassell Report. According to Hassell, the basic problem was that "many of the people of Northern New Mexico, who are of Spanish extraction, are behind the rest of the State socially and economically; standards of living are often lower and in some cases dire poverty exists."<sup>140</sup> He further stated that the basic solution is "the entrance of the people of Northern New Mexico into the American mainstream of life. This solution will require education, training, money, time and work." He went on to describe the ways that the Forest Service is central to the solution, concluding that

the Forest Service must continue to be a viable, helpful and effective arm of the government of New Mexico. To continue such a role during the years ahead[,] the uniqueness and value of Spanish American and Indian cultures in the Southwest must be recognized and efforts of the Forest Service must be directed towards their preservation. These cultures should be considered resources in much the same way as Wilderness is considered a "resource" with Forest Service Programs and plans compatible with their future well-being and continuance.<sup>141</sup>

The focus on care of the people as a "resource" to be managed was not entirely new. However, the centrality of these acts of care and proper stewardship to the Forest Service's authority have never been more explicit. As Hurst said in an interview, "It was not exactly that we wanted to do what we did . . . at least not entirely. It was that if we were to have any ability to continue to do our jobs in the area and not lose our essential and highly respected influence in Northern New Mexico, we had to show that we could better care for those communities and that we could rethink how we cared for the land."<sup>142</sup>

More money and authority were given to the Forest Service to implement these poverty programs because they "were the most significant governing presence in the region."<sup>143</sup> The results of these efforts became very clear on the landscape around Truchas. Large-scale timber sales on Borrego Mesa were greatly limited and more attention was given to firewood sales for the surrounding communities. On the other side of the land grant, in the piñon-juniper forest, thousands of acres were subjected to the Bates tree crusher, a tractor the size of a house that drove over an area crushing the trees with each pass and leaving nothing but splintered

pieces of wood. This action, along with chemical treatments to limit the regeneration of these trees, was carried out for the explicit purpose of "poverty alleviation" by increasing the carrying capacity of forage for grazing. However, grazing permits for this area were allotted to the wealthiest citizens. Moreover, many people who had used the area for hunting, firewood, and collecting piñon nuts were left even more marginalized. Additionally, these lands became overrun with sagebrush and never provided nearly as much forage as the Forest Service had hoped.

Things again reached a boiling point after the spotted owl injunction in 1995 (detailed in the introduction) when an environmental lawsuit stopped all logging on federal lands in the region. What is important for this chapter is that the injunction and the resulting protests and demonstrations also marked the beginning of a new Forest Service approach: managing the national forest through "collaborative stewardship."

The notion of collaborative stewardship, a policy that was supposedly based on the care and well-being of the community, helped re-legitimize a Forest Service that had been severely undermined by three decades of environmental challenges. Collaborative stewardship not only reifies the benevolent care of the Forest Service, it helps form and define new ways of relating to the forest "through cooperation and not conflict" and "respect, not hostility," as the forest supervisor Leonard Atencio stated at a meeting one week after our "field trip" to Borrego Mesa. Atencio went on to say, "We need to form new relationships to each other and the land, [and] that means learning to be new and more responsible citizens. . . . This new relationship requires not more law enforcement personnel . . . more forest patrolling on the mesa, but more of people controlling their own actions for their own long-term well-being as well as that of the forest."<sup>144</sup>

The collaborative stewardship program developed around the Forest Service's allocation of small timber projects of community firewood for personal consumption and sale. The projects contributed to "ecosystem health" through "thinning the forest areas that are overgrown to create more healthy and diverse ecosystems" and to "enhance cultural and economic well-being of the surrounding communities."<sup>145</sup> This was then expanded into grazing projects "to thin and burn overstocked forest and improve watershed conditions, forage and wildlife habitat."<sup>146</sup>

However, collaborative stewardship has not been unique to Northern New Mexico. Mike Dombeck, a former chief of the Forest Service, stated that collaborative stewardship had been a top priority since his first day in office. According to Dombeck, in trying to find ways to legitimize its role in

the management of one-third of the land in the western United States, where timber production for the good of the nation associates the Forest Service more with corporate forestry than with forest stewardship and community welfare, the Forest Service's mandate would be "car[ing] for the land and serv[ing] the people by listening to all our constituents and by living within the limits of the lands. I call this commitment to healthy ecosystems and working with people on the land collaborative stewardship."<sup>147</sup> In many ways this is not a new focus, especially not in northern New Mexico, but one that has been central to the Forest Service's mission since its founding and the conceptions of the care of nature laid out by Marsh and others over one hundred years ago. What is clear is that it continues to reassert the centrality of the Forest Service in the "proper" governance of the "relationship between men and things" that is leading to the convenient end of remaking the Forest Service's authority and role in northern New Mexico.

## CONCLUSION

When forester Bill Armstrong of Española said on our trip to Borrego Mesa that "this is the best example of welfare forestry in the Southwest" he was talking about the perseverance and benevolence of the Forest Service as well as about the forests and people in and around Borrego Mesa. He also echoed a long tradition of Forest Service policy related to caring for and improving the welfare of the forest landscapes that has its roots in formations of nature dating back to Leopold, Pinchot, Hough, Marsh, and others. This chapter explored the conditions through which ideas of nature and the practices authorized through formations of nature have come into being—the lines of force, acts of caring, and practices of improvement that have made possible more than a century of management of the land and people of northern New Mexico. Looking at the formation of the Forest Service in this chapter does not tell the history of the Forest Service in New Mexico. What it does do, however, is reexamine the bounds of the political debate on the naturalized authority and position the Forest Service occupies in New Mexico and within current debates over such controversial topics as "collaborative stewardship," "forest health," and "community welfare." By exploring how changing rationalities of nature have been central in the everyday practices through which forests and subjects of northern New Mexico came to their present and changing forms, I have tried to reexamine both the means through which the Forest Service gov-

erns others and, more centrally, how others have come to govern themselves through nature in northern New Mexico.

Nature has been both an object and means of sovereignty in northern New Mexico. Sovereignty is not only the enactment of power on a preformed world of bounded and naturalized categories but is also about bringing the relationship of new objects and subjects into being. I have looked at the ways that concerns for the health, well-being, and improvement of the body have crossed from bodies to populations and from populations to forests. I have traced the understandings of nature formulated by Marsh and others and the movement of these rationalities to the Forest Service both to examine its role in the formation of institutions for the governance of nature and to detail how practices of scientific research and management of nature help make the forest intelligible and Hispano subjects discernable.

Ultimately, I have tried to show how care, improvement, and stewardship of nature's health and Hispanos' welfare can be the very means through which state formation occurs. These acts are the process of protecting the land from "timber famine," wildlife loss, and soil degradation as well as the implementation of programs for "social welfare," practices authorized through formations of nature. These lines of force, acts of caring, and practices of improvement have made possible more than a century of governance of the land and people of northern New Mexico. "Poverty alleviation" and "cultural preservation" have placed the Forest Service in a seemingly benevolent and central role above and outside nature's regional society. It is not through authoritarian control or state violence that the Forest Service has come to occupy such a privileged position in northern New Mexico but through the kind acts, caring, and management of nature and Hispano welfare. These acts have led to the "convenient end" of the Forest Service and point to the many ways that nature is bound up in modern forms of sovereignty.

As numerous quotes within this chapter reveal, many Forest Service employees are deeply committed to their jobs. Theirs is a mission—although diluted since the early part of the twentieth century—of pride and commitment to managing the health and welfare of the forest. This dedication to the mission of the Forest Service and caring for the forest enrolls the sympathies and sentiments in the practices of forest stewardship. This combination of state authority and personal affect in relationship to the forest fuses questions of sovereignty with questions of subjectivity through formations of nature. The histories of the formations of nature

that have created the conditions of possibility for growth and governance in northern New Mexico have also created the citizens of environmental stewardship.

All too often the debates in northern New Mexico have been limited to the domination of the Forest Service versus the resistance of the "locals." This binary conceptualization of power as domination versus emancipation and its implications for understanding governance are simply too blunt to explain the particularities, passions, and contradictions of the complex relations between the forests, residents, and government officials in northern New Mexico. The creation of subjects and objects of governance are contradictory and inconsistent, forming strange, sometimes elusive, and sometimes surprisingly enduring couplings and relations. What is clear is that there is no singular force or source of power and definitive site or population of resistance. These acts of contestation over the forest are as much about unlikely couplings, contradictory formations of nature and subjectivities, personal commitments and passions as they are about any monolithic state force or innate cultural tendency toward resistance.

As such, violence toward the Forest Service in northern New Mexico must be seen as part of practices of care and improvement. The histories that have made the Forest Service's longevity possible are the same histories that have made contestation possible. In particular, it is worth considering the practices of the Forest Service that have brought about passionate sentiments and the possibilities of governance not as opposing forces but as historically and mutually constituted. Perhaps what is most surprising is not the Forest Service's rule in New Mexico, or even the violence and land management difficulties surrounding it, but the ways that the Forest Service has come out stronger through these actions. Practices of governance and rationalities that have authorized the Forest Service's claims to the land have also—through such arguments about the protection of nature and, in particular, the protection of Hispano welfare—formed the rationalities of Hispano discontent with this same authority. Rationalities inherent in the Forest Service's rule, particularly those surrounding Hispano welfare, are historically specific and contextually variable in such a way that the very rationale that has legitimized its rule can also form and legitimize discontent toward that rule.

Thus, shadows of dispossession and flashes of discontent should not be read simply as populist resistance to the Forest Service's authority. For that authority, as well as the entitlement to the land, has been built on a long

history of daily practices that have made the forest and Hispanos' relationship to the land intelligible and the Forest Service's own practices not only rational but unquestionably necessary. As such the governing of the relationship between Hispanos and the forest by the Forest Service has become less and less about controlling or limiting Hispanos' capacity to act and more about taking advantage of their actions, with the most sincere intents, in ways that directly or indirectly create the conditions of possibility for the Forest Service's authority.

There is much criticism from inside and outside the Forest Service of the ways in which the agency has ignored the economic and cultural plight and the health of the forests in and around Truchas, as well as in other parts of the forestlands in northern New Mexico. This criticism extends to all facets of the agency's work in the area—from the process through which land-grant lands ended up in the public domain, to the reduction of grazing permits, to the spraying of DDT, to the chaining of large areas of the piñon-juniper forest. However, what is striking in talking to Forest Service officials past and present and in examining the Forest Service archives is how much emphasis there has been on poverty amelioration, cultural preservation, and community welfare. These policies became the ethical basis for the Forest Service's actions, the very logics through which the Forest Service sought its authority. It is not the lack of attention to care and welfare that has brought about the management practices in question, but, in fact, it is the Forest Service's attention to care and welfare that have made these acts possible.



## CHAPTER THREE

### PASSIONATE ATTACHMENTS AND THE NATURE OF BELONGING

These old folks are so important. They remind us of where we come from and where we belong . . . they serve as the *mayordamas* of memories who irrigate our children with wisdom so they grow strong.

—Larry Torres<sup>1</sup>

If our roots die, our lands will slip away.

—Marcelo Romero<sup>2</sup>

The bleachers of the Peñasco High School gym were packed, as they often are for the high school basketball games in the fall. But folding chairs and uneven tables covered the squeaky polished wooden floor from one free-throw line to the other. The spring crowd had come for the presentation of a high school oral history project, in which a group of

students had gone to the surrounding mountain communities, where they had found and interviewed the oldest people in each community. All of these older people had been invited to this "Honoring Our Elders" event, to be "honored for their lives and valued for serving to remind us who we are and why we belong here . . . honor[ed for exemplifying] the connection between these souls and this soil."<sup>3</sup>

The ceremony was hosted by Larry Torres, a professor at the University of New Mexico at Taos and a local radio host who is widely respected for his knowledge of history and languages and for his capacity to tell a good story. Struggling with an intermittently squeaking microphone, he began with a lecture about the importance of the *ancianos* to "our culture," and to "this place." He pointed out that they had "worked the soil, dug the irrigation ditches, harvested the wood, hunted the game, shepherded the sheep," and "lived, worked, wept, [and] married in these mountains." Slowly, but animatedly, he told the central story of the event:

A long time ago, in the mountains not too far from here, there lived a forest of trees. The trees grew strong in the mountain sun and developed deep and strong roots in the soil. One generation learned from the last generation, and as the trees' roots extended in the soil, their branches filled the sky. They slowed the dry winds, they held the moisture on the mountain and, through their strength and patience, they created tight communities. But one day, a young tree heard of a far-off place where he did not have to stand tall all day, and where he did not have to hold tight to his roots and tremble from the thunder. The tree left in the night in a hurry so no one would see him leave. He arrived in the far-off place, and, after a time, he felt weak and he began to wither in the bright lights and cold streets. As he withered and dried, he remembered the lush mountain meadows and the cool shade of his community, but he could not remember how to stand tall, hold the soil, or how to drink from the deep cool springs. The tree died because he left the forest home where he belonged. He died because he forgot his roots. This is why we are here today, to learn from our *ancianos* and to not forget our roots.<sup>4</sup>

After the ceremony, most of us waited in a long line that snaked across the basketball court and led to rows of tables covered with assorted crockpots of *posole* and green and red chile. As volunteers organized the food and laid out Styrofoam cups and paper plates, people filed past old photos that had been collected from a number of the people honored in the ceremony.

In many of them, people stood in fields and orchards; one stood alongside a sheep and some old pickup trucks; another was propped against a shovel over an irrigation ditch. Other old photos showed men in miners' clothes, sitting on piles of timber, or in the clean, ordered landscape of a Los Alamos building complex. There were people in suits and army uniforms, and still others in front of mobile homes or next to the newly painted low-riders of their grandchildren. These photos served as portals into a history that is not entirely spoken of here. They reflected a sense of place comprising not solely an agrarian past but a more complicated story that included histories of labor, migration, and nationalism.

More poignant than the photographs were three men in front of me discussing the Forest Service's unwillingness to open more acreage for forest thinning. I had met two of these men the year before when they were cutting wood; the third was living in Albuquerque and had come back for a visit. They all complained about the current situation in the forests. Lupe blamed "La Floresta," calling it "a blood-sucking bureaucracy." David echoed common complaints about "urban environmentalists and their fucking owls and minnows."<sup>5</sup> Jacinto added that it didn't matter whether it was "stuffed suits from the Forest Service" or "lawsuits from the environmentalist outsiders"; both factions were taking over the land.<sup>6</sup>

This conversation was not unique. I had heard all the stories in different forms again and again at various meetings, protests, and homes. Like many of the stories people tell about the region, these celebrate the naturalness of the link between people and place. These are discursive practices of belonging, reaffirmed through stories and practices that "other" outsiders, establish birthingrights, demonstrate labor investments, delimit or essentialize race, and help mark and reproduce a rootedness. Inherent in Larry Torres's stories of deep roots and Jacinto's comments about stuffed suits are articulations of nature and belonging that are, directly or indirectly, sentimental expressions of attachments, possessions, and personhood.

This chapter traces these constellations of belonging and examines how previous racial and class formations are woven, often uncomfortably, within contemporary forest politics. These discourses and practices regarding the nature of roots, soil, and trees help make intelligible a wide range of practices and understandings of the origins, characteristics, and tendencies of place and people.<sup>7</sup> The results have been a particularly close relationship between nature and sentiments of belonging, and a charged set of battles over the nature of the forest.<sup>8</sup>

An exploration of the nature of belonging first requires an exploration of the detailed histories of the various articulations of belonging among forests, soils, and souls. Moreover, it requires the treatment of sentiments of belonging not as the surface of a deeper political substrate—a mere reaction to “real” politics—but as the product and site of material histories and cultural politics as they infuse contemporary struggles over the forest in New Mexico. I start by exploring the ways in which the cultural politics of belonging are deeply indebted to the ways that the nature of subjects (their interests, passions, and desires) and the nature of place (its characteristics, qualities, and feelings) are forged into the tenacious bond that binds peoples to place.<sup>9</sup> Next, I explore two well-known protest events surrounding the forest, each of which evoked a different sense of belonging, with different political effects, and illustrate the ways in which belonging infuses current forest politics in the area. They raise this question: What politics are enabled, reproduced, or foreclosed by certain articulations of belonging within contemporary struggles over the forest in northern New Mexico?

#### GROUNDWORK: THE ROOTING OF PEOPLE IN PLACE

The reason that community forestry has worked so well in northern New Mexico is simple. It's because both the people and the forests are deeply rooted here.—Crockett Dumas, District Ranger, Carson National Forest<sup>10</sup>

I've fought for the forest because it belongs to me . . . and I belong to it.—Ike DeVargas<sup>11</sup>

Their families have lived here for centuries; their roots are in the land; their hearts and souls are there. The tie is mystical.—Father Benedict<sup>12</sup>

A great deal is at stake in these battles over the nature of belonging: political conditions and possibilities are opened and foreclosed, rights of access to and control of land and resources are granted or denied, and personal and collective identities are threatened or affirmed. Simply put, there are three central interrelated conceptual ways in which belonging functions in contemporary politics in the region. First, the notion of belonging functions as an *attachment*, through which a racial group has come to be seen as an accompaniment of, or pertinent to, the forest both in duty and identity. Second, belonging also functions as a *possession*, which underscores the ways in which histories of property and labor have left residues of rights to the forests. And finally, belonging functions as an

embodiment, an internal part of, or *appendage*, to a social body such as a family, community, or nation—in this case, having a particular relation to the forest. These interrelated senses of belonging as attachment, possession, and embodiment define the political possibilities in current struggles over the forest in northern New Mexico.

*Attachment* | This first facet of belonging is a sense of accompaniment, or pertaining to the forest by virtue of duty or as deep attachment. Racial identities of Hispanos have become synonymous with the imagined geography of northern New Mexico. As Torres stated in the story above, to be Hispano is to “have a special relationship with the forest,” one that relies on the attachments of bodies to landscapes through idioms of nature. There is a rooting of people in place, a sense that to be Hispano is to be understood in relationship to that place. As the former Rio Arriba county commissioner Moises Morales puts it directly: “To be a Hispano in northern New Mexico is to know the woods.”<sup>13</sup>

This fusing of people and forest has deep roots. For almost a century, institutions, academics, and writers have used this sense of belonging or rootedness to explain New Mexican poverty, backwardness, resistance, isolation, and ecological stewardship. One of the earliest and most influential such treatments specific to northern New Mexico was George Sanchez's 1920 *Forgotten People*, in which he explores Spanish Americans' “unique adaptation to the environment.” He attributes this to the fact that “in isolation, a people identified itself with its environment.”<sup>14</sup> Later studies have echoed this sentiment. According to Richardson and Risters's 1934 study of the Southwest, “The Spanish planted their institutions so firmly [in northern New Mexico] that the trace of the Spaniard and his Mexican successor can never be beaten out of the land.”<sup>15</sup> Similarly, in his 1948 study *North from Mexico*, Carey McWilliams describes the Hispano population in the region as being “like the dwarf evergreens on the surrounding hills, [whose] roots have acquired a remarkable strength and sturdiness.”<sup>16</sup>

In most of these works, the conception of rootedness goes beyond a relationship of dependence to link people and community to place as an intrinsic characteristic of Hispanos. Ortega's study notes that “the most cohesive Hispanic population in the United States . . . and the most faithful to a long and uninterrupted tradition of identification with the soil is to be found in New Mexico.”<sup>17</sup> Margaret Mead voiced a similar sentiment of belonging when she said, “The sense of belonging to a specific village . . . and way of life is one of the basic characteristics of Spanish American



life."<sup>18</sup> In a more recent study, Alvar Carlson explains Hispanos' ties to the village and to the land: "Their attachment to this land provides forms of security and a sense of belonging and place."<sup>19</sup>

The idea of culture's being fixed to and defined by place became a bedrock of early social sciences and geographical thought largely through the German geographer Friedrich Ratzel's (1844–1904) concept of the *Kulturkreise* (cultural circles), formulated as a means of defining both the boundaries and connections between place and ethnicity. These cultural circles were drawn around people who shared a collective identity through a shared history of common territory, or *lebensraum* (living space). These notions of place-based identity were later invoked in political struggles as a means of naturalizing many different nationalist homelands. Most notably, the National Socialist Party drew directly on Ratzel's concepts of *lebensraum* to justify Nazi imperialism, but, ironically, it has also been invoked by African nationalists such as Amiri Baraka (LeRoi Jones) and was conceptually central to the very notion of Aztlán, a place-based nationalism of the early Chicano movement.<sup>20</sup>

The anthropologist Alfred Kroeber (1939), in his work *Cultural and Natural Areas of Native North America*, and the noted geographers Carl Sauer (1952) and Julian Steward (1955) took Ratzel's notions of belonging to place in different directions with concepts such as "cultural hearths" and "cultural areas." These ideas treat the natural properties of place as a template for mapping forms of difference, creating a link between uniform social behavior and one's environment. These notions became central and specific in understanding both place and nature within the region of northern New Mexico, most notably through the work of D. W. Meinig (1971) and other cultural geographers who mapped, with determinist overtones, distinct peoples of the Southwest as belonging to separate physical environments.<sup>21</sup>

The social history of cultural areas reinforces a sense of northern New Mexico as a separate territorial cultural unit. On the one hand, northern New Mexico has been the internal "other," the separate space of land-based tradition and agrarian values for over a century, and on the other hand, a threat to capitalism, progress, and modernity. The historian Sarah Deutsch states that "Hispanic culture . . . was conveniently the antithesis of all that was meant by 'American,' and provided a target for those who saw it as dangerous, and a foil and refuge for those critical of predominant norms of the modern United States."<sup>22</sup> For many academics, especially sociologists, geographers, and anthropologists, Hispanos have been "the peasant

within our borders."<sup>23</sup> Central to this agrarian myth is a notion of the proper peasant belonging in a specific place.

Because of their ties to the land, Hispanos have represented idealized values that are seen by many as "alternative to modern capitalist society."<sup>24</sup> From the 1890s to the present, writers and artists such as Charles Lummis, D. H. Lawrence, Willa Cather, Mary Austin, John Nichols, and Georgia O'Keeffe have sought refuge in northern New Mexico from the "outer," "modern," "capitalistic," "hurried" world of the rest of the nation. Truchas, like much of this part of northern New Mexico, has seen its share of these visitors, having been the location for Robert Redford's film *The Milagro Bean Field War* (adapted from the John Nichols novel), as well as the site of a hippie commune that included part-time residents Janis Joplin and Wavy Gravy. Most of the communes have formally dissolved, but many ex-members still live in the region and have become the old guard of a back-to-the-land movement that continues to this day.<sup>25</sup> A wide variety of people have sought an idealized alternative in "a traditional land-based culture," and they, too, have participated in the construction of the material and imagined geography of northern New Mexico.

This tension between seeing Hispano values as a threat to society and as salvation from its excesses has spawned a great deal of investment in the region. The federal government tries to modernize and incorporate, yet at the same time preserve "Hispano culture," while the burgeoning tourist industry seeks to idealize this "unique feature of the Southwest." Federal programs initiated by Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal found New Mexico "an almost untouched laboratory for progressive reform and experimentation."<sup>26</sup> The New Deal, through its "social engineers," attempted to "restore people to the land, and the land to the people."<sup>27</sup> Massive Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) programs of reforestation, and other early campaigns, worked simultaneously to modernize a backward people and to preserve the traditional values of poor Hispano farmers. Some of these programs were clearly intended to preserve a land-based culture that had cultural importance to the identity of a mythically agrarian nation; others were social programs more directly aimed at alleviating poverty.

The Forest Service in northern New Mexico was also caught in a similar bind: its founding principles were to increase efficient (read "corporate") use of timber on federal lands and to preserve traditional Spanish American and Native American culture in the region. Not surprisingly, this led to massive contradictions in its forest programs. It permitted vast areas of

ponderosa pine and mixed conifer to be clear-cut, while at the same time it established one of five national model programs to set aside sustained yield units (SYUS) for the well-being of local economies and the conservation of traditional ties between the Hispanos and the forest. Similarly, the Forest Service chained large tracts of ancient piñon pine to create pasture for "traditional" grazers while simultaneously outlawing the number and types of livestock that were most central to that same tradition, claiming they were "inefficient."<sup>28</sup>

Hispanos' "basic characteristics" and their "identification with the soil" are reincarnated, though clearly not without contradiction, within the Forest Service's and certain environmental groups' policies. The Forest Service's Northern New Mexico Policy, designed to help alleviate poverty in the region, recognized a need to respect and preserve the "unique relationship" between Hispanos of northern New Mexico and the land and forest.<sup>29</sup> A former superintendent of Carson National Forest put it this way: "Listen, timber possibilities are relatively limited here when compared to the Northwest. What we have that is particularly unique is a culture that is deeply bound to traditions of the land and forest. I see the preservation and fostering of this special bond, by protecting both the forest and the culture, as a central part of our work."<sup>30</sup>

The commercial possibilities of this special bond did not elude capitalists. The railroad promoted New Mexico as a tourist destination based on the strength of the cultural experiences a traveler could enjoy and the area's status as a site of "traditional culture" and "pure nature," in the form of mountain forests and mineral baths.<sup>31</sup> In the 1880s, the Santa Fe Railroad formed an alliance with the Fred Harvey Company, drawing on California's success in reinventing "dirty Mexicans" as "Spanish Americans," building mission-style hotels, encouraging marketing, and even helping traditional weavers build a unique cultural form that could be highly marketable.<sup>32</sup> The Santa Fe Railroad also gave free passage to artists, and the Fred Harvey Company provided food and lodging in exchange for paintings that were used to promote the Southwest and help foster the artist communities of Taos and Santa Fe. The invention of a Spanish pueblo style, and its promotion by local and state politicians, commerce boards, and businessmen, helped form an "authentic tourist experience." This, followed by the invention of "traditional" Spanish American cuisine and festivals, made northern New Mexico the heartland of cultural tradition.

Early in the twentieth century, business proponents such as Paul Walter, an early editor and later owner of the *Santa Fe New Mexican*, launched

a campaign in the paper to "promote the distinctiveness of New Mexico's native culture."<sup>33</sup> With the cooperation of the railroad and the Chamber of Commerce, Walter and others offered such deals as a special train package, "the Santa Fe Indian detour," in which passengers were guided by attractive young female "couriers" who had been given crash courses in everything from anthropology to geology to help them provide tourists with the "correct" and marketable understanding of the region and its people. In the late 1920s, the promotion of motorcar tourism, through brochures such as "Roads of Yesterday," brought scores of motor tourists through New Mexico and launched tourist treks between Santa Fe and Taos on the "back roads" through Chimayó, Córdova, and Truchas. In fact, the "roads of yesterday" were new roads aggressively pushed by economic interests in regional tourist development and by federal programs. Drive-by tourism has been a mainstay of much of the region's economy since the 1920s. One pragmatic observer, Ruth Barker, noted in the 1920s, "Even hard-headed businessmen realized that Santa Fe's greatest attraction lay in its atmosphere of remote antiquity. Accordingly, the ancient city . . . pulled a rustic black shawl over her head and posed for the world to come see her."<sup>34</sup>

The black shawl is, of course, the "traditional" garb of Hispanic women. This image of Santa Fe and northern New Mexico proved to be the economically driven simulacrum for the future material and cultural forms of northern New Mexico. Though the promotion of "authentic" New Mexico was driven, in large part, by economic interests, federal programs were also key in the formation of a traditional regional identity. Suzanne Forrest states, "The pragmatic economic origins of the Hispanic New Deal derived from a desire to preserve the native cultures as lucrative tourist attractions and prevent the villagers from becoming a rootless, landless population permanently dependent on federal relief."<sup>35</sup> Tourism has been a powerful draw to the region ever since. As one Santa Fe tourist guide told me, "This is the perfect place for tourism. Nothing is more sellable than nature and culture. Santa Fe has both, and they are connected."<sup>36</sup> The history that forged this connection is a complex history that has as much to do with attachments to agrarian myths and profit motives as it does with innate connection between Hispanics and the land.<sup>37</sup>

This invention of an imagined regional geography, and within it an attachment to nature and place, forged most often through natural metaphors, is part—either implicitly or explicitly—of almost every major work in northern New Mexico in the last one hundred years. It is also commonly

rationalized as either cause or consequence of Hispano isolation, poverty, backwardness, tradition, strength, and resistance. This yoke between people and landscape continues to be a defining factor, an intrinsic characteristic, and a natural tendency that binds race, nature, and place.<sup>38</sup>

The anthropologist Liisa Malkki calls the rooting of identity in a stable relation to place “sedenterist metaphysics,” and points to the ways its formation is deeply infused with normative notions of space and difference, leading to the treatment of diaspora, nomads, and refugees as people infected with social pathologies.<sup>39</sup> What is most relevant here is not the nomadic component of northern New Mexicans, but how “out of place” they become when they leave the immediate area. People often commented during interviews that while traveling they were called immigrants or treated like immigrants. When I asked Jerry Fuentes, a lifelong resident of Truchas, why he came back to Truchas, he responded, “I can’t leave. Every time I do, people treat me like an illegal Mexican. I tell them that my feet were on this ground way before their white asses came. But it doesn’t make any difference; they still treat me the same.”<sup>40</sup> This resonates with Larry Torres’s story of the tree forgetting its roots, and speaks to the normative possibilities, limitations, and centrality of place as part of Fuentes’s identity.

People have come to understand themselves and to be understood by others in relationship to particular notions and histories of the landscape. For example, during a public forum, employees of the Office of the State Engineer tried to persuade the residents of Truchas to convert their main *acequia* (irrigation ditch) artery into a closed pipe because it would be more efficient. Jerry Fuentes gave an eloquent and impassioned speech arguing for the preservation of *acequias*, calling them the “lifeblood” of Truchas. Reflecting on the event, he admitted that he’d never relied on *acequia* water in his life. Just the same, he felt that his authority could not be challenged. As he explained to me when I questioned the truth of his statement, “Whether I use the water or not, the *acequias* are still part of who I am.”<sup>41</sup> If you are a Hispano male raised in Truchas, New Mexico, you are associated with working the *acequia*, collecting firewood, tilling the soil, and raising cows. Here, the racial identity has an assumed link to resources through a presumed rootedness in place.

This raises questions about the nature of attachments between Hispanos and the forest. Within notions of belonging, metaphors of nature work as a means of signifying an entrenched essence for people’s true foundations deep in their cultural roots. The use of natural metaphors of

trees, roots, soil, and seeds works as a means of making Hispano identities intelligible. As Malkki points out, these metaphors link people to place with temporal continuity, spatial fixity, and a cultural essence underscored by histories of nourishment and growth. As one environmentalist from the Forest Conservation Council put it to me, “They simply are that way [deeply tied to the forest] because that is the nature of their culture.”<sup>42</sup> Implicit in this statement is a certain effect: the link between people and place via the forests helps to form a metonymic bond between the forest and racial formations. Nature and threats to nature have come to be understood through terms of human relations such as exploitation, conquest, and domination. Similarly, discussions around “degraded soils,” “impure wilderness,” and “at-risk forests and forest stands” often have a deep personal resonance that is directly related to the formative histories of Hispano identities.

*Possession* | A second facet of belonging concerns property and ownership. In this section, I present a brief history of the regional political economy that lies in direct contrast to the idealized bond between Hispanos and place—a history that betrays their isolation and stagnation. My intent here is to add another dimension to the histories of belonging by pointing to the changing labor and migration patterns that stand in direct contrast to idealized notions of belonging and to theories of a Hispano “culture of poverty” molded by their stubborn adherence to the land.

Years and years of labor invested in the forest form a sedimentary core in which convictions about ownership, access, and control of the forest are embedded, and this continues to fuel powerful emotions about rights and justice. To commodify the forest as resource is not to take an object out of a system of meanings but to infuse it with a specific set of meanings. These meanings define specific sets of relations to others and, depending on their definition, distinguish possessor from thief, landowner from trespasser. An accumulated sense that the forest belongs to people as property is central to understanding the role continued protests play in indicating and perpetuating this sense of belonging.

“Roots,” as a metaphor, can represent a nurturing force but can also represent stubborn, steadfast attachment to a place. This bleaker dimension of belonging underscores a major theory about the cause of northern New Mexico’s overwhelming social problems, which range from its being one of the poorest areas of the country to its being the site of one of the nation’s highest per capita rates of heroin overdoses. This theory suggests

that belonging to the land generates cultural shackles that hold people down and constitute a central factor in a "culture of poverty." Raymond Williams observes, "Many mountain villages have never known anything but poverty so that poverty itself has become an isolating factor of their lives. Poverty . . . 'is part of their cultural inheritance.'"<sup>43</sup> Hispanos are seen as victims of their own cultural heritage of belonging.<sup>44</sup> And stubborn possession of marginal land and of equally marginal cultural values are seen as forming the roots of poverty and isolation.

Carlson echoes this theory in his explanation of poverty in northern New Mexico:

By the twentieth century subsistence agriculture and rural overpopulation were increasingly at odds with the engulfing and more dynamic Anglo-American economic system. Through time, rural economic poverty in the region intensified in comparison to other areas of the country, and the homeland was isolated not only by language and culture but by economics as well. Out-migration would have alleviated the problem [but] their attachment to this land provided security and a sense of belonging and place. Consequently, Spanish Americans developed a distinct human ecology and folk culture.<sup>45</sup>

In this account and many others like it, Hispanos and their ties to the land are depicted as the means through which people fight the arrival of an external economy. It also, implicitly, explains why Hispanos continue to be poor and isolated. The irony is that Hispanos have been the backbone of the labor force of this economy, and their attachment to the land and sense of belonging, which Carlson speaks of, were deepened by the same economic processes to which their culture and tradition are now opposed.<sup>46</sup> In conversations with forest rangers, environmentalists, and residents, both Anglo and Hispano, I commonly ran into this explanation in the form of the notion of *envidia*. It appeared whenever people attempted to explain the region's poverty or the failure of social or environmental programs. For example, the forest ranger Crockett Dumas explained to me that the greatest problem facing northern New Mexico is not outsiders such as the Forest Service, environmentalists, or large logging companies, but *envidia*, which is "internal to their own culture."<sup>47</sup> *Envidia*, loosely translated, means jealousy, and Max Córdova explained it to me this way, as I mentioned earlier: "We [Hispanos] are like a bucket of crabs. . . . You know why you do not need a lid on a bucket of crabs, Jake? It's because when one starts climbing out, the others just pull him back to the bottom."<sup>48</sup>

Hispanos from northern New Mexico have been a central part of the regional labor force since the 1890s.<sup>49</sup> As land grants were denied through the government adjudication process and people lost their land base, they were literally forced into the labor market. New laborers constituted a sizable percentage of the state's population at that time. The government investigator Victor Clark noted that in 1908 Hispano men "made seasonal migrations to distant parts of the West in search for work."<sup>50</sup> He reported a year earlier that in one village, as many as 70 percent of the men were absent due to labor migrations. The historian Sarah Deutsch points out that by the early twentieth century "migration had become an essential and integral part of life for the Hispanic villager."<sup>51</sup>

Almost all the middle-aged and older men and many of the middle-aged women I interviewed in Truchas had spent significant parts of their lives working outside the region. These jobs were highly concentrated around resource extraction industries such as the beet and potato fields, the coal, silver, and molybdenum mines, and the railroads and lumberyards in places such as Colorado, Wyoming, and other states throughout the West. Other jobs were found in war-related industry, in the shipbuilding yards and canning factories of California, during World War II.

The volume of work boomed between 1900 and 1910; the number of coal miners doubled in Colorado alone. More than eleven thousand New Mexican men and women moved north to work in the mines, raise food, or cook for the miners. Closer to home, the establishment of mines in northern New Mexico also took people from their communities and into the mines. Similarly, agriculture lured New Mexicans north. In 1910, it was estimated that one quarter of Colorado's beet labor was supplied by Hispanos. At first, most of these laborers were men, but following policy changes by companies such as the Great Western Sugar Company, which began to accept only family labor in its beet fields, women and children entered directly into the migratory workforce. Similarly, in the 1920s, some seven thousand to ten thousand people (from fourteen thousand families) went north to work at least part of the year. This number continued to grow and peaked in the early 1930s.

The Depression diminished the number of unskilled jobs available and, worse, it exacerbated racial tensions. Growing anger over labor migrations caused the large-scale deportation of thousands of Mexicans who were working in the fields and mines. It was a confusing time for race and nationalism—both of which, in the minds of many, became linked. The growing confusion might help explain why in 1930 the U.S. Census Bu-

reau officially changed "Mexican" from its prior category as a nationality to its new category as a race.<sup>52</sup> Hispano New Mexicans increasingly found themselves considered and treated as "aliens." People from within and around Truchas remember being loaded in trucks and taken by train and truckload and dumped as "Mexican citizens" at the far side of the New Mexico–Mexico border. Colorado's governor, Walter Johnson, set up a blockade at the border of Colorado and New Mexico and deployed the National Guard to keep the "Mexicans from New Mexico" out of Colorado's labor markets.<sup>53</sup> As a consequence, unemployed young Hispano men enlisted in disproportionately large numbers to fight in both World War I and World War II. This is a trend that continues to this day.

My intent here is not to give a detailed history of labor or migration patterns but to point to the fact that the history of northern New Mexico was far from isolationist. The bond to place has been as much a part of labor practices that seasonally exploited and exported Hispanic workers. It can then be understood not as a holdover from an agrarian past, but as an important survival strategy.<sup>54</sup> The village of Truchas did not persevere because people doggedly resisted external economic changes; indeed, it owes its continued existence to these same labor practices and their attendant patterns of exploitation and migration. Hispano identity, community, and ties to the land were strategically formed in relation to this migration, not as an antithesis of it.

This is not to say that ties between people and place were forged through migration alone. In fact, political-economic forest geographies have long occupied a central position in this regional economy. The forest has been part of the region's financial geography since the nineteenth century, when trainloads of piñon nuts shipped to Mexico brought needed money to rural areas. Though forestry has a long history in New Mexico, it was not until the late nineteenth century that large numbers of rural residents became directly involved in the industry. The demand for railroad ties and telegraph poles for the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe (AT&SF) Railway brought many people into the forest. Millions of board feet of timber were taken from more than a hundred small mills throughout the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. Operating along rivers in places such as Truchas, these mills were, initially, small operations that used horses in cutting and dragging logs to streams and creeks where they could be floated to the Rio Grande. A squared 8-foot tie brought a dime; a 17-foot log was worth about a quarter.<sup>55</sup> Larger operations also started in the area; operators such as the Santa Barbara Pole and Tie Company and Pot Creek

Lumber employed hundreds of people and industrialized the production of timber for the railroads.

Larger operations relied on water flues and narrow-gauge railways built high in the mountains to gain access to the huge quantities of timber needed. They also relied on ample cheap labor, largely supplied by residents of northern New Mexico. Along with their native ties to the land, the practices of felling trees, cutting logs into ties, and moving them through the forests also formed their relationship to place and to the forest through labor. Ana Morales, whose father worked for the timber mill, told me that "It [working in the forest] *created* in my dad the deepest respect and knowledge of the woods. . . . Whenever he would get frustrated or angry he would head out and work in the woods. Even when we did not need wood, he just went there. It helped him remember and made him feel good. . . . My mother hated it because he was more at home there than here [in Córdova]."<sup>56</sup>

Intensive forestry operations continued through the 1920s, shifting more toward standard lumber production than railroad ties, but the industry slowed dramatically during the Depression years of the 1930s. The Depression, however, did not put an end to working in the woods; it simply changed its nature. In 1933, President Franklin Roosevelt signed an executive order establishing the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Soon the Forest Service was overwhelmed with workers as hundreds of thousands of people competed for forest work. In fact, as the historian Bill deBuys points out, "Most of the 1,300 CCC camps were located in national forests, where the men worked on projects supervised by state and federal foresters. By the time CCC was terminated in 1942, 2.5 million youths in 'Roosevelt's forest army' had planted two billion trees, built 122,000 miles of road, constructed six million erosion check dams, erected thousands of fire towers and office buildings, and laid out hundreds of campgrounds and thousands of miles of hiking trails."<sup>57</sup>

The social historian Suzanne Forrest adds that "the CCC camps combined the appeal of the agrarian myth with relief and vocational education"<sup>58</sup>—"bringing together two wasted resources—young men and land, in an effort to save both."<sup>59</sup> Forty-four of these camps were set up throughout New Mexico, with the highest concentration in northern New Mexico. Much of the work of the camps was concentrated in the forest and involved building fences as boundaries for grazing, thinning forest stands, reforesting grasslands, creating recreation facilities, and building and maintaining roads and trails. For their work, the men were given a place to stay,

food, and educational programs, and were paid about \$15 per month. The camps were run in a military style, beginning with the raising of the American flag early in the morning, followed by disciplined work, recreation, and meal schedules. Even today, scaled-down programs, referred to as the Youth Conservation Council, employ youth—in small numbers—for seasonal work in the national forest.<sup>60</sup>

Timber reached a second peak in the 1950s, in the post-World War II boom. In 1956, approximately 85 operating sawmills produced close to 157 million board feet of lumber per year in northern New Mexico and employed 2,660 people. The output of the mills varied greatly, from 100,000 board feet to 15 to 20 million board feet per year. Of the total cut, about 39 million board feet were taken from federal lands as part of a sustained-yield management program. The Forest Service projected that it could not only maintain that annual rate of cut indefinitely but could increase the cut to an annual harvest of more than 50 million board feet if more lands were placed in sustained-yield management programs. These numbers were clearly overly optimistic. But the dramatic change from a projected annual timber harvest of 50 million board feet on federal lands in the mid- to late 1950s to an actual harvest of less than a few million board feet in the 1990s demonstrates the dramatic changes in the timber economy over the past forty years.<sup>61</sup>

What is most central, however, is that many New Mexicans were deeply involved in the forests through these timber operations. These acts of labor—cutting trees, milling them, dealing with racist treatment in the CCC camps, or striking with railroad workers over poor pay—linked forest histories with social histories in the memories of many of the people I interviewed. These linked histories helped form a combined sense of belonging through labor practices as well as through the more traditional attachment to the land. While initially activists such as Ike DeVargas saw a great deal of potential for advancing their political agenda through a narrative that focused on traditional ties to the land, over time they became increasingly frustrated with the limitations of basing forest politics within this narrow notion of belonging.

In his essay “Ideas of Nature,” Raymond Williams notes that “we have mixed our labor with the earth, our forces with its forces too deeply to be able to separate each other out.”<sup>62</sup> This statement is born by looking at belonging in the light of possession and property.<sup>63</sup> For someone to claim possession of something, there implicitly exists the communication of a bond of belonging, which is a product of this mix of labor and nature.

Moreover, this mixing of labor and nature forms—along with nature’s subjects themselves—powerful sentiments. The basis of ownership, and people’s willingness to fight or die for rights of ownership, stems from a belief in the emotional bond of belonging. At one level, these sentiments toward nature may seem distant from the romanticized attachments of environmentalists to their sometimes idealized characterizations of nature. But, in fact, they are one and the same. Both are deeply held sentiments, neither with more legitimacy than the other. Whereas environmentalist sentiments of belonging derive from notions about nature, Hispano sentiments derive from notions about labor. The conflict between the two materializes when both are seeking purchase on the same ground.

Sentimental arguments over nature are often considered the antithesis of rational discourse about property rights. But to think this is to miss the ways in which property rights indicate or stand in for bonds of affect toward nature. It is a mistake not to think of the relationship between logger and forest as a bond between people and nature.<sup>64</sup> To know the forest from a logger’s standpoint, to know the feel of the heft of a tree against one’s shoulder, the consistency of wood fiber in a cut, the smell of wood chips, is to know the forest in an extraordinarily intimate way. To drag the unwieldy weight of a log against and along the contours of hills, to cut and load cord after cord of firewood, and to slowly release years of stored sunlight to warm a house or a meal—all these form a deeply felt relationship. Again, Williams observes, “Once we begin to speak of men [*sic*] mixing their labor with the earth, we are in whole new relations between man and nature, and to separate natural history from social history becomes extremely problematic.”<sup>65</sup> This is not to say that the relations of intimacy are understood in the same ways across all forms of difference. In many of my interviews with loggers and firewood gatherers, it was striking how many different relationships were formed by their labor, and how differently each person understood these relationships. Whether forestry is understood as an act of rape, of love, of restoration, of profit, or of tradition, deep emotional ties have been formed through the long history of mixing labor and nature.

Williams coined the term “structures of feeling” to name the fusion of lived histories and memories that relate cultural identities to place. Structures of feeling are constellations of sentiment that are derived from material histories, which histories themselves have become embodied in changing cultural practices. The notion points to the ways in which the deep emotional resonance that people feel for the forest in New Mexico is not

about some idyllic closeness to nature. It is because of the specific histories that have led people to form a sense of belonging to the forest that the forest has come to be such an incendiary site. And it is through the mixing of labor and nature with the formation of these structures of feeling that the dispositions and interests of individual people, communities, and regions of northern New Mexico come to be attached to forest landscapes.

*Embodiment* | The embodiment of belonging is a sense of connection as an appendage to a social body. This relation is metonymic, as in the case of family, community, or nation, in which each person belongs to a larger social body. And, in turn, the social body is understood through the acts and representations of an individual body. People speak of blood ties, sick communities, and dying nations, all to make larger social bodies intelligible. In doing so, they make the material experiences of the individual body the archetypal logic of the social body.

Long histories of binding inner souls and sentiments to the land exist in New Mexico and form a sense of belonging to the land through metaphors of belonging.<sup>66</sup> Belonging has been one of the guiding metaphors for nation building and missionary activity in northern New Mexico. One of the most famous and influential bishops in northern New Mexico (and later an archbishop) was Jean Baptiste Lamy. In the mid- to late nineteenth century, Bishop Lamy started schools, asylums, and sanatoriums, brought in charities, and made many trips to the East Coast and Europe to select teachers and priests to tend and cultivate the growth of souls. He also imported trees and cultivated what became known as “the bishop’s garden,” where he wrote lessons and gave tours to demonstrate his natural ability to tend and cultivate nature. As one newspaper report stated, “It is not only one of the most delightful retreats in which to spend an hour but may be counted as one of the most charming spots in New Mexico.” The garden was the model of perfection in which “every tree looks healthy and thrifty, the leaves are larger, have a deeper color; each limb is alive to the tip of every twig; and the fruit . . . is all perfect in development, free of worms and of the most delicious kind.”<sup>67</sup>

The article goes on to say that the “sleepy Dons who have occupied this country for generations wake up in surprise by the Bishop’s demonstration of the adaptability of soil and climate of Santa Fe to the growing of a whole range of northern fruit to perfection.”<sup>68</sup> It concludes that Bishop Lamy is “manifestly an enthusiastic admirer of nature and of nature modified by art.”<sup>69</sup> In fact, the bishop’s garden was designed and laid out by the



11. The hole in the back of the Santuario de Chimayó, New Mexico. The dirt is said to have healing powers and the room is filled with discarded crutches and testimonials of the healing power of the blessed soil. Photo courtesy of Jules Greenberg.

bishop’s French architect, who was the superintendent of the city’s cathedral and chapel. It was seen as an example of the bishop’s ability to manage and cultivate nature and served as a metaphor for the work of the church in New Mexico.

Metaphors of trees and gardens generously peppered the interviews I conducted with clerics in the area, both Catholic and Protestant. Father Roca is an older Spanish priest who has lived in the region for more than forty-five years. He oversees the famous Santuario de Chimayó church that was built in 1821 and is the destination of thousands of people who walk to it from all over New Mexico on an annual pilgrimage during Lent. Particularly notable is a small hole in a back room of the old adobe church, which is filled with holy soil believed to have special healing powers (figure 11). The room is filled with crutches and testimonials to the healing power of the soil. Echoing the sentiments expressed about Bishop Lamy’s garden, Father Roca told me, “You can tell the health of a people from the health of their trees.” He recalled that when he first arrived in this valley, it “was full of fruit and Christian souls. Now the fruit of this land has been contaminated with drugs, the Labs [Los Alamos National Laboratory], and gambling.” He lamented again and again the church’s inability to properly

“nurture” and “cultivate” the souls and morals of the people in the valley.<sup>70</sup> When I asked another well-known priest in Truchas, Epifanio Romero, about the natural metaphors of the church, he stated, “There is no question soil and souls have always been tightly joined here”; a good minister, he added, “tends to the soul so that the people can better tend to the soil and to God’s will.”<sup>71</sup> The sowing of “Christian seeds to grow strong and sturdy souls,” as another Protestant report claims, is not the only means through which people become linked to land.<sup>72</sup> Similarly, as one activist stated, being “under the branches of the nation without being attached to the roots created deep feelings of resentment of people here.”<sup>73</sup> Arboreal metaphors, from the building of strong national roots to the cultivation of patriotic citizens, have helped render subjects and define relationships to duty, sacrifice, and the nation.

I will return to questions of nationalism in chapter 5. For now, it is enough to say that metaphors of trees have been important means through which the relationship of citizens to nation is formed. Alfredo Padilla, a former Protestant minister and longtime resident of Truchas, understands this connection to the forest well: “You must tend to the soul as you tend to the forest,” he says. “After a fire if it [the forest] is not thinned, it will grow into dense thickets, light will not be able to reach and warm the ground, and nothing will grow.” He told me this as we wove our way through a mix of desert scrubland filled with Indian ryegrass, the occasional creosote bush, and seemingly random clumps of sagebrush.<sup>74</sup> He stopped to point out the names of different gullies: “That is called Arroyo Abajo—that is where I learned to shoot a rifle. . . . That field on that mesa there”—pointing as he walked—“is where La Floresta bulldozed all the trees to create pasture for permit holders from Santa Fe.” He went on in this way as we walked around the abandoned carcasses of cars and the occasional bedspring, across sandy gullies and up the red-soiled embankments, until we reached the woodland stands on the other side of Desmontes Mesa, just to the northeast of Truchas in the Carson National Forest. This is an area that has been opened for thinning by the Forest Service as a means of “returning stand density to its natural conditions,” which to the Forest Service means about a mix of 60 to 160 trees per acre of piñon and juniper.<sup>75</sup> Alfredo estimated that there were more than 250 trees in the acre through which we walked. Most of the trees were very small, with a DBH (diameter at breast height) of less than six inches. Some were bent over because their height was too much for the thin trunks to support. These forests, Alfredo explained, are like “a tinderbox ready to explode—if



12. Alfredo Padilla thinning ponderosa pine for the coming winter. Photo by author.

you get a fire in here, this whole place goes to hell. If it is thinned, then a fire will stay out of the crown and burn cooler on the forest floor, helping the grass grow, allowing more elk and wild turkey.”

As he walked with his beat-up old chainsaw on one shoulder, he explained, “Sometimes pruning is the best way to foster healthy forests. Sometimes caring for God’s creations means making choices.” He chose a spot, put down our lunch on a clump of what he called Chihuahua love grass,<sup>76</sup> filled his old saw with a gas mix, and sprayed the carburetor of the saw with ether (“coffee for chainsaws”). Then for four hours straight he stopped only to add more gas. He dropped the trees and cut them into small blocks, while I piled the slash and stacked the cut logs (figure 12). For a slightly overweight ex-minister in his late sixties, he was impressively agile and completely comfortable with the saw. When we finished bucking up the last tree, he helped direct my truck over clumps of grass and dried piñon pine cones and around patches of bush to the back side of the forest stand. In it we stacked the neatly cut and spicy-scented juniper logs and turpentine-scented piñon logs. It dawned on me that my old truck was probably the reason he was so interested in my going to the woods with him to talk.

While we stacked more wood in the back of my truck than I thought



possible (almost double the recommended weight load), he told me he will do this until he dies, no matter who tries to stop him. "This is my job. Taking care of this is like brushing your teeth in the morning—it's something you just got to do." Working in the woods, he added, "is like tending my flock; it is part of what I am here for, and no matter what any environmentalist tells me, I am not going to stop. I know it is good for the woods because it feels right—these woods are part of me." He joked that these unkempt woods are "like hippies—they both need a good trimming."<sup>77</sup>

Alfredo's sense of the forest has little to do with "objective" forest health, or discussions about whether to thin the forest as part of a "healthy forest initiative" or leave it in its "natural state." For him, it is about an understanding of himself and a duty to God. Threats to his use of the forest are about much more than denying him access to firewood; for Alfredo, the struggle with the environmentalists, and at times with the Forest Service, is a struggle of light versus darkness, health versus sickness, and God versus secularity.

Similarly, when Max describes the forest as belonging to him like the fingers of his hands, when Ike DeVargas proclaims that "the Forest Service has cut out our guts and offered to give it back as an act of charity," or when Moises Morales claims that "this land has been raped and it has left us partly conquered and very angry," they are all invoking metaphors that merge the personal and collective body with the land and forest.<sup>78</sup> Forests represent much more than simply sources of material gain or stored *brus* for heating and cooking. Though this is clearly part of what is at stake in the struggles, it is only a small part. What is at stake for Alfredo is a complex and sometimes contradictory history of belonging. Environmental injunctions and federal institutions represent a violation of the sovereignty of the Hispano body and a threat to its vitality.

This sense of belonging points to a set of complex histories of material practices that have bound geography, difference, and nature together. Central to its development were transformations of the forest landscape, which have simultaneously formed internal sentiments as well. Metaphorically and materially, there has long been a dialectic between external landscape and internal landscape: the two are interwoven in histories of faith, compassion, and exploitation. The weave runs from Spanish missionaries who set out to "cultivate souls in the barren and rocky soils,"<sup>79</sup> to settlers longing for land ownership that becomes inseparable from identity, to contemporary community members' fears of losing their "deep and nourishing roots"<sup>80</sup> in the land. The nature of subjects and the nature of the environ-

ment are not separate spheres, neatly divided by the thin skin of the body. In short, subjects make and remake nature as nature makes and remakes subjects.<sup>81</sup> Personhood transgresses the membranes of bodies and becomes situated in material and ideological forms.<sup>82</sup> Difference becomes dislodged: gender from sex, race from skin, and class from laboring bodies. Each dislocation creates the possibility for people to speak and understand the engendering of forests as virgin, the racialization of nation as Aryan, or the spatialization of class relations into poor neighborhoods.<sup>83</sup>

These specific histories are bound in such a way that a material board foot of timber, a cord of firewood, a spotted owl, a silvicultural practice, or a wilderness area cannot be separated from the lived histories and formations of raced and classed subjects. Nature works as a common substrate for the traffic between internal selves and external environments. The presumed universality of nature allows this traffic to flow seemingly unfettered by the contradictions, particularities, and politics of its formation in specific contexts to seemingly unrelated, disparate sites. Natural metaphors of roots, soil, rivers, and blood make intelligible such disparate sites as forest stands, national characters, and racial tendencies. The traffic runs in both directions, connecting body and forest through metaphors of nature and belonging.

Two things are clear. First, the Hispano subject is commonly conceived, and conceives him- or herself, beyond the boundaries of skin and resides in part within the forest landscape. These subjects have become bound to the forest in many different and sometimes contradictory ways. This is not due to some intrinsic character of "the native" but because of the specific material histories I have mentioned previously—histories of exploitation and subjection. Second, there is an interchange between inward dispositions and outward activities, one that binds internal and external natures.<sup>84</sup> One must take seriously the ways in which blood and veins are related to water and *acequias*, the ways in which soil and souls are fused, and the ways in which tree roots and personal histories have bound together landscape and Hispano bodies. This traffic between body and landscape also infuses them in ways that make threats to one inseparable from threats to the other. Forest struggles in New Mexico, when seen in this light, are far more than the irrational, nostalgic struggles of an atavistic people for a lost past, as they are sometimes portrayed; they are deeply personal struggles of identity and belonging. Changing Spanish, Mexican, and American nation-states have helped form Hispanos' notions of their marginality and nationalism and have formed subjects who fought and died for the honor

of the king of Spain, for *la Patria* of the viceroy of Mexico, and for freedom and the “new world order” of the United States.

The struggle to cultivate souls and claim subjects of faith has created profound personal commitment and convictions, voiced through metallic paint on automobile hoods, plastic saints, brotherhoods, and pious intentions to “la Pursima” Virgin de Guadalupe and His Lord Our Savior. The supposedly “isolated settlements” of mountainous northern New Mexico, filled with “primarily subsistence farmers” and surrounded by “wilderness areas,” have been the source of labor for railroads, mines, lumber mills, and livestock yards for centuries. The Spanish subject has been the white Spanish *don* and the seductive Spanish temptress, the Mexican subject the lazy Mexican, the U.S. subject the polluted *mestizo*, the radical proponent of La Raza, and the passive native. All these histories defy an idealistic relationship between people and landscape, and point to a relationship of belonging that was forged not solely out of agrarian traditions and isolation, but also out of violence, coercion, and consent.

#### “TRADITIONAL” TIES: THE CULTURAL POLITICS OF BELONGING

On October 31, 1996, more than one hundred people drove onto Borrego Mesa in the Santa Fe National Forest, carrying chainsaws and defying an environmental injunction that restricted firewood cutting. They removed thirty-five truckloads of fuelwood while Forest Service officials and members of an environmental group stood by and watched. The Forest Service, knowing the cutting was going to take place, had gone in earlier and felled the trees. Voicing the irony of that small victory, Max Córdova, then-president of the Truchas Land Grant, told the press, “It is simply wrong to turn local people into thieves on our own land. People here are poor and they need this wood to cook and to heat their homes. Besides, like my fingers belong to my hands, this wood belongs to us” (figure 13).<sup>85</sup>

Max had been in constant touch with rangers in both the Santa Fe and Carson National Forests, asking that permits be issued despite the injunction. After long, heated discussions, he eventually told the Forest Service, “Either you come with permits so we can get wood or you come with warrants for our arrest.”<sup>86</sup> Fearful of a public relations nightmare, the Forest Service capitulated. But the event supplied more than firewood. It also became a strategic, if uneasy, reference point in long-term political battles over the loss of land, racial inequalities, and rural poverty.

Ike DeVargas was there, along with many people who had been in-



13. Max Córdova (far right) asserting land-grant claims on Borrego Mesa. Photo courtesy of Eric Shultz.

involved in the Vallecitos Sustained Yield Unit battle in which environmentalists had successfully filed an injunction to shut down logging on the unit by community members. Sam Hitt of Forest Guardians was also there to try to demonstrate solidarity with the community and its “traditional” ties to the land, and to counter Forest Service attempts to discredit the environmentalists. Max Córdova, Salomon Martínez, Jerry Fuentes, and many others from Truchas were there as well. Some were there for free firewood; others came out of anger and a desire to reassert their “ownership” of the land they felt had been stolen from them on Borrego Mesa. The district ranger, Lori Osterstock, was there, accompanied by three armed law enforcement officers. A number of Forest Service staff members were on hand, to fell trees and fill out permits. The Forest Service presence attempted to demonstrate its authority (albeit a mitigated one) over the area, granting permission for something that was going to take place with or without its imprimatur, and to affirm that the agency was on the side of the local communities and their cultural ties to forest resources.

Many different scenarios could have unfolded. As Jerry Fuentes said, tongue in cheek, “There were so many guns there that there was hardly room for the firewood in the trucks.”<sup>87</sup> For the Forest Service to witness—

indeed, to be forced to sanction—a timber cut they had not themselves initially prescribed was certainly a powerful concession. But perhaps just as powerful was the image of a die-hard “zero-cut” environmentalist leader helping load pickup trucks with the freshly cut firewood just one week after the Borrego incident.

Borrego Mesa and Truchas more generally played a particularly central role in the struggles surrounding forest politics in the mid- to late 1990s, becoming the quintessential site of the fuelwood controversy and making headlines over and over again in both local and national papers. The community became a symbol of poverty throughout northern New Mexico, a region in which firewood figures centrally in the local economy as a resource for heating and cooking. The newspaper articles all focused on the “traditional cultural bond” between Hispanos and the forest generally and firewood specifically. The combination of deep poverty and idealized ties between village and culture worked to make Truchas a geographic imaginary of belonging. Community activists capitalized on this confluence to launch a series of accusations against the Forest Service, reflecting longstanding animosity toward environmentalists. Although some of these environmentalists had previously been allies in struggles against the Forest Service, as their lawsuits and injunctions now threatened Hispano access to the forests, the Borrego Mesa incident heralded a new and much deeper level of antagonism between the two groups.

The main target of locals’ opposition was the most influential environmental group in the region, Forest Guardians. Forest Guardians is not unique among national environmental organizations. It is part of a broad network of groups that share many of the same tactics and strategies: appeals, lawsuits, legislative pressure, and watchdog monitoring of Forest Service activities. Forest Guardians is known for its absolutist policies of zero-cut and zero-grazing on public lands. These positions might garner support from urban conservationists and outdoor enthusiasts living near the larger timber and big ranch regions, but they have a different resonance in the charged geographies of New Mexico. Critiques of corporate logging and ranching hold less weight in a region where only a few million board feet of timber are collected per year, mostly in the form of firewood. More important, the Forest Guardians’ efforts are viewed by many as a challenge to “traditional Hispano” cultural ties to the land. Most of the people I interviewed considered their actions deeply class-biased, making forest issues particularly incendiary sites of conflict.

The event that took place on Borrego Mesa was by no means a spontaneous one, as it was sometime portrayed in the media. Max Córdova worked very hard to gather support and balance interests, both internally and externally. He has become one of the most important speakers on resource issues in northern New Mexico. His kind demeanor, his great storytelling ability, and what many consider to be his more palatable politics make him a less volatile alternative to the more “in your face” Hispano activists of the region. The Forest Service also expressed frustration at being tied up both politically and economically by environmental lawsuits and the specific and contentious history on Borrego Mesa itself. These three factors converged around the idioms of poverty and belonging in such a way that they became the means of unifying disparate elements such as contemporary environmental politics, deep feelings of anger and injustice, and generally sentimental notions of the traditional northern New Mexico community. Idioms of belonging reverberated, moreover, with a growing national community forestry movement that offered political legitimacy, a more powerful regional and national voice to those involved in it, and new sources of funding.<sup>88</sup> Ultimately, however, these opportunities would come with political costs: the broader political struggles that converged on Borrego Mesa would be limited through the narrowly defined relationship of belonging.

Ultimately, Max needed to articulate the Borrego Mesa protest in the context of the traditional sense of belonging. He discussed the bond between people and forest in general, and Borrego Mesa in particular, employing the language of property rights and using the metaphor of “the fingers on my hand.” Articulating the threat to the “traditional bond” between people and place resonated with the press and with benefactors who brought an outpouring of liberal support.

Compare the incident at Borrego Mesa to another event that happened with many of the same Hispano leaders at a protest in Santa Fe. On November 22, 1995, more than one hundred people marched together to the headquarters of Forest Guardians, carrying signs that read “We Refuse to Be Endangered” and “The Owl or *La Gente*: The Choice Is Easy.” They carried with them stuffed dummies representing the directors of Forest Guardians, Sam Hitt and John Talberth, and hung them from a 10-foot beam while shouting, “¡Qué viva El Norte!”<sup>89</sup> The marchers then proceeded to the office of the Levinson Foundation. Talberth’s wife, Charlotte, directs the foundation and at the time served on the board of Forest Guard-

ians. (The Levinson Foundation was also one of the funders of Forest Guardians.) Finally, the march made its way back through the narrow downtown streets and ended at the state capitol building. The intent of the symbolic hanging, said an activist who was present, was to “impress on these two people, and the foundations that are funding them, that their litigation injures the communities of northern New Mexico, and their conduct is unacceptable.”<sup>90</sup> Protesters further intended to “put them on notice that people are getting angry enough that violence could happen.”<sup>91</sup>

The reaction to this protest was quite different from the reaction to the event on Borrego Mesa, however. The protesters’ discourse was partly one of belonging—witness the chanting of “El Norte”—but the claims this time centered not around traditional firewood needs and traditional ties to the land but around rights, jobs, race, and poverty. Though many of the same people were at both protests, the Santa Fe demonstration also attracted members of the wise-use movement, loggers from Duke City Lumber, at least one miner, and ex-lieutenant governor and Green Party candidate Roberto Mondragon, among others. In short, participants represented a complex assemblage of interests whose common ground was anger directed at “absolutist” environmental groups such as Forest Guardians. The protest was widely criticized in the press for being too extreme and violent. It also afforded the environmentalists an opportunity to regitalize some “liberal sentiment” on their own behalf by portraying the protesters as violent, angry radicals.

Though Max was involved in this protest, it was led by Ike DeVargas, Santiago Juarez, and other longtime activists who were rooted in a more radical tradition of political engagement (figure 14). They have histories that include the Brown Berets, La Raza Unida Party, labor unions, and the Alianza. Their interest in the forest is related less to an idealized traditional cultural bond and more to issues of social and environmental justice.

Learning that these activists were going to stage a protest, Sam Hitt and other Forest Guardians organized a counter-rally of about fifty people to coincide, in time and location, with the close of the march. Not surprisingly, angry shouting matches erupted. The environmentalists yelled and carried signs that read “Thank You, Sam and John, for Defending Our Forests” and “Stop Scape-Goating Environmentalists.” Several messages emerged from the counter-rally that were subsequently voiced in newspaper articles and letters to the editor. First, the protesters were painted in broad strokes that intentionally blurred the distinction between large-scale



14. Ike DeVargas, Moises Morales, and Santiago Juarez and others march at the annual retreat of Forest Guardians, one of a series of protests over the lawsuit filed by environmentalists. Ike DeVargas’s sign reads “Zero cut, zero grazing, zero sanity.” Photo courtesy of Eric Shultz.

corporate exploitation of forest resources and sustainable community use. This was possible because Ike and others framed the issues in terms of poverty, the need for jobs, and racism rather than in terms of traditional ties to the land and basic needs. The presence of people who were not from northern New Mexico and “did not have traditional ties to the land” added to the impression that this movement was no longer driven by traditional villagers with cultural bonds but rather by angry workers who were a front for corporate interests.<sup>92</sup> This was clearly a group unlikely to elicit public sympathy, especially when compared to a nonprofit environmental group.

The environmentalists exploited this perception with a “Frontline Report” press release entitled “Forest Activists Lynched in Effigy.”<sup>93</sup> In it, they blamed “a mob of Northern New Mexican loggers, ranchers and company officials” for hanging Sam Hitt and John Talberth in effigy. They went on to claim that the real force behind the protest was the “wise-use” movement: “a growing wise-use uprising put aside long-standing prejudices to expand its reach into a culture ripe to receive its message of hate.”<sup>94</sup> In an impressive rhetorical twist, Charlotte Talberth declared the event a “hate

crime," portraying the environmentalists as innocent victims. John Talberth remarked that the protest was a form of reverse discrimination carried out by a "renegade band of men who are preaching the gospel of racism, hatred and violence."<sup>95</sup> Sam Hitt wrote a piece for the *High Country News*, entitled "Green Hate in the Land of Enchantment," in which he suggested that Hispanos were being exploited by the corporate wise-users. The accompanying photo of him standing passively as a white mill worker yells at him reinforced the familiar image of the brave environmentalist taking on the corporate interests.

The press bought into this spin and the protest organizers were widely criticized, as were some of the more public figures who participated. Ike, Santiago, and the other organizers were unable to convince the press and the public that the protest targeted economic and social injustices because the presence of corporate interests and wise-use members, as well as the threats of violence, allowed the environmentalists to divert attention from these substantive issues. The protest was denounced repeatedly. One editorial proclaimed, "The only message that they send is that the forests soon will be covered with blood, to no purpose."<sup>96</sup> In the eyes of many who had supported the demonstration on Borrego Mesa, Hispano activists were no longer voicing their concerns in a "socially acceptable" manner and, therefore, no longer deserved public support. In an effort to limit the damage, Hispano activists changed their strategy. Rather than another protest, the next demonstration was a silent candlelight vigil "to honor and protect the traditional relationship between [the] people and the land."<sup>97</sup>

All these events were testing grounds for popular support of two different notions of belonging. Links between people and the land were more easily supported when they invoked tropes of timeless cultural ties to nature and an idealized past. This more benign sense of belonging was disrupted by the image of the white mill workers and the portrayal of those involved as self-interested loggers and ranchers. The effigy protest evoked an imagined geography of northern New Mexico that linked people to place, but in a relationship quite different from that of a traditional needy peasant: this relationship was forged by radical Hispano and labor activists following a tradition of protest. When the community bond was represented in the press as political, and particularly as tied to a history of racial and class struggle, broader popular support for the struggle dried up. Activists such as Ike DeVargas, Moises Morales, Santiago Juarez, Max Córdova, Jerry Fuentes, and others understood this and worked harder, each in different ways, to articulate their claims within a more traditional



15. A cartoon mocks the injunction on logging placed by Forest Guardians, which stopped firewood collecting in much of northern New Mexico. © John Trever, *Albuquerque Journal*. Reprinted with permission.

sense of belonging. In some cases, this articulation appeared as a strategy or tactic, but in others this bond genuinely resonated with people's own understandings of themselves and the forest. In either case, the forest, because of the firewood crisis, became both a symbol of the traditional relationship to the land and a vehicle for voicing and legitimizing a diverse set of interests, from land-grant issues to racial inequities. But this was possible only to the extent that it did not disrupt essentialized notions of the bond between Hispanos and the forest.<sup>98</sup> These bonds were central in the case of Borrego Mesa and the Truchas firewood controversy. The court injunction that ordered the restrictions on woodcutting was framed by "outsider" white environmentalists, who were theoretically saving spotted owls, which had never been sighted in the area, at the expense of some of the most economically marginal and traditional forest users in the West (figure 15). As a statement from Rio Arriba County expressed it, "The Endangered Species Act . . . [is] being improperly used by insensitive and elitist groups, resulting in an assault on the economic stability and cultural and social fabric of the communities in Northern New Mexico. . . . Environmentalists," the journalist went on to state, "have worked to push native New Mexicans from the land."<sup>99</sup>

Forest Guardians tried to distance itself from the growing animosity generated by the effect its lawsuit had on "traditional land-based communities." The group brought and delivered fuelwood to people in Truchas and was instrumental in helping to obtain funds to purchase a wood splitter for La Compañía Ocho, an organization based in Vallecitos. It also formed a coalition with environmental groups in the Southwest that supported the easing of restrictions on community firewood harvesting. That coalition worked with the Forest Service to exclude firewood gathering from the injunction and developed new strategies to counter the effects of the shifting debate.

This cooperative junction was a key moment for environmental politics in New Mexico, because much has been made of the "natural" alliance between environmentalists and indigenous communities. Native cultures have in many cases become important symbols that legitimize environmental goals. Environmentalists often work hard to foster these alliances based on the presumption that indigenous understandings of resource management are analogous to principles of Western conservation. In effect, these alliances would have served to support environmentalist positions through the metonymic link between native and nature. The anthropologists Conklin and Graham have pointed out that "identification with native cultures can be a political statement: it encapsulates a critique of Western cultural dominance and colonial regimes and locates those who identify with the native in an oppositional position morally distanced from their own societies' racism or colonial histories."<sup>100</sup> However, an alliance between Hispanos and environmentalists in northern New Mexico never materialized because of the tenacious way environmentalists held to certain positions: the need to create wilderness areas devoid of people, and zero-cut and zero-cow policies that would limit access to what many Hispanos still consider their lands.

The people who had been struggling against the environmentalists saw an important opportunity to gain public support. This sense of belonging became the crux of the struggle between the different groups involved in forest politics. Ironically, the Forest Service also saw this as an opportunity to change its standing by siding with the communities against the environmentalists. The agency spread the message to people in the area that the limitation on their fuelwood was caused by the environmentalists' "aggressive" litigation. It blamed "urban environmentalists" for "locking up firewood gathering . . . and in so doing, intruding on a tradition in Truchas and neighboring settlements since the 1700s."<sup>101</sup> On the day before the

incident on Borrego Mesa, the Forest Service sent out eight thousand letters laying the blame for the injunction squarely on environmentalists. Environmental groups, in turn, called for a federal investigation of the Forest Service for its "abuse of power" and its attempts "to create discord among citizens," stating that "misinformation has been leaked for the sole purpose of slandering the environmental community."<sup>102</sup> Forest Guardians placed full-page advertisements in local newspapers that read, "Environmental groups have been demonized . . . for forcing them [northern New Mexicans] to comply with draconian new firewood restrictions." They claimed that this was not true, noting that "all we have done is make common-sense biology mandatory."<sup>103</sup> The ad also urged activists not to "be pawns of the Forest Service."<sup>104</sup>

The Forest Service's frustrations with environmentalists were no secret. Through litigation, the environmentalists had significantly eroded the Forest Service's control over the management of federal lands, not just in New Mexico, but all over the country. On a national scale, in the eyes of much of the public, the environmental movement helped demonstrate that the Forest Service, once seen as a model federal agency, is actually a bumbling, misguided facilitator of corporate profit. Even before the injunction, the Forest Service spent most of its time trying to get timber sales through the process of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) without getting slapped with a lawsuit. One of the forest rangers I interviewed told me, "I spend most of my time filling out paperwork rather than being out on the land and doing my job." He added, "The environmentalists have us hog-tied."<sup>105</sup> This was especially true of the timber program of the Carson and Santa Fe National Forests, which by 1998 had virtually stopped all logging. The board feet of timber coming from the Carson and Santa Fe National Forests dropped 88 percent between 1990 and 1994, largely because of environmentalists' lawsuits.<sup>106</sup>

This drop-off was a serious matter for the Forest Service, because the budget of every national forest relies on the amount of board feet that the forest generates. Added to this declining revenue was a 15- to 20-percent reduction in the overall budget of the Carson National Forest that same year, leading to serious internal difficulties. Most of the additional loss in funding had to do with Congress, which was controlled by the Republicans, starving the federal agencies and antiquated incentive programs for national forests. As a result, Forest Service administrators experienced a great deal of frustration and, in New Mexico, this frustration was focused on the environmentalists. Lori Osterstock, a district ranger in Española,

went so far as to send letters to the Pew, McCune, and Tides Foundations telling them how much Forest Guardians was resented locally and how much it was damaging "local people." She wrote, "Local people and the Forest Service are hard-pressed to deal with the single-minded agenda of environmentalists." The environmentalist Joanie Berde of Carson Forest Watch responded by calling this "a blatant attempt to drive some nonprofit groups out of business and stifle our ability to participate in public review of the Forest Service logging plans."<sup>107</sup>

An alliance with communities was also critical as a means of self-justification as postindustrial forestry changed the nature of Forest Service timber revenues. More firewood has come from the Carson National Forest than from any other forest in the Southwest (in 1995 alone nearly eight thousand permits were issued), and both the Carson and the Santa Fe were the last two national forests to charge for firewood permits. Today, these permits are still among the cheapest greenwood firewood permits available in the entire Forest Service system at \$5 per cord, and dead and down permits are currently \$20 for five cords. Firewood, normally measured in cords and not factored into the Forest Service's timber output, was recalculated in board feet in an effort to generate more revenue. More importantly, many new community forestry initiatives were launched to provide individual people and small "community organizations" with access to "stewardship plots," in which individuals and groups thinned small forest stands in exchange for the resource.

This effort was important on many fronts, most significant of which was that it placed the Forest Service firmly on the side of the community. It allowed the Forest Service to gain revenues from harvesting wood on Forest Service land, and it helped the agency carry out management of the forest in a manner that it had previously been unable to employ. But perhaps most strategically, because of the fallout from the Truchas fuelwood controversy, the Forest Service knew that local environmentalists would be less likely to try to step in and stop the programs. These programs have expanded significantly since their inception in 1995 and have become critical to the Forest Service's ability to carry out forest thinning programs in the area. In this context, the Forest Service's position in Truchas and other rural communities changed from confrontation and enforcement to facilitation: the environmentalists, in contrast, were seen as completely unsympathetic to the resource needs of rural communities and insensitive to social issues of poverty and racism. They failed to recognize how closely this caricature fit their behavior.

These tensions surrounding forest politics—related to the environmentalists, the Forest Service, and the geographic memories of belonging—infused the cool, clear October morning on Borrego Mesa. What was ultimately most remarkable about the day was not that violence was averted but the realization that a violent confrontation would have had dire consequences for the political positions of the Forest Service and the environmentalist. To take a stand against the gathering of wood by the "Truchas villagers" would have been to stand against popular notions of culture and tradition that are deeply part of the imagined ties between people and the forest in the region. Or, more generally, to interfere with the villagers' right to gather wood would unquestionably have been seen as a violation of the imagined, essentialized bonds between a "culture" and its "nature."

To challenge such a sacred part of northern New Mexico's likeness in the public imaginary would have been to go against the racialized image of the area. The idealized triumvirate of poverty, tradition, and, most important, belonging formed the basis of many people's presence on Borrego Mesa as well as their claim to legitimacy. The Forest Service's programs and its deep involvement in New Mexico have long laid claim to caring for the "poor" and "traditional villagers" and their "special relationship to the land."<sup>108</sup> To stop firewood gathering near Truchas would directly contradict the Forest Service's claims to be working on behalf of the poor Hispanos and their unique cultural ties to the land. By the same token, the environmentalists tried to keep their opposition to the logging from being framed as a simple jobs-versus-environment debate or, even more damaging, a "poor traditional Hispano villagers versus rich white environmentalists" debate. This was especially critical because the "natural" correctness of the environmentalist position relies in part on its supposed solidarity with cultures assumed to be close to nature and environmental interests. As Sam Hitt put it, "Conservationists and traditional Hispanos . . . share[d] a deeply held vision of the land."<sup>109</sup> To challenge the claims and rights to the firewood of the Truchas community members would be to jeopardize the same bond that, in part, authenticates Forest Guardians.

In this way, the Borrego Mesa incident became a poignant moment through which this notion of belonging was articulated. Arguments by Max Córdova and other advocates and supporters of "traditional ties to the land" relied on an emotional attachment to the land as a given or as a set of "primordial" links that come from an idealized past formed through federal programs, tourist industries, and battles by artists, hippies, and intellectuals over the imagined geography of northern New Mexico. The point

here is not to question this relationship but to better understand the practices and politics of its formation and the consequences and work these formations produce. Contrary to many of these conceptions, this relationship of belonging is not the product of the ideal, isolated, agrarian past of a "forgotten people" or of a static "land where time stood still." While this notion of belonging is the basis for a number of people who have come to understand themselves and their place within the landscape, it also plays a central role in contemporary forest politics.

#### CONCLUSION: THE CULTURAL POLITICS OF NATURE AND BELONGING

Hispano New Mexicans have a powerful and passionate politics related to the forest because they have a long and complicated history of relationship to the forest. Like most relationships, the bonds can take different forms, from passionate attachment to troubled forms of possession and an empathetic sense of embodiment. These interwoven senses of belonging are formed and expressed through connections between forests and roots, soil and souls. They demonstrate that the nature of belonging is not a natural essence of Hispano relationship between people and the forest landscape. This "timeless" and "traditional link," as it is commonly described by scholars, Forest Service officials, environmentalists, and, at times, Hispanos themselves, is the product of particular material histories of resource extraction, labor exploitation, religious traditions, and imperialist nation building. Those Hispano passions for place and ties to territory have as much to do with these histories as with economic resource dependencies as with the presumed inherent cultural tendencies.

This concept is not entirely new. A whole recent history of landscape formation and the social production of nature has linked the politics of labor and, to a much lesser extent, the politics of difference to nature in important ways. Questions of idealized formations of place have similarly been brought into realms of politics, both in the way that history, labor, and difference are central to place making and in the way that places are constituted through changing flows of capital and broader, changing social relations.<sup>110</sup> This is clearly the case in northern New Mexico, where, from tourism to sugar beets, from mining to the timber industry, from New Deal projects to the church, ties to place are anything but essential, isolated cultural forms outside history.<sup>111</sup>

These bonds of belonging to place come from diverse histories, but I

have argued here that the history of the forest is a particularly potent site because of the links, material and imagined, between Hispanos and the forest.<sup>112</sup> More broadly, nature is central to these senses of belonging: as attachment, as possession, and as appendage. Within each of these different forms, nature plays different roles: an external vessel that has been filled with identity and emotion; an object of possession that has been formed through a sense of loss and a history of labor; and, finally, an appendage that serves as an internal site of the subject that travels back and forth, making intelligible both internal selves and souls and external environments and landscapes.

These passionate attachments are complicated. They take many different forms and are lived in different ways by different people. Ironically, the racial links that have formed a particular connection between people and the land are different from those built through a history of labor on the land. The two traditions have seemed to fit within the same community forestry movement, but what becomes clear is that the radical tradition of labor and racial struggles cannot fit within the essentialized images of northern New Mexicans as traditional villagers.

Central to struggles over the forest are the ways that interests and practices have had to be reformed and rephrased to fit with, or in some relation to, the politics of belonging. The least successful in doing that were the environmentalists, who lost the moral high ground on which so many of their tactics depended. The loss was not permanent, but it was significant enough to engender an animosity that still exists today. More importantly, it helped galvanize a group of Hispano social-justice activists who were able to organize more effectively against them, and it helped form a new relationship between communities of northern New Mexico and a long-distrusted Forest Service.

In my opinion, however, more significant things happened on Borrego Mesa and the other terrains of struggle over the forest during this period. Though the political battles over firewood garnered deep sympathy regionally and nationally, they did so through an idealized sense of belonging that resonated with liberal sensibilities without directly challenging them. Max's son David Córdova expressed this well in an editorial in the *Santa Fe New Mexican*: "They [environmentalists] are continually trying to harm the more innocent and unchanged communities of Northern New Mexico."<sup>113</sup> In particular, the community forestry movement was brought front and center as a viable and important alternative to the environmental groups'



zero-cut campaign. However, a whole set of social concerns now had to be articulated through a narrow, apolitical, imagined past that affirmed the relationship between forest and Hispanos. What could and could not be said had to fit within the new moral and ethical metaphysics of belonging.

There is no doubt that this opened many doors, but I think it also drastically limited activists' fields of political engagement. Traditional forest knowledge is acceptable; burning critics in effigy is not. Organizing around the preservation of tradition and the forest is acceptable; organizing around race and class is not. This presented a particularly difficult scenario for many Hispano subjects: how to be simultaneously modern and traditional, how to perform an authentic, nonconflictive Hispano identity as traditional and multicultural. There is no doubt that this effort was broadly rewarded, in terms of recognition by politicians as diverse as Al Gore and Newt Gingrich, in terms of funds from foundations, and in terms of technical and administrative support from nonprofits working in northern New Mexico. What were lost or silenced were the possibilities of addressing or demanding certain rights and creating certain political forms and alliances.

Some activists, such as Max, operated within this realm more comfortably than others; Ike largely rejected it (at the cost of being marginalized) and refused support from foundations, nonprofits, and, at times, much of the New Mexico press. This alignment with an agenda more acceptable to the liberal sensibility provided an alternative to the jobs-versus-environment debate, but it did so at great cost to Hispanos, for whereas community forestry extended its hand to "traditional" Hispanics, it did so only if they behaved as traditional Hispano subjects and as long as they were not too radical or challenging to liberal sensibilities.

Elizabeth Povinelli calls this the "fantasy of liberal capitalist society . . . convulsive competition purged of real social conflict, social difference without social consequences. No more, no less is asked of . . . the minority subject—[but] to provide a sensorium of cultural competition and difference without subjecting the liberal subject to the consuming winds of social conflict."<sup>14</sup> When Hispanos who engaged in forest politics sought to go beyond the possibilities of this movement they found themselves directly opposed by the same liberal imaginary and material possibilities that enabled the movement. This has led to deep divisions within the movement and to difficult times for community forestry initiatives: people who once found possibility in the movement have left in order to directly

address the political roots of forest struggle. As long as place and belonging are idealized by liberal traditions, the politics of race and class, which have been such a deep part of the means through which the structure of feelings of belonging has come to adhere within Hispano subjects, will be beyond the political conditions of possibility.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RACIAL DEGRADATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL ANXIETIES

It is not just the wood and soil or other resources that we are interested in preserving and protecting—it is something more, something deeper . . . it is the integrity, vitality, and purity of the wilderness that we want to maintain.

—Bryan Bird, Forest Guardians<sup>1</sup>

Wilderness is something that is entirely a white man's invention; it is not something I relate to . . . it is something that I have a deep reaction against. We have a close tie to the land—I have lived on and worked on and lived off this land my whole life. They just don't get it.

—Ike DeVargas, Chicano activist<sup>2</sup>

#### ENVIRONMENTALISM'S TROUBLED (AND TROUBLING)

##### "HEART OF WHITENESS"

On the morning of March 19, 1999, while conducting his usual morning routine at the office of Forest Guardians in Santa Fe, a staff member went outside to retrieve the mail. Inside the mailbox he found more than membership applications: carefully placed atop the letters was a large pipe bomb packed with ball bearings. The bomb's fuse had been inserted into one end of a filterless cigarette; it was evident that the cigarette had been lit but had gone out a quarter of an inch before its embers would have reached the tip of the fuse. Sergeant Tom Stolee of the Santa Fe Police Department's bomb squad said that had the bomb exploded it would have blown the Guardians' door off its hinges and killed any pedestrians within twenty feet (figure 16). Two days later, the Guardians found an envelope in the mail: on the enclosed sheet was a drawing of a rifle scope's cross hairs over the words "Forest Guardians" and "see-ya" written underneath. It was signed "MM—the Minute Men."<sup>3</sup>

Sam Hitt, president of Forest Guardians, considered it another case of what he termed "Green hate" and vowed that their mission to ensure the "protection and restoration of wild places will not be compromised by such cowardly acts."<sup>4</sup> John Talberth, then the Guardians' executive director, said he was "not surprised," noting "it's one small step from killing old growth forests and Spotted Owls to killing people."<sup>5</sup> Board member Charlotte Talberth pointed an accusing finger at Chicano activists Ike DeVargas, Santiago Juarez, and their supporters for "fomenting the hatred" that led to the bombing. She pointed to an all-day meeting the week before, held by officials and activists from northern New Mexico's rural counties. They had come together to discuss their opposition to Forest Guardians' regional plan for "rewilding" the southern Rockies, from southern Colorado to northern New Mexico. The Minute Men were never identified, and neither were the parties involved in the attempted bombing. But this did not mark the first threat of violence against Forest Guardians; in fact, they had received numerous threats before this event and received more afterward. One activist told me: "The only surprising thing about the bomb attempt on the Guardians is that it has not happened earlier."<sup>6</sup>

What is most interesting about the incident is that the potential culprits spanned the spectrum from radical Chicano activists to conservative property rights' advocates. In fact, many environmentalists theorized—without a shred of evidence—that the two factions had colluded in the coordination



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16. Bomb squad removing bomb from Forest Guardians' mailbox in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Reprinted with permission of the *Santa Fe New Mexican*.

of the attack.<sup>7</sup> This dim view of local Chicanos was nothing new. Many in the environmental community, including members of the Sierra Club, Carson Forest Watch, Forest Conservation Council, and the Forest Protection Campaign, had repeatedly expressed confusion and frustration over why they could not forge any significant alliances with Hispanos from northern New Mexico. George Grossman of the Sierra Club put it this way: "I am not sure why we [environmentalists] get the brunt of so much hatred—we really should have a lot in common [with Chicanos]."<sup>8</sup> Others such as John Talberth felt that "the people of northern New Mexico have been manipulated by a few extremists; in reality we are their real allies; we have the same interests as they do."<sup>9</sup> Talberth went on to write in a newspaper editorial that "the protesters [against Forest Guardians] are tragically deluded as to who their real enemies are—the advocates for big industry and the Forest Service, who have consistently ignored the needs of small communities."<sup>10</sup> Sam Hitt concurred: "They don't have the right enemy. . . . They are just throwing punches and not knowing where they are landing. . . . There are no real conflicts between the needs of rural communities and the goals of environmentalists."<sup>11</sup>

In what follows I explore the notion of wilderness, the bitter responses elicited by its proponents, and its relationship to historical forms of whiteness. More specifically, I examine how notions of wilderness have been infused with racialized notions of purity and pollution.<sup>12</sup> Using links be-

tween contemporary New Mexico and the rise of particular racialized notions of nature around the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, I investigate how the movement to protect forests from degradation and pollution draws on national metaphors regarding the contamination of pure white bodies and unsoiled bloodlines. I trace the entanglement of eugenicist conceptions of bodily purity with wilderness protection and demonstrate how past formations of whiteness connect with current struggles over wilderness in New Mexico. Finally, I argue that the animosity of local Hispano activists toward environmental groups that advocate strict preservation of forests is not as mysterious as it may seem to some environmentalists: it has a great deal to do with the ways in which forest preservation activities are haunted by exclusionary rhetorics of purity and entrenched fears of racial pollution.<sup>13</sup>

Most often, the history of the environmental movement is traced to abusive land practices at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, greater scientific understanding of "natural" processes, or the rise and expansion of modern "enlightened" thinking into nonhuman realms.<sup>14</sup> Progressive critiques of capitalism have become part of some wilderness advocates' rationale for the protection of "wild" spaces. These histories have clearly contributed to the development of the wilderness movement, but current battles within it point to a still greater diversity of origins.<sup>15</sup> From among those I call into view an estranged ancestor: the movement for white racial purity, a specter of environmentalism's past that is hardly acknowledged yet never entirely absent. As others have pointed out, while wilderness is a concept that by definition runs counter to modernity and politics, it is, in truth, a product of both.<sup>16</sup> It carries with it complicated inheritances that counter its own claims to timelessness and universality. One need only look at the evictions of Native Americans from such icons of wild America as Yosemite, Yellowstone, and Glacier National Park (among many others) to understand the deep and material contradictions of claims to pure, untouched nature.<sup>17</sup>

These aspects of wilderness have been thoroughly explored by others; it is not my intent to rehash what William Cronon calls the "trouble with wilderness," nor what his critics call "the trouble with Cronon."<sup>18</sup> Nor do I want to rework the ground that has been so fruitfully cultivated by political ecologists around questions of parks and people, though both are related. I do, however, hope to shed light on the complex relationships between forms of nature and forms of difference, and, more practically, to illuminate tensions permeating the environmental movement in New Mexico.

Because so much is at stake in these debates I want to be completely clear: I am not speaking generally about the current environmental movement or all environmentalists; neither am I denying that the wilderness movement has many different origins beyond what I discuss here, including many that are "progressive." Instead, I mean to unearth some of the wilderness movement's deep and troubling roots and to invite critical examination of the ways in which the movement—both in its past and in the present—is implicated in the reproduction of racial difference and class privilege.<sup>19</sup> I hope to show how these entanglements of race, class, and nature are manifest both in abstract ideas, such as "wilderness," and in material forms, such as the gunpowder, ball bearings, and lead pipes found in Forest Guardians' mailbox.<sup>20</sup> The divisions between various progressive ideas of the environmental movement are clearly manifest in New Mexico, where longtime environmental advocates typically line up on very different sides of the fence—often reaching across only to grab at one another's throats. The struggle over the environmental movement is, in large part, a struggle over these different roots.<sup>21</sup>

#### OF BLOOD AND POWER:

##### "OVERLAPPINGS, INTERACTIONS AND ECHOES"

The notion of protecting or maintaining the purity of a racially exclusive national body politic has long been central to American nationalism. From the first naturalization laws in 1790, which limited the privilege of citizenship to "free white persons," to the nineteenth century's Chinese Exclusion Act, to California's Proposition 187 in the late twentieth century, this country's history is riddled with legislated racial exclusion and definition. Regardless of contemporary myth making about the nation's longstanding multiracial identity, numerous battles have been fought—some ongoing to this day—to preserve and reproduce this nation's white racial "character." When President Theodore Roosevelt considered the weakening of whites' "strong racial qualities" and the declining population among whites amid rising immigration as "race suicide," and when President Coolidge, upon signing the 1924 Immigration Act, which drastically limited immigration into the United States, stated that "America must remain American,"<sup>22</sup> each echoed deep-seated fears of racial degradation.<sup>23</sup>

Many scholars have noted that racial discourses have hidden attachments.<sup>24</sup> But these fears of bodily pollution in the United States in the mid-1800s reached significant proportions; they became deeply imbedded

in the formation of the nation, including its narratives of improvement and progress, its selective construction of its own "common" national history, and its desired national future. Indeed, the rationale of American expansionism was imbedded within a racial logic substantiating the expansion of the social and political principles of the American Anglo-Saxon offshoot of the Caucasian race.<sup>25</sup> It was posited that the superiority of the white race not only enabled its conquest of other races and the spread of "good" government, commercial prosperity, and Christianity throughout the world but, in fact, that this undertaking was the manifestation of its destiny. This pungent mixing of paternalism and colonialism became, as Kipling's oft-quoted poem proclaimed later in the century, "the white man's burden."<sup>26</sup> This mixture also became one of the driving and legitimating forces in western expansion within the United States.

Another equally troubling consequence of the racial logic of western expansionism was the conviction that progress—as seen in this rubric—was inevitable in the war between races. This was particularly true in relationship to the Spanish and Mexican Southwest in the mid- to late 1800s. Class distinctions had been a prominent feature in that region, forging links between the elites of the Spanish blood caste system and wealthy white capitalists. Yet the tension between American elites and those of Mexican and/or Spanish backgrounds grew as racial tension in the United States became more entrenched. As the renowned racial scholar Josiah Nott outlined in 1859, important distinctions existed even between those of European descent: "The Ancient German may be regarded as the parent stock from which the highest modern civilization has sprung. The best blood of France and England is German; the ruling caste of Russia is German; and look at the United States, and contrast our people with the dark-skinned Spaniards. It is clear that the dark-skinned Celts are fading away before the superior race, and that they must eventually be absorbed."<sup>27</sup>

Contempt for "mixed blood" Mexicans was even greater. In 1846, U.S. Representative Columbus Delono from Ohio described the population of northern Mexico as "a sad compound of Spanish, English, Indian and Negro bloods . . . resulting in the production of a slothful, indolent, ignorant race of beings."<sup>28</sup> At the center of this discourse—one in which races were set off as different and simultaneously assigned to a singular, evolutionary hierarchy—was the need to legitimate the expansionism dictated in manifest destiny.<sup>29</sup>

Furthermore, many scholars have pointed out how the individual body

and the social body have been deployed as metaphors and metonyms for each other.<sup>30</sup> In this way, the bodily health of the individual citizen and the well-being of the collective nation become culturally intelligible through commonly deployed metaphors of blood, vitality, and race.<sup>31</sup> At times, fears of pollution and contagion in the colonies, for example, became a central concern, spawning efforts to control colonial officers' sexuality for fear of diluting the potency and purity of the European race.<sup>32</sup> The nation is also often seen as embodied in individuals—athletes, cultural icons, and political leaders, among others—and their success or failure is often linked implicitly to patriotic notions of the strength and well-being of the national character. Whether seen as virile or viral, the body has served as both metaphor and metonym for processes that occur well beyond the boundaries of the skin.

Particularly powerful has been the symbolization of blood as a means of defining the boundaries of difference. Blood has served to link identity to the body, present generations to past and future, and individual characteristics to the vitality of species. Michel Foucault called attention to blood as a mechanism of power:

For a society in which the system of alliance, the political form of the sovereign, the differentiation into orders and castes, and the value of descent lines were predominate; for a society in which famine, epidemics and violence made death imminent, blood constituted one of the fundamental values. . . . Power spoke through blood: the honor of war, the fear of famine, the triumph of death, the sovereign with his sword, executioners, and tortures; blood was a reality with a symbolic function.<sup>33</sup>

Foucault traces the course whereby power operates in society from a "symbolics of blood" to "an analytic of sexuality," which becomes the basis for his understanding of modern power.<sup>34</sup> Of course, control of the purity of blood has much to do with sexuality, and Foucault does not assume a complete break in this transition. He notes that "while it is true that the analytics of sexuality and the symbolics of blood were grounded at first in two very distinct regimes of power, in actual fact the passage from one to the other did not come about without overlappings, interactions and echoes."<sup>35</sup>

The biopolitical shift that occurred in relation to blood and its purity is significant. Foucault suggests that the move from a preoccupation with a

royal elite, whose blood purity must be protected from a contaminative society, to the defense of an implicitly racially pure society from the biological dangers of another race, represents a shift not only in formations of race but also in the operations of power. As Ann Stoler points out, the key elements in this calculus are still "society," "enemies," and "defense," but their arrangement is different. What must be defended—and what must be defended against—significantly changes; thereafter the role of the state is transformed from that of an unjust state to a state that "is and must be the protector of the integrity, the superiority, the purity of the race."<sup>36</sup> Racial and blood purity no longer pit one social group against another, or against the state, but instead serve as mechanisms by which to sustain the health and life of both the individual and the entire population. Foucault argues that in this new formulation the war of the races changes shape to become a racism that "society will practice against itself, against its own elements, against its own products; it's an internal racism—that of constant purification—which will be one of the fundamental dimensions of social normalization."<sup>37</sup> Stoler points out that this understanding makes racism more than an ad hoc response to crisis; it is a manifestation of preserved possibilities, the expression of an underlying discourse of permanent social war, nurtured by the biopolitical technologies of "incessant purification." Racism does not merely arise in moments of crisis, in sporadic cleansings. It is internal to the biological state, woven into the web of the social body, threaded through its social fabric.<sup>38</sup>

Foucault sees these new forms of racism as rebuilding the previous symbolics of blood, spawning new, biologizing forms of racism.<sup>39</sup> The most significant of these modern forms of racism—the science of eugenics—arose in the second half of the nineteenth century, and one form of its state expression, Nazism, attempted to cleanse the German national body by exterminating individuals and populations that it understood as pollutive threats. Foucault traces this modern racism back to seventeenth-century beliefs that the social body was divided into two separate, warring races. He posits that nineteenth-century bourgeois class anxieties were constructed according to this racial grammar, spawning the call to cleanse and purify the social body of these threats. Efforts were made to differentiate the social into natural or biological orders of race, caste, and descent lines. The rise of new forms of intervention surrounding the body and everyday life found expression at the level of health and hygiene, which, he notes, indicates another effort to protect the vitality and purity of race.<sup>40</sup>

#### WILD NATURES: THE MAKING OF A TRUE-BLOODED AMERICAN

Like the links between nation, blood, and body, the connections between nation and “wild” nature in America are anything but arbitrary, simple, or benign. Perhaps the most influential origin story of American nationalism grows out of these persistent connections. In 1893, Frederick Jackson Turner delivered his famous paper “The Significance of the Frontier in the Building of American National Identity.” His basic premise was that the confrontation between civilization and the wild, demanding frontier changed the fundamental character of Americans as a people, transforming them into strong individuals with a propensity for democratic principles of governance. However, it was not just any immigrant Turner had in mind; implicit in his frontier thesis is the transformation of English and German “stock” into a new, Anglo-Saxon, fundamentally masculine, American stock.

Speaking of the frontiersman, Turner states that “little by little, he transforms wilderness, but the outcome is not the old Europe, not simply the development of Germanic germs . . . here is a new product that is American.”<sup>41</sup> What drove these white explorers? Turner, directly echoing the rhetoric of manifest destiny, quotes Grund’s famous essay on America, which states: “It appears then that the universal disposition of Americans to emigrate to the western wilderness, in order to enlarge their dominion over inanimate nature, is the actual result of an expansive power which is inherent in them.”<sup>42</sup> According to Turner’s treatise, the “Americanization” of the European, or at least a particular class of European, took place in the western “wilderness,” which was itself made “American” by free white men: he fails to make any mention of former slaves migrating West after abolition, Chinese laborers, and Mexican shepherders, all of whom significantly transformed western landscapes.

Turner imagined that the nation’s strength came from its wilderness and argued that “the existence of an area of free land, its continuous recession, and the advance of American settlement westward, explain American development.”<sup>43</sup> Turner also claimed that “the frontier is gone, and with its going has closed the first period of American history” and “a great historical movement.”<sup>44</sup> The closing of the frontier, Turner feared, signaled an end to Americans’ conquering spirit. What, he worried, was going to test and distinguish Americans as a people if the very material forces that formed American identity ceased to exist? Anxiety over the closing of the frontier came at a moment of great transition in American

society, and Turner’s words resonated with additional anxiety about the character and boundaries of racial dominance in America. The closing of the frontier meant the loss of wilderness, which in turn implied the loss of the site in which white American masculinity had been produced—and with it, the “superior” institutions and civility through which the nation had been constituted.

This anxiety over the protection of national and racial superiority is especially visible in the context of immigration. From the late 1880s through 1914, the United States experienced one of its largest influxes of immigration, reaching almost 1.3 million people in 1907 alone. Between 1870 and 1920, more than 26 million people migrated to the United States.<sup>45</sup> Not until the 1980s would an equal number of people enter the nation in one year.<sup>46</sup> So deep were anti-immigrant sentiments that President Theodore Roosevelt campaigned against birth control among Anglo-Saxons, believing that the overwhelming numbers of non-Anglo-Saxons would diminish the quality and quantity of the superior “native American stock.”<sup>47</sup> Similarly, the young Woodrow Wilson commented on biological threats to Anglo institutions that stemmed directly from an increasing influx of immigrants, whom he described as hailing from “the ranks where there was neither skill nor energy nor any initiative of quick intelligence.”<sup>48</sup>

Fear of contamination by immigrants through disease and the mixing of blood with Anglo-American stock led to direct conflict with the desire to create an immigrant “army of surplus labor.” This tension resulted in a paradox: immigration took place, but so too did the segregation of these immigrants. Laws preventing Chinese from testifying in court, explicitly excluding Irish Catholics in certain establishments and neighborhoods, and enabling the *bracero* program, which imported Mexican immigrant laborers without offering them basic human rights—all became means by which to contain racial difference within the national body while at the same extracting labor and profits from immigrant bodies. If immigrants were the means by which the national body could extract profit, then internal forms of differentiation and a means to protect the nation had to be developed. Many tensions were at play here; but for now it is enough to note that during the early-twentieth-century wave of immigration many Anglo-Saxons were as concerned about the diluting of the American stock and mixing of the races—something they believed would lead to a less pure nation—as they were about the immigrants themselves.<sup>49</sup>

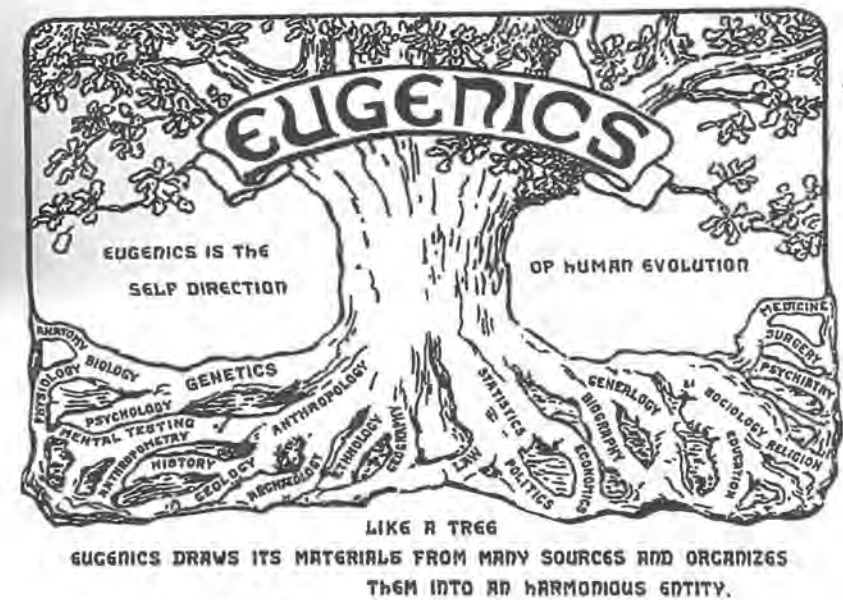
## THE SCIENCE OF DESTINY AND THE "GREAT WHITE MISSION"

These racialized fears were articulated and legitimized by the science community. Theories of polygenesis—which posited that different races had, in fact, different origins—were the most widely accepted theories of racial difference at the time. Indeed, tensions over theories of polygenesis revolved not around the argument that non-Anglo races were inferior but around their potential challenges to the biblical genesis story.<sup>50</sup>

The nineteenth-century race theorists Dr. Josiah Nott and George Gliddon, an Egyptologist and professional lecturer, drew from the work of prominent scientists, ethnologists, evolutionary biologists, and phrenologists to assert that "a long series of well-conceived experiments has established the fact that the capacity of the crania of the Mongol, Indian and Negro, and all dark-skinned races, is smaller than that of the pure white man. And this deficiency seems to be especially well-marked in those parts of the brain which have been assigned to the moral and intellectual faculties."<sup>51</sup> Nott went on to claim that "everything in the history of the Bee shows a reasoning power little short of that of a Mexican." His sentiments about racial purity reflected ideas that were becoming deeply entrenched in the mid- to late-1800s. Fears abounded that pure strains of Aryan blood would be polluted, thus weakening the nation. Nott explained that "the adulteration of blood is the reason why Egypt and the Barbary states never can again rise, until the present races are exterminated and the Caucasian substituted."<sup>52</sup> This scientific naturalization of racial difference helped create not just the idea of a hierarchy among races but something on the order of "natural" distinctions among races that could not be changed. Dr. S. Kneeland wrote, in an introduction to the 1852 English version of Darwin's *The Natural History of the Human Species*: "the dark races are inferiorly organized, and cannot, to the same extent as the white races, understand the laws of nature."<sup>53</sup>

### EUGENICS: PURIFYING AND PROTECTING NATURE

Francis Galton, a preeminent British scientist and a cousin of Charles Darwin, coined the term "eugenics"—meaning "good in birth"—in 1883.<sup>54</sup> Galton believed in the genetic superiority of the British ruling class—thus, he reasoned, their leadership and economic position—and he became a popular advocate of selective breeding in the late 1860s, long before the term eugenics appeared. Though the tenets of eugenics had their roots in



17. A prominent image produced by the Eugenics Society in 1925 uses a tree and roots to naturalize ideas of racial improvement. Courtesy of the National Archives and Record Administration.

earlier ideas of race, the rise in production of "scientific" knowledge regarding racial difference found traction at the juncture where new theories of evolution mixed with the burgeoning field of genetics and deepening anxieties concerning racial degradation (figure 17). Galton's notions borrowed from and contributed to work in the United States, and, by the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, eugenic theories of social behavior underpinned the "common sense" understanding of racial difference and provided the legitimating authority for a whole host of new policies and social programs. In fact, at that time, eugenic theories found transpolitical support—from conservatives to progressives to libertarians—and were deployed in immigration reform, sterilization programs, marriage laws, health policies, and segregation programs.

Organizations such as the American Eugenic Society, the Galton Society, the American Breeders Society, and the Immigration Restriction League formed to guide and implement immigration and population control policies in the United States. The prominent eugenicist and avid naturalist Charles Davenport was recruited to lobby Congress on immigration issues.<sup>55</sup> With the help of the Carnegie Institute and the Rockefeller Foundation, Davenport founded the prestigious research institute at Cold



Spring Harbor to "investigate and report on heredity in the human race, and emphasize the value of superior blood and the menace to society of inferior blood."<sup>56</sup> Davenport was extremely successful in persuading Congress, the surgeon general, and other officers within the U.S. Public Health Service and the Department of Education to align with the eugenics movement. He actively published articles on the importance of eugenics, using it to support immigration restriction and population controls. As L. K. Sadler declared at the Third International Congress of Eugenics: "The stocks which carry the germ plasm of leadership, talent and ability must be nurtured and increased; better babies must be the watchword . . . the race must be purified."<sup>57</sup> Explicit in Sadler's and others' arguments were fears of contagion and pollution of blood purity, the rise of "social inadequacies" due to improper breeding, and the increased social burden on a nation yoked into supporting genetically inferior races. Eugenists were able to exploit historically resonant fears of impurity and convince Congress that the "American" gene pool, originating with the Puritans themselves, was being polluted by defective "germ plasm" and creating an increasingly genetically inferior American "stock." As a direct result, Congress passed an initial stop-gap immigration measure in 1921 to slow the increasing number of immigrants to the United States.<sup>58</sup> President Calvin Coolidge made the law's premise explicit when he signed an expanded version of the act into law in 1924: "Biological Law shows that Nordics deteriorate when mixed with other races."<sup>59</sup>

Throughout the mid- to late eighteenth century, notions of whiteness and superiority relied deeply on formations of nature. From the natural "destiny" of whites to "manifest" their "innate" tendencies toward western expansion, to the basis of racial difference in the eugenics movement, nature has been central to concepts of racial purity in the United States. It is no coincidence that in this context—one filled with obsession over the purity of bloodlines and the nation's body politic—the wilderness movement was born. It was at the very moment when immigrants were "flooding" the cities, when new epidemics were "infecting" the population, and when the frontier that had supposedly both tested and made white men and their institutions of governance was believed to be "closing" that the early "fathers" of environmentalism, such as John Muir, George Perkins Marsh, Gifford Pinchot, and Aldo Leopold, developed and began to propagate concerns over degradation of the natural integrity of pure wilderness.

#### "HIDDEN ATTACHMENTS": THE PURITY OF BLOOD AND SOIL

I am now going to suggest that Muir, Leopold, Marsh, and other early environmentalists were, at times, both overtly racist and creatures of their historical moment.<sup>60</sup> These men, whose writings were often explicitly racist, drew from prevailing understandings of and anxieties around race to make environmental issues intelligible, and their impulse to create and protect national wilderness areas flowed directly from the perceived need to differentiate and protect the "pure" from the "polluted," the "natural," from the "unnatural." The result was that racial and class fears surrounding purity and degradation became a primary means through which wilderness and the environment became discernable. By feeding on the prevailing fears of that particular moment in American history, they galvanized support for wilderness preservation; the importance of maintaining in perpetuity the purity of the nation's environment—the very environment that embodied white nationalism and helped forge the nation's individual character and institutions—resonated with popular understandings and fears of the nature of race.

When John Muir went into the Sierra Nevada Mountains to, as he put it, "get their good tidings," he did not just discover the forest through his wanderings; he brought with him his life history as an immigrant Scot who had worked as a laborer and had developed a deep distrust of all things modern. On his hikes in California, he brought the New Testament, Robert Burns's poems, John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and the writings of Charles Darwin, Walt Whitman, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Henry David Thoreau.<sup>61</sup> As he embarked on his first summer in the mountains, Muir carried with him traditions of romanticism and rationalism, from deeply held Protestant visions of the universal and mystical ideas of transcendentalism, to critiques of Lockean empiricism, to the rationalism of scientific reason, all of which were part of the means through which Muir came to understand landscapes. Muir also "packed" contemporary fears and attitudes about race that led him to conclude that not everyone belonged in his beloved mountain cathedrals. He wrote disdainfully about the "China-man" and "Digger" Indian who first set off with him into the Sierra, and about the lack of enlightened appreciation on the part of the Hispano herders for the majestic grandeur of the mountains. Along with scorn for the "filthy," "lazy" habits and perpetual "dirtiness" of the herders, he also deplored the sheep themselves, calling them "wooly locusts" that were "dirty," "wretched," "miserably misshapen and misbegotten."<sup>62</sup> He saw

both sheep and men as out of place in the mountains, and placed them all—sheep, Hispanos, “Chinamen,” and Indians—in opposition to the purity and grandeur of “Nature.” He complained that he could not find the “solemn calm” when they were present and described the Indians in Yosemite as “mostly ugly, and some of them altogether hideous.” He argued that they had “no right place in the landscape.”<sup>63</sup>

The wilderness sanctuaries Muir held so dear were not, as he believed, simply “created by god”; they were created by the U.S. cavalry, armed with the nineteenth-century authority of manifest destiny. In fact, it was while pursuing “hostile” Indians that whites first discovered Yosemite Valley. And it was that same cavalry battalion that finally captured Chief Tenaya on the shores of Pyweack Lake and marched him and his band to a reservation in the flat, hot San Joaquin Valley. Ironically, the soldiers told the chief that they were going to rename the lake after him “because it was upon these shores of the lake that we had found his people, who would never return to it to live. . . . His countenance, the narrative states, indicated that he thought the naming of the lake no equivalent for his loss of territory.”<sup>64</sup> As Rebecca Solnit points out in her essay on Yosemite, it was on this same site that, twenty-five years later, John Muir camped and wrote of the purity and wildness of the valley: “[Lake Tenaya] with its rocky bays and promontories well-defined, its depth pictured with the reflected mountain, its surface just sufficiently tremulous to make the mirrored stars swarm like water-lilies in a woodland pond. This is my old haunt where I began my studies. . . . No foot seems to have neared it.”<sup>65</sup>

Muir was not opposed to the U.S. army’s presence in Yosemite; in fact, he continued to promote its presence in the valley to keep out perceived undesirables—especially Hispanos and Native American grazers. Muir declared “blessings on Uncle Sam’s soldiers! They have done their job well, and every pine tree is waving its arms for joy.”<sup>66</sup> Though he depicted it otherwise, John Muir’s unblemished wilderness was, in fact, a space of violent, racially-driven dispossession, one of a series of removals, massacres, and impoverishments that had reduced the Native American population in California from 250,000 to 16,000 within half a century.<sup>67</sup> These brutal acts created the conditions not only for the “wild” Sierra that Muir and others exalted so passionately but also the “solemn calm” they unapologetically experienced there. Indeed, this type of “pure,” “natural” space, created by the elimination of Native Americans and others who were deemed to have “no right place in the landscape,” became the basis

Muir and others like him created an external nature shaped by internal lines and boundaries that separate pure wilderness from sullied society. Parks and wilderness areas are, in essence, monuments to the ideological separation between nature and society. This is not just an abstract separation of nature and culture; this is a particular form of separation reflecting the anxieties, politics, and relationships—human and inhuman—of a particular time. Parks and wilderness areas have served as material, naturalized reaffirmations of this spatial separation and those relationships. They are, of course, not fixed; their meanings are the site and source of constantly changing politics. But the meanings themselves are not easily changed. The density with which the social relations of race and class are embedded within these spaces of “pure” wilderness has helped reproduce attitudes about the nature of race and perpetuate the racialization of nature.<sup>69</sup>

#### WILDING SUBJECTS: THE “PURIFICATION MACHINE”

Nature, then, served as a purification machine, a place where people became white. . . . The journey *into* nature [for purification] was just as much a journey *away* from something else, and that something else was race.—Bruce Braun

Nature’s external purity was also celebrated as a catalyst for internal purity. While society degraded the human spirit, and modernity and its trappings polluted both nature and the human soul, the solution, many thought, was to be cleansed by a return to that which is timeless, to nature as it was before humanity’s fall, to the “true,” pre-social world of wilderness. This process of purification merits attention because the creation of such wilderness did more than make nature divinely and racially pure, spatially separate and materially expressed in trees, mountains, and rivers. It also created what I call “subjects of wilderness”: that is, it takes polluted individuals and makes them pure again.<sup>70</sup> The act of going out into wilderness was and continues to be an act of looking inward. This is perhaps one of the most recurring themes in the argument for wilderness. The formation of individual subjects has also served as one of the central themes of nation building: Frederick Jackson Turner’s white pioneers creating both country and character. The intertwined formation of a nation and its people continues to serve as a central logic for preserving wilderness. Wallace Stegner, one of the most eloquent supporters of wilderness, wrote in support of the passage of the Wilderness Act of 1964: “We need wilderness preserved

—as much of it as is still left, and as many kinds—because it was the challenge against which our character as a people was formed.”<sup>71</sup> This implicit grouping, this trinity of body, nature, and nation, is not accidental or insignificant; rather, it has its origins in the belief in racial salvation through a return to nature.

A tacit assumption in many of these early arguments was that nature’s healing capacities, or rather, the ability of whites to benefit from nature’s curative powers, depended on the absence of, and distance from, those with darker skin. Braun addresses this rather large caveat: “nature, then, served as a purification machine, a place where people became white.” In fact, he argues, “the journey *into* nature [for purification] was just as much a journey *away* from something else, and that something else was race.”<sup>72</sup> This myth of white purification was made more persuasive and insidious by its suggestion that what the wilderness adventurer had to learn was internal and eternal. Because wilderness has been created as a space beyond the social, the wilderness traveler believes he or she is experiencing the essence of nature, pure nature, unpolluted by the social, cultural aspects of society. It is this myth that makes the search for our inner selves so compelling, something to “get back to,” a place that serves as a mirror to our own true nature. Of course, wilderness does not underlie our true being any more than nature determines culture. As Donna Haraway observes in *Primate Visions*: “Nature [serves as] the raw material of culture, appropriated, preserved, enslaved, exalted or otherwise made flexible for disposal by culture . . .” She claims that “the appropriation of nature [serves] the production of culture” and acts as a means for the “construction of the self from the raw material of the other.”<sup>73</sup>

Muir was only one of many advocates for this kind of natural transformation of the inner self, of finding the soul through the exploration of nature. From Ralph Waldo Emerson to Charles Darwin, Theodore Roosevelt to Edward Abbey, Aldo Leopold to Gary Snyder, the discovery of the self in the supposedly timeless material of nature has served as one of the most dominant themes in western environmentalism. People go to nature to find their “true selves,” to “remember” the basis of life. The “call of the wild” is, in truth, nature’s hailing. It is a green version of Louis Althusser’s famous “Hey, you there,” but in this case the interpellating agent is not a state official but a social and political history that is vested in and bound up in the material of mountain, rivers, and forests.<sup>74</sup> Because the hailing is outside of humanity, because it is from a “pure” source, the calling goes unexamined and its political histories remain obscured. Thoreau exclaimed:

Give me the ocean, the desert, the wilderness! . . . When I would recreate myself, I seek the darkest wood, the thickest and most interminable and . . . the most dismal swamp. I enter a swamp as a sacred place, a *sanctum sanctorum*. There is the strength, the marrow, of Nature. The wildwood covers the virgin mould, and the same soil is good for men and trees. . . . In such soil [civilization] arose and out of such wilderness comes the reformer eating locusts and wild honey.<sup>75</sup>

Walt Whitman was another believer in nature’s role in forming individuals. In *Leaves of Grass*, he wrote: “Now I see the secret of the making of the best persons. It is to grow in the open air, and to eat and sleep with the earth.”<sup>76</sup> But, like Muir, Whitman did not extend this character-building ability to non-Anglo-Saxons. When Whitman was editor of the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* in the 1840s, he argued that American expansion and manifest destiny would be good for the whole world. He wrote: “What has miserable, inefficient Mexico . . . to do with the great mission of peopling the New World with a noble race?”<sup>77</sup> He celebrated General Taylor’s capture of Mexican territory as “another clinching proof of the indomitable energy of the Anglo-Saxon character.”<sup>78</sup>

The link between race and nature was even more direct in the work of George Perkins Marsh.<sup>79</sup> In a frightening foreshadowing of Turner, Marsh believed that the American government was the product of this mixing of a potent strain of Germanic-Anglo tradition with the wilds of America. In 1868 he wrote: “The Goths are the noblest branch of the Caucasian race. We are their children. It was the spirit of the Goth that guided the May-Flower across the trackless ocean; the blood of the Goth that flowed at Bunker Hill.”<sup>80</sup> For Marsh, nature—both human and environmental—was something that could be controlled and that needed protection and proper management. It followed, then, that a love of liberty and effective governance were exclusive attributes of the Germanic people.<sup>81</sup> Marsh argued that “they [California and New Mexico] are inhabited by a mixed population, of habits, opinions, and characters incapable of sympathy or assimilation with our own; a race, whom the experience of an entire generation has proved to be unfitted for self-government, and unprepared to appreciate, sustain, or enjoy free institutions.”<sup>82</sup> At stake for him in these debates is a loss of purity, the decline of the race, and the consequent corrosive effect on the white nation.

But Marsh also recognized that the return to nature was not without peril. He argued that “if man is indeed above nature, wherever he fails to

make himself master [of nature], he can be but her slave."<sup>83</sup> In this formulation, there is a balance: the potential destruction of nature—leading to the further decline of civilization and ultimately to barbarism—is tempered by the fact that nature is manageable by “man.” So it follows that we must govern “her,” nature, both for the good of nature and of “man.” Such arguments allowed Marsh’s work to feed directly into the eugenics movement after the Civil War. This need to manage nature fit well with eugenicists’ desire to take nature’s evolutionary process, as described by Darwin, and make improvements on it. Those who claimed some knowledge of or control over nature demonstrated, by their own logic, their superiority over those who did not. Thus, while the “lesser races” were subject to nature’s whims, the “higher races” were able to bend nature and its subjects to their will, for their own good.

Francis Galton made this explicit in a landmark paper in *The American Journal of Sociology*: “What nature does so blindly, slowly and ruthlessly, man may do providently, quickly and kindly.”<sup>84</sup> Galton, along with a growing group of scientists, politicians, and popular supporters, sought to “introduce [eugenics] into the national conscience, like a new religion. It has, indeed, strong claims to become an orthodox tenet of the future, for eugenics co-operates with the workings of nature by securing that humanity shall be represented by the fittest races.”<sup>85</sup> Darwinian conceptions of nature are combined with Marsh’s vision of a nature that needs to be protected and managed for the well-being of civilization.<sup>86</sup> The goal was to manage nature more efficiently, more benignly; to protect nature’s purity while at the same time developing better subjects through closer interaction with it. Many others picked up on these ideas, most notably Gifford Pinchot, who was himself actively supportive of both Marsh’s ideas and the eugenics movement. He compared the managing of people’s nature to the managing of forests’ nature, claiming that “only in this way could the forest, like the race, live on.”<sup>87</sup> His models for managing the nature of the forest and the nature of the race called, at their core, for the proper governance of nature’s purity.

The same theme is present in Aldo Leopold when he exhorts us to “think like a mountain,”<sup>88</sup> or when Muir “discovers” himself in Yosemite, or when hikers come to “find” themselves through the timeless wisdom of nature. Acts of self-discovery are, of course, not unique to western subjects; transformations of the self through nature occupy many different traditions far beyond those of western environmentalism. Even in the West, it can be argued that acts of self-discovery by white environmental-

ists have different purposes and effects; subjectivization, like nature, is contingent and uneven.

#### “DANIEL BOONEING” AMERICAN HISTORY: THE “DARK AND BLOODY REALITIES OF THE PRESENT”

Fears of contagion were expressed by environmental leaders from Muir to Roosevelt to Pinchot; all saw immigration restriction as vital to the protection of nature’s purity. But these fears are not limited to the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth; issues of purity and perceived national threat continue to be at the forefront of contemporary debates around the protection of nature—whether the contagion is national, racial, or environmental.

The Sierra Club’s proposed initiative in 1998 to support California’s Proposition 187, which would have defined the club’s position as actively anti-immigration, was a clear relic of these one-hundred-year-old fears.<sup>89</sup> Though the Sierra Club measure lost, the massive support it received was very telling; Stewart Udall, Gary Snyder, Dave Foreman, David Brower, Farley Mowat, Herman Daly, and Lester Brown were just a few of the well-known environmentalists who publicly supported the measure.<sup>90</sup>

Edward Abbey, a prominent author and modern-day environmental renegade hero, was the person quoted most often in the Sierra Club debates over the issue. Abbey wrote: “I certainly do not wish to live in a society dominated by blacks or Mexicans, or Orientals. Look at Africa, Mexico and Asia.”<sup>91</sup> He invoked Garrett Hardin, a neo-Malthusian biologist who developed the infamous “tragedy of the commons” theory: “Garrett Hardin compares our situation to an over-crowded lifeboat in a sea of drowning bodies. If we take more aboard, the boat will be swamped and we’ll go under. [We must] militarize our borders [against illegal immigration]. The lifeboat is listing.”<sup>92</sup> He went on to even more directly echo eugenicists of the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth, stating that “it might be wise for us, as American citizens, to consider calling a halt to the mass influx of even more millions of hungry, ignorant, unskilled, and culturally-morally-genetically impoverished people. . . . Why not [support immigration]? Because we prefer democratic government, for one thing; because we still hope for an open, spacious, uncrowded, and beautiful—yes beautiful!—society, for another. The alternative, in the squalor, cruelty and corruption of Latin America, is plain for all to see.”<sup>93</sup> Abbey’s views, as well as those of many others engaged in recent immigra-

tion debates, clearly reflect long-standing conceptions of a pure nature threatened by various forms of racial difference.<sup>94</sup>

Aldo Leopold was yet another founder of the environmental movement who was indebted to bodily metaphors and a rhetoric that lamented degrading national health and its consequences to nature. Like George Perkins Marsh, Leopold believed that nature had to be properly managed for the “good of man” and for its own “well-being.” Indeed, Leopold considered wilderness to be the purest and “most perfect norm” and, as such, believed it “assumes unexpected importance as a laboratory for the study of land-health.” We are lost without it, he wrote: “We literally do not know how good a performance to expect of healthy land unless we have a wild area for comparison with sick ones.”<sup>95</sup>

Leopold also agreed with Muir that human use of wilderness involved “direct dilution” that “destroys” the “pure essence of outdoor America.”<sup>96</sup> Like Muir and Marsh, Leopold conceived of “wild” nature as central to the formation and/or regeneration of the citizen—or at least, the white male citizen.<sup>97</sup> He argued: “Wilderness areas are . . . a means of perpetuating . . . the more virile and primitive skills in pioneering travel and subsistence.” The experience of wilderness, he insisted “reminds us of our distinctive national origin and evolution, that is, it stimulates awareness of history. . . . For example, when a boy scout has tanned a coonskin cap, and goes Daniel Booneing in the willow thicket below the tracks, he is reenacting American history. He is, to that extent, culturally prepared to face the dark and bloody realities of the present.”<sup>98</sup>

Of course, the “American history” reenacted by the boy scout and revered by Leopold overlooks the “dark and bloody realities” of the past—as well as those of the present. In the boy scout’s performance, the theater of wilderness bears no traces of land dispossession, immigrant labor, or slavery. Rather, the celebration of his “Daniel Booneing” reinforces a “purified” white national history, one that relies on nature to bind national citizenship to gender and race.

Indeed, as Robert Finch points out in the 1987 introduction to the reprinting of Leopold’s classic compilation, *The Sand County Almanac*: “No idea of Leopold’s has been more important . . . than his assertion that our encounters with wild nature can reveal, not only interesting and useful observations about natural history, but important truths about human nature.”<sup>99</sup> This claim must have seemed almost self-evident to Leopold, given his belief in Americans’ “wild rootage.”<sup>100</sup> However, despite his attempts at deciphering these natural “truths,” Leopold neglected to grasp

the profoundly political nature of these roots, particularly the fears of the loss, degradation, and infirmity caused by social degradation, which was largely defined as a mixing of upper- and middle-class whites with those of another race or class.

Ultimately for Leopold and many other conservationists, a healthy landscape, like a healthy body, is a “pure” one. This equation of purity and health, of both land and body, is closely linked to the history of racial struggles over the purity of white bodies as they battle against contamination by unhealthy, impure peoples and nations. Particularly telling are Leopold’s metaphors of the human body that are no less deeply immersed in national and regional discourses of race than they had been for thinkers a generation or so earlier. In particular Leopold drew on fears of bodily contagion and contamination that were grounded in a crisis of medicine at the time and incorporated them into his theories of “land pathology” and his ideas of “land health.” Many of these themes he drew directly from German and eugenic scientists who trafficked in metaphors of nature’s purity to make intelligible and improve bodies and landscapes.<sup>101</sup> When Leopold says that “the evidence indicates that in land, just as in the human body, the symptoms may lie in one organ and the cause in another,” and “the practices we now call conservation are, to a large extent, local alleviation of biotic pain,” he is tacking back and forth between metaphors—of the nature of the body and the nature of the landscape—that are necessarily grounded within historical and contemporary notions of the bodily health of the individual and the nation.<sup>102</sup> These metaphors are also grounded in the debates around race in New Mexico at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, where Leopold, as a young Forest Service ranger, developed the germs of many of his ideas and the country’s first wilderness area.<sup>103</sup>

#### NEW MEXICO: GUARDING THE FOREST, PROTECTING THE PURE

The Southwest has been a seedbed for such great visionaries of the environmental movement. I mean, Aldo Leopold, Dave Foreman, Ed Abbey. Look at the people that have come out of this blasted landscape. There is a clarity of vision; there is a singleness of purpose that instills people in the Southwest, and I don’t know where that comes from, but it’s absolutely part of the landscape.—Sam Hitt, *Forest Guardians*<sup>104</sup>

The idea of wilderness we have used is flawed. This flaw is never acknowledged when “white” or urban environmentalists gather because the concept has been driven into us so completely.

—Chellis Glendinning<sup>105</sup>

In June 1999 I enter the new offices of Forest Guardians. The attempted bombing has noticeably shaken the staff, some of whom have left. There is no longer a sign out front or a mailbox. While waiting to meet with Bryan Bird I talk to Dick Cameron, who is the primary mapmaker for Forest Guardians and who has been creating maps for the release of the "State of the South Rockies Ecosystem Plan," part of a large national movement to create detailed, environmentally oriented plans and maps of bioregions across the United States. His maps are spread out in piles all around him and on every possible surface he can reach. On his large computer screen he demonstrates how he makes a visible representation of the "underlying native ecology" of the region of northern New Mexico and southern Colorado. The maps that he says "are at the heart of the project and are the soul of this landscape" are colored in environmental hues of green, blue, and brown. They show the area devoid of any social markers or divisions. It is easy to see what Dick calls the "true diversity and unsoiled nature of the forest" on his big-screen computer, with its high resolution and bright green colors. He explains that large variations in the stand type, density, and age class are part of what is represented by the different shades of color. Aesthetically, it is indeed beautiful.

Then, with a click of his mouse, dark black lines appear on the screen showing the boundaries of the national forest, Bureau of Land Management, and the few national parks and monuments. They overlap with many of the green areas but do not include much of them. He clicks the mouse again; this time bright yellow county lines appear, crossing through the greens and blues, through curves of the river and dividing large swathes of green. He clicks again and property holdings appear: a few at first, in bright orange, and then, bit by bit, as the computer catches up to the command, private property, land grants, and reservations—all categorized the same way. A few large green areas remain on federal land and the larger reservations. He points to the land on the reservations: "This is some of the land we are most worried about. There is no way we can touch it, and the reservations are cutting it down much faster now that the Forest Service land is closed off. We are trying to develop some way to protect it but, it is too charged [politically]."

"Watch this," Dick says and clicks the mouse again. Red lines begin to appear in clustered patches all over the screen. He stands back to give me a clear view. "These are the roads. They look like a virus, don't they?" We watch the red lines fracture the green spaces until the screen is a cluttered mess of colors, like a bad piece of modern art. Dick says, "I hate looking at

this, but it reminds me of why I do what I do . . . why I get paid almost nothing to work the long hours here. I am willing to deal with the hate mail and the aggression toward this organization. It's to save the last few bits of green on this screen, the last few pure wild places."

Bryan comes up and shakes his head as he looks at the screen, claiming that the situation is even worse than it looks on the computer map. He has been spending a lot of weekends and free time riding his mountain bike in the forest, looking for roads that are not on the maps or documents the Forest Service supplied to Forest Guardians under the Freedom of Information Act. He and Dick are both proud of the maps. They are the product of hundreds of hours of work and help make clear a new vision of the region's forests. In all fairness, the maps are central to a reimagining of the landscape that has been oriented around production and the authority of the state but ultimately is about reproducing ideas of wilderness purity. I ask Dick for a copy of the map before I head into my meeting with Bryan. He declines, saying it is still too politically charged, but he gives me a small photocopy of part of the map showing one of the few "pure wilderness stands left," near the Vallecitos Sustained Yield Unit in the Carson National Forest.

Two weeks later I head out, with this photocopy in hand, to the green spot on the map. I meet with the longtime environmentalist George Grossman, Ryan Temple of Forest Trust, and Susan Miller,<sup>106</sup> a Forest Service employee who has come on her own time (as have a few others who are here for a tour of the area). George, in his late sixties, is a member of the Santa Fe Group of the Sierra Club, a group that in many ways is very different from the national organization. In fact, George, who has been involved in forest politics for the past thirty years, was instrumental in getting the Santa Fe Group to support community logging in the national forest and specifically in the Vallecitos Sustained Yield Unit, where he wrote comments for the Santa Fe Group endorsing the Agua/Caballos timber sale. The national board of the Sierra Club, which had endorsed a zero-cut policy in 2000, responded by censuring the Santa Fe Group and striking George's comments from the public record. This move came at the request of Bryan Bird, who in addition to his job at Forest Guardians was also a member of the Sierra Club's state governing board. Ryan Temple, a young man in his thirties, was at the time an employee of Forest Trust, one of the few nonprofits around the country that support, in practice, small-scale, sustainable use of forest resources. The organization has come under fire from both Forest Guardians, for "compromising environ-

mental integrity," and from some Hispanos, for capitulating too much to environmentalists. Susan Miller is a middle-aged woman who has worked for the Forest Service most of her professional life. Trained as a naturalist, she is a sympathetic, if somewhat guarded, supporter of the sustained yield unit, and even though this area of the forest is out of her jurisdiction she has agreed to come along in order to "know the ground which everyone is fighting about." We meet outside an old logging road gate just beyond the town of Vallecitos in the early morning. Others in the group include additional Forest Trust employees, community activists, and birders.

It is early summer, but the temperature is already hot, making the walk up the old logging road, under the high canopy, cool and pleasant. I walk with George, Ryan, and Susan as others break off to chase some woodpeckers, and we talk about the politics and possibilities of the sustained yield unit, which was set aside to guarantee the community access to forest resources in terms of "wage labor" that would compensate for the loss of the permits. We enter an open meadow where we drop our daypacks and head out to walk through the woods. The forest around the meadow is an open stand of older ponderosa pine that will be opened up for logging if Forest Guardians does not file an injunction in the courts against the Forest Service to stop it. We begin counting trees in different size classes to roughly calculate stand density in a number of spots and determine that it is about 120 trees per acre. In everyone's opinion, the stand could use some thinning. Ryan's opinion is that thinning would "open up the stand, decrease the possibility of a crown fire by making the overstory less crowded, and release some of the small understory trees."

Susan agrees that the stand density could be reduced but thinks that the logging operation might do more harm than good. Somewhat surprisingly, George is the most open to the idea, suggesting that the stand would be healthiest if it were thinned down to 60 trees per acre. Observing that the sandy soil type in the area would recover well from logging, he also suggests that removing the logs in the winter, when they rest on snow and ice, would cause very little soil disturbance. George is from an older school of forestry: one that looks at the forest less as a pristine place that should be left undisturbed and more as a place that should be "used carefully and thoughtfully so that it can produce timber as a renewable resource." Ironically, as he himself notes, his "coming of age was at a time of industrial forestry, and even though I was often aggressively opposed to it, it made me more understanding of the possibility of sustainable community forestry today."

As Ryan and Susan core a few trees and calculate the total basal area and the average stand diameter, I ask George how he aligns his values as an environmentalist—and as an active proponent of wilderness—with his support of the logging of old stands such as this stand of ponderosa.<sup>107</sup> He leans against the yellow belly of one of the large pines and points to markers on the landscape that I haven't seen. "See that meadow?" He points to the grassy opening where we left our daypacks. "That's an old logging landing, where the logs were collected and cut into movable sizes." "If you look carefully," he continues, "at some of the trees near the landing, you can see some logging scars." He points to a tree just across from ours, which has a dried scar that the tree has grown around, and then points to a fire scar on the other side of the tree he is leaning against. "There is a lot that has happened in these woods over the years. If you look carefully, you can see a lot of it. I'm not saying that it's all good, but the reason people think this is a 'healthy' stand is not a product of its being left alone but because it has a history of logging and other uses."

He tells me that this area was heavily logged in the 1880s and then again in the 1920s and 1930s—not all of it, but most of it. What wasn't logged was thinned in the 1920s by the Civilian Conservation Corps, and there has been extensive grazing for a few hundred years at least. He says, "Who knows what's happened here? Certainly some major fires, probably both man-made and from lightning strikes. There was a mining track near here, and at some point a logging camp. Who knows what else? Most of it can't be seen. But what we don't see of this forest's past has everything to do with what we do see now. This is not to say that we haven't destroyed areas through logging—there are plenty of areas that have been so destroyed that they haven't been able to grow trees on them. But that's just plain bad forestry; we can't permit that kind of destructive logging. But not all logging is bad." He looks around the forest and says plainly, "You can't go back to the 'real forest' any more than you can go back to your birth and discover your real self. You are what you have lived. This forest too is what it has lived."

Ryan and Susan wave us back to the meadow. As we look for a spot for lunch, Susan points out some of the different grass and forbs species, giving their Latin names: "That's Arizona fescue (*Festuca arizonica*) and that's mountain muhly (*Muhlenbergia montana*), and over there is Western wheatgrass, which is a good foraging species. In the distance, the larger clumps that are just leafing out are small Gambel oak (*Quercus gambelii*), which without fire or thinning can become a nuisance for foresters and

grazers alike." We find a shady spot in a patch of wheatgrass and everyone starts complaining about Forest Guardians' lawsuits that have shut down most of the logging on the Carson; logging projects that they support. Most of their reasons are "scientific." Susan talks about the overstocking of the forest, citing the data that she and Ryan have just collected. Ryan cites the "edge effect"<sup>108</sup> that would be created from selective thinning and how it would diversify the habitat in the area to create more differentiated stands that support wildlife. George talks about how opening up the canopy by removing more trees would increase the growth of grasses, not just for cows but for elk and deer and other animals and birds.

As we continue to talk, the discussion turns from forest ecology to other explanations of these people's positions on the sustained yield unit. What is striking is that though all of them argue in support of the unit in terms of ecological integrity, their focus is primarily on other issues. Ryan returns again and again to the legal rights of the community. George's support of the thinning seems to come as much from a disdain for the arrogance of the Guardians' critique of all past forestry practices as from a sense of injustice, shared with Ryan, about what has happened to Hispano communities' rights of access to the forest. Susan, though less interested in asserting Hispano rights per se, believes deeply in the federal government's role in protecting social needs. These histories of rights, welfare, and justice, like the histories of purity, are also part of the environmental movement. This walk through the woods makes it very clear that the forest's nature is simultaneously a dynamic actor and a critical ground of contemporary politics. Past practices of place making are sometimes invisible to us—sometimes they are translucent, such as the markers that George points to—but they are always remade through the politics of the present. Thus, the landscape has a strange quality of being socially made but never being entirely the product of social practice.

At stake for Ryan, George, and Susan, as well as Bryan Bird, Sam Hitt, Ike DeVargas, Max Córdova, and many others, are both a social history and the materiality of the forest itself. None of these people is getting rich from his or her involvement with the forest; all of them, however, have a vested interest in the materiality and "health" of the ecosystem. Moreover, all of them share a deep passion for and have a personal connection with the forests of northern New Mexico. These connections have been made through different histories of walking, logging, camping, harvesting wood, hunting, and listening to and observing the forest; they are expressed through taxonomic names, scientific practices of forest mensura-

tion or ecological processes, as economic opportunity and cultural tradition, through spiritual well-being, and, of course, sometimes as a site of personal and social purification. Similarly, they have formed their commitment through efforts to protect the forest from what they see as its abuses; how these abuses are understood, and how the forest is to be "protected" and cared for, however, vary as greatly as their own personal histories.

The maps in Forest Guardians' office and the walk in the woods of the sustained yield unit are not meant to depict opposing truths: both are representations that are seen and experienced in ways that are real. But they are different in the ways in which they represent the material forest. The green maps on the computer would be found by Bryan and Dick in the woods of the sustained yield unit, and plenty of maps are made that foreground the social history of an area. What is different is the understanding of the materiality of forest. The green maps on the computer depict a forest before the social, a natural territory devoid of human influence, and thus makes the space—even as the layers become mixed—one of pure nature overlaid with social history, reproducing a natural ontology of nature. In contrast, George, Ryan, and Susan's understanding of the forest is one in which the social and the natural are bound together through mounds, stumps, scars, and clearings that make the very same space anything but pure nature. Though their understandings are not identical, they are starkly different from those of Forest Guardians and in turn create different understandings of what the future of the forest should be. Let's take a look at how this particular understanding of pure nature that is commonly expressed by Forest Guardians manifests in the group's practices of forest protection.

#### EARTH DAY

On April 22, 1999—Earth Day—I attended a public presentation in Santa Fe organized by Forest Guardians "to educate and inform people about the general health and threats to northern New Mexico forests."<sup>109</sup> The presentation was one of many events going on that day in Santa Fe, including a tree-planting ceremony and a kids' educational fair—the usual events one might expect to mark the occasion. The talk was held in Santa Fe's public library, and about sixty people were in attendance, all of whom were white, well-dressed, and seemingly genuinely concerned about forest issues. Three staff members of Forest Guardians introduced themselves and explained that their organization was the most active and most un-



compromising of the groups engaged in the protection of forests. They then began a slide show with an opening image of a plantation: a large white house stood in the background, surrounded by a green, manicured garden.

Bryan Bird, one of the presenters, told the crowd: "These are the true roots of the environmental movement. . . . When people tell us we must compromise, that we must lower our standards and commitment to the integrity and health of wild forest, we remember that compromise did not end slavery." He added: "It was the civil rights movement activists in the 1960s and their discovering the words of Muir and Leopold that launched the modern-day environmental movement." The presentation went on to address broader struggles over forests in Oregon and Washington, and the civil disobedience techniques that people were using in the struggle for "what is left of the pure and pristine wild spaces of the West." The audience was reminded of the importance of the national campaign for zero-cut and zero-cow on federal lands and the work that Forest Guardians was engaged in, locally, nationally, and with other groups to forward these agendas both in public opinion and within federal agencies.<sup>110</sup>

We were then told that in nearby Vallecitos the Guardians had lost a recent battle to stop logging in the area. "The dangers to this area are real; what lies in the balance is the last best hope for the preservation of one of the few remaining unspoiled areas of forest in the region." We were left with a sense that a small island of pure wilderness stood alone against a rising tide of human imposition. The talk ended with a call not to compromise the last free and wild places in the West and a commitment to "rewilding the West" through the creation of zones and corridors and more open, untouchable areas.<sup>111</sup>

The audience had a few questions. The first came from an elderly woman whom I recognized from a Sierra Club meeting a few weeks before. She asked about how the group was dealing with the "real problems" that underlie the "threat to wild spaces," which she defined as issues of "population control." The speakers nodded as she spoke and did their best to answer the unwieldy question, pointing to the loss of the Sierra Club initiative as a loss for the environment. Bird reassured her that many people were continuing to work on that issue, and that the fight had not been lost. He also pointed out that while population was part of the problem, another factor was our overconsumption of resources. The woman conceded that "yes, that is true," but reasserted that "to save our resources we need to protect both our borders and our wild lands."<sup>112</sup>

Another question, raised by an elderly man, was a simple one: "Why are the environmentalists so disliked in northern New Mexico?" A tense moment followed, but the matter was something that almost anyone involved in New Mexican politics, or who regularly read the newspaper or listened to the radio, knew to be true. Bird referred back to a controversy surrounding fuelwood collection in the wake of a 1995 injunction to protect the endangered spotted owl,<sup>113</sup> but claimed that the Forest Service had "manufactured the tension" in a "divide and conquer" move "that fractured the possibility of alliances between the community and environmentalists." He also claimed that a few "radicals" such as Ike DeVargas and Max Córdova helped stir up bad feeling, which he claimed was "in fact not as widespread as it seemed." Soon after the presentation came to a close and small knots of people gathered to speak individually with the speakers. The event itself was not at all surprising. I had been to many such meetings before, but this was the first time I heard environmentalists claim a direct lineage to the civil rights movement. Indeed, after this event, it became a much more common refrain among environmentalists.

I do not mean this as an indictment of all that is done by Forest Guardians. There are implicit critiques of capitalist commodification of nature in much of their work to halt the ecological degradation of the forests of the desert Southwest. The history of resource exploitation has left a serious scar on the forest landscapes. But when I recounted environmentalism's newly claimed civil rights heritage to Santiago Juarez, a longtime left-wing Chicano activist and organizer in the region, the 180-pound man responded: "Yeah . . . and I'm Snow White." Then he turned serious: "Where the fuck were they during the 1960s and the La Raza movement? I didn't see any of them at the marches in Albuquerque. They weren't canvassing for La Raza Unida or being arrested by the cops with Corky [Gonzales]. Where were they when we marched against the racist policies and unfair hiring and wage practices at Los Alamos? Where the fuck are they when some white cop pulls me over for nothing?" He finished with an outright dismissal: "They're as tied to the civil rights movement as much as I'm part of the Klan." As I sat with him, he got even angrier. His sentiment was not unique; before and since, I heard similar reactions from many others throughout the region.<sup>114</sup>

Kay Matthews, one of the editors of the region's radical community newspaper, *La Jicarita News*, frames the conflict this way: "You have two of the most progressive environmental justice groups in the West just down in Albuquerque. When was the last time they [Forest Guardians] went

down and marched or organized for Chicanos?"<sup>115</sup> Matthews referred to the claims by Sam Hitt, the leader of Forest Guardians, that the small-time irrigators are the culprits in the water wars in New Mexico. Often citing the statistic that irrigators control 80 percent of the diversionary rights of the water in New Mexico and only about one-third actually reaches the fields,<sup>116</sup> Hitt's position is that locals are using technology from the nineteenth century, a flood irrigation system based on *acequias*, or irrigation ditches, that deliver water to the fields, and this is what is causing the degradation of local rivers.<sup>117</sup> But Matthews argues correctly that nowhere near that amount of water goes to agriculture and that the water used is central to growing food and maintaining the livelihoods of the people who live in *acequia* communities and hold legal title to that water—access rights dating back hundreds of years. Matthews asserts: "Sam is fighting to take water away from the *acequia* for the silvery minnow, calling the *acequia* inefficient. But when was the last time he went down and fought with Intel in Albuquerque over their water use—which is massive—in the production of computer chips? Or when was the last time they addressed white urban sprawl?"<sup>118</sup> Matthews sums it up this way: "You need to judge the Guardians both by what they do and also what they don't. . . . It's very telling which struggles they are involved in, who they blame, and which ones they avoid in the region."<sup>119</sup>

Though there are many examples of the tensions in New Mexico between those activists committed to social and environmental justice and those strictly in the environmental camp, none makes them clearer than a public letter entitled "A Letter to Environmentalists" written by Chellis Glendinning, who describes herself as a "recovering environmentalist."<sup>120</sup> The letter was published in the *Santa Fe Reporter* in April 1996 after the federal fuelwood injunction that halted all logging on Forest Service lands. Glendinning worked with many people involved in that struggle, including Ike DeVargas and Max Córdova, and has a long history of activism in the civil rights movement, the anti-war movement, and the women's rights movement. She began her letter by "asking environmentalists to stand behind the politics of indigenous Chicano people 100 per cent," claiming that "the idea of wilderness we have used is flawed."<sup>121</sup> She pointed out that "this flaw is never acknowledged when 'white' or urban environmentalists gather because the concept has been driven into us so completely." But, she added, "whenever indigenous people join us, the flaw is quickly pointed out." She wrote eloquently about the need to lift the veil and see behind what is unquestioningly referred to as "our" efforts at preservation.

"Put most simply," she says, "this veil concerns our unthinking use of the word 'we.' 'We' must save the forests! 'We' must build a better world!" She then asks: "How different are these statements from the outlandish manifest destiny rationales used to conquer these lands in the first place?" The rewards of this internal examination, she claims, would be to have "new ideas, new strength, new comrades and, best of all, to understand that 'we' . . . is something entirely different from saying it inside the empire."<sup>122</sup>

The letter resonated powerfully with many environmentalists, including members of Forest Trust and the New Mexico Green Party, and it spawned a number of meetings and teach-ins at the Oñate Visitors Center in Española. Here, at long last, was a respected environmentalist siding with Chicano loggers; her position was, of course, not surprising to DeVargas or Córdova or many other local loggers who knew her. Her letter identified a fracture in the environmental community that would only become wider in the ensuing years. Glendinning soon joined forces with fellow "recovering environmentalists" Mark Schiller and Kay Matthews, co-editors of *La Jicarita News*, and a small group of activists to write another letter entitled "Inhabited Wilderness." This time, more than seventy-five other prominent environmentalists and activists, including Ryan Temple of Forest Trust, signed the letter, which ran as a paid advertisement in the *Santa Fe New Mexican* supporting an alternative vision of wilderness, characterizing the tension in the following way: "The most recent tragedy to emerge from this injustice is a conflict that is tearing the people of New Mexico apart. On the one side stand the advocates of pure wilderness, working to halt a toxic civilization by isolating areas away from human use; on the other, the Indio-Hispanic communities of the north, fighting for their lands, livelihood and culture."<sup>123</sup> The letter goes on to pronounce that "we support their [natives' and Indio-Hispanos'] right to sustainable forestry, including community-based logging and restoration, as well as hunting, fishing, herb-gathering, firewood collection, and water. And we honor their right to make decisions about the lands that, according to the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, are theirs."<sup>124</sup> There was also "An Open Letter to the Environmental Community," in *La Jicarita News* (October 1997), drafted by Kay and Mark, which specifically addressed the zero-cut initiative and the Vallecitos Sustained Yield Unit. It was signed by George Grossman, Courtney White, and Barbara Johnson of the Sierra Club as well as Roberto Mondragon, Max, Ike, Antonio Medina, Estevan Arellano, Lauren Reichelt, Chellis, Salomon, Jerry Fuentes, and others.

The letters and the subsequent meetings led to greater animosity to-

ward the Forest Guardians' position. Contrary to what Bryan Bird claimed at the 1999 Earth Day meeting, anger and frustration directed toward environmentalists in northern New Mexico was very widespread. This shared anti-environmentalist sentiment assumed the status of such an assuredly universal topic of conversation as the weather—at the post office, food counters, in parking lots, and along the shaded sides of adobe buildings where people gather. Though many locals may not have agreed with everything that DeVargas or Córdova or other leaders in the forest struggle did or said, these activists became ever more popular for their vocal opposition to environmentalists in general, and to Forest Guardians in particular.

One especially contentious encounter took place in August 1996 when members of Forest Guardians and the Forest Conservation Council hosted a camp-out at the site of the La Manga timber sale in the Vallecitos Sustained Yield Unit.<sup>125</sup> Over the course of three days, the groups organized workshops on bird identification, tree sitting, and nonviolent protest techniques. After hearing of the event, DeVargas, other members of La Compañía Ocho (a community-based logging organization), and people of the community of Vallecitos and neighboring villages staged their own counter-event to protest the presence of the environmentalists. Although La Compañía Ocho had been guaranteed 75 percent of the timber sale (in a settlement with the U.S. Forest Service), a Forest Guardians' lawsuit had temporarily halted logging of the sale, with the result that many people from the area were out of work.<sup>126</sup>

Locals claimed that because the Guardians and La Compañía were involved in litigation over the area it was outrageous for the environmentalists to stage workshops at the timber sale site. Local counter-demonstrators hung John Talberth and Sam Hitt in effigy (as they had at an earlier demonstration in Santa Fe) from trees along Forest Road 274, which led to the timber sale site and workshops. They posted signs that read: "It's not the owl . . . it's a way of life that's at stake." When asked if a compromise was possible, Sam Hitt responded: "This stand must be protected," and "my bottom line is that these old growth pines will not be cut."<sup>127</sup> He claimed it was simply "culturally irresponsible" to log in the area.<sup>128</sup> Eventually, DeVargas, Max Córdova, and others met to discuss their differences with the Guardians, an event that devolved to a great deal of finger-pointing followed by heated threats. After the incident, DeVargas commented that Sam Hitt, the Guardians' leader, "can no longer portray himself as David fighting Goliath, out to save the poor people against the corporate giant. He has now become Goliath."<sup>129</sup>

#### WILD NATURES AND A NEW WAVE OF COLONISTS

This vision of environmentalists as the new Goliath, the new "wave of colonists," was widely shared by many involved in New Mexican forest politics.<sup>130</sup> Forest Guardians' decision to litigate the issue, a one-size-fits-all approach to environmental issues, only exacerbated these feelings. As Glendinning claimed, there is "a lot of wisdom in the environmental movement, but it has been a mistake to try to disseminate it through litigation."<sup>131</sup> The legal tactic was effective in stopping large-scale logging nationally, but in this region it only intensified existing antagonism between environmentalists and the communities, articulated in many of my interviews as outrage at the arrogance of Forest Guardians.

Alfredo Padilla, a resident of Truchas and a former minister, said during our firewood gathering trip: "Who the heck do they think they are? . . . They act like they can send down commandments and that we should all get out of the way or get on our knees for them." He later asked rhetorically: "Who put them in charge of these woods? The Forest Guardians? I didn't ask them to *guard* these forests. Who are they guarding them for? Not for the people who live here. They're guarding [the forest] so that they can have their own playground."<sup>132</sup> Others, like Sam Córdova, who worked thinning and selling firewood, said: "I don't feel the woods are going to be safer because they're guarding them. . . . I can't think of any bigger threat to these forests than the Guardians . . . all they're doing is making it safe for people to develop here [in northern New Mexico]."<sup>133</sup>

In a letter to the *Albuquerque Journal* titled "Green Vision Blind to Native Hardship," three Hispano commissioners of Rio Arriba County asked: "What right other than conquest do these people [environmentalists] have to develop a vision for our communities or for the lands stolen from us." Referring to the injunction against logging on federal lands, the letter added: "The courts have been used to rid the United States of our kind for too long. We will do whatever is required, as individuals and as elected public servants, to defend our country and our people from a sophisticated, treacherous and deceptive attempt at cultural extermination."<sup>134</sup>

Both the intent and tone of the editorial were very clear; so, too, were its racial undertones. "Our kind" is vaguely defined here; it might be a class reference or it could be tied to culture and place—but it is most certainly racial. In the preceding paragraph, the letter asks, in reference to the Southwest Forest Alliance (which was made up of sixteen environmental groups, including Forest Guardians), whether "there is a Hispanic, a

Native American, or even an individual raised in northern New Mexico among them?"<sup>135</sup> The answer was, not surprisingly, no. The letter articulates one of the greatest concerns expressed at innumerable meetings, interviews, and conversations with local Hispanos: the claim that the almost all-white, largely male environmentalist is the singular, rightful voice for nature and its protection.

Forest Guardians assumes this mantle with little equivocation. As Sam Hitt said during an interview: "We might not always be popular, but if we didn't look after the forest, who would?" He broadens the rationale to a campaign whose bounds are as noble and inevitable as those expounded by the environmentalists' founding thinkers: "We are doing something bigger than ourselves; we are working to preserve the forest for people who will be living beyond our lifetimes. [We work] to maintain its health and protect its integrity." The best way to do this, according to Hitt and others, is to "keep as much of it as wild and free of degradation as possible."<sup>136</sup>

When I asked Hitt what was at stake for him personally in preserving wilderness, he said:

When I go out deeper into it [wilderness], I end up going deeper into myself. It does not happen all the time; most of the time I go to the forest and I see problems. I see cows in the wilderness. I see roads that are polluting sediment into streams. I don't see the creatures that should be there. . . . If you're not sad, you have no right to be alive in the twenty-first century. You're living inside a cocoon. You're numb. You've lost connection with the wild and you're blind to the incredible ecospasm that's going on, on the planet. It's global suicide, this greatest extinction in 60 million years. . . . There is something about it [wilderness] which makes us stronger, physically and mentally; it recharges our batteries; it restores our souls. . . . It is these trips, both the problems and the beauty, that reaffirm my commitment to what I am doing and remind me of why it is so important.<sup>137</sup>

Bryan Bird expressed a similar mix of rationalism and romanticism: "Yes, it is about preserving endangered species; yes, it is about protecting old growth forests and maintaining biodiversity. But it is also about reminding ourselves who we are. The fact is, our inner nature is connected to our outer nature."<sup>138</sup> These sentiments express the selfsame notions of pure wilderness espoused by Muir, Marsh, and Leopold. It is this understanding of pristine, nonhuman nature, as well as these deeply personal, sentimental, and political connections to it, that are at stake in struggles

over the forests in New Mexico. These sentiments toward nature have their roots not only in rational scientific discourses of nature's purity but also in the environmental romanticism and transcendentalism of Thoreau and Emerson, both of whom tied nature and the self so tightly together. It is these combinations of understanding nature that make the preservation of its purity and the commitment to its improvement so sacrosanct. This is the key point, the fulcrum on which my argument turns; if it is through this connection to nature that contemporary "environmental citizens" are formed, and if we accept that nature has deeply racialized roots, then the ways that environmentalists are formed and form themselves through nature should be examined more carefully. An "environmental citizen" is formed when understandings and experience of nature become grounds for membership in a community, a basis for making claims and the legitimizing authority for an individual to speak for nature. This citizenship is deeply contested in New Mexico and the boundaries of this community are determined and policed by the inherited notions of nature that have these deep racialized roots. This is not to claim that historic texts or intensions generate their intended meanings seamlessly across time, or that there were not other diverse contexts and influences involved across time. It is to say that these histories of nature matter, albeit unevenly and inconsistently, both in membership in an environmental community and in contemporary environmental politics.<sup>139</sup>

This ideological heritage is discernable in the Forest Guardians' publication "The State of the Southern Rockies," a report authored by Bird, along with John Talberth, then a member of Forest Guardians. Sam Hitt traced the genealogical connection himself, claiming that the report "was an offspring of Aldo Leopold's vision of land health and John Muir's vision of wilderness."<sup>140</sup> The report grew out of a 1996 meeting in which twenty-three environmental organizations in the region agreed to collaborate under an umbrella organization they would call the Southwestern Wildlands Initiative. It was part of a larger set of initiatives of the Wildlands Project, which hoped to establish an "audacious plan" because, in their words, "North America is at risk."<sup>141</sup> According to environmentalists, this plan is central to the region's survival and recovery. The intent is to create a "vast, interconnected area of true wilderness" by means of a connected system of reserves that span from Panama and the Caribbean to Alaska and Greenland. The plan was most clearly articulated in a special issue of *Wild Earth* dedicated to "Plotting a North American Wilderness Recovery Strategy."<sup>142</sup> The magazine featured articles by the EarthFirst! activist David Foreman.

the poet Gary Snyder, the conservation biologist Michael Soulé, and others, all in support of the plan. Foreman went so far as to call the Wildlands Project plan "one of the most important documents in conservation history," claiming that what its creators "seek is a path that leads to beauty, abundance, wholeness and wildness."<sup>143</sup>

The "State of the Southern Rockies" report claimed that if the region is "managed properly" it will be possible to restore much of the area to its wild state.<sup>144</sup> The authors continually invoke metaphors of a sick and imperiled patient in need of a recovery strategy; they propose to restore natural health to the forest through scientific management and rational planning.<sup>145</sup> Given the atmosphere of conflict over the forests in northern New Mexico, Forest Guardians' role in producing the plan did little to help it receive favorable reviews.

The activist Max Córdova responded to the plan in an eloquent letter<sup>146</sup> stating that he was drawn to write a response because although "the plan is an abstraction, disconnected from the day-to-day lives of people living in the area . . . the Forest Guardians' lawsuits have themselves demonstrated [that] these abstractions are based on objects and issues as real and concrete as the wood in my backyard, the temperature of our homes in winter and the sovereignty of our lands."<sup>147</sup> Córdova stated that he was concerned that:

the report describes a plan to build a "wilderness," a "land where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man." The plan's prescription to create a "pristine nature" out of a landscape that is deeply related to our history—from the births and deaths of family and friends, to the sweat and labor of our ancestors as herders, hunters, farmers, firewood gatherers, community loggers, acequia members, miners—is deeply disturbing. . . . These "wildlands" are not wild; they are the products of intensive use dating back hundreds, if not thousands, of years. . . . The Forest Guardians are not the first to use the notions of wilderness in this way. The concept of an open, unoccupied, "wild" frontier has been the myth that has fueled the dispossession of lands in America for a long time. Whether the planners of this report are conscious of it or not, the report carries on this legacy that empties the landscape and erases our history . . . which disingenuously dismisses the past, with disturbing implications for the future.<sup>148</sup>

Córdova's recollection of racialized dispossession from his ancestors' point of view is powerful. But his story is not a simple one in which a tradi-

tional, rural Hispano group is pitted unfairly against an overwhelming force for national/natural purification, itself driven by a racially haunted past. It is as important to examine the diverse notions of blood, and nature, in the local Hispano community as it is in the environmental community. Hispanos claim that their land was stolen by the Forest Service, and they invoke claims to blood purity that often seamlessly cross centuries, ignoring the brutal histories of Spanish colonialism in America as well as centuries of cross-racial intermarriage. Such claims staked upon the purity of bloodlines enable the possibility for land title restoration, according to the terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, and yet also implicate the title recipient directly in the legacy of colonial violence. Indeed, blood politics in the region are deeply complicated by histories and contradictions that make simple ideas of Hispano opposition to environmental claims of wilderness and whiteness—while powerfully compelling—less than straightforward. Moreover, still more troubled variations on the narrative of purity and pollution haunt these corporal and external landscapes. Among the most compelling are the very real fears of radiation pollution from Los Alamos, one of the biggest employers in the region, and the skyrocketing deaths from heroin overdoses that have earned the region the ignominious distinction as the nation's heroin overdose capital. All of this leads me to believe that an investigation of the intersections of environmental politics and blood politics should not end with a critique of the eugenicist roots of environmentalist thought but, instead, should begin there and move outward.

## CONCLUSION

We seek the purity of our absence [in nature], but everywhere we find our own fingerprints.  
—Richard White<sup>149</sup>

Tensions that exist around the nature of wilderness in New Mexico (and elsewhere) are deeply rooted in very particular formations of nature—formations that owe much of their shape, size, and even soil structure to anxieties over the loss of bodily and national purity in mid- to late-nineteenth-century North America. Nature, race, and nation have been intimately and insidiously bound together for well over a century: Darwin's theories of natural improvement and progression; Turner's warnings about the closing of the American frontier; Emerson's finding of good and the self through romantic transcendentalism in nature; and the inven-

tion of polygenesis and eugenics to ensure the integrity and health of the middle- to upper-class white populace. Wilderness advocates and other proponents of the early conservation movement, including Muir, Marsh, Whitman, Leopold, and Abbey, were deeply influenced by these intersecting notions and are equally implicated in their disturbing effects. As with Turner, Calhoun, Galton, Davenport, Haeckel, Grant, and so many others before (and after) them, the efforts of these men to protect the purity of nature were intertwined—whether explicitly or implicitly—with their desire to ensure the strength of their nation, their fellow citizenry, and themselves. Nature thus became a social template that needed to be “guarded”—kept or made pure—not only for its own sake but for the good of the nation and select, deserving individuals within it.

The conception of nature as already pure and yet in continual need of purification—in need of protection from the ever-threatening elements that “have no right place in the landscape”—continues to trouble the contemporary environmental movement. This is not to say that every reference to wilderness is bound to historical formations of race, class, and nation in the same way; wilderness draws off of many forms of knowledge, from Christian traditions to the Enlightenment. However, as long as racial histories remain hidden, racist and racialist practices will continue to find some form of expression and efforts at environmental protection will continue to be cast as attempts to guard and restore a natural, God-given purity, by the pure, for the pure. By looking at forest politics in a contentious corner of the Southwest, I have tried to illustrate some of the dangers of regarding nature as a pure template for moral guidance. Nature itself has a social history that is anything but pure. Efforts to preserve and restore “wilderness,” to create “healthy” forests, and to treat “sick” and “degraded” landscapes are not as simple as they may at first seem. The environmental movement, particularly as it pertains to the protection of forest wilderness, is haunted by the specters of its own racist creation. In part, the very meaning and impact of the environmental movement in the United States is at stake. If environmental groups continue to conceive of the debate so narrowly around the question of wilderness as traditionally defined, they will do so at their own peril.

In the battles over the forest in northern New Mexico, many environmentalists blame local Chicano activists and the “recovering environmentalists” who roused the internal debate for “fomenting the hatred” that led directly to the escalation of tensions there.<sup>150</sup> But tensions in the region run still deeper. At issue are historically sedimented fears and understand-

ings regarding nature, race, and class, and they are made manifest in material, often violent struggles over the forest. New Mexico and the racially charged forest landscapes that populate it demonstrate that these tensions and their lengthy historical lineages are inescapable and deserve closer, more careful attention.

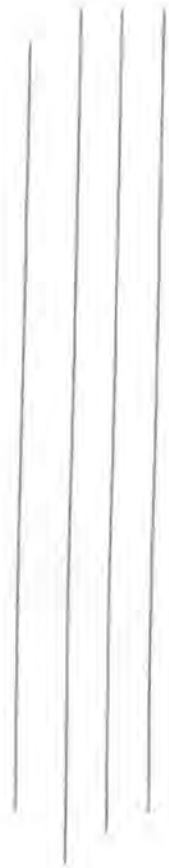
This is, of course, not the only history that infuses wilderness; it is vested with all kinds of anxieties, aspirations, and politics. In fact, an important part of the wilderness debate has been about how to conceive of wilderness as anything other than simply a landscape of resource production. It is undeniable that the policies and claims many environmentalists have used to transform the landscape over the past fifty years created the possibilities for contemporary struggles over many forest areas that simply would not exist otherwise.

Some conceptions of wilderness protection have echoed substantial critiques of capitalism. However, these critiques seem to have quieted amid the advent of “green capitalism,” which implies that the environment can be “saved” while simultaneously serving corporate interests and profit margins, thus maintaining the inequitable distribution of resources and the security of suburban white enclaves. A more critical political ecology would cultivate an awareness of the production of nature and the construction of wilderness and draw out the hidden labors and constitutive silences implicit in the making of wilderness.<sup>151</sup> Yet one of the biggest failures of the environmental movement has been its stubborn inability to critically examine the politics involved in its own contribution to the formation of the environment itself, as well as the social legacies imbedded and reproduced within the movement’s understandings of nature.<sup>152</sup> Though recent debates about wilderness and environmental justice have become more widespread, a radical rethinking of wilderness has yet to occur. Most notably, leftist and conservative environmentalists alike continue to deal ineffectively—or not at all—with issues of race as they intersect with questions of wilderness.

I have raised concerns here about spaces of whiteness in federal forest lands in the United States and challenged what is being protected and perpetuated through these spaces. I hope, however, to have done more than merely point to the problematic ways in which race and class are linked to environmental politics; I want also to have opened the door for a reconceptualization of wilderness areas and public lands more generally. The fact is, public spaces in the West have too long been defined as white; too few people and ideas have contributed their reconceptualization in

broader, more politically engaged ways. What does it mean to remake the notion of wilderness in the United States? What does it mean if nature is not something to be protected but something that is continually produced? How do “we” begin to remake spaces of nature in ways that make clear the histories present within them while also forging new ways to openly engage these spaces as alternatively raced, classed, and gendered? The forest politics of northern New Mexico demonstrate that this process of radically remaking forests landscapes in the United States is an intensely complicated, contentious one—but one that can, and does, indeed happen.

Ultimately, much more than the environmental movement or the 15 percent of the country that lives in “inhabited wilderness” are at issue here. More centrally at stake are the notions of nature and its purity that continue to work as a reservoir for ingrained conceptions of race and for the reproduction of exclusionary logics of racial difference. What is at stake are lived experiences of difference that are naturalized and reproduced through those notions of nature. Given these stakes, the responsibilities and possibilities of environmental politics are even greater than we have so far imagined.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### “SMOKEY BEAR IS A WHITE RACIST PIG”

There is a lot of respect for that symbol [Smokey]. It is heroic. It has weathered all these years. It's just like the American flag.

—Ken Bowman, U.S. Forest Service<sup>1</sup>

Smokey Bear is a white racist pig.

—Jerry Fuentes, land-grant activist, Truchas, New Mexico<sup>2</sup>

#### NATURE'S NATIONAL ICON

*The Colonial Bear* | In northern New Mexico, in discussions about the forest, forest fires, the Forest Service, the government, and the loss of land, it's hard to get away from commentary about Smokey Bear. What struck me most immediately during these conversations was the antagonism and

disdain many area residents had for him. In fact, I was startled when Jerry Fuentes, a Chicano activist from Truchas, called this beloved icon “a white racist pig,” and when Rio Arriba County commissioner Moises Morales called him “a symbol of U.S. colonialism.”<sup>3</sup> The more I talked to residents in northern New Mexico, the more I realized how shared these sentiments toward Smokey are. The activist Santiago Juarez said, “That bear has lurked in the woods too long, it’s time we skin him.”<sup>4</sup> Others, such as longtime forest worker and Córdova resident Salomon Martínez, spoke less violently but were equally disdainful: “He is a constant reminder that the woods are no longer ours; he watches over them like a prison guard . . . he is not here to help people, he is here to keep us [Chicanos] out.”<sup>5</sup> Crockett Dumas, a district ranger of the Camino Real Ranger District of Carson National Forest, claimed, “Posters of Smokey have more bullet holes in them than any sign we post around here.”<sup>6</sup>

In this region, Smokey dolls have been hanged and nailed to posts, posters bearing his image have been riddled with bullet holes, and he has commonly been characterized as a vicious and despotic land thief. Moreover, the philosophies preached by Smokey—including a particular narrow vision of the forest and the need to preserve it for the public—have been continually challenged. In the minds and experiences of many Hispanos in the region, Smokey is deeply intertwined with normative notions of race and nation. Particularly in the 1970s and early 1980s, when northern New Mexico embraced alternative visions of Chicano cultural nationalism and homeland—*Aztlán*<sup>7</sup>—Smokey represented an especially antagonistic figure: one who linked a particular exclusionary understanding of the nation and public with a complex, deeply contested forest landscape (figure 18). In a region dominated by more than five hundred years of overlapping and contested Native American, Hispano, and public land claims, Smokey’s presence as a representative of federal authority is particularly charged. Sometimes Smokey was tied to the history of land loss, other times to racial tensions, but he was almost always an antagonistic outsider.

This regional response could not be more different from his national persona. Smokey Bear has enjoyed the adoration of three generations of Americans, earning the national trust as a stalwart protector of the forest. For more than fifty years, he has so deeply pervaded the nation’s collective consciousness that advertising studies have ranked Smokey with Coca-Cola and Santa Claus as one of the most readily recognized icons in America today.<sup>8</sup> He has been so popular that he has received more mail than some sitting U.S. presidents—such a high volume of mail, in fact, that he



## El Gran Robo de Nuestra Tierra

18. Courtesy of the National Archives and Record Administration.





19. Courtesy of the National Archives and Record Administration.

was given his very own zip code (20252) in 1964.<sup>9</sup> Since his conception, Smokey has been credited with reducing the number of forest fires by 40 percent between the 1940s and 1998, arguably helping save millions of acres of forests from being burned and billions of federal dollars from being spent in fighting fires.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, he is widely regarded as a benevolent bear—the stuff of childhood innocence, righteous goals, and altruistic commitments. As such, Smokey has become the most significant, beloved, and trusted symbol of both nature and nation in America today (figure 19).

In this chapter I want to examine how this seemingly benevolent brown bear can be “a white racist pig.” I do so by exploring discordant understandings of Smokey and tracing the social history that gave rise to Smokey through the diverse sites of his production, both as a symbol of the nation’s forests as well as through hostile remakings in northern New Mexico. My central argument is that racialized nationalist histories underlying the Smokey Bear campaign have infused the bear and the forest with exclusionary formations of U.S. nationalism and, together with the acquisition and misuse of forest lands by the Forest Service in northern New Mexico, have made Smokey more of a “white racist pig” and a “despotic land thief” than a benevolent protector of public forests.<sup>11</sup>

In order to consider this complex entanglement of fur, timber, flames, and bodies (both individual and national), a broad and critical approach is necessary to understand how nature, race, and nation bear on the particularities of forest landscape politics in northern New Mexico. The landscapes of difference under examination here are post-1940 cultural formations of forest and fire, as produced through this most ubiquitous of icons and as lived in northern New Mexico. I argue not only that it is impossible to understand environmental politics without addressing their embeddedness within the politics of difference (race, class, and nation), but also that those of us concerned with the social reproduction of difference must also take seriously the politics of nature.<sup>12</sup> This means taking seriously anxieties, representations, and animosity as being undeniably material in expression and effect, while at the same time being attentive to the cultural facts of bears, forest, and fires and the contradictions and tensions of their various formations. In so doing, this chapter demonstrates how divergent practices and histories trouble the rigidity of material and symbolic lines of nature and illustrates both the unevenness of these assemblages of nature and the violent effects of their formations.

At stake here is both an analytic of the politics of nature and difference and the lived material histories of exclusion in northern New Mexico. By demonstrating that nature is more than simply a collection of objects that are struggled over, or a universal substrate that is uncovered, I attempt to demonstrate how nature serves as archetype and archive, aiding the formation of narrowly defined racialized nationalism as well as the production of landscapes of exclusion. Because formations of race adhere so powerfully to pigments of skin and with such powerful material effects, because notions of nation are so linked to the state or treated as supra-local formations beyond contingent histories and cultural politics, and because nature works as such an effective cloak to the process and politics of social formation, we risk not seeing the ways in which race and nation occupy these sites beyond the skin and within the materials, landscapes, and imaginaries of everyday life.

*Bear Animosity* | Through more research I later learned that this antagonism toward Smokey has deep roots. Introduced in northern New Mexico in the mid- to late 1940s, he was met with a great deal of skepticism. The first formal references to him were in a Forest Service memo regarding the World War II-era Smokey posters in northern New Mexico; Forest Supervisor Stevens wrote, “I am reducing the distribution of the war posters due

to negative reaction to them on the part of local people."<sup>13</sup> Although Stevens did not define the "negative reaction," in a letter to his regional supervisor he explained, "Many of the residents in northern New Mexico burn areas for their sheep and do not feel that the practice is destructive. . . . The fire prevention posters have made people feel like they are being accused of aiding the enemy."<sup>14</sup> He went on to state that although the fire prevention program was badly needed, "in order to avoid trouble, I advise we do a more intensive education campaign before actively enforcing fire prevention in the area."<sup>15</sup>

No one I spoke with in Truchas specifically remembered the details of the World War II Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Program (CFFP) or the exact posters. But they do remember the growing presence of the Forest Service. Many older residents also remember community gatherings in which the Forest Service showed films about spruce budworm disease and films about Smokey and forest fires. A Córdova resident, Antonio Sanchez, observed, "That's when we learned that they [the Forest Service] were lying. . . . Forget what they say. The forests were not being managed for us."<sup>16</sup>

Indeed, the emerging notion of the "public," though an established concept in connection with federal lands, took a form that eliminated local control of natural resources in favor of the "national good." Smokey was both a mechanism for the creation of this notion of the "public" and a reflection of a broader set of Forest Service policies. The reaction to Smokey and to these policies in northern New Mexico was less than positive from the beginning. Although only limited details remain in the Forest Service archives (because of a reduction in the storage space for Forest Service records), one can find offhand comments in rangers' reports about the "surprising lack of reception of the Bear campaign"<sup>17</sup> or the occasional reference to the burning of billboards or Smokey posters, reported from the late 1950s through the 1970s.<sup>18</sup>

In the late 1950s, despite these reports, many in the Forest Service thought they were making inroads with the Smokey campaign, especially with children. Indeed, many people I interviewed remembered learning of Smokey as children in church and from white rangers and missionary teachers. Truchas resident Alfredo Padilla, for example, remembers learning that he was from New Mexico and wondering how the bear got such an important job in the Forest Service. "The missionary teacher told us that he was from New Mexico and how he was teaching the country about protecting the forest and everything." Padilla later came to understand

Smokey's good fortune with the Forest Service, as he explained, laughing: "It was because he [Smokey] was from southern New Mexico [an area dominated by powerful white landowners], not northern New Mexico." When I pressed him to explain how he knew that Smokey was not from northern New Mexico, he said that Smokey was there to help to protect the forest for the good of the American public, which meant "protecting it for people in Chicago [and] New York." When I asked if he believed that the public included people in New Mexico, he replied defensively, "Of course we are Americans, part of the public, but just not in the same way."<sup>19</sup>

Citizens in almost every one of northern New Mexico's towns heard Smokey talks, viewed Smokey film strips, or were exposed to Smokey posters pasted up in the post offices, general stores, churches, and bars. In fact, as in the rest of the nation, Smokey became one of the most recognized public images, associated not just with the forest but also specifically with the Forest Service. Given the amount of Forest Service land there, it is not surprising that the area received so much attention. What was surprising to the Forest Service was how negative Smokey's reception was, especially given his immense popularity in much of the rest of the country. The explanation is rooted not just in the politics of New Mexico but also in specific histories of Smokey's production outside of New Mexico and in histories that configure and predate that formation. So, before reexamining specific histories and practices of exclusion that underlie the animosity toward Smokey in New Mexico, it is worth stepping back to explore some of the specific conditions, institutions, and individuals involved in Smokey's making. Through mapping the specific context in which Smokey emerged, and his rise to fame as a symbol of the nation's valued forest resources, specific lived politics of production and exclusion resulting from his formations can be discerned.

I am not arguing that Smokey as produced in diverse sites and times is simply an intrinsically antagonistic figure; the conceptions of race and nation that were central to his production conflicted with the racial and national history in the region. Land politics in northern New Mexico are not simply struggles over narrowly defined ideas of property but instead are invested with regional histories of racism, national exclusion, and state violence, all of which were central in representations of Smokey. As such, Smokey becomes an important site of struggle not as an abstract symbol but as a site through which the complex mixture of land struggles, racial exclusions, and nation building are mediated and made manifest in the lived daily experiences of northern New Mexicans.

## ASHES AND UNDERSTORIES:

### THE ROOTS OF THE FOREST'S PRIME EVIL

*Incendiary Elements and Deviant Behaviors* | Smokey's roots are intertwined with complicated histories of nation and nature. Smokey's birth happened not through a predetermined teleological path of nationalization, but rather through a set of specific and contingent histories that brought together heightened national fears, intense racial anxieties, and histories of fire and public forests.

In fact, nationalistic understandings of forests and threatening images and events of fire certainly predated Smokey Bear.<sup>20</sup> Forests have long been associated with the economic and symbolic health of American society, and fire had long been seen as their foe. For example, Bernard Fernow, the first director of the Bureau of Forestry (later to become the Forest Service), stated, "Our civilization is built on wood. From the cradle to the coffin, in some shape or another it surrounds us."<sup>21</sup> The Society of American Foresters later put it in stark economic terms by stating simply, "No wood, no agriculture, no manufacture, no commerce."<sup>22</sup> Gifford Pinchot, the second chief forester of the Forest Service, claimed that fire was the enemy of American forests and referred to fire as the "dragon of devastation." Accordingly, he made fire suppression a central priority of his new cadre of forest rangers, helping assure "the greatest good for the greatest number."<sup>23</sup> The Forest Service, defined more and more by the precepts of scientific management, determined that fire was a grave threat to the forest and must be suppressed.<sup>24</sup>

The fear of fire reached an all-time high after the 1910 fires in which more than five million acres of the West burned, killing more than eighty people.<sup>25</sup> In 1911, Henry Graves, Gifford Pinchot's successor as chief forester, declared that fire prevention "is the fundamental obligation of the Forest Service and takes precedence over all other duties."<sup>26</sup> Clearly these large, devastating fires had a great deal to do with the rise of fire prevention programs in the United States, but so did the historical association of fire with delinquency.<sup>27</sup> In 1887, Bernard Fernow, chief forester of the U.S. Forest Service, wrote in frustration that "the whole fire question in the United States is one of bad habits and loose morals. There is no other reason or necessity for these frequent and recurring conflagrations."<sup>28</sup> Pinchot similarly pointed to the "moral effects" of incendiarism, stating that "there is no doubt that forest fires encourage a spirit of lawlessness and a disregard for property rights."<sup>29</sup>

It was not only fire's long history of beneficial use by farmers, hunters, and grazers that made the state and national programs difficult to implement. Because of fire's usefulness as a means of protest, retaliation, resistance, and even employment, fire continued to be an "incendiary topic" in much of the rural United States.<sup>30</sup> A particularly pernicious aspect of fire was its ability to cloud the lines between intent and accident. In 1921 Ranger Alan James, in what is now the Santa Fe National Forest in northern New Mexico, wrote in frustration to his supervisor that "it is impossible to know whether a sheep grazer (Spanish) camp fire really got away or whether he helped it get away." Even more difficult, he stated, was to find out "who is responsible."<sup>31</sup>

This frustration contributed to making fire a powerful site for the projection of society's fears, thus entangling racist sentiment with fire prevention. Fire was often understood as being used by racial or radical "others," including Japanese soldiers, rww (Industrial Workers of the World) union organizers and workers, Native Americans, Hispanos, African Americans in the postbellum south, immigrant Latinos, homeless persons in Los Angeles, and many others.<sup>32</sup> As recently as 2000, William Hurst, a former Southwest regional forester, argued that "there is a long history of close association between social degenerates and wild fires. The aim of our agency [the Forest Service] is to convince, control or capture the former to prevent the latter."<sup>33</sup>

The massive fires that transform western landscapes and threaten the economy are simultaneously intertwined with fears of deviance, enemy, evil. The result is that the lines between fires and foes dissolve into a fluid combination of social facts and material fabrications of territory and nation. And although fire management had been an important part of "scientific forest management" since at least the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, as had firefighting and efforts to control, transform, and punish "incendiary elements of society" in order to protect forests, it was not until World War II that the social engineering of fire suppression would reach fruition.<sup>34</sup>

*The Wartime Advertising Council and the Enemy Within* | This history of fire and deviance created a volatile understory in which fire and fear ignited new efforts to defend the forest and society, a campaign in which Smokey would be absolutely central. In fact, one can trace the spark that led to Smokey's birth to the evening of February 23, 1942, when a Japanese submarine off the coast of southern California fired a series of bombshells

near the Los Padres National Forest. Over the next few months, other incidents were reported in Oregon: a submarine bombed coastal forests; a Japanese plane bombed an inland forest reserve; and a Japanese balloon bomb exploded in a national forest, killing a family of five and igniting a small forest fire.<sup>35</sup> These little-known incidents, occurring just a few months after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, intensified nationalist fears about threats to the nation and its forests from Asian "others." As fears of external bombing grew, so too did the fears of internal "Asian agents of sabotage."<sup>36</sup>

In response to these bombings, Forest Service supervisor William Mendenhall of the Los Angeles National Forest was recruited by agents of the Department of Defense to serve as Forest Defense Coordinator for the entire region. He argued hysterically that "they [the Japanese] could illuminate the whole West Coast by setting our forests on fire" and destroy a resource that the War Department considered "as important as ammunition."<sup>37</sup> Mendenhall persuaded Lord and Thomas, a well-known advertising agency, to hold a meeting to bring advertisers, art directors, and Department of Defense staff together in "a war atmosphere—a patriotic fervor."<sup>38</sup>

Together they developed a campaign to convince the public that the "protection of America's National Forests . . . is a big part of defeating the Axis."<sup>39</sup> The group also determined that the threat posed by the enemy within was of "national significance," and that "a link between national health and the forest needed to be established from coast to coast."<sup>40</sup> They formed the Wartime Forest Fire Prevention Program (WFFP), later renamed the Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Program (CFFP), and, to achieve their task, turned to the newly formed Wartime Advertising Council, which would become the nation's central war propaganda agency and was responsible for selling more than 800 million war bonds, recruiting soldiers, and promoting victory gardens.<sup>41</sup>

The Wartime Advertising Council saw an anti-forest fire campaign as much more than a means of protecting the nation's forests from a menacing enemy; it also saw it as a vehicle for the restoration and preservation of the public's image of the advertising industry.<sup>42</sup> More specifically, the War Advertising Council catalyzed at least three important policy changes dealing with fire prevention that are absolutely central to the story.<sup>43</sup>

First, the War Advertising Council, along with the Forest Service, launched the first truly *national* forest fire prevention campaign. Until this point, forest fire prevention had been handled locally and regionally; the new campaign transformed fire prevention from a disparate set of mes-

sages and approaches to fire prevention by different states and agencies into a cooperative and cohesive effort to protect the *nation's* forests.<sup>44</sup> This made "the nation" the target population—though, as we will see, the War-time Forest Fire Prevention campaign had a narrow definition of whom that imagined community included—linking the message of forest fire prevention to the fervent World War II nationalist sentiment.<sup>45</sup>

Second, due largely to the increased sense of nationalism sparked by Pearl Harbor and the bombing of the California coast and Pacific Northwest forests, the centrality of wood products for the war effort helped link fire prevention to patriotic duty. The War Advertising Council's fire prevention posters urged "patriots" to "Volunteer Now as Forest Fire Watchers" and to "Serve America at Home—Volunteer to Protect the Nation's Forests" and warned them to "Keep a watchful eye for enemy saboteurs."<sup>46</sup> The boundaries of that patriotism, as was made painfully clear throughout the nation at the time through expression in the Japanese American concentration camps, the zoot suit riots, and the Tuskegee project testing syphilis on African Americans, among many other exclusionary nationalist practices, became manifest in forest fire prevention.<sup>47</sup> The campaign made those "elements" that had traditionally used forest fires more suspect to their neighbors and unpatriotic collaborators with the enemy.

Finally, an important switch was taking place from forest protection articulated as the material basis on which American society depended (in agriculture, manufacturing, and commerce) to forest metonymically linked to the body of a threatened nation at war.<sup>48</sup> A fire in Los Padres National Park, for example, was no longer simply a threat to commercial foresters or to the people in and around Los Angeles or even California. Rather, fires became, in the words of Richard Hammatt, the director of the WFFP, a "cancer that affected the health of the entire nation" and "an open wound that continued to sap the nation's strength."<sup>49</sup> This is not to argue that the forests' material significance had diminished—on the contrary, wood was central to industry in the United States—but rather to identify a shift in the rationale for forest preservation that directly linked the economic significance of wood to the patriotic sentiment of protecting a nation at war.<sup>50</sup> Mendenhall and the WFFP campaign fueled this fire, building on the same racist sentiments that led to laws prohibiting Japanese Americans from owning land and to the physical confinement of thousands of American citizens.

The first Wartime Advertising Council meeting and resulting materials reflected these early fears and related conservatism and built on preexist-

ing nationalist discourses and tropes. In doing so, they helped define and reify narrow boundaries of the national community, but even more significantly, they emphasized the dangers of the enemy within. Advertisers, the military officers and officials from the Department of Defense, Mendenhall and the Forest Service, and others who took part in the meeting in Los Angeles were living those fears. They drew on traditional iterations of enemies and metonymically associated “fire” with “enemy,” allowing them to link the forest to nation and then depict the forest as threatened and in need of protection from these enemies.

Take, for example, a 1942 poster portraying a large red devil standing in the forest with trees surrounding his ankles (figure 20). The devil is shrouded in a cloak of flames; his left hand is sowing seeds of fire in the forest. His features, specifically his slanted eyes and pointed grin, reflect extant stereotypes of the Asian face, and his destructive presence is marked by the crowns of trees engulfed by flames. His strong body, firm footing, and towering presence depict him as an entrenched, formidable, and threatening adversary. This trope of the adversarial devil is symbolically linked to the fire, and its presence provokes alarm at the clear threat to the forest—this Asian Fire Devil. Above the image is the word “Fire” emblazoned in large red letters; below the image the text reads, “Forest’s Public Enemy No. 1.” A great many meanings are at play here, but most crucial is the link forged between the forest and the public. The entity threatened by the devil/Asian/fire is the forest/public—a second symbolic link. The side the reader should be on is clear, and the connections between forest and nation, and fire and enemy, are already established.

A very different image produced around this same time draws on another perceived public enemy, the wolf, as an embodiment of the evil of fire (figure 21).<sup>51</sup> The image comes from the cover of the May 17, 1942 *American Weekly*, a widely circulated periodical of the time. In this image, a bright red-orange flaming wolf is jumping out of the forest, and the flames are igniting the trees and grass nearby. He leaps toward a strong, young, white man who leans toward the threatening beast, seemingly arrogantly unafraid as he wields an ax, presumably ready to kill the beast and thereby extinguish the threat to the forest and the nation. As with the fire devil in the previous example, the links between fire and enemy and forest and nation are very clear in this image. The critical difference is the way the image ties the nation to the forest not just through the notion of the public but much more directly through the material reliance on the forest for wood products essential to fueling the military-industrial complex. Victory



20. Courtesy of the National Archives and Record Administration.

## STRIKE DOWN THIS MONSTER!



Painted by Willy Pogany  
Exclusively for The American Weekly  
In Co-operation With the United States Forest Service

Claude R. Wickard, U. S. Secretary of Agriculture, Sounds a  
Nation-Wide Warning. "Be Careful," He Says, "Our Forests  
Are Vital to Victory." Read His Important and Instructive  
Article on Page 6.

21. Courtesy of the National Archives and Record Administration.

depends on the defeat of this wolf in fire's clothing, and the nation's strength and well-being are simultaneously linked to and planted within the forest itself.

The Wartime Advertising Council fed the fear and anger surrounding World War II, weaving hatred of the Axis into its campaign that made fire the enemy. Unlike earlier images of fire as devil or wolf, in which the origins and location of the enemy are implied rather than explicit, subsequent images are marked by a definable geography of fear and hatred—pointing directly at Germany, Japan, and Italy. For example, a then-popular poster placed the leaders of these three countries in the smoke of a fire over red flames engulfing a thick forest canopy (figure 22). The poster's title is "Enemies All: Don't let them loose in our forest." The object, location, and threat are all very clear, as is the link between fire and enemy. Moreover, the "us" against which the enemies are defined is unified by the possessiveness of "our forest."

Over time, the Department of Defense and the Wartime Advertising Council perceived that the threat of forest fires came not just from outside enemies such as Japan, but also from within, from those potential saboteurs, be they Japanese Americans or Communist sympathizers, who were working for the enemy. This fear helped shape the message of the WFFF. The danger from within the nation was believed to stem from either malicious intent or careless action. The WFFF called for the policing of both and sought to create a "national army" of forest protectors who would police the behavior of the potentially careless enemy within each citizen.

Eventually, these fears of an internal threat to the health of the forest and the nation became more directly linked to themes of fire prevention and led to one of the Wartime Advertising Council's most widely distributed posters of 1943 and 1944 (figure 23). It appeared in the windows of department stores, in newspapers and magazines, on billboards, and in gas stations across the country and propagated what would be one of the most popular wartime fire prevention slogans: "Careless Matches Aid the Axis." The poster depicts a lone Japanese soldier holding a burning match that partially illuminates his insidious smile; behind him, flames engulf everything.

Certain tropes in particular help identify the figure as truly evil. The most obvious are the sinister Asian eyes, invoking contemporary war propaganda as well as older racist notions of the untrustworthy Asian "other." The metaphor is reinforced by the fact that the figure is carrying out his act in the dark, illuminated only by the match—both the source of his



22. Courtesy of the National Archives and Record Administration.

**careless matches aid the Axis**



23. Courtesy of the National Archives and Record Administration.

evil act and the “smoking gun” that links him to older tropes of the fire and enemy. The soldier’s thick lips, large nose and ears, and dark skin also resonate with racist depictions of African Americans, while the long, skinny fingers, tipped with long nails, rely on long-standing misogynistic portrayals of wickedness and threats from devious, feminized characters.<sup>52</sup> Interestingly, the match is held by an enemy who is simultaneously external and internal.

Moreover, it is important to note a biopolitical shift that takes place within these ads, as external threats to the nation become internalized within the nation and ultimately within individual subjects. The movement of an external foreign threat of Japanese invasion becomes one in which spies, traitors, and arsonists within the social body of the nation threaten its very health. This is what Stuart Hall terms “the enemy within” and serves as a means of internal othering, against which a narrow community of the nation defines itself and its patriotic loyalties.<sup>53</sup> But the enemy in this instance becomes more than this, for in the ads *carelessness* becomes an internal weapon in aid of the enemy, one that requires the proper internal regulation of the self. Policing moves from the protection of borders of the territory to the regulating of populations within the territory to the regulating of one’s own potentially deviant behavior and carelessness. It is this message of carelessness and social deviance that becomes the central tenet of the next stage of the advertising campaign.

The link is also visible in the Wartime Advertising Council’s “Their Secret Weapon” poster. But in this image, the match is no longer in the hands of the enemy (figure 24). Here, the source of the fire is not clear. The association between the characters of Hitler and Tojo is direct, but the source of the threat is a carelessness that slips between complicity and treason. The enemy is not the devil, the wolf, or even the Japanese, but the careless citizen him- or herself. The cause of the fire has shifted from various metaphors for evil, depicted as external enemies of the nation, to an internal enemy of carelessness, a potential threat within every citizen. An incredible 36 million copies of this image were distributed across the country, appearing in gas stations, store windows, and countless other public spaces. Even more people saw it in newspapers and magazines and in other reproductions. Other images reinforced this same message. Consider, for instance, the widely distributed cartoon in which a citizen receives a medal from Hitler for his careless act of starting a fire.<sup>54</sup> The lesson was clear: Starting a fire, which destroys the forest, hurts both the forest and the nation.



24. Courtesy of the National Archives and Record Administration.



Indeed, a Wartime Advertising Council memo of November 1943 stated that “the real threat comes not from the forest fire bombings but from those within our borders that are careless or maliciously threaten our forest resources and national safety . . . our campaign should reflect this fact.”<sup>55</sup> But as the target population and the images themselves make clear, not all citizens are equally threatening. The threats to the national body are marked by familiar fields of difference, which further define the boundaries of the nation. The council, working with the Forest Service, helped define these threats to the national body by relying on linkages between two sets of tropes. They helped reinforce a connection between forest and nation that slips back and forth between forest as necessary material for the war effort, on the one hand, and as a symbol of the nation itself on the other.

Moreover, the forms and the tenacity of these tropes helped the Forest Service achieve what had been impossible in its almost fifty previous years of existence and struggle in New Mexico: they helped redefine meanings and understandings of the forest, and they firmly linked regionally contested forest spaces to a national identity. These newly nationalized spaces were ones from which Hispanos and Native Americans were commonly, either explicitly or implicitly, excluded. Neither these messages nor the sentiments and tropes that forests and fire carried with them ended with World War II, nor did the efforts of the people behind them. At the end of World War II, the Wartime Advertising Council was transformed into simply the Advertising Council, and the same people continued their relationship with the Forest Service and the national fire prevention campaign. The campaign was at first concerned with how to transform its message from a wartime campaign to a peacetime one. The council and the Forest Service determined that the threats to the forest and the nation still existed. Though the form of the message had to change radically, the council continued to draw momentum from the wartime agitation surrounding forests and fire, nation and enemy.

The technologies and tropes of war, the internal threats of carelessness and sabotage, the imperative of protecting forest purity for the sake of the nation's health and welfare—all these continue to be means through which forest fires are understood to this day. It would be impossible to understand how these fearful notions of purity and protection are reproduced and maintained so tenaciously without taking a careful look at the nation's central icon of forest fire prevention, Smokey Bear.

## THE BEAR

*The Birth and Popularity of the Bear* | Owing in part to concern that their message was too frightening for children, postwar advertisers wanted to “convey the same message, with the same urgency but in a more digestible manner.”<sup>56</sup> In a memo to his staff in 1947, Belding of the advertising firm Foote, Cone, and Belding (FCB), one of the central architects of the fire prevention campaign, insisted, “Sabotage of the forest is still a serious threat today and we still have an enemy of the forest to conquer . . . it is not from overseas but from both a deviant and uneducated group of fire bugs and the insidiousness of Americans' own carelessness.”<sup>57</sup> Their thoughts turned to the possibility of using Uncle Sam himself as an emblem that tightly linked forest fire prevention with national defense. The government's CFFP and the Advertising Council drew on the talent of Montgomery Flagg—the man who had drawn the original World War I recruitment poster that depicted a stern Uncle Sam pointing to a burning forest in the background with the words “Your Forest, Your Fault, Your Loss”—but after producing one poster, they realized that many people mistook Uncle Sam for the arsonist.<sup>58</sup> Moreover, though Flagg's link to the nation was ideal, Uncle Sam's tie to the forest was not “logical.” It seemed that everyone on the Advertising Council, in the Forest Service, and at FCB agreed that an animal would enable more direct targeting of a young audience, while also appearing to be a more “natural protector of the woods.”<sup>59</sup>

It was agreed that the obvious choice was the fawn Bambi, from Disney's very popular movie of the same name; he had lost his mother to a hunter and barely escaped a human-created forest fire that destroyed his home and plucked the heartstrings of millions of moviegoers. But although Bambi was used in fire prevention posters by the CFFP in 1944 with considerable success, Disney would not release the copyright. It was just as well: Bambi invoked the image of what needed to be protected—vulnerable nature, a very popular trope through which to invoke postwar masculinity—but “he could not stand,” as one member of the CFFP ironically stated, “on his own two feet.”<sup>60</sup> The council wanted instead to feature the actual protector, the agent who did the safekeeping. In short, the council wanted a more “masculine and dominant animal,” “one that you could imagine putting out fires.”<sup>61</sup>

A bear seemed the perfect choice, imbricated as it was in a long symbolic history as a cardinal test of frontier masculinity. As Smokey biographer Clifford Lawter wrote, “A bear was strong . . . the toughest animal in

the forest and, because might makes right, could be a powerful force for fire prevention.<sup>62</sup> Ellen Morrison, another official Smokey biographer, noted, "a bear would look natural on his hind legs and would make a convincing symbol of strength and confidence."<sup>63</sup> Great care was taken, however, to avoid evoking counterproductive reference to other bears. A memo to an artist from the CFFP stipulated that the artist in no way "simulate" either "the bear that symbolizes Russia" or the "teddy bear," since the former was perhaps too strong a (foreign) referent, and the latter simply not strong enough.<sup>64</sup>

A memo to Forest Service chief Lyle Watts from FCB expressed a preference for a bear on the grounds that it had "humanlike" qualities that would appeal to more people. This sort of animal could "be shown putting out a warming fire with a bucket of water, dropping by parachute to a fire, reporting a fire by phone from a lookout, plowing a fire line around a new-made clearing . . . and carrying a rifle like G.I. Joe's."<sup>65</sup> They wanted a forest ranger in bear clothing who would embody the proper behavior of citizens toward the forest and who evoked the image of a male soldier protecting the nation.<sup>66</sup>

The success of the subsequent Smokey Bear campaign was unprecedented. This campaign has so far spanned more than sixty years, during which Smokey has appeared on the covers of more national magazines, on more billboards, and in more advertisements, comic strips, and television and radio spots than almost any other national figure. He has appeared on more lunchboxes, key-chains, shoelaces, lamps, dinnerware, hats, belts, balloons, decals, ties, wristwatches, calendars, and, yes, even ashtrays and matchbooks, than almost any other national symbol.<sup>67</sup> President Eisenhower bestowed awards on him, President Truman signed laws protecting him, President Reagan sang for him, and President Clinton praised him.

Hundreds of the most popular national celebrities have "plugged" him, from the Grateful Dead to Alvin and the Chipmunks, from Aretha Franklin to Sammy Davis Jr. He has been promoted by John Wayne, James Mason, Ella Fitzgerald, Leonard Nimoy, Gregory Peck, Glenn Campbell, Rodney Dangerfield, Rod Serling, Lawrence Welk, George Burns, Jack Benny, and Roy Rogers. He has ceremonially thrown out the first ball at major-league baseball games, been a featured guest at professional football, basketball, hockey, soccer, and road-racing events, and appeared with sports personalities such as Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Reggie Jackson, and dozens more. These figures, among hundreds of other American icons,

have leveraged their popularity to promote Smokey, helping ensure that his image and message travel with theirs to reach into the homes of much of America.

As a result, Smokey has received vast amounts of fan mail, often more than a thousand letters per day. By 1970, applications to become one of Smokey's Junior Forest Rangers were adding to the volume; these letters alone sometimes came in at more than a thousand per day. More than seven million children were enrolled as Smokey's official helpers by 1972, and millions more have since joined, each one crossing his or her heart and pledging "as an American to save and faithfully defend" the forests of this nation.<sup>68</sup>

Smokey even enjoys a law written expressly to protect his image. Museums are dedicated to him; he is depicted on his own postage stamp; he is one of the enormous, full-figure hot air balloons appearing in Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade in midtown Manhattan; and he has been exported to numerous countries around the world, including Costa Rica, France, and Nigeria. The success of the program, and the reach of Smokey's influence on America's understanding of nature and forest, are as extensive as they are profound.

*Bearly Human: Naturalizing National and Federal Authority* | According to the official record, it was on August 9, 1944 that Smokey Bear was created by the artist Albert Staehle for the Forest Service, upon the order of Richard Hammatt, the director of the wartime Cooperative Fire Prevention Campaign, which was working with the Advertising Council. The story is actually much more complicated. Almost sixty people claim to be somehow related to the "birth" of Smokey.<sup>69</sup> Indeed, with the input of so many individuals and the shifting strategies of the advertising campaign, the contemporary Smokey has morphed considerably in the fifty-six years of his existence. Originally, Staehle had drawn the bear according to Hammatt's orders: "nose short, color black or brown, expression appealing, knowledgeable, quizzical, perhaps wearing a hat that typifies the outdoors and the woods."<sup>70</sup> Smokey was first drawn without pants, which raised concerns, as Forest Service public relations officer Bill Bergoffen remembered. "Staehle had drawn a bare bear . . . most people were taken aback at the idea of a naked bear throwing water on a fire."<sup>71</sup> Hammatt told Staehle that he should put some pants on the bear—but, again, the kind that would be appropriate for the woods. Such concerns verify that, from his very beginnings, Smokey was meant to symbolize a human male with com-

mand over nature. Hammatt's explicit intent was to humanize the bear and establish him as an image of benevolent authority. This is not an incidental or insignificant change but the concerted transformation of a bear into a humanized agent of the state. Over time, that authority figure would assume more and more the likeness of a human ranger—while still remaining a bear in the woods, serving to naturalize the role of the ranger and the state in the forests.

In the following sections I will examine this transformation: first, the process of Smokey's humanization and then, his legitimization as an agent of the state. The first image (figure 25) is one of Staehle's original 1944 drawings, in which the bear appears fairly small and unobtrusive, playing the authoritative yet compassionate role of teacher. His looks in many ways resemble those of a playful, unthreatening dog. Though he is referred to in memos as male in this form, his gender is more vague than in later images. He has no teeth or claws to speak of and holds a pointer in one paw as he teaches a young bear about breaking matches. On the chalkboard is a drawing of a hand, fingers testing the end of a burned match to make sure it is cold. Smokey's role here is didactic; he is instructing humans about the proper behavior regarding fire. Although the little bear may appear to be the pupil, Smokey's eye is focused on the viewer of the image, and the hand on the board is clearly human.

Figure 26 shows the campaign's primary poster for 1947. Here, Smokey is more cartoon-like. For the first time, he holds a shovel—the tool that will become his best-known accessory—and he appears strong. He is more humanized than in the last image: his bodily structure is more upright; his paws, though mostly hidden, have fingers for the first time rather than claws; and his eyes are more centered and in the front of his face. He holds the hands of two young cubs, presumably his own, and as a family man asks "folks" to be "extra careful." The focus is almost entirely on the family itself. Barely any forest shows, just enough to let us know that the forest is Smokey's home and that while fire is the danger, it is not present. Smokey stands here as a strong though bumbling, benevolent parental figure, caring for and managing both the forest and his family.

Figure 27 shows Smokey in 1952. Now the forest's enemy is clearly present—a fire burns the woods in the background—and Smokey wears a far sterner look on his face than in previous images. He seems to be reprimanding the viewer as partly or at least potentially responsible for the dark, smoke-filled skies and the forest fire still blazing in the background. Smokey is even more human here, with clearly defined fingers on a hand



This shameful waste  
**WEAKENS AMERICA!**



Remember—Only you can  
**PREVENT FOREST FIRES!**

## A FOREST RANGER'S DUTIES



that is grasping his shovel as well as pointing at the fire. His facial features have become still more anthropomorphic; his nose is much shorter and more humanized, and he has developed a human's lower lip and eyebrows. Most important, he has assumed a more authoritative role as forest protector.

In these past images Smokey becomes not just a bear or a symbol of fire prevention but a humanized caricature of an actual forest ranger. Smokey is simultaneously a bear, the "natural" resident of the woods, and a ranger, the guardian of the woods. He straddles the line between society and nature and, in so doing, naturalizes the role of the ranger as benevolent, paternal protector of the nation's forests. Over time, the role has broadened beyond mere fire prevention. In comic strips, Smokey is shown not just scoping distant fires from a lookout tower, but fighting poachers, spraying for insects, marking trees for lumber sales, greeting tourists, driving a jeep, caring for a ranger cabin, and fighting off mountain lions (figure 28). Through such depictions, Smokey helped to naturalize the state as the legitimate and authoritative owner and caretaker of the nation's public forests and, by extension, helped to undermine the legitimacy of alternative land claims, a topic I will return to later.

It is worth noting here that Smokey was quite unlike the early heroic images used in the fire prevention campaign, such as the young white male wielding an ax to defend the human world against a wild nature, as in figure 21. The bear's human traits, however, made his actions comprehensible in a similar but more insidious fashion. In the Smokey campaign, no evil enemy is explicitly invoked, and only occasionally is indirect reference made to an internal saboteur who must be rooted out for the survival of the nation. Yet Smokey's image emerged from the crucible of fears generated by World War II about the vulnerability of the nation and the purity of nature. Smokey's role, like that of other explicit or implicit protectors of the forest, is still to defend against rogue fires and careless or deviant behaviors. The fears that helped define the relationship between forest and fire in particularly nationalistic terms went on to help create the relationship between citizen and forest that continues to haunt contemporary understandings of national forests. This specter helps make the forest a central battleground for exclusionary nationalism.

## EL OSO HUMOSO: NEW MEXICO'S NATIVE BEAR

We would really like to work more for the [Hispanos] up here, but our hands are tied. . . . We must manage these forests for the entire nation, for the public good.—Bill Armstrong, U.S. Forest Service

Smokey is as American as apple pie, as central to New Mexico as green chili. He has come to be more than a symbol of fire prevention; he has become a symbol of truth, integrity, the forest, the Service and, most of all, the nation.—William Hurst, former Southwest regional director, U.S. Forest Service

*The “True Story” of Smokey Bear* | Smokey Bear, like Jesus, Madonna, and genetically modified corn, has multiple origin stories. The official record—what the Forest Service calls the “true story” of Smokey—is silent about the Wartime Advertising Council, the Department of Defense, and World War II anxieties. According to this official record, Smokey emerged in May 1950 from a major forest fire in the Lincoln National Forest, near the small town of Capitan, New Mexico. Note the date, for it turns out that Smokey’s birth as an advertising icon in 1944 predates his discovery as a newborn cub in the forests of New Mexico by six years, making him arguably the most famous simulacrum—his representation predates his material self—in the nation’s history. Dates, it would appear, need not get in the way of official history. The existence of two bears filling the same iconic paws has led both to uneasy tensions and to telling contradictions.

At that fateful New Mexican fire, a small, badly burned bear cub was found clinging to a burnt tree stump by some of the firefighters battling the blaze.<sup>72</sup> A member of the fire crew passed him off to Roy Bell, a U.S. Fish and Game warden and pilot who, while flying the bear cub away for medical attention, was struck by the potential connection of this bear to the preexisting bear campaign. The Forest Service jumped at the public relations possibilities and after extended discussions it was decided that if he was to represent the nation’s forests, he should reside in the nation’s capital, at the Washington National Zoo. His relocation was turned into a publicity tour, in which the little cub was paraded through six major cities across the country, drawing thousands of people to see him. When the small plane bearing Smokey arrived in Washington, President Truman granted permission for it to pass over the White House. Washington newspapers reported that twenty-seven commercial planes were delayed to accommodate Smokey’s arrival. Thousands of spectators came out in a downpour to meet him. The next day, thousands more showed up for his

official welcoming ceremony, including congressmen and cabinet officials as well as the heads of the National Park and Fish and Game departments and the chief of the Forest Service.<sup>73</sup> After the initial ceremonies, the black bear from New Mexico was visited by hundreds of thousands of people in a year, making this model of forest citizenship one of the greatest attractions of the zoo for many years.

Ironically, many people, including the ranger who cared for Smokey, quietly admitted “that bear was mean as hell” and had a “nasty aversion to being petted, which frustrated everyone.” The ranger even called the cub “a real little son of a bitch.”<sup>74</sup> Throughout his life, the living Smokey was, in fact, a loner, and his hostile temperament constantly embarrassed his handlers and threatened to distort the image that he was ostensibly exemplifying. In fact, the slippage between representation and material bear continued to create a serious crisis for the Advertising Council and the Forest Service when the “nature” of the bear did not compel him to behave as he ought. His public persona elevated this nasty-tempered, impudent bear with a burned butt to the level of a national icon, while at the same time making a national symbol undeniably “real.” However, the disjuncture between the bear from New Mexico and the bear from the Advertising Council made clear the difficulties in the humanization of the material bear and the possibilities of reifying forms of difference through their representation in a “natural” bear.

Remarkably, the Advertising Council’s public relations campaign persisted, managing to portray him as a cross between a teddy bear and a benevolent forest ranger, hidden under the fur of an authentic bear. Every aspect of the New Mexican bear’s life was set up to mirror the life of a human, the better to link him with the anthropomorphic symbol of the bear in the advertising campaign. The first major task was to procure a “wife” for Smokey. In 1962, in an unsurprising but clearly hetero-normative effort, Goldie was found. She was an American black bear, like Smokey, with gold-colored fur. Like Smokey’s initial arrival, the “marriage” garnered a great deal of press; zoo officials presented Goldie with a wedding ring; and numerous jokes, stories, and images of Smokey as a family man were spread across the country. For example, the Washington *Sunday Star* ran an article entitled “Petite Young Thing Due Here to Meet Her Mate.”<sup>75</sup> It read, “A story-book romance will come to pass next week when Goldie, a 100-pound petite tawny blond with a gentle, loving nature, will fly in from New York to meet her life’s mate for the first time.”<sup>76</sup> And *The Milwaukee Journal* lamented, “I guess this puts an end to Smokey’s bachelor life as a

rover. Especially when the zoo makes the happy announcement, at the end of the next breeding season, that his cubs runneth over."<sup>77</sup>

But "nature" did not take its course. Smokey proved to be unable to perform his marital duties.<sup>78</sup> The Forest Service and the zoo worked hard to conceal this fact, but eventually it was leaked that Smokey—the masculine representative of nature and mighty American nationalism—was in fact impotent.<sup>79</sup> This discovery generated endless secret memos and cover-ups to try to spin the situation. Any jokes about Smokey's condition angered many in the Forest Service, and they worried that this kind of characterization would detract from Smokey's image as a (properly masculine) guardian of the forests. In a carefully orchestrated effort, Smokey's zoo-keeper and the Forest Service eventually explained away his impotence, stressing that "Smokey was so busy trying to stop forest fires that he did not have any time for sex."<sup>80</sup> Of course, the actual Smokey never left his cage. Smokey the symbol did the firefighting for him.

However, one problem persisted. If Smokey were to die without procreating with Goldie, it wouldn't be merely his lineage that would expire—so might the symbol. Fearful of this, the Forest Service and the National Zoo went about finding an heir: "Little Smokey." They went to great pains to find another bear from the same national forest in New Mexico so that Little Smokey would more accurately fit the origin story of Smokey Sr. Again, a great deal of press was marshaled to publicize Smokey as a father. The process in the zoo was mimicked in the advertising campaign, with Smokey Sr. passing his hat and shovel to the new Little Smokey. The Forest Service mounted a campaign to create a new cage for the new bear, complete with a ranger's log cabin as Smokey's den, an interstitial space that would hold Smokey between a nature-culture binary. At the last minute, however, the log cabin plans were scrapped because of an appropriations problem in Congress and inadequate space for the "ranger station" at the zoo. But attempts to humanize the New Mexico bear paralleled the humanization of the symbol, continuing nearly to Smokey Sr.'s death.

On July 21, 1976, Smokey died at the National Zoo. The next day, he was shipped back to New Mexico for burial. His death was a major news story across the country and tens of thousands of letters poured in, expressing sadness, condolences, and advice about how to best honor his passing. The burial process became even more complicated when rumors circulated about a plot by animal traffickers to hijack Smokey's corpse and cut off his claws for sale as trophies.<sup>81</sup>

Smokey's death presented more than just a daunting logistical chal-

lenge for the Forest Service and the zoo; it offered a serious public relations challenge to Foote, Cone and Belding and the Advertising Council, both of which managed his image. Most notably, the Advertising Council had to work hard for almost a decade to undo in the minds of many Americans the belief that Smokey's death meant the end of his life as a symbol. This entailed a large infusion of money into the campaign surrounding Little Smokey as heir to Smokey Sr. and a new set of Smokey ads. By this time, though, the bear from New Mexico had done the most important part of the work already: he had created a "true" origin story for a symbolic bear, making him "real"—whether dead or alive—to much of the nation.

Indeed, the imagined community of "the nation" is depicted implicitly within the Smokey campaign, with specific racial, gender, and class segments of society presumed to stand in for the common interests of the larger nation. As a national symbol, Smokey thus nationalized prescribed behaviors by policing certain conduct within the forest. Even more powerfully, however, Smokey came to embody the normative model citizen. He thus helped mold the proper relationship between American citizen and subject and reproduced boundaries of the national populace that excluded many groups or individuals or, at the very least, left open the question of whether and to what extent they were included.<sup>82</sup>

In public service announcements that the Advertising Council made for television during the 1970s and 1980s, for example, associations are made between Smokey, the nation, and the forest. This series not only won numerous advertising awards and was seen by millions of people across the country but was credited with redefining the standards for public service advertising.<sup>83</sup> One of the most popular award-winning television ads starts with the sound of a patriotic drum roll and then shifts to a somber version of the "Star Spangled Banner" playing in the background as historic paintings and images of the Liberty Tree and other symbols mentioned below are shown on the screen. In the voice-over, an official-sounding baritone intones:

The first stirrings of America's freedom began under the Liberty Tree. The Pine Tree shilling was our first coin, George Washington's cherry tree our first tall tale. Names like "Old Hickory" and "Abe the rail splitter" just naturally seem to fit our country's giants. Our legends—Johnny Appleseed, Paul Bunyan, Davy Crockett—come from the forest. We built our churches, our homes, our tools, our rifles, our toys, our

books—all from trees. We traveled West on wooden wagons and canoes, and blazed a path to the ocean on wooden ties. America and America's forest have grown up together. So please be careful with fire, because a country without its forest is a country without a future.

The closing image is of Smokey next to a "Liberty Tree" with the word *PLEASE* beneath him.<sup>84</sup>

The history invoked in this ad clearly carries a particular racialized notion of the nation, one that does not match the experience of ex-slaves, Chinese laborers, or Hispanos of the Southwest, let alone Native Americans. Instead, such a construction defines the nation and the nation's forests as part of the narrow origin story of white nationalism. This omission of nonwhite laborers is ironic because the long histories of use patterns involving nonwhite laborers, from fire to labor practices, have been central in shaping these forests, in addition to the fact that the Forest Service worked hard for years to eradicate bears from the forests of New Mexico.<sup>85</sup> That aside, what is important here is that this narrowly defined and racialized nationalist account is written into and onto the meaning of the national forest and directly associates this history with its most famous protector, Smokey Bear.

More recently, these messages of nationalism are perpetuated in numerous ads. Take for example the predominant Smokey ad of the 1990s (figure 29). The image directly evokes the famous "Uncle Sam Wants You" recruiting poster: Smokey's gaze is direct as he points a finger directly at the viewer. Like the early pre-Smokey posters, it maintains a nationalist sentiment message, but unlike many of them this image does not depict an enemy. The poster assumes nationalism and assumes the viewer's patriotic responsiveness. It simply reads: "Only You." The rest is understood, already internalized by the ad-consuming public. This is testimony to the established nationalist history of the Smokey campaign. Even more than the earlier image of the bear, this Smokey is portrayed as even more of a human character than his earlier images. His facial features, especially his eyes, eyelashes, lips, hands, and teeth, are like those of humans. In this red-white-and-blue-framed poster, Smokey is directly linked to Uncle Sam and occupies the role of national recruiter working for the good of forest fire prevention and for the good of the nation.

The Advertising Council and the CFFP did not simply reflect an understanding of race and nation. Through their efforts, understandings of race and nature have been etched into understandings of the forest and of



29, 30. Courtesy of the National Archives and Record Administration.

subjects as members, or not, of the imagined “public.” In this way, efforts to protect the *national* forest for the *public* good become implicitly conditional on a particularly narrow definition of nationalism.

Another compelling image from the Advertising Council’s national campaign that reinforces this exclusionary racialized nationalism shows Smokey with the Boy Scouts (figure 30). Four larger-than-life figures march above, and tower over, a forest and stream. The image shows the evolution of a white boy in the scouting hierarchy, beginning as a Cub Scout and progressing through the different stages (Cub Scout, Boy Scout, Eagle Scout) until he grows into a young man. Smokey’s placement at the end of this teleology gives the impression that Smokey is part of this evolution from happy young white boy to strong, “manly” bear. The implied evolution links the traits of the scouts—including that of whiteness—directly to Smokey. Another telling image, again from the Advertising Council, shows a white man in a suit holding up a facemask of Smokey (figure 31). The image is meant to show that Smokey is made up of “all of us,” according to the Advertising Council. It seems powerfully clear, however, that the “us” that is merely assumed in other images but is explicit here is a white-collar male.<sup>86</sup>

In these culturally familiar roles, as nature’s lighthearted instructor, family patriarch, devoted caregiver, or patriotic protector, Smokey has thus helped make forests and the practices of federal forest ownership intelligible. He speaks with great authority about the forest because he comes from it, simultaneously occupying the roles of model citizen, Forest Service official, and natural member of a forest community. He becomes the model American citizen: a hard-working white family man who is law-abiding and works for the current and future well-being of the defenseless and mute forest—as well as, on occasion, for his untainted children. Smokey Bear’s history as the product of an authentic place of nature, the wild forests of New Mexico, erases Smokey the symbol’s history as the product of racist fears, the communist “other,” or the interests of capitalist accumulation. Love of Smokey is, in fact, a form of national nepotism; the favoring of a central cultural imagination of the nation; to doubt him is to doubt both nature and the American nationalism for which he stands.

Moreover, the disjuncture between the bear from New Mexico and the bear from the War Advertising Council illustrates both the difficulties in the humanization of the material bear and the possibilities of reifying forms of difference through their representation in a “natural” bear. It illustrates that social difference, often defined in relationship to the



31. Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration.



biophysical, can travel beyond the biological signifier (such as hair, skin, and bone, and so on) into or onto objects or landscapes far from their original signifiers. In the case of Smokey, a brown bear can have a social history of white nationalism that is inextricably linked to his body and message. Central to this argument is that even while racism is a lived, material fact, racial difference itself does not adhere solely to “biology” of the body but can be and often is written beyond the body itself as a type of “floating signifier.” Thus, many objects or creations, from DNA strands to particular forms of music, can convey and reproduce racialized formations. In the case of Smokey, the racialized meanings of whiteness can be embedded in and move from a cartoon bear to a furry brown bear from New Mexico to the nation’s forests.<sup>87</sup> As a result, these objects, landscapes, and bodies can both reproduce forms of difference and be animated sites of struggle. In particular, the material bear from New Mexico helped to erase the social and political history of the Advertising Council bear as well as to make natural the social ideas of race and nation that were imbedded within the latter bear’s past.

But the relationship between these two bears is not just a symbiotic one in which Smokey from the World War II Advertising Council becomes “real” and the bear from New Mexico becomes a national icon. A volatile instability between the two bear stories constantly threatens the naturalness of both of these bears. The bear from New Mexico is not in fact the “real” bear but rather is himself the product of a different bundle of history, politics, and meanings of what a “natural bear” should be. The result is a tense relationship that exposes the politics of nature in both bears. The friction arises when the nature of the humanized bear does not match the nature of the “real” bear, or when the “real” bear fails to perform as a “natural” bear should.

*Colonial Disposessions: “For the Public Good”* | It is worth returning again to New Mexico at this point because New Mexico continues to be the irritating itch in the naturalized national politics of Smokey and because the region highlights the ways in which differing national histories and divergent lived practices can trouble the rigid boundaries between the politics of nature and difference. If we are to take seriously the animosity of Jerry Fuentes and others toward Smokey, then it is essential to understand the history and politics of northern New Mexico that make the exclusionary racialized national politics of Smokey crystal clear. These histories of dispossession, exploitation, and exclusion by the Forest Ser-

vice combine with the nationalism of Smokey to make him a central target of antagonism and contestations. While the nationalism embodied in Smokey and his message are not in any simple way the cause of land loss or the history of violent exclusion, Smokey has helped create an image and understanding of the national forest that excludes those who are beyond the bounds of the narrowly defined national public.<sup>88</sup>

As the Smokey campaign demonstrates, this fiction obscures ways in which “the public” and the nation are commonly conceived of and divided in racial and class terms in lived daily practices. By abstracting its constituency and taking advantage of the marginal position of Hispanos within the body of the nation, the Forest Service has been able to grant fewer privileges than ever to those Hispanos living in proximity to the forest resources in northern New Mexico that so long sustained them.<sup>89</sup> This history of exclusion has deep roots in the Southwest, roots that are much more tangled than that of fire alone. The tensions of racist nationalism were most clearly manifest in the debates over the Mexican-American War. In 1846, for instance, the *American Whig Review* summarized manifest destiny in explaining America’s rationale for going to war over Mexico: “Mexico was poor, distracted, in anarchy, and almost in ruins—what could she do to stay the hands of power, to impede the march of greatness? We are Anglo-Saxon Americans; it was our destiny to possess and to rule the continent—we were bound to it! We were a chosen people, and this was our allotted inheritance, and we must drive out all other nations before us!”<sup>90</sup>

Others were wary of the social effects of incorporating an “inferior race” into the national bloodlines. The Vermont representative Jacob Collier proclaimed in 1845, “We should destroy our own nationality by such an act. We shall cease to be the Saxon Americanized.”<sup>91</sup> Moreover, as Senator Calhoun explained, the U.S. government had never dreamed of incorporating anything but the Caucasian race. As he clearly stated in Congress in 1845, “Ours, Sir, is the government of a white race.” He added that none but the white race had been “found equal to the establishment of free popular government.”<sup>92</sup>

These sentiments presaged similar arguments about statehood for New Mexico in the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth. Most of the opposition to statehood had decidedly racist overtones, resonating in questions about the Hispano population’s worthiness to be incorporated and naturalized into the body of the nation.<sup>93</sup> Critics cited the economic burdens that would result from incorporating such a group of unproduc-

tive people—so many of whom had potentially questionable national allegiances. In the end, it was upper-class New Mexicans, long considered “white,” or Spanish-European, who caused New Mexico’s citizens to be taken seriously.<sup>94</sup> In 1912, New Mexico became the last state within the contiguous United States to be incorporated into the union. But statehood did little to unsettle rigid connections between race and nation in the minds of many Americans. As the Depression brought fewer and lower-paying jobs, it exacerbated racial tensions. Growing anger over labor migrations gave rise to large deportation schemes that “repatriated” thousands of Mexicans.<sup>95</sup> It was a confusing time for race and nationalism. This growing confusion may help explain why in 1930 the U.S. Census Bureau officially changed “Mexican” from its prior status as a nationality to its new status as a race.<sup>96</sup> In any case, Hispanos from New Mexico increasingly found themselves considered to be, and treated as, aliens.

I frequently heard this strong feeling of exclusion expressed in the context of the above-average enlistment and casualty rates among New Mexicans serving as U.S. soldiers from World War I on. “We are good enough citizens to be sent to war but not good enough to be treated as citizens.”<sup>97</sup> Or: “They will let us fight and die for the country, but they will not let us graze a cow or collect firewood on the national forest.”<sup>98</sup> At issue are not merely questions of equity or even national responsibility. Hispanos are being referred to as a separate collective body even though they are clearly part of the nation. This sentiment is echoed by whites as well. A scientist I interviewed after a meeting of the Los Alamos chapter of the Sierra Club put it this way: “Hispanos of northern New Mexico are sort of a nation within a nation; they are part of the country, but they seem out of place. . . . When you go from Santa Fe to Truchas, Peñasco, or Mora you feel like you are entering another country.”<sup>99</sup>

In fact, marginalization of Hispanos in the imagined national community of the United States has been directly related to counter-nationalism throughout the region. Social movements before and especially during the 1960s turned their allegiance to Mexico as a protest of exclusionary and racist policies in the United States.<sup>100</sup> In addition, many New Mexican activists continue to argue that the United States has been a relatively new national player in New Mexico. For four hundred of the last five hundred years, the territory and its citizens have existed under the banners of the Spanish and Mexican nations.

Reies López Tijerina and other Chicano activists fostered this Mexican nationalist sentiment. They even sent members of Alianza Federal de las

Mercedes (Federal Alliance of Land Grants) to Mexico to ask the Mexican government to form an official alliance with them to protest America’s failure to uphold the agreements in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Tijerina and others consistently voiced allegiance to Mexico and Mexican nationalism, using the Mexican national flag widely in their campaigns, posters, and headquarters.<sup>101</sup> Despite this show of nationalism, the Mexican government did not intercede on behalf of the group and the Alianza took matters into its own hands, engaging in many acts that challenged the Forest Service’s claims to their land.<sup>102</sup>

Most notable was the 1966 takeover of the campground at Echo Creek Amphitheater in the Carson National Forest (described in chapter 1), in which hundreds of the members of the organization drove through a Forest Service roadblock and seized the property.<sup>103</sup> During this event and the famous violent takeover of the Tierra Amarilla Courthouse in northern New Mexico by the same group, the articulation of an alternative nationalism and the use of nationalist revolutionary heroes such as Emilio Zapata and Pancho Villa were central to contemporary struggles.<sup>104</sup> These images and attitudes, though much less prominent today, continue to be symbols of a radical nationalism that pervades leftist Chicano politics, in New Mexico and across the Southwest.

The second most visible nationalist gesture was the creation of the Chicano homeland of Aztlán within the southwestern United States. The now-famous “Plan Espiritual de Aztlán” [Spiritual Plan of Aztlán] defined the territory of the Southwest as the historic Chicano homeland and laid out principles of *la Raza* that resonated with earlier formations of racial unity.<sup>105</sup> The plan took a separatist position because of the “brutal ‘gringo’ invasion of our territories” and asserted:

We the Chicano inhabitants and civilizers of the northern land of Aztlán, from whence came our forefathers, reclaim the land of their birth and consecrating the determination of our people declare that . . . Aztlán belongs to those who plant the seeds, water the fields, and gather the crops, and not the foreign Europeans. . . . We declare the Independence of our mestizo Nation. We are a Bronze people with a Bronze Culture. . . . We are a nation. We are a union of free pueblos, we are Aztlán.<sup>106</sup>

The powerful geographical imagery of Chicano nationalism has served as a spatially unifying concept of the Chicano movement, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>107</sup> The leaders of the Chicano *movimiento* drew on

the conceptualization of Aztlán to redefine their roots in the Southwest and create an alternative national history, one that underscored their *mestizo*, or mixed Native American and Spanish, origins. The emphasis was on pride in the *mestizo* heritage of *la Raza* and its deeply rooted, pre-Mexican and pre-American history in the Southwest.

These alternative forms of nationalism resonated powerfully with the already distinct regionalism of northern New Mexico. In fact, many in *el movimiento* felt that northern New Mexico was *el corazón de Aztlán*—the heart of Aztlán—especially after the Tierra Amarilla Courthouse raid and the takeover and occupation of the Echo Creek Amphitheater.<sup>108</sup>

During this time, regional newspapers such as *El Grito del Norte* (The Northern Call) carried anti-Smokey images and cartoons (figure 32). One such cartoon depicts Smokey as a clueless Forest Service law enforcement officer with a Texas accent. The Texas accent is significant, as it draws on both the deep resentment of Texans, who vacationed and bought land in northern New Mexico, and the powerful association within the Chicano movement of Texas rangers, who were responsible for the torture and lynching of hundreds of Mexicans in the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth.<sup>109</sup> In many ways it is the pictorial representation of Fuentes's description of Smokey as a white racist pig, for the bear is associated with whiteness and the racist history of Texas rangers, and he is clearly "with" the state—or, in Fuentes's words, a pig. If we take brown and white to be not just skin colors but actually a collection of knowledge—a group of floating signifiers assembled on the skin—then this racialized knowledge can be assembled separately from skin itself. As Moises Morales, an activist with *La Raza Unida*, stated, Smokey has been viewed in New Mexico as both "a symbol of U.S. colonialism" and one of "white oppression."<sup>110</sup> Morales added, "Smokey wants to keep the forest green not for us or our animals or our fuelwood but for Duke City [Lumber Company] and the fucking tourists."<sup>111</sup>

Many of the images, behaviors, and interests of this brown bear were recognizable as the images, behaviors, and interests of white humans and, through these markers and codes, he became unequivocally understood as white. In addition, Smokey represents more than just himself. As a national symbol representing the forests and the public, he fuses formations of race with conceptions of nation that conflict directly with older notions of Aztlán and Mexico as well as a less formal collective community in contemporary Chicano politics.

The Forest Service tried to address Smokey's lack of popularity in New



32. Courtesy of Center for Southwest Research, University of New Mexico.

Mexico by creating an "*el Oso Humoso*" (Spanish for Smokey Bear) campaign, targeted at the Southwest in general and northern New Mexico in particular. They translated the "True Story of Smokey the Bear" into the "*La Verdadera Historia de Smokey*." They regularly hung signs about Smokey in Spanish rather than in English. And, in one of the most prominent depictions of *el Oso Humoso*, the Forest Service attempted to recast Smokey as a New Mexican Hispanic by depicting him in a sombrero and blanket (figure 33). Ironically, that effort only reinforced the notion that Smokey is not Hispanic, evoking a visual stereotype of Mexicans, not New Mexicans. No one in New Mexico wears such clothing or has any personal association with these images. People in New Mexico often invoked the image of *el Oso Humoso* in a mocking fashion in our discussions and used it as an example of the Forest Service's utter ignorance about northern New Mexico. They also pointed out, with great irony, that the U.S. Forest Service, unbeknownst to itself, was promoting Mexican nationalism within the United States.<sup>112</sup> In so doing they challenged the construction of a particular form of Hispanic identity in the Southwest and refused to allow a form of Mexican nationalism to be captured and used by the U.S. Forest Service.

Hispano residents in New Mexico still widely believe that the Forest Service has stolen land from the people of the region, continually favored outsiders (largely whites) for logging permits and for the best grazing permits, and generally abused forest lands. As Gene Onken, a forest ranger on the Santa Fe National Forest, told me, "No matter what we [the Forest Service] do, we cannot seem to get them [Hispanos] to support our forest initiatives, even when they are designed for their benefit. . . . The problem is they refuse to understand that we have to manage this land for the public

# ¡Bienvenidos!



¡Mis Amigos, bienvenidos a las Florestas Nacionales del Suroeste. Son suyos para gozar, mantener limpios, y para defender de los incendios!

Les agradezco sus asistencia

OSO HUMOSO \*



\* Welcome.  
My friends, welcome to the Southwestern National Forests. They are yours to enjoy, keep clean, and protect from forest fires!  
Thanks for your help.

SMOKEY BEAR

33. Courtesy of the National Archives and Record Administration.

good—for the old lady in Chicago and for the businessman in California and the farmer in Iowa—even if it means limiting their use of the land.”<sup>113</sup>

“Moreover,” he added later, “I am not sure [the conflict] has anything directly to do with the forest any more. I think people are fighting about something else.”<sup>114</sup> In fact, the most radical political movement in northern New Mexico throughout the 1990s centered on forest struggles: Forest Service buildings were burned and bombed; rangers were shot at; and environmentalists who advocated protecting the “nation’s wilderness areas” from locals were hung in effigy. Max Córdova, the former president of the Truchas Land Grant, explained the violence by saying, “They [the Forest Service] have taken our lands, doused them with DDT, and clear-cut them. They cleared thousands of acres of forest land with bulldozers to create pastures, often for outsiders, and they have then turned around and told small ranchers and community foresters that we cannot have the scraps that they have thrown us. . . . What is most annoying,” he added, “is they are never responsible. Their taking and misuse of the land is always for the good of someone else.”<sup>115</sup>

Thus, Smokey has become the consummate representative of white colonial paternalism, unjust land dispossession, and state authority, and as such, the target of hatred for many northern New Mexicans. The animosity toward Smokey in this context is not surprising, because he represents both an exclusionary nationalism and an institution that is directly implicated in the dispossession and exclusion of people from the land. There is broad sentiment that, as Alfredo Padilla put it, “Smokey [though officially born in New Mexico] is not from here and he does not belong in our forests.”<sup>116</sup>

## CONCLUSION

At once human and animal, Smokey stands at the intersection, directing and policing the traffic between nature and culture. It is this ability to cross symbolic and material lines—and, even more important, to occupy both nature and culture—that makes Smokey such a powerful icon. Part human, part animal, he makes nature understandable through freighted cultural formations of race, gender, and nation, and in so doing naturalizes them and depoliticizes them. In almost all representations of Smokey produced by the Forest Service and the Advertising Council, Smokey appears in ways that show him as naturally belonging in the woods. However, it is important to note that his position is not completely within

nature; instead, he appears as gatekeeper, guardian, and caretaker, standing at the boundary between the human world and the world of the forest.<sup>117</sup> From this privileged position, Smokey is able to perform the dual gesture of appropriating nature in the production of culture while simultaneously naturalizing cultural forms of racism and nationalism.<sup>118</sup>

A closer exploration of Smokey demonstrates what is possible when we treat nature as more than an inert set of environmental objects over which struggles occur, but rather as a dense terrain of political struggle in which meanings, histories, and difference themselves are made and reproduced.<sup>119</sup> Counter-readings and contested ideas about Smokey Bear are about much more than Forest Service fire policy; they are also an important means through which race relations are negotiated, national boundaries delineated, and histories of violent exclusion remembered and challenged. I am not arguing that the "real issue" underlying forest policy is race or nation, but rather that forest policy and practices have become inseparably intertwined with the reproduction of these forms of difference. Through the unevenness and unsettled relationships between the material and symbolic formations of Smokey and in the specificities of histories and practices through which Smokey was produced and remade, the unstable relationship of nature and difference is made apparent. This was difficult not just for the Forest Service and others who defined Smokey but also for Hispanos who understood the material manifestations of these representations in everyday life. By tracing these movements, and tensions, between nature and difference, I have tried not only to demonstrate how nature serves as universal archetype and cultural repository for the formation and reproduction of landscapes of exclusion and sites of social differences, but also to point to the political possibilities of remaking nature.

It is important to uncouple these forms of social difference from biology and to de-essentialize the links between tendencies, traits, behaviors, and forms of difference. This approach allows us to conceive of race as written onto sites beyond "hair, skin and bone," opening a broader domain of racial politics for analysis and struggle.<sup>120</sup>

I have tried to highlight ways in which an imagined national community of the United States has been forged, in part, both within and through nature. Nationalism is not delineated by a predefined community clearly bounded by a territory, but rather by changing boundaries of imagined communities that are continually expressed, taught, and reproduced. Even though nature has been a central site of a particularly potent and exclu-

sionary idea of U.S. nationalism—from the work of Frederick Jackson Turner to the creation of the national parks—the connections between nature and nation and the historical and contemporary material effects of these exclusionary couplings continue to go largely unexplored.

National boundaries within a territory are policed, communicated, reproduced, and fiercely contested in numerous ways, but many of these boundaries are seldom examined as serious domains of the politics of difference. The nation's beloved bear, his troubling origins, and his continued expression of the nation in selective and exclusive ways reveal the way nature works as a site through which forms of race and nationalism are remade in the present. Smokey is not the only means through which narrow notions of nationalism were constructed in New Mexico, nor is the animosity toward the Forest Service simply due to the racialized formation of this bear. Rather, the material history of Forest Service land use practices and acquisition is inseparably tied to a cultural logic of exclusionary nationalism and racially violent practices and policies of forest use that Smokey has not merely represented but also has helped form and reproduce.<sup>121</sup> By treating race and nation as assemblages of knowledge, able to adhere to different geographical and discursive sites—and formed and contested in everyday practices—it is possible to see how struggles over a forest can incite such passion and antagonism, and how, indeed, a seemingly benevolent brown bear can become a white racist pig.

## NOTES

### PREFACE

- 1 Reno 1999, 1. The information on Chimayó was reported by Lauren Reichelt, the health coordinator of Rio Arriba County, in an interview with the author, Española, N.M., Oct. 7, 2000.
- 2 Lori Osterstock, phone conversation with the author, Española, N.M., July 16, 1998; James Brooke 1998.
- 3 Wilson 1997.
- 4 *Vigas* are debarked ceiling beams that are common in the Southwest; *latillas* are small branches of shaved wood that are placed above the *vigas* to hold up the roof.
- 5 Fred Swetnam, interview with the author, Santa Fe, N.M., Oct. 3, 2000.
- 6 Sam Hitt, interview with the author, Santa Fe, N.M., Oct. 3, 1999.
- 7 Salomon Martínez, interview with the author, Córdova, N.M., Oct. 6, 1999.
- 8 Reichelt, interview.

- 9 See, for example, Glendinning 2005.
- 10 In particular, these connections include the ways in which forms of nature are written into and travel between degraded bodies and endangered forests and the ways in which both assign their intrinsic value and confirm their need for management and improvement.

#### INTRODUCTION

- 1 USDA Forest Service 1989.
- 2 Forrest 1989; Nostrand 1992.
- 3 Reported by Lauren Reichelt in an interview with the author, Española, N.M., Oct. 7, 2000.
- 4 There is a long history of arguments and extensive debate in the academic literature on “the culture of poverty,” which I will not rehearse here. For a few different perspectives, see Goode and Eames 1996; Harvey and Reed 1996; and O. Lewis 1966.
- 5 It turned out that the ban was primarily on commercial logging. (The injunction also halted small thinning sales and partially restricted fuelwood gathering: collecting of “dead and down” trees was prohibited in owl habitat and streamside zones.) However, the Forest Service originally interpreted the ban as including firewood. In fact, the Carson National Forest sent out letters to communities stating that the ban prohibited firewood collection. While it turned out that this was not true, the injunction continued to have the effect of a de facto ban on firewood collection.
- 6 Max Córdova, conversation with the author, Truchas, N.M., July 26, 1997.
- 7 Kutsche and Van Ness 1981; Lecompte 1985; Nostrand 1992; deBuys 1985; USDA Forest Service 1922.
- 8 Max Córdova, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., Oct. 10, 1999.
- 9 This is my own rough estimation based on conversations with Max and other members of the land grant. My attempt to estimate this is complicated by the fact that the survey may have mistakenly included a large portion of the Pueblo Quemado commons.
- 10 Jessie Romero, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., Nov. 8, 1999.
- 11 I use the terms *Chicano*, *Hispano*, *Hispanic*, and *Spanish American* at different points throughout the book. All of these terms are used to describe people from northern New Mexico, either by the people themselves or by outsiders. Each of these terms is used by different people in different contexts. To limit my descriptive use to one term would be both politically unacceptable and ethnographically anemic. I have matched the context of the usage to the context of the material I am writing. There are no exact rules for the usage of each of these terms; however, *Chicano* tends to be associated more with political activism and broader race-based social movements such as La Raza. *Mestizo* literally means *mixed* and refers to mixed-

- blood people, usually part Native American and part Hispano; its usage is much more common today, especially as claims to native status become more central to many Hispanos. *Hispanic* tends to be used by outsiders to describe people of northern New Mexico—the term was created in the 1930s by the U.S. government for census-taking purposes. As such, to many activists it is politically unacceptable. Slightly more acceptable, and the most commonly used descriptor in the region, is the Spanish version of *Hispanic*—*Hispano*. *Spanish American* is also widely used, particularly in circumstances where people wish to differentiate themselves from Mexican nationals. When the context is not central to the word choice, I use *Hispano*, since it is the most commonly used descriptor in the region.
- 12 Ortiz 1980; Nabokov 1970.
- 13 J. Romero, interview, Nov. 8, 1999.
- 14 Max Córdova, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., Oct. 10, 1999.
- 15 Ike DeVargas, interview with the author, Española, N.M., Nov. 13, 1999.
- 16 Jerry Fuentes, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., Sept. 13, 1999.
- 17 Pinchot [1947] 1987, 36, 49.
- 18 Max Córdova, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., June 7, 1999.
- 19 Max Córdova, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., June 18, 1999.
- 20 See Peters 1921. Allen Peters’s journal entry is similar to comments made by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century explorers in Africa, Asia, and South America—and yet colonial parallels are rarely made between the history of these regions and the history of the U.S. Southwest. For a very interesting discussion on colonialism and the United States, see Stoler 2001.
- 21 See Hardin 1968 for the original concept. See two pieces on grazing—deBuys 1985 (226–30) and Carlson 1990 (114) for the application of the principle to New Mexico.
- 22 There is a great deal of debate about livestock barons in New Mexico, in particular about Frank Bond, who was the largest owner of sheep in the area. Part of the confusion stems from the fact that Bond would get local herders to acquire permits for sheep for themselves, then Bond would hire the herders—because he was only permitted to hold a limited number of public land grazing permits at one time—to graze his sheep on their permits. Since he controlled the transport, and small herds were economically unfeasible, the system amounted to a form of livestock sharecropping, whereby people were forced to work through Bond for the marketing of the animals and made less than subsistence wages for their work, while Bond was able to skim the profits through his connections to the railroads, control of the market, and available capital.
- 23 M. Córdova, interview, Truchas, N.M., June 18, 1999.
- 24 Moises Morales, interview with the author, Tierra Amarilla, N.M., Nov. 12, 1999.
- 25 Crockett Dumas, interview with the author, Peñasco, N.M., June 19, 1999.

- 26 Moises Morales, interview with the author, Tierra Amarilla, N.M., Nov. 14, 1999.
- 27 "Zero-grazing" is a national initiative by environmental groups. Sponsors of this initiative include the Sierra Club and Forest Guardians, among others.
- 28 Max Córdova, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., June 7, 1999.
- 29 Henry Carey, interview, Santa Fe, N.M., Sept. 1, 1999.
- 30 Deutsch 1987.
- 31 Juanita Montoya, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., Oct. 12, 1999.
- 32 Max Córdova, interview, Truchas, N.M., Oct. 10, 1999. Perhaps this is why people responded so negatively to the Forest Guardians' recent proposal to end all grazing in the national forests in the region.
- 33 DeVargas, interview, Española, N.M., Nov. 13, 1999.
- 34 Marx [1867] 1967, 283.
- 35 DeVargas, interview, Española, N.M., Nov. 13, 1999.
- 36 Reichelt 1999.
- 37 Sam Hitt, interview with the author, Santa Fe, N.M., July 16, 1999.
- 38 I owe a great many of the insights in this section to conversations and exchanges with Donald Moore and Anand Pandian during the writing of *Race, Nature, and the Politics of Difference* (Moore, Kosek, and Pandian 2003).
- 39 Moore, Kosek, and Pandian 2003.
- 40 This insight comes directly from Braun 2002.
- 41 The "knot" refers to Latour's (1993, 6) metaphor for the relationship between nature and culture, the "web" and the "assemblage" to Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 20), and the "cyborg" to Donna Haraway (1989, 123).
- 42 Though there has been a significant growth in the analytic of governmentality within the academy, and while a related environmental cottage industry, "green governmentality," has developed (see Agrawal 2005; Luke 1999; Rajan 2002), much of this work remains at the level of gross abstraction, robbing it of the specific technologies of power and the often messy practices (spatial, ethnographic, historical) through which institutions' and individuals' sentiments are made in uneven and partial ways.
- 43 See Drayton 2000.
- 44 Appadurai 1996; Dirks, Eley, and Ortner 1994; N. Rose 1999. I am making a leap here, applying Foucault's insights on the governance of "men" and "populations" to a more detailed treatment of the governance of nature. This move requires an unorthodox use of Foucault's work and a brief explanation: I make this move not out of an attempt at theoretical acrobatics but because I am compelled by detailed observations of quotidian practices in New Mexico. This attention to the qualities of the territory and their linking of landscapes to subject and citizen requires attentiveness to the mobility of nature and difference across time and space. Foucault terms this ability to travel between sites as disparate as colonial Spanish Empire and contempo-

rary New Mexico, or from the nature of bodily health to the nature of the nation, "polyvalent mobility." These links surround us and are particularly potent because what makes them possible is the presumed consistency of nature and difference across time, scale, and space (see Alonso 1995; Malkki 1997; Nelson 1999; Pred 1998). Nature "works" to facilitate these movements across sites and times because nature is assumed to be an underlying universal logic that defines and drives all life, inner and outer.

- 45 In fact, this approach of claiming broader bits of "nature"—be they environments, behaviors, or histories—as "social" only works to reinscribe the very divide we critique so vigorously: we reinscribe an essential nature as the "other" through our efforts to define the social.

#### ONE CULTURAL POLITICS OF MEMORY

- I Quoted in Forrest 2001, 85. Erwin Rivera is a Chicano artist who lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico. These words were spoken at a vigil protesting environmentalist injunctions that had been imposed to protect the spotted owl.
- 2 Evila Garcia, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., May 21, 1999. The name of the interviewee has been changed at her request.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Ibid. "The land-grant question" is common political shorthand for the complex land-claims situation of Hispanos under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.
- 6 E. Garcia, interview, May 21, 1999.
- 7 Tijerina Papers, box 1, folder 3, page 5.
- 8 Moises Morales, interview with the author, Tierra Amarilla, N.M., Nov. 12, 1999.
- 9 *Albuquerque Journal* 1995.
- 10 E. Garcia, interview, May 21, 1999.
- 11 See Nora 1989; Terdiman 1993. I am referring here to understandings of nature and difference that link Hispanos to the landscape in contradictory and sometimes troubling ways. I intend in my argument to unsettle these essentialist notions of ties between race and place by demonstrating the ways in which these ties are not the product of essentialized pasts or natural tendencies but instead subject to what Stuart Hall (1996b, 1986b) calls "the continuous play of culture, power and history." This theoretical formulation assumes that nature is always already cultural, political, and material, and that race is not a biological category but a social one with powerful lived material consequences (Gilroy 2000; Goldberg 1990, 1994). For more of my conceptualizations of the theoretical biases about the relationship between nature and race, see Moore, Kosek, and Pandian 2003.



- 12 Alonso 1995; Boyarin 1994.
- 13 E. Garcia, interview, May 21, 1999.
- 14 My treatment of memory and history together here is not an attempt to point to the populist authenticity of "ordinary" people's memories, or to tell a "more accurate" folk history counter to an official history of land grants. Nor is the history of the land grant placed in opposition to memory, a construct wherein memory occupies the mythological, fictional, and subjective side of a dualistic notion of the past, with history occupying the other, rational, scientific, or objective side.
- 15 D'Arcus 2000; Ivy 1995; Malkki 1995.
- 16 The important point of this approach is that material and symbolic pasts are made, contested, and remade in the present through acts of remembering and forgetting. I mean to deny, then, that events, experiences, and their meanings exist prior to discourse or outside the context and politics of their formations (Boyarin 1994; Yoneyama 1999). In making such a claim, I am in no way denying empirical "facts" or the material "truth" of past experience; I simply claim that these phenomena are inseparable from the politics, meanings, and fictions of the present. I hope to show how these symbolic histories and material memories of land are important and deeply contested sites in the production of identity, community, and nature. In so doing, I hope to point to the power of the production of historical knowledge and the stakes and consequences when some histories are remembered and others are forgotten (Alonso 1995; Malkki 1997; Nelson 1999; Pred 1998).
- 17 Weber 1994.
- 18 Carlson 1990; deBuys 1985.
- 19 Carlson 1990; deBuys 1985; Ebright 1994.
- 20 Nava 1973.
- 21 Weber 1979.
- 22 deBuys 1985; Ebright 1994.
- 23 Weber 1979, 124.
- 24 Carlson 1990, 11.
- 25 There were, however, exceptions to this with the pueblos. The Spanish sometimes "legitimized" pueblo claims by granting the "pueblo league." Although pueblo claims were often encroached upon by Spanish settlers, there were also court cases that upheld pueblo claims and forced Spanish settlers to abandon those areas. There were also instances of the Spanish governors' granting land to pueblos in addition to the formulaic "pueblo league." I owe this insight to conversations with Malcolm Ebright and Mark Schiller.
- 26 Eleven heads of households were included in the original petition: Nicolas Romero, Juan de Dios Romero, Salvador Espinosa, Tadeo Espinosa, Miguel Espinosa, Ventura Espinosa, Julian Romero, Gabriel Romero, Domingo Romero, Francisco Bernal, and Cristobal Martín. Later two more were added: José Manuel Gonzales and Juan Luis Romero.
- 27 deBuys 1985, 69.
- 28 Alonso 1995, 123.
- 29 Carlson 1990, 11.
- 30 Roberto Mondragon, interview with the author, Santa Fe, N.M., July 16, 1999.
- 31 See deBuys 1985; Lamar 1966; Martínez 1996.
- 32 In addition, article IX assured protection of their liberty and property, and secured "the free exercise of [their] religion without restriction." Article X, drafted by the Mexican government, detailed the means and stipulations for validation of the grants, stating that the U.S. government was to honor all land grants created by the Spanish and Mexican governments. In the discussions that followed, the United States eliminated articles IX and X from the treaty, much to Mexico's dismay, and as a result Mexico refused to ratify the treaty. After months of negotiation, Mexico agreed to an amendment, the Protocol of Queretaro, guaranteeing that the "American Government by suppressing the Xth article of the Treaty of Guadalupe did not in any way intend to annul the grants of land made by Mexico in the ceded territories" (from the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo; see Martínez 1996).
- 33 Zorrilla 1965.
- 34 Ebright 1994, 29.
- 35 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Feb. 2, 1848, *Treaty Series and Executive Agreement Series of the Department of State*, series 207, article 9, statement 922. See Martínez 1996, 26.
- 36 Max Córdova, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., June 18, 1999.
- 37 Robert Tórreres in a speech to Ghost Ranch protesters, July 2, 1998, recorded by the author. See also Howerton 1996.
- 38 M. Morales, interview, Nov. 12, 1999. In fact, in 1996, the major counties of northern New Mexico passed a resolution declaring February 2 as Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo Day. Orlando Romero, the former director of the Palace of the Governor's Historical Library, declared, "It's a day of mourning" (Toppo 1996). The activist Ike DeVargas, who helped write the resolution, stated, "We wanted a day for people here to stop and think about why they are so poor." DeVargas went on to say, "I see it as a day of remembering what we had, a day to consider our loss together. After 148 years, that document is still very much alive for us. . . . These are not the cold voiceless words of an old dusty document; they are smoldering fires of a history of injustices that we are dealing with today" (Howerton 1996, 16).
- 39 Ebright 1994.
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 deBuys 1985; Ebright 1994.
- 42 Ibid.

- 43 Easley 1892b.
- 44 Max Córdova has a copy of this receipt as well as a letter from Easley requisitioning the payment.
- 45 Tijerina in a letter to Corky Gonzales.
- 46 Phil Smith, phone conversation with the author, Albuquerque, N.M., Dec. 11, 1999.
- 47 Gardner 1970; Nabokov 1970. The takeover of the campground, though it was portrayed in the press as a one-time event, actually started the week before, when a number of Alianza members had taken over the campground, declaring the space the "Republic of San Joaquin," holding elections, and raising the flag of the newly formed independent republic. Ranger Smith and Carson Forest supervisor Stedman observed the "illegal" use of the area but did nothing to stop the activities. The Forest Service knew, through the press and in coordination with the FBI, that Tijerina wanted an incident; fearing that the incident would turn violent, they avoided any direct confrontation.
- 48 Gardner 1970; Nabokov 1970.
- 49 Nabokov 1972.
- 50 Gardner 1970, 127, emphasis in the original.
- 51 M. Morales, interview, Nov. 12, 1999.
- 52 Gardner 1970, 127.
- 53 Beier 1966.
- 54 Jessie Romero, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., Feb. 11, 2000.
- 55 Moises Morales, interview with the author, Española, N.M., Aug. 21, 2000.
- 56 Smith and Taylor 1967.
- 57 William Hurst, official memorandum to forest supervisors, Oct. 13, 1986. A copy of this memorandum was given to the author by William Hurst on June 5, 2000.
- 58 Smith and Taylor 1967.
- 59 Ibid.
- 60 M. Morales, interview, 2000. The interviewee used the old Spanish term *chota*, which roughly translates as *pig*, to describe both the police officers, to whom it is normally (derisively) applied, and the Forest Service officers.
- 61 Floyd Garcia, interview with the author, Tierra Amarilla, N.M., April 23, 2000.
- 62 Smith and Taylor 1967.
- 63 M. Morales, interview, 2000.
- 64 Smith and Taylor 1967, 22.
- 65 Ibid., 3, 4.
- 66 Allens 1966, 7.
- 67 Smith and Taylor 1967, 10.
- 68 *U.S. v. Tijerina et al.* 1969.
- 69 Bottorff 1966, 3.
- 70 Ibid, 4.
- 71 Allens 1966, 12.
- 72 Smith and Taylor 1967, 12.
- 73 Preliminary hearing court document for the State of New Mexico, *U.S. v. Tijerina et al.* 1967 and *Tijerina v. New Mexico* 1969.
- 74 Bottorff 1966, 1.
- 75 Nabokov 1969, 51.
- 76 Smith and Taylor 1967. It was significant that José Lorenzo Salazar and not Tijerina became mayor of the "revived republic," for, unlike Tijerina, who was a fairly recent immigrant from Texas, Salazar was an *anciano* and his great-grandfather was one of the original heirs to the grant. Tijerina was able to employ Salazar's local authority as the basis for their claim within the area. His authority, based on bloodlines and memories of injustices surrounding the land, resonated with people in northern New Mexico.
- 77 Santiago Juarez, interview with the author, Española, N.M., Aug. 27, 2000. See also Tijerina Papers, box 2, file 5 (campground incident), folder 6. The actual grant, which the Alianza and others were claiming at Echo Creek, San Joaquin, varied in estimated size from the Alianza's claim of 472,736 acres to the Forest Service's claim of 1,422 acres. The Alianza and the land-grant heirs were referencing the original claim, not all of which was ratified by the Mexican government, and only 1,422 acres of which was recognized by the U.S. Court of Private Land Claims. This land grant was divided into numerous parcels, and the United States recognized only the individually divided parcels, not the communal lands. Such shrinkage was not an uncommon phenomenon. The Forest Service continuously supplied the media with conservative information that challenged the status of the land grant based on its "legal" size. The articles—written by Anglo reporters—took an incredulous tone, which only exacerbated the sense that the Forest Service and the forest were sites of oppression, whiteness, and injustice. In truth, the Forest Service, through an act of Teddy Roosevelt (who had become fond of New Mexico after his hunting expeditions there), had proclaimed in 1905 that 300,000 acres of the original grant was to become Forest Service land. The rest of the land later either was also declared Forest Service land or fell into the hands of large cattle corporations. Ultimately, according to locals such as Tijerina, the land was illegally taken from the heirs.
- 78 Nabokov 1969.
- 79 Smith and Taylor 1967, 2.
- 80 Bonner 1967.
- 81 E. Garcia, interview, May 21, 1999.
- 82 The Alianza was in direct contact with other movements and had invited Corky Gonzales to the campground takeover. It was also very aware of other activism by such groups and individuals as the Communist Party, the Black

- Panther Party, Martin Luther King Jr., and the Hopi—with all of whom Tijerina would later communicate.
- 83 What is striking, through this and other events, is the creation of a predominant memory of land-grant loss even though the histories of individual land grants and their measurement, ratification, sale, and/or theft are tremendously diverse. A single unified story of land-grant loss enabled a collective memory of injustice and helped form a community with a history deeply entangled with sentiments of longing. The story is also striking for what it includes and does not include.
- 84 Jerry Fuentes, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., April 13, 2000.
- 85 Foucault [1978] 1990.
- 86 Hammond and Rey 1953, 330.
- 87 Minge 1976.
- 88 Hammond and Rey 1953, 355, 356.
- 89 Minge 1976, 14.
- 90 Hammond and Rey 1953.
- 91 Associated Press 1998.
- 92 James Brooke 1998.
- 93 Lopez 1998.
- 94 Mondragon, interview, July 16, 1999.
- 95 Diaz 1998.
- 96 Rivera 1998.
- 97 Hummels 1998.
- 98 Brooke, James, 1998.
- 99 *Newsweek* 1998.
- 100 Brooke, Joan, 1998.
- 101 Hummels 1998.
- 102 Rivera 1998, 3.
- 103 Brandtner 1998.
- 104 Lopez 1998.
- 105 Lopez 1998.
- 106 Brooke, James, 1998.
- 107 Lopez 1998.
- 108 *Ibid.*
- 109 This is also true within the Native American community itself, as seen in recent attempts by AIM (the American Indian Movement) and other Native American groups to deny that Ward Churchill is a Native American. Even more poignant is a recent case at Isleta in which the tribe is trying to deny a cut of the gambling benefits to people in their forties, fifties, and sixties who have lived their entire lives on the pueblo, but whom the tribal administration is claiming do not have a high enough percentage of "Isleta blood" to warrant benefits.
- 110 Gene Onken, interview with the author, Española, N.M., March 1, 2001.

- 111 Anonymous director of an environmentalist organization, interview with the author, Santa Fe, N.M., May 12, 2000.
- 112 Antze and Lambek 1996, xvii.
- 113 Evila Garcia, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., Nov. 12, 2000.
- 114 Antze and Lambek 1996, xvii.
- 115 *Ibid.*
- 116 Many Chicanos and New Mexican Hispanos try to emphasize their link to Spain and disassociate themselves from contemporary Mexico and Mexican immigrants. In fact, the rise in the immigrant population has led to stark division within the community.
- 117 The myth of a tri-racial Southwest (see Meinig 1971) is one of the most predominant and enduring examples of attempts to create clearly delineated racial categories.

## TWO SOVEREIGN NATURES

- 1 Gilbert Vigil, interview with the author, Taos, N.M., Jan. 27, 1999.
- 2 William Hurst, interview with the author, Albuquerque, N.M., Jan. 7, 2000.
- 3 Gene Onken, interview with the author, Española, N.M., July 1, 1999. Onken and many others commonly used the idea of the field and nature as the site for the "real," that which would objectively demonstrate the best practices by showing us "what was really best on the ground."
- 4 Alfredo Padilla, conversation with the author, Truchas, N.M., Aug. 1, 1999.
- 5 Gene Onken, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., Aug. 1, 1999.
- 6 Whether La Montaña "forced" the Forest Service to open the area for cutting or the Forest Service did it because it saw the need depends on who you talk to. Max Córdova claims that "community members forced the Forest Service to open the area" for fuelwood gathering (Max Córdova, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., June 18, 1999).
- 7 Lori Osterstock, conversation with the author, Española, N.M., July 7, 1998.
- 8 All comments are from a field trip with the Forest Service, Truchas, N.M., Aug. 1, 2000.
- 9 Leonard Atencio, conversation with the author, Truchas, N.M., Aug. 1, 2000.
- 10 My claim is not that the Forest Service is the monolithic state; other agencies have clearly been central to the formation of the region and its population. My argument is that the lived, day-to-day experience of the state has been mediated predominantly through interaction with the Forest Service.
- 11 The other 40 percent is a mix of land-grant lands, private property, reservations, and other federal and state lands.
- 12 These readings generally follow a Weberian approach to understanding of the state.
- 13 See, for example, Culhane 1981; Hays 1959; Hirt 1994; Langston 1995; Peluso 1992. For an example solely on New Mexico, see deBuys 1985.

14 See, for example, Prudham 2005; Robbins 1994.

15 Robinson 1975.

16 Also overlooked are the contradictory tendencies of these formations; such analyses tend to treat a class, community, or racial group as a singular human collective having set common interests. Furthermore, I do not mean to imply here that biopower operates solely through “productive power.” Biopolitics makes the body its central target, and the disciplinary regime focuses on the body as a machine: “the optimizing of its capabilities, the extortion of its forces, the parallel increase of its usefulness and its docility, [and] its integration into systems of efficient and economic controls” (Foucault [1978] 1990, 139). Biopolitics involves the shepherding or fostering of people to “do what they ought” by reshaping individual conduct in ways which do not impinge on formal senses of freedom. This is particularly clear in Foucault’s discussion of the role of biopower in the development of capitalism. Foucault states that “bio-power was without question an indispensable element in the development of capitalism; the latter would not have been possible without the controlled insertion of bodies into the machinery of production and the adjustment of the phenomena of population to economic processes. But this was not all it required; [capitalism] also needed the growth of both these factors, their reinforcement as well as their availability and docility” (*ibid.*, 140–41).

17 This is not to say that the Forest Service does not have a lived coherence, or that disparate sites of knowledge production concerning the forest have not been central to forest practices in New Mexico. Quite the contrary, the lived experience of the Forest Service, changing understandings of nature, and national anxieties of loss have led to the forest preservation and the institutions that regulate and manage it. However, the rationales that justified these acts of preservation met with extant spatial and institutional forms that proved tenacious and forced forest agents to mitigate between divergent understandings and rationalities in order to maintain their authority. In the process they developed new forms of managing and governing forest use and Hispanos’ behaviors, and the resulting disparate regional practices led to disparate regional institutional forms.

18 This approach to governance represents a critical transformation of forms of rule. First, it creates a “continuity” between the governing of the state and the internal governance of the family and the self. The central transformation represented in the art of governance, then, is how to introduce the “oeconomy,” that is, the proper management “of individuals, goods and wealth within the family and of making it thrive” into “the management of the State” (Foucault 1991). Foucault’s notion of “oeconomy” initially represented the proper management of “individuals, goods, and wealth within the family” and of those elements responsible for “making it thrive”; later, its wider usage grew to encompass the governing of an entire state, which

would “exercise towards the citizens, the wealth and behavior of each and everyone, a form of surveillance, of control which is as watchful as that of the head of a family over his household and his goods” (Foucault 1991). The actual means by which this transformation is effected are less than clearly spelled out by Foucault; in passing, he mentions factors such as demographic expansion, changes in agricultural production, and the growth of wealth, but avoids positing the specifics of this transformation. He states, “Here again a number of general processes intervened: the demographic expansion of the 18th century, connected with historical monetary abundance, which in turn was linked to the expansion of agricultural production through a series of circular processes that historians are familiar with” (Foucault 1979, 16). But what is clear is that there has been an emergence of new administrative apparatuses and new forms of knowledge production (especially statistics), and an ascendance of mercantilism, all of which are central to new forms of governance. These transformations are tightly linked to two central and interrelated changes in modern mechanisms of rule. First, the elevation of the economy was rendered possible by the creation of population as a category and problematic. The rise of the economy—the art of stewardship of things and people—then both comprises the state and operates through the family, making the central objective of the state no longer the sovereign control over territory (as with the prince) but instead the governance (as with a patriarch and his household) of a complex unity of the economy or the relationship between “men and things.” It was only as part of the development of the science of government, through the rise of the domains of population and economy, that the large, abstract means of sovereign rule became intertwined with the weaker but more individual internal systems of rule of the economy of the family. In particular, the emergence of the problem of population allowed for the notion of economy to change planes to become the broader notion of economy that is central to modern governments (Braun 2000; N. Rose 1999).

19 In contrast to other approaches to understanding the state, in this approach it is through the very process of improvement, the proper management and care of individuals and populations—both human and forest—that the Forest Service has come to assume its current form and authority in northern New Mexico.

20 Foucault notes that the problems of population became intelligible only through the surveying and measuring of the properties of the population, whose health and resources became the targets of governance. It is through the development of these techniques concerned with the population and the improvement of the relationships between “men and things” that the “art of government” shifted from the family to the practices and policies of the state (Foucault 1979, 67). This replacement of the problematic of sovereignty with the problem of the improvement of the condition of the popula-

tion is central to the notion of governmentality. It traces the sovereignty of the prince into an internalized disciplinary rule, through which the extensive yet tenuous rule of the prince combines with the formative and intensive rule of the family. Moreover, the invention of the population makes available large sectors of inhabitants as targets of normative economic, administrative, and bureaucratic rationalities. In earlier works, Foucault had already begun to look at this shift in the expression of power from the protection of the prince's "sovereignty" (or how best to rule over a territory) to the cultivation of governmentality (or how to optimize rule from within subjects). Particularly relevant for his notion of governmentality is the conceptualization of discipline that he developed so convincingly in *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault 1977).

- 21 The management of life led to new techniques and institutions directed at the improvement of the social body. These included the employment of new forms of population micromanagement that targeted its births, deaths, longevity, and general levels of health so as to ensure its "optimization," including its wealth, happiness, prosperity, and efficiency. This represented a shift in tactics from the power of the coercive state, whose creed was "to kill or let live," to a more productive power of the biopolitical state, whose creed became "to make live or let die" and which operated not through "the menace of death" but through "the management of life" (Foucault [1978] 1990, 147). Moreover, the "optimizing" of life developed through rationalities of welfare, improvement, and security to produce governing effects on the conduct of individuals and the formation, or "governmentalization," of the state itself. Governance, then, requires the search for rationalities, for the authority of one's own authority (Dean 1994; N. Rose 1999). These rationalities are based on truth—claims that range from ethical certainties to moral truths, from scientific facts to common sense, and, of course, natural logics. All of these form the basis for the vocabularies, practices, and conditions of possibility in which thoughts and disputes can be organized. Tracing these rationalities in relationship to the forests of northern New Mexico is a central aspect of the section in this chapter entitled "Forest Management." It is important to note, as Foucault demonstrates, that these projects or strategies of rationalization are not totalizing, that they have specific histories that can be mapped through specific sites and historic moments and can be linked to other systems of thought and other regimes of truth.
- 22 This definition of governance plays on the multiple meanings of conduct, simultaneously invoking the notion of conduct in its meaning *to lead, direct, guide*, as well as the notion of conduct in an ethical and moral sense, as in *to conduct oneself, through self-guidance and self-regulation*, through evaluation and normative judgments about rational or appropriate codes of conduct (Dean 1999; Foucault 1979, 220–21; Burchell, Gordon, and Miller 1991).

- 23 Foucault 1979, 73.
- 24 Hays 1959, 36.
- 25 Max Córdova, conversation with the author, Truchas, N.M., Aug. 1, 1999.
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 Bergoffen 1976, 11.
- 28 Of course the underlying themes of nature, as well as the battles to protect the forest in the United States, go back much further. In this instance I am referring to the institutional origins of the U.S. Forest Service.
- 29 Hough 1873, 1.
- 30 Ibid.
- 31 I do not mean to use these figures as part of telling an origin story of the Forest Service. Rather these three figures and, later in this chapter, Aldo Leopold, serve as sites through which to understand the formation of regimes of management of the relationship between people and the forest.
- 32 See Lowenthal 1958; Strong 1988.
- 33 Hough 1897.
- 34 The original title of this work was going to be *Man the Disturber of Harmonies* (Lowenthal 1965, xxiii).
- 35 G. Marsh [1864] 1965, 32.
- 36 Kuehls 1996.
- 37 Lowenthal 1965, xvii.
- 38 Glacken 1967; Lowenthal 1965; Steen 1976. As Harold Steen, in his history of the Forest Service, stated about the legacy of Marsh, "Intellectual successors to George Perkins Marsh have for over a century lectured their readers on man's responsibility to the land and about the dangers of depletion and pollution" (1976, 9).
- 39 However, as I will argue later, during the last thirty years in New Mexico the caring forms of governance that Marsh thought "morally obligated men" toward better "husbandry" of nature have become more and more central to the Forest Service's practices of governance.
- 40 George Marsh's ([1864] 1965) notions of nature were central to the rise in notions of its governance and they went on to become central to the formation and operations of the Forest Service.
- 41 Worster [1979] 1985. Darwin's theory of evolution positioned nature outside human history, working as an external force of change, while at the same time providing an internal logic of hierarchy and improvement for society. Natural laws operated on the health of a population through the fitness of individual bodies, thereby linking external forces with the internal workings of behaviors. Marsh made a similar link, but from the opposite direction: the health and fitness of nature depended on the working of an individual independent "man."
- 42 See Kuehls 1996, 4–5.
- 43 Lowenthal 1965, xi.

- 44 Ibid.
- 45 I do not mean to claim that this is the originary moment for this break. However, I do mean to claim that this break was a significant shift in the understandings of nature that Marsh played a key role in establishing.
- 46 Strong 1988, 29.
- 47 Lowenthal 1958, xi. Most striking, next to this personification, are the ways in which Marsh's characterizations of nature drew directly from contemporary assumptions about race and gender. Signs of this appear continuously throughout his work, for example, when he points to the need for those in Vermont to "enlighten the aboriginal forests," or for "men to subdue" nature and "her temperaments." Here, colonial notions about the wealthy white male's "burden" of responsibility to care for natives and protect women's vulnerable purity become the organizing principles that drive the rationale behind nature's protection.
- 48 These, of course, were not conducted in the vacuum of the United States; they were directly related to the drive of the science of colonialism and to the work of Darwin and other natural scientists at the time, all of which greatly influenced Marsh.
- 49 The data contributed to the erosion of Marsh's faith in a universal law of nature and shaped his work on environmental problems in America. See G. Marsh [1864] 1965.
- 50 Powell actually received the equipment for his research on the Colorado River from the Smithsonian Institution in 1867.
- 51 Lowenthal 1965, xxvii.
- 52 Ibid., xxv.
- 53 Ibid., xxv.
- 54 It is this aggregation, through the rise of science and the problems of the environment that, like that of the human population, necessitated the governance of nature for "her own good and protection" and for the good of "man."
- 55 Kuehls 1996, 23.
- 56 Hough, like Marsh, felt that the scientific forestry practices of Europe should be implemented in the United States. Hough went to great lengths to research these for his report to the Congress of the United States (see Hough 1873). However, his view on what constituted proper governance differed from Marsh's.
- 57 Lowenthal 1965, xvii.
- 58 Lowenthal 1965.
- 59 Steen 1976, 34.
- 60 Strong 1988, 76.
- 61 Ibid.
- 62 Hays 1959, 27.
- 63 Steen 1976, 38–39.
- 64 Pinchot did more to shape the Forest Service into its present form with its current goals than any other chief in its history. He also did more to make the forest a center of public concern.
- 65 Strong 1988, 34.
- 66 Strong 1988, 112.
- 67 Strong 1988, 27.
- 68 Pinchot's interests in these surveys goes back to his undergraduate work at Yale. He claimed that he knew then that forestry was his life's work.
- 69 White 1957, 43.
- 70 Steen 1976, 48.
- 71 Pinchot [1947] 1987.
- 72 See Hays 1959; Steen 1976.
- 73 Roberto Mondragon, interview with the author, Santa Fe, N.M., July 16, 1999.
- 74 The problem was that, unlike Europe, whose forests were cut down long ago, few stands had the even age characteristics that facilitated these types of forestry practices; that is, the forest would not often behave as a forest ought to behave (see J. Scott 1998).
- 75 The notion that the forest could be maintained in an orderly fashion—like a corn crop—was central to Pinchot's philosophy of forestry. But the massive input of labor required to make this happen was well beyond the reach of the Forest Service. Even later, with the influx of the massive labor pool of the Civilian Conservation Corps into forestry in the 1920s and 1930s, and with industrial logging operations on federal lands, the trees' "agency" made this only somewhat materially feasible.
- 76 Pinchot 1901, 401.
- 77 M. Córdova, interview, June 18, 1999.
- 78 Salomon Martínez, interview with the author, Córdova, N.M., Oct. 6, 1999.
- 79 Easley 1889.
- 80 R. Marsh 1969.
- 81 See USDA Forest Service n.d., "Report to supervisor," 2–3.
- 82 See USDA Forest Service n.d., "Report to supervisor," 1.
- 83 See surveyor's notes in USDA Forest Service 1967.
- 84 These mills are considered small when compared to those of the Northwest, but they are some of the largest in the region. Duke City, for example, is an internationally owned company that is highly mechanized, with a large capacity for felling and processing timber.
- 85 Carey 1998, 2.
- 86 Forest Trust 1997.
- 87 Ibid., 2–3.
- 88 Orlando Romero, interview with the author, Nambé, N.M., Feb. 13, 1999.
- 89 Fred Swetman, interview with the author, Taos, N.M., Sept. 3, 1999.
- 90 Strong 1988, 33.

- 91 Notions of improvement, implied conceptions of the independence of nature from humans, the aggregate scale of forest population, and the need for its proper stewardship by a new class of scientists and managers all became linked to modernizing notions of progress.
- 92 Pinchot 1909, 12.
- 93 After a trip to the Southwest and considerable regional pressure, Pinchot convinced the secretary of the Interior to retract the sheep prohibition in 1900, though it continued in various forms in New Mexico through 1905.
- 94 Pinchot 1909, 14.
- 95 Eliodoro Martínez, interview with the author, Córdova, N.M., June 17, 1998.
- 96 Ibid.
- 97 F. Swetman, interview.
- 98 S. Martínez, interview.
- 99 See USDA Forest Service n.d. "DDT and the forests."
- 100 Sted Edwards, interview with the author, Española, N.M., Sept. 13, 1999.
- 101 Steen 1976, 95.
- 102 Ibid.
- 103 The notion of maximum output made for compelling goals but was vague. Efficiency, of course, has no specific meaning until it is defined as efficiency of profit-making or of wood growth, diversity, longevity, quality of timber, board feet, and so on. Similarly, Pinchot's most famous saying, "Forestry is for the greatest good for the greatest number over time," sounds compelling—until one has to make distinctions and decisions about *which* good, for *which* people, at *which* time. Everyone can agree to the broad intent of this saying, but when it becomes, as it must, grounded in day-to-day practices, it becomes a great deal more problematic and essentially means little at all. The Forest Service used Pinchot's words as a foundation for its multiple-use policies and has had to deal ever since with its debilitating vagueness.
- 104 Strong 1988, 80; USDA Forest Service 1905, 8.
- 105 Strong 1988, 112.
- 106 Pinkett 1970, 20.
- 107 Ibid.
- 108 Steen 1976, 32n.26.
- 109 Hays 1959.
- 110 Steen 1976, 33.
- 111 Hays 1959, 47.
- 112 I do not mean to imply that all of this is true throughout the U.S. West. In New Mexico, the lack of a viable large-scale forestry industry has greatly contributed to the effectiveness of the lawsuits in stopping Forest Service activities. Moreover, the weakening of the Forest Service after the Reagan era has further contributed to the effectiveness of environmental challenges to the Forest Service.
- 113 This observation comes from an insight of Brown and Carmony in their comments on the essay in their book *Aldo Leopold's Southwest* (1995, 32).
- 114 Leopold [1949] 1987, 78.
- 115 L. Warren 1997, 98.
- 116 One local even converted one of the two gas tanks of his truck into a storage area for poached game so he would not be caught by the game warden.
- 117 L. Warren 1997, 104.
- 118 USDA Forest Service 1912.
- 119 Ibid.
- 120 Ibid.
- 121 deBuys 1985, 233.
- 122 Briggs and Van Ness 1987, 235.
- 123 USDA Forest Service 1909.
- 124 Briggs and Van Ness 1987, 236.
- 125 Grubbs 1961, 299–300.
- 126 Briggs and Van Ness 1987, 237.
- 127 Carlson 1990, 119.
- 128 Wiltbank 1938, 2.
- 129 These statistics cover the whole of the Quemado allotment, which is larger than Borrego Mesa alone.
- 130 See Hammill 1972, 36.
- 131 Wiltbank 1938, 19.
- 132 See USDA Forest Service 1939. See also Wiltbank 1938.
- 133 Hammill 1972.
- 134 USDA Forest Service 1959a.
- 135 USDA Forest Service 1959b.
- 136 This conference was entitled the Mexican-American Conference and was held in El Paso, Texas.
- 137 USDA Forest Service 1969.
- 138 Forrest 1989.
- 139 Hurst 1986, 2.
- 140 Hassell 1968, 2.
- 141 Ibid., 9.
- 142 Hurst, interview.
- 143 Ibid.
- 144 Atencio, conversation.
- 145 Crockett Dumas, interview with the author, Peñasco, N.M., May 19, 1999.
- 146 Schiller and Matthews 1999. The northern New Mexico collaborative stewardship program has won grants from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government for innovations in government; the Al Gore Environmental Hammer Award for innovative environmental stewardship efforts; and numerous grants from private foundations.
- 147 Dornbeck 2001.

### THREE PASSIONATE ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Larry Torres is a professor at the University of New Mexico, Taos, and an announcer for the radio show *Cafécito y Cultura* on KTAO in Taos. This quote is from his Aug. 21, 1999 radio broadcast.
- 2 Marcelo Romero, tape-recorded interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., Aug. 8, 1999.
- 3 Larry Torres, presentation at Peñasco High School, Peñasco, N.M., May 10, 1999.
- 4 Torres, presentation.
- 5 This is a reference to two high-profile endangered species that threaten forest access and water rights.
- 6 All three comments are from a conversation on May 10, 1999 at Peñasco High School, Peñasco, N.M.
- 7 I want to focus more directly on the ways in which nature operates in place. There are many scholars on whom I am relying directly for this argument. Most directly is work by Liisa Malkki, as published in Gupta and Ferguson 1997, in which she discusses the arboreal roots of the link between people and place, and the implication of the formation of these links for Hutu refugees in Rwanda and in refugee camps in Tanzania.
- 8 This is an argument, as Steven Feld points out, of reciprocal relations, through which places are sensed and senses are placed (Feld and Basso 1996, 8–9). Some early formations of place romanticized by scholars include Yi-Fu Tuan's early work on place: Tuan stated that "rootedness in the soil and the growth of pious feeling toward it seem natural to sedentary agricultural peoples" (Tuan 1977, 156, as quoted in Malkki 1997, 61).
- 9 These cultural bonds of attachment to forest places are formed rather than found. Moreover, the process of forming these bonds is a deeply political one. As many have pointed out, the assumed link between culture and place has been a central organizing feature of both anthropology and cultural geography since their inceptions as disciplines. This understanding of the world as made up of bound, culturally distinct geographical units allowed ready comparison between those units. But it also led to essentialist formations of "cultures" and their relationships—symbolic, symbiotic, and sacred—to place. The presumption that cultures are bound by discrete spatial boundaries has, in the words of Gupta and Ferguson, "enabled the power of topography to successfully conceal the topography of power" (1997, 35). I depart from much of the literature on place and belonging that treats space as empty and place as made meaningful by intentional acts of social actors. As Donald Moore (2005) so powerfully points out, much of anthropology's and geography's scholarship on sense of place assumes as self-sovereign subject whose intentional acts forge place from empty, meaningless space and treats place as a locally delimited concept whose history is self-

- contained. Similarly, seeing Hispanos as a natural component of a particular forest landscape obscures the ways in which this bond works to form stubborn and sometimes violent couplings between forest geographies and racial identities.
- 10 Crockett Dumas, interview with the author, Peñasco, N.M., May 19, 1999.
  - 11 Ibid.
  - 12 Carlson 1990, xiii.
  - 13 In fact, as I have pointed out in the introduction, most people have very little to do directly with the woods. But the deep sense of attachment is a common perception built from different notions of belonging that I am outlining here. However, as employers have tried to find workers to fill jobs in community forestry, they have had a hard time finding people who know how to work logging equipment well. This points even more to the fact that something other than the solely material aspects of the forest is at stake in contemporary forest politics.
  - 14 Sanchez 1940, 63.
  - 15 McWilliams [1948] 1968, 49.
  - 16 Ibid.
  - 17 Ortega cited in McWilliams [1948] 1968, 32.
  - 18 Knowlton 1961, 39.
  - 19 Carlson 1990, xiv.
  - 20 Gupta and Ferguson 1997; Moore, Kosek, and Pandian 2003.
  - 21 Gupta and Ferguson 1997; Kroeber 1931; Meinig 1971, Moore, Kosek, and Pandian 2003; Ratzel 1896; Sauer 1952; Steward 1955.
  - 22 Deutsch 1987, 6.
  - 23 Ibid., 5.
  - 24 Ibid., 6.
  - 25 The most overt example is the "earthships" that are built in the open desert out of packed mud and tires. These structures are forms of "biotecture" that allow the builder to use more sustainable resources and function independent of the electrical grid. They have become symbolic for many of a continued back-to-the-land approach to architecture (see <http://www.earthship.com>).
  - 26 Forrest 1989, 38.
  - 27 Ibid., 34.
  - 28 Meine 1988, 181. Aldo Leopold himself played an important role in this portrayal of the use of the commons.
  - 29 Hassell 1968, 32.
  - 30 Gilbert Vigil, interview with the author, Taos, N.M., Aug. 12, 1999.
  - 31 Wilson 1997.
  - 32 Ibid.
  - 33 Forrest 1989, 30.
  - 34 Ibid., 194.



- 35 Ibid., 198.
- 36 Mike Willis, interview with the author, Santa Fe, N.M., Jan. 19, 1999.
- 37 For insightful accounts of the commodification of art and history in the making of place, see Richard Handler's and Eric Gable's work on colonial Williamsburg (Handler and Gable 1997) and Molly Mullin's work on the U.S. Southwest (Mullin 2001).
- 38 I am using "landscape" broadly here to connote land, forests, waters, and pasture.
- 39 Malkki 1995, 1997.
- 40 Jerry Fuentes, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., Sept. 13, 1999.
- 41 Jerry Fuentes, interview with the author, El Valle, N.M., July 23, 1999.
- 42 John Talberth, interview with the author, Santa Fe, N.M., Nov. 16, 1999.
- 43 McWilliams [1948] 1968, 65.
- 44 Deutsch 1987, 29.
- 45 Carlson 1990, 13.
- 46 Deutsch 1987, 29. There is a long and rich debate, particularly in sociology, over the culture of poverty, which continues to be central in areas as diverse as immigration and welfare today. For discussions on the topic, see Goode and Eames 1996; Harvey and Reed 1996; O. Lewis 1966.
- 47 Dumas, interview, May 19, 1999.
- 48 Max Córdova, conversation with the author, Truchas, N.M., Oct. 13, 1999.
- 49 Carlson 1990; Deutsch 1987; Larson 1974; Nostrand 1992.
- 50 Deutsch 1987, 32.
- 51 Ibid., 32.
- 52 Ibid., 35.
- 53 Deutsch 1992, 47.
- 54 Deutsch 1987.
- 55 deBuys 1985.
- 56 Ana Morales, interview with the author, Española, N.M., April 13, 2000. Emphasis mine.
- 57 deBuys 1985, 33. See also Forrest 1989.
- 58 Forrest 1989, 63.
- 59 Ibid., 73.
- 60 Carlson 1990; Deutsch 1987; Forrest 1989.
- 61 Wall 1958.
- 62 Williams 1980, 83.
- 63 Locke and others have defined property as a natural right that is formed through the mixture of labor and nature. Nature, in Locke's formulation, is a rational order to be embraced, an order of "goodwill, mutual assistance and cooperation" in direct opposition to the oft-quoted Hobbesian notion of the natural state of precivilized man as "nasty, brutish and short." Millions of working poor have made it clear that either a simple Lockean formulation is woefully lacking or, as Marx has pointed out, a great deal of property has been taken from a great number of workers. Rousseau saw property and its role in selfish society as the antithesis of humans' natural state, and he reified both an idealized nature and a separation from a fallen human society. But whether nature is something to be overcome, embraced, or revered, its relationship to labor has been central to principles of property and possession.
- 64 Richard White's (1995) discussion of the nature of the Columbia River serves as a useful example here. He writes, "In damming the river, the workers knew nature through labor. It is foolish to deny that the men who bored the bedrock, who walked the river bottom, who came to know with fine precision the density and composition of the clay, sand and granite of the river were, in a full and meaningful sense, knowing nature. It is foolish to think that the danger and exhilaration of a man dangling from a cliff with a jackhammer somehow differs from that of rock climbers who also dangle from cliffs. We need to take the work and its intent seriously" (R. White 1995, 61).
- 65 Williams 1980, 83.
- 66 Moreover, interior racial characteristics are fused with exterior landscape forms in subtle ways that both infuse the forest with race and link the Hispano subject to particular relationships to and with the forest.
- 67 Filton and Horgan 1937, 186. See also de Aragon 1978, 67.
- 68 Filton and Horgan 1937, 187. See also de Aragon 1978, 23.
- 69 Filton and Horgan 1937, 187. See also de Aragon 1978, 48.
- 70 Father Roca, interview with the author, Chimayó, N.M., April 12, 1999.
- 71 Epifanio Romero, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., Jan. 3, 1999.
- 72 Barber and Agnew 1981, vii.
- 73 Roberto Mondragon, interview with the author, Santa Fe, N.M., Dec. 12, 1999.
- 74 *Larrea tridentata* and *Artemisia tridentata*.
- 75 *Pinus edulis*, *Juniperus monosperma*, and *Juniperus deppeana*.
- 76 *Eragrostis erosa*.
- 77 Alfredo Padilla, conversation with the author, Truchas, N.M., April 28, 2002.
- 78 Max Córdova, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., Jan. 23, 1999; Ike DeVargas, interview with the author, Española, N.M., Nov. 13, 1999; Moises Morales, interview with the author, Tierra Amarilla, N.M., Aug. 7, 1999.
- 79 E. Romero, interview.
- 80 Alfredo Padilla, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., Oct. 16, 1999.
- 81 See Basso 1996, 91.
- 82 See, for example, Arnold 1993; Butler 1993; McClintock 1995; Nelson 1999; Stoler 1995.
- 83 See, for example, James Fernandez's work on the effectiveness of metaphors (1991).
- 84 See Basso 1996, 55–58 and Butler 1997, 167–98 for discussions of relations between objects and psychic dispositions.

- 85 Max Córdova, recounted in a conversation with the author, Truchas, N.M., July 26, 1997.
- 86 M. Córdova, conversation, July 26, 1997.
- 87 Fuentes, interview, Sept. 13, 1999.
- 88 Community forestry promised the answer by posing a solution that cared for the well-being of the forest without closing it and alleviated poverty without requiring major social change, all through developing the inherent ties between people and the land.
- 89 Roberto Mondragon, interview with the author, Santa Fe, N.M., June 14, 1999; Ike DeVargas, conversation with the author, Española, N.M., July 20, 1999. See also Toppo 1995. John Talberth later became the head of the Forest Conservation Council.
- 90 Easthouse 1995.
- 91 McClellan 1995.
- 92 Sam Hitt, interview with the author, Santa Fe, N.M., June 18, 2000.
- 93 S. Hitt 1996.
- 94 Ibid.
- 95 McClellan 1995.
- 96 *Albuquerque Tribune* 1995.
- 97 Mondragon, interview, June 14, 1999.
- 98 It was in this way that the political interests of a diverse set of people became linked to a particular notion of belonging. This understanding, in turn, pivoted on certain understandings of the relationships between nature, culture, and place. This formation implicitly opened windows of political possibility, as the incident on Borrego Mesa illustrates, but it simultaneously silenced other possibilities as inappropriate and inauthentic, as the effigy hanging illustrates.
- 99 Absatz 1995.
- 100 Conklin and Graham 1995, 695–710.
- 101 Hoffman 1996.
- 102 Easthouse 1995.
- 103 Talberth and Hitt 1995.
- 104 Talberth 1997.
- 105 Dumas, interview, May 19, 1999.
- 106 Talberth 1997.
- 107 Easthouse 1995. Ironically, Osterstock was accused of racial discrimination, both within the Forest Service and in the context of a long history of difficult relations with the Truchas community, and was transferred to the supervisor's office to defuse the controversy.
- 108 Hassell 1968, 23.
- 109 S. Hitt 1996.
- 110 Much of this work demonstrates that the move to politicize nature and place (and the move away from apolitical sentiments of nature and place) has

inadvertently left those sentiments themselves outside the political. Those relations of piousness and desire, of passion and anger, become eclipsed by the "real" social relations of production, of property, and of hierarchy or inequity. (There are exceptions here; for the very best of this work, see Raffles 2002, Moore 2005.)

- 111 My point here in focusing on notions of belonging is to focus on what was palpably clear in the passion of Max Córdova, Ike DeVargas, and others toward the forest. I have sought to combine this with the disjunction between idealized histories of northern New Mexico and what I was learning from long interviews and trips to the archives. I have sought to show here, by focusing on one particularly important relationship of belonging, the ways in which these profoundly personal sensibilities are linked to material histories that are deeply political. These stories are told and contested in different ways by sympathetic men and women, by Anglos and Native Americans, by longtime Hispano residents and recently transplanted radical activists, by tour guides and lawyers, by historians and forest rangers, by ecologists and sawmill operators. How Truchas is experienced as a place and as a defined cultural unit depends on whether one lives in the relatively better-off Llano Quemado or the poorer Llano Abeyta; whether one is a female who weaves or works for Los Alamos or a male who is on welfare or works for an art gallery; whether one is a third-generation resident or a sixth-generation land-grant member. These relationships are neither stable nor singular. It is precisely their changing forms and formations that so deeply charge forest politics in northern New Mexico. In fact, the history of assumed cultural bonds of belonging has left the difference within and between "a people" and "a place" largely unexplored. More important, this fluidity points to the need to treat the bond between people and the forest not as an established fact, nor solely as a singular relation, but rather as a deeply political co-constitutive relationship between the formation of place and the formation of subjects.
- 112 I am not arguing that there is no relationship between people and the land or that the forest is the only means through which this relationship has been manifested. On the contrary, I am arguing that there are many forms and sites of contest. But for both historical and contemporary reasons the forest has become a particularly rich site for the incitement of passion and protest.
- 113 Córdova 1997.
- 114 Povinelli 1988, 31.

#### FOUR RACIAL DEGRADATION

- 1 Bryan Bird, conversation with the author, Santa Fe, N.M., March 12, 1999.
- 2 Ike DeVargas, interview with the author, Servilleta Plaza, N.M., March 12, 2000.

- 3 Neary 1999.
- 4 Sam Hitt, interview with the author, Santa Fe, N.M., April 16, 1999.
- 5 Lezon 1999a.
- 6 Anonymous New Mexico activist, interview with the author, Española, N.M., April 5, 1999.
- 7 Talberth 1999.
- 8 George Grossman, interview with the author, Santa Fe, Nov. 27, 1999.
- 9 John Talberth, interview with the author, Santa Fe, N.M., Nov. 16, 1999.
- 10 Talberth 1999.
- 11 Hitt, interview, April 16, 1999.
- 12 This is not to say that the history of wilderness is racist, per se, or that wilderness does not have other histories. I intend here merely to map these hidden genealogies of wilderness and the grounded implications of this history of the movement in northern New Mexico and to point to the fact that this history is very much still part of many conceptions of wilderness. The phrase "purity and pollution" comes from Douglas (1966), but I am using her conception in a slightly different formulation here.
- 13 I am not saying in any way that wilderness works the same in all places. Neither do I want to imply that all efforts at wilderness preservation in all places carry the same meanings. Ideas of wilderness have many genealogies and articulate differently within the particularities of places, practices, and histories. Likewise I am not saying that to work for the preservation of the forest is inherently racist. What I do want to claim is that notions of wilderness and, more broadly, nature, articulate with historical tensions in New Mexico, and that some of these meanings have long, entangled histories with racial formations and anxieties.
- 14 Hays 1959; Nash 1967.
- 15 Though the wilderness movement is only one part of the environmental movement, it was a particularly important one at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. I do not mean to conflate the two but rather to discuss the wilderness movement as an important component of the environmental movement.
- 16 See Cronon 1996, Neumann 1997, and Spence 1999 for discussion of the implications of notions of wilderness. For the embeddedness of the notion of wilderness in social relations in relation to labor, see R. White 1995, Williams 1980, and N. Smith 1984.
- 17 Solnit 1994; Spence 1999.
- 18 Cronon 1996; Foreman 1992.
- 19 The connections between racial purity and nature's purity have a long history, with many, sometimes contradictory paths, more than I can do justice to here. I attempt only to trace the necessary links between them, not to map the comprehensive, entwined epistemology of nature, race, and purity.
- 20 How does knowledge about the human body—its health, contamination,

- and virility—become the means for understanding the health and well-being of the forests? To understand this claim in relation to the forest, we need to begin with a simple reiteration of the following postulate: the cultural history of the forest is inextricable from the forest itself, from the very material fibers of the wood. The fact that wilderness areas have this social history is the starting point. Second, we must remember that the discourses of forest wildernesses are not produced from the forest alone; rather, they are woven together by the iteration and reiteration of established norms, meanings, and understandings. This iterative process is what makes forests intelligible as wilderness areas. The epistemology of wilderness purity may be constructed without specific reference to race, but it is bound to turn on references to notions of purity that conform to established norms regarding race. These meanings of wilderness, of course, can drift, be contested and remade. Likewise they can serve to reproduce racialized ideas of difference without intention and without direct reference to forms of difference. As a result, notions of wilderness that arose in the late 1800s and early 1900s were governed by regulatory norms and anxieties that function even in the absence of their explicit articulation. I'm grateful to Bruce Braun for conversations related to the development of this point.
- 21 The environmental justice movement is the only aspect of the contemporary environmental movement to truly engage difference. The environmental justice movement has shaken the foundations of the "old school" environmental movement, forcing some of its adherents to reexamine their own practices and assumptions. To date, the environmental justice movement has concentrated almost exclusively on the inequitable access to resources or disproportionate exposure to hazardous pollution based on race or class difference. This work has radically changed approaches to environmentalism, especially in relation to pollution and health. But the roots of race questions lie still deeper. Scholars have scrutinized the racially charged statements of individuals such as Muir, Thoreau, Pinchot, and others, but those critics too have stopped short of exploring the *origins* of the ideas behind these statements and the ways in which these origins continue to shape environmental agendas. The few who have tried to understand the colonial or Judeo-Christian traditions as they manifest in the notion of wilderness have indeed opened new ways of understanding the familiar logics of these claims. However, they have continued to treat wilderness as a coherent, homogeneous, universal concept in which lived and contested formations are rarely—if ever—situated in specific times and places. My work here seeks to build off these insights by exploring the roots of notions of wilderness while also examining how they articulate and are lived within a particular time and place.
  - 22 Bederman 1995.
  - 23 The point here is to look in greater depth at historical notions of purity in

relation to race, first in a broader sense, and then more specifically as these relationships have played out in the wilderness movement over time in New Mexico. I do not intend this to be a comprehensive genealogy of race in the United States, nor do I claim that all forms of race are inherently the same. My intent here is to outline how racial discourses—especially notions of racial purity and improvement—articulate with formations of nature. And I hope to show how fears of the dilution and degradation of race—in particular, of forms of whiteness—became entangled with fears of the degradation of New Mexico’s “pristine” forest landscapes. My claim here is that discourses of purity placed diluted racial subjects and degraded landscapes into the same “grid of intelligibility,” wherein understandings of and fears surrounding race at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth became the raw substance out of which wilderness as an idea and a landscape was forged. Moreover, these fears of bodily pollution folded into new formations of “wild” landscapes at a particularly tense moment in American history: former slaves were being emancipated and were migrating, immigration was rising rapidly, and the protection of a white, masculine notion of nationality had become a central preoccupation. Notions of wilderness and its importance to the nation must be understood within this temporal and spatial context.

- 24 Hall 1986a, 2002; Roediger 1991; Ware 1992; Almaguer 1994; Cosgrove 1998.
- 25 Horsman 1981.
- 26 Kipling [1899] 1963.
- 27 Quoted in Horsman 1981, 131.
- 28 Horsman 1981, 240. Also see chapter 7 of Sunseri 1979, where there are numerous citations of congressional speeches, newspaper articles, and memoirs that are similarly racist.
- 29 Horsman 1981. Nowhere was the notion of manifest destiny more explicitly expressed than in the Mexican-American War. Given the widely accepted belief that it was the destiny of this white nation to stretch “from sea to shining sea,” the idea of annexing a territory with a large Mexican population was deeply troubling to many in the United States (Horsman 1981). Ironically, the debate over whether or not to get involved in the Mexican-American War was fought largely between those who thought that it was “our” mission, a nationally shared burden, to civilize the Mexican race, and those who feared what the mixing of races would do to the national character. Senator John C. Calhoun put it this way: “Can we incorporate a people so dissimilar from us in every respect—so little qualified for free and popular government—without certain destruction to our political institutions?” Calhoun directed his words to those who felt it was Americans’ duty to spread civil and religious practices across the continent, stating that “we have never dreamt of incorporating into our Union any but the Caucasian

race—the free white race” (quoted in Horsman 1981, 241). The Mexican-American War at mid-century, coupled with growing tensions over slavery, placed the racial question at the heart of scholarly discussion; nineteenth-century American theorists and popular writers were deeply engaged in defending the innate differences between races and warned of the dangers of mixing blood between races—both at the level of the individual body and within the body of the nation.

- 30 Winichakul 1994.
- 31 See McClintock 1995; Stoler 1995; Young 1995. For notions of cultural intelligibility, see Butler 1993. For a discussion in relationship to nature, see Braun 2002.
- 32 Arnold 1993, 1996; Grove 1995.
- 33 Foucault [1978] 1990, 123.
- 34 Foucault [1978] 1990.
- 35 Ibid., 149.
- 36 Stoler 1995, 71.
- 37 Quoted in Ibid., 67.
- 38 Ibid., 69.
- 39 Foucault [1978] 1990.
- 40 Ibid..
- 41 Turner [1893] 1994, 35.
- 42 Ibid., 36.
- 43 Ibid., 37.
- 44 Ibid., 56.
- 45 Jacobson 2000.
- 46 Cosgrove 1995, 34.
- 47 J. Graves 2001, 129.
- 48 Ibid., 131.
- 49 Deep fears of “the enemy within” resonate strongly with contemporary fears of domestic terrorism in the wake of the September 11, 2001 attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center: anxieties regarding not only the external “other” but imagined internal threats to the national body have led to calls for the purging of “alien elements” and reaffirmation of the narrow boundaries of the nation. This has been clearly illustrated by the increase in violence toward Muslims in the wake of the attacks. It is also important to note that, even in efforts to include Muslims in the national body, the terms on which Muslims are included—that is, what constitutes acceptable behavior and what is suspect—are tightly bound within the liberal norms of Western national rationalities.
- 50 For example, W. G. Ramsay from South Carolina wrote two articles in the *Southern Agriculturalist* in 1839 in which he argued, “We are almost tempted to believe that there must have been more Adams than one, each variety of colour having its own original parent” (quoted in Horsman 1981, 141).

Abetted by the popularizing zeal of Josiah Nott and George Gliddon, Agassiz and Morton helped the scientific postulations behind theories of polygenesis become widely accepted. In an influential book first published in 1852, *Types of Mankind*, Nott and Gliddon took these theories to one of their seemingly natural conclusions, proclaiming whites as the carriers of civilization (Horsman 1981). They wrote: "The creator had implanted in this group of races an instinct that, in spite of themselves, drives them through all difficulties, to carry out their great white mission of civilizing the earth. It is not reason, or philanthropy, which urges them on; but it is destiny" (ibid., 132). By conquering the globe and, in particular, expanding westward, they reasoned, Caucasians were "fulfilling a law of nature" (ibid., 136). The overriding message of *Types of Mankind* was that superior races would make the world a better place by exterminating, or at least governing, the inferior races that stood in their way.

51 Horsman 1981, 131.

52 Ibid., 130.

53 Ibid., 134. Debates about Darwin's ideas of natural selection and species diversity and their relationship to race are far too involved to engage in detail here, but they warrant brief comment. More than any other theory, Darwin's theory of evolution (written in 1860) became deeply intertwined with racial debates and anchored even more firmly in the popular imagination this conception of race as a subset of naturalized hierarchies of difference. Intentionally or not, Darwin both drew from and contributed to debates about race. And while his position directly countered ideas about the polygenesis of the human race, it opened the door for new ways of understanding racial difference. Herbert Spencer, Ernst Haeckel, and members of the rising eugenics movement in the United States were deeply influenced by Darwinian concepts, as well as by Mendelian theories of heredity in farm animals. Both were harnessed to explain a wide variety of moral, intellectual, and social traits in humans, including poverty, patriotism, and, of course, racial difference. Spencer's earlier work also influenced Darwin's own thinking. See Spencer (1855), *The Principles of Psychology*, for his early ideas of evolution. He and nine other well-known British intellectuals formed Club X to discuss Darwin's ideas.

54 Selden 1999.

55 He later became president of the American Breeder Association and director of Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory.

56 Selden 1999, 4.

57 Ibid., 22.

58 These efforts echo German eugenic projects that were taking place at the same time. In fact, Germany directly mirrored American sterilization programs, the Immigration Act, and the research at Cold Spring Harbor, which the American eugenics movement had developed for the creation of its own

"racial hygiene movement." In fact, Davenport and the leading German eugenicist Eugene Fisher (whom Hitler relied directly upon in *Mein Kampf*) were such close colleagues that Davenport asked Fisher to take over as chair of the International Federation of Eugenics when he stepped down. Nazi and U.S. notions of race are in fact far more closely linked than is often acknowledged.

59 These were President Calvin Coolidge's comments as he signed the 1924 Immigration Act. See J. Graves 2001. By 1915, the rise of the eugenics movement had helped spawn antimiscegenation laws in twenty-eight states, invalidating marriages between "Negroes and white persons"; six of those states went so far as to write this prohibition into their constitutions. For example, Virginia's Racial Integrity Act of 1924 warned of the "dysgenic" dangers of mixing the blood of difference races. The law declared that "it shall thereafter be unlawful for any white person in this State to marry any save a white person, or a person with no other admixture of blood than white." (Source: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aso/databank/entries/dh23eu.html>.) These very sentiments are frighteningly parallel to those echoed in Nazi Germany twenty years later. Dr. Gerhard Frey, founder of the German People's Union and a Nazi activist, similarly stated in 1933 that "Germany should remain German."

60 I borrow the notion of "hidden attachments" from an essay by Dennis Cosgrove (1995). Cosgrove's argument is similar to mine here in that he also finds race a hidden attachment to contemporary environmentalism. Furthermore, I do not mean to accuse all environmentalists of racist writings, for many did in fact speak out, as Lindqvist and others have emphasized (see Lindqvist 1997). Rather, I want to point out that the idea that race is a natural biological determinant of undesirable social behaviors and traits was commensurable with the ideas of nature that were at the heart of the early environmental movement. Understandings of the meanings of race and racism have not been consistent over time.

61 Strong 1988.

62 Spence 1999, 23.

63 Indeed, modern notions of wilderness were not created in a vacuum and did not simply emerge self-evidently by virtue of John Muir's or others' wanderings and discoveries of what was "really" there. Instead, stories of the discovery of pristine wilderness gained relevance and support because they emerged from and addressed prevailing anxieties around the need to protect the purity of the body and of the nation—and not just any bodies, but white bodies, and their associated pure blood. In other words, the term "wilderness" and the meanings conferred to it emerged not through objective observation of a "real," timeless nature, but rather through historical sedimentation of discourses that incorporate notions of race and class. The point here is that meanings of wilderness have not come into the world fully

- formed; neither have they been simply induced from dispassionate observation of socially disconnected material objects. But these meanings of wilderness are also not produced by the intention of the subject who makes the observations. Rather, these understandings of wilderness connect present acts to prior ones in ways that conform to the iterable norms, fears, and understandings of the social and political context in which they are created.
- 64 Solnit 1994, 220.  
65 Ibid.  
66 Meyerson 2001, ix.  
67 Ehrlich 2000, 85.  
68 Spence 1999, 133.  
69 The opposition of wilderness and modernity was not a gesture of Muir's invention, but his life reaffirmed it and made him a passionate preacher of this divide. While he worked making parts for carriages in his late twenties, Muir stopped to untie the belt of a machine with a file. The file flipped up and hit him directly in the eye. He was convinced that his eye was lost, though it was only partially damaged. However, Muir had to spend four weeks in a dark room to allow it to heal; when he got out he was left with an even greater disdain for machines and factories. The incident helped spur Muir's trip west in search of Yosemite, which he had read about in a small pamphlet. He set out in the "direction by the wildest, leafiest and least trodden way [he] could find." Immediately upon his arrival in San Francisco, he asked a fellow traveler (who was British): "What is the quickest way out of the city?" The traveler asked him: "Where do you want to go?" "Anywhere that is wild," Muir responded. Muir had already found what he wanted well before he arrived in Yosemite, well before he "discovered" true wilderness. What he sought was an Other against which to pit modernity, with which to measure the fall of man from grace. Like transcendentalists before him, Muir found God in nature, and with God on his side, he drew ever more clearly the line between that which was "pure," "cleansing," "light-filled," and true, and that which was "fallen," "degraded," polluted, and impure. The "grandeur" of the mountains was on one side, and the "squalor" of the cities and their inhabitants on the other; "God's wild gardens" and their protectors set against the "temple destroyers."
- 70 Braun 2002, 9.  
71 Stegner [1960] 1969, 4; emphasis added.  
72 Braun 2003, 197; emphasis in original.  
73 Haraway 1989, 12.  
74 Althusser 1977.  
75 Oelschlaeger 1991, 165.  
76 Whitman [1860] 1961, 319.  
77 Horsman 1981, 235.  
78 Ibid.  
79 Marsh is widely considered to be the founder of the environmental movement in the United States. He was more than this, though; he was also a lawyer, a manufacturer, a philosopher, a congressman, a diplomat, and one of the founders and earliest supporters of the Smithsonian Institution—in short, he was a broad and influential thinker of his day. His most celebrated work, *Man and Nature*, is widely seen as the standard-bearer of ecological thinking in this country. Lewis Mumford and others considered it to be the "fountainhead of the conservation movement" (Mumford [1931] 1955). Gifford Pinchot called it "epoch-making," and more recently, Stewart Udall claimed it to be the "beginning of land wisdom in this country" (Strong [1971] 1988, 27, 36).  
80 Quoted in Horsman 1981, 181.  
81 Horsman 1981, 1983.  
82 Ibid., 183.  
83 Marsh [1864] 1965, xxvi.  
84 Galton 1904, 2.  
85 Ibid.  
86 Support for Galton's position was broad, spanning the social spectrum from John D. Rockefeller to Emma Goldman. Even the noted leftist writer George Bernard Shaw said, in response to Galton's paper, "Eugenics: Its Definition, Scope and Aims": "I agree with the paper, and I go so far as to say that there is now no reasonable excuse for refusing to face the fact that nothing but a eugenic religion can save our civilization from the fate that has overtaken all previous civilizations" (Shaw [1904] 1965, 14). With these words, Shaw echoed Marsh and Galton—and amplified common fears of the decline of civilization in the wake of man's folly against nature. The point of recounting this is to recognize the ways that both nationally and internationally the eugenics movement grew well beyond its initial forms and was put into service for social reformers including, ironically, Jewish and African American radicals. See Stepan 1991; S. Weiss 1987; Köhl 2002. All of these references point to a broader social adherence to and support for the eugenics movement than is commonly recognized.  
87 Pinchot [1947] 1987, 79.  
88 Muir also wrote an essay about forests called "Thinking Like a Forest."  
89 The proposition was a central debate within the Sierra Club for over a year, starting in 1998.  
90 See Petersen 1998.  
91 Ibid, 113.  
92 Abbey 1988, 126. See also Talbot 1990.  
93 Petersen 1998, 115.  
94 Here again, articulations of difference become tightly wrapped around the body of nature, both as national landscape and as internal marker of an essential identity. As such, the protection and improvement of nature deeply

- link blood and landscape; the threat of pollution of this body necessitates the proper governance and management of nature for its and humanity's own good. Virile white males step up to protect and improve the body of nature in the face of foreign threats to its purity. This management requires masculinity, science, and proper governance.
- 95 Leopold [1949] 1987, xxiii, 196–97.
- 96 *Ibid.*, 172–73.
- 97 Leopold's ([1949] 1987) answer to concerns regarding nature's sickness is proper "husbandry" and a recognition of the value of America's "wild roitage." This "wild roitage" is similar to Muir's notions, as are his ideas of wilderness as the fountain and purity from which humanity has emerged and which humanity must now protect. His attention to the managerial notion of "husbandry" also owes a profound debt to George Perkins Marsh.
- 98 Leopold [1949] 1987, 192, 177.
- 99 *Ibid.*, xxii.
- 100 *Ibid.*, 177.
- 101 Mitman 2006.
- 102 Leopold [1949] 1987, 195.
- 103 *Ibid.*, 175.
- 104 Sam Hitt, interview, April 16, 1999.
- 105 Chellis Glendinning, interview with the author, Chimayó, N.M., Feb. 2, 2000.
- 106 "Susan Miller" is a fictitious name. She came on her own time, not as an employee of the Forest Service, and therefore asked that if I quote her I not use her real name. She specifically cited the political nature of the conflict over Vallecitos and the fact that it was not her jurisdiction as reasons for remaining anonymous.
- 107 It is, in fact, an old forest stand. The lower trunks of the ponderosa pine turn from a pale red to a light shade of yellow as they get older and larger, and the floor of the old stands has a considerable undergrowth of grasses.
- 108 The edge of a forest creates a habitat that supports a large diversity of species.
- 109 Sam Hitt, conversation with the author, Santa Fe, N.M., March 12, 2000.
- 110 Forest Guardians, Earth Day meeting, Santa Fe Public Library, April 20, 1999. I should note here that the zero-cut campaign was later renamed the National Forest Protection Campaign.
- 111 Forest Guardians, Earth Day meeting.
- 112 *Ibid.*
- 113 Locals flouted a federal injunction and "trespassed" on Forest Service land to continue harvesting the fuelwood on which many base their livelihoods.
- 114 Santiago Juarez, conversation with the author, Española, N.M., Feb. 16, 1999.
- 115 The groups to which Matthews refers are SWOP (Southwest Organizing Project) and the Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice.
- 116 Sam never mentions that there is at least a 50 percent return flow from the fields.
- 117 Matthews 1999, 3.
- 118 The Intel Corporation in Albuquerque uses more than seven million gallons of water a day in the middle of a desert to produce Pentium chips, and urban sprawl is probably the most threatening process facing the Southwest today. See <http://www.swop.net/intelinside.htm>, on the Southwest Organizing Project's Web site (Matthews 1999).
- 119 Kay Matthews and Mark Schiller, conversation with the author, El Valle, N.M., April 3, 2000.
- 120 Chellis Glendinning, Kay Matthews, her partner Mark Schiller, and a handful of other activists have all lived in northern New Mexico for years, and all of them have at one time or another been intimately involved in environmental struggles. In fact, some of them have even worked with Sam Hitt in the past. But the impact of living in this area, coupled with their commitment to other issues such as labor rights, racial justice, and local sovereignty, have changed how they understand and engage in environmental struggles.
- 121 Glendinning 1996. For a complete copy of the letter, see <http://www.lajicarita.org/justice.htm>.
- 122 *Ibid.*
- 123 The letter "Inhabited Wilderness" was printed in different newspapers; see *La Jicarita News* 1997.
- 124 *La Jicarita News* 1997.
- 125 One of the most recent, intensely public, and long-fought battles over New Mexico's Carson National Forest was the battle over La Manga and Agua/Caballos timber sales—a part of the Vallecitos Sustained Yield Unit, or vsyu. The vsyu was established by the Forest Service in 1948 as one of a number of test sites on federal lands in which the logging and processing of timber are guaranteed for local communities (Goldberg 1997, 15–21; Wilmsen 1997). In most cases, the Forest Service policy is to present a timber sale for competitive bid; in the case of the vsyu, the Forest Service awards a bid to a lumber company at the timber's appraised value in exchange for the company's promise to employ only local loggers, provide a sawmill, and conduct primary manufacturing on-site, as well as provide Hispanic residents with a supply of wood for domestic use. However, logging companies and the Forest Service have continually tried to dissolve the vsyu, only to have community members challenge these efforts.
- 126 Wilmsen 1997, 167.
- 127 Quoted in Matthews 1999, 1.
- 128 Matthews 1999. In my interviews with Sam Hitt, John Talberth, Bryan Bird,

and many others, it became clear that none of them wanted anything to do with compromises. After La Compañía Ocho won the right to log the La Manga timber sale in court, Bird declared: "We will appeal and . . . we will litigate" in order to stop the logging in the area. Both Bird and Talberth were most centrally interested in "ecosystem health and integrity" and "wildlands restoration and preservation," and they were committed to a new mantra—"to protect and restore native biological diversity." They were, in their own words, "uninterested in making concessions" (Bryan Bird, interview with the author, Santa Fe, N.M., Jan. 30, 1999). As Talberth stated in relation to the sale: "There are places you just cannot compromise. . . . Letting old growth be slaughtered for commercial gain is clearly one of them" (John Talberth, interview with the author, Santa Fe, N.M., Jan. 29, 1999).

- 129 Quoted in Matthews 1999, 3.  
130 Ike DeVargas, quoted in Goldberg 1997, 19.  
131 *Ibid.*, 21.  
132 Alfredo Padilla, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., Dec. 13, 1999.  
133 Sam Córdova, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., Nov. 12, 1999.  
134 Montoya, Morales, and Tafoya 1997.  
135 *Ibid.*  
136 Hitt, interview, April 16, 1999.  
137 *Ibid.*  
138 Bird, conversation.  
139 My notion of environmental citizenship here is an effort to think about the formation of subject through environmental politics that emphasize a relationality of these formations. The notion was influenced by Adriana Petryna's (2002) notion of biological citizenship that was central to post-Chernobyl politics in the Ukraine.  
140 Hitt, interview, April 16, 1999.  
141 Talberth and Bird 1998, 4.  
142 See Foreman et al. 1992.  
143 Foreman 1992, 6.  
144 Talberth and Bird 1998, 9.  
145 This approach to "wilderness preservation" is not unique to Forest Guardians. The Sierra Club's broader national zero-cut campaign—which proposes to end all commercial logging on federal lands—as well as the more recent zero-grazing campaign, express this same hubris. Indeed, the zero-cut campaign has been at the center of national forest debates since 1997. However, some environmentalists from northern New Mexico dissented. Most notably, the longtime award-winning George Grossman, a well-respected member of the local Sierra Club chapter, came out in favor of the cut. His position, however, led to serious tensions not only between the local chapter and the state chapter, but also within the national policy of the Sierra Club.

Members of the Guardians, many of them members of the Sierra Club, complained to the state chapter and members of the board of the national Sierra Club that the local chapter was at odds with the national policy. They claimed that Grossman "violated Club policy, misrepresented the Sierra Club, and misused the Sierra Club name." They went on to call for Grossman to "step down from his position." As one member of the state chapter and a supporter of the Guardians explained at a regional Sierra Club meeting: "There is a tendency for this group [the Santa Fe Group of the Sierra Club and Grossman in particular] to wander away from the pure environmental focus to the sociological. . . . [Hispanos] seem to think they have a right to live rurally and they can take it off the taxpayers any way they want." The censorship of the Santa Fe Group of the Sierra Club from both within and without, coupled with pressure from Forest Guardians, further divided environmentalists in Santa Fe and Albuquerque, forcing people to choose between two very different strains of the environmental movement.

- 146 Max Córdova's 1999 letter was widely distributed to politicians and activists throughout northern New Mexico.  
147 Córdova 1999.  
148 *Ibid.*  
149 R. White 1995, 173. I am indebted to Anand Pandian for bringing this quotation to my attention.  
150 Charlotte Talberth, interview with the author, Santa Fe, N.M., Aug. 27, 2000. See also <http://lists.ibiblio.org/pipermail/permaculture/1999-March/000519.html>.  
151 N. Smith 1984; R. White 1995; Cronon 1996.  
152 Braun and Castree 1998.

#### FIVE "SMOKEY BEAR IS A WHITE RACIST PIG"

- 1 Lawter 1994, 367.
- 2 Jerry Fuentes, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., July 17, 2000.
- 3 Moises Morales, interview with the author, Tierra Amarilla, N.M., Nov. 14, 1999.
- 4 Santiago Juarez, interview with the author, Santa Fe, N.M., March 17, 1999.
- 5 Salomon Martínez, conversation with the author, Córdova, N.M., Oct. 13, 1999.
- 6 Crockett Dumas, interview with the author, Peñasco, N.M., March 28, 1999.
- 7 Chicano cultural nationalism and Aztlán, both present in New Mexico, have been sometimes separate and sometimes interconnected movements there. The Mexican American movement has much older roots, predates the Chicano movement in the United States, and links Mexican American identities much more directly with Mexico. The Chicano movement has some-



times drawn on Mexican symbols such as Zapata or the Mexican flag's colors as part of the movement, but often it has forcefully separated itself from Mexico. However, in New Mexico, the Chicano movement was complicated by a particular brand of Mexican nationalism, which linked the history to Mexican occupation with land titling of the territory where many of the land grants were created or ratified, in the case of Spanish land grants, by the Mexican government. In fact, at its height, the Chicano movement's leader, Reis López Tijerina, went to Mexico to ask the Mexican government to address the lack of willingness on the part of the U.S. government to honor the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Though the Chicano movement is clearly separate from the Mexican nationalism of Mexico, the use of the flag, the constant recourse to Mexican symbols, and the rhetoric were different from practices in many other parts of the United States, leading to a hybrid Mexican nationalism and Chicano movement in New Mexico alone.

- 8 Knapp 1983; Morrison [1976] 1989; USDA Forest Service 1968, 2000.
- 9 Barker 1982; Morrison [1976] 1989.
- 10 Lawter 1994; USDA Forest Service 2000. See also "Bear Facts" at <http://www.smokeybear.com/kids/facts.asp>.
- 11 I in no way assume that this is the way in which the forest, or even Smokey, has been constituted in the United States. I do, however, want to argue that by looking at the particular formations of the national forests and of Smokey Bear, we can challenge normative ideas of Smokey as representing the "public" and ideas of the forest belonging equally to people within the national territory.
- 12 Indeed, the very structure of the nation's geobody is imagined in arboreal form, from the historic "roots" of the nation to its "branches" of government (J. Scott 1998; Winichakul 1994). At a time when novice American nationals may have questioned the new nation's cohesiveness or stability, this rooting in arboreal symbols worked to naturalize the imagined community as a strong, enduring, properly placed one (B. Anderson [1983] 1991; Malkki 1995, 1997; McClintock 1995; Moore, Kosek, and Pandian 2003). So a bear—first created, then conveniently discovered—became a natural choice as the defender of the forests and the nation.
- 13 Stevens 1945. Though Stevens is clear in his intent of reducing the number of Smokey ads, it is clear that this was not the course that was ultimately taken, in view of the continued use of Smokey in classrooms, the records of numbers of "packets" of Smokey material posted, and the number of reports of continuing destruction of these materials as described in Forest Service reports.
- 14 USDA Forest Service 1948, 132.
- 15 *Ibid.*, 48.
- 16 Antonio Sanchez, interview with the author, Córdova, N.M., Aug. 12, 1999. The name of the interviewee has been changed at his request.

- 17 Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Program 1956, 12.
- 18 See Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Program 1956, 1957.
- 19 Alfredo Padilla, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., April 27, 2002.
- 20 Symbols that link the trees to the nation go back to the first of the nation's flags and coins (the pine tree shilling), and can be traced to the national symbol of strength in everything from the U.S. Eugenics Society's logo, to World War I posters depicting the strength and rootedness of the nation, to the images of great western painters. Similarly, there are images of fire in Pinchot's declaration that fires were "dragons of devastation" and the "primary enemy" of the forest and through the forest to the nation. Pyne traces some of the symbolic representations of fire, particularly the Fire Wolf and, to a lesser extent, the demon Fire (see Pyne 1982 and Carle 2002).
- 21 R. O'Toole 1988, 100.
- 22 *Ibid.*
- 23 Pinchot 1901, 39. See also Pinchot [1947] 1987.
- 24 Scientific forest management originally developed in the mid- to late eighteenth century, primarily in Prussia and Saxony. Rather than simply setting off plots in a rotational harvesting cycle, as had been done before, scientific forestry espoused intensive forest mensuration and corresponding management to produce the largest possible consistent volume of wood. This approach became a central theme of the U.S. Forest Service in the early twentieth century, largely introduced and championed by Gifford Pinchot, the chief forester of the service at the beginning of the twentieth century, who was schooled in forestry in France to use the most advanced German scientific forestry techniques, including simplifying the diversity of the forest to favor commercially valuable woods and managing for sustainable yields to produce—in Pinchot's words—"the greatest good for the greatest number" (see Pinchot 1909; J. Scott 1998).
- 25 Morrison [1976] 1989.
- 26 Carle 2002, 3.
- 27 There is no doubt that there have been large fire seasons such as that of 1910, in which millions of acres in Montana and Idaho burned and more than eighty firefighters were killed. The fear of fire has roots in both the materiality of fire and the economic and social costs of fire. My argument is not simply a "cultural" argument about fire but is rather that the material and economic histories of fire are inseparably bound to the ways in which fire has been made intelligible within historical and culturally specific moments. (For books that have focused more on these aspects of fire history, see Carle 2002; Herron 2001; Langston 1995; Pyne 1982.)
- 28 Pyne 1982, 165.
- 29 *Ibid.*
- 30 Pyne 1982.
- 31 James 1921, 2.

- 32 For IWW (Industrial Workers of the World) union organizers and workers, see Pyne 1982; for Native Americans, see Warren 1997; for Hispanics, see deBuys 1985; for immigrant Latinos and homeless persons in Los Angeles, see Davis 1998.
- 33 Hurst 1986. The Forest Service stepped up its efforts to fight fires and by 1924, at the agency's insistence, the Clarke-McNary Act was passed by Congress to provide greater control and cooperation in fighting forest fires. The attitude of new forest managers was that science and technology were bringing them within reach of being able to control fire. As an example of this intent, the "10 a.m. rule" was established, stipulating that all forest fires were to be controlled by 10 a.m. the day after their discovery (R. O'Toole 1988; Pyne 1982).
- 34 Pyne 1982. To this day the Forest Service fears these incendiary elements in the forest, most recently degenerates and the homeless, and the Department of Homeland Security has officially issued a warning to Forest Service rangers throughout the Southwest that "intelligence sources" have determined that Al Qaeda operatives may have plans to set fire to the nation's forests.
- 35 Carle 2002; McDowell 1993. The Japanese were reported to have launched more than nine thousand "fire bomb balloons" during 1944 and 1945. These were supposed to ride the jet stream air current and land on America's West Coast. They landed in twenty-six states, but because they landed mostly in winter the damage was minimal (Carle 2002, 83; McDowell 1993).
- 36 J. Anderson 1992; Carle 2002; Knapp 1983; Lawter 1994.
- 37 Lawter 1994, 29; USDA Forest Service 1968.
- 38 Lawter 1994, 30. One agent for Lord and Thomas went on to say that "the flag was waving and I was anxious to do my part" (also in Lawter 1994, 30).
- 39 Ibid.
- 40 Mendenhall 1942.
- 41 Griffith 1983; Jackall and Hirota 2000; Lykins 2003.
- 42 Knapp 1983; Lawter 1994; J. O'Toole 1991.
- 43 Carle 2002; Hays 1959; Hirt 1994; R. O'Toole 1988; Pyne 1982.
- 44 Pyne 1982, 174. This is not to say that a national fire policy did not exist, but rather that the scale and scope of cooperation between agencies, the consistency of implementation efforts and of messages, and the linking of disparate pieces of Forest Service land into a collective national body constituted a significant shift in the ways in which national fire policies were implemented. The Clark-McNary Act is a good illustration of this: Though the act was passed in 1924, its funding and the scope and national vision of the program were transformed by the war (in 1944 alone, funding under the act went from \$2 million to almost \$6.5 million), allowing a new level of cooperation between state and federal forest fire prevention efforts (Pyne 1982).
- 45 This is most clearly seen in the changing advertisements and representa-

- tions of fire prevention efforts. For a quick and representative illustration, see the forestry field's flagship, the *Journal of American Forestry*, whose special fire issue in April 1939 shows the most prominent state-sponsored ads for forest fire prevention. The messages and the representations demonstrate widely disparate approaches to fire prevention.
- 46 Hammatt 1944c.
- 47 Acuña 1981; Jones 1993; Rosales 1996.
- 48 I am not arguing simply that fire prevention is racist, but rather that the collective national body that is threatened by these agents of sabotage has been constituted in narrowly, racially defined terms, as is made clear in this book by the narrow nationalist representation of the Advertising Council's ads. The move both to nationalize and racialize the forests at this moment helped make local forests part of a collective national imaginary; also, it did so in a way that was racialized as largely white.
- 49 Hammatt 1944c, 2-3.
- 50 Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Program 1956; Lawter 1994; Pyne 1982.
- 51 It is likely that the image also comes from an Anthony Euwer poem entitled "Red Wolves," quoted in Pyne 1982, 175.
- 52 In such posters, Asian men were commonly characterized in ways that feminized them, as seen in the long fingernails in this image, as well as being portrayed animalistically—linking race to a savage nature.
- 53 Hall 1988.
- 54 Hammatt 1944c.
- 55 Belding 1942b.
- 56 Belding 1947.
- 57 Ibid.
- 58 Hammatt 1944c; Pyne 1982.
- 59 Foote, Cone and Belding, Inc. 1946.
- 60 Belding 1947.
- 61 Ibid., 2.
- 62 Lawter 1994, 40.
- 63 Morrison [1976] 1989, 7.
- 64 Hammatt 1944a; Lawter 1994.
- 65 Lawter 1994, 39.
- 66 Belding was reluctant to move away from the hard-sell, anti-war approach, so even as Smokey was being created, Belding and others at Foote, Cone and Belding were designing a new campaign entitled "American Enemy." But his and others' concerns were alleviated over time by those who convinced him that he could perpetuate the same message in a more palatable and widely consumable form.
- 67 The few exceptions might be the eagle, the Statue of Liberty, and the national flag itself. The fact that the Smokey icon exists on a par with these others is, in itself, indicative of its importance to the nation.

- 68 Lawter 1994; USDA Forest Service 1974.
- 69 Lawter 1994, 41. This number includes people who claim to have something to do with the "real" bear from New Mexico as well. It is most likely an exaggeration, but the number of people who have tied themselves to Smokey's life (either as image or as bear) is astonishing.
- 70 Hammatt 1944c.
- 71 Lawter 1994, 42–43.
- 72 Throughout the telling of the story, people who have written accounts of the event trip over the accounts that others relay of Smokey and the "facts" that surround his life. The "official" story is so fixed in people's minds, and has been told and retold in such a specific manner, that it has come to gain as much influence on the story's retelling as any individual's own memories. The biographers constantly tell two or three versions of what happened during any event so as not to slight the different versions, all of which are deeply ingrained in people's minds.
- 73 Lawter 1994, 336.
- 74 William Hurst, interview with the author, Albuquerque, N.M., Jan. 7, 2000.
- 75 O'Leary 1962.
- 76 Ibid.
- 77 *Milwaukee Journal* 1962
- 78 Lawter 1994, 327–28.
- 79 The issue of impotence raises a number of tricky questions that I do not have room to expand on here. It is not clear whether he was technically impotent, *unable* to produce offspring, or simply uninterested in Goldie or perhaps "queer." In the case of a heteronormative Smokey, "impotence" is the only possible acceptable explanation for a white, male bear.
- 80 Lawter 1994, 328.
- 81 Gause 1976.
- 82 The history of exclusionary nationalism is in no way specific to Smokey. It is manifested in the features that granted only landed white men the right to vote, the eugenics movements that worked hard to protect the white nation from immigrant hordes, the Immigrant Act and the Chinese Exclusion Act, and the nation's "containing" of African Americans through the Jim Crow laws and of Mexican American immigration through the *bracero* programs. These and many other efforts have sought to protect both individuals and the national body—largely conceived of as white—from the contaminating effects, on individuals and on the nation, of racial mixing. Much of recent historiography paints the history of this racist nationalism as weakening after World War II; however, these forms of racist nationalism continue to be perpetuated through different and sometimes less overt means. From efforts by right-wing groups that push exclusionary legislation such as California's Proposition 187 and Proposition 209, to significant sectors of the

environmental movement attempting to protect the nation's environment from immigrant populations, to the federal government's efforts to protect the nation from the marriage of same-sex couples, exclusionary nationalism is alive and well. To believe that because the Advertising Council no longer places racist depictions of Japanese on its posters it no longer conveys ideas of exclusionary nationalism is to miss the ways in which forms of difference continue to manifest themselves both in contemporary representation of the nation and in the material lives of individuals.

- 83 Lawter 1994.
- 84 USDA Forest Service 2004.
- 85 Aldo Leopold, who worked as a forest ranger in northern New Mexico, lamented the eradication program (which he was initially involved with) in his book *A Sand County Almanac*. He also later insightfully saw connections between the colonial presence of the Forest Service and that of the Spanish Empire. Of his early involvement in northern New Mexico, he wrote that "we forest officers, who acquiesced in the extinguishment of the bear, knew a local rancher who had plowed up a dagger engraved with the name of one of Coronado's captains. We spoke harshly of the Spaniards who, in their zeal for gold and converts, had needlessly extinguished the native Indians. It did not occur to us that we, too, were captains of an invasion too sure of its own righteousness" (Leopold [1949] 1987, 137). I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer of my book for this insight and citation.
- 86 These images work to fuse national-historic symbols with the forest and invoke patriotism as a motivating force for forest protection. The nationalism, summoned both explicitly and implicitly, works for certain interests. But Smokey's message had to be carefully defined. At first, the Smokey campaign was almost scrapped because the lumber industry, which commented on the plan, believed that the message might be used to promote conservation against its activities. As Hammatt wrote to Belding about growing obstacles to the fire prevention efforts, "There are many owners of stumpage and manufacturers of lumber who are very suspicious that the Forest Service will use this Wartime Fire Prevention campaign as a vehicle through which to preach public control of cutting practices on privately owned forest land, and there are members of the Forest Service who believe some of those owners and manufacturers might be glad to throw a spike or two in the wheel of a forest fire prevention campaign undertaken in any large way by the Forest Service" (Lawter 1994, 33). In another memo two weeks later, he seems to have come to an accommodation with the timber industry: They agreed that "[as long as] we keep the fire prevention message on protecting forests from fire and do not cross into private lands or the message of forest conservation they will support the effort" (Hammatt 1944a, 2). Industry, shielded by Smokey, was able to help persuade the

- Forest Service to continue a policy of zero tolerance for fire, despite the fact that the Forest Service has debated the beneficial effects of fire on ecosystems since at least the 1920s (Carle 2002; Pyne 1982).
- 87 See, for example, Gilroy 2000; Hall 1985, 1988; Haraway 1989, 1997; Moore, Kosek, and Pandian 2003; Wade 2002.
- 88 This is not to say that there were not growing discourses of inclusion by the federal government concerning questions of race. However, these efforts at inclusion were made as the concentration camps, the zoot suit riots, the unequal treatment of returning African American servicemen, and the many other examples of pernicious racism that existed after the war and that led to the civil rights movement made clear that what is considered by many historians to be a general movement toward improved race relations by the U.S. government during this period was spotty at best. Moreover, my intention here is not to weigh in saying it is better or worse but simply to demonstrate that racist nationalism continues, that it is linked to understandings and definitions of U.S. nationalism, and that it is manifested in part in the animosity toward Smokey in northern New Mexico.
- 89 L. Warren 1997.
- 90 Horsman 1981, 236. Many other Americans were convinced that empire building was not just beneficial for them but was in fact good for the entire world as well (Bauer 1974). In fact, many saw the colonizing of Mexican territory as an act of social reform and touted the humanitarian benefits of taking more than one-third of Mexico's territory by force. Walt Whitman wrote in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* in support of going to war with Mexico: "We pant to see our country and rule far reaching on inasmuch as it will take off the shackles that prevent men the even chance of being happy and good" (Horsman 1981, 235). Writing in the *American Whig Review*, Andrew Johnson claimed that the socially degraded Mexican civilization "has reached its acme" and that "the Anglo-Saxon race has been selected as the rod of her retribution" (Horsman 1981, 237; see also Rodríguez, J. Vincent, and K. Vincent 1997). Whether seen as an act of liberation or as one of retribution, the war was justified by the assumption that the Mexican race was "lazy, ignorant, and of course, vicious and dishonest" (Thompson, quoted in Horsman 1981, 212).
- 91 Horsman 1981, 245.
- 92 *Ibid.*, 241.
- 93 Horsman 1981.
- 94 Miguel Antonio Otero, one of the first institutionally supported Hispano political leaders in the United States, was governor of New Mexico between 1897 and 1906 and pushed hard for statehood. His line of argument was this: It was the moral duty of a paternalistic United States to help the citizens of New Mexico. He stated, "I understand that some people are afraid of the expense and responsibility attached to our becoming a state. But such fears are unworthy of American manhood. If they were to prevail in ordinary affairs of life no one . . . would incur the duties and responsibilities of family life" (quoted in Horsman 1981, 173).
- 95 Acuña 1981; McWilliams [1948] 1968.
- 96 Deutsch 1992.
- 97 Fuentes, interview, July 17, 2000.
- 98 Manny Trujillo, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., Feb. 23, 1999.
- 99 Alan Simpson, interview with the author, Los Alamos, March 27, 2000.
- 100 These include in particular the famed White Caps activities, as well as much of the union organizing that went on in Las Vegas, New Mexico.
- 101 Ike DeVargas, interview with the author, Servilleta Plaza, N.M., March 12, 2000; Moises Gonzáles, interview with the author, Española, N.M., March 13, 2001; M. Morales, interview, Nov. 14, 1999.
- 102 Nabokov 1969.
- 103 Acuña 1981; Kosek 2004; Nabokov 1969; Rosales 1996.
- 104 Acuña 1981; Blawis 1971; Rosales 1996.
- 105 Navarro 1995; Marín 1977. The plan was the product of the National Liberation Youth Conference organized by the activist Corky Gonzales in Denver. A special emphasis on notions of racial unity was the work of the Mexican philosopher José Vasconcelos, who posited that a mixture of Iberians and aboriginal Meso-Americans, whom he referred to as "la Raza Cosmica" (the cosmic race), was superior and was destined to take over the hemisphere because of its hybrid strength.
- 106 Rosales 1996, 181.
- 107 Marín 1977; Navarro 1995; Rosales 1996.
- 108 Santiago Juarez, interview with the author, Española, N.M., Aug. 11, 1999.
- 109 Acuña 1981.
- 110 M. Morales, interview, Nov. 14, 1999.
- 111 *Ibid.*
- 112 The Forest Service had to work hard to deal with what was officially named "the Spanish American problem" of northern New Mexico. A series of policies, such as the Hassell report and the Hertz policy, which arose out of the political tensions of the 1960s and 1970s as attempts to institute a new policy for working with Hispanos, as well as more recent efforts to work with community forest initiatives and grazing policies, have made for small short-term gains but have done little to alleviate the deep distrust and antagonism that many feel toward the Forest Service.
- 113 Gene Onken, interview with the author, Española, N.M., July 1, 1999.
- 114 *Ibid.*
- 115 Max Córdova, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., June 18, 1999; see Kosek 2004.

- 116 Padilla, interview, April 27, 2002.  
 117 He occupies this location on the cover of *Newsweek* in the "Be my guest" poster. See *Newsweek*, June 2, 1952.  
 118 Haraway 1989, 11.  
 119 Braun 2002; Moore, Kosek, and Pandian 2003; Williams 1980.  
 120 Du Bois [1903] 1995; Gilroy 2000; J. Goldberg 1997; Hesse 2000; Volpp 1996; Wade 2002.  
 121 In many ways I am following the argument of Judith Butler in her piece "Merely Cultural." There is a cultural argument here that should not be apposed to the material but, on the contrary, should demonstrate the ways in which cultural arguments are inseparably tied to material objects. See also Sarah Jain's work on the "car culture" (Jain 2004).

#### SIX NUCLEAR NATURES

- 1 Unless otherwise cited, all quotes from Paula Montoya are based on two trips to Los Alamos from Truchas, on Oct. 16, 2000 and Oct. 2, 2002, as well as two additional interviews with her in 1999 (Truchas, N.M., July 17) and 2004 (Truchas, N.M., March 23). Note that "Paula Montoya" is not her real name; her name has been changed at her request.  
 2 This quote is from Jude Egan, a graduate student at the University of California at Berkeley, who did research on Los Alamos in 1999.  
 3 Unless, of course, one considers nuclear weapons production and pollution criminal acts.  
 4 See Coghlan 2004; Masco 1999a; Reichelt 1999.  
 5 Coghlan 2004. This strategy of economic dependence has been fostered by the powerful congressman Pete Dominici, who has, according to Coghlan, supported a nuclear economy "at great benefit to his career and cost to the state" (Coghlan 2004).  
 6 P. Montoya, conversation, Oct. 16, 2000.  
 7 Ibid.  
 8 Williams 1973, 32.  
 9 Joseph Garcia, interview with the author, Truchas, N.M., July 16, 1998.  
 10 Flora Garcia, conversation with the author, Truchas, N.M., July 16, 1998.  
 11 P. Montoya, conversation, Oct. 16, 2000.  
 12 Ibid. In truth, there is one other time such traffic is common: on the days when Social Security checks arrive, people come out of the post office and make a beeline for the casinos.  
 13 Lauren Reichelt, interview with the author, Española, N.M., Oct. 7, 2000.  
 14 P. Montoya, conversation, Oct. 16, 2000.  
 15 Father Roca, interview with the author, Chimayó, N.M., April 12, 1999.  
 16 Ibid.  
 17 Reichelt 1999.  
 18 P. Montoya, conversation, Oct. 16, 2000.  
 19 Langdon Toland, interview with the author, Los Alamos, N.M., July 8, 2004.  
 20 Joseph Garcia, interview.  
 21 P. Montoya, interview, March 23, 2004.  
 22 See Coghlan 2004; Masco 1999a; Reichelt 1999.  
 23 P. Montoya, conversation, Oct. 16, 2000.  
 24 J. Garcia, interview.  
 25 For "epidemilization," see Fanon [1952] 1986, 11; for "turn white or disappear," see *ibid.*, 100.  
 26 See Zahar 1974.  
 27 P. Montoya, conversation, Oct. 16, 2000.  
 28 Chuck Montano, interview with the author, Santa Fe, N.M., March April 20, 1999.  
 29 Ike DeVargas, interview with the author, Servilleta Plaza, N.M., March 12, 2000.  
 30 Ibid.  
 31 This heroin tar, or *chiva*, because of its price and potency, is the cheap tequila of heroin and the drug of choice in the valley. This particular batch was brought up from Mexico into northern New Mexico as part of a "drug stream" of the broader flow that the local police called a "flood" of drugs. But because the drug industry has been one of the more successful globalization stories, the substance could have come from places as diverse as Paraguay, Thailand, Afghanistan, Pakistan, or Iran. That night two other people died; by the end of the week, two more had overdosed. I witnessed the last of these deaths as one of the first responders for the Truchas Fire Department. To go into a house at 4:00 AM, meet dazed parents, a hysterical lover, and his three children, and see a young man slip into a coma and die made brutally real one of the sixty-eight deaths that took place in a small, barely populated rural area of the Southwest. The per capita death rate due to heroin overdose is higher in this area than in Los Angeles or New York or Chicago; it is the highest per capita death rate in the country, six times the national average.  
 32 P. Montoya, interview, March 23, 2004. I am also grateful to Chellis Glendinning for sharing with me her insights and writings on heroin in northern New Mexico.  
 33 P. Montoya, conversation, Oct. 16, 2000.  
 34 Toland, interview.  
 35 Ibid.  
 36 This is an enduring fiction of capitalism. Marx, though at times accepting an underlying logic that naturalizes the centrality of economics in social relations, refuses this divide that separates economics from politics, making inseparable in a powerful way the production of wealth and poverty. Nowhere is this fiction more clear than in the work of the cultural historian

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