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Women and Revolution: Race, Violence, and the Family
Romance in Literature of the Southwest

By

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ABSTRACT

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As a significant act of U.S. imperialism, the Mexican War doubled the territory, erected an international border between the two nations, and significantly complicated nineteenth- and early twentieth-century notions of race and gender relations. The Southwest territory, old Spanish borderlands, was the site of the first foreign war for the United States and it witnessed the most nationally-informing debates regarding the Indian question, the woman question, and how citizenship could be imagined and transformed in the age of Manifest Destiny.

This dissertation interrogates the mimetic link between nation and the domestic through a reconfiguration of the republican family romance and its monomaniacal preoccupation with gatekeeping whiteness as the sole signifier of political privilege and power. I examine Manifest Destiny in the context of U.S./Mexico relations framed by the Mexican War (1846-8) and the Mexican Revolution (1910). I look specifically at
how Mexican and Anglo-American women in the Southwest forge relationships between and among familial, cultural, and national spheres.

Chapter one examines the role of Enlightenment ideology and the captivity narrative in post-Mexican War interracial marriages. Chapter two probes the legal and racial consequences of Manifest Destiny expressed in interracial adoption plots. The third chapter investigates female travel narratives in the Southwest. Women soldiers and spies during the Mexican War, Civil War, and Mexican Revolution (1910) comprise the fourth chapter. The final chapter looks at women’s fight for suffrage during the Mexican Revolution. Among the authors and historical figures featured in this study are recovered authors María Amparo Ruiz de Burton, Jovita González, and María Cristina Mena. Also featured are the personal narratives of Eliza Allen, Loreta Janeta Velazquez and the newspaper articles of Jane McManus Storms (Cora Montgomery).
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Finally, I want to dedicate this dissertation to my grandparents, Lela and Jim McGraw. I miss you.
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Women and Revolution: Race, Violence, and Family Romance in Literature of the Southwest

This past December, I visited the Smithsonian Museum of American History, and was particularly interested in its depictions of life in the United States beginning mid-nineteenth century and running to 1900. I was happy to see a focus on women’s movements, including the black women’s club movement, temperance movements, the Friday Morning Club of California which advocated ecology and historical preservation. The focus on women’s movements in the Southwest was a pleasant surprise, but I was especially struck with a cultural document that I believe is the most fitting introduction to this dissertation.

A political sketch entitled “The Awakening”\(^1\) depicts a slight variation on the Statue of Liberty, a woman in classical robes carrying a torch and traveling east from the west coast. Under foot, the states of California, Arizona, Oregon, Washington, and Colorado are colored white, while the remainder of the nation is unnamed, cast in a dark hue. Iconographically, the document effectively defies the logic of Manifest Destiny which imagined westward expansion as civilizing the inhabitants of the Old Spanish borderlands through Enlightenment ideology and democratic principles. The notion of awakening suggests the somnambulistic quality traditionally associated in the Southwest in male travel narratives like Charles Lummis’ *Land of Poco Tiempo*. The landscape and

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\(^1\)Kate Chopin’s famous novel with the same title depicts Mexico, the former owner of the Southwest territory annexed by the United States during the Mexican War, as a topos for male sexual freedom. In the novel, Robert travels to Vera Cruz, Mexico and it is from there that he begins to loom large in the sexual imagination of Edna Pontellier. Mexico is utterly foreign and forbidden for her; what’s more, the mestiza who appears briefly in the novel, Robert’s former lover only reaffirms the topospatial sense of the Southwestern territory as sexually available, ripe for the picking by Anglo men. It is decidedly against this reading of the landscape and of the women inhabiting it, that my dissertation is focused.
its inhabitants are imagined to be asleep, in need of waking, and bringing brought politically and culturally up to speed. The iconography is of progress, or enlightenment, of rescue. And I find it brilliant that a woman rather than a man is depicted in this role and that the movement is counter to the well-entrenched story of neglect, backwardness, and barbarity associated with the inhabitants of the Southwest. Women most definitely were participants in Manifest Destiny, in the westward expansion, in the “civilizing mission,” and many of them benefited economically and politically.

It is perhaps not common knowledge that women in the West enjoyed suffrage before their sisters did on the East Coast. One political button on display at the Smithsonian quite plainly reflects this fact: “If the men of the West trust their women with the ballot – why can’t the women of Massachusetts be trusted? Suffrage spreads from state to neighbor state.” The irony is that Mexican women, who inhabited the west for centuries before the Mexican War, actually enjoyed much more agency and personal freedoms than did their Anglo counterparts. Thus, the trajectory of political contagion, “suffrage spread[ing] from state to neighbor state,” moves from west to east. As Lizbeth Haas discusses in *Conquests and Historical Identities in California, 1769-1936*, Mexican women lost fundamental rights guaranteed under the Mexican Constitution when they became de facto members of the United States. The logic of the civilizing mission, which supposedly justified Manifest Destiny, remained a constant source of empowering discourse from the mid-nineteenth century (with the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848) through the turn of the century. Around the time of the Mexican Revolution, feminist councils and suffrage movements in Mexico looked North to the United States for models and heroines just as the U.S. looked to Britain and France.
"Women and Revolution" takes as its historical frame Mexican Independence from Spain in 1821 to the decades following the Mexican Revolution of 1910, imagining revolution to inflect not only the political, cultural, and racial upheaval of the times, but also the roles of Mexican and Anglo women. Admittedly, this is a very ambitious undertaking, but I believe that the span of roughly eighty years permits a more complicated and informed sense of the dynamics forged between Mexicanas and Anglo women in the Southwest territory. The Mexican War from 1846-8 suddenly transformed the foreign territory of the Old Spanish borderlands into the frontier of the United States. Much criticism has been focused on the role of the frontier in the national imaginary, but it is primarily seen through a masculine gaze. Annette Kolodny’s pioneering work on women and landscape, beginning with The Lay of the Land, helped to focus critical attention on women’s relationship with the land and to defuse the traditionally held notion that only men engaged with the frontier.

I am particularly interested in writing women into the landscape outside of these well-entrenched traditions that Kolodny, Nina Baym, Ann Douglas, Lora Romero, Amy Kaplan, and countless others have combated for decades. I look specifically at the Southwest territory, not in its timeless, romantic sense of the frontier problematically cast and propagated by Cooper in Natty Bumppo or by Richard Henry Dana in Two Years Before the Mast. Rather, I hope to demonstrate how saturated in history the Southwest was, to borrow a phrase from Gertrude Atherton, “Before the Gringos Came.” Accordingly, I rely on moments of contact between the United States and Mexico. To borrow from Mary Louis Pratt, I envision the Southwest Territory as a dynamic and rich "contact zone" since the transfer in ownership from one nation to the other occasioned
the creation of the U.S.-Mexico border, which has and always will be porous and permeable.

Images of frontiersmen, squatters, and gold diggers abound in literature and criticism, but not until recently have women been the focus of sustained critical investigations. In addition to Kolodny’s significant contribution to the field of women’s frontier narratives, Nina Baym is responsible for introducing and legitimizing domestic fiction, which has been seen either as too low brow or popular to warrant critical attention, and for exposing the basis for the second-class status of women’s fiction: the false dichotomy of high-brow male writings in contra distinction to women’s literature.

Lora Romero addresses this very constructed notion of separate literary spheres in *Home Fronts* where she deconstructs the notion that male literature – and she specifically addresses the mid-nineteenth century authors Hawthorne, Cooper, and Melville – existed apart from and in direct opposition to women’s literature, which was imagined to convey and support the conservative status quo. Such a gendered framing of literature is not far removed from Leslie Fielder’s notion that the frontier became a masculine “natural” landscape free from the civilizing impetus symbolized by white women. In this case, domestic fiction functions as the necessarily evil against which men’s literature can distinguish itself.

The canonical narrative of the captivity narrative, which told the story of women crossing racial and geographic boundaries, is a model for narrating and translating the movement of Anglo and Mexican women across battle lines, lines of prescribed sexual conduct, and nations. As will be made evident in the chapters that follow, these crossings did not follow a set pattern. This is true in part because the borders and boundaries
themselves were never solid, never fully formed and because women occupied such an ambiguous place in the nation prior to the nineteenth amendment, their physical and psychological movements were not uniform. I purposely resist assigning any one meaning to how women on both sides of the border engaged each other.

Rather, I present the various chapters as a chronology that also takes on different foci in examining the configurations of women, race, violence, family romance, and nation. I address the interracial marriage plot between Mexican women and Anglo soldiers/husbands and the adoption of Anglo women into Mexican families. Given the pervasiveness of the notion that the republican family metonymically represented the nation, every chapter addresses how Anglo and Mexican women addressed their relationship with these two entities that conferred a circumscribed sense of identity for them.

This explains why family romance is part of my title, but it does not really account for the presence of violence. Indeed, it might seem that the two are antithetical since the family is all about reconciliation, peace, and replicating national values and standards on the personal, domestic level. But violence is, as Richard Slotkin argued in *Regeneration Through Violence*, an instrumental part of the U.S.'s understanding of the frontier, of race relations, and of conquest. Violence appears in marriage plot narratives such as those presented in chapter one because, following the argument Doris Sommer brilliantly lays out in *Foundational Fictions*, battles precede the nuptials which are integral to nation-building practices after war. Sommer defines the formula common to Latin American “foundational fictions” in the following manner:

[T]he variety of social ideals inscribed in the novels are all ostensibly grounded in the ‘natural’ romance that legitimates the nation-family through love. [Sommer]
suggest[s] that this natural and familial grounding, along with its rhetoric of productive sexuality, provides the model for apparently non-violent national consolidation during periods of internecine conflict. (76)

Here, and elsewhere, the family is meant to be a panacea for the wounds inflicted by violence, by the day-to-day sufferings imposed on people of color under the “enlightening” rhetoric of Manifest Destiny.

Coined on the eve of the Mexican War (1846-8), the phrase Manifest Destiny justified the incorporation of half of Mexico’s territory and citizenry into the United States. With the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, the United States ended its two-year war with Mexico and took possession of what are now the southwestern states. Under the ideological banner of Manifest Destiny, the Mexican War literally doubled the U.S. nation and triggered stratagems for promoting emigration in the newly annexed territory, including the promise of citizenship to former Mexican citizens. Nineteenth-century U.S. politicians and domestic fiction writers alike imagined the Anglo family as a model for the nation, dictating the gender roles specific to each family member, writ large, in terms of national duty.  

Historians Steven Mintz and Susan Kellogg expressly define “the chief functions of the democratic family [as] psychological and ideological. Its purposes were to ensure individual happiness and to serve the political order by diffusing self-serving needs and instilling children with values of order, responsibility, and self-discipline – the values of

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2 The term Manifest Destiny first appeared in print in an editorial supporting the annexation of Texas by John Louis O’Sullivan, editor of The Democratic Review (Johannsen 7).

3 In The American Woman’s Home (1869), Harriet Beecher Stowe and her sister, Catherine Beecher, argue that the work of housewives constituted the “sacred duties of the family state.” Historian Ann Douglas Wood argues in “The War Within the War: Women Nurses in the Union Army,” that women expressed a “complicated urge to make the front truly a homefront, to replace the captain with the mother” Civil War History 18 (1972): 206. As early as 1778, John Adams asserted that the “foundation of national morality must be laid in private families” Diary of John Adams, ed. L.H. Butterfield et al. (Harvard UP, 1961), 4.
good citizenship” (43, emphasis mine). Republican motherhood was born out of the
domestic framing of the nation; these women became moral instructors of nationally-held
virtues and beliefs for their patriotic children, the next generation of citizens.⁴ In rearing
her children to answer the call to arms and defend the nation as tenaciously as if it were
their home, the republican mother fulfilled her national duty. John Quincy Adams
attributed nationalism in an 1821 oration to the feelings fostered by family: “The
sympathies of men begin with the affections of domestic life. They are rooted in the
natural relations of husband and wife, of parent and child [and] spread to countryman and
fellow-citizen; terminating only with the circumference of the globe.”⁵ Loyalty and
honor, first cultivated within the home, constituted the very sentiments touched upon by
military and political leaders to mobilize its citizenry, male and female alike, in times of
war.

As early as the U.S. Naturalization Act of 1790, whiteness signified privilege,
power, and political capital. Indeed, citizenship was reserved exclusively for “free white
persons.”⁶ By politically endowing whiteness with the power to signify citizenship, this
legislative act passed early in U.S. history fostered the very practices that I am
investigating in the nineteenth century – those of securing and protecting the republican
family’s claims to, and reproductions of, whiteness. It should come as no surprise that
politicians and lawyers in the nineteenth century endeavored to generate a federal
standard of laws governing families and marriages. Such efforts attested to the family’s

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⁴ For a sustained examination of the inception of republican motherhood, see Elaine Crane’s “Dependence
in the Era of Independence: The Role of Women in a Republican Society,” in Jack Green, ed. The
⁵ John Quincy Adams, “Address . . . on the Occasion of Reading the Declaration of Independence on the
Fourth of July 1821,” reprinted in Arthur Schaffer, The Politics of History: Writing the History of the
American Revolution, 1783-1815 (Precedent, 1975).
pivotal position in the national imaginary and to the conviction that legislative acts
governing marriages could secure whiteness on a national scale.

Lawyer William Snyder, author of The Geography of Marriage (1889), surveyed
the spectrum of marriage and divorce laws governing the states and territories and
lobbied for a shared, overarching set of federal rules for a “homogeneous people” (iv).
Chief among his concerns was the phenomenon of families or individuals relocating from
state to state to physically extricate themselves from prohibitive or restrictive laws.7
Given the disparity in family laws, the very practices which legislation intended to
prohibit could legally be sanctioned simply by crossing a geographic boundary.8

In the first chapter I explore how women, through their participation in the family
romance as wives, lay tenuous claims to U.S. citizenship, an axis of identity in the
nineteenth century mediated by whiteness. An unstable but nevertheless powerful
cultural and political commodity, whiteness occupies a pivotal role in the historical
romances conflating political alliances with interracial and international marriages
between Mexican heroines and Anglo-American soldiers. I depart from Doris Sommer’s
Foundational Fictions and Shirley Samuels’ Romancing the Republic by focusing on the

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7 The fear that mobility among the Southwestern territories could enable lawless behavior from being
punished is addressed in Chapter Three, “Just Passing By,” in the autobiographical stories, “Toby” and
“Flight,” which chronicle the escape of Josephine Clifford’s first husband from a certain murder conviction
in Texas to the safe anonymity of New Mexico. Their real-life marriage, which nearly proved fatal to
Clifford, was enabled in part by the absence of federal laws.
8 As an example of the incongruity of marriage laws in the Southwest, consider the anti-miscegenation laws
of Texas and California. Although both were formerly owned by Mexico, Texas’ status as a slave state
made it much more concerned with unions between “blacks” and “whites.” Indeed, no other racial
category appears in early Texas legislation under anti-miscegenation, in part because any person who was
not included in the legal definition of negro (third generation inclusive) was “deemed in law white persons”
(Snyder, 304). California law prohibited marriages between Anglos and Asians; no mention was made of
unions between Anglos and Mexicans, or Native Americans.
racial dynamics of historical romances and by examining the texts of recovered authors María Amparo Ruiz de Burton and Jovita González.

Beginning with Timothy Flint’s *Francis Berrian*, the first U.S. novel set in Mexico, I trace an evolutionary arc of romance’s employment through a phenomenon I term “political whitening” whereby Mexican heroines perform whiteness through the study of Enlightenment ideology, the mastery of somatic signatures of blushing and paling, and the revision of the captivity narrative. Recast along racial and romantic/political lines, the captivity narrative positions Mexican brides as prisoners delivered from captivity in the semi-feudal patriarchy of Mexico and its custom of arranged marriages into republican marriages with Anglo husbands.

The legal fluidity of whiteness after the Mexican War created a crisis of political inheritance that I address in chapter two, “Savage Relations,” through an investigation of counternarratives of assimilation involving “white” heroines whose adoptions into Mexican families naturalize the greed and expansionism of U.S. imperialism through the familial rhetoric of inheritance. I map out in Bret Harte’s *Gabriel Conroy* and Helen Hunt Jackson’s *Ramona* and the republican family’s adjustments to the annexation of the Southwest territory, specifically California, and the promise of U.S. citizenship to former Mexican citizens. The minstrelsy of “white” heroines adapting to Mexican culture belies the anxiety that whiteness could lose its potency with the enforcement of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo (which promised U.S. citizenship to former Mexican citizens).

I treat these narratives of interracial adoption as scaled-down versions of the peace treaty because both contain the same savagery promoted and perpetrated within the republican family to maintain its symbolic entitlement to the spoils of Manifest Destiny.
The family’s inward turn, a response intended to restore Anglo supremacy and political inheritance, results instead in cannibalism – both literal and what I call “racial cannibalism.” Because “passing” implies a shift from oppression to empowerment and traditionally traces masquerade along a black/white binary, I choose the phrase “racial cannibalism” to signify the metaphorical consumption of another person’s culture in line with the logic of Manifest Destiny. The unbridled fear of miscegenation also manifested the other “crime of blood,” incest, to maintain a pathological legacy of homogeneity.

In chapter three, “Just Passing By,” I explore the travel narratives and short fiction occasioned by journeys into the Southwest territory that both participate in and critique U.S. expansionist politics. I argue that the mimetic relationship between the family and the nation scripts much of the language and logic underlying their narratives. Although I agree with Mary Louise Pratt and Brigitte Georgi-Findlay that nineteenth-century Anglo-American women created and benefited from a dialogic relationship between themselves and the nation, I caution that this symbiotic dynamic between woman and nation presupposes the former’s complicity and consent in the latter’s politics. Mary Austin Holley’s emigration narrative, Texas, which depicted Anglo colonists as loyal Mexican citizens in its first edition, later alarmingly removes all Mexicans from the Texas landscape in anticipation of the 1836 fight for independence. Susan Magoffin troubles the family romance’s prominence in the national symbolic in Down the Santa Fe Trail by relating her adoption into a New Mexican community, yet nevertheless maintains the cultural and sexual markers of whiteness as tokens of exchange with upper-class nueva mexicanas. Only Josephine Clifford, a Prussian emigrant, critiques U.S. expansionism through stories of cultural misreading and
domestic violence. Published in Harte’s *Overland Monthly*, Clifford’s stories decenter both the family and whiteness from their prominent positions in the nineteenth-century national imaginary.

Indicative of the profound disruption of the national symbolic caused by their break with gender codes, the female spies and soldiers who participated in the Mexican American and Civil wars, the subject of chapter four, “Embattled Women,” are tucked back safely into the republican family after their battlefield adventures. The family romance, specifically the marriage plot, loosely tethers them to conventional gender roles and thus functions as a moral life preserver, but is ultimately a disappointing trope. With a critical eye towards Amy Kaplan’s argument for the conflation of warfront and homefront, I provide an in-depth analysis of Eliza Allen, Jane McManus Storms, and Loreta Janeta Velazquez, and locate where the family romance fails to assist these historical and literary figures. Accordingly, I attend to how these texts were received, as registered by both the anticipatory reaction in editorial and authorial prefaces, as well as obituaries and personal correspondence between one author, Loreta Janeta Velazquez, and her most vocal opponent, Confederate General Jubal Early.

Finally, I investigate in chapter five, “Friend or Stranger,” how the stories of Maria Cristina Mena, Katherine Anne Porter, and Nellie Campobello resist narratives of nation-building with respect to conceptualizing violence and strategic amnesia. Given print media’s role in the nation-building process, women who write about the Revolution, in particular about what Walter Benjamin calls lawmaking violence, enact violence against the nation through their narratives. I locate women at the center of tensions between family romance and revolution expressed in love triangles and reunions. By
realigning the elements intrinsic to the family romance plot, these authors destroy the assumption of iconic female representations on which it stands. Such a dynamic between women and nation exists in part because of its reciprocal nature, because women, in turn, shape the national imaginary.

Ultimately, what I hope to prove in this dissertation are two things: one, that domestic fiction and the sense of the domestic as a gendered, family-based topos was directly impacted by the international politics between the United States and Mexico beginning with the Mexican War and continuing through the Mexican Revolution. I also hope to prove that women, not just as domestic, but certainly in relationship with the domestic, were active participants on the borders between the two nations as brides of interracial marriages, as the adopted daughters of Mexican families, as travelers into the Southwest, as soldiers and spies, and as suffragettes struggling for women’s rights in Mexico. Not all of their personal and fictional narratives are cause for celebration, however. Women like Jane McManus Storms and Loreta Janeta Velazquez welcomed the U.S. into Mexico’s territory, for their own personal reasons. But their mutual position of subjugation, which was primarily due to their second-class status as women, did occasion friendships, critique of patriarchy on both sides of the border, and a mutual desire for agency, the vote, and freedom from the domestic yoke. Even as it served them to justify their movements in public and outside of the separate sphere of the home, the domestic – as a multivalenced term encompassing family romance, the republican family, patriarchal rule, the nation symbolized through women – was a productive symbol for women to deploy when acting outside of its real and imagined parameters.
At times of significant political upheaval – occasioned by the Mexican War and the Mexican Revolution of 1910 – women in the two nations were called upon to symbolize iconic roles as republican mothers and as repositories of national values. The notion that women could function as the stabilizing force during times of profound political change simultaneously grants and denies them power and agency. Lora Romero dispels the misconception that domestic fiction, produced out of the above-mentioned conditions, reinforces the status quo and is politically conservative in nature. Traditionally, women’s resistance to patriarchal and racial dominance has been studied through the literature and non-fiction of suffragettes and abolitionists. Accordingly, race relations in these critical studies have been restricted to the black/white binary. Only recently with texts like White Women’s Rights have critics broadened their definition of race relations to consider the dynamic between Anglo-American and Native American women, largely under the auspices of missionary work. What my dissertation hopes to contribute to the fields of U.S. and Chicano/a literature is an examination of the complex relationship between Mexicanas and Anglo-American women in the Southwest Territory and in Mexico from mid-nineteenth to early twentieth century.
Chapter One

**Domestic Captives: Mexicanas in Post-1848 U.S.**

Mexico's most sustained appearance in the U.S. literary imaginary coincided with its independence from three hundred years of Spanish colonialism. In 1821, Mexico became a republic, and their struggle for independence was treated as analogous to America's own revolution less than fifty years prior (Johannsen 179). Despite this political link between the two fledgling republics, an ambivalence developed in the literary portrayal of characters of Mexican descent. Sifting through early U.S. nineteenth-century texts, Cecil Robinson notes how class heavily influences racialization: "While the ordinary Mexican encountered every day in the border country was treated with unremitting scorn, the aristocratic owners of the large haciendas in the interior of Mexico were objects of interest and curiosity to the writers of the dime novels, who treated them with a combination of hostility and respect" (26).

Critic Sandra Myres surveys literature from this twenty-five-year span (Mexico's independence to the Mexican War) and concludes that "a number of accounts of Mexican life in Texas, New Mexico, and California helped to convince Americans that the Mexicans were unworthy to occupy such fertile and potentially productive territories". For Myres, such attitude "presaged nineteenth-century nativism and prepared the way for the expansionist ambitions that a later age would label Manifest Destiny" (74, 73). Like

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9 As Raymond Paredes argues in his unpublished dissertation, early Anglo-European colonists like William Bradford and Cotton Matther were aware of Spain and desired to "remove the Spanish presence in the Americas" through "massive missionary activity" (40). As a preacher, most of Mather's anti-Spanish sentiment was grounded in the Black Legend, the Catholic Church and its leader, the Pope. The Anti-Catholic spin in Mather's Hispanophobia produced *La Fe del Cristiano* in 1699, reported by Paredes to be the "first book printed in Spanish in New England" (42). Not surprisingly, Bartolome de Las Casas' descriptions of Mexico greatly shaped the attitudes of early Anglo-European colonists; it is no wonder that the Marine's battle hymn invokes an image from the Spanish Conquest of Mexico — the Halls of
Robinson, Raymund Paredes identifies “two apparently contradictory notions of Mexican character [that] flourished simultaneously in American literature” (iv). “When the U.S. sought a foil for its scheme of national expansion,” Paredes believes the “jingoistic and energetically contemptuous” accounts of “Mexico and her people” flourished as the literature promoted a “justification for the destruction of Mexican life in the West” (139).

The doubling of the U.S. territory, and the unfulfilled promises of citizenship and land rights housed in the rhetoric of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the peace treaty which ended the Mexican War, raised the issue of Mexican assimilation into the U.S. citizenry. Questions of citizenship were all the more vexed for Mexican women, who were racialized along double vectors of class and gender and whose civil rights and legal status, as historian Lisbeth Hass proclaims, was dramatically reduced after the Mexican War. “Californianas,” Haas asserts, “had particular burdens as they negotiated more than one gender system in the American period. They were vulnerable as women in U.S. society where women were not accorded equal status in law or custom, and they were vulnerable to the anti-Mexican prejudice of Anglo-American migrants” (86). Through the rhetoric of Enlightenment ideology, romanticism, and superiority, the Mexican heroines discussed in this chapter appeal for enfranchisement. And they use these very terms – citizenship and whiteness – precisely because they were the subject of debate after the Treaty (1848) and thus held public weight and immediacy.

In this chapter, I investigate the impact of Mexico’s Independence and the Mexican War on the historical romance. I focus particularly on this genre of novels collapsing marriage and political plots not only because they center on nation-making

Montezuma.
events, but also because they exercise a desire to reconcile previously warring sides. In these particular novels, the two antagonists are Anglo-American and Mexican\textsuperscript{10}; their reconciliations are registered/figured through interracial marriages. The pervasiveness of interracial marriages between Anglo men and Mexican women in the early to mid-nineteenth century caught the attention of novelists who replicated this historical phenomenon, yet squelched the incendiary quality of miscegenation through a whitening of the Mexican heroine prior to marriage. These historical romances reverse the naturalization process of Anglos into Mexico families, a phenomenon promulgated by the Mexican government prior to the Mexican War, by directly linking their Mexican heroines to the U.S. nation. It is therefore by a paradoxical suppression of racial difference, then, that these novels transform interracial marriages into international unions.

This chapter is not exclusively interested in addressing this “whitening process,” but is intent upon examining the impetus for recasting the marriages as international rather than interracial. Chapter one primarily catalogs and evaluates the components critical to a romantic construction of interracial marriage, where love is central and based on an egalitarian relationship. It also peeks behind romance’s artifice to reveal male privilege, class climbing, and property rights as motivations underlying some Anglo-Mexican unions. The whitening of Mexican brides, a trope central to this chapter, coincided with whitewashing the Anglo husbands’ opportunism in Western literature; hence, they sought the possibility of conquering a continent through white-race ideology.

\textsuperscript{10} Many historical romances marry Britains to Americans after the American Revolution or members of the North and South after the Civil War and thus bypass the dilemma which racial crossings create. I purposely investigate novels uniting Mexicans and Anglo-Americans because I believe they should be
Historical Context

Some interracial marriages were the product of legislation designed to encourage emigration into Mexico's partially inhabited areas in the period between Mexican independence (1821) and the Mexican War (1846). Historian David J. Gutiérrez notes ironically how the "'success' of Mexico's colonization law of 1824, originally passed in an effort to encourage immigration to the sparsely populated Texas frontier, soon attracted thousands of American immigrants" and thus created a population imbalance where "American immigrants probably outnumbered Mexicans in Texas by as much as ten to one" (19). Texas' independence from Mexico in 1836 orchestrated by such famous Anglo settlers as Stephen F. Austin clearly revealed the dangers underlying large-scale population schemes, and in the years following the Mexican War, the disparity between Manifest Destiny's intent and its results would become increasingly clearer.

Early Mexican legal policy not only invited Anglo-Americans into the Southwest, it explicitly identified interracial marriages between Anglo men and Mexican women as a means for enlarging its citizenry. Article 27 of Mexico's naturalization law specifies:

All foreigners who come to establish themselves in the Empire, and those who, following a profession or industry, in three years, have sufficient capital to support themselves with decency and are married, shall be considered naturalized; those who, under the foregoing conditions, marry Mexican women, acquire a special right to have their letters of citizenship given them (emphasis mine).

As a long held practice, arranged marriages in Mexico created "union[s] of two properties, the joining of two households, the creation of a web of affinal alliances, and

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included in the canon of U.S. historical romances. For more detailed analysis of novels centering on post-American Revolution romances, see Shirley Samuels' Romancing the Republic.
the perpetuation of a family’s symbolic patrimony;” marrying into Mexican families thus secured unions, such as those between citizen and nation (Ramón Gutiérrez 227). It is quite tempting to draw a parallel between the appeal to filial duty in arranged marriages and that to national duty in interracial marriages. Forming strategic alliances through nationally “arranged” marriages took precedence over individual feelings and/or issues of compatibility. Including marriage to a Mexican woman as one of the requirements for Mexican citizenship revealed how the Mexican nation imagined foreigners settling into its territory as entering the national family through marriage. And so they did. Historians have estimated that “seventy five percent of the male foreigners who came to New Mexico between 1820 and 1850, and whose names appear in church records of those years, did marry Mexican women” (4).11

In addition to offering land grants as an incentive for American emigrants to become naturalized Mexican citizens, “the central government of Mexico promulgated a series of decrees inhibiting the trade activities of foreigners. One of these highly restrictive laws . . . made effective in April 1844, forbade foreigners from engaging in the retail trade. However, it contained a clause which exempted those foreigners who were naturalized citizens, those who were married to Mexicans, and those who were residents of Mexico with their families” (McDowell Craver 29).

With the Mexican War of 1848, these marriages became much more problematic. What might have been marriages of convenience for the Anglo husbands wishing to avoid taxation directed at “foreigners” or to gain land grants available only to Mexican

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citizens would be refashioned after the War as unions benefiting the Mexican heroine, bringing her into enlightenment and the principles of humanism associated exclusively with the United States. At some level, Anglo-Americans might have understood that championing the Mexican cause in 1821 might some day provide an opportunity for the U.S. Dime novelists like Timothy Flint initiated revisionist histories, recasting marriage through the lens of enlightenment ideology and American romanticism so that the Anglo suitor did not appear an opportunist or a "foreigner" (Flint's protagonist bears the title of Mexican patriot although he is an Anglo-American seeking the romance and adventure he's read about in Don Quixote and Robinson Crusoe) but rather as savior, fulfilling the moral imperative dominating the captivity narrative by taking a Mexican bride.

For female authors, María Amparo Ruiz de Burton, Jovita González and Eve Raleigh, whose novels address the aftermath of the Mexican War of 1848, their novels recast the parameters for civilization and U.S. citizenship; claim whiteness for themselves and their heroines; and peel away the artifice of romance from marriages of convenience to reveal the more desperate, greedy motives such as gaining ownership of land, property, and economic status through marriage to women of prominent Mexican families. "The elite Mexican woman's class position, European cultural background, and 'white' racial status privileged her over other women of color and opened an avenue for some to eventually assimilate into the dominant culture through intermarriage with European-American immigrants" (Almaguer 209).

I employ romance in its multiple meanings: as a plotline involving courtship and marriage; as the family romance marked by the traffic of women from fathers to husbands; and as the capacity for finer feeling, allowing for the transference of emotions
from the domestic sphere and the family (expressed through marriage) to the public sphere (expressed through patriotism and patriotic acts). The romantic aspects of these novels manufacture a relationship between the heroines and the U.S. nation. Their capacity to love their American suitors constitutes the first stage in their naturalization. The personal romance, taken up with courtship and marriage, serves as the cradle of the national romance. Timothy Flint clearly links the two levels of romance together in his novel, Francis Berrian, by conjecturing the impact of romance’s absence on national service: “[without romance] the dreams of patriotism, the willingness to devote all, and die for [the U.S.] country, become the idle extravagance of insanity” (1:13). Without romance, marriages constitute little more than business arrangements where financial prosperity trumps love and the underbelly of Manifest Destiny is exposed, devoid of its romantic trappings. The novels’ heroines demonstrate their capacity for romance not only through their marriages to Anglo soldiers, but also through the somatic responses of paling and blushing.

These two plot lines – romantic and political – intersect in the novels discussed here at the site of citizenship. Traditionally, the concept of republican motherhood yoked together marriage and citizenship through the patriotic act of bearing and raising children who then served as agents of national consolidation. The inheritance of Manifest Destiny’s children, who are not the literal children of these international unions, but are nevertheless symbolic of them, will be explored in the next chapter. As these marriages do not produce children, the female characters employ strategies outside of maternity for

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relating themselves to the nation. The Mexican heroines actively pursue U.S. citizenship during their courtships. Marriages thus secure their successful admission into the U.S. nation. In *Francis Berrian* (1826), Doña Martha’s indoctrination into the enlightenment philosophies of Locke and Rousseau constitutes her initial duty or service to her new nation, the United States, and yet the novel is not devoid of romance; rather, patriotism, the spirit of republicanism, and the marriage plot are expressed in terms of romance.

Ruiz de Burton’s *Who Would Have Thought It?* directly addresses the genre of captivity by narrating the multiple removes of Lola Medina from captivity among the Navajo to domestic incarceration within a New England household. In response to dime novels like *Francis Berrian*, Jovita González and Eve Raleigh’s *Caballero* (1994) launches a feminist critique of both the semi-feudal patriarchy associated with Tejanos as well as the more liberal U.S. patriarchy which casts women as passive, inert objects to be taken possession of by Anglos.

**Republicanism 101: What Martha Learns in Francis Berrian**

Set during the war of Mexico’s independence from Spain, the specter of an U.S. citizen in battle between two other countries presented in *Francis Berrian* seems out of place and intrusive. Flint’s subtitle, *The Mexican Patriot*, thus attempts to answer the question of how an American citizen can travel across national boundaries, assume the title of Mexican patriot, and engage in Mexico’s battle for independence. Under the auspices of “citizen of the world,” Flint exports his character’s patriotic feeling; the broad

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13 The last three texts are recovered works either out of print until recently, in the case of Ruiz de Burton’s novels, or never printed before, as is true of González and Raleigh’s novel, *Caballero*. I want to announce the status of these novels because part of my project and indeed the desire of many scholars tied to the Recovery Project, is to introduce them to a critical conversation or else create one for them. I also did not want the reader to be misled by the recent date of *Caballero*’s publication. As noted in the novel’s
definition of duty or commitment permits Flint’s protagonist to exceed beyond the nation. Francis is a patriotic Johnny Appleseed who spreads the seeds of republicanism. The first U.S. novel set in Mexico, Francis Berrian follows the titular character’s adventures in Mexico where he rescues a Mexican damsel in distress, Martha, from an arranged marriage with a Comanche, battles for Mexico’s independence from Spain, saves the Mexican damsel’s entire family from drowning, redeems the Mexican damsel again from an arranged marriage with a dastardly Spaniard, and delivers the promises of republicanism to Mexico (Johannsen 179, Robinson 23). As a reward for all his hard work, Francis gets the girl, but not before she passes a class in Republicanism 101.

Before Francis channels his republicanism into heroic acts on the battlefield, he serves as rescuer and tutor to Martha. His first mission as an ambassador of U.S. republicanism is to save her from the Comanche warrior, Menko, who carries her off as his intended bride to his tribal enemy, the Apaches. Menko defines his own bravery and sexual prowess to Martha by contrasting himself with the “white skin” of Francis (1:91-2). Whiteness in the context of the captivity narrative constitutes the first in a series of “natural” links between Francis and his future bride, Martha. A Comanche woman in

introduction by José Limón, it was written sometime during the 1940s and 50s and remained in the special collections in a library at Texas A&M at Corpus Christi until its recent publication.

14 Raymund Paredes asserts that because of the “brutalization of the Mexican character in U.S. literature, Flint believed that the Mexicans were incapable of governing themselves with any degree of stability or Enlightenment; as a novelist, his solution to their dilemma was to place their national destiny in the hands of an American – more specifically, a Puritan New Englander – savior” (149).

15 Menko’s actions, taking a Mexican bride, her ransom (a make-shift dowry), and heading for enemy territory, are not unlike those Anglo-American men who married into Mexican families, benefited from dowries and naturalization laws, and then took wife and loot (or just loot) to the United States. Note that Menko is the first “savage” threat to Martha; by casting a Comanche warrior in this role, Flint relies on early conventions of racial binaries reinforced by the tradition of captivity narratives to remove the taint of opportunism and savagery from Francis’ eventual marriage to Martha.

16 In captivity and “going native” narratives, the racial dynamics of Native Americans and Anglo-Americans are decidedly gendered. The Anglo woman in danger of corruption by the savage dark body is whitened in contrast to her captor (see Christopher Castiglia, Philip Gould, and Nina Baym). The Anglo male, best embodied by Natty Bumppo in the Cooper novels, has a much more tenuous hold on
love with Francis, Red Heifer attributes Francis’ affections to Martha’s white skin:

“[Martha] white. You love” (1: 72).^{17} Within this brief, truncated speech lies the inner workings of the revised captivity narrative, which is predicated on the whiteness of the female held against her will. Precipitated by captivity scenarios involving Native Americans and Mexicans, rescue plots further Martha’s indoctrination into Enlightenment ideology. Francis saves Martha from Menko, a condition she “shudders to think of,” and later from her arranged marriage partner, Don Pedro; in so doing, Francis repeatedly confirms Martha’s status as white, the source of her capacity for assimilation into the U.S. (1:82).

The clarity of Francis’ white skin makes it an ideal surface upon which his republicanism can be read. To visibly register Francis’ republicanism, his corporeal response to battle wounds inflicted by Menko mark and identify him to the members of the Alvaro family. Francis’ skin becomes even whiter; he pales from the blood shed during Martha’s rescue and his body narrates an exchange of blood for freedom, which is a central component of republicanism.^{18} Francis notes the effects of somatic response on the Alvaro family: “deep and unaffected concern was manifested about my wounds and visible paleness. My country, my religion, every thing, was overlooked in contemplating my exposure, and its joyous termination” (1: 98). Francis’ paleness, however, has everything to do with his republican beliefs and it is worth noting that in his first act of

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^{17} Red Heifer’s name alone summons the racialization of Native Americans common to nineteenth-century literature as “red” and bestial.

^{18} In The Body in Pain, Elaine Scarry evaluates this phenomenon where victory in battle or in a war is determined by the number of deceased bodies tallied on each side. Blood is shed for political principles
rescuing Martha, he conducts himself according to the rules governing patriotism in the United States. If the nation is imagined as feminine and represented in the female body, then the protection of a Mexican woman from potential rape by a Native American constitutes a patriotic act. Since Martha is Mexican, Francis, according to this model, has completed his first in a series of performances as a Mexican patriot, and yet his paleness maintains Francis’ racial difference.

The very markers of difference previously ignored by the Alvaro household, Francis’ country and his religion (Protestant, of course), predictably become bones of contention between himself and the male members of the family. And this process of racial differentiation is coterminus with a subplot intended to separate both Francis and Martha from the male members of the family. As historian Tomás Almaguer argues in Racial Faultlines, “[f]ar from being articulated in a straightforward symmetrical form in which class and race were merely parallel structures, racialization was bound to class formation in complex ways that gave racial conflict its decidedly class-and gender-specific form” (209). Gender and class status were two determining factors in the portrayal of Mexican males as “dark, skulking, ‘inferior’ rancheros” and Mexican women as noble characters displaying many of the traits associated with U.S. national character (Johannsen 189). This gendered and class-specific construction of race for Mexicans allowed Anglo soldiers to intervene as suitors, potential husbands, and saviors for Mexican heroines; marriages to Anglo soldiers were thus construed as rescues from captivity in Mexico’s semi-feudal patriarchy where fathers and future husbands arranged unions. “The Mexican women of these stories, beautiful señoritas all, seem to have been

and the nationalistic rhetoric linking the physical body with the disembodied ideals of nationalism is best
in accidental proximity to the rest of their race. Their proper place was beside the blond and noble giants from the north who have rescued them from the connivings of deceitful, cowardly and dowry-seeking Mexican suitors’ (Robinson 26). Racialized by association with Mexican males, these heroines were just as easily imagined to be re-racialized when they became the brides of Anglo soldiers.

Unable to convert the Conde or Don Pedro to the principles of republicanism, which they fear as a deadly contagion, Francis abandons his debates with Martha’s father and intended suitor and instead begins to school Martha and her female friends. And the women seem much more receptive to the principles associated with Rousseau, Locke, Wordsworth, and Shakespeare (1: 130, 214). Distinguishing herself even among Francis’ female students, Martha demonstrates her affinity with the political and romantic principles espoused by these authors in a manner reminiscent of Francis – she pales. Martha’s nobility is in part derived from class privilege (which includes a pure Spanish lineage), but this status is shored up by her repeated demonstrations of finer feeling.

As if to further illustrate the gendered dynamics of racialization and political assimilation, Francis’ only male student, Don Pedro, frustrated by his inability to master the English language, storms out of the make-shift classroom. throwing insults over his shoulder at Francis, thinly disguised as attacks on the English language:

He observed that a foolish fashion had controlled him to think of learning [English]; but that it was a harsh, hissing, and vulgar language, fit only to be spoken, as it was, by barbarians. He thence digressed to the people of the States, and he spoke of them with increased asperity, adding, that the only difficulty in reducing the rebellious creoles to proper loyalty and submission, arose from the contiguity and the infectious example of the States. (1: 164).

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exemplified by soldiers on the battlefield.
Don Pedro’s speech against the English language and the political structure of the United States implicitly links the accoutrements of republicanism with the fight for independence from Spain being waged by the “rebellious creoles.”¹⁹ Given this imagined connection, Francis’ tutoring of Martha in the language and philosophy of the United States can only lead to her own rebellion. It does in her resistance against arranged marriage, a custom dependent upon the “property loyalty and submission” of daughters to their fathers and future husbands. Confirming Don Pedro’s characterization of republicanism’s “infectious” quality, Francis’ remarks about the U.S. and its political character “produced an effect with the mother and daughter” (1: 108). They subsequently pale at the very sight of him. And this somatic reaction, quite involuntary, signifies their affinity for Francis, and their very “natural” or unaffected emotional ties to the romantic tenets of republicanism.

Martha herself recognizes the connection between republicanism and knowledge of the language in which its poetry and philosophy are written. Francis models enlightenment indoctrination, the romantic fervor necessary for rebellion, when he refers to his own “delight in unfolding to such a pupil the treasures of our great master-minds” (1: 163). Martha links English to enlightenment ideology, represented by the finer feeling she treasures, when she professes: “Your language has opened to me a new world, and your beautiful poets have convinced me that I have a new heart . . . you have just opened the first pages of the book of knowledge before me, and have raised the eagerness of desire” (1: 168, emphasis mine).

¹⁹ Leonard Pitt notes Enlightenment’s influence in Mexico’s independence from Spain, “they began to yearn vaguely for education, the reduction of clerical power, freedom of expression, liberation of bondsmen, the end of colonial status, and self-government. However belatedly, the Enlightenment was overturning the old order” (3).
Martha discusses Francis’ influence on her patriotism in the following manner: “I sometimes flatter myself that I am a Patriot by instinct. I have been deeply engaged in the American history. What a great country! What a noble people! There is something independent . . . in the appearance . . . of these people” (2: 193, emphasis mine). The naturalized rhetoric of patriotism “by instinct” echoes the inherent nature of enlightenment ideology and romanticism and their beliefs in “natural rights” as it also expresses Martha’s predisposition for political whitening. She confesses to hold the ideals of the United States as if by instinct and expresses a belief that outer appearance and countenance will reflect these beliefs. The last phrase of her quote – that independence is perceptible in the appearance of Americans – is worth comment because the visible “signs” of assimilation into the United States have been previously addressed with Francis and his somatic response to battle.

Martha’s immersion in political whiteness occurs when she acts upon the lessons of the American Revolution and actively seeks her own independence from Don Pedro before Francis rescues her a third time. Martha’s melodramatic cry that submitting to an arranged marriage with Don Pedro “does violence to her feelings” echoes the rationale given for patriotism within the novel’s first pages – a willingness to die for a particular cause (2: 168). While imprisoned by Don Pedro, Martha grabs a knife, intent upon using violence to gain her independence; her willingness to physically combat her captor and regain possession of herself contrasts severely with the passivity exhibited during her captivity by Menko. Martha’s radical shift to active soldier poised to fight for her own freedom can only be attributed to her indoctrination in Western philosophy.20 Tellingly,

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20 It echoes the famous revolutionary phrase, “Give me liberty or give me death.”
Martha’s fight for the cause transpires within the revised captivity narrative, the vehicle for conducting the campaign of Manifest Destiny under the cover of romance.
**Captivity and Manifest Destiny: Who Would Have Thought It?**

In *Cartographies of Desire*, Rebecca Blevins Faery argues that U.S. geography could easily be traced through the images of iconic, mutually-informing captives which she collapses into the figures of Mary Rowlandson and Pocahontas. Nevertheless, Faery argues that “the figure of the *white* woman captive has been a primary site for the construction of race, gender, and national identity in U.S. culture” (25, emphasis mine). Like Christopher Castiglia’s recognition of captivity narratives in the twentieth century, which extends the historical boundaries of this genre, Michelle Burnham expands the generic constraints by linking the narrative of abduction with sentimental literature. Burnham highlights the commonalities shared with stories of captivity and emancipation like Harriet Jacobs’ *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. In their expansions on a narrative that Nancy Armstrong has recently classified as a paradigmatic American genre, Castiglia and Michelle Burnham provide a fitting introduction to my reading of María Amparo Ruiz de Burton’s first novel, *Who Would Have Thought It?* and her revision of the captivity narrative.

The captivity narrative, with all of its attendant historical ties to colonialism of the British variety, becomes an apt trope for railing against Manifest Destiny, or colonialism of the U.S. variety, because in their multiple forms, captivity narratives repeatedly reveal that what is at stake in the fate of the captive females is nothing less than the reproduction of the nation. “Since captivity typically takes place in colonial contexts of cultural as well as military warfare, [its] rhetorical opposition serves to justify the political and social antagonism that both propels and results from the sentimental representation of captivity” (Burnham 2). In the case of *Who Would Have Thought It?*, a sentimental novel
originally published in 1872, and republished in the early nineties by the Recovery Project, Ruiz de Burton articulates a narrative of resistance against U.S. imperialism, or what she called “Manifest Yankee trick,” in a profound, paradigm-shifting manner by recasting the captivity narrative in terms of the Mexican War, and critiquing the dime novel’s narrative of relations between Mexico and the United States at a time when the border between both countries was just being set and the border patrol that existed was in place to police for “Indian raids.”

By the time Ruiz de Burton wrote *Who Would Have Thought It?*, the U.S. had already fought the Mexican War and remained preoccupied with the aftermath of the Civil War. For the residents of the New England area, where Ruiz de Burton and her husband Captain Henry S. Burton settled after their move from California, no prevailing discourse adequately explained the complex and conflicting dynamic between Mexicanos and Anglo-Americans; indeed, as I will argue, Ruiz de Burton was most successful at articulating a Mexican identity to an audience trained in the geographical and racial binaries of the Civil War by maneuvering her Mexican protagonist, Lola Medina, through the racial identities well entrenched in the national imaginary. The captivity narrative constitutes a prevailing motif in Ruiz de Burton’s *Who Would Have Thought It?* that is both repeating and multivalenced.

Born while in captivity, Lola Medina’s story is, in Dr. Norval’s words, “more romantic than that of half of the heroines of [Mrs. Norval’s] trashy novels” (17). Captured while pregnant with Lola in December of 1846, a particularly significant date coinciding with the Mexican War, Doña María Teresa Almenara de Medina is first held by the Apache Indians while she is in Sonora, Mexico. She is then traded off to the
Indians of the Colorado River, the Mohaves, and five months later she gives birth to her daughter, Lola. Although the particulars of her captivity are never revealed, Doña María does narrate the tale of her life among the Mohaves to Dr. Norval and his companion, Lebrun, who transcribes her story and later translates it into English. She entreats Dr. Norval to take Lola and an obscene amount of gold and precious jewels with him back to New England. Lola later elaborates on the life of captivity she and her mother endured by detailing the manner in which the Indians insured against their escape: "[my skin] was stained by the Indians to prevent our being rescued. My mother was also made to stain her lovely white skin all black" (100). When the reader first encounters Lola, she is in black face, still wearing the dye applied by the Mohaves.

As critics have argued, the sexual dynamics animating captivity narratives, namely the fear of miscegenation, had to be put to bed to shore up the status of the former captive and pave the way for her reentry into Anglo-European society. And we can see echoes of the bare chested female figure symbolic of the Americas in the sketches of white female captives imagined to be ravaged by their dark captors. On the surface, this would appear to be an iconography specific to Anglo European/Native relations, but when we read early travel narratives of Anglo-American men in the Southwest, we encounter the same image. Mexican women are overwhelmingly a point of interest, painted in minute detail by male and female travelers alike, who discuss at length the señoritas’ degree of dress or undress. And I would suggest that just as critics have studied this female iconography conflating woman and land, inaugurated by Annette Kolodny, similar desires for ownership circulate around the figure of the Mexican woman and the Southwest Territory. Thus it is all the more hazardous that Ruiz de
Burton would first introduce her Mexican heroine through the captivity narrative. Yet I would suggest that she plays with the iconography of captivity brilliantly. In the opening scene where the reader and members of the Norval family first encounter Lola, she is described enigmatically as “the female in the shawl.” Startled, Lola’s shawl falls, revealing “a little girl very black indeed” (16).

This first account – particularly the pseudo-scientific discourse accompanying the gradual wearing away of the dye – operates under the same racial logic discussed by Baym and Wald: it whitens Lola through contrast. To categorize Lola, members of the Norval family rely on taxonomy, projecting that a baboon will be the next item collected by Dr. Norval since “having exhausted the mineral kingdom, he is about to begin with the animal”(16). It also reflects the pseudo-scientific enterprise aimed at lending scientific/biological credence to the racial superiority of Anglo-Americans, more specifically the Anglo Saxon race. As Reginald Horsman argues in Race and Manifest Destiny, Anglo-Americans began fortifying their own sense of racial and moral superiority by the 1840s through a discourse of nostalgic, romantic Anglo-Saxon (Anglo-Nordic in the case of the South) genealogy buttressed by disturbing calibrations, autopsies and other “scientific” studies of physiognomy.21 Categorization according to phenomenological characteristics like lips not only informed racial identification, but placement within a moral hierarchy as well.

Later in the novel when Lola’s skin dye begins to fade and she is literally spotted, Hackwell, who later plots and schemes to marry Lola, proclaims her to be a member of the pinto tribe. Lola’s body becomes the site on which Ruiz de Burton maps the racial

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21 I am thinking here specifically of cases like the Venus Hottentot.
and political indeterminacy of Mexicans after the Mexican War (78). Her reformulation of the captivity narrative hinges on an expanded visual economy inclusive of the Anglo-Americans of the East Coast who pale in comparison; indeed, Lola is whiter than they are. Now the subject of envy rather than derision, Lola’s former rival, Emma Hackwell, pines, “I think Lola might teach us the secret of that Indian paint that kept her white skin under cover, making it whiter by bleaching it. I would bargain to wear spots for a while” (232). That the skin dye does not wear off soon after Lola becomes a member of the Norval household belies the captivity narrative’s second manifestation – Lola’s imprisonment among the Norvals.

In its second manifestation, which Beth Fisher discusses in “The Captive Mexicana and the Desiring Bourgeois Woman,” “the account of Lola’s captivity in the Norval home clearly unsettles, as Anne Goldman has suggested, the cultural assumptions behind Anglo-American captivity narratives that define the Yankee home as the site of white civilization vulnerable to attack by savage natives” (62). Not entirely separate from the first version of captivity among the Apaches and Mohaves, Lola’s time served with the Norvals is compounded by Jemima’s exploitation of the young girl’s inheritance and her liminality in the domestic sphere based on her racial indeterminacy. She is placed with the Irish servants because she is imagined to be either Black or Native American and this racial binary affords Ruiz de Burton the opportunity to critique the travel narratives of the time which tended to racialize Mexicans by classifying them below Native Americans. Ruiz de Burton alludes to the common practice among early male travel writers who ventured into the Southwest like Walter Colton, Richard Henry Dana, and Charles Lummis of comparing Mexicans with Native Americans. And the
result was a kind of triangulation of racialization, if you will, in which Native Americans represented the “noble savages,” people of Spanish ancestry were cultivated but morally corrupt, and Anglo-Americans represented the most enlightened of the three races.

This second captivity narrative not only allows Ruiz de Burton to reframe the Southwest within the national imaginary, but to do so in terms of the aftermath of Manifest Destiny, articulated through the peace treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Lola’s liminal status in the Norval family, and Mrs. Norval’s plans to steal or “borrow” Lola’s inheritance represent the double-bind facing former Mexican citizens after the war.

Through her reliance on the captivity narrative to assert Californianas into a position of race and class privilege, Ruiz de Burton not only indicts Anglo-European society who gained financially from U.S. imperialism in the Mexican War, but undoes the very formulaic treatment of Mexican women in travel narratives and dime novels by the time *Who Would Have Thought It?* was published. I agree with Beth Fisher that one form of the captivity narrative involves Lola’s adoption into the Norval household through which, she argues, “the novel indict[s] domestic womanhood as a discourse of class and racial dominance. It represents this discourse, furthermore, as fully implicated in the unbridled expansion of capitalism . . . threat[ening] the economic security of propertied Mexicans on both sides of the newly constructed border” (60).

Lola’s reunion with her father and maternal grandfather occasions Ruiz de Burton’s redressing of grievances after 1848. The fates of Doña María and Lola are blamed on the U.S. government and its unprotected frontier (201). Here Ruiz de Burton alludes to Article XI of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo that addressed the issue of captivity and the trafficking of human beings in the following manner: “It shall not be
lawful, under any pretext whatever, for any inhabitant of the United States, to purchase or acquire any Mexican or any foreigner residing in Mexico, who may have been captured by Indians inhabiting the territory of either of the two Republics” (reported in Griswold del Castillo 191). The U.S. government established the first border patrol to the police against Indian raids and to safeguard against the trafficking of individuals across the newly erected border. For Ruiz de Burton, both Native Americans and Anglo-Americans are the invaders who enter Mexico’s domestic space, capturing wives and marrying into Mexican families for profit and financial gain.

She argues against this penetration of national and domestic boundaries through the third layer of captivity which involves the Revered Hackwell’s attempts to force Lola into marriage and thereby lay claim to her significant inheritance. In dime novel fashion, Manifest Destiny is sexualized into the marriage plot which imagines the Mexican bride to be captive of a semi-feudal patriarchy that would give her a fate worse than death – arranged marriage to a Mexicano. She is of course rescued by an Anglo soldier-turned suitor who is rewarded not only with a new bride, but with her class status, family and business connections, wealth, and property. The racialization common to captivity is slightly adjusted away from the native/white dialectic to whiten the Mexican bride-to-be out of her own family whose male members in particular begin to take on darker hues and tones.

Rev. Hackwell’s scheme to threaten Lola with exposing her mother’s captivity operates within the “logic” of the dime novel captivity. In true form, Hackwell has a ship made ready to sail Lola away to Cuba where he will force her to marry him. Interestingly, a testimonio from the late nineteenth century collected by Hubert Howe
Bancroft in a fashion similar to the fictional character of Lebrun in Ruiz de Burton’s novel, involves similar props, but with an entirely different ending.

In the lost narrative of Doña María, which is recovered from the dead letter office and eventually finds its way to the Medina family in Mexico, Ruiz de Burton symbolically defies the imperialistic/cooptive agenda of Hubert Howe Bancroft. In 1875, as part of Bancroft’s overly-ambitious project to interview, translate, and publish the oral histories of California’s original residents, Doña Josefa Carrillo de Fitch sat down to tell her own story. It involved Pío Pico, the governor of California, boats of various sizes, and a trip to Valparaíso, where she eloped with husband Henry/Enrique Fitch. Having sought and obtained the blessing of Doña Josefa’s father, Henry Fitch converted to Catholicism, learned Spanish, and made preparations for the two of them to be married by the local priest in her parents’ home.

Governor José Echeandía learned of the wedding and sent men to order it stopped under penalty of imprisonment. Of course, Doña Josefa states, the people, including the priest who had recently arrived in San Diego, immediately obeyed the governor’s order and all quickly filed out of the Carrillo household. Fitch, not dissuaded, leaves as well, but to find help in the form of Pío Pico, Doña Josefa’s cousin. Together, they work out a plan to get Josefa out of her parents’ home and onto a boat bound for Valparaíso. Pío Pico is charged with persuading Josefa’s parents into permitting the elopement; Henry is to get the ship he commands ready for sail and to have another boat waiting to ferry Josefa from shore. All of this occurs under cover of darkness and Josefa and Henry sail off for their life together as husband and wife.
Ultimately, Ruiz de Burton revision of the captivity narrative operates under a different geographical and racial imaginary than the one commonly animating captivity narratives. It also focuses attention on the broken promises of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, on the cooptive actions of people like Bancroft, on the primacy of the Southwest territory in nation-building, on U.S. imperialism, and on the U.S. Mexican border. As José Saldívar’s latest book title attests, *Border Matters*, and by narrating a story that deals with border crossings in the vain of a quintessential American trope – the captivity narrative – Ruiz de Burton gives us a critical story of the border that draws upon a different history from the one commonly told or known in the nineteenth century.

The Marriage of Texas

Written in the 1920s and 30s as a collaborative effort by Jovita González and Eve Raleigh, *Caballero* operates under the theoretical conflation of family and nation outlined in Doris Sommer’s *Foundational Fictions*, which will be discussed in more detail in chapters two and five; however, it does not follow this literary pattern without reservation. Most of the conventions set in place in *Francis Berrian* are invoked and critiqued a hundred years later in *Caballero*, which I read as a critical study of intermarriages between Anglos and Mexican during and after the Mexican War. The marriage of convenience between Angela and Red McClane, the feminist revision of the captivity narrative where Susanita rescues her brother from the Texas Rangers, and the homosocial relationship between Luis Gonzaga and Captain Devlin combine to expose the thin romantic trappings of the Mexican War historical romance.

Let me preface my argument with a brief plot summary. Early in the novel, *Caballero*’s patriarch, Don Santiago, expresses his dominion over his children’s destinies
and simultaneously divulges both his own and the novel’s preoccupation with marriage:

“There would be match-making, betrothals. A wife for Alvaro, a husband for Susanita.
A husband for Angela, [he] had determined” (36). Conspicuously absent from Santiago’s
match-making scheme is his eldest son, Luis Gonzaga, whom he refers to throughout the
novel as a marica (milksop) and a woman (141, 157). Alvaro, although saved from the
noose by his sister, Susanita, later dies at the hands of a Texas Ranger before he can
return to the hacienda and engage in the marriage plot. Don Santiago’s two daughters,
Susanita and Angela, do comply with the marriage plot, but, in their choices of Anglo
husbands, they are labeled racial and political traitors by their father. Luis Gonzaga
leaves Texas for Maryland to study art with an Irish Catholic doctor, Captain Devlin. By
the novel’s conclusion, Don Santiago has lost his peons, who have left him to receive
wages in American households, his daughters have married Anglos, one son has died, and
another has left for Maryland and later for Spain. Critic José Limón argues that “each
relationship means a rejection of Don Santiago’s patriarchal right to dictate and arrange
his children’s liaisons” (345).

Raleigh and González write their novel at a time of increasingly restrictive
immigration policies (Operation Wetback) and anti-miscegenation laws in the Jim Crow
South so that the only marriages that can be imagined between Anglos and Mexicans are
those that take place a hundred years prior.22 In Texas in the 1840s, the category of
“white” was as much in flux as that of “Mexican.” Within the Geography of Marriage,

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22 I agree with Limón that González and Raleigh project their ideals of social relations into the nineteenth
century, but the two of us differ with respect to our readings of such early Mexican and Anglo relations.
Limón conjectures, “had it been published [in the nineteenth century], Caballero would have asked a
nineteenth-century reader to view its happy marriages as a plausible projection of the future based on
contemporary social relations.” He continues, “the long century could no more have imagined such a
possibility, even as romance, than it could have imagined a novel of the postbellum Jim Crow South in

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lawyer William Snyder explicitly addresses how statutes regarding the legality of certain unions varied drastically from state to state. In Texas, Snyder notes, marriages were forbidden on the basis of incest, bigamy, and miscegenation. In the case of the latter category, miscegenation is defined exclusively as the marriage between "any person of European blood or their descendants" and "Africans or the descendants of Africans" who are also referred to as "a person of mixed blood descended from negro ancestry to the third generation inclusive" (304). However, what is much more striking and speaks directly to the issue of whiteness as a fluid category is the statement that follows: "all persons not included in the above definition of negro are deemed in law white persons" (304, emphasis mine). Through a negative dialectic, the term "white" comes to signify exclusively "not negro." By opening up the category of white, ostensibly all races, like Mexican and Native American, are eligible to legally claim the rights and privileges enjoyed by whites.23

In terms of Caballero, this legal expansion of the category of whiteness shifts the marriages of Don Sebastiano's two daughters to Anglo soldiers from interracial to international unions. In other words, because Angela and Susanita are legally classified as white by virtue of the fact that they are "not negroes," their matrimonial ties to Red McClane and Robert Warrener do not cross racial lines, but rather serve to unite and confirm national and political alliances. Accordingly, much of the book's energy which would have to be directed towards whitening the women through class privilege and/or

which a white man and a black woman found true marital bliss" (346-7).

23 What critic Kathleen De Grave has described as "a famous case of passing that is pretty well documented," bears out the living truth of this racial binary in mid-to late-nineteenth century Texas. Lucy and Albert Parsons, who married in 1872, "eved the Texas laws banning miscegenation by creating fictional parents" for Lucy (102). Because she could not reveal her racial identity as an escaped plantation slave, she concocted the story that she was "the child of John Waller, a Native American, and Marie del
their European ancestry can instead be channeled into their political assimilation into U.S. republican ideology.

The novel metonymically represents Mexico and its patriarchal traditions (such as arranged marriages) in the character of Don Sebastiano. Tracing the father-daughter relationships reveals the shifting ties and alliances between Mexico and the United States, represented by the two Anglo-American suitors/soldiers. Because the family romance stands in for “natural” allegiances to the nation, marriage expresses a shift in national identification.\textsuperscript{24} By representing Mexico through the patriarch, the marriages of Susanita and Angela are predetermined to be acts of racial and national betrayal. The whitening of the Mendoza y Soria daughters when wed to Anglo husbands occurs primarily because of the false dilemma Don Santiago constructs between the two national and racial identities: Susanita and Angela can either submit to his power and enter into arranged marriages with Mexican men or they can become outcasts to their family and their nation by betraying them in marriages to the enemy. Don Santiago’s ultimatum is reminiscent of the false dilemma buttressing the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which considered Mexicans who did not declare their national ties within one year of the treaty’s ratification to be U.S. citizens by default.\textsuperscript{25} In both situations, note that marriage is a constant and that the husband’s racial identity determines that of his wife.

In the marriage of Angela and Red McClane, love and romance are substituted for practical matters: future economic prosperity and the application of religious convictions

\textsuperscript{24} In “the erotics of politics,” the conflation of nation and family is predicated on ‘natural’ heterosexual love and in the marriage that provided a figure for apparently nonviolent consolidation during internecine conflicts at mid-century” (Sommer 6).

\textsuperscript{25} See particularly Article IX of the Treaty in Richard Griswold del Castillo’s The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.
through social service and religious conversion. Angela describes the dynamics of their relationship in the following way, “I do not think we will need what you call love to make a successful marriage. We are different, the Señor McClane and I” (285). A marriage that both respects and maintains cultural and racial difference is, according to historian David Montejano, more in keeping with the Anglo-Mexican relations forged in the “semi-arid region west and south of the Nueces,” the territory on which the fictional Rancho de la Palma is situated (25). Red McClane embodies the merchant class who arrive in Texas and “benignly and paternally serve as intermediaries between the natives and the new authorities” (25). In fact, Red McClane advises Don Sebastiano to take the title of magistrado in exchange for his control of the future votes of the Mexican community. Because of his intermarriage to Angela, McClane is “seen as [a] trusted protector by the native people” (25).

In comparison to Warrener’s motives for intermarriage, which adhere to the romantic, egalitarian tenor first introduced in Flint’s Francis Berrian, McClane’s marriage satisfies the economic and political incentives cited by Montejano for the merchant class in this region of Texas. “Warrener’s marriage . . . was love that was an end in itself . . . McClane’s was a link in power, a staff of respectability, a means to an end” (317). Don Sebastiano clearly identifies McClane’s motives for marrying Angela and the role she herself will assume: “all this concern over the misery his countrymen are visiting upon the poor Mexicans is to further his personal ambitions.” He tells Angela, “You are to be the Lady of Mercy so that he will have their allegiance for his schemes” (312).
Angela and Red enter into a partnership, one which allows each to pursue his/her own interests. What is so alluring to Angela about a marriage to Red McClane is the freedom it permits her. In this respect, the McClane marriage mirrors the Warrener's: both women gain an independence exclusively associated as American. Ironically, Angela's marriage to Red allows her to pursue her religious beliefs. Angela wishes to enter the convent, but is forbidden by her father. Oddly enough, marrying Red McClane (an act which would seem directly opposed to the chaste life of a nun) allows her the freedom needed to perform works of charity in the name of God. Marriage permits Angela to be more of a nun than her single life under her father's roof. Again, the novel plays upon, and in this case renders absurd, the degree of freedom afforded by marriage to an Anglo-American. Put differently, Angela's union with McClane examines the degree to which emancipation narratives can enter and interpret intermarriages. It questions why rights and privileges have to necessarily be the exclusive property of Anglo-Americans.

Similar to the revision of the captivity narrative in Francis Berrian, Caballero inverts the gender structure of this literary genre by casting Susanita in the role of rescuer who saves her brother, Alvaro, from the hanging noose. Through Robert Warrener, her future husband and a lieutenant in the U.S. Army, Susanita learns of her brother's impending death at the hands of the Texas Rangers. She rides through the night, unchaperoned by a woman, but attended by a male mozo, before arriving at the site of her brother's incarceration and scheduled hanging. Although she aids in her brother's release from Ranger custody and thus saves his life, her acts are met with anger: "Riding all night alone with a peon, you a Mendoza y Soria! . . . Couldn't you let me die instead? It
would have been an honor to our name, dying for my people and my country, now you have dishonored us forever” (270). Susanita’s rescue of her brother defies Mexican patriarchal custom and, more profoundly, subverts the very tenets upon which Alvaro’s actions as El Lobo, a bandito fighting against the Texas Rangers, are founded. Alvaro himself reveals the impact which Susanita’s rescue has had on his own reputation, the honor of the family name, and the reputation of its female members, on which the family’s position stands.

However, Susanita’s rescue of Alvaro does not solely resonate with the dishonor of his family name; it disrupts the very mechanisms put in place to justify and fuel patriotism — family honor and duty to one’s people and nation. That Susanita’s rescue of Alvaro destroys these factors belies the critical role of women in nationalism. For Alvaro to fulfill his duties to family, fellow citizens, and country, Susanita and other women like her must maintain a certain decorum and/or reputation. Susanita’s unchaperoned horse ride to the site of her captured brother stands in direct contradiction to the belief that patriotic acts are performed in the name of women incapable of taking such actions themselves.

What in fact Alvaro has exposed is the underpinning narrative seeking to justify interracial marriages at the expense of Mexican men. Alvaro breaks open the hidden purpose behind the transformation of the captivity narrative into the rescue from arranged marriage, which is equating marriage to an Anglo soldier with emancipation or liberation. Following the logic of this complicated pattern of substitution, marriage becomes a politically whitening act because for the women to wed Anglo soldiers, they must first express a desire to unite themselves with like-minded individuals who respect their
individual autonomy. In fact, the novel notes numerous times how liberal Anglo husbands are with their Mexican wives.

The marriages of both Susanita and Angela to Americanos contrast the romantic lives of their brothers, Alvaro and Luis Gonzaga. It would logically follow that if marriage serves Susanita and Angela as a political act that confers U.S. citizenship, then the two brothers could employ this same vehicle to solidify or maintain their national identities. However, the marriage plots seem to be strictly available to the two Mendoza y Soría sisters; in Caballero marriage is a gender specific act whose performance only serves to construct relationships between Mexican women and their new nation, the U.S.

The one “true romance” in Caballero involves Susanita and Robert Warrener. As an exaggerated foil to the Warrener’s, the marriage between Inez and Johnny White mimics the literary tradition of fairytales in which the damsel in distress (in this case in a nun’s habit) is rescued by her Prince Charming. It is worth noting that Inez’ dramatic marriage to “Yonay” White precedes that between Susanita and Robert and models the revised captivity narrative discussed in Francis Berrian. Unlike Susanita’s political conversion and emancipation, both occasioned by her marriage to Warrener, Inez’ union serves to place her forever on the mantel as a trophy bride whose first, and perhaps only English words are: “Geeve me a kees” (273). In comparison with the tutoring of Martha Alvaro in Francis Berrian where the acquisition of the English language expands consciousness, providing Martha with the language in which to articulate and exercise the ideals of republicanism. It is decidedly against this hyperbolic romantic plot that the romance of Susanita and Robert transpires.
Homosocial Possibilities

As I have argued, González and Raleigh were well aware of the heterosexual, whitening trajectory of the historical romance and thus set the alternative, homoerotic "romance" of Captain Carl Devlin and Luis Gonzaga, the only member of the Mendoza y Soria family to retain his ethnic identity, against a veritable tour de force of interracial marriages.

Even before Devlin and Luis meet for the first time, Luis Gonzaga is positioned peripherally in relation to family and nation based on these two institutions' shared masculine construct. Presented early on as a dandy, "eighteen and without an affair, never even kissing the servant girls he sketched," Luis suffers an "old loneliness" within him that changes dramatically to a "feeling that he belonged" when in Devlin's company (104). What further distances Luis Gonzaga from his father and a certain brand of nationalism is his neutral stance towards the Mexican War and Americans in general. He learns from his father that Americans are "coarse, sometimes clever enough to simulate gentility," but his developing relationship with Devlin, a fellow artist, contradicts his father's nationalist ideas (103). At one solidifying moment, "Luis, to his confusion, found his hand in that of the American... It was a terrible thing to do, [Luis thought] the more so because it did not seem terrible at all" (105). Indeed, the fact that Devlin attends mass and is an Irish Catholic who will eventually take Luis to Maryland, a state founded by Catholics, counters a nationalist narrative altogether by positioning other belief systems such as religion and art over those of nation.

In a subsequent encounter between the two men, art challenges nationalism by reconfiguring the axes of identity. Note the alternative "territory" which Devlin offers
Luis Gonzaga once the latter has delineated his own position as a “traitor to [his] father and [his] country” (156). In response, Devlin offers a completely different cartography, “‘I should make a good map,’ Devlin said, ‘So many feet, so many miles, here a hill, there a valley’” (156). “Their hands were locked and tears splashed down Luis Gonzaga’s cheeks and onto the hands. They were neither Mexican nor Anglo Saxon but artists” (156). This spontaneous ritual of solidarity will be invoked later in the novel as a source of strength from which Luis Gonzaga will draw his strength when he makes his declaration of independence against his father, Don Santiago. Because the relationship between Devlin and Luis exists independent of the pattern for national consolidation, their “romance” bypasses the whitening process associated with historical romances featuring interracial marriages.

Indeed, by employing the historical romance to narrate the story of the Mexican War, González and Raleigh make interracial unions between Mexicans and Anglos inevitable. By bringing race to bear on the pattern for national cohesion, González and Raleigh reveal the underlying assumptions of the historical romance – whiteness and heterosexuality. The historical romance has traditionally addressed conflicts like the American Revolution and the Civil War in which only political differences need to be resolved through marriage and race remains a non-issue. In the case of Caballero, where, as Jovita González stated in her unpublished master’s thesis, “two peoples of different races, customs, and traditions come in contact with each other disagreements, misunderstandings, and quarrels are bound to occur,” marriages are a much more daunting task. 26 For, if the purpose of the historical romance is to promote national

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26 Jovita González. Social Life in Cameron, Starr, and Zapata Counties. Unpublished M.A. Thesis for the
consolidation by bringing people together as families, and the nation in formation is the U.S., then where do Mexicans fit into this formula? For the most part, González and Raleigh have, according to Limón, “an unconscious sense that the new social formation must, for the foreseeable future, admit the Mexican in a still-subordinate position, attenuated by the care and respect that the idiom of romance and marriage make narratively possible” (351). This subordinate position, I believe, is predicated on and signified by the gender of the racial others marrying into Anglo families.

The marriages of Susanita and Angela to Robert Warrener and Red McClane respectively follow what I have witnessed in other historical romances as a whitening pattern whereby the heroine’s identity is either physically or socially whitened when she marries an Anglo. Caballero conforms to this literary convention in its heterosexual plots, but not in its homosocial “romance” between Devlin and Luis. I believe the threat of miscegenation diminishes when the racial identity of children born out of a bi-racial marriage is not an issue. The “romance” of Luis and Devlin constitutes an alternative to this pattern as witnessed by the juxtaposition of Luis and Susanita’s letters home. Luis, imagining his art in the Spanish style, will produce paintings reflecting his race and ethnicity; Susanita, assimilating into her Anglo life with husband Robert Warrener, literally produces a newborn baby reflecting her whitening process. She writes to her parents, “the baby is blond and so white” (333).

Interracial romances in Caballero begin with the Anglo soldiers at Fort Brown and the Mexican girls of marriageable age catching glimpses of each other on the street.
During one such moment, Susanita spies her future husband in the figure of Robert Warrener, a soldier who has interestingly enough come to Texas to flee a marriage arranged by his parents and would-be in-laws (46). The forbidden courtship that develops out of this chance meeting serves as a foil for the homoerotic relationship of Luis Gonzaga and Devlin, who also have an unplanned encounter that ends similarly with interest piqued on both sides and Luis departing from the scene, blushing despite the remonstrations of his brother Alvaro, that he has better things to do than “look at a gringo’s face” (48). In reflecting on this brief meeting, Devlin remarks, “I hope I meet that boy again under more pleasant circumstances. I like him. Rather more than merely like him” (48). Part of Devlin’s desire to see Luis again stems from his recognition that Luis “looks like a poet or an artist should look and did” (48).

In opposition to the masculine romance’s fascination with “killings and cruelties,” Luis Gonzaga identifies a consolidating romance constructed out of art and its creative, rather than destructive, properties. Just as he reached out to pull the gun from Simón’s hands, Luis Gonzaga reaches out to his father, turning him around so they are face to face when he delivers the news that he is leaving Rancho La Palma with Devlin. The scene purposely echoes two previous ones in which Luis arrests his father’s violence. Conjuring up an image of Padre Pierre standing at his right and Devlin “holding his hand, the clasp strong and warm,” Luis Gonzaga finishes his confession to his father, “Papá, I wish to study art. I want to go to the Americano towns of Baltimore and New York” (197).

Luis physically intervenes in violent scenes orchestrated by his father and in so doing, establishes the means for his own escape from the constructs underwriting the historical romance and nationalism, which imagine a man to first engage in battle before
becoming engaged in marriage. Indeed, by interceding in violent moments, Luis reverses the pattern in which men profess political beliefs by their willingness to die for them, a sentiment repeated by his brother, Alvaro. Luis Gonzaga's multiple intrusions into scenes of violence directed by his father are intended to register on a metalevel where they signify interventions into the historical romance. But the gender dynamics of such rupture in the genre are not fully realized until, in Luis' absence, Susanita finds herself the only person who can rescue Alvaro from the Texas Rangers' noose.

The homosocial relationship between Luis and Devlin parallels the historical romance and the heterosexual marriage plots that serve as foils for this alternative "romance." Their alternative romance surpasses the racial and sexual assumptions underlying the historical romance. By the end of Caballero, both men leave the U.S. for Spain, renouncing all national ties in favor of the links forged through a life of art. Having successfully escaped the trappings of the historical romance, Luis Gonzaga emerges by the novel's end as a citizen of the world. What is so compelling about the homosocial relationship in the midst of the historical romance revisiting the Mexican War is its ability to dispel the myths on which such a romance is predicated — to reveal specifically how pivotal the whitening (political and otherwise) of the Mexican heroine is recasting the effects of Manifest Destiny in terms of the marriage plot.

Timothy Flint's novel is just one example of a wealth of dime novels that directly translated the Mexican War and, thus, relations between Mexico and the United States through the interracial marriage plot. In Ruiz de Burton's novel, the captivity narrative

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28 Robert Johansen catalogs the titles of many of these dime novels on the Mexican War whose very titles reveal their allegiance to the literary formula discussed in this chapter. Some examples are: Inez, the Beautiful; or, Love on the Rio Grande, Arthur Woodleigh: A Romance of the Battle Field in Mexico, and The Bloody Nuptials; or, A Soldier by Chance: A Tale of the Mexican Campaign (188).
and the interracial romance plot are both revised, yet Californios' claim to whiteness remains intact. Unlike Flint, Ruiz de Burton insists on the whiteness of her characters of Spanish and Mexican descent outside of the interracial romance plot. As I have argued, adaptations of the captivity narrative could just as easily be employed by female writers like Ruiz de Burton to indict the treatment of Californios by Anglo-Americans. Jovita González and Eve Raligh take Ruiz de Burton's critique of U.S. imperialism one step further by writing directly against the gender dynamics inherent in the rescue scene. They cast a woman in the position of rescuer. Ultimately, González, Raligh, and Ruiz de Burton all insist upon the whiteness (the racialized language of worthiness) of their heroines independent of interracial marriage plots.
Chapter Two

Savage Relations: Race, Family, and War in Helen Hunt Jackson’s Ramona and Bret Harte’s Gabriel Conroy

Bret Harte’s Gabriel Conroy (1871) and Helen Hunt Jackson’s Ramona (1884) both fictionalize the Treaty’s repercussions in California. Their novels reflect the War’s tumultuous impact on Native Americans and Mexicans, who jockeyed for positions of political and social legitimacy through vexed engagements with whiteness and racial otherness. This chapter examines how the Mexican War impacted U.S. race relations as expressed in these two novels by centering whiteness through legal maneuvers for citizenship rights and by disrupting the family romance, which served as a cradle for national consolidation.

Although both family and national romances expanded to include differences in gender, they did not accommodate differences in race. Indeed, for Anglo-Americans the nineteenth-century family romance was a homogenizing myth intent upon insulating and protecting the family from racial difference. Ensuring legitimacy and inheritance necessitated measures to safeguard the republican family from any external (read racialized) sexual threat. Ironically, although race was imagined by Anglo-Americans as a corrupter of family and, therefore, national romances, the rigorous campaign for circumscribing whiteness within the familial unit posed an even greater threat by

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29 As Claudia Tate argues in Domestic Allegories of Political Desire, post-Reconstruction black women writers were keenly aware of the political currency of the family romance and, not surprisingly, employed the domestic as an indirect, but socially recognized maneuver for political capital.
30 See Hazel Carby’s “On the Threshold of Woman’s Era: Lynching, Empire, and Sexuality in Black Feminist Theory,” in Race, Writing, and Difference. for a critical and historical account of the logic of lynching laws and how the sanctity and preservation of the white female body became the very ideological grounds on which black males were killed.
inadvertently encouraging the transgression of powerful social taboos specific to the
family: those being what I have come to call “racial cannibalism” and incest.

I choose the term “racial cannibalism” to signify metaphorical digestions of
another person’s culture and racial identity first and foremost because I want to retain the
forbidden flavor of this word, its universal taboo, and its moral repugnance. Its
traditional definition as the consumption of human flesh also resonates in this chapter
since Harte bases *Gabriel Conroy* loosely on one of the most popular and scandalous
accounts of cannibalism in the West – the Donner Party Expedition. Although other
nineteenth-century texts distinguished between the cannibalism of savages and that
committed by whites under “extreme conditions” such as shipwreck, the practice of
anthropophagi was primarily associated with indigenous peoples, and people of color.\(^{31}\)
Indeed, in texts containing what critic Geoffrey Sanborn classifies as “white
cannibalism,” whiteness camouflages and rationalizes such notorious acts. “To a certain
degree, then, the mid-eighteenth century image of cannibals as rational, humane beings
without any other rations may be said to have become, in the late eighteenth and early
nineteenth centuries, an element of discourse marked ‘For Whites Only’” (Sanborn 42).
To remove the veil of desperation, rationalism, and survival – the factors prohibiting
cannibalism from becoming just another savage act – is to reveal the savagery perpetrated
by whites and this is precisely one of my arguments in this chapter. In fulfilling their
Manifest Destinies, “whites” realized the savagery of this doctrine in their actions.

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\(^{31}\) Published on the eve of the Mexican War, evolutionist Charles Darwin’s *Journal of Researches into the
Geology and Natural History of the Various Countries* (1846) describes cannibalism practices of tribes in
Tierra del Fuego and other parts of Africa. Darwin makes no mention in his text of this act being
performed by people of European descent. They are merely witnesses.
I likewise coin this term “racial cannibalism” because the acts of masquerading as a member of another race do not adhere to the conventions of the passing narrative where a light-skinned black character passes as white to access a world of rights and privileges reserved exclusively for whites. Unlike this convention of passing where whiteness represents the end goal for a character assuming a racial mask, the phenomenon of racial cannibalism fixes whiteness as its starting point. Grace Conroy and Ramona Gonzaga both consume Mexican and Native American identities respectively.

Traditionally, cannibalism, as Roberto Fernández Retamar has outlined in his seminal article on Caliban, has been associated with the Americas and with indigenous/aborigine peoples. The deformed slave in Shakespeare’s *Tempest*, Caliban (an anagram for cannibal) represents for Retamar and other critics a symbol of counterhegemony – a source of resistance and defiance to the rules of colonialism. Rather than focus as Retamar does on the figure of the colonized, the cannibal who is native to the Americas, I turn my attention to the white cannibal who consumes the lives and identities (racial and cultural) of those she colonizes. Retamar and Harte, I believe, have the same intention – to indict the colonizer – but each positions the cannibal differently within the critique. Retamar embraces the image of Caliban as a positive symbol for the colonized; Harte reverses the racial dynamics associated in Western society with cannibalism by casting Anglo characters into Caliban’s role.

Harte and Jackson’s novels bear the taint of incest, as well as that of racial cannibalism, precisely because as the national bastion of whiteness, the republican family sanctions and veils violent, dissembling acts to secure its position. An over-reliance on

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32 According to the *OED*, the first instance in which “passing” was used to describe racial masquerade was
the family romance as the model for nationalism inadvertently produces an environment conducive to incest. Incest appears in Harte’s novel through characters scheming to hide their ulterior motives in family romance. Lovers Grace Conroy and Philip Ashley affect a filial relationship to hide their illicit sexual affair and protect Grace’s reputation behind the domestic screen.33 In the second manifestation of false family ties, Julie Devarges, having exhausted her scheme to swindle family inheritance by passing as Gabriel Conroy’s sister, seduces Gabriel Conroy (her alleged brother) and gains financial security by sexualizing her family role as wife instead of sister. In many fictional accounts of incest, an illicit affair between family members transpires because both characters are ignorant of their shared kinship. In Ramona, the suppression of the titular character’s bloodlines, expressed through the manufacturing of foster familial relationships, produces the specter of consanguinity.

Bret Harte superimposes this vocabulary of savagery, cannibalism, and incest onto the vulgar white characters populating his novel to criticize the consequences of Manifest Destiny and opening the West up indiscriminately – one might say promiscuously — to all settlers.34 Harte adapts the sensational story of the Donner Party Expedition, a group of emigrants stranded in the Sierra Nevada of California and forced to cannibalize their dead as the only means of survival. With actual historical accounts of white cannibalism as the foundation for the novel, Harte taints whiteness as he reveals the various savage acts Anglos commit under its guise. Helen Hunt Jackson makes similar

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33 This plot of substituting marital for fraternal relationships perhaps begins for Western literature with the story of Sarah and Abraham from Genesis, Old Testament.

34 “Whereas in such early tales . . . [Harte] betrayed a rather benign view of American and Spanish colonialism, in several late stories he decried the notion of manifest destiny” (Schamhorst 102).
accusations in *Ramona*, yet ultimately her novel imagines the future inheritance of land in the West by people representing the genteel white and the best of the “whitened” native.

Prior to the Mexican War in 1848, the practice of absorbing people of color into the citizenry of the United States was an unspoken necessity to populate the landscape with individuals loyal to the nation who would take up arms against any enemy and fight, at least for the land they occupied. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Mexico, and Spain before it, employed similar tactics to assure their literal presence in regions distant from the capital or center of government. Incentive packages including large plots of land were offered not only to Mexican nationals, but also to Anglo emigrants whose loyalty to the Mexican government was assured through oaths of allegiance. In the view of the U.S. and Mexican governments, the Southwest was a relatively barren region whose geographic proximity to both nations made it a contested territory by default. Both nations would wrestle for a stronghold in the region – Mexicans by offering citizenship and land grants, and the U.S. by Manifest Destiny. To fortify their claim to the Southwestern territory, both governments were willing to accept members of the other nation into their citizenry and this drive to occupy the contested landscape meant a sanctioning (whether direct or indirect) of interracial marriage. After the war, in post-1848 U.S., there was no longer a need to recruit people wholesale into the citizenry,

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35 Geographical proximity played such an influential role in the loyalty of Mexican citizens that a direct correlation existed between people living close to the capital fighting for Mexico during the Mexican War and those residing in Alta and Baja California who welcomed U.S. annexation. In *Telling Identities*, Rosaura Sánchez notes that proto-nationalism in Alta California took the form of a nativist association with California in particular, not with Mexico. The closer subjects were to the capital in Mexico City, the stronger their ties with the nation.

36 The tenuous nature of such oaths will be addressed in the next chapter in the figure of Stephen F. Austin, who received a Mexican land grant in and around the current city of Austin, Texas.
and the incidence of interracial marriage, quietly tolerated in the past out of necessity, was no longer permitted.

Through the doubling of U.S. territory, Manifest Destiny brought about the crisis that Snyder and others address. Former Mexican territories like California and Colorado would pose the greatest threat to the domestic model because matrimonial law was based upon Mexican laws. The church first instituted marriage laws by publishing lists of relatives forbidden to join in marriage. States passed legislation to prohibit and punish instances of incestuous unions between people of consanguinity and affinity. In cases of incest, rulings in southern courts in general reveal the connection assumed between family and nation. Judges were reticent to intrude upon or undermine patriarchal rule. Further testament to the bond between family and nation, the Mississippi high court in 1872 characterized incest as a transgression against “domestic virtues” and “the obligations of a citizen” (Bardaglio 33). In the South in particular, where slavocracy conflated family and racial servitude, and where countless slave owners raped and impregnated black female slaves, the policy against incest was further complicated.

The insular properties associated with the family romance are predicated in part on the specter of the racial other, often imagined as prone to savage acts like literal and racial cannibalism. Yet the guarded, homogenizing function of the family romance to maintain and reproduce whiteness fostered the very practices it sought to avoid. The phenomenon of racial cannibalism, or the strategic incorporation and deployment of racial otherness, whether Native American or Mexican identity, appears in both novels to signify the consequences of a national preoccupation with the republican family.

37 Colorado’s state laws made exception expressly for “people living in that portion of [the state] acquired
Savagery and immoral sexual practices were first associated with whites in the mid-nineteenth century when Brigham Young’s publicly decreed that Mormons could take plural wives (Allmendinger). Expelled from New York and Missouri, Mormons relocated in Salt Lake City among five Native American tribes (Utes, Gosiutes, Paiutes, Shoshoni, and Navajo). The subsequent interactions between Mormons and Native Americans prompted President James Buchanan to declare war in 1857 against the Mormons out of fear that they were spreading white slavery (polygamy) and were inciting Native Americans with the belief that, “as members of God’s chosen people, they should inherit the land” (Allmendinger 54).\(^3\) “[The] Book of Mormon identified North American Indians as one of the scattered, lost tribes of Israel . . . [and] through conversion and, in some cases, intermarriage with Indians, missionaries hoped to salvage and lighten the race” (53). Unlike the Mormons who, based on kinship to Native Americans, imagine interracial marriage and assimilations as the means to “whiten” their distant relatives, the heroines of *Gabriel Conroy* and *Ramona* plot a reversal of this racial trajectory where they metaphorically feast upon Mexican and Native American identities.

Racial and literal cannibalism appear in *Gabriel Conroy* through whispers, innuendoes, and a decoding of silences. Although cannibalism is never explicitly evoked in the novel, readers cannot help but puzzle at an off-the-cuff remark about Peter Dumphy never eating in public, or at the description of the corpses, including Dumphy’s wife, retrieved from a cave in the Sierra Nevadas (“three bodies . . . and the *dissolved* from Mexico [who] may marry according to the custom of that country” (Snyder 202).

\(^3\) Given the absence of historical precedent, the U.S. government could not cite polygamy or “white slavery,” as the basis for their conflict with the Mormons; Utah had to be treated like Kansas, allowing the territory to decide its own policies on the issue of slavery. Instead, Pres. Buchanan declared war on the Mormons based on their defiance of the separation of church and state since Brigham Young held posts as Head of the Mormon church and territorial governor (Allmendinger 52).
members of a fourth)” (1: 44). It is my belief that the urge to cannibalize (both literally and racially) derives from an over-reliance on the family romance to mold the national romance and to bestow identity. The homogenizing effect of the family romance, which seeks to replicate itself with each subsequent generation, emphasizes sameness to such a degree that the family turns inward to avoid contamination or heterogeneity. As a result of this monomaniacal preoccupation with whiteness, the family romance becomes incestuous, its members cannibalistic.

Both Ramona and Gabriel Conroy are set in California, a former Mexican territory with its own distinctive history of race relations following the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo. Populated by Californios, mestizos, Indians, and Chinese, California adopted its own state constitution to determine how it would legislate citizenship after the treaty, which granted U.S. citizenship to all individuals eligible for Mexican citizenship. Article VII of the treaty states: “Those who shall prefer to remain in the said territories, may either retain their title and rights as Mexican citizens, or acquire those of citizens of the United States” (Griswold del Castillo 189). Article VII created a dilemma for Californios surrounding the status of Indians, who, under the Mexican Constitution of 1821, had been granted Mexican citizenship.

According to the Treaty, then, all Indians in former Mexican territory (which included California) were eligible for U.S. citizenship, a policy at odds with Article XI of the Treaty naming the U.S. government as the agent responsible for policing the border

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39 The term, Californio, describes a wealthy land owner born in California who boasts of pure Spanish ancestry. Mestizos, bi-racial people who have both Spanish and indigenous ancestors, make up the majority of Mexicans living in the United States and Mexico. Unlike the Californios who claimed and were granted access to citizenship and its rights and privileges on their basis of their shared European heritage with Anglo-Americans, mestizos comprised the middle to lower classes in Mexican society and provided the labor required to operate haciendas for nearly 300 years.
and protecting its citizenry against Indian raids. One year after the treaty, California’s State Constitutional Convention debated how racial lines were to be drawn; such decisions involved the extension of enfranchisement and other citizenship rights. At the convention’s close, Mexicans were defined socially as “white” and extended citizenship while California Indians were deemed “nonwhite” and were therefore ineligible for citizenship. The 1854 case of People vs. Hall classified Chinese as “Indians” and therefore nonwhite (Almaguer 9, 10).

The adoption of two “white” heroines into Mexican families — Harte’s Grace Conroy as Doña Dolores Salvatierra into the Salvatierra family and Jackson’s Ramona into the Moreno family — should be read as domesticated versions of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, particularly Article IX declaring the “incorporation” of former Mexican citizens into the United States. The aftermath of the Mexican War scripts racial cannibalism of mestizo identity by Harte’s Grace Conroy; the “going native” narrative operating in Jackson’s novel is mobilized by the racial genocide of the Jacksonian Era. The rapid depeopling of Native Americans and Mexicans from the national landscape licensed characters like Ramona and Grace Conroy to “go native.” In a carbon copy of the Treaty, where adoption serves as a domesticated version of incorporation, the racial and political identities of the adoptees (Ramona and Grace) mirror those of Mexicans, ostensibly welcomed into the U.S. national family. Strikingly, the central dilemma of racial identification facing both heroines and focusing upon the ownership of whiteness reflects the very real predicament confronting Mexicans and Native Americans after the California State Constitutional Convention created the term, “white Mexican.”
California’s subsequent interpretations of the Treaty’s very broad, ambiguous
terms for U.S. citizenship placed racial categories in flux. Specifically, the category of
“white” was dislodged from a fixed racial and social position as many upper class
Californios, those who declared their European ancestry through pure Spanish bloodlines,
claimed status as white persons. What I argue in my reading of the legislative acts
particular to post-1848 California is that whiteness is expunged from its position as a
static racial, social, and legal category by the dynamic interplay between Mexicans and
Native Americans. Indeed, California passed laws to “disenfranchise Mexicans of Indian
descent and to allow only white Mexicans full political rights” (Menchaca 588). What
followed, according to ethnologist Martha Menchaca, was both phenomenal and utterly
disheartening: “The conquered Mexican population learned that is was politically
expedient to assert their Spanish ancestry . . . [conversely] it became politically expedient
for American Indians to pass for Mexican mestizos if they wished to escape the full
impact of the discriminatory Indian legislation” (587). The legal posturing of people of
both Native American and Mexican descent chronicled by Menchaca are replicated, in
revised form, in Gabriel Conroy to such an extent that even the titular character’s identity
is called into question on the witness stand.

**Grace Conroy and the Legal Status of Identity**

Interracial marriage and adoption appear in *Gabriel Conroy* set in a newly-formed
mining town rife with gamblers and charlatans making multiple false claims about their
familial relationships. Bret Harte’s novel chronicles the survivors’ lives of a fictional
Donner Party expedition: Gabriel Conroy, his sister Grace (a.k.a. Doña Dolores
Salvatier, a.k.a. Mrs. Peter Dumphy), Philip Ashley (a.k.a. Arthur Poinsett), Peter
Dumphy (the cannibal and, not coincidentally, the lawyer), Julie Devarges (a.k.a. Grace Conroy), and Victor Ramirez (Julie’s jilted lover whose death occasions the novel’s sensational court case).

Three events transpiring between members of the emigrant party significantly impact the subplots of the novel: before he dies, renown scientist Dr. Devarges bequeaths his silver mine claim to Grace Conroy; Grace leaves the party with Philip Ashley, her lover who impregnates and subsequently abandons her; and Mr. Peter Dumphy, in the hidden darkness of the caves, cannibalizes his own wife. Devarges’ ex-wife, Julie, impersonates Grace and then marries Grace’s brother, Gabriel, in the hopes of reclaiming the silver mine. The real Grace Conroy performs a racialized version of cannibalism, consuming a mestiza identity as Doña Dolores Salvatierra, and only returns to reclaim her identity as Grace when her brother is put on trial for the death of Julia’s ex-lover, Victor Ramirez. Indeed, Ramirez’ death (a bizarre suicide – he falls upon his own knife) compels all characters to disrobe from their assumed identities and happily fulfill the marriage plot.

Violence, represented by the death of Victor Ramirez, occasions the novel’s moment of revelation where the characters’ “true” identities are revealed, their crimes exposed. I read the court scene as the passage in which Manifest Destiny, in all of its guises and forms, appears naked and ugly, exposed for both narrator and reader alike to ridicule. Given the history of legislation designed to authorize and perpetuate Manifest Destiny, it is appropriate that Harte should set the novel’s final showdown in the courtroom where, like the aftermath of Manifest Destiny, the victimized and displaced Mexican is virtually ignored. The ridiculous posturing of Anglo-American characters
over ownership of the infamous silver mine—Victor Ramirez’s mysterious death—overshadows the occasion of the trial.

Despite the novel’s title, Grace Conroy figures prominently in the novel by offering the most in-depth examination of Manifest Destiny’s impact after the war in the guise of racial cannibalism and the appropriation of Mexican land grants by “legal” means. Indeed, it is no accident that the novel tethers the subplot of ownership disputes over the silver mine with the recovery of Grace Conroy. Gabriel Conroy unwittingly settles on the silver mine and, through his foolish actions and thoughts, represents the watered-down version of an Anglo-American who receives the spoils from Manifest Destiny, but remains ignorant of the insidious means used to gain them. When at the novel’s conclusion Grace secures the title to the mine based on her inheritance from José Salvatierra, her adopted father, we witness the mechanisms of Manifest Destiny at work—the geographic incorporation of Mexican territory, signified by the silver mine, and the racial incorporation of Mexican identity, signified by Grace’s guise as Doña Dolores Salvatierra—and how these two forms of incorporation function together.

When she disguises herself and lives as Doña Dolores Salvatierra, Grace Conroy enacts a racial incorporation, an imperialist consumption of Mexican racial and cultural traits. I argue that Grace takes her cue for racial cannibalism from national documents like the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. I read Article IX of the Treaty that figures Mexicans in the United States after the War as a type of racial incorporation, racial erasure, and racial cannibalism. The United States did not just stop at incorporating half of Mexico’s territory, it also took its people, its citizens. And in doing so, the United
States made manifest a kind of racial and cultural ownership of Mexicans, to be deployed whenever it served the nation’s interests.

Examining the imperialist rhetoric of Article IX of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo reveals the extreme degree to which Manifest Destiny permeated the Mexican War, both fueling patriotic fervor before the war, and later justifying the violence after peace was met. Witness the manner in which the Article imagines, “The Mexicans who, in the territories aforesaid, shall not preserve the character of citizens of the Mexican Republic . . . [to be] incorporated into the Union of the United States” (190, emphasis mine). Tellingly, this concept of incorporation does not account for racial difference—nor does it figure Mexican as agents of their own nationalities. Although the language of the article is couched as a choice, ostensibly giving Mexicans the decision to either retain Mexican citizenship or else become U.S. citizens, the application of this article denied that such a choice existed at all. Incorporation does not imply choice—it in fact implies an unspoken violence, an action that occurs in direct disregard to someone’s choice. Grace’s passing as Doña Dolores Salvatierra constitutes racial cannibalism because the same dynamics that characterize cannibalism are mobilized in Grace’s racial transformation.

The ultimate result of the inward turn, cannibalism can be understood as the literal exaggerated version of incest. Instead of turning inward for a sexual partner to insure the perpetuation of the family, as occurs in incest, cannibalism pushes this gesture a step further whereby family members literally feed upon each other in the belief that absorption of the dead by the living will ensure the continuation of the bloodline. In the family romance, cannibalism exists in the preservation of one’s ancestors, the assumption
of characteristics. The rationale behind cannibalism is a conservation of sameness, an insurance against mortality and historical erasure.

The first glimpse the reader gets into the domestic situation of the Dumphy family indicates the family’s capacity to harbor violence: “Dumphy, the red-haired man, had rudely shoved and stricken the woman with the baby – she was his wife, and this conjugal act may have been partly habit – as she . . . did not seem to notice the blow or its giver” (1: 6, emphasis mine). Clearly, the ritualization of this violent “conjugal act” does not register with Mrs. Dumphy precisely because the family romance has been so engrained in Anglo society, so “naturalized” that it hides the very violent mechanisms maintaining its prominence. Grace Conroy, however, does recognize the threat Dumphy poses; she perceives it in “a face with so much animal suggestion in its horrible wistfulness that she needed no further revelation; a face full of inhuman ferocity and watchful eagerness, and yet a face familiar in its outlines – the face of Dumphy!” (1: 12). Grace reads the savage intent beyond Dumphy’s face, although she never witnesses the unspeakable horror first-hand, as her brother Gabriel does.

When Grace passes as Dumphy’s wife, she does so not as a vigilante seeking to revenge against Mrs. Dumphy’s killer, but as a victim of identity theft, to punish Mr. Dumphy’s role in helping Julie Devarges assume Grace’s identity. Under the guise of the deceased Mrs. Dumphy, Grace hires a Southern lawyer, Colonel Starbottle, to bring a lawsuit against Mr. Peter Dumphy for abandonment, not cannibalism (1: 301). Note that although Grace works within the legal system, she does so by assuming the identity of an actual family member. Further, the charge Grace brings against Dumphy, abandonment, is exclusively a familial crime.
What are we as readers to make of the disparity between crime and punishment in the case of Peter Dumphy? Cannibalism, Dumphy’s crime against humanity, goes unpunished while his complicity in Julie Devarges’ scheme to secure the silver mine by impersonating Grace Conroy prompts the real Grace to seek retribution. Weighing the crimes Dumphy commits based upon their respective punishments, invading the sanctity of another home through the impersonation of a family member is a much more heinous offense than the act of cannibalism, which remains within the family proper. Indeed, Dumphy’s violence against the Conroy’s poses more of a threat to the family romance than cannibalism does. Coupled with Grace’s fall (caused by her affair with Philip Ashley that leaves her unmarried and pregnant), Dumphy’s scheme to have Julie Devarges pass as Grace prompts the latter to become Doña Dolores Salvatierra. Therefore, Dumphy is indirectly responsible for Grace bringing racial difference into her own family since he engineers the scheme that strips her of her true identity. And it is for this crime, and not for cannibalizing, that Dumphy becomes the target of Grace’s revenge.

Harte’s approach to the gruesome subject of cannibalism carries over into the fate of Peter Dumphy, who is never prosecuted for consuming his wife. By casting an Anglo-American, Mr. Dumphy, as the savage cannibal, Harte further deviates from the canonical treatment of this taboo. The tragedy of the Donner Party stands as a cautionary tale against the homesteading, squatting, gold-digging greed which prompts Anglo-Americans to make the journey West at all costs. The journey unleashes the savage that exists within them, exposing the fact that the potential to commit such immoral acts as
cannibalism exists despite the trappings of civilization in which Anglo-Americans clothe themselves. Under the right conditions, the brute aspects of a person will emerge.

It is worth noting that the entire chronicle of cannibalism, the narrative of the Donner Party, is housed within official Spanish records. Historically, Spanish texts, specifically the conquest narratives of Bernal Díaz del Castillo and the letters of Hernán Cortéz to the King of Spain, first document the horror of human sacrifice and cannibalism among the Aztec tribe. In a popular, but quite controversial, text on the conquest of America, author Tvetzhan Todorov⁴⁰ attributes the presence of cannibalism among the Aztecs, through a syllogism, to the absence of a writing system among them. According to Todorov, the absence of a writing system⁴¹ among the Aztecs led to “the necessary memorization of laws and traditions” or the “predominance of ritual over improvisation” (156, 157). Todorov predicates his argument about Aztec cannibalism on ritual, on laws, on traditions, which are strictly followed without room for improvisation. Yet I take improvisation to include individual agency, or the capacity to deviate from laws and traditions. Cannibalism results from an absence of abstract thinking, and is rather the very real result of a literal-minded individual who, having conquered another, performs this conquest through the graphic absorption of his/her victim. I would suggest that the overreliance on ritual does not exist on the part of the Aztec, but on the part of

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⁴¹ I position myself with Clendinnen in her analysis of Todorov’s reading of the Aztecs and take issue with the claim that the Aztecs were unable to write. Indeed, although the Spanish conquistadors were quite effective in burning the majority of the Aztec *codices*, a few “picture” or “painted” books exist. The existence of these pre-Cortesian *codices* defy the very premise on which Todorov makes his claims against the Aztecs (Mexico).
the observer and chronicler, who has been conditioned to find cannibalism among racial others.

Indeed, for the United States this overreliance on ritual would involve the metaphor linking family and nation. Sanborn makes a similar reading of Todorov, arguing that “it is the explorers, not the natives, who value ritual over improvisation”, but he does so to a slightly different purpose. In examining how the explorers, despite their limited exposure and knowledge of other cultures, nevertheless insist on what they have seen, Sanborn argues that “they inadvertently emphasize the material presence of those signs” (7,8). Sanborn identifies the materiality of signs, another way of explaining the Spaniards’ insistence upon a system of writing as a marker of “civilization,” as the ritual to which they were bound. I am merely using this example to illustrate my point that an overreliance on any ritual or law can taint observations and actions and that in the case of reacting to the presence of people of color in the United States, the family metaphor is ritualized to the point of cannibalism (self-absorption).

Spanish records, land grants, and other official notices not only document the savage history of the Donner Party, but also cast doubt on the identities of the Conroy family and Philip Ashley. In a critique of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, an official U.S. document promising citizenship to Mexicans, Harte reveals how the Treaty’s rhetoric negatively impacted the identities of Mexicans by denying them entry into the “American family.” In fact, Mrs. Julie Devarges, the widow of Dr. Devargas who was a member of the emigrant party, intends to use the Spanish report “show[ing] both sisters to be dead and leav[ing] [Gabriel Conroy’s] identity in doubt” to discredit Gabriel and make claims on her deceased husband’s silver mine (1: 74). The identity of Grace
Conroy, Gabriel’s older sister who leaves the emigrant party with Arthur Poinsett to search for relief, remains a mystery throughout much of the novel because the Spanish report legally disinherits her from her own identity. When Grace first appears in front of Don José Salvatierra, commander of the Presidio of San Geronimo, she enlists his aid in finding her family. From the translation of a Mexican official document, she learns that her name is listed among those of the deceased (1: 55). Upon hearing that she is officially dead and that Philip Ashley, the father of her unborn child, is “not found,” Grace faints at the feet of Don José. The next time she appears in the narrative it is in the guise of Doña Dolores Salvatierra, the daughter of Don José and a Native American woman. I want to trace out Grace’s transformation into Doña Dolores as an indicator of the failure of the republican family romance and the intercession of the Mexican family and its legal system.

When Grace originally leaves the emigrant party with Philip Ashley, a false biological relationship between the two is manufactured to protect Grace’s reputation. At Philip’s insistence that Grace’s beauty “offers an explanation of [their] companionship that the world will accept more readily than any other, and the truth to many would seem scarcely as natural,” she takes his name (1: 36-7). But what momentarily appears to be a marriage proposal turns instead into an insidious creation of familial ties – Philip declares that Grace shall be his sister (1: 37). This benign covering for an illicit love affair offers no protection to Grace once she has been impregnated and summarily abandoned by Philip. In her pregnant condition, to repeat the lie that she and Philip are brother and sister would be not condemn both her and her child to the scandal of incest. This tenuous status exists not for Grace’s baby, but also for Grace herself. Now a “fallen woman,”
legally declared dead, and without any immediate family to assist her or shield her from social judgment and sentencing, Grace must turn to other sources for her identity and her reputation (which was inextricably tied to a woman's virginity).

To read Grace's racial passing through the family romance is to recognize the creation of two illegitimate familial relationships (first the sibling relationship between herself and her lover, and second the relationship between the father and the baby) which leave Grace completely bereft of a legal, legitimate identity. Having consumed and exhausted all the familial roles open for an Anglo-American female, Grace takes on the asexual and racialized identity of Don José's daughter. Assuming the pious, nun-like qualities under the guise of Doña Dolores, as attested to by Father Felipe and Doña María Sepulvida, protects Grace's reputation.

The family romance's obsession with homogeneity, sameness, and legitimacy promotes a consumptive quality that not only compels self-replicating sameness, but also leads to its own demise through the consumption of the racial other. I mean to suggest that racial passing, which occurs in Gabriel Conroy through the character of Grace Conroy who assumes the identity of Doña Dolores Salvatierra, a mestiza (of indigenous and Spanish ancestry), is a scaled-down version of metaphorical cannibalism. Cast out of all of the possible family positions which she could claim, Grace takes advantage of her only recourse— which is to dye her skin, learn Spanish, and assume the identity of Salvatierra's "half-breed" daughter. Instead of assuming the character of a socially white member of the gente de razón, a pure-blooded Spaniard, Grace usurps a mestiza identity, a racial identity which retains the stigma incurred for the birth of an illegitimate child. In other words, Grace retains her "fallen" character in her alias as Doña Dolores. Yet
despite the “fallen” nature of her disguise, Grace indeed inherits more cultural capital as a *mestiza* in a Mexican society than she could ever hope for as a fallen woman in the United States:

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the basic principle guiding American law was that a husband was the natural guardian of his wife’s interests... A married woman was prohibited from bringing legal suits or being sued, from making contracts, and from owning property individually. By the Civil War... many states... adopted married women’s property acts, which permitted married women to control their own property and earnings. (62). 42

By passing as Doña Dolores, Grace Conroy compromises the family romance, but gains social respectability and inherits one of the largest haciendas in California. And it is in a Spanish document, written up by José Herminiozildo Salvatierra, Grace’s adopted father, that her racial transformation is revealed: “Wishing to keep her secret from the world and prevent recognition by the *members of her own race and family*, by the assistance and advice of an Indian peon, Manuela, [Grace] consented that her face and hands should be daily washed by the juice of the Yokoto – whose effect is to change the skin to the color of bronze” (2: 183, emphasis mine). Just as a Spanish document initially left Grace bereft of her own identity, this second document restores to her new racial and familial identities. It is worth noting that in order for Grace to assume an identity that would protect her from recognition by her own family, she must dye her skin and affect a different racial identity. The assumption of racial difference appears in *Gabriel Conroy* as the only escape from the family romance. Tellingly, the overly invasive legal system figures in the novel as the means to force one’s way into a family.

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42 For additional information on married women’s property rights, see Norma Basch, *In the Eyes of the*
The Many Faces of Ramona – Ramona Gonzaga Majella Phail Moreno

In Ramona, Helen Hunt Jackson repeatedly undermines the family romance and its reign over whiteness through interracial marriages (beginning with Ramona’s father, a Scotsman, and her mother, a Native American, and concluding with Ramona’s marriage to Felipe Moreno, a pure-blooded Californio) and adoption. Adopted by the Moreno family and raised on their hacienda as a Californiana, a “white Mexican,” Ramona only learns of her Indian blood when Señora Moreno discovers Ramona’s clandestine meetings with Alessandro Assisi, a Temecula Indian. Once Ramona performs an Indian identity, her life is fraught with loss and dispossession – she loses her property, social status, home (the Temecula Indians are removed from their lands), baby (whose death is attributed to the negligence of the Bureau of Indian Affairs’ doctor), and her husband (murdered for allegedly stealing someone else’s property). Framing Jackson’s social critique of the U.S. government’s mistreatment of Native Americans are Ramona’s two family romances within the Moreno household. The first romance, as mentioned before, involves Ramona’s relationship as an adopted daughter; in the romance’s second phase, Ramona becomes wife to her foster brother, Felipe Moreno.

Introducing people of color into the national imaginary, signified in both novels by interracial adoption, subverts the mechanisms for conferring identity and property. Harte’s novel addresses the post-1848 turmoil in identity and property claims. At one point in the novel, as if to indicate the absurd degree to which this identity crisis had risen, the titular character appears on the witness stand and declares himself to be John Law.

43 Jackson herself became involved actively in the “Indian question,” receiving a government appointment as a Special Commission of Indian Affairs to survey and report to the Department of the Interior on the status of California Indians (xii, The Annotated Ramona).
Dumbledore, not Gabriel Conroy (2: 147). Similarly, the racial identity of the titular character in *Ramona* is challenged repeatedly, echoing the ambiguous position which Mexicans and Native Americans alike held in the nation after the War. In the assembly of foster families, identity is not the only claim at stake. Inheritance, legally expressed through wills and land grants, represents another facet of the family romance encroached upon in the war’s aftermath. Family and national romances, two interdependent stratagems for conferring identity onto individuals, are challenged in the wake of the Mexican War.

In the chaos that followed the Treaty’s dismantling of the domestic apparatus as the stronghold of whiteness, residents of California, regardless of race, sought retribution and refuge in the U.S. judicial system. Individuals petitioned their claims to racial identities and property rights to judges in the belief that a legal decree would secure their rights and privileges, allow them to maintain their lands, and render them safe from vigilantes, squatters, and other criminal products of Manifest Destiny. Documents, wills, testimonials, and land grants – several of the legal methods for establishing and securing inheritance, both political and territorial – became the very targets of U.S. colonialism, which drafted legislation intended to reverse past promises to Mexicans and *Californios* (such as the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo) and to assert territorial dominance. In 1851, California constructed the Land Commission as the legal apparatus for overturning Spanish and Mexican land grants. During their time in California, both Harte and Jackson witnessed first hand the devastating effects this legal act, coupled with the Pre-Emption Act, had on residents of the state.\(^4\)

\(^4\) Jackson based her fictional account of the Moreno *hacienda* on Ygnacio del Valle’s Rancho Camulos,
The Land Commission’s impact on California’s residents is registered in *Ramona* through the displacement of the Temecula Indians, whose land rights were secured, if at all, by a verbal promise and through the diminishment of the Moreno *hacienda*, formed by Pío Pico land grants. “Governor Pío Pico, it was rumored, had dreamed up some eighty new land grants *after* the American occupation and had doled them out to his ‘worthless cronies’; certainly [reasoned Captain Halleck] all such grants must be retracted at once” (Pitt 87). “In 1849, while still Army Secretary of the State, [Capt. Henry W.] Halleck had produced the first official report on California land matters, setting forth a negative interpretation. He believed that most California claims were inchoate and the Pico grants totally invalid, if not openly fraudulent” (Pitt 91-2). Harte’s Victor Ramirez, former Secretary under Governor Pico, forges false land grants on old official stationary bearing Pico’s signature. Both Jackson and Harte bring into sharper focus the methodologies for “legally” robbing Mexicans and Native Americans alike of their rightfully held lands. The abuse of legal methods to affect illegal gain, both novels argue, jeopardizes the very claims individuals make on their own identities. In fact, *Gabriel Conroy* reads like a detective story where readers and characters must sift through the multiple disguises and identities assumed by its characters.

In the narrative of Ramona’s racial identity, first imagined (by default) in the novel as white and only later revealed to be “half-white” (her mother was Native American), Jackson revises what readers of James Fenimore Cooper’s Natty Bumppo

which dwindled alarmingly from 48,000 acres to approximately 1,500. According to Leonard Pitt, this was the pattern for southern California ranchos from 1865 to 1885 (250-1). Harte resided in California from 1854 to 1871; even after his return to the east coast, California, gold miners, and squatters were the primary subject matter of his prose. Stories like “The Story of a Mine” (1878) satirized lobbyists and federal bureaucrats involved in determining the legal status of a quicksilver mine (Scarmhorst 63).
series would recognize as the “going native” narrative. Not only are the genders switched from Cooper’s overly masculine Natty to Jackson’s quite feminine and, quite exotic Ramona, but the vehicle for cultivating a native racial identity is dramatically altered. Bumppo achieves a certain degree of “nativeness” by association—he is the constant companion of Chingachgook and seems to narrowly escape whiteness (signified by feminized civilization) in each novel. Natty’s racialization as “native” occurs in a decidedly homosocial context. In contrast, Ramona’s “going native” narrative is tied inextricably to the marriage plot where her wedding to a Temecula Indian guarantees her a certain status as “Indian.” Nevertheless, despite these distinctions between Cooper and Jackson’s versions of “going native,” both authors embed their tales within a discourse privileging whiteness. The protagonist’s whiteness functions as an escape hatch in the “going native” narrative. Deploying racial otherness in the form of “going native” tales is possible because of Manifest Destiny and its literal and metaphorical uses of incorporation.

Ramona’s whiteness leaks through her native disguise in the form of visual and cultural markers designed to be instantaneously read. Ramona has blue eyes, her first baby with Alessandro also has blue eyes. Although she does not speak the Indian dialect, her desire to communicate with members of the Indian village is enough to make her conversant. Tellingly, her sympathetic connection to the Native Americans, fostered by their oral narratives of loss and death, parallels Jackson’s own personal relationship.

45 “In the mid-1860s, [Bret] Harte wrote a series of so-called condensed novels, travesties of works of such contemporary writers as Cooper. In ‘Muck-a-Muck: A Modern Indian Novel,’ for example, Harte both burlesques Cooper’s periphrastic style and ridicules Natty Bumppo’s marksmanship” (Scharnhorst 14). 46 David Luis-Brown offers a different interpretation of Ramona’s blue eyes in his article, “‘White Slaves’ and the ‘Arrogant Mestiza’. With respect to the novel’s treatment of whiteness, Luis-Brown argues that Ramona should be read as a mestiza rather than as an Indian since she embodies the mixed-raced American
with the tribes indigenous to California. Jackson predicates her racial appropriation on a vilification of Mexicans. This is due to the differing status of Indians in the United States and in Mexico, where a majority of the population is mestizo, of both European (Spanish) and indigenous ancestry. Only on a U.S. landscape could Jackson tell a romanticized narrative of native peoples because in Mexico, the presence of mestizaje did not support the discourse of the "noble savage."

In the nearly constant intercessions of Mexicans and Native Americans in Ramona's life, we witness a fictional accounting of the historical dynamics particular to California. The Californios like Señora Moreno consider themselves superior to Native Americans, employing them as servants and workers on their haciendas, but they nevertheless treat them with more respect than do the Anglo-Americans who violently remove them from the U.S. landscape. Against the legacy of Indian Removal, some Mexican and Californio landowners who retained their lands despite the U.S. Land Commission provided many Native American tribes with a refuge from Anglo-Americans.

When Alessandro's tribe is removed from their lands near Santa Ynez, he locates two possible sites, both secured by Mexican land grants, where he and Ramona can live without the threat posed by white people. One of the land holders, Señor Ravallo, "was good to all Indians, and said they should never be disturbed . . . his three sons [who] have the estate . . . [will] keep their father's promise to the Indians" (378). The promise of honoring land grants to Native Americans echoes the Mexican government's guarantee of citizenship for all native peoples within its borders. However, written and verbal

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future idealized by Cuban critic and author, José Martí (823).
promises, both those made by the U.S. government to Mexicans, and those made by the Mexican government to Indians, are cancelled out through Indian Removal and squatting.

When Jim Farrar brutally murders Alessandro for allegedly stealing his horse, Farrar describes Alessandro as being *either a Mexican or an Indian* (432, emphasis mine). Clearly, in the mind of Farrar and other white characters within the novel, there was no need to distinguish between the two groups since they existed only as impediments to the realization of Manifest Destiny. Alessandro, however, is the first to claim the equality between Mexicans and Native Americans based on their mutual victimization by the white men, stating, “we are alike helpless in their hands . . . they possess the country, and can make what laws they please” (90); to counter this situation, Alessandro assumes a mutual superiority of Indians and Mexicans over the Americans (74).

In the triangle of racial tension between Indians, Mexicans, and Anglo-Americans, the members of the Temecula tribe, when led by Alessandro’s father, Pablo, removed themselves from the site of bloody conflict “that they might be identified with the whites in case hostilities became serious” (70). This perplexing alignment of Indians with whites, which appears on several occasions in Jackson’s novel, seems predicated on Ramona’s racial ancestry and on an unspoken knowledge that whiteness is the key to agency and empowerment in the United States. I want to point out here that the novel removes whiteness from being the sole purview of Anglo-Americans; indeed, whiteness appears to signify the savagery sanctioned under Manifest Destiny.

Alessandro and Ramona’s love undermines the national family romance not only because it brings race into the domestic sphere, but because it dismisses the theory that
nurture (family) can overcome nature (racial identity). The national imaginary attributes nurture, the purview of the republican family, with dominion over nature, in this case Ramona’s biological identity. Through adoption, Ramona is raised as a member of a Californio family who maintain their lands through mestizo and Indian labor. Ramona’s ignorance of her own heritage becomes part of a mysterious subplot in which she is subconsciously drawn to Alessandro. Because “Ramona had been the adopted daughter of the Señora Ortega, bore the Ortega name, and had lived as foster-child in the house of the Morenos,” Felipe wonders to himself, “Would the Señora permit such a one to marry an Indian?” (142). Allowing Ramona to marry an Indian would bring shame on the Moreno name since the racial distinctions in Spain and Mexico were drawn according to the amount of indigenous blood in one’s ancestry. The blood connection between Ramona and Alessandro links them together in an uncanny bond; tellingly, her love for Alessandro is professed at the same time that her Indian ancestry is declared to her by Señora Moreno.

Señora Moreno structures Ramona’s inheritance as a false dilemma: her foster daughter can claim either her racial or her material inheritance, not both. In analyzing the methods and motives behind Ramona’s foster mother keeping her inheritance and heritage from her until the former can be used to influence the latter, we witness the dynamics of colonialism at work. Ramona’s non-white racial identity justifies appropriation of her inheritance. In her threat to withhold Ramona’s property, Sra.

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47 For example, the term “mestizo,” which literally means half-caste, describes all individuals descended from Spanish and indigenous ancestors. To signify individuals of “pure European ancestry,” Mexicans and Spaniards created the term gente de razón, literally people of reason. Given the presence of this caste system, the admission of Ramona’s indigenous blood would jeopardize the Moreno family’s gente de razón status, especially since Ramona is their foster child.
Moreno reverses the domestic exchange from mother to daughter under the pretense that Ramona’s love for and therefore identification with an Indian forfeits her birthright.

U.S. imperialism, buttressed by the combined rhetorics of work ethic and the moral character of Native Americans into a discourse of worthiness, informs Señora Moreno’s strategy for intimidating Ramona into disavowing Alessandro and all other trappings of Indian identity. “All these are yours, Ramona, you understand, on your wedding day, if you marry worthily, with my permission,” Señora Moreno says to her foster daughter (179, emphasis mine). By controlling crucial information about Ramona’s racial ancestry, Señora Moreno affects colonialist tactics on the small, domestic scale. If Ramona professes the “correct” racial identity, that is if she does not marry Alessandro and thereby declare herself an Indian, then she may have her own property. Señora Moreno’s logic and strategies parallel those prompting racial passing in mid-to late-nineteenth century California court rooms, as reported by Menchaca.

By adding “worthiness” to the set of conditions by which Ramona can secure her own inheritance, Señora Moreno draws heavily from the schemes employed by squatters to possess land already owned in the Southwest. Manifest Destiny left behind a legacy of conquest whereby subsequent generations of Anglo-Americans emigrating into the Southwest inherited the methods devised by their forebears to “legally” strip Mexicans and Native Americans of their rightfully-held property. The Pre-Emption Law, which defined ownership not in terms of family inheritance, but according to labor rights, recognized a squatter’s improvement on the land as tantamount to ownership of it.48

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48 At the behest of California settlers, Congress passed two laws -- one “guaranteeing the right of occupancy, that is, permission to enter upon and improve ‘vacant’ land with the guarantee of recovering the value of improvements from the titleholder should the court rule for the latter; [the] second, a law of preemption, that is, a guarantee of the option to buy the land they had improved, should the courts reject the
“Holding the Protestant Ethic and white Anglo-Saxon values as the criteria for evaluating Mexicans, Anglos believed that California’s underdeveloped state was simply the product of California’s cultural backwardness and lack of self-discipline. To overtake this class was no crime, for Anglo-Americans were required to follow God’s injunction to make the land fruitful, prosper economically, and attain their divinely appointed calling” (Almaguer 51-2). In raising Ramona as a socially “white” foster daughter, Señora Moreno could argue, according to colonialist paradigm, that she deserves Ramona’s inheritance for “improving” upon her.

Ramona’s declarations of love to and from Alessandro are quickly followed by the revelations of her dowry -- passed down to her from both her adopted mother and her biological father -- and of her mother’s racial identity. The connection between these two romance plots is crystallized in Señora Moreno’s recitation of a prophecy she made when her sister first took in Ramona: “the Indian blood in [Ramona’s] veins would show some day” (177). The manifestation of Ramona’s “Indian blood,” a biological predisposition, is, in Sra. Moreno’s mind, the only satisfactory explanation for Ramona’s affection for Alessandro. The novel figures the inevitability of race as an essential ingredient of the family romance as the heroine herself imagines the moment at which she will unveil her true identity to Alessandro, musing that she “would wait . . . until she had reached Temecula, and they had begun their life there, and Alessandro had been astonished to see how readily and kindly she took to all the ways of the Indian village” (218). In this manner, Ramona herself capitulates to the concept of genetic tendency whereby her biology would directly impact her sociology, giving her the tools necessary to make the

original clam, and to buy it at a minimum price” (Pitt 88).
narratives of blood truth and outer appearance utterly seamless. Ramona’s newfound Indian identity, expressed as the “young, strong blood running swift in her veins” and “a newly discovered power; a fulness of sense” leads her to Alessandro (233).

The biological and hence “natural” characteristic attributed to the family romance, camouflages the workings of the nation from the very individuals whose fates are carved out by it. Despite the “complexity, fineness, and delicacy of . . . the human eye,” Jackson states, “there cannot be found . . . any other creature so blind in its own range of circumstances and connection, as the greater majority of human beings are in the bosoms of their families” (213-4). To clarify: the family romance (which involves the subsequent generational perpetuation of the nuclear family through marriage and procreation) addresses the very concerns facing the nation, only on a microscopic, individual level. Nation and family equally shared concerns such as miscegenation, the perpetuation of family lines along racial and class lines, etc. Cognizant of the direct relationship constructed between these two collective, mutually-informing identities, subsequent crises erupting within the family could be understood to reflect the larger concerns facing the nation. Attempts by the Moreno family to keep its adopted daughter from the truth of her racial past, of the Indian blood she carries from her mother’s side, register on the national level with Indian Removal during the Jacksonian era.

Against the overbearing Señora Moreno and the performance of the national script within the nuclear family, Jackson writes the defiant and tragic love story of Alessandro and Ramona, a marriage both sanctioned and enabled by the uncanny manner in which Ramona assumes an Indian identity. Nevertheless, the family romance seems to be racially marked as white. When Aunt Ri, the lower class Tennessian, first meets
Ramona, who defines both herself and her husband as Indians, she declares that Ramona is “fond uv her baby’s enny white woman!” (382). Comments like these, coupled with numerous remarks about the blue eyes of both Ramona and her first child, work to reverse, and therefore necessitate, Ramona’s declarations as an Indian. Because of the racialization of the family as white, even Ramona’s marriage to Alessandro does not assure her of being read or recognized as an Indian. Indeed, she must continuously declare her identity to the incredulous ears of those who hear her, including the priest who marries her and Alessandro.

Ramona’s racial passing flies in the face of a convention where bi-racial children assume the characteristics and racial identity of the more socially acceptable parent. According to this narrative pattern, Ramona should maintain her identity as white (given the parentage of her Scottish father) rather than declare herself not only to be the daughter of an Indian and therefore “half-Indian,” but completely Indian. Ramona labors industriously to affect the mannerisms of other Native Americans, but these efforts are not necessary since Ramona’s discovery of her Indian blood translates all of her previously inexplicable affinities and thoughts into appropriate, racially marked beliefs held by other Indians. Indeed, her very attraction and love for Alessandro are explained as the natural progression of her unfolding Indian identity. Ramona’s body, and the history of its exchange, become the site on which the history of conflict between whites, Native Americans, and Mexicans is played out. To trace her history is to understand the unfolding conflict between these three races in the former Mexican territory.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ See Menchaca’s article for a detailed analysis of the legislation passed on the state and federal levels which rescinded voting and land rights to Native Americans and people of Mexican descent. It is Menchaca’s contention that as a result of these race-based restrictive laws, both Mexicans and Native Americans were forced to position themselves within racial categories recognized within the legal system.
The marriage that takes place on the final page of *Ramona* between the titular character and Felipe Moreno, the man who she grows up with as her brother, bears the taint of an incestuous union. After Alessandro’s murder and the reunion of Felipe and Ramona, the filial relationship between Felipe and Ramona is displaced onto her position within the Indian village: “Ramona, wife of Alessandro, had been as their sister” (471, emphasis mine). Characterizing her relationship with Native Americans in familial terms accomplishes two goals: Ramona’s racial identity is secured within a family romance; and, by displacing familial feelings onto the village, the specter of incest is effectively removed from their marriage. The metaphorical displacement of the family romance from the Moreno household to the Indian village is followed by the physical removal of Felipe and Ramona from California to Mexico. Their move outside of the United States could be read as a punishment for the threat they pose to the U.S. family romance by disregarding its precepts of whiteness.

In assessing Ramona’s engagement with racial identity to determine whether she is the “arrogant mestiza,” as argued by David Luis-Brown, or a revision of the “going native” narrative, as I argue, we must investigate how Ramona’s multiple racial identity positions are facilitated by her literal geographic positions and her associations within the family romance. Her residence in the Moreno family positions her as socially, if not racially, white. In her multiple removals with Alessandro, Ramona is situated in sparsely populated, make-shift Indian villages. These villages become Ramona’s training ground for her indigenous racial position, a position which she must overtly perform and announce since it is counter to her former identity as white. But once Ramona abandons the Indian village for married life with Felipe in Mexico, her identity as Indian
terminates. It is almost as if Ramona assumes the identity of those around her, and this chameleon-like quality of blending in with the background would have been instantly recognized by readers of nineteenth-century novels predicated on the family. The family was imagined to be the instructional realm for future generations of citizens; for such a construct to operate, environment had to be an influential factor.

There is a desire to racially complete Ramona and this desire does not just exist on the part of the narrator or the other characters. Ramona herself participates in creating a totalizing racial narrative for herself. When introduced to characters after her departure from the Moreno household and while accompanied by Alessandro, Ramona repeatedly refers to herself as an Indian. Indeed, even Aunt Ri ponders at Ramona’s deliberate erasure of her own whiteness by comparing Alessandro with Ramona: “he’s pewer Injun; her father wuz white, she sez, but she don’t call herself nothin’ but an Injun, the same he is” (387).

Brown’s reading of Ramona as a mestiza rather than as an Indian is quite compelling, but does not adequately address the chameleon-like quality of Ramona. Brown characterizes the novel’s protagonist as an “arrogant mestiza,” José Martí’s phrase reflecting an utopic vision of a mixed-race American future. The novel’s racialization of Ramona, however, is much more in keeping with a “going native” narrative than it is an empowering tale of a mixed-race protagonist. Indeed, the novel works quite assiduously to cordon off portions of Ramona’s racial identity and deal with them as separate, rather than integral, identity positions. For example, despite the Moreno family’s knowledge of Ramona’s mixed ancestry, they focus particularly (exclusively) on her whiteness. Indeed, the Moreno’s themselves, as their last name suggests, (dark-skinned, usually a
term attributed to more indigenous Mexicans) have a racially mixed past which they suppress – highlighting instead their European (Spanish) heritage. Ramona’s Indian blood is suppressed as well, but I would argue that the death of Alessandro likewise signals the end of Ramona’s connection to her indigenous past. Her marriage to Felipe at the novel’s conclusion threatens the bounds of the family romance by infusing a sibling relationship (albeit a foster family tie) with amorous feelings.

In both novels, racial cannibalism results in the death of the male figure who serves as the only other representation of this racial identity. It would seem that the deaths of Victor Ramirez and Alessandro Assisi would prefigure the racial appropriations of Grace and Ramona, but in fact the events occur in a counterintuitive chronology. For this reason, I read the deaths (murder/suicides) of Victor and Alessandro not as prerequisites to racial cannibalism, but as the results of it. The consumption of these racial identities by “white” heroines brings about the deaths of both men. What makes this argument all the more compelling are the events which unfold after both deaths – the white heroines reclaim their whiteness, demonstrating that their former guise was temporary, affected.

In *Ramona*, the circumstances surrounding Alessandro’s death cast doubt onto whether he committed a suicidal act he knew would lead to his death or whether he was murdered. Suffering from bouts of unexplained insanity, Alessandro rides to the ranch of Jim Farrar where he spots a black horse. The narrator posits that it may have been this horse’s resemblance to Alessandro’s own beloved horse that causes him to dismount, take the black horse belonging to Farrar, and leave his horse behind. Even the events leading to the moment when Farrar tracks down his horse at Alessandro and Ramona’s
house and shoots Alessandro are unclear. Is it stealing, after all, since Alessandro left his
own horse at Farrar’s ranch?

The only witness to the murder is Ramona, yet given her self-proclaimed status as an Indian, she is ineligible to testify in court. Indians in California were not given the right to testify in court until 1872. I read the absence of a trial and thus of justice for Alessandro as punishment for Ramona’s continued racial performance as an Indian. Ramona’s whiteness is reclaimed soon after Alessandro’s murder, but not soon enough that she can bring his murderer to justice. Ramona’s return to the Moreno hacienda and her subsequent marriage to Felipe undoes her racial performance as an Indian, and reverses it to the moment before she left the hacienda to elope with Alessandro. It is telling that Ramona’s shifting racial performances occur after the death of Alessandro, but not in a manner benefitting Alessandro and it is for this reason that I read Ramona’s actions as those of racial cannibal.

Taken together, these two points – that the inclusion of racial difference removes one from the family romance and that the legal system can advocate inclusion into the family – reveal the very foundation of the family romance and the basis for the threat that Mexicans and Native Americans pose after the Mexican War. In Gabriel Conroy and Ramona, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo’s guarantee of U.S. citizenship to Mexicans living in the newly-annexed territory appears in the family romance through interracial adoption. Ramona and Grace Conroy, two heroines who are socially and racially white, respectively, are adopted into Mexican families in fictional reversals of the national narrative scripted for the post-1848 southwest (particularly California). Whiteness, a social and racial category imagined to be the sole purview of the republican family, is
jeopardized when Mexicans are granted U.S. citizenship. In the national family’s desire to socially erase Mexicans’ racial difference (noted by Mexicans’ status in California as “socially white”) and thus maintain a legacy of whiteness, the monomaniacal preoccupation with sameness results in the acts of incest and cannibalism.

Frederick Jackson Turner’s seminal thesis on the frontier pivots on the consumptive quality of westward expansion that imagined the Southwest Territory to instantaneously become Anglo-American. We could easily apply this same logic to earlier U.S. borders, specifically the porous one floating between savage and civilized, between Native Americans and Anglo-European colonists. Natty Bumppo, White Bird (née Faith Leslie) are just two fictional characters whose journeys into the frontier were articulated through “going native” plots.

In the Southwest Territory recently annexed into the U.S., the creation of the U.S.-Mexico border occasioned the racial masquerade of “white” women who temporarily take on Indian and Mexican identities. Their movements outside of the white family and into the racialized terrain – Grace wanders off alone in search of Philip just as Ramona travels into former Indian territory to find Alessandro – afford them a certain modicum of agency and independence, not under the racial identity of “white” but as Mexican and Indian. I have already cited Lisbeth Haas’ work on the legal status of Californianas who enjoyed property rights under Spanish and Mexican law; despite the dime novel construction of a revised captivity narrative in which Mexican women were being saved from a less enlightened society, they lost legal and economic power after the Mexican War. Accordingly, the consumption of racial identity is gendered; it is women,
specifically “white” women whose movements outside of the republican family matrix occasion their racialization, which becomes a source of freedom and class ascension.

To characterize racial cannibalism as an inward turn might seem counterintuitive. After all, part of the “logic” of cannibalism is to look within one’s own species for food. But the notion of racial cannibalism that I examine in this chapter must be understood within the historical phenomenon of Manifest Destiny, which was a complex moment simultaneously inward and outward, predicated on ever-shifting, porous borders between Mexico and the United States, foreign and domestic, and racial other and “white.”

Accordingly, racial cannibalism is an inward turn reflexive of the consequences of Manifest Destiny (westward expansion) because the Southwest and its inhabitants, Mexicans and Native Americans, were suddenly part of the nation, the domestic, the republican family. Their movements, simultaneously inward and outward, reflect the anxieties of Manifest Destiny’s impact on the republican family, specifically on “white” women who were its symbol. Grace Conroy’s and Ramona Moreno’s financial gains purchased through the racial cannibalism of Mexican and Indian identities respectively parallels the cultural capital of literature about California. Bret Harte depended financially on translating the frontier experience to an East Coast readership and Helen Hunt Jackson gained notoriety from her political activism on the part of Native Americans. The literary journey into the racialized terrain of the Southwest proves profitable for both authors and their fictional heroines.

In these first two chapters I have investigated the boundaries of the family romance, particularly the racial dynamics of whiteness when a Mexican wife enters an Anglo-American family and in novels where “white” heroines are adopted into Mexican
families, to identify the mechanisms of Manifest Destiny operating on the level of the family. In the next chapter, which examines women's travel narratives, we will see how the changing sense of the domestic problematizes women's relationship to the Southwest and to U.S. imperialism.
Chapter Three

Just Passing By: Women Travelers in the Southwest

The rhetoric of westward expansion saturates the travel narratives of Anglo-European women journeying into the Southwest before Texas’ Independence (1836) and during and after the Mexican War. In this chapter, I will examine how women travelers situate themselves within the larger national project of Manifest Destiny, paying particular attention to race and gender relations. Where women draw their own imaginary lines, how they align themselves within both larger and smaller cultures and the role of aesthetics in defining nationalism are primary concerns in my investigation. I argue that no prevailing formula dominates or shapes the travel narratives of Mary Austin Holley, Susan Magoffin, and Josephine Clifford. Rather, each writer constructs her own shifting relationship with the nation, her family, and with the Mexican and Native American cultures encountered.

Critics Mary Louise Pratt and Brigitte Georgi-Findlay both identify the phenomena of Anglo-European women traveling into colonial spaces as a mutually-reinforcing project for both the women and the nation. For Pratt, travel writing emerged “to create specifically female relationships to North European expansionism, a female domestic subject of empire, and forms of female imperial authority in the contact zone” (170). Through her conception of contact zones, Pratt foregrounds the “interactive, improvisational dimensions of colonial encounters so easily ignored or suppressed by diffusionist accounts of conquest and domination” (9). For Georgi-Findlay, who

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50 According to Brigitte Georgi-Findlay, “the American travelers in the Southwest of the 1830s and 1840s could no longer cast themselves as discoverers of a primal world. Spanish America, inhabited and full of the evidence of a long cultural history, demanded new rhetorical practices and had to be invented as backward and neglected, in need of American cultivation and exploitation” (94). Such a characterization of
specifically addresses western U.S. expansion, frontier narratives "authorized and
legitimized, and were in turn generated by an expansionist history, producing the rest of
America for readers and thus playing an active role in managing relationships between
cultural centers and margins" (16). I agree that nineteenth-century Anglo-American
women created and benefited from a dialogic relationship between themselves and the
nation by virtue of their participation in the project of Manifest Destiny. However, this
symbiotic dynamic between woman and nation presupposes the former's complicity and
consent in the politics of the latter. This is not always true, as we shall see in the example
of Josephine Clifford, a Prussian emigrant, who openly criticized U.S. imperialism
represented by city planning, urban development, and the destruction of the California
environment.

The relationship between the family and the nation scripts much of the language
and logic underlying their narratives. As a widow, Mary Austin Holley was dependent
upon her cousin, famous statesman Stephen F. Austin, for the financial well-being of
herself and her twelve-year-old son. Susan Magoffin and Josephine Clifford were
married women whose husband's occupations occasioned their journeys into former
Mexican territories. Efforts to recreate the domestic in the Southwest territories are the
subject of this chapter because the rhetoric of the domestic and all of its aesthetics
concerns (clothing, home furnishings, and cosmetics) provide a familiar language in
which these women can converse with and translate the international conflicts between
Mexico and the United States, specifically Texas' Independence in 1836 and the Mexican
War.

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the Southwest follows what Mary Louise Pratt has described as a "negative aesthetic of neglect."
Mary Austin Holley’s *Texas*, both the pre and post Texas Revolution versions, reads like an emigrant’s guide to settlement. As the cousin of Stephen F. Austin, Holley, like Magoffin and Clifford, occupies a privileged position and gains a considerable degree of agency from her familial relation. Unlike the other two authors, however, Holley travels into Mexican territory without a husband. Her son accompanies her. Accordingly, Holley assumes the mantle of motherhood and addresses her text to other mothers, providing them with such practical advice regarding home furnishings, food provisions, and weather reports so they can pack and travel appropriately to the Austin colony in Texas. What Holley shares in common with Magoffin is not only a view of the Southwest as a permanent residence, but also an impressive knowledge of the political history between Mexico and the United States as it relates specifically to their colonized territories.

Susan Magoffin’s *Down the Santa Fe Trail*, written during the Mexican War, has been described by historians as a valuable text for the amount of information it contains related to battles during the War. Just eight weeks after her marriage to Samuel, Susan Magoffin travels along the Santa Fe trail into contested territory during the Mexican War to engage in trade. Her position as the wife of a wealthy trader creates opportunities for Magoffin to socialize with both aristocratic Mexican families as well as with U.S. Army

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51 As editor Stella M. Drumm notes in the book’s introduction, “James [Magoffin] [Susan’s brother-in-law] was really on a secret mission for the government of the United States, it being hoped that he would be able to pave the way for Gen. Kearny to enter Santa Fé and gain possession of New Mexico without bloodshed” (xii).

52 The “bloodless conquest” of New Mexico under the command of Gen. Kearny was largely the result, according to Carey McWilliams, of “the treachery of [New Mexico’s] leader, Governor Manuel Armijo, who is said to have presented New Mexico to the American agent, James W. Magoffin, for a handsome consideration” (114). Indeed, the rhetoric and culture of exchange and trade seems to have affected the loyalties of New Mexicans involved in the Santa Fé trade. “Those who had profited by the commerce which developed with the opening of the Santa Fé Trail saw in American rule the hope of expanding markets and better communication” (113-4).
officers. Integral to the social relationships and pseudo family ties Magoffin creates with *nuevo mexicanas* is a shared aesthetics that circulates primarily around domestic objects and women’s dress. Magoffin filters her own understanding and prejudices regarding people of Mexican descent through a language of aesthetics. Like her husband and her brother-in-law, Magoffin creates an economy for trade and exchange; unlike him, she traffics in an exclusively visual medium where cosmetics, domestic furnishings, and dress are shot through with racial and class values.

Josephine Clifford also employs a language of the domestic to describe her travels in New Mexico, Arizona, and California as the wife of an Army lieutenant assigned to the Southwest territory; however, unlike Magoffin, the aesthetic language of the domestic appearing in Clifford’s short stories camouflages racism and marital violence. For Clifford, a sense of the aesthetic is mapped onto the shifting Southwestern terrain appropriated and misused by Anglo-American emigrants and soldiers. The intimate domestic sphere of the home is not immune from a sense of the aesthetic as a symbol of cultural domination; the very furnishings in the fictional homes of Clifford’s characters are acquired through questionable means and threaten to disrupt the family rather than symbolize its economic prosperity. The accoutrements of an officer’s makeshift home, all detailed precisely in Clifford’s stories, reflect the consumptive quality of Manifest Destiny.

In this chapter, each author deploys rhetorical and symbolic representations of the domestic in her attempts to translate women’s relationship to the nation in the contested territory of the Southwest. The home, family, and other domestic concerns all stand in for larger national issues and, at times, become the discourse for both racial and cultural
differences between themselves and their Mexican and Native American counterparts. As Amy Kaplan argues, the nineteenth century was filled with “manifest domesticities” – domestic novels which took place in the ever-expanding territory of the “domestic.” For Kaplan, however, the foreign is exclusively African slaves, who are a part of the domestic sphere in slavocracy and whose presence in the home promulgates a rhetoric of Manifest Destiny to be espoused and adhered to in the writings of such domestic writers as Harriet Beecher Stowe and E.D.E.N. Southworth.

Mary Austin Holley’s *Texas*

Holley’s *Texas* makes immediate the double sense of the domestic that Kaplan identifies in nineteenth-century women’s fiction – the term “domestic” operates on both a personal and public level. According to historian Ron Tyler, Holley made plans to write about the Mexican colony before consulting with her first cousin and prior to her actual travels to Texas. In October of 1831, Holley, along with her twelve-year-old son, left New Orleans and her position as a governess for the Labranche household, to travel to and write about Texas (vii). Although speculation exists regarding the nature of their relationship, it is clear that Stephen F. Austin was quite pleased with his cousin’s book. A decree issued on April 6, 1830 by the Mexican government restricted further settlement by foreigners in territory contiguous with Mexico, but Holley’s text could promote the settlement of the Upper Colony, additional lands that Austin received a few months prior

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53 With the exception of her analysis of E.D.E.N. Southworth’s *The Hidden Hand*, which is set during the Mexican War, Kaplan removes Manifest Destiny from its historical context and instead misapplies it to the Civil War. Instead of addressing westward expansion and the doubling of the U.S. nation as a fluctuating sense of the domestic, Kaplan shrinks this term to signify only the dynamics of African slaves in the houses of Anglo-Europeans.

54 Some scholars believe Holley traveled to Austin’s colony with the hope of marrying her cousin.
to the decree (ix-x). Holley writes her text “[w]ith a view to emigrant mothers,” believing it “would furnish more hints for the judicious arrangements of the voyage . . . than could be gathered from the more abstract and general views of gentleman travelers” (5). She openly criticizes “the schemes of interested contractors, eager to allure the unwary emigrant, by deceptive statements” and instead assumes the mantle of motherhood, which separates her motives from those driving other emigrant guides along moral lines (1).

Holley attributes the absence of colonists in Texas to two misconceptions: the “jealous policy of the old Spanish government [which] discouraged all attempts to penetrate into the country” and the myth that the Carancahua Indians are cannibalistic (2). In the first assumption lies the dynamics of U.S. Mexican relations. In the second, is the fear of race relations between Native Americans and Anglo-Americans. Her boat, on its approach to Brazoria, is boarded “not by Spanish myrmidons, or cannibal Indians, but by friends and kinsmen, all of the same complexion with ourselves, and speaking our native tongue” (16, emphasis mine). Anticipating the war between Texas and Gen. Santa Anna, Holley imagines the outcome in which the landscape is devoid of difference and an Anglo-American travel anywhere and encounter sameness. Holley mirrors the replication of sameness discussed in the last chapter. In keeping with the pattern of maintaining whiteness in the republican family examined in Harte’s and Jackson’s novels, Holley supplants the threat of cannibalism with a scene of racial and cultural sameness.

To bridge the gap between the East Coast mentality of the frontier and the reality of Texas, Holley compares the colonist in Texas to “the character of Leather Stocking”
(19). Drawing from Cooper’s fictional portraits to describe the Texas frontier privileges
race relations between Anglo-Americans and Native Americans. Writing Anglo-
Americans into this Mexican landscape, Holley stipulates that although “Indians and
Mexicans are considered the best qualified for [frontiersmen], it sometimes happens that
a white man from the States, who has become somewhat de-civilized, is substituted” (19).
She also, perhaps inadvertently, draws on Cooper’s gendered analysis of civilization in
the figure of the white woman. Such a depiction of Texas colonists as decivilized
substitutes for Indians and Mexican presupposes the necessity of white women in the
colonies to help differentiate between the races through the creation of the domestic in
the Texas frontier.

Holley promotes an image of the Texas colonist based primarily on literary
images from both Britain and the United States. Locating “the character of the Leather
Stocking . . . in Texas” translates Texas colonial experience to readers with an East Coast
sensibility of the frontier made famous by James Fenimore Cooper. Interestingly, Holley
has to further tweak the analogy with Natty Bumppo in order to place Anglo-Americans
into the role of the frontiersman. The idea of substitution is quite telling, especially given
the “substitution” of “Indians and Mexicans” by “white men from the states.” Racial
mimicry, particularly related to an Anglo man masquerading as Native American man
has been a signature of Anglo-American relationships to the frontier and its native
inhabitants such as the figure of Natty Bumppo. The dynamics are not so different,
Holley seems to intimate, from the East Coast colonization in the late eighteenth century
and the colonization of Texas in the early to mid-nineteenth century. Indeed, one could
imagine Texas emigration replicating the New England colonial experience and Holley appears to foreshadow the Revolution of 1836 as just another “substitution.”

The other reference Holley makes to clarify life in Texas to East Coast readers is a brief comparison to the Vicar of Wakefield’s picture (57). In a section dedicated to advising female emigrants of the domestic furnishings to be packed and brought to Texas, Holley refers to Goldsmith’s 1766 novel depicting a household stricken with grim poverty and bankruptcy. Unlike the traditional image of the frontier as edenic, a land of milk and honey, Holley warns female emigrants not to imagine transplanting their well-furnished, fashionable homes to Texas. Household furnishings such as bed, tables, and chairs, are imagined for their utilitarian rather than their decorative uses. Holley advises “those who must have a feather-bed had better bring it” to intimate that certain luxuries cannot be purchased or traded in the Austin colony. The sacrifice of an upper-class domestic sphere, Holley promises, will be well rewarded in personal growth. “Delicate ladies,” Holley argues, “find they can be useful and need not be vain. Even privations become pleasures: people grow ingenious in overcoming difficulties” (59).

With these statements, Holley creates a certain mystique for the female emigrant settling in Texas that was only marginally present in the literature and in the national imaginary.55 Indeed, the kind of burgeoning image of the female emigrant that Holley promotes speaks to feminist sensibilities: “they discover in themselves, powers, they did not suspect themselves of possessing” (59). For women, Texas is a land of opportunity, a place for them to develop and exert female agency, and such individual development

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55 Caroline Kirkland’s A New Home: Who’ll Follow? (1839), defined in opposition to male writing in the adventurous mode and male notions of empire building, “deliberately deflates the expectations produced by male narratives of western adventure” (Georgi-Findlay 27).
seems to be not only supported, but expected in Texas. The kind of industry traditionally imagined in emigrant guides and propaganda is largely gendered to a male audience, thus Holley's attention to women's labors in the Austin colony separate her text from the generic norm.

Social relations in the colony are depicted as idyllic, and, I would argue, supportive of the kind of frontier woman that Holley seems to call into action in *Texas*. There are no distinctive social classes — "there are no poor people here and none rich"; distinctions that can be discerned are attributable to the emigrant's management and industry (59). The absence of class differences among the colonists eliminates the kind of domestic economy and social conventions that are tied directly to class maintenance and social stature. Holley translates the absence of this class-based domesticity into an opportunity for female agency. The colony's maxim is utilitarianism, and Holley's advice that women not be vain or occupied by the outward trappings of class liberates women from certain social preoccupations and duties and thus empowers them to participate equally with their male counterparts. The aesthetics of Holley's imagined community in the Austin colony revisit those of minimalist utilitarianism shared by her historical predecessors in the original thirteen colonies. We should not be surprised by the oblique references to the Protestant work ethic and the culture of industry.

The fantasy of homogeneity among the colonists extends beyond class to imagine an exclusively Anglo-American colony, even territory, and this delicate relationship between the colonists and the Mexican government is a touchy subject for Holley to address. She does so primarily through the correspondence of her cousin, Stephen F. Austin. In 1832, Austin and his fellow colonists were entangled in the conflict between
the political and military factions of the Mexican government. The wrongful
imprisonment of several citizens, including José Francisco Madero and his surveyor, José
María Carbajal, by Colonel Juan Davis Bradburn enraged the colonists who appealed
without result to the governor, who himself “borne down by the same iron rod that was
held over Texas” (76). As the democratic government of Mexico was itself suffering
under military despotism and martial law, Austin characterizes the potentially
insurrectionary actions of himself and his fellow colonists who take up arms and travel to
Anahuac to demand the release of the wrongfully imprisoned as patriotic. Toasting “la
federación y la constitución mejicana,” along with General Santa Anna as their defender,
Austin and the others publicly announced their loyalties and sentiments lie squarely with
the Mexican government to whom they had pledged their allegiance (72). Austin
champions Gen. Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, even naming themselves the Santa Anna
Volunteer Company. 56

This small-scale rebellion is a dress rehearsal for the Texas Revolution of 1836,
and is also played out as being reminiscent of the 1776 American Revolution because it is
prompted by many of the same factors: rights abrogated, lands seized, and elections
curtailed (75). Holley relies on the comparison of life in Texas with the American
Revolution, a nation-building event quite recent in America’s political past. Coupled
with her references to Cooper’s Natty Bumppo, Holley successfully translates this
“foreign” territory in the national imaginary, making its transition into the national
domestic all the more “natural.” Holley writes before Texas’ Independence, her narrative

56 The motif of mutual oppression, suffered by the Austin colonists and the Mexican citizens living in
Texas alike does not adhere for long. The colonists openly revolt against Santa Anna and gain their
independence in 1836.
has an anticipatory undercurrent, an inarticulated, but nevertheless imagined future of Texas as a U.S. territory, populated by “friends and kinsmen all of the same complexion with ourselves, and speaking our native tongue” (16).

**CoverGirl: The Veil, Rebozo, and Face Paint**

Susan Magoffin’s narrative is likewise marked by the political developments between the U.S. and Mexico. Not written as an emigration guide, but rather as a private diary, Magoffin’s *Down the Santa Fe Trail* casts the image of an Anglo woman in the Mexican territory at the border of both lives. Spanish leaks into the most intimate of private spheres of the domestic – Magoffin begins to refer to her husband as “mi alma” (literally, “my soul”). Unlike Holley’s *Texas*, Magoffin’s version of New Mexico is a place for cultural exchange, albeit on a limited basis.

We went up and while *mi alma* with his gun and pistols kept watch, for the wily Indian may always be apprehended here, it is a good lurking place and they are ever ready to fall upon any unfortunate trader behind his company – and it is necessary to be careful, so while *mi alma* watched on the rock above and Jane stood by to watch if any should come up on the front side of me, I cut my name, among the many hundreds inscribed on the rock and many of whom I knew. . . This I remarked would be quite an adventure to celebrate the 4th! (Susan Magoffin, *Down the Santa Fe Trail*, 40-1).

In the above quotation, many of the elements intrinsic to Pratt’s characterization of the female travelogue are contained: the white woman is protected by both husband and servant; class privilege and the marriage plot enable a certain degree of female autonomy (expressed here in the carving of her name in the rock); and the ever-present threat posed by racial others – Native Americans in this case, Mexicans in other instances. Most importantly, I will argue that the enterprise of writing a travel narrative, whether the author be male or female, was influenced, to varying degrees, in the project of national expansionist politics. Note that Magoffin performs this defiant act, alongside
the name of "many hundreds" on the fourth of July, the day of U.S. independence from Britain. Susan Magoffin began writing *Down the Santa Fe Trail* before the start of the Mexican War; President Polk declared war while Magoffin and her husband were on the famous trade route.

Shifting from the carriage to the veil as her source of shelter and protection, Susan Magoffin arrives in the Vegas. She substitutes one veil for another, which cordons off a personal space that can remain private even in public spaces. In nineteenth-century United States, upper-class women wore veils when circulating in mixed company, in public spaces, and in mourning. For women traveling West, two prominent surrogate "veils"—the covered wagon (functioning in one very iconic painting entitled the *Madonna of the Prairie* as a halo) and the bonnet—covered and protected them. Ironically, Magoffin becomes the subject of a reversed colonizing gaze where all the Vegas inhabitants are imagined to be constantly staring at her. "Her representation of the exotic other thus contains a curiously inverted version of the touristic gaze—it is the center of the Pueblo gaze, while she herself professes indifference and denies seeing those who gaze at her" (Georgi-Findlay 101). Magoffin’s own assessment of the episode demonstrates how the veil functions as a mediator—allowing her to return the gaze with impunity.

Magoffin describes the scene in which she has become the unwitting subject of a "‘monkey show’" in the following manner: "My veil was ingenuously drawn down, not only for protection of my face from the wind and constant stare of ‘the natives,’ but [it] also afforded me a screen from whence to beholding my scrutinizing spectators" (92). In

57 I have attempted to trace the etymology of this phrase in the *OED*, but have yet to meet with any success.
listing the various elements from which her veil protects her, Magoffin mentions both the wind and the native stare, as if these were both “natural” occurrences in the Southwest territory. It is not my intention nor my purpose to dwell on the dynamics of the gaze, but rather what I want to emphasize are the similarities between Magoffin’s veil and the rebozos worn by the Mexican women who dine with the caravan. The cultural dynamics underlying each woman’s assessment of the other’s dress and demeanor operate simultaneously and in direct relationship to each other. The veil allows Magoffin to return the gaze of the “natives” with impunity; the rebozos allow the Mexican women to protect their children from the elements, keep them warm and secure, and allow for the simultaneous play of public and private in the presumed nursing of these infants under the cover the rebozo affords.

Beyond the power dynamics associated with the gaze in a colonial space (and New Mexico was in the process of colonization since the Mexican War was underway at the time of Magoffin’s writing), I am interested in these moments of uncanniness, where the cultural differences elide similar practices among women. Magoffin speculates about what is happening underneath the rebozo: “some of them had their babies under their rabosas. I shant say at what business. I may venture this much though that the little things were taking care of No.1” (93). Magoffin seems bothered by the whole process of something related to the maternal body occurring before her eyes, yet out of sight. And to my mind this is the same dynamic underlying the veil – the simultaneous play of public and private for women and the permeability of the very material comprising this screen for the female body in a public space.
To maintain a certain degree of racial and class privilege, Magoffin employs the veil to protect her complexion. Just a few pages before the above mentioned scene, Magoffin writes of the environment’s influence on her face: “I have been walking till I am covered with dust till instead of being black any longer, I am brown changing back to white again” (79). Traversing the terrain threatens Magoffin’s ability to maintain a certain level of racial and class privilege, coded here and elsewhere in the narrative as whiteness. It is worth comparing the temporary transformation of Magoffin’s skin from black to brown to white again with the hyperbolic spotting of Lola Medina’s skin in María Amparo Ruiz de Burton’s *Who Would Have Thought It?*. As mentioned in chapter one, Lola symbolizes the racial indeterminacy of Mexicans in the U.S. national imaginary where racial lines are primarily drawn and comprehended along a black/white axis.

The perceived vulnerability of an U.S. woman in Mexican territory during the Mexican War is not only expressed in this earlier scene in which Magoffin finds herself the object of a “monkey show,” but it occurs again when she travels further into the territory and interacts with poor Mexican women and their children. When encountering the site of “children running about perfectly naked,” a site which Magoffin describes as “repulsive,” she feels herself compelled to “keep [her] veil drawn closely over [her] face all the time to protect [her] blushes” (95). Clearly, the veil operates in this scene as an improvised screen intended to cordon Magoffin off from the “repulsive” presence of the unclothed children. Further, the veil differentiates the presence of color (the blush) on Magoffin’s face from the people of color whom she encounters. The clothing itself serves as a marker delineating the differences between Magoffin and the children and other inhabitants; the veil adds another layer of difference intended to augment the
distance between her and the inhabitants of San Miguel. What is curious is not the use of
the veil to protect a blush. Why hide a marker of moral integrity and a physical
representation of social decorum?

To answer this question, we must investigate the entire scene. Besides the naked
children and the scandalized Magoffin, there are also women “slap[ping] about with their
arms and necks bare, perhaps their bosoms exposed (and they are none of the prettiest or
whitest)” (95). The degrees of dress and undress range from Magoffin, who uses clothing
to hide something as minute as a blush; to the women who expose portions of their bodies
that she believes should remain covered; to the children whose lack of clothing perhaps
most approximates the stereotype of the savage. Veil allows Magoffin to be physically
responsive in private to the nakedness she views. Just as degrees of exposure and
inadequate cover characterize the lower class, Magoffin describes her relationship with
members of New Mexico’s elite through a language of dress. Georgi-Findlay argues,
“[Magoffin] is simultaneously writing her self as the center of her narrative and opening
herself to the gaze, which is interestingly gendered: the native gaze is perceived as
mainly female” (102). I agree with Georgi-Findlay’s assessment, but I would qualify it to
include the aesthetics of American fashion.

As a member of the upper class, Donna Julienne’s (Doña Juliana?) visits to the
Magoffin household initiate a redefinition of all Mexicans from “half-barbarous” to polite
and modest. Magoffin articulates this converted sense of the inhabitants along the Santa
Fe trail in terms of clothing. “Donna Julienne called this evening; took a great fancy to
my cape because it is high in the neck, and will return for the pattern; she dislikes, she
says, to go into the plazo where there are so many Americanos, and her neck exposed”
(131). By patterning her own dress after that of Magoffin, Doña Julienne affects a willingness, through dress, to emulate an U.S. custom. The dynamics of women in the public space (here the plazo), open to the gaze of others, are cleverly inverted so that the subject of the gaze is a upper class Mexican woman and those who attempt to fix her in their gaze are Americans. In many significant ways, this scene mirrors the one mentioned earlier where Magoffin discovers herself to be the subject of a “monkey show.” The cape is substituted for the veil and this change impacts the power dynamics of the gaze. The higher neckline of the cape presumably cloaks more of Doña Julienne’s body from American spectators. Further, the cape separates Doña Julienne from the women whose degrees of undress created a spectacle for Magoffin.

When Magoffin crosses the plazo with her husband, she “of course attract[s] the attention of all idle bystanders – [her] bonnet being an equal object of wonder with the white woman who wore it” (134). No racial markers are expressly identified with the phrase “all idle bystanders,” yet the description of herself as a “white woman” implies a non-white audience. Similar to the veil, the bonnet attracts rather than deflects attention, especially in a society where bonnets were not the fashion for head covering. The ability for clothing to cloak, hide, or protect Magoffin from her environment does not extend to her identity as a “white woman.” Indeed, every piece of clothing is culturally and racially coded so that the fact that Magoffin repeatedly draws attention in public and confirms her status as an outsider, yet not perhaps on the terms that she would desire necessarily. In other words, she is physically marked as an outsider because of her

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58 Although Georgi-Findlay argues that Magoffin’s narrative is marked by an absence of what Pratt calls a “negative aesthetic of neglect,” I believe the preoccupation with emulating American dress to register as a narrative of progress. After all, Georgi-Findlay herself notes how Gen. Kearny’s occupation of Santa Fe is not seen as an act of conquest but an attempt to liberate the Mexican people from tyranny (102).
costuming – just as she characterizes people of Mexican descent by their clothing, or lack thereof. For Magoffin, the unwelcomed result of her compliance with sumptuary laws to maintain her racial and class status is the heightened sense of difference – the conspicuousness transformed into spectacle.

Within the enclosed space of the makeshift domestic sphere, whether the covered wagon or the tent, Magoffin negotiates with Mexican women through a language of dress, and indirectly, through a mutually-held class privilege and moral decorum signified through costuming. Magoffin’s use of the female aesthetic relates loosely to Findlay’s theory that travel narratives sometimes operate on the justification of the subjectivity of the narrator/seer who makes pronouncements. Magoffin’s shift in opinion regarding Mexicans occurs along a line of aesthetic sensibility: “I did think the Mexicans were as void of refinement, judgment, etc. as the dumb animals till I heard one of them say ‘bonita muchachita’ [pretty little girl]! And now I have reason and certainly a good one for changing my opinion; they are certainly a quick and intelligent people” (98). Clearly, Magoffin’s statement contains a bit of self-deprecating humor. However, there is enough truth in this confession to highlight it as indicative of the powerful discourse of aesthetics that operates throughout the text between Magoffin and her female Mexican counterparts.

The uncanniness initially unrecognized but nevertheless present in Magoffin’s narrative takes the shape of a domestic economy in which she and upper-class New Mexican women traffic in the circulation of their own specific cultural capital. For such exchanges to transpire, there must necessarily be a common ground – this is an issue of class privilege and decorum, which assures the “worthiness” and equitable exchange of
items and advice. The Mexican women exchange their knowledge of married life, including how to tame their husbands and manage their jealousy, for the knowledge of American style and domestic furnishings that Magoffin has to offer. Magoffin’s age, together with her disconnectedness from her family soon after her marriage, are coded in terms of sexual innocence.

*Nueva mexicanas* who make social calls to her temporary domicile act as surrogate family and simultaneously provide the kind of womanly advice missing from Magoffin’s marital interactions with her husband. It is not surprising that Mexican women were coded as sexually knowing or licentious – this was a strong cultural stereotype in the mid-nineteenth century. A “good old lady” who “has great confidence in her own knowledge of the men, as the speaks of those staple objects of Creation, and says she wishes we could understand each other sufficiently well that she might give me some advice respecting their snares!” (109-110). Magoffin admonished herself again when faced with another opportunity for womanly advice, “I must be expert in my Spanish, that I may receive that La Señora Ortis wishes to give me respecting them” (124). Magoffin depicts knowledge of the Spanish language as an entry into the world of the sexual component of domestic affairs. Strangely, this promise of a conversation of womanly advice is mediated through Magoffin’s husband, who acts as a translator between the two women.

Another encounter with a Mexican woman, Doña Refujio, leaves Magoffin in a state of shock, when the former puts forth the possibility that Magoffin’s husband “might be off with his other Senorita” (212). Twice in the narrative Magoffin describes a scene in which ladies from the upper class have visited her make-shift home and expressed
admiration, in one way or another, for her clothing and other domestic furnishings. If Magoffin imagines her own adaption to New Mexican “ways of living” in these terms of cultural production, then surely we must imagine that she reads Mexican women patterning their dress after the American style as a similar gesture of cultural accommodation.

In March of 1847, near the middle of the Mexican War, Magoffin writes of her adoption as “Nana” into a make-shift family centered around “María la tonta,” whom Magoffin describes as “a deranged woman entirely dependent on the charities of the citizens” (212). Having discovered Magoffin in the church – “an object of curiousity of course” – María dubs her “Nana” and becomes “a constant visitor” at Magoffin’s room. The other women who Magoffin has previously introduced, Doña Josefa and Doña Refujio, are transformed into Mamá and Mama Juga respectively (212-3). María creates an entire foster family, replete with Samuel Magoffin as “Tato.” To solidify this familial relationship, Magoffin busies herself in making María a chemise. Doña Francisca and Doña Josefita, who “requested to see some modas americanas,” return the next day to “take two or three of them as patterns for a few days till they can cut or make themselves some” (213). In lending out her dresses for patterning and emulation by her New Mexican neighbors, Magoffin extends the economy of fashion exchange that solidifies her foster ties with María to include these other women.

The family model for the nation maintains its prominence in Magoffin’s narrative, as evidenced by the manner in which she gets adopted into Mexican families (both in literal and figurative ways) and the way in which she becomes the purveyor of American customs and goods in terms of the various accoutrements she brings with her to the Santa
Magoffin’s clothing and other items brought with her on the trail not only mark her racial and class identities, but they also become the very material means by which Mexican women gain access to U.S. society and culture. Unlike the political indoctrination discussed in chapter one, wherein lessons in Enlightenment ideology and free will are taught to Mexican women before they become the wives of U.S. soldiers, the kind of cultural exchange described/imagined in Magoffin’s travel narrative occurs outside the marriage plot and primarily involves Mexican women patterning their dress after la moda Americana.

Not surprisingly, Magoffin expresses her own plan for adapting to life in New Mexico in terms of producing the clothing and food associated as Mexican: “If we remain here during the winter,” Magoffin avows, “I must learn a good many of the New Mexican ways of living, manufacturing serapes, rabozos, to make tortillas, chily peppers, and cholote, which by the way I do know a little something about – I made myself a passable cup this afternoon” (164-5). Magoffin expresses a willingness to augment her current domestic practices with those she has learned from her New Mexican neighbors. This gesture should be considered as the counterpart to nuevo mexicanas fashioning their dresses in an American style.

There is a certain degree of spectacle and cultural consumption imagined in Magoffin’s activities, particularly since these are the very items that she has singled out as artifacts of Mexican culture. A few pages after Magoffin vows to learn to make tortillas, she includes a very detailed account of the wife and daughter of Don José demonstrating the process (167-8). The cultural exchange here ends with Magoffin

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59 As will be discussed in chapter five, the U.S. female tourist in María Cristina Mena’s “The Gold Vanity
offering "the easier mode of U.S." knitting to the old lady who taught her tortilla making. The kind of performance or masquerade of Mexican identity, associated with the serape and the rebozo are taken up further in the final chapter. For the moment, however, I want to emphasize how unusual Magoffin’s desire to conform to the domestic model of Mexican life is in the larger body of travel narratives in which the degrees of dress (or undress) by the people encountered spurred much speculation regarding Mexican women’s moral character, and thus did not warrant imitation.

**Clifford’s Overland Tales and the Dynamics of Cultural (Mis)Reading**

Dismantling the figure of the sexually savvy Mexicana prominent in many male travel narratives, and in portions of Magoffin’s Down the Santa Fe Trail, Clifford’s “Another Juanita,” first published in the Overland Monthly and later in a collection entitled Overland Tales (1877), expresses the climate of unease in post-1848 New Mexico through a failed love story against a background of cultural and political mistranslations. Captain Dunwood, highly regarded by his fellow soldiers “in spite of his perfections,” falls in love with a young Mexican woman of the gente finos whom he spies leaving church. From behind the “mud walls” of this mysterious woman’s casa, Dunwood hears from her “siren’s voice” what he imagines, based on his lack of Spanish, to be verses of an old Spanish love song. Although he has not spoken with Juanita, Dunwood cannot arrest her image from his mind.

When news reaches Fort Craig that Apaches are headed towards the hacienda of Don Francisco Delagado, Dunwood must postpone the only invitation he has received to visit Juanita at her home in order to organize troops to protect the wealthy hacendado.

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Set” has a similar, but unintended effect, through the circulation of her vanity set.
The next morning Dunwood arrives at Juanita’s home deflated, having failed to protect Delagado from the Apaches. He finds her servant, who then leads him to the church and, once inside, to Juanita’s corpse. It is only after her death that Dunwood’s assumptions about Juanita are dispelled. What Dunwood imagined to be a love song was actually an “Ave María,” sung to protect her father, Don Francisco, while he was away from town. Rather than a romantic or social call, as Dunwood suspected, he discovers too late that his summons to Juanita’s house was to seek the U.S. Army’s protection for her father.

Clifford includes Dunwood’s mistranslations, attributed to his kinship with “fools and coxcombs whom he had always so despised – who believed every girl’s glance to be directed to them, every woman’s song addressed to their susceptible heart,” with many other small but significant battles over the labeling, and thus the understanding, of cultural and national practices (26). The Mexican War had already taken place by the time Clifford wrote her stories, yet on a smaller scale, cultural and border battles continued to be waged – whether it be a question of who would protect against Indian raids (a question addressed in the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo), or how the local and newly-arrived inhabitants would organize and relate themselves to the natural and man-made spaces. Near the beginning of the story, Clifford addresses a point of intersection for axes of meaning when describing “the space in front of the quarters” as a ‘plaza’ for the natives and a parade ground for the soldiers (6).

In a later story entitled “Camp-life in Arizona,” Clifford, the colonel, and his wife play “Central Park” – “pass[ing] and repass[ing] each other . . . assuming all the style and air of New York elite, as [they] bowed and saluted afresh, every time [they] met” (34). Combining these two examples of how individuals relate themselves to the landscape
reveals the primacy of spectacle wherein the land becomes a makeshift stage on which these people parade and perform their various cultural roles. For the soldiers who consider the plaza to be a parade ground, one can imagine the performance of formal parades, formation for reveille, drilling, and other assemblies before going out on patrol. These orchestrated movements, intended to be performed before an audience of commanding officers, contrasts with the free flow of individuals who cross through the plaza in their daily business, errands, social calls, etc. and reflects the restrictive and unnatural impact of Manifest Destiny in reordering daily life.

Captain Dunwood’s mistaking Juanita’s song of prayer for a love song evokes another set of gendered misunderstandings surrounding the enigmatic figure of the light-skinned, upper class Mexican woman, as well as revealing some anti-catholic sentiment. When Dunwood first sees Juanita, he is particularly struck by “a narrow, wax-white hand” emerging from beneath her rebozo to draw her veil closer (7). What marks Juanita as exceptional as she returns home from church, chaperoned by her servant, is not just the style of her dress, which is described as being of a finer material than that of her companion’s, but the “blood-red” beads of her rosary (7).

When he espies her again, accompanied by her servant, Dunwood notices that “her throat was white as any swan’s, and that her lips were not as bright red as some would suppose a Spanish girl’s’ lips ought to be” (12). Dunwood’s eye registers the classical aesthetics of European beauty detailed in Petrarchan sonnets, but then compares them to the assumed set of features that all Spanish women are imagined to possess. The whiteness first espied on her hands, and later her neck, is also found, to Dunwood’s surprise, to color her lips and thus differentiate her from other “Spanish girls.” By the
end of the story, when we learn along with Dunwood that Juanita suffered from a weak heart, we can read back to these early physical descriptions and recognize how whiteness not only signifies a particular racial and class affiliation, and registers with Dunwood as a marker of a potential romantic partner, but more importantly, how it signifies illness. Clifford pathologizes whiteness and thus removes it from the exclusive realm of Manifest Destiny.

Although Juanita is imagined to be exceptional by Dunwood, which would necessarily separate her from the realm of Mexican women, he continues to operate under U.S. stereotypes defining “the star-eyed daughters of the Spanish race” (16). He mistakes the “Ave María” for a love song, and displaces her religious devotion, particularly her rosary, with the accoutrements of a woman on the marriage market. There is an interesting displacement of Dunwood’s fascination with Juanita’s whiteness, to include her lips, which he describes as “pale red,” to the redness of her rosary beads. His fixation on these beads, and on their contrasting color to her lips, signals his misappropriate characterization and sexualization of her.

Dunwood, however, makes strident attempts to shape his image of Juanita to fit the mold of sexually available woman. What Dunwood has fetishized – namely her whiteness and her “pale-red” lips contrast with the “rich, dark beauty” of the women accompanying Juanita who “do full justice to the descriptions one reads” of Spanish women (16). Indeed, Dunwood’s own inherent racism rises to the surface when he realizes that Juanita is being supported by one of her cohorts. Although he does not act on it, Dunwood “fe[els] an impulse to fling off the arm that encircled the girl’s slender waist, as if it were the grossest contamination to have it there” (16). The concept of
purity, evoked here in the term “contamination,” speaks to the racial separation and differentiation underlying the politics of exceptionalism.

Despite the absence of a real romance, what Dunwood imagines as the beginnings of a relationship between himself and Juanita influences the narrative of Clifford’s story in a profound way. The proliferation of misreadings, which are of course the basis for Dunwood’s characterization of Juanita, rise to the level of the story itself wherein the attentive reader recognizes that all previous readings of Juanita and indeed of the people and culture of Albuquerque are flawed themselves. Although it would be impossible to ascertain Clifford’s own reading of the Mexican War and the politics of Manifest Destiny, I cannot resist reading the abundance of misreadings, which also describe spatial relationships, as an awareness of the mechanisms of language and appropriation. As noted previously, there is the conflict over naming the space in front of the quarters. There are many other similar discrepancies in not only describing but relating to landscapes. A piece of land close by the river, “where the cottonwood trees flourished,” is called a bosque by the Mexicans and a pasture by the U.S. soldiers. The bleakness of the landscape frustrates the formulaic description of it as pastoral and how the Apache Indians are present in their conspicuous absence since they are imagined by Clifford to be the reason for the oppressive silence.

Violent Play and other forms of Domestic Violence

Clifford’s stories in The Overland Monthly explore the relationship of women to the project of Manifest Destiny after the Mexican War. As the wife of an army officer, Clifford is ex post facto violating/trespassing on lands historically occupied by the
Apaches. By default, she is witness to and participant in on-going battles between Native Americans and the soldiers fulfilling the nation’s will of Manifest Destiny. As a testament to the critical position Anglo-American women occupy in the Southwest, the heroines of “An Episode of Fort Desolation,” “La Graciosa,” and “A Miner from Arizona” are all directly or indirectly responsible for the deaths of their husbands and would-be lovers.\textsuperscript{60} The inhabitants of the domestic sphere are not immune to the vices associated with Manifest Destiny such as unmitigated greed. Indeed, the women are much more adept at satisfying their desire for material possessions and a higher social status than are their male companions. One weapon in the arsenal of Manifest Destiny that these women possess alike is the ability to cultivate an air of respectability and gentility to mask their baser desires for money at the expense of their partners.\textsuperscript{61} In each story, there is a dumb show of the violence to later be enacted on the men through a third party. Although the women are never directly linked to the crimes of murder, rumors following each of them after the men’s deaths correctly identify the women as accomplices to murder. Unchecked expansionism has upset normative gender roles and expectations.

In “A Miner from Arizona,” partly a cautionary tale against marrying below one’s station, women are placed at the critical point between a man’s ability to succeed or fail in the Southwest. Margaret Benson meets the titular character in San Francisco where the latter is determining the worth of his various mining prospects. Her willingness to entertain the thought of marriage to Calhoun Kendal before his economic situation is

\textsuperscript{60} Consider Holley’s real-life argument for the presence of Anglo women, as wives and mothers, in the Texas frontier.

\textsuperscript{61} Bret Harte’s \textit{Gabriel Conroy}, set in Gold Rush California, contains one such female gold-digger, Julie Devargas, who attempts to gain wealth by exploiting all female roles with the respectable family romance.
established places her in the category of women who contrast severely with these other gold diggers and opportunists. By the end of the story, when she has assented to marry Philip Dufresne, a member of the social elite in San Francisco, we learn that Margaret is herself a member of the upper class; because she already possesses the status and upbringing of the class to which these other women aspire, her motives for marriage exclude class climbing.

Cahoun Kendal’s young bride, however, has a tenuous hold on the category of *nouveau riche*. To catch Kendal, Sarah Briscoe reinvents herself as “Sadie,” adjusting her age by a few years because, as she confesses to her brother, “the old fellow wants a young wife for his money, and [she] think[s] [she’ll] fill the bill” (191). To eliminate the competition that Sadie imagines in Margaret Benson, the former plays the part of the jealous lover who cannot stand the idea of Cahoun meeting in private with Margaret. Violent actions accompany her confession of jealousy – “She stood on tip-toe before him, and made playful attempts at choking him” (194). Tellingly, Kendall’s death is located at the site of violent play – his neck. Chronicled in a newspaper article, Margaret and Philip read together of the events leading up to Kendall’s death:

The body of a man supposed to be the once famous Mr. Kendall, the discoverer of the mine known by his name, was found on the Gila Desert, some ten days after a severe sand-storm had been raging there. The theory is that he had been laboring under an aberration of the brain, consequent upon great disappointment in finding mines he had meant to relocate taken up by other parties – otherwise he would not have started across the desert without other water supply than a small canteen, which was found by his side empty. (205)

Within the subtext of the article, one reads the pronouncement of Sadie’s guilt. She is conspicuously absent from the description of Kendall’s final days alive. Although unnamed in the article, her wanton spending of Kendall’s money created the kind of
drought and feeling of desperation that drove him out into the desert alone. Perhaps the
crowning moment where Sadie is most implicated in Kendal’s death occurs after the
Dufresnes have read the article and learned the fate of their late friend. As Margaret
weeps, Philip declares: “O faithful heart! Most tender of women and truest of wives – I
thank God that you are mine” (205). Perhaps Philip imagines himself suffering the same
fate where it not for Margaret’s tenderness and “trueness.” The heroines’ shared vice of
greed leads them to value the capital produced by their husbands (in “La Graciosa,” the
trappings of aristocracy offered by their lovers) over these men’s lives. The domestic
sphere is the perfect location for such vices to germinate because it can best conceal
them.

In “La Graciosa,” Clifford seems to imagine the lengths to which a woman’s
dissimulation can lead. On one level a failed romance plot where the hero is murdered
before he can propose to his beloved, “La Graciosa” is the story of a woman named Nora,
a divorcée, (we later discover that this is not her true name) disguised in mourning
clothing. She quickly gains the attentions and later the heart of the story’s tragic hero,
Don Pedro Lopez, a gentleman ironically admired by his peers for his ability to not be
duped by los Americanos. As the romance plot thickens between Nora (renamed La
Graciosa) and Don Pedro, she begins to exhibit some bizarre behavior. Through a
conflation of woman and landscape to be echoed later in the story when Don Pedro
reveals that he has named his land holdings after Nora, “La Graciosa,” Nora’s morbid
emotions are expressed in terms of the surrounding scene: “How glad, how thankful I
could be, if from the wreck and ruin I could gather light and warmth enough to cover my
past life and its miseries, as the pink and the purple of the sunset cover the black
dreariness of yon mountain’’ (19, emphasis mine). Notice that Nora doesn’t speak of replacing the “light and warmth” for “black dreariness,” merely of using the former as a “cover.” She is indirectly responsible for his death since she does not disclose her past. Don Pedro is murdered while trying to defend La Graciosa’s honor against the insults shouted by her ex-husband. Clifford demonstrates how cultural misreadings, particularly an overly romanticized notion of women, can have deadly consequences.

In a two-part short story, “Toby” and “Flight,” Clifford recounts what critic Cheryl J. Foote describes as the author’s own near-death escape from her abusive, alcoholic husband. “[T]hese autobiographical sketches provide a remarkably intimate view of Clifford’s marriage to an army officer and other details of her life at military posts throughout the Southwest” (221). In the concluding story,” the unnamed protagonist reluctantly returns to Santa Fé with her husband, knowing that she “should feel the effects of the lieutenant’s wrath sooner or later, no matter how honeyed was every word he spoke to [her]” (134). Even the very rhetoric of reform,62 central to such domestic fiction as Stowe’s Uncle Tom’s Cabin, is suspect in Clifford’s stories because of its capacity to mask/house hate and murderous intent. It is true that Stowe located moral reform in the testimonial tears of repentant slave owners and neglectful mothers, but these physical displays were always accompanied by verbal acts of contrition. In the Southwest territory, where Clifford and her husband were stationed as part of the troops assigned to fight against the Indian raids along the U.S.-Mexico border, the domestic, portrayed in women’s fiction as a space for reform, moral tutoring, and a general atmosphere of Christian beliefs, is constantly threatened with violence both from within

62 The landscape’s potential for regeneration carries potentially deadly possibilities when abused by con
and without. Further, the solution for moral reform outlined in domestic fiction and treatises does not apply; indeed, the myth that the household can transform its inhabitants keeps Clifford's protagonist a prisoner in her own home and threatens her life.

When General Carleton in Albuquerque learns that the heroine is not returning to "the States," but is remaining with her husband, he orders the lieutenant to return to his station under arrest (136). As feeble as this attempt at safeguarding the protagonist is, the lieutenant's arrest constitutes one of many such strategies under U.S. military law to protect its female "citizens." As testimony to the sacrosanct character of the home and domestic relations, the military leaders were aware of the abuses the lieutenant's wife suffered, but did not act because "not a word or a sign from [her] told them that [she] wanted their help." As the protagonist herself posits, "how could they interfere without or against [her] wish and desire?" (138, emphasis mine). The concept of removing her from an abusive environment as interference speaks to the common reticence, particularly in the southern states, to intercede into family matters (look for that quote).

Upon her return to Fort Bayard, the domestic quite literally becomes a carceral as the lieutenant, and therefore his wife, are confined to their quarters. A sentinel parades constantly outside their tent under the auspices of preventing the lieutenant from leaving his tent, but "in reality to protect [the protagonist] from [her husband's] murderous attacks" (141). The confined space of the makeshift home in the form of an army tent contrasts with the large, open space under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army. And the dislocated, isolated spatial relation of the Southwest territories from "the States" indirectly creates the ideal environment for crimes to go unsolved or unpunished. During artists, gold diggers, and even murderers as the environment for lawless masquerade.
her husband’s confinement, the protagonist learns that he is wanted for murder in Texas, an indication that the Southwest lays just outside justice’s reach.63 Her isolation even further threatens her life because it keeps her from potential aid, solace, and agents to assist in her escape. The very geography of the newly-annexed territory breaks down the kind of community dynamic requisite for the domestic to operate as a space of safety.

Critic Dennis Hoiiman discusses the biographical aspect of Clifford’s companion pieces (“Toby” and “Flight”), remarking that her descriptions of domestic abuse “constitutes a moving case history of what we have come to know as the ‘battered wife syndrome’” (471). Only after Clifford had learned of her first husband’s death did she commit these two stories to print and to the readers of The Overland Monthly. Another aspect of this two-part story that has been examined by critics like Melody Graulich is how masculine violence is always already present in the frontier, a masculinized landscape that as Annette Kolodny has so aptly illustrated, is dominated by men who are both antagonistic to women and the land.

When critics examine the horrific, real-life violence that Clifford narrates in “Toby and “Flight,” they should look closely at what I consider to be a third, companion piece – “The Episode at Fort Desolation” which Clifford republished under an alternate title, “A Woman’s Treachery.” The Arnold family in “Fort Desolation” is emblematic of how Manifest Destiny can thoroughly imbue and destroy an Anglo-American definition/dynamic of class status that is secured and therefore dependent upon the display of material possessions. The wearing away of the artifice of a happy home is

63 James Ingram, the real name of Clifford’s first husband, “bragged to Josephine [that] he had murdered a man in Texas and because he wished to conceal the face that he had spent two years in a lunatic asylum in Philadelphia,” adopted his alias and joined the U.S. Army (Hoiiman 472).
described in this story in terms of the wear and tear visited upon the family’s prized toilet-set.

Early in the narrative, our unnamed female protagonist feels herself compelled to visit the Arnold household after having been taken for Mrs. Arnold on several occasions. The uncanniness that stems from an almost doppelgänger relationship between the two women who are absolute strangers to each other is key to the gender and racial reversal of Kaplan’s model of domestic violence. When the two women finally meet, the unnamed protagonist confesses to an uncanny resemblance between herself and Mrs. Arnold, yet she immediately identifies a feature Mrs. Arnold possesses that separates the two – Mrs. Arnold’s blue eyes. In almost jealous tones, the female protagonist reviews her own genealogy and discovers that no one in her family was born with blue eyes.

Tellingly, Clifford locates the site of difference between these two Anglo frontier women in a traditionally physical marker of “whiteness” – blue eyes. Following the racial implications of this distinguishing feature, Mrs. Arnold occupies a rung in the racial caste ladder above Clifford’s nameless protagonist. This distinction would not necessarily carry racial import were it not for the turbulent racial dynamics of the setting – white officers commanding a unit of black soldiers intent on violently removing American Indians from the newly-annexed Southwestern territory.

The racial dynamics of the Army unit stationed at this dismal place are only touched upon briefly, but they are quite telling. The unit is comprised of African-American soldiers, just as the Arnold household is managed by African-American servants. The parallels between homefront and warfront, however, do not follow the pattern Amy Kaplan sets forth in “Manifest Domesticity.” Rather than casting the black
servants in a white household as the immediate threat to the domestic (as Kaplan argues), Clifford shifts the role of villain to the female head of the household, Mrs. Arnold.

Perhaps it is because the soldiers are African-American that Kaplan’s model of Manifest Destiny does not hold. If, as Kaplan outlines in her article, there exists a symbiotic relationship between the homefront and the warfront, then what falls into the category of “foreign” is both the enemy being engaged on the battlefield and the “foreign” servants engaged in domestic service. The threat of a racialized other, a foreigner, exists simultaneously in both “domestic” spaces – the nation and the home. According to this configuration, any violence occurring on either domestic front is justified because, based on this set up of foreign and domestic, it occurs under the rubric of self-defense. And it is precisely this racial configuration of violent play on the domestic front that Clifford subverts in “Fort Desolation” due in part to a different interpretation of the nation (the central signifier of the domestic) and its agenda of Manifest Destiny.

When the protagonist and Mrs. Arnold are alone in the latter’s home, the narrative displays how the dynamics of Manifest Destiny are played out in the domestic sphere. The masochistic pleasure Mrs. Arnold derives from withholding items from her servants simply shocks the protagonist, who ascribes Mrs. Arnold’s behavior to manly traits. Having witnessed Mrs. Arnold’s delight at the sheer terror one young male servant endures because she has hidden his cap (which he superstitiously believes to shield him from Indians’ arrows) and then ordered him outside bare-headed to fetch wood, the narrator concludes that Mrs. Arnold “tormented and tantalized every living creature over which she had the power” (87).
The ever-present show of force, primarily displayed through Mrs. Arnold’s mental antics with her servants, only escalates to the threat of deadly physical violence when her husband returns home. Giving the unnamed visitors his own tour of the house, Mr. Arnold narrates “the story of almost every piece of furniture in the house” until he arrives at the master bedroom. I want to delay an examination of what occurs in the most intimate of domestic spaces for a moment to address the political/national implications of Mr. Arnold’s relationship to the house. The actual structure itself, Mr. Arnold relates, is a “pretty adobe home” built by this “colored soldiers.”

The double sense of the domestic collapses in Captain Arnold’s orders for his men to construct his home. To further complicate matters, Arnold (who is white) commands his men (who are black) to build an adobe home (just one of several acts of cultural appropriation which takes the possessions of Mexican citizens). Although by all appearances the house resembles other adobe structures dotting the Southwest, the circumstances of its construction denaturalize it from the landscape. The house, the shell of the domestic, becomes one in a series of material goods possessed by the Arnolds through questionable means. As such an item, the home itself becomes the site of Manifest Destiny not surprisingly played out in dumb show just following Clifford’s description of how the home was built.

To return to the Arnold bedroom, where Mr. Arnold’s tour of the house ends, we witness a scene of deadly intent between husband and wife that parallels those described by critics in “Toby” and “Flight.” Yet distinguishing it from the other two stories are the presence of witnesses and the threat of violence posed by both husband and wife. Resting against the bed is Mr. Arnold’s carbine, which he grabs at first to examine, but
then he “pointed it at his wife’s head with the air of a brigand and uttered, in unearthly tones, ‘Your money or your life.’” (85).

‘With a quick, cat-like spring, she was by the bed, had thrust her hands under the pillow and the next instant was holding two derringers close to his breast. Throwing back her head, like a heroine in velvet trousers on the stage, she returned, in the same strain:

‘I can play a hand at that game, too, and go you one better!’

She laughed as she said it, the laugh that she laughed with her white teeth clenched, but there was a ‘glint’ in her eye that I had never seen in a blue eye before. (85). Mr. Arnold’s ultimatum: your money or your life closely mimics the terms of Manifest Destiny, which took money, life, and land. In a reciprocal move that Kaplan addresses in her article of heroines defending their homes from racially othered intruders, Mrs. Arnold poises herself to return two barrels’ worth at her husband’s chest. In an exaggerated display of frontier bravado, Mrs. Arnold bests her husband’s threat by pointing two guns to his one. Her threat of double-fisted revenge foretells his death by the end of the story when the narrator discovers the wife’s complicity in events leading up to her husband’s death.

Perhaps the most telling clue of Captain Arnold’s impending murder lies in the glint in his wife’s eye. As the narrator remarks, such a look is unknown in blue eyes. The shock the narrator registers at witnessing this unparalleled scene of domestic violence narrows down to fixate on one seemingly insignificant, yet quite profound, aspect of Mrs. Arnold’s face – her blue eyes. As mentioned earlier, this feature has long been associated with “whiteness” and all the social and moral characteristics bundled with it. As the focal point of the narrator’s shock and disbelief, those with blue eyes,
Clifford intimates, should not be capable of such violent, unseemly, uncivilized thoughts, much less actions. And yet Mrs. Arnold, along with the male servant and soldier under her control, prove capable of trading the life of her husband for the promise of money from the two men the captain holds captive.

The sense of aesthetics prominent in each author’s stories of travel into the Southwest territory becomes a coded language resonating with their own personal relationship to the ever-increasing and multi-valenced sense of domestic. Home furnishings, cosmetics, fashion, etc. become the very means by which Holley parallels Texas colonization with the colonial origins of the United States through a language of Puritan aesthetics predicated on industry and necessity rather than luxury or class-associated ostentation. Magoffin employs a high-class, fashion-conscious sense of aesthetics to bridge friendships with upper class nueva mexicanas. Only Clifford recognizes how dominance saturates aesthetic sensibilities.
Chapter Four

**Embattled Women: Female Spies and Soldiers in the U.S. Wars**

 Somehow, back in September [1847], 1st Lt. Amandus Schnabel had managed to recruit into Company D a young woman named Caroline Newcome. How many were in on the secret we cannot judge, but she traveled with the troops and first reached official notice at Fort Mann. Lieutenant Schnabel disguised Caroline in soldiers’ clothing and had her report under the name of Bill whenever she stood formation. According to his court-martial charges he resorted to ‘various means to keep the said female disguised as a male, off from duty in the Company under different pretexts and during all or portions of that period, (several weeks), was tenting, sleeping and cohabitating with the said female, thereby defrauding the United States of the service of a good and competent soldier.

(Karnes 5)

In an article investigating Maj. William Gilpin’s volunteer troops from Missouri, historian Thomas Karnes characterizes the above quotation as “a more unusual scandal . . . to brighten the Kansas winter for the troops at Fort Mann”(5). Even the circumstances under which Bill was discovered to be Caroline — “Pvt. Bill Newcome became pregnant and her lieutenant tried to get her to desert” — retain a certain degree of humor and appear anecdotal (5). In contrast to Karnes’ somewhat flippant treatment of the phenomenon of female soldiers in the nineteenth-century U.S., this chapter takes seriously many of the issues mentioned, but not examined, in his brief recounting of Caroline/Bill Newcome.

The story of female soldier Caroline/Bill Newcome raises many of the issues this chapter seeks to address: women’s potential for affect in military attire; the rhetoric of romance to justify cross-dressing; the sexual dynamics associated with female drag; and the male national reaction to personal narratives and articles penned by these women soldiers and spies. What I hope to work out in this chapter is how Manifest Destiny scripts female identity formation in terms of sexuality and racialization.
More of a camp follower than a soldier — Karnes notes how Lt. Schnabel kept Caroline “off from duty” — Newcome’s assumption of military dress is a convenient masquerade enabling their sexual relationship to continue despite the dire and gendered conditions of war.\(^{64}\) The Army’s reaction to this scandal (Schnabel was court martialed) illustrates the profound impact a female in military uniform could have on the U.S. Army and the national imaginary. Newcome’s presence in the Company is imagined by the Army as occupying a place that would otherwise have been filled by a man, and on this basis they charge Schnabel with defrauding the nation of a male soldier’s service. This reaction begs the question: if Newcome had actually participated as a soldier, performing the various duties assigned by Gilpin, how would the Army have treated her presence on the battlefield?

In the previous chapter, I examined women who traveled into Mexico and the Southwest, either following husbands, or establishing households, but always under the guise of motherhood or in fulfillment of wifely duties. This chapter, “Embattled Women,” investigates remarkable women soldiers and spies who occupied territory under dispute during the Mexican and Civil Wars. Beginning with the narrative of Eliza Allen Billings, a woman from Maine who assumed male guise to follow her beloved onto the battlefields of the Mexican War, this chapter attempts to prove that despite the cultural disposition against female war participants, an appreciable lattitude was afforded women in the mid-nineteenth century, which resulted, even if indirectly, in the prevalence of

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\(^{64}\) Historian Robert Johannsen writes that “at a time when the traditional roles of women in society were coming under attack, it might be expected that women should participate in the Mexican War in more ways than simply by exhorting their men to patriotism or by sewing flags and uniforms or even by working in the ammunition factories. There were instances, though few, of women who volunteered to fight as soldiers, though they could do so only by disguising themselves as men” (136).
female soldiers and spies.  Historian Richard Hall estimates that as many as four hundred women participated in the Civil War alone. In determining the factors which led to these women to assume male guise or traditionally male roles (spies and war correspondents), I will look particularly at the strategies they employ to make the radical shifts along axes of gender and geography, and the dynamics which these women forge between themselves and the U.S. nation.

I examine cross-dressing as performing the same kind of disguise as occurs on a narrative level where romance and marriage plots disguise women's forays into masculine realms such as the battlefield and the tavern. Allen and Madame Loreta Janeta Velazquez both rely heavily on the marriage plot, a device traditionally stalled or frustrated by war, to justify and situate them in the military tale of courage, valor, and national duty. Precisely because war postpones the marriage plot, transferring it to a courtship lasting the duration of the conflict, the women soldiers can claim that their involvement in the traditionally male narrative of warfare is intended to hasten the war's end in order to resume and conclude the marriage plot. As a soldier, Allen functions as a maternal figure in drag – keeping tabs on the moral behavior of her future husband and thus training him for marriage. Velazquez's numerous attempts at marriage keep this subject ever-present in the readers' minds. But even more compelling, the timing of her marriages, their relationship to events and battles in the Civil War, foregrounds the inextricable link between the double sense of "domestic affairs."

65 An article published in The National Intelligencer, noted the presence of women among the Mexican military and advocated the recruitment of members of "the (miscalled) softer among sex." The article continues, "men can no more encounter women, when once fairly aroused, than they can so many tigresses." Described as "instinctive soldiers," women in the military would conform to "the great
That's George Mead

Published a mere three years after the Mexican War, Eliza Allen's *The Female Volunteer* documents the author's adventures as a volunteer soldier in the war which occasioned the term Manifest Destiny. As noted in the text's considerably lengthy subtitle, Allen fights in the battle of Cerro Gordo, digs for gold in California before she accomplishes her "single desire" for undertaking such "wonderful adventures"—marrying her true love, William Billings. Allen's text reads like a female version of the adventure tale, with the marriage plot and a rebelliousness prompted by forbidden love supposedly motivating her every escapade. In the preface, Allen defines her text as a "warning to parents to be more cautious than many are [in making] the choice of a partner for life" for their children (7-8). Tellingly, the villain or foe to be overcome in this text situated during the first foreign war fought by the U.S. is not the Mexican people. Instead, as laid out in the preface, the social practice of parents haphazardly or recklessly selecting spouses for their children is the subject of Allen's critique. Indeed, it should be noted that the relationship between home and nation is especially conflated in *The Female Volunteer* where a forbidden love affair sparks Allen's entrance into the

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66 Being a truthful and well-authenticated narrative of her parentage, birth, and early life — her love for one whom her parents disapproved — his departure for Mexico — her determination to follow him at all hazards — her flight in man's attire — enlistment — terrific battles of Mexico — her wounds — voyage to California — the shipwreck and loss of her companions — her miraculous escape — return to her native land — meeting of the lovers — reconciliation of her parents — marriage, and happy termination of all her trials and sorrows.

67 In chapter one, where I investigate the dynamics of interracial marriage following the Mexican War, the custom of arranged marriage is associated exclusively with Mexican culture. Mexican heroines who marry for love rather than antiquated custom are politically affiliated with the tenets of republicanism and, by association, the United States. In Allen's narrative, we witness the same formula — her patriotism is directly linked to her love for a suitor not chosen by her parents — and, in the midst of her military career, its reverse racialization. As discussed later in the chapter, Allen's skin darkens to the point at which it would be unrecognizable to her own family.
Mexican War and her adventures terminate with the long sought after parental blessing of her union with William.

Allen’s foray into the masculine plot as soldier of the Mexican War comes, interestingly enough, through the sentimental plot of forbidden love. Describing herself as a “most willing and loyal subject” of love. Allen places the marriage plot above all other consolidating systems like family and nation that would command her fealty, loyalty, and call her into action. Although Eliza and William pledge their eternal devotion to one another, her parents oppose the marriage based on William’s lower class status and their fear that such a union would reflect badly on their social standing as one of the most prominent families in Maine.

In keeping with many narratives in which marriage is denied to lovers of contrasting classes, William departs from Maine and joins the U.S. Army, in the hopes of accruing a social status worthy of his fiancée and her parents. The war becomes less a political event of national import than a scaled-down version of Manifest Destiny, particularly the idea that as a soldier in the war, William Billings can benefit (materially and otherwise) at the expense of others. War becomes an opportunity: William intends it to be the means to his class ascension and his marriage to Eliza, and Eliza gains the freedom and agency afforded by a male persona while tracking him. Divorced from its political portent, the Mexican War occupies an ancillary position in the narrative with one very crucial exception – the spirit of Manifest Destiny driving the military campaign imbues Eliza’s transformation into a volunteer soldier.

William’s parting letter to Eliza reveals the extent to which love has replaced nation, how his willingness to brave death proves his love and devotion to her rather than
his fealty to his adopted nation. Quite plainly, William vows that it is “for [Eliza’s] sake [that he] has become an alien from his native land and a stranger to relatives and friends” (14). The Mexican War, and Mexico particularly, serve as sites of exile, testing grounds on which William will prove the depth of his love and commitment to Eliza. Tellingly absent from William’s letter are any references, however oblique, or acknowledgements of the principles underlying the war. Rather, William imagines his journey south to Mexico aiding Eliza’s situation with her parents; he intends his tour in the U.S. army to have a domestic (personal) rather than national impact.

Eliza’s conversion into George Mead, the fictitious character she invents for herself, occurs with surprising ease in the solitude of her family’s house while her parents are away, attending to an ill brother. The other individuals who could potentially expose Eliza during the latter, more crucial stages of her transformation, are usually inebriated. In the multiple citations of other characters’ drunkenness, Allen creates an environment in which men are plagued by the demons of drink and in need of moral guidance as only she can provide. In other words, Allen cannot make herself an invaluable member of the U.S. Army as a volunteer soldier, but she can intervene as a member of the temperance movement to guide soldiers towards a more sober and moral way of life. The presence of alcoholism among the soldiers and commanders seems to serve another purpose in positioning Allen advantageously with respect to her male comrades. She becomes doubly exceptional – not only is she a female soldier, but she is morally superior to those around her, including her fiancé, William.

Allen remarks upon her own radical transformation from “reclining on a sofa of exquisite ease” to “now [being] led up in that little but gallant band, to face a magazine
charged with all the angry missiles of slaughter and death” (23). Class, not gender is the axis traversed in Allen’s transformation. It is the life of comfort represented by “ease” and “recline” which is replaced by “being led” that produces alarm in Allen’s life as a soldier. With her first enlistment expired, and the object of her adventure, reuniting with William, still unfulfilled, Eliza volunteers again to follow under the command of General Scott. It is during her second tour of duty that race joins class as two axes traversed during her time as George Mead. The effects of the war on Eliza Allen are primarily registered on her face:

My appearance also had so changed in every respect, that, with my tawny and bronzed face, disheveled hair, and enlarged and blistered hands – all of which I had purposely neglected, in order to hide the appearance of my sex – I was now unrecognizable. I had also succeeded in altering my voice to much coarser sounds; in fact, I was so entirely altered, that I question if my own mother would have known me. (25)

Because “tawny” and “bronze” are the very terms Allen uses to describe Mexican soldiers, her conversion outlined in the above passage resonates with racial undertones. Although never directly stated, but nevertheless implied through a negative dialectic, the reader is meant to understand that Allen’s complexion prior to the war was white – a hue implying both racial and class status. What are we to make of the fact that the terms defining her transformation into a male soldier are the very ones identified with “the sons of Montezuma”? I want to delay answering this critical question until addressing Allen’s convalescence in Don Alfonso’s hacienda in Mexico City. For the present, however, I want to emphasize the markers of Allen’s “unrecognizability” as indices of “neglect,” which presuppose that femininity requires vigilance and attention. Finally, the

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68 The idea that Allen would be unknown to her mother is also worth comment because it places Allen entirely outside of the domestic sphere, outside of the familial relations so crucial to female identity in the
purposeful neglect of the markers of femininity – her complexion, hair, and hands – is sufficient to alter her appearance. Remarkably, neglect does not require one to remain constantly on guard, prepared to perform at any given moment; rather, it is a purposeful forgetting, a strategic letting go that allows Allen to slip from female dress to masculine uniform.\(^{69}\)

While engaged in battle under the command of General Scott, Allen’s treatment of the Mexican War shifts dramatically and patriotic rhetoric imbues her descriptions of the battle of Cerro Gordo. Borrowing heavily from the rhetoric of Manifest Destiny, Allen recounts how the U.S. soldiers were “destined to purchase victory at its dearest rate . . . here our proud eagle, as if to sanctify its destiny, was to be baptized in blood, and the palm of its triumph consecrated in a halo of glory” (26). In a highly-wrought passage, Allen dramatically turns from her own voice to one that is decidedly patriotic and imperialistic, capitulating to the beliefs undergirding manifest destiny. Coined by New York journalist John Louis O’Sullivan, “our manifest destiny [was] to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions” (Johannsen 8). Notice the religious language “baptized in blood” from Allen’s own description of the battle of Cerro Gordo; in this fashion, God, or Divine Providence, reveals itself in the victory of the U.S. over Mexico. As God’s chosen people, the U.S. is merely fulfilling God’s plan by attacking its neighbor to the South and capturing half of its territory.

\(^{69}\) Together with the idea that she fancies herself the muse of temperance, men are slovenly in all respects, because they fail to attend to their appearance, and cannot live in moderation.
Tellingly, Eliza Allen shifts to this language of Manifest Destiny precisely when her own life is hazarded by a wound she receives on the battlefield. One would imagine this telling moment in which Allen proves the mettle of her character, her willingness to face death at the hands of the Mexican soldiers, as the scene of her triumph over social convention and the restricting roles in place for women. But I believe that her shift in voice is strategic, aimed at interjecting her into the patriotic plot as a vehicle for the fulfillment of Manifest Destiny. It isn’t that Allen shifts to Manifest Destiny rhetoric because she is bereft of a discourse for articulating the plotlines of women soldiers; indeed, when she decides to follow William as a female soldier, she relies on her predecessors whom she had read in the past: “I had read the life of Deborah Sampson, who served in the ranks as a soldier in the revolutionary army for several years and was honorably discharged without her sex being discovered; I had also read the life of Lucy Brewer” (15).

Allen’s battle injuries are serious enough to place her in a make-shift hospital, coincidentally next to her “long lost William.” Their reunion, however, is delayed; indeed, when convalescing in Don Alfonso’s hacienda in Mexico City along with William, Allen “did not dare to converse with him for fear of discovery” (31). Instead, still camouflaged as George Mead, Allen tests William’s devotion for her by positioning him as a worthy recipient for the love that Don Alfonso’s daughters express for Allen in drag. Similar to the primary plot line in which forbidden love prompts Allen’s assumption of the battlefield, Don Alfonso’s daughters, who are never named, offer George Mead their hospitality and “whatever sum [he] may please to name” for remaining with them for “a year or more” (32). Don Alfonso prefaces this proposition
with the following passage, “our respective countries are at war, and, as dutiful citizens, we are compelled to defend the rights and honor of our flag; but between you and I, as individuals, I presume and hope there is no unfriendly feeling” (32).

This farce threatens to undo the very trajectory of love and war on which Allen’s cross-dressing as George Mead is predicated by positing romance as the preferred alternative to war. Indeed, readers accustomed to the historical romance, in which battles engender marriage plots, will recognize the proposal of Don Alfonso as keeping within this genre while Eliza Allen, in going to war to reunite with her husband-to-be, operates under the reverse assumption – that forbidden love necessitates the war plot which will ultimately be resolved into the marriage plot. William, however, proves himself a worthy lover by avowing to George that he can “never; in prosperity or adversity, in [his] own or a foreign land . . . entertain the most distant thought of any other” (35). Just as Eliza has proven herself on the battlefield, and will indeed continue to prove herself outside of battle, but yet attired as a male soldier, William, in refusing the advances of Don Alfonso’s daughters, reveals the extent of his devotion for Eliza.

Victims of “Cupid’s grand mistake [who received] his dart into their hearts for one of their own sex,” Don Alfonso’s daughters introduce the foils of inappropriate love, described by Allen as a “farcical,” and rendering the possibility of lesbian affection or attraction, as will be discussed in the narrative of Madame Loreta Janeta Velazquez later in this chapter, an impossibility (32).

The peace which Don Alfonso extended to Allen on behalf of his daughters is immediately followed by international peace between Mexico and the United States and an end to the war. However, Allen continues to remain in male attire, joining William

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and other soldiers in their march to the seaboard. They take passage to New Orleans and then to New York, where they “were regularly discharged and paid off” (36). The reason for Allen’s continued disguise as George Mead is soon revealed as the soldiers, with money in their pockets, celebrate their victory over Mexico through drinking and gambling, much to Allen’s horror. She quickly assumes a commanding role, vowing to protect the moral characters of the soldiers, including William, who had enlisted ironically “with all his fiery ardor, for not only his honor and country, but the safety and protection of his wife and children” (24).

Indicative of the ancillary position the Mexican War ironically takes in Allen’s narrative, her masquerade as soldier George Mead does not terminate with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Peace and the reunion of Allen and Billings do, however, prompt Allen to accommodate her strategy for remaining in male attire. Indeed, the fortuitous reunion of Allen and Billings while recuperating from wounds suffered at the battle of Cerro Gordo would signal her return to female dress and her “true” identity, yet Allen manages to continuously defer the conclusion of her masquerade. She is quite cagey about maintaining her disguise, citing such ambiguous reasons as “fear of discovery,” “risk[ing] all consequences,” “fear[ing] that it would only disquiet William, make [her] case more hopeless, and render [her] ruin inevitable” (37-8). And it is perhaps through the repetition of these weak excuses to remain as George Mead after the war and after reuniting with William that alert the reader to the startling conclusion – that Allen employs both the war and her forbidden love for William as brilliant conceits masking and enabling her true desires – to orchestrate her own life, and to manipulate her environment to her own advantage.
Masking the underlying motivation for her extended jaunt in male guise, Allen cleverly assumes a leadership role over her fellow soldiers, including William, who are easily swindled through drinking and gambling. Although still operating as George Mead, Allen adopts the rhetoric common to temperance pamphlets and other moral writings warning about the sinful effects these two vices. This shift in Allen’s voice occurs because of an odd moment of stasis in the narrative. No longer on the battlefield, nor called to perform any particular activities as soldiers, the men have just been released from their military contract with the nation and are thus at free to return home to their families, resuming the lives they led before the war. However, when the men, including William, lose their entire army pensions in card games with “two genteelly-dressed men,” they begin clamoring for other financial opportunities.

Mexico, specifically the recently-acquired California, appears as the “land of opportunity.” “One proposed to go to California, where there was plenty of gold, and where they could soon retrieve all their misfortunes, and return with loads of riches” (38). Having gambled away the money earned as soldiers in acquiring half of Mexico’s territory, including California, Allen and the other soldiers turn once again to the former Mexican landscape for additional financial opportunities and for a deference of their return to “civilized” life. In fact, although gambling and drinking are described in the narratives as vices, they are nevertheless tied, if indirectly, to the very civilization that Allen and her troop of soldiers wish to avoid. It is no accident that the two swindlers are described by Allen as possessing the external markers of civilization: they are “genteely-dressed” with “very flattering manners” (37).
Two ships sailing from New York to California provide all with an escape from the predatory nature of civilization into the promising land of the gold diggings. The first ship, on which William and all the other soldiers sail, wrecks in the Pacific and is saved when Allen’s ship, following the same course a day after the first departed, discovers survivors in the water and on a nearby island. Once again, William and Eliza are reunited, and once again, Allen maintains her identity as George Mead. Organizing Thomas Acron, Isaac Crown, and William Billings together after their rescue into a digging party, Allen furnishes them with the tools and provisions necessary so they could “start early in the morning for the gold region” (49).

Unlike the battlefield and hacienda of Mexico, and the dangerous civilization found in New York, the gold diggings of California occasion an entirely different topospatial dynamic between Allen, Billings, and the other soldiers. What the diggings and the battlefield hold in common is the myth of an entirely male landscape; Allen’s presence in the diggings, however, occasions more narrative description than did her tours with the U.S. army. The agenda for traveling to California, to regain the money lost to gambling and drink in New York, inadvertently places Allen into a position of authority since she not only retains her army pension, having abstained from the vices all the other men entertained, but will inherit substantial sums from her wealthy family. Her class status affords her a privileged position while in the California gold mines. Living and traveling in close quarters with William and the other men in the gold diggings, Allen worries that “some casual accident [might] lead to [unveiling] her fatal secret” (52). Yet, Allen delights in the access to William her disguise affords her that would have been scandalous if she were not dressed as a soldier, “lying on our pallet, side by side, he,
filled with the happy thoughts of Eliza, as he would call her" (52). Her disguise allows her to be privy to William’s unexpressed feelings for her, to witness his love for her as an outsider would, and to be free from the gender-specific rules of decorum in love-making.

In Boston, the corrupting agents of civilization, described by Allen as the “most depraved and abandoned of human beings,” “soon began to feast and flatter us with the utmost attention” once they learned that Allen’s group recently arrived from California. Allen again occupies an exceptional position as the only member of the gold digging party to immediately recognize that the pattern of seduction employed in New York is operating in Boston as well. “Having succeeded in their first attempt to stupefy them with liquor, they now resorted to the next, which was to swindle them out of their money with cards and dice” (55). The exact same vices, liquor and gambling, constitute the design behind the elaborate show of manners, congeniality, and hospitality. All along, Allen “saw the snare most fearfully laid,” but “had to make her cautions general” since she “could not well single [William] out as a special object of [her] anxiety” (55). Note that in Allen’s narration of the events in Boston, her exceptionalism keeps her completely outside of this scheme to swindle the fortunes of her fellow gold diggers in part because she has already out-swindled the swindlers; she appears to them as just another victim, another man returned rich from California, when we as readers know that she is in fact a woman in drag.

William’s misrecognition of Allen, coupled with his gullibility to fall victim to repeated schemes intended to separate him from his money, are meant to contrast his naïveté with her experience. In fact, descriptions of William like the following threaten the integrity of Allen’s cover story, reuniting with her true love: “knowing that William
was of a confiding and unsuspecting nature, who was not disposed to deviate from the path of rectitude, but whose diffident and kind disposition could too easily be abused by designing and corrupt associates, I felt the greatest solicitude on his account” (55).

Having indirectly achieved the primary objective of her adventure as George Mead, Allen shifts tactics and cloaks herself in the guise of nurse, confidant, and general protector to William. Yet, at this moment in Boston where a susceptible William is poised to become the victim a second time to a swindle, Allen does nothing to intervene directly or specifically on his behalf. In fact, I would argue that Allen takes advantage of this opportunity, just as she did in Mexico City, to test William’s character.

Unable to sway the men to pack their bags and leave Boston for fear that the events transpiring in New York would repeat themselves, Allen resolves herself to one final scheme intended to keep William from morally falling into a life of sin and vice. Having dismissed the most direct means of intervening on William’s behalf and “mak[ing] known [her] real character,” Allen manufactures an alibi for her absence from the hotel, requesting William to watch over her trunk containing her fortune from the gold mines. Allen does not, however, give her fortune over to William for safe keeping, but instead takes it with her on her supposed journey to visit relatives. She proceeds to a dressmaker’s shop where she procures “an entire lady’s wardrobe of rich and costly materials” along with “a gentleman’s fine cloak and a fur cap, which could, at a moment’s notice, be changed, so as either to appear as a gentleman’s cap or a lady’s traveling hat” (58-9). Her last public appearance as a man is purposely staged, but neither to a dramatic nor a pragmatic end. The elaborate staging of her unveiling and return to female attire and identity is as contrived as the snares laid-out by swindlers in
New York and Boston. The effect, really, is to demonstrate the extent of Allen's control even at the very moment when she appears to be relinquishing it by returning to her "real character."

Alone in a private chamber, Allen divests herself of her male attire and identity for the last time and prepares for the romanticized reunion with William and the resumption of the marriage plot. The constructed nature of Allen's anticipated narratological climax is displaced onto her resumption of female attire: "The transition was almost as odd as the one I had experienced nearly three years before; but when I had completed my new dress, which seemed so strange that it made me feel awkward and unnatural, and viewed myself before the mirror, I could not but be astonished at the sudden and striking change" (59). The "awkward" and "unnatural" feelings elicited by Allen's return to female costume reflects the defining characteristics of her three year masquerade as George, which had become so naturalized in the narrative that it went unmarked at times.

Accordingly, her reclamion of her female identity takes on dramatic overtones such as when she "purposely throw[s] open [her] cloak, in order to reveal her sex" so that she will be conducted to the ladies' car on the train back to Boston, the site of her reunion with William (60). Allen's unmasking brilliantly doubles as an unmasking of the gender and sexual conventions associated by Marjorie Garber with crossdressing: throwing open the cloak to reveal a female body arrayed in gendered clothing effectively undoes the pleasure associated with hiding/revealing the phallus in male crossdressing, and effectively commands the striptease towards an entirely different line of pleasure.
Unveiling her female identity under the purposely ambiguous cloak is indeed a striptease because William is not yet her audience and so the narrative divests itself of another layer of its own narratological clothing. This moment of supposed unveiling could go unnoticed in the narrative, so Allen repeats the image once again as she registers at a different hotel in Boston, “with [her] cloak thrown open” as Eliza Billings, assuming William’s surname as his sister rather than as his wife. This clever trick protects Allen from any scandal that might come from William calling on her at her hotel room. But it is also another narrative striptease because what is revealed when the cloak is thrown open is still a disguise, not the real Eliza Allen, but another persona. She reveals this one excusable and very understandable disguise to William in the note she writes to him to be delivered by messenger. Like her preface, her letter to William addresses the issue of truth and authenticity, and thereby assures William and reader alike that full disclosure will occur and all will be revealed: “it may be, that you will be inclined to doubt [the letter’s] authenticity, but, be assured that it is genuine, and that it comes from her to whom you once proposed constancy and fidelity” (60-1). Note that even at the brink of full disclosure, a moment threateningly close several times in the adventure, Allen continues to maintain a separation between herself and William’s version of her.

While in the tent with William in California and in their sick beds in Mexico City, Eliza Allen as George Mead witnessed William’s love and devotion to her as a divided character who secretly enjoyed the praise William gave her, but publicly had to maintain a distance from that identity. It is crucial that these moments transpire on Mexican or former Mexican soil because the environment of war prompts such divisions, such schisms between public and private, by the very mechanisms of nationalism. A soldier
abroad, particularly a female masquerading as a male soldier abroad, gains access to a
script of abstraction, or representation whereby s/he publicly assumes an identity quite
separate from a private persona during the theater of war. The anonymity of soldiers in
war, whose uniforms identify them by nation only and not by anything more specific as
name, provides the ideal setting for Eliza Allen’s transformation into George Mead.

“The Plenipotentiary in Petticoats”: Jane McManus Storms –

War Correspondent and U.S. Spy

Unlike its peripheral position in the narrative of Eliza Allen, the Mexican War and
the political issues surrounding it were central to both the life and writings of Jane
McManus Storms Cazneau, who served as war correspondent and possible spy while
traveling behind enemy lines at the height of the War. A devout believer in Manifest
Destiny, Storms devoted most of her editorial letters published in the New York Sun to
promoting U.S. expansionism into Central and South America. Her interest in the
Mexican War presents an ironic study in contrast to the narrative of Eliza Allen who,
although she served as a soldier in the War, viewed the conflict only as an opportunity to
fulfill the marriage plot and rail against the social practice of arranged marriages.

Because both women are from the North – Eliza Allen from Maine and Jane
Storms from outside Troy, New York – their geographical distance from the disputed
Southwest might easily translate into an emotional distance or detachment from the
political and ideological environment out of which the War was formed. Yet, just as the
gold mines of California, a former Mexican territory, refilled Allen’s purse, land schemes
in Texas were projected by Storms, her father, and one of her brothers to bring them
profit.\textsuperscript{70} But for both women, the economic gain imagined to be reaped from former Mexico did not compare to the personal and political freedom Allen and Storms acquired by virtue of their participation in the War.

Storms secures her passage into Mexico at the height of the conflict by virtue of her experience in Texas and the political connections she established among members of the U.S. and former Texas governments. Historian Anne Kasten Nelson suggests Storms’ strong alliances with Aaron Burr, Mirabeau B. Lamar, and William L. Macy were crucial to the subsequent secret peace mission undertaken by her and the publisher of \textit{The Sun}, Moses Y. Beach. “It was probable through Mrs. Storms’ friendship with Lamar and Cazneau that Beach, or at least that Mrs. Storms, became interested in a mission to Mexico” (231). “Storms apparently played a central role in initiating the Beach mission. With her political contacts in the administration and Texas she was able to interest the various parties in the possibility of such a venture” (Reilly 27).

Rather than the cover of the marriage plot, which serves to sanction Eliza Allen’s actions, Storms is a thirty-nine year old divorcee at the time of the War. Ironically, family does disguise for Beach and Storms on their journey to Mexico. Beach is reported to have taken his twenty-one year old daughter Drusila, along on the mission to corroborate his cover story that his mission to Mexico was undertaken to conduct business. Nelson reports that Beach met with Mexico’s vice president, Valentin Gómez Farías, “proposing the establishment of a national bank in Mexico City to be capitalized and controlled by Beach and his associates” (238). At their arrival in Havana, Cuba, a

\textsuperscript{70}“Storms first became interested in Texas and the Southwest when her father joined other investors, including Aaron Burr, to form the Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company. She lived in Matamoros, Texas during the mid-1830s and became acquainted with Texas politics and political figures” (Reilly 24).
correspondent for the New Orleans *Picayune* reported Beach leaving on a steamer for Mexico “with his wife and daughter” (Reilly 30).

Romantic intrigue and the plying of feminine wiles are not only absent, but are rendered entirely inappropriate for Storms’ role in reporting the war and promoting peace between the two nations. This absence of traditional female plots of seduction and marriage does not, however, preclude a negotiation of both her gender and her citizenship, and the relationship between these two. Tellingly, all critics and historians who discuss Storms quote Missouri Senator Thomas Hart Benton’s complaint that she had a “masculine stomach for war and politics” (Reilly 21, Nelson 245).

Storms takes decidedly different approaches to Mexico’s military and its citizens. To shore up her belief that Mexico should “be transferred under the wing of the United States,” she devotes an entire letter to the *New York Sun* on the civil war, the Polkos Revolt\(^7\), between the clergy and the *guarda nacional* to fund the war with the United States. Acting as President in the temporary absence of Santa Anna, Vice-President Gómez Fariás, “sacrific[ed] the property of the church on any terms, and the soldiers who should be defending the frontiers, were detained at the capitol, to carry this legalized robbery into effect” (March 8, 1847). In essence, Fariás ordered soldiers to take money by force from the church to fund the war against the United States. The resulting civil war, the internal division among the “two most powerful classes of the republic,” created a rift in the seamless nation of Mexico, which had previously been imagined as its own discrete entity. “Mexico,” Storms argues, “if true to herself, might defy the world. But she is not true to herself, and even at this hour she is doing more for the generals of the

\(^7\) The “Polkos” Revolt is, according to Anna Kasten Nelson, “so-called because that part of the national
United States than they can do for themselves” (March 8, 1847). Storms widens this gap to create two opposing versions of Mexico – its oppressive political and military leaders and its oppressed people. Mexico’s internal dissension seems to warrant the war as Storms casts the U.S. Army as the saviors of Mexico’s people, who the military believes “were created to be plundered” (May 8, 1847).

Storms implicates Mexico’s rulers in the destruction of their towns, and the deaths of their own villagers. “With a determined purpose and honest leaders,” Storms argues, “the struggle would be but commenced with the occupation of Vera Cruz, but Mexico has neither, and the victor will have but to march leisurely to the capitol and dictate his own terms” (April 16, 1847). She reports in her next letter the “woeful aspect” the “heroic city” of Vera Cruz presents in its embattled state, with “houses beaten in, with cannon shot, many disembowelled with the exploding bombshells which fell through the roofs, then bursting and tearing the whole inside out” (April 19, 1847). The insinuation is that if the Mexican military rulers would have conceded the inevitable, their defeat, then this kind of destruction would never have happened. What I find quite worthy of comment is the site of destruction – the family domicile. To make sure her readers do not mistake these home for abandoned shells, Storms mentions the “killing [of] women and children.” What is quite appalling is how she can catalogue the death and destruction meted out by the U.S. Army and Navy and suffered by Mexico’s citizens, yet blame all violence on the failure of Mexico’s military to surrender.

The only time in her series of letters where Storms evokes the primacy and veracity of an eyewitness account is to express her outrage against the U.S. merchantmen, guard, recruited from the upper classes, which led the revolt enjoyed dancing the polka” (240).
who are described as “the most remiss and the most ungenerous” (April 16, 1847). The British ship, under the command of Captain Matson, “found room and hospitable accomodation for more persons than the whole fleet of American merchantmen were willing to or did shelter” (April 16, 1847). To further illustrate the lack of hospitality extended to citizens in search of shelter during the seige on Vera Cruz, Storms includes the account of a captain “of one of the New York and New Orleans ships [who] refuse[d] a refuge of one of his countrywomen, though his vessel had ample room for a dozen persons more, if they were in a condition to pay well for shelter from the storm of war” (April 16, 1847). Storms “mention[s] this fact with great regret, for the benefit of the admirers of American chivalry.”

Not coincidentally, her letter is written soon after her March 20th meeting with General Scott in Vera Cruz to apprise him of the civil war being waged in the capital and the road (best path) to take from Vera Cruz back to Mexico City (Reilly 34). It may have found its way into her letter, albeit indirectly. According to historian Tom Reilly, Scott was quite alarmed by the sex of the informant, who had travelled a dangerous route alone and under the threat of imminent arrest by Santa Anna if she had remained in Mexico City. “Storms [who] had left the Mexican capital before Beach . . . undertook the difficult, 200-mile trip to the coast to apprise the American general of events at the Mexican capital” (Reilly 34). “Beach and his daughter hastily left Mexico City, taking the land route to Tampico and then an American steamer to Vera Cruz. They finally left Mexico aboard the U.S.S. Mississippi which sailed on April 14, 1847” (Kasten Nelson 240). Storms was effectively left in Mexico alone, having performed her duty to the

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72 When Santa Anna returned to Mexico City on March 23, after being defeated at Buena Vista, Beach
nation by relaying information to an ungrateful General Scott. Beach’s son wrote how “[t]he gruff old soldier . . . concluded the interview [with Beach] with a jocular caution never to send messages of such importance by a ‘plenipotentiary in petticoats’” (140).

Storms’ gender and her unique position as the only female war correspondent writing behind enemy lines, seem to leak out into her letters back to The New York Sun with the mention of the fates of countrywomen refused shelter on a U.S. merchant ship and the anonymous women and children. She uses iconic representations of the nation in the family to surprising ends — she wants Mexican citizens to occupy the same status as American citizens because she believes in Manifest Destiny and imagines them as future U.S. citizens. Interestingly, these future U.S. citizens are women. Storms never casts images of Mexican citizenry that are gendered male. Only corrupt and failed leaders, mentioned at times by name, are male.

Storms admonishes “the Mexican officers, safe and unattacked in their fortress [who] cared little for the wall of murdered and ruined families” and the U.S. military policy which directed “a storm of shells . . . on the unarmed inhabitants,” yet “spared the castle” housing Mexican leaders (April 28, 1847). Storm’s argument rests on the crucial

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73 In Storms’ angry accusations of inhumanity acted out by members of the U.S. citizenry and its military is a charge to make the republic live up to its own standards. If women and children are sacred symbols of the republican family, and the U.S. intends to annex parts of Mexico, then how can they continue to wage a war whose victims are not primarily soldiers, but family members? Storms seems to beg this question by publishing a letter on the Plan of La Playa after the one cataloguing the attacks suffered by vera cruzanos. Described as “the work of [Mexico’s] best citizens and most honored clergy,” the peace plan would redraw national boundaries. “The states known to be ready for united action on the Plan of La Playa are included between 18° and 24° west longitude, from Washington, and extend from 22 degrees north to latitude to the north”. Further, the plan outlines how the U.S. will provide “protection [to] the new states . . . against the Indians of the boundary” (March 29, 1847). Proposed nearly a year before the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, this peace plan echoes some of the war’s final resolutions, especially the U.S. policing of the border against American Indian attacks.
separation of people from their military and political representatives. Already imagining the end of Mexico's political leadership, Storms calls for U.S. representatives to "think and speak for the people of Mexico and demand that the war should be made against and not for the army, their enemies and ours." The symbol of continued military oppression, the Castle of San Juan de Ulloa, should have been the U.S. military's primary target, so that, in the absence of Mexico's corrupt leaders, its people would be free to enjoy "a better sense of republicanism." In Storm's estimation, the war, and the U.S.'s intended annexation of Mexican territory, are actions taken with the well-being of Mexico's citizenry in mind. Evoking the language of oppression most associated with anti-slavery writing, Storms writes of "throw[ing] off the yoke of that galllling military despotism which has its headquarters at the city of Mexico, and radiates from thence its evil influence to every corner of the republic" (March 29, 1847).

Further, Storms catalogues the atrocities committed by U.S. soldiers against the Mexican people. In a corrupt sense of justice the Army executes one of its soldiers for insulting an officer, yet lets the rapes of Mexican women by U.S. soldiers go unpunished. Storms writes that "such is the natural tendency of discipline and justice in times of war that a rudeness to an officer is thought worthy of death, but the frolic of a party of soldiers making a playful visit to the Mexican village of Boca del Rio . . . [who] outraged some women . . . is not a matter of grave punishment" (May 7, 1847). Storms further, "the same little indiscretions were committed at Monterrey, but how far they were

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74 For Storms, who is heavily invested in Manifest Destiny and thus imagines Mexicans entering the U.S. citizenry and being liberated from an oppressive government, there must necessarily exist a separation between representative and represented for Mexico and its citizens. Otherwise, they too would bear the taint of corruption already maligning their rulers.
75 The kind of influence Mexico's leaders have over their people, described here as contagion, is not unlike the anxiety created by unchecked influence.
chastised is uncertain.” Storms did not receive her own form of justice from the U.S. government for the duties she performed “in times of war.”

At the time of her death in December 1878, an article written about her career in journalism and her married life in Texas, Jamaica, and Haiti seems concerned with writing her back into republican motherhood and redeeming her from her former belief in the “‘Divine right’ of slavery” rather than for celebrating her work for the nation. Described as “a woman of remarkable energy and unusual business capacity,” Mrs. Cazneau’s adventures in Mexico and Texas are downplayed to her late-in-life conversion to abolitionism. What is mentioned of her involvement in the Mexican War is the following: “Mrs. Storms travelled alone from the City of Mexico to the besieging army as the bearer of the preliminaries of what was afterward known as the Trist Treaty, and to inform Gen. Scott of the position of the negotiations. Many incidents of that negotiation bore evidence of her coolness, her bravery and her tact in avoiding difficulties.” Unlike the published letters to the editor written by Beach’s son, who insisted on his father’s prominent role as the agent of the U.S. government, this eulogy, written by “one [who] was acquainted with her for many years,” attributes Storms exclusively with performing a duty for her country. Despite this remarkable event in her life, the anonymous writer does not dwell on Storms’ activities during the Mexican War. Instead, Storms’ pro-slavery sentiments, which prompt her to abandon her lands in Texas for Jamaica, and then Haiti, become the primary focus.

Her removals from the United States coincide with her critical turn away from slavery, a belief that in post-Civil War times was imagined as anti-American. Her return to the States (New York and Connecticut, specifically) – abolitionist territory – is
coterminous with her new-found sense of humanity. The lawlessness associated with Storms’ life in Texas, where she became experienced in “warfare with the Indians and . . . expert in the use of firearms” and an owner of “slave property” contrasts severely with her near religious conversion later in life.

The moral lines are so rigidly drawn that a return to the North signified a moral and political redemption. Before returning to the West Indies, Storms is reported to have heard a sermon by Beecher at Plymouth Church. After the service, she confesses to Beecher: “fifteen years ago, I was so far from listening to you that I would have deemed it doing service to God to put a bullet through your head! I dreaded you as a fearful agitator – an enemy of the nation.”

Making amends with him, by professing her former ignorance of regarding race relations, Storms has effectively regained her status in the nation and could occupy a position in U.S. history. However, I will argue that the purpose of this article is not to secure a place in history for Storms, but rather to return to her the mantle of republican motherhood. By professing a willingness to murder Beecher in the nation’s cause, and to make that violent threat quite specific and graphic, a connection is implicitly made between anti-nationalism and female violence. To return Storms back into the national imaginary, the article writer focuses instead on her activities that maintain republican motherhood. The article catalogues Storms’ activities: she opened schools, taught sewing and the “domestic arts,” promising to make the interests of “poor blacks” her own. Storms’ actions shift from the warfront, where she gains her marksmanship and bravery, to the homefront, where she performs and instructs in the “domestic arts.” Her status as a republican mother is achieved in part by distancing her from suffragist politics.
“Never a ‘woman’s right woman’ in any sense,” Storms is instead cast as a woman “always eager to do the duty which lay next to her . . . without ostentation”. Jane McManus Storms Cazneau, spy for the U.S. government and female war correspondent for *The New York Sun*, becomes ultimately a dutiful woman – mother and widow.

**Woman in Battle: Contesting Velazquez**

In the preface to her controversial book, *The Woman In Battle* (1876), Madame Loreta Janeta Velazquez refers to her experience in the Civil War as the authorizing agent for her narrative: “I only attempted authorship because I had, as others assured me, and as I myself believed, something to tell that was worth telling” (5). What follows is a worthwhile, even compelling, series of adventures that begin with Velazquez donning male drag to accompany her husband at the beginning of the war and include her subsequent triumphs as a soldier and a spy.

While I am quite interested in the story, I am fascinated by its telling, by the narrative techniques and romantic posturings Velazquez assumes and masters to obfuscate several serious impediments to her story ever reaching public notice. Addressed briefly in her preface, and at length in her narrative are questions of propriety, veracity, and national loyalty (Velazquez was, after all, a confederate soldier). Maintaining a female sense of decorum and propriety even when attired as a male serves the dual purpose of protecting her reputation (upholding it) and justifying her presence in these primarily, if not exclusively, male spaces such as the tavern, the campground, and the battlefield. Like Allen, Velazquez employs the rhetoric of the temperance movement, which not only lent her a recognized authority, but did so on a highly respected basis.
Velazquez recalls the narratives of other famous female soldiers, especially the story of Joan of Arc, even before addressing her own family history and the circumstances under which she first transformed herself into Harry T. Buford. By foregrounding and privileging her historical predecessors on the battlefield, Velazquez secures a place for herself in a well-known, albeit small, literary tradition.

Nevertheless, although she attributes these tales of female glory with sparking her own desire to go to war, Velazquez “attribute[s] some of the blame to the adventuresome blood of old Governor Don Diego, which [she] inherited, and, which fired [her] brain and steeled [her] nerves when there was a prospect held out that, despite the fact of [her] being a woman, [she] might be able to enjoy the excitements of the battlefield, and win for [her]self a warrior’s fame” (39). Inherent in Velazquez’ construction of the influences (literary and genetic) that led her onto the battlefield is the privileging of race over gender. The blood of her ancestors forged the mental readiness and desire needed for her to join the Confederate Army “despite the fact” of being a woman. Much has been made by historians of Velazquez’ racial heritage and whether or not she was, as she claims, the product of a high ranking official in the Spanish government and the “daughter of a French naval officer by an American lady” (40). Indeed, one of the many points of contention that confederate General Jubal Early raises against Velazquez to discredit it both her and her book is to attack her claims as Spanish.

One year after the Mexican War, Velazquez is sent to New Orleans to be educated by her aunt and later at a school run by the Sisters of Charity (41). While in America, Velazquez begins purchasing a library for herself of books related to royalty, soldiers, and Joan of Arc. In a passage quite reminiscent of Cervantes’ Don Quixote, Velazquez
confesses the influence these tales had on a girl of her “impulsive and imaginative disposition” (42). In past centuries, the texts deemed appropriate for young, impressionable female students would have excluded the category of romance altogether. These texts appear to have contributed to Velázquez’ dismay at having been born a woman (42). She begins to enact her own imaginative adventures by dressing herself in her cousin’s clothes and “promenad[ing] by the hour before the mirror, practising the gait of a man, and admiring the figure [she] made in masculine raiment” (42). In this manner, Velázquez becomes the author of her own fate, performing the disguise that would later grant her access to the male sphere of warfare. What I want to highlight in the passage as well is that Velázquez’ heightened sense of romance is not channeled into the marriage plot nor into a stereotypically female sense of the term. Rather, as I will argue, Velázquez cleverly employs the rhetoric of romance to justify what will follow – numerous accounts of flouting social convention that are aligned with both gender and racial identity.

Just as Velázquez attributes her desire to join the war to her castillian noble blood, she identifies her American friends that she meets during her term at the Sisters of Charity as the culprits responsible for her break with the time-honoured Spanish custom of arranged marriage. “It is the custom in Spain, and among the Spanish people in America, for the parents to make what they consider suitable matches for their children, and the young people are expected to accept any arrangement that may be concluded in their behalf, without murmuring” (44).

Like Allen, Velázquez mentions the freedom of choosing her own husband; however, the two narratives differ in that Allen relies heavily on the forbidden love plot
(her parents' disapproval of William as a suitable husband because of his class status and, perhaps, because of his status as a foreigner—a Canadian) to justify her appearance on the battlefield. Velazquez attributes the custom of arranged marriage to Spanish people, even Spanish people in America. The American girls at the Sisters of Charity provide Velazquez with "considerable enlightenment" that America "was a free country, and that one of the chief blessings of living in a free country was, that a girl could not be compelled to marry any particular man if she did not choose to do so" (45). The kind of national/political association linked to these two marriage customs (arranged marriage as a Spanish custom, and marriage for love as an American custom), Velazquez writes in a vein quite similar to the authors discussed in chapter one.

I would suggest that Velazquez shapes the marriage plot in terms of national affiliation in part because she wants the readers to associate her as American and thus recognize an act of rebellion that the confederacy has against the mother country. In terms of literary representation, Shirley Samuels argues in Romancing the Republic that both the American Revolution and the Civil War were cast in literature as family rebellions, in which the younger generation (Americans and Confederates) fought to separate themselves from the established authority (usually portrayed by the father or other comparable paternal figure). Velazquez rebels both in the romance and the war plot. Against her father's wishes, she elopes with William and thus choses an American over a Spanish husband; in doing so, Velazquez also breaks what she identifies as a Spanish tradition in which parents select a suitable marriage partner for their children.

By fighting for the confederacy, Velazquez politically aligns herself with the country her father detests. Early in the narrative Velazquez recounts the losses her father
and thus her family suffered because of the Mexican War. A large estate in Texas as well as sizable properties and estates on the Island of St. Lucia were all lost, according to Velazquez, as a result of war. Velazquez writes that the events of the war greatly impacted her destiny; one can only imagine that she refers to her school years spent in New Orleans where she learned a daughter's prerogative in a "free country" from her "American schoolmates" and where she met and eloped with William. Their subsequent move to Fort Leavenworth, a frontier town, provides the location for Velazquez' conversion: "In course of time I became a good American in thought and manner" (50).

Although Velazquez does not dwell on or expand her description of frontier life, except to complain of the food and living conditions, I would like to pause momentarily to consider how this environment helped to shape Velazquez into an American, how she came to assume the thought and manner of an American. Established in 1827, Fort Leavenworth served as the chief base of operation on the Indian frontier for 30 years. It was the site of a battle between the Cherokees and the U.S. Army under the command of Col. Kearney, who was also integral to the Mexican War. To associate Americanism with the frontier is to embrace the philosophy of Manifest Destiny and all its racial implications.

As a testament to the profound nature of Velazquez' conversion, she describes herself as the primary catalyst to her husband's resignation from the U.S. Army when the talk of secession reached a fevered pitch. Her husband expresses doubt regarding the "wisdom of the southern states" and "wished most sincerely that the political difficulties which caused their secession could be settled in some other manner than by an armed conflict" (51). Velazquez displays much more fervent loyalty and belief in the
confederate cause, vowing to forsake her husband if he “raised his sword against the South” (51). Throughout her narrative, Velazquez promotes an exaggerated, hyperbolic image of herself as a man and as a confederate soldier that approximates the logic of exceptionalism — an implicit concession to inferiority based on either racial or gendered terms that promotes the unusual talents and skills of a select few whose greatness is predicated on the low stature of the race or gender on the whole.

Velazquez appears most fervently to draw attention to her disenfranchised status as a woman and on this basis, create a means of comparison and differentiation. However, this strategy does not limit itself solely to a comparison of herself with other women; Velazquez raises the stakes (and perhaps the eyebrows of her readers) when she claims superiority to her fellow soldiers both on and off the battlefield. Not only does she display her bravery against the union soldiers, but she excels in gallantry in the parlors of eligible southern women. Velazquez never overtly pursues a line of exceptionalism based upon her racial identity as Spanish and French. As mentioned earlier, she does attribute her propensity for adventure to her Spanish ancestors, but in all other respects, she labors to associate herself as American and to cast her actions as duties performed for her nation.

As testament to women’s superiority over men (or, at least Velazquez’ superiority over her fellow soldiers), she includes several accounts of her conquest on the female battlefield, the parlour. And in this way, makes cogent the double sense of the domestic and the blurred line between the homefront and the warfront. Velazquez performs equally well in both arenas because as a woman on the battlefield, she physically and
psychologically straddles both worlds. She is truly an early example of a bordered subject.

Among the critics of Velazquez' narrative, the topic of her success at seducing southern women garners a considerable amount of critical attention. After having performed well on the warfront in the famous battles of Bull Run and Ball's Bluff, Velazquez proves her prowess on the other domestic scene – the homefront. Along with Colonel Bacon and Captain Billingsley, Velazquez stops briefly on her way to Bowling Green to enjoy the hog-killing and corn-shucking festival, and its company of female revelers. Equipped with a "uniform-coat [that] is tolerably sure to be a passport to the favor of the ladies," Velazquez competes against her superior officers to prove her "manly reputation" by "not be[ing] beaten by them in the matter of gallant attentions to the girls of Paris" (155).

Relocating the contest to the homefront introduces the subject of performance to Velazquez' narrative for the second time; the initial mention of theatricality occurs when she first assumes male attire and enters male spaces (taverns and gambling houses) with her first husband before the join the Confederate Army. In this instance where cross-dressing has sexual implications, Velazquez confesses that she "was only playing a part" and that if her traveling companions had "but known who [she] really was, they would, undoubtedly, have been intensely amused, and would have enjoyed the whole performance immensely" (156). By characterizing her performance as a gallant soldier to the Parisean ladies as a comical "frolic," Velazquez intends to diffuse any sexual tension

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76 Referring to Velazquez' seduction plots in hyperbolic fashion, historian Mary Elizabeth Massey describes how "masquerading as Lieutenant Henry T. Buford [Velazquez] romanced the ladies in nearly every Confederate state" (82).
that might be building as a result of her actions. Her ability to figure “as one of those nice little fellows who for some unaccountable reason, seem to be admired by many women in a greater degree than are more manly-looking men” (156). Again, her blood knowledge of womanhood, coupled with her acquired knowledge and performance of male behavior, mark her as a talented actress able to bring both cultural and sexual knowledge to bear on all stages.

Velazquez further ignores and subverts the social conventions of courtship and seduction by focusing all of her attentions on “an old maid who had been compelled to play the part of a wallflower nearly all the night before” (157). Tellingly, Velazquez seems to recognize in the object of her feigned attention a fellow actress, as she employs the same rhetoric of performance, “play the part of,” that she uses to describe her own actions. Together, the two parlour thespians confound the laws of courtship by dismayng “those who thought they had a better right to [Velazquez’] courtesies” (157). That Velazquez has selected an inappropriate love interest is registered in a double sense – as a woman seducing another woman, Velazquez treads the line of social propriety in a Victorian period that, according to Lillian Faderman, did not consider “good middle-class women” to have a sex drive (102-3).77 The unconventionality of her romantic pursuits are further compounded by the age of her love interest. The frustration and chagrin expressed by the “rival beauties” when all attempts to conquer Velazquez’ attention away

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77 Kathleen De Grave also characterizes the Civil War and “the scarcity of men” resulting from its battle casualties with making “two women living together seem like common sense” (103). De Grave continues: “so many women were involved in this kind of long-term monogamous love relationship that the alliance was called a ‘Boston marriage’ and was accepted by the community as such, the sexual issue not arising unless one of the women was an actress (and therefore likely to be debauched), looked masculine, or seemed insane” (103).
from the "old maid" further attest to the social deviance of the female soldier turned suitor.

General Jubal Early, Velazquez' harshest, most vocal critic, corresponded with her in 1878 through an intermediary, citing the numerous courtships with southern women, along with the wholesale attack on the moral character of southern women (those who attempt to woo and seduce Velazquez as she performs the functions of a military conductor under General Polk along the Nashville Road) as proof that her narrative is not only fallacious, but most likely authored by a union soldier, intent on further insulting the Confederacy after their defeat in the Civil War. Historian Kathleen De Grave attributes the influence of General Jubal Early, "who has a prejudice against the idea that a southern lady could act in so unmannerly a way" with the cloud of disbelief surrounding The Woman in Battle (115).

As a male soldier and courtier, Velazquez destabilizes the hermetically sealed notion of the chaste, sexually innocent southern woman. It is no surprise that General Early cannot accept her racial identity as a Spanish woman because doing so would allow her narrative to call into question racial as well as gender lines. In a letter addressed to Tucker, Early attacks Velazquez' character and racial claims in the following excerpt:

Her appearance and will are those of an American woman, and has no resemblance to those of a cultivated Spanish lady. If she is really Spanish in origin, then her association with camp life have thoroughly Americanized her.

I... express[ed] the belief that Madame Velazquez is not of Spanish birth or origin, but is an American and probably from the North. This is the extent to which I have sought to depreciate Madame Velazquez on her book so far as Richmond is concerned; and I have expressed the same opinions to several persons in this city.

Madame Velasquez herself is no true type of a Southern woman, and the women she describes are not fair specimens of the pure and devoted women who
followed with their prayers the armies of the Confederate States through all their struggles and trials.

― letter dated 22 May 1878

For Early, Velazquez’ racial identity is wrapped up in her class status, which he surmises from her appearance and demeanor. Described as either “American” or else “thoroughly Americanized,” Velazquez does not perform within the confines that Early imagines for a “cultivated Spanish lady.” Indeed, I would suggest that “Americanized” stands in for a rougher, lower class identity. Because the Civil War racial binary of black and white was so deeply entrenched in the national imaginary, Velazquez’ Spanish identity does not register as racial difference. After the Civil War, when Velazquez writes her narrative, the South was embroiled in the aftermath of a demolished slavocracy. The dismantling of the racial hierarchy upheld by slavery made the need to reaffirm white supremacy all the more fervent and desperate.

Velazquez’ narrative, as well as Gen. Early’s accusations of forgery, hinge on her relationship with whiteness and on the prescribed roles of Southern women. What differentiates the writings of Allen and Storms is their participation during the Mexican War, which unlike the Civil War, did not revolve around a narrowed sense of racial identity. Nevertheless, Allen’s trespassing into the male territory of the battlefield does racially mark her as “bronze” and unrecognizable to her own mother. Storms, who also participated in the war and assumed a different persona (C. Montgomery), was not racially marked by her time in Mexico. I imagine these women in the context of the captivity narrative, crossing imaginary and real borders of race, gender, and nation in search of agency and adventure.
Chapter Five

Violence, Women and the Anti-Romance of the Mexican Revolution

The beginning of the twentieth century promised the possibility of gender equality in the form of the Mexican Revolution, which began roughly in 1910 to oust dictator Porfirio Diaz and his forty-year reign over Mexico. The democratic principles which the United States promised to deliver to the inhabitants of the Southwest in the aftermath of the Mexican War were now being espoused by Mexican political figures and revolutionaries who voiced opposition to the Porfiriato and wanted, like Madero, who published *The Presidential Succession in 1910*, to bring democracy in the form of presidential elections to Mexico. There are numerous accounts of male expatriates, particularly John Steinbeck, Ernest Hemingway, Hart Crane, and Langston Hughes, traveling to Mexico in and around the time of the Revolution, but for women who were still disenfranchised, the Revolution promised much more than a cure for the malaise of modernity. Mexico’s atmosphere of radical change seduced women like María Cristina Mena, Katherine Anne Porter, and Nellie Campobello.

This final chapter revisits many of the issues animating this study of women and the Southwest Territory: race relations (focused on the problematic relationship between Mexico’s indigenous population, its European elite, and U.S. tourists), family romance (appearing in the form of single women resisting seduction by corrupt revolutionaries), and violence (signified not only by remembering certain events defiant of the national script, but also by the revenge women seek against the very men who made empty promises of political and social change). I am reminded of Mary Austin’s *Cactus Thorn*,

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78 In *The Enormous Vogue of All Things Mexican*, Helen Delpar argues that in the wake of modernism and
which concludes with Dulcie Adelaid, a married woman who initiates an affair with would-be politician Grant Arliss, murdering her former lover and escaping the law on a train headed back to the Southwestern desert. Austin’s novel takes up the painful subject of women before the vote who were still paid a certain amount of lip service by politicians who knew their capacity for affect. Arliss’ murder is not so much a vengeful act by a woman spurned, but rather the cumulative frustration and anger of women who have been placated, lied to, and, in a word, seduced into waiting for political and social change to positively effect them.

Perhaps no historical event demonstrates how porous the border between Mexico and the United States is than the Mexican Revolution. An intranational event, the Mexican Revolution well might seem an insulated conflict existing outside of the U.S. national imaginary, but this assessment would be quite incorrect. As evidenced by the number of expatriates in Mexico around the time of the Revolution, the presence of journalists like John Reed, who wrote *Insurgent Mexico*, the coverage in U.S. newspapers, and the iconic, romantic treatment of the Revolution through films like *Viva Zapata* and *Que Viva Mexico!* the Mexican Revolution was quite present in the U.S.’s national imaginary. The U.S. not only sent war correspondents like George Mason, Richard Harding Davis, Julian Ralph, Julian Chambers, George Marvin, Edward Gibbons, and Whitaker to report on the Revolution, but President Wilson revoked the arms embargo on behalf of Venustiano Carranza, providing his soldiers with guns and other ammunitions to fight against the Villistas. One factor fueling U.S. attention to and

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79 Helen Delpar writes, "From the start of the Revolution of 1910, periodicals such as the *Appeal to Reason*, *The Masses*, and *Mother Earth* carried reports of events in Mexico, supported the revolt of the dispossessed, and expressed opposition to intervention by the American government. Leftist organs also
participation in the Revolution was economic interest. By the time of the Mexican Revolution of 1910, “Americans owned . . . over 40 percent of Mexican land . . . and well over half of silver, lead, and copper mines, oil, and rubber production” (Wilson 351).

The two most prominent historical figures associated with the Revolution, Pancho Villa and Venustiano Carranza, make the border between the United States and Mexico seamless. Critic Christopher Wilson attributes the geographical proximity of Villa’s campaign to its prominence in the U.S. newspapers: “[I]t was no coincidence that Villa’s Northern rebellion – that is, the wing closest to the U.S. border – came to center stage in the American press” (344). Further, Villa’s raid into Columbus, New Mexico also challenged the border between the two nations. Indeed, the border crossing of the Villistas further differentiates Villa and his relationship with the United States from that of Venustiano Carranza and President Wilson. As mentioned earlier, Wilson armed Carranza’s soldiers; clearly, this political alliance was intended to protect substantial financial and real estate investments of U.S. entrepreneurs in Mexico. Wilson attempted to retaliate against Villa by sending General “Blackjack” Pershing and his troops into Mexico on a putative expedition.

The romance of the Revolution was particularly dicey for women who hoped for a toppling of patriarchal rule along with the end of the Porfiriato. In their fictional accounts of the Revolution, Maria Cristina Mena, Katherine Anne Porter, and Nellie Campobello reveal romance’s devastating effects on the potential for revolutionary change. A line from Porter’s “Flowering Judas” – “she knocks on doors not knowing

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80 Historian John Hart defines two critical moments between Pancho Villa and Venustiano Carranza: Villa’s recapturing of Torreón against Carranza’s orders, and a demand that Carranza “approve measures for the redistribution of the land” at the Aguascalientes meeting of 1914 (275).
whether a friend or stranger shall answer” — expresses, in its elliptical dialectic (friend or stranger instead of friend or enemy) the ambiguous and oftentimes ambivalent dynamics of women involved in revolutionary movements.\textsuperscript{81} It is also representative of the gender politics shared by Mexico and the U.S. in times of reconstruction after civil war. Male revolutionaries who routinely guilt women into postponing their own goals for suffrage to assist in post-revolutionary reconstruction are located somewhere in the gray area between stranger and friend.\textsuperscript{82} Porter reports how Mexico City’s chief of police provided funding for the Mexican Feminist Council. Francisco Madero, too, was a vocal proponent of women’s rights, but oftentimes politicians like Governor Salvador Alvarado, who tied Mexico’s reconstruction to the “elevat[ion] of Mexican women,” were more adroit at pay lip service to the suffrage movement\textsuperscript{83} with an eye towards building a loyal constituency or else unabashedly labeling women traitors for wanting their rights along with everyone else. Through an anti-romantic stance, all three authors traverse the porous border between friend and stranger.

As Mary Louise Pratt, among others, has observed, women are markedly absent from the enterprise of nation-building outlined in Anderson’s \textit{Imagined Communities}. Except for their role as brides in what Doris Sommer describes as “foundational fictions,”

\textsuperscript{81} Katherine Anne Porter writes of her friend Mary Doherty who accompanied her to Mexico as possessing “a romantic sense of adventure . . . that guided her to the lower strata of revolution.” Porter continues, “it would have all worked beautifully if there had been anyone else in the whole country as clear and straight minded as Mary . . . She doesn’t in the least comprehend that revolution is also a career to half dozen or so initiates who are managing it, and finding herself subtly blocked and hindered at every turn, she sets it down to her own lack of understanding of the special problem of labour in Mexico . . . So that now she has the look of one [who] expects shortly to find a simple and honest solution to a very complicated problem. She is never to find it” (240, \textit{Mexican Day Book}).

\textsuperscript{82} Historian S.J. Kleinberg cites the “connection with abolitionism and the threat to the prevailing race-gender hierarchy” as reasons why the U.S. South lagged behind in suffrage (199).

\textsuperscript{83} As Emma Pérez writes, “Alvarado’s philosophy about women’s ‘emancipation, independence, and citizenship’ was a discourse that underscored his core beliefs — that educating women would, in turn, make them better homemakers” (224-5).
women disappear from the national imaginary (75). Porter, Mena, and Campobello devise to “cure” the almost schizophrenic position of women involved in the nation-building project that was the 1910 Mexican Revolution. Because this literary practice of wedding political differences through the marriages of women who metonymically represent the nation began in the nineteenth century, I would argue that all three authors were both conversant with and therefore leery of this genre’s pitfalls. The “revolutionary moment in which they could be imagined as players in the drama of the nation-building” (35).  

Romance would foreclose any opportunity to gain civil liberties and/or rights for women. Indeed, romance threatens to compromise the ties between revolution and suffrage. Pratt argues that “women inhabitants of modern nations were not imagined as having intrinsically the rights of citizens; rather, their value was specifically attached to their reproductive roles” (30). Each author’s stories depict the repudiation of romance, which would divert women’s desires into a family romance plot, as the skillful renunciation of seduction by revolutionaries. This a common strategy that liberates the female characters from nineteenth-century restrictions on their involvement in war and thereby permits them more agency and independence. To illustrate my point that it is through an anti-romantic position that women enter into the national imaginary on their own terms in order to strengthen the marriage between revolution and women’s rights, I will limit my analysis to potentially dangerous seduction plots.

84 Irene Matthews argues that “although the 1910 Revolution was the marker for modernity in Mexico. . . the way that the Mexican Revolution was fought and written about betrays it as a product of the nineteenth-century, and ‘Latin,’ ideology and custom” (159).
In each of the stories discussed, the corrupt revolutionary signifies the tenuous yoke between the revolution and the suffrage movement. His involvement in the conflict is self-serving, and his beliefs run counter to the official ideology. I will argue that this mutually shared trope of the failed revolutionary symbolizes the ambivalence of male revolutionaries towards the feminist cause. In turn, it becomes the site of outrage and protest for women who join the Revolution because of its environment of radical change only to discover that the roles available to them are those imagined by the culture of machismo.

Finally, I will argue how the stories of Porter, Campobello, and Mena counter narratives of nation-building with respect to conceptualizing violence and strategic amnesia. Given print media’s role in the nation-building process, women who write about the Revolution, in particular about the violence that exceeds what Walter Benjamin calls law-preserving violence,\(^5\) enact violence against the nation through their narratives.\(^6\)

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\(^5\) In “The Critique of Violence,” from his text *Reflections*, Walter Benjamin argues that “all violence as a means is either lawmaking or law-preserving” (287). Lawmaking violence’s “purpose is not to punish the infringement of law but to establish new law”; lawmaking violence guarantees power (286, 295). Law-preserving violence concerns itself with “subordinat[ing] citizens to laws” (284). Obviously, both forms of violence are both understood by Benjamin as a means. Whether violence enforces laws that are already in place or assists in the recognition and installation of new laws, it is always related to law and to a sense of justice. In this final chapter, I take Benjamin’s sense of violence in terms of revolution since the distinction he first draws between is between natural law (which imagines violence to be a naturally-occurring phenomenon) and positive law (which is based on the French Revolution). In a revolutionary context, it is impossible to discern among the revolutionaries whose violent acts will later be defined as law-preserving or lawmaking. In the case of women remembering acts of lawmaking violence by revolutionaries, these “heroes” are no longer differentiated from the oppressors they fight against because the violence used is used to generate power.

\(^6\) Pratt emphasizes the role of print media in her article, describing it as one of the three domains (including military service and electoral politics which were originally limited to males) “in which women have participated” (30).
Hacienda Syndrome: Breaking the Romantic Code of the Colonial Past

Born in 1893 in Mexico City, María Cristina Mena lived in Mexico for the first fourteen years of her life, emigrating to New York City just before the Mexican Revolution of 1910. Although not physically present during the Revolution, Mena translated the experience of Mexico’s political situation to an U.S. audience and readership. In 1913, her first short story, “The Gold Vanity Set,” was published in American Literature Magazine. Her short stories, such as “The Emotions of María Concepción” and “The Sorcerer and General Bisco” appeared primarily in The Century Magazine in the nineteen teens. Only leftist magazines and journals, allied with communist and/or socialist agendas, and the newspapers and journals, such as La Prensa and La Crónica, written and published by Mexican expatriates in exile in the U.S. accurately portrayed the political and cultural issues at the heart of the Revolution.

Touted by The Household Magazine as “a story of revolution by the foremost interpreter of Mexican life,” Mena’s “A Son of the Tropics” brilliantly demonstrates how the family romance, in the form of a father/son reunion, short-circuits the revolutionary agenda. It investigates the class conflict and issues of land rights central to the Mexican Revolution in a scaled-down version – the rebellious Rosario, the illegitimate son of the hacendado, demands land reparations from his own father.

Don Rómulo and his daughter return after a twenty-year absence to La Paloma, the patriarch’s hacienda, and are surprised to find neglected fields and overripe crops. Rosario, a young peon born and raised on the hacienda in Don Rómulo’s absence, threatens its future by preaching land reform to the peones. What begins as a captivity narrative, Rosario’s men overtake Dorotea while she rides out alone, quickly turns into an
awkward domestic scene of family reunion between half-brother and half-sister. Don Rómulo’s capture while searching for Dorotea completes the family portrait.

Arturo, the don’s faithful, “elderly Indian” overseer, discloses the paternity of the revolutionary threatening La Paloma. Through Arturo, Don Rómulo learns that Remedios, the daughter of his nana, who was apparently his lover many years before, gave birth to their son. Although the exact nature of the relationship between the don and his female servant is not divulged, the narrative foregrounds questions of power and paternal legitimacy. Don Rómulo wonders if Remedios ever revealed his identity as Rosario’s father; before he is told that Rosario’s mother has passed away, he announces his plan to stop the youth’s rebelliousness by speaking with her. By describing a familial relationship between the don and the woman who “gave light” to Remedios, Mena further complicates the family structure that permeates and reinforces the hacendado system when the patrón also holds paternal authority.

Tellingly, Don Rómulo recognizes the family resemblance between himself and the revolutionary when the latter begins citing charges against the former (148). His promise that “the name of Salgado [shall] be fixed upon [Rosario] by law” – is predicated on the public admission of Rosario’s illegitimate birth as the bastard son of the hacendado. Rosario reels at the knowledge that the tyrant standing before him, offering him material wealth and a surname, is his father. His reaction is expressed through a

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87 In many of Mena’s stories, she includes untranslated Spanish phrases and approximates Spanish phrasing in English such as this example of directly translating “dar luz,” meaning to give birth, into its literal meaning, to give light.

88 Deborah Cohn recognizes the connection between haciendas and plantations in the invasion of familial spheres through rape by the hacendado or plantation owner. Through rape and sexual domination, father and owner are blended together; thus, the patriarchy to be toppled has both racial and gender implications.

89 In Romancing the Republic, Shirley Samuels outlines how novels set at the time of the American Revolution interpreted the colonists’ independence as grown children gaining independence from their
rhetoric of purity collapsing racial and political purity that recognizes how the family can corrupt the revolution. “Disarmed and dishonored, his leadership made a mockery, his very blood polluted with tyranny,” Rosario decides to commit suicide and remain true to the revolutionary cause rather than murder his own father. He also fears losing his followers to his father’s empty promises of land reform after the peones help bring in this year’s harvest.

The sympathies of the peones-turned soldiers move too easily from Don Rómulo, when he promises wage labor and the restitution of lands, to Rosario, who reminds his fellow revolutionaries of their shared goals for liberty and land reform. Tipping the scale of public opinion back in his favor, Don Rómulo blurs the class and racial lines distinguishing him from Rosario by claiming him as his son. Family romance and the rhetoric of the domestic trump revolutionary “harangue” and in this battle of words and promises, in this atmosphere of free-flowing emotions, Mena identifies romance’s dangerous potential – it can be successfully deployed by either side to gain popular support. The peones abandoned the hacienda on Rosario’s words and, as he himself predicts, they will return to a life of servitude based on Don Rómulo’s empty promises.

Women provide the occasion for the converging plotlines of revolution and reunion in this short story. Dorotea’s kidnapping makes her bait for the anticipated capture of her father. Her ride attracts the attention of other women, who “halted with their great jars on their heads and turned to stare after the daughter of the master, riding alone the fearlessly toward the foothills,” yet her sojourn plays perfectly into a rescue plot in which she lures her father by playing the iconic role of dutiful, virginal daughter parents.
Although her honor remains intact during her captivity, Rosario claims that “the revolution does not molest the señoritas,” in Tula’s (a soldadera’s) estimation, Dorotea “has no valor [because] the señorita is afraid of dynamite” (146). In this assessment of Dorotea we witness the bifurcation of women’s roles in the revolution, expressed in the difference between valor and honor (which virginity signifies for women). And yet Mena’s goal, I would argue, is not limited to addressing the conventional treatment of women. She extends her focus to the impact the family romance has on its male counterparts as well. Implicit in charting the revolution’s collapse by the persistent comparison to the family romance is the argument that it equally affects both women and men.

The greatest tragedy in “Son of the Tropics” is not that the peones, in Rosario’s own assessment, “will return for harvest and give [Don Rómulo] much trouble if [he] does not keep [his] promises,” but that Rosario labors under such a romantic notion of the revolution that he cannot imagine himself fulfilling the role of revolutionary leader with the blood knowledge that he is the hacendado’s son. He is victimized by his own misguided sense of revolution, further complicated by his “undigested half-knowledge” taken from a transcription of Plutarch’s Lives. The reconciliation of Rosario and his enemy and father, Don Rómulo, results in a coalescence of the death of the Revolution and the suicide of its leader.

Mena filters the Revolution through family romance and the hacendado system in “The Sorcerer and General Bisco,” (1915) which López describes as “a metaphor for political struggles in Mexico.” The story’s two subplots – romantic and political – converge through the character of Carmelita, the second wife of Don Baltazar Rascon,
who escapes with her lover, Aquiles, from her tyrannical husband and his hacienda. Rather than a successful escape from Baltazar, the lovers are discovered by a scouting troup under the command of General Bisco and brought back to the hacienda. This discovery is fortuitous, as Bisco had targeted the hacienda and pueblo of Divina Merced, “over which Don Baltazar Rascón ruled as absolutely as any medieval baron,” because of its proximity to the seaport (101). What transpires during the confrontation between Bisco and Rascón, however, deviates from the traditional narrative of revolution and turns instead upon the powers of sorcery, an asexual form of seduction, that Baltazar possesses.

Despite the short story’s title, Carmelita becomes a pivotal character in resolving the political plot marked by the confrontation between Bisco, who López believes represents Pancho Villa, and Baltazar, a member of the hacendado system targeted by the agrarian reform movement of the Revolution. Although General Bisco sits “magisterially in the great chair at Don Baltazar’s library table,” he fears his adversary because of rumors that Baltazar “was in league with the devil” (102,103). Bisco’s suspicions lead him to destroy a microscope owned by Baltazar yet another object for aiding sight, a crystal ball, remains untouched. This crystal ball becomes the weapon of choice for Baltazar. He invites the General to stare deeply into it, promising that the crystal ball will show the General’s “own august future.” Baltazar then hypnotizes the General, imposing himself as a prominent figure in the military leader’s prosperous future; in so doing, Baltazar creates an association for the General between himself and all prospective political victories. The link Baltazar manufactures is so profound that the General thinks
of him as his brother, and cannot envision a future without Baltazar. The strength of this false connection is predicated on the primacy of the family in the nation.

Sight plays a critical role in this story, whether it be the instruments such as microscope and crystal ball that aid sight, or the more profound use of sight as a metaphor for understanding. Baltazar bridges the gap between the physical and metaphorical meanings of sight by employing the crystal ball to shape the thoughts and feelings of General Bisco. The only other person who seems to traverse these two facets of sight is Carmelita and it is therefore only fitting that she be the one who breaks Bisco’s spell and indirectly causes Baltazar’s death. Differentiating between the type of sight she receives from God in the form of a dream and the bewitching powers Baltazar employs to warp Bisco’s dreams, Carmelita brings the General to understand that he suffers from Baltazar’s sorcery. General Bisco utters his cry of despair brought on by the realization that he is no longer El Bisco, “[he] is nothing. [He] is less than that tarantula there” (110). This proclamation draws Baltazar’s eyes momentarily away from the General, and causes “the general [to] experience a reaction of freedom” (110). Ironically, it is a distraction caused by such an insignificant but potentially deadly creature as a tarantula that breaks Baltazar’s spell over Bisco and thus transforms the latter back into “a practical man with a magazine pistol” (111).

The death of Baltazar, which immediately follows his momentary glance at the tarantula, is sudden and somewhat indirect. “Don Baltazar had no more than glimpsed the tarantula when there came a sputtering of fire and mad confusion, in the midst of which he toppled over a chair, and then slid to the floor, pierced with many bullets” (111). Despite the detailed and visual description of Baltazar’s death, a certain degree of
agency is missing from his final scene. Within this depiction of violence, the bullets are more directly responsible for Baltazar’s demise than is General Bisco, the person who pulls the trigger. In constructing Baltazar’s final scene as one of violence that does not appear to originate in a direct source, Mena is perhaps gesturing at one of the most complicated foes of the Revolution – the person who wields power and command over others, but is able to do so in a seemingly indirect manner where no direct correlation for culpability exists.

As stated earlier in the chapter, revolutionaries like Villa and Zapata wanted to bring about agrarian reform through the dismantling of the hacendado system and the division and return of lands to the local people, the peones. A system introduced during the nearly three hundred years of Spanish colonialism, the hacendado system functioned in much the same way as the plantations in the U.S. South, wherein the landowner, or hacendado, maintained control over the lands and the workers who lived upon it through indirect means. It was the overseer who interacted with the workers on a daily basis, not the landowner. Although he remained in power, the landowner was not directly linked to the system from which he benefited. Rumor, gossip, and superstition had as much to do with maintaining Baltazar’s position as an hacendado as they had in keeping plantation owners in power in the South. This disembodied sense of power is much more difficult to attack and topple than a more direct one where there is a true and tangible connection between oppressor and the violence he/she metes out.90 Mena expresses this disembodied nature of oppression and power through the rhetoric of sorcery precisely because the

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90 This is similar to Ruiz de Burton’s critique of the Big Four in *The Squatter and the Don* as a disembodied oppressor without a face to blush.
same elements that support magic – superstition, a reliance on the physical, and rumor –
fuel the form of power wielded by people like Don Baltazar.

Unlike the revolutionary, Carmelita is able to see beyond the smoke and mirrors,
the illusion that is so necessary to maintain power for *hacendados* like Baltazar. She
brings Bisco to the realization that he has been hypnotized, and is obeying Baltazar’s
will. Carmelita realizes how the crystal ball is being used as a medium for Baltazar’s
power. Why is it that Carmelita is the only character who can penetrate Baltazar’s
strategy? Perhaps part of the answer to this question resides in the story’s double
narrative of revolution – the romance and political plots. Carmelita marks the
intersection of these two plots: the one where she and her lover runaway to escape her
oppressive husband, and the other where Bisco murders Baltazar and in effect frees her
and Aquiles.

**Friend or Stranger**

Of all of Katherine Anne Porter’s short stories written in or about Mexico,
perhaps the one which most provides a painfully in-depth analysis of the position of
American activism in Mexico is “Flowering Judas” (1930). Portraying the role of an
American woman committed to the principles of communism and socialism, Porter
creates a character named Laura (who is described by critics as a combination of Porter’s
friend Mary Doherty and Alma Reed). The story opens with a serenade scene, an
awkward and unwelcome attempt at love making in which Laura, an American woman
sympathetic to the cause of the Mexican Revolution, finds herself in Mexico as a
messenger for comrades in jail, a teacher to Indian children in Xochimilco, and the
reluctant love interest (flavor of the month) for a corrupt, high-ranking official in the
Revolution. Braggioni, the very telling name of the revolutionary who visits Laura every night for a month while his wife cries herself to sleep, serves as a metonym for the corruption and disappointment accompanying the Revolution. "The gluttonous bulk of Braggioni has become a symbol of her many disillusionments, for a revolutionist should be lean, animated by heroic faith, a vessel of abstract virtues. This is nonsense, [Laura] knows it now and is ashamed of it... She is, her comrades tell her, full of romantic error" (141). Yet she is correct in feeling a sense of danger with Braggioni and does not dare to "smile at his miserable performance [because] nobody smiles at Braggioni" (140).

One of the central issues around which the uncertainty of the story circulates is Laura’s motivation for moving to Mexico and participating in the Revolution, risking her own life for a political system that will benefit strangers. As Laura cleans and loads Braggioni’s gun, he states that he “cannot understand why she works so hard for the revolutionary idea unless she loves some man who is in it” (156). What Porter expresses through Braggioni’s logic of female involvement in the Revolution is the implicit link apparent in literature of the nineteenth century where the romance plot became entangled with the political plot precisely because the male love interest was a soldier.

Any involvement on the part of the woman was interpreted as an outward expression of the woman’s love for her lover or fiancé. Such is the case with Braggioni’s wife who organizes factory girls, yet “employs part of her leisure lying on the floor weeping because there are so many women in the world, and only one husband for her, and she never knows where nor when to look for him” (155). “[Braggioni’s] wife organizes unions among the girls in the cigarette factories, and walks in picket lines, and even speaks at meetings in the evening. But she cannot be brought to acknowledge the
benefits of true liberty” (154). Her ability to mobilize the working class of women does not translate over to her own life – she is not an independent woman and in fact suffers for her inability to remove herself from the culture of *machismo* that licenses the extramarital affairs of Mexican men.

For Laura, the Revolution is about cultivating stoicism, thus the formula of employing the romance plot as the vehicle for introducing women into the political scene is bankrupt. The three incidents of men professing their love for her makes no emotional impact on Laura. Indeed, she grows accustomed to having one nineteen year old follow her around town, and leave poems “stuck like handbills in her door” (150). What does affect her, however, is the suicide of one of the prisoners who she visits. Eugenio, who is not mentioned until midway through the story is described by Laura as “going into a stupor. He refused to allow [Laura] to call the prison doctor. He had taken all the tablets [she] brought him yesterday. He said he took them because he was bored” (157). Braggioni dismisses Eugenio and his impending death by calling him a fool and stating that “his death is his own business” (157).

As Braggioni returns home to his wife after a month of attempting to woo Laura, she returns to her bed and her nightmarish vision of Eugenio. In a brilliant parallel scene, Porter orchestrates the redemption and forgiveness of Braggioni by his wife. In a replaying of the scene of Mary Magdalene who washes the feet of Jesus with her tears and receives his forgiveness for her previous life of sin, Mrs. Braggioni kneels and cries over the feet of her husband who has been unfaithful to her. At the same time, Laura begins to sleep and is visited by horrific images of Eugenio, and a disturbing reworking of the scene of the last supper where Jesus invites his disciples to “take and eat” his body
and blood. In her dream, Eugenio strips off a “warm bleeding flowers” from the Judas tree and gives them to Laura to eat.

Much more aware of her position as an outsider or extranjera in Mexico than any of the fictional tourists depicted in Mena’s work, Porter’s stories and personal notebooks convey a painful awareness of her peripheral status as outsider. Nevertheless, Porter does serve both literally and figuratively as a cultural liaison between the United States and Mexico.\textsuperscript{91} Porter’s childhood in Texas, and its geographical proximity to the U.S.-Mexico border, are precursors to her life-long obsession with Mexico.

Porter’s relationship with Mexico is a vexed one – at times quite zealous about political (socialist) movements, she is also pessimistic about the possibility for change, material change, in Mexico. Quite crucially, Porter never succumbs to strategic amnesia as many expatriates do – she never forgets her status as an outsider in Mexico. Laura from “Flowering Judas” best expresses this aware of distance when she reflects on her own position within the revolution and its feminist element.

Politically, Porter aligned herself with the Revolution, with its socialist aspirations (she was particularly interested in questions of land rights, oil rights, and the mistreatment of Indians by the government),\textsuperscript{92} and with the feminist movement. She joined the Mexican Feminist Council, which was founded in 1919 by Elena Torres, becoming its 79\textsuperscript{th} member and fighting for the equal rights of women. Among notes from her Mexican daybook, Porter includes drafts of the Program of Action of the Mexican Feminist Council. Divided into three sections: economical, social, and political

\textsuperscript{91} In 1960 Porter was on a tour of duty for the State Department.
\textsuperscript{92} Both Limón and Cohn attribute Porter’s interest in the Revolution with her relationship to the agrarian movement and her impoverished childhood in Texas.
emancipation, the text makes demands on behalf of women. Under the third section, political emancipation, the following demands are made:

The same political rights for men and women. Effectivity of the rights for citizenship granted by the Constitution of the Republic. Free access to all the offices of public election whenever women be capacitated for them. To reform the Civil Laws in regard to the rights of citizenship for women. Perfect equality in the laws as regard to women granted her the right to administer her fortune and possessions either married or divorced. To work with all the women of the world so as to do away with wars and militarism granting the rights of the smaller nations so as to live in peace, harmony, and perfect liberty. To work for the Latino American Union as a means of strength and mutual protection.

Note the movement within this section of the program from specific demands particular to Mexican women to broader, more global connections imagined between women around the world who can bring about the end of war. Perhaps within this inductive pattern lies a key to Porter’s problematic relationship with Mexico. This Program is before the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in the United States, which granted women suffrage. The shared situation of Mexican and American women at the time of the Mexican Revolution was key to Porter’s affinity for Mexico; she found herself among like-minded people, sharing many of the same aspirations and dreams. In fact, some of the controversy surround the Mexican Feminist Council involved the interference of Americans. Below is an excerpt from the minutes Porter kept while a member of the Council. I quote them at length because they speak to the council’s agenda, and to Porter’s own understanding of feminism in the time of the Mexican Revolution:

"THE MEXICAN FEMINIST COUNCIL was organized in the month of August 1919, with the assistance of seven members. The first evidence of its existence was to publish against American intervention. This step gave this organization some notoreity and many votes of sympathy were sent, and at the same time the American and the Mexican press wrote some articles about the organization. At the beginning, our program of action was not minutely defined but later on it has been printed and circulated a good deal."
In the month of September of the same year 1919, we reorganized the Council purging it of some persons that did not think fit to carry on the work as it should be. As I said before, at that time our definite program was printed and the work went on; some of the principal and enthusiastic members were Mrs. Avelina Roy, Miss Torres, Miss Fernandez, etc. having Mrs. María Sandoval de Zarco as our Lawyer Counselor.

At the beginning of this year we heard that many of the rich men of Wall St. intended to get hold of the poorer women and children in our country helping them so as to have a moral hold on them: We declined this offer asking these men, at the same time, why did they not take some interest in their own women and children in their country where many were starving.

On account of this incident the Associated Press requested an interview which was granted by Miss Elena Torres in the representation of the Council.” Clearly, “American intervention” was a gendered term – the Americans mentioned in these notes on the history of the Mexican Feminist Council are not only male, “men of Wall St.,” they are rich. And this is perhaps also a point of intervention for Porter – rich white men are seen as antagonist to the feminist movement. The question put to these men, of why they do not intervene positively to aid women and children in the United States, is not put to Porter perhaps because women were suffering equally all over and, in these terms, “nation” did not matter.

This position has been challenged in subsequent years. African American feminist critics have noted how untenable the relationship between white women and women or people of color with respect to abolition and suffrage. To expand, we could note the presence of Anglo-American women abroad in Mexico making similar claims – they cannot claim slavery as their common point with Mexican women and Indians, but

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93 When Frederick Douglass married a white woman in his second marriage Susan B. Anthony, a leader of the women’s movement, urged Elizabeth Stanton not to speak out on behalf of interracial marriages. Newman writes that “Anthony’s comment [that Douglass ‘threw the principle of Equality of political right to women – overboard – saying himself first and women afterward] serves as a tragic reminder that the possibility for interracial cooperation between the struggles for civil rights and woman’s rights was diminished in the 1870s and 1880s by white women’s feelings that a great injustice had been done them when black men received the franchise ahead of them” (4).
they do take up the charge of a similar level of mistreatment and lack of rights and privileges from the governments.

The Indian question which launched the feminist careers of many women who were missionaries, etc. under the auspices of domestic patriarchy and a racialized definition of "civilization" will be the same point of entry for Anglo-American women traveling to and writing about Mexico. This is in direct contrast to California writer María Amparo Ruiz de Burton who makes claims of whiteness for herself and employs indios in much the same manner as critics like Nina Baym discuss the dynamics of the captivity narrative where the proximity (and inevitable contrast) of "white" heroines and their Native counterparts leads to the "whitening" of the heroines.

For Anglo-American writers like Alma Reed and Katherine Anne Porter, the artistry of Indians, their plight, and the art of Mexican muralists like Diego Rivera and Orozco will instead become their entryway into Mexico and will be the basis for carving out a space for themselves. They make of themselves artistic and cultural diplomats, grooming an American audience to become appreciative consumers of Mexican muralists. They themselves, of course, act as cultural translators, explaining the politics, identifying the political and cultural figures depicted in the paintings, for an American audience. In return, these two women gain notoriety in both countries, and in that very loose sense, function in a much more empowered position as a vehicle of intercultural, international exchange. Unlike the women of chapter one and two who function as "national glue" through their exchange between father and husband, Porter and Reed dictate the terms of their position as international emissaries and gain power, prestige, and certain cultural and national capital from their positions. Most importantly, their
assumption of these positions is not predicated on their marriage to Mexican men. Reed was engaged to Felipe Carrillo (governor of the Yucatán assassinated before their wedding) and Porter had an affair with Luis Hidalgo, but neither woman was married to a Mexican man and indeed their scandalous affairs with them runs exactly counter to their counterparts discussed in the first two chapters.

Violence, Women, and the Revolution in Porter’s Stories

Porter’s “María Concepción” relates the violent resolution of a two-sided love triangle between Juan Villegas and his two Marias – María Concepción, his wife, and María Rosa, his mistress. The two lovers travel to war together, leaving behind a community of disapproving women who turn their attention in the form of pity onto the deserted and pregnant wife, whose baby dies a mere four months after birth. What survives the absence of Juan and María Rosa is María Concepción’s anger and hate for her husband’s mistress. When the two return from war, having abandoned the army in part because of the daily expected birth of their child, the two gendered forms of justice are suffered upon each – Juan is jailed for deserting the army and María Rosa is murdered for breaking up a church-sanctified marriage. Although the plot-turning violence of the story is described indirectly, the image of a mad wife stabbing the body of her husband’s mistress just hours after the latter has given birth to an illegitimate son mixes uncomfortably with scenes of domestic tranquility and tableau, that often center on or are mastered by women.

Porter separates the double sense of the domestic in terms of the punishment and “justice” or “law” presiding over the sentencing and execution of punishment. Both Juan and María Rosa are tried by a jury of their peers, the composition of which is carefully
divided along gender lines. Even family bonds are broken in favor of female solidarity around María Concepción, protecting her from the “gendarmes who went about spying on honest people” (30). Lupe, godmother to María Rosa, opts to join the community of women who cast an impenetrable “sheltering wall” around María Concepción safe from prosecution and/or death for two reasons: one, the villagers gather around the accused to protect the communal sense of the domestic from the disruption of the foreign element (the gendarmes and their judicial system); two, the women honor the church-sanctioned marriage of Juan and María Concepción and thus act to restore their domestic unit after María Rosa’s death. “The neighbors went around saying that María Rosa was safer in the army than she would be in the same village with María Concepción” (12-3).

The other sense of the domestic, which involves Juan Villegas, is defined and surveyed by other men. Givens, the American archeologist and Juan’s “chief,” saves him from the firing squad for deserting the army. Clearly, the nationalistic sense of the domestic does not register as powerfully as the family-oriented one. The captain of the barracks, with orders to execute deserters, privileges instead the work relationship between Givens and Juan over the army’s power over Juan as one of its soldiers and releases the deserter into Givens’ custody.

Further disrupting the national sense of the domestic is Givens’ own foreign identity – he is from the United States – but this nevertheless trumps the national tie between soldier and nation. Givens’ relationship with Juan cancels out his temporary fealty to the Mexican Army when the former is given the power by the military to decide Juan’s fate. Further diminishing the national sense of the domestic is the conflation of Juan’s adulterous affair with María Rosa and their whimsical, spur-of-the-moment
participation in the war. They might just as easily have left town to join the circus for all their lack of dedication to the cause of the Mexican Revolution.

In her brief descriptions of Juan and María Rosa’s lives in the army, Porter notes that both wore a rifle, while Juan also carried two pistols in his belt, yet they are never involved in combat. Rather, María Rosa “marched ahead with the battalion of experienced women of war, which went over the crops like locusts, gathering provisions for the army. She cooked with them, and ate with them what was left after the men had eaten. After battles she went out on the field with the others to salvage clothing and ammunitions and guns from the slain before they should begin to swell in the heat” (12). There is solidarity among the “battalion” of women that does not appear in any descriptions of the male soldiers. Further, Porter attends more to the female’s role in battle than to the male’s.

The kind of grave-robbing opportunism that marks the actions of the women in the war (stripping crops from fields like locusts and disrobing the corpses of fallen soldiers) negatively characterizes the “domestic” of the Mexican Revolution as less than noble. There is an almost sinister air to Porter’s description of Juan’s new wardrobe as he emerges free from jail and its death sentence. Juan’s clothes “were new and handsome, and they had cost him just nothing. María Rosa had collected from for him here and there after battles” (19). Porter registers the corruption of participants in the Mexican Revolution through their inappropriate clothing, thus manufacturing a seamless connection between internal opportunism and external finery. Implicit in such descriptions is the condemnation of men who join the Revolution for self-serving means. These same “dandies” of the Revolution also maintain the culture of machismo that only
reserves for women the role of subservient lover. The principle flaw with this male-centered version of the domestic is only rectified when María Concepción destroys Juan’s scenario of “hero to two such desirable women” through the murder of María Rosa. Through such violent means, María Concepción restores a more female, family-centered domestic sphere over which she presides.

The volatile compound of love/romance and violence serves as the main ingredient in most of the relationships depicted in “María Concepción.” The Revolution (a national drama of violence) serves as the ideal environment for Juan and María Rosa’s affair. Even their lovemaking is punctuated by battles. Clearly, most obvious is the murder of María Rosa which restores the family unit of husband and wife, and even augments it with the addition of María Rosa’s illegitimate son.\(^4\) This form of violence falls under Benjamin’s sense of law-preserving violence. Like the stories of Josephine Clifford described in chapter four, the domestic becomes a shield around violence, insulating it to the family unit and protecting it from the foreign element that would disrupt it. When Juan wakes after a night of celebrating the birth of his son in a local pulquería, it is to the frantic confession of his wife. Within their “legal household,” Juan begins to erase all signs of his wife’s culpability in his mistress’ murder. He cleans the bloody knife, throwing the red water clear of the jical, and orders his wife to change out of her bloody clothes and bathe. Once the physical markers of violence are safely outside of the home, Juan resumes the role of head of the household, telling his wife in a

\(^4\) The murder of María Rosa falls under Benjamin’s sense of law-preserving violence since it gives María Concepción power over her husband; ironically, this power immediately dissolves as soon as the family unit is restored.
“peremptory tone” to light the bracero and cook dinner for him (24). The result is “the pleasant, harmless scene of a man eating supper with his wife,” staged for the gendarmes.

The domestic masks all signs of violence and death; indeed, both husband and wife take refuge in their domestic roles, which functions as alibis not only to their whereabouts at the time of the murder, but also to their possible motives for committing the crime. María Concepción, especially, retreats into the domestic role assigned her in the culture of machismo to erase all suspicion from herself as the suspect in her husband’s mistress’ murder: “It was true at first she was troubled when her husband went away, but after that she had not worried about him. It was the way of men, she believed. She was a church-married women and knew her place. Well, he had come home at last. She had gone to market but had come home early, because she had her man to cook for. That was all.” (31).

Violence, Film, and the Real Revolution

The violent love triangle which heavily informs the plot of “María Concepción” between Juan Villegas and his wife and mistress also appears, albeit in “modern” form in “Hacienda,” yet the resolution does not reaffirm the marriage bond, but rather introduces the brief homosexual romance of wife and mistress. When the husband disappears, as Juan Villegas does in “María Concepción,” the triangle of desire is fully resolved by the affair between his two lovers. These two women are the only characters who act out of turn and do not adhere to the tragic romance plot of the adulterous husband and his jealous, yet understanding wife depicted in “María Concepción” and in “Flowering Judas” in the figure of Braggioni’s wife.
Porter’s somewhat autobiographical story, “Hacienda,” tells the story of a film being made by three Russian filmmakers, the daily familial and familiar tragedies on the hacienda, which serves as a stage for both the film and the short story, and the cultural and racial conflicts between Russians, Americans, Mexicans, and Indians. Primarily, it is the story of the conflict between history and personal lives/stories. Reality clashes with its various forms of mediation – film, gossip, rumor, story-telling, corridos, and cultural translation. When the film script anticipates the real-life tragedy of an Indio shooting and killing his own sister, Kennerly invites Stepanov to “... just try to imagine that when that poor boy comes back he’ll have to go through the same scene he has gone through twice before, once in play and once in reality. Reality!” He licked his chops. “Think how he’ll feel. Why, it ought to drive him crazy” (273). Within this scene of oddly replicating violence Porter casts the Mexican Revolution into a family tragedy in which one sibling accidentally kills another. That the roles of incidental murderer and victim are played by lovers in the film and siblings in the story only adds to the corruption of restaging scenes of domestic violence – scenes from the Revolution.

On a metatextual level, Porter’s story addresses the moral implications of mediating the violence and daily tragedy of the Revolution through romantic writing, and thus doing violence to the victims of the war. In the story as in the Revolution, those who suffer most pointedly are the peons, the members of the lowest class who have been, like Don Genaro describes Justino, “[his] peon, his family [having] lived for three hundred years on [Don Genaro’s] hacienda” (258). In nearly archetypal form, the wealthy, Northern-Spanish Don Genaro and his wife, Doña Julia, play turn-of-the-century (1898)
owners of an hacienda; their peons, who have been the property of the hacendados for nearly 300 years, portray themselves with tragic and fatalistic realism.

When the Revolution actually threatened the pulque hacienda owned by Don Genaro and his family, in the form of an agrarian raid, the event is described as a “fiesta”:

There were machine guns on the towers, and every man on [the hacienda] had a rifle and a pistol. They had the time of their lives. They drove the raiders off, and then they fired the rest of their ammunition in the air by way of celebration; and the next day they were bored. They wanted to have the whole show over again. It was very hard to explain to them that the fiesta was ended. (275).

For the hacendados, the agrarian raids spawned by the Revolution are equivalent to a play—both provide entertainment by way of temporarily diverting them from the drudgery or boredom of the everyday, yet serve no other purpose. No permanent or lasting change is brought about by the raid or the Revolution in general. It is merely a temporary, transient moment to interrupt the monotony of three hundred years of peon slavery and a semi-feudal culture. Near the beginning of the story, when the female narrator and Andreyev are looking at photographs of the hacienda and its inhabitants, the film maker notes that the location was carefully chosen because “it was really an old-fashioned feudal estate with the right kind of architecture, no modern improvements to speak of, and with the purest type of peons” (235).

Only Doña Julia, a self-described modern, “very modern [woman] . . . [with] no old-fashioned ideas at all,” and Lolita, an actress from the Jewel Theatre, benefit from the Revolution, having been liberated from the cult of machismo that would relegate them to one-dimensional personalities according to their relationships with men, specifically Don Genaro. As husband and adulterer, Don Genaro had “borne with his wife’s scenes because he really respected her rights and privileges as a wife.” Don Genaro explains the
wife’s prerogatives in the following manner, “A wife’s first right is to be jealous and threaten to kill her husband’s mistress. Lolita [the mistress] also had her definite prerogatives” (239). According to Don Genaro, the two women had license to act dramatically, even violently because such actions were well within their rights as spurned women competing for the same man.

As long as their actions center on Don Genaro, and thus privilege machismo, they were sanctioned, condoned, and even respected. The scene of same-sex affection -- his wife and his mistress “affectionately entwined, heads together” -- that shocks Don Genaro upon his return to the hacienda is the first act in Porter’s story that is not already calculated and therefore subsumed within the hegemony of sameness that comprise the artificial/superficial changes that is the 1910 Revolution. Porter first hints at the bankrupt promises of the Revolution quite early in the story: “Now that the true Revolution of blessed memory has come and gone in Mexico, the names of many things have changed, nearly always with the view to an appearance of heightened well-being for all creatures” (223).

Perhaps we first glimpse into the “modern” sense of Doña Julia through her dress – she “loved Chinese dress made by a Hollywood costumer” (239). Porter mentions the posted-up/plastered images of flappers, famous American and British suffragettes on the stairwell and along the walls where the Mexican Feminist Council met. In La Mujer Moderna, the argument for female suffrage is predicated on the success of American women in various states in the United States. The American influence on Doña Julia’s dress, and presumably her “modern” ways of thinking, is bastardized somewhat by a thoroughly commercial and mediated version of Mexico entirely taken over by U.S.
imperialism and the cult of cultural consumption and replication – Hollywood. Doña Julia’s dress is made by a costumer – it is an already mediated version of what Hollywood has exoticised and appropriated in the figure of the Chinese female. Doña Julia’s very movements and speeches seem to be orchestrated as if by a Hollywood producer intent on keeping her in the character of her costume. She walks into a room “softly on her tiny feet in gay shoes like a Chinese woman’s” and apppears “to be an exotic speaking doll” (253, 254). This racial/cultural appropriation of Chinese dress and mannerisms forces a rift between the generations of hacendados. Don Genaro’s grandfather, “who had been described . . . as a gentleman of the very oldest school,” does not approve of his granddaughter-in-law, and goes so far as to remove himself physically from their wing of the house, only joining them for meals.

It is worth noting that the unexpected romance between Doña Julia and Lolita frustrates the metanarrative, the film schedule. All other impediments to the film – the accidental shooting of Vincente’s sister, the presence of beggars within the parameters of the camera lens, the Oaxaca earthquake – all are tragic events that impact members of the lower classes most pointedly. The reality of how little the indios’ lives have been effected by the Revolution intrudes into the film and warrants notification to the Mexican government and action by its agent of propaganda – the character of Betancourt.

For the female narrator of the story, the Revolution is nothing more than the subject of a film which absurdly casts people to play themselves. The chastity of American and Mexican women, upon which such a substantial portion of nationalism rests, remains a required standard after the Revolution. Kennerly, the ugly, overbearing and pathologically racist American who funds the film, moves the female protagonist’s
body into the pullman car of the train, "tucking [her] skirts about [her] knees with officious hands, to keep a thread of [her] garments from touching the no doubt infectious foreign things facing [them]" (248).

This kind of orchestration of the white female body is not unlike the "purity" the film crew expects and immortally preserves on their celluloid images of Mexico. To the Russian filmmaker, Uspensky, the national scripting of female behavior in both Mexico and the United States are so similar, they are interchangeable. Thus he stages "old Russian country comedies" with "all the players wearing Mexican dress" (255). Even further yoking the U.S. Civil War with the Mexican Revolution, Uspensky states gallantly, "'Ah yes, I remember' as he meets some southern women, 'You are the ladies who are always being raped by those dreadful negroes!'" (255). Porter in her Mexican notebooks relates the Mexican Revolution with its Russian counterpart.

**Speaking the Body: Narrative Strategies of Nellie Campobello**

In her introduction to *Cartucho*, Elena Poniatowska situates Nellie Campobello as a, if not the, solitary female among a male-dominated field of writers on the Mexican Revolution. Citing Martín Luis Guzman's *The Eagle and the Serpent*, Poniatowska follows with a long list of male authors, clearly overstating the isolated position in which Campobello finds herself, not only as a woman, but also as a Villista. However, this very point - this characterization of Campobello as an isolated female author in a male tradition - has traditionally been the platform on which critics have launched attacks on Campobello and, more broadly I would suggest, on the role of women in the Revolution.95

I turn away from a gendered reading of Campobello and instead situate her against other

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revolutionary writers based upon her participation with and divergence from a nationalist discourse. Drawing upon the theories of Walter Benjamin and Benedict Anderson, particularly with respect to conceptualizations of violence and strategic amnesia, I will examine how Campobello’s Cartucho relates to the practice of nation-building.

To begin, we must consider how to situate the Mexican Revolution in theories of nationalism and nation building. If we acknowledge the overdependence of national narratives on teleology and the belief that nationhood represents the natural or organic end-stage of that evolutionary process, where do we situate revolution? If war depends so singly on characterizing the nation as a motherland in need of protection and defense, where do you locate home in an intranational conflict? Campobello constructs her own map of the Revolution by placing Parral as its geographic center, citing her own home, and those of other neighboring women, as the particularized and domesticized versions of this theoretical nation space. In keeping with the limited geographical scope, thus substituting a personal landscape for a national one, Campobello narrows her focus of the Revolution to the conflict between the Villistas and the Carrancistas rather than relating the battle between the federales and the revolutionary faction. Because Villa takes over Parral and then later defends it against the Carrancistas, and because Parral figures as the center of the Revolution as told by Campobello, Villa participates in nation building as a defender of the motherland. Further, Campobello’s reading of the Revolution, and of Villa specifically, subverts the national discourse of this event by countering post-revolutionary characterizations of Villa promulgated by Guzman’s The Eagle and the Serpent.
By limiting the scope of the Revolution and personalizing it, it is understood in
the national discourse as a form of domestic violence against the nation. The role of
violence in nationalism discussed by Walter Benjamin in “The Critique of Violence,”
distinguishes between different forms of violence based in part on their function in the
creation and maintenance of the nation. There is a slippage in the revolution between
violence as lawmaking and as law-preserving. For authors like Guzman, Carranza shifts
from revolutionary (lawmaking violence) to President (law-preserving violence); Villa’s
actions are understood after the Revolution as lawmaking violence and are imagined to
be motivated by a desire for power rather than one for social change.

Women enter into the Revolution in Cartuco as soldaderas, either literally
fighting or fighting with their knowledge of the events of the Revolution. In other words,
women participate in the Revolution either like Nacha Ceniceros, a coronela, or else as
storytellers, as the bodies that house and retell the memories of the dead. In fact, the two
versions of female participation in the Revolution merge together in the vignette about
Nacha. In one version of the tale, Nacha is executed because she accidentally kills her
lover, Gallardo, while cleaning her gun in her tent. In another version, she quietly leaves
the Revolution, returning to her home and filling in the bullet holes fired by the
Carrancistas. Her return home signals her resignation from an active role in the
Revolution.

The fact that two versions of her exist speaks directly to the source of narrative’s
power over the nation, which is dependent upon a particular reading of history. In the
first version, she is executed by Villa’s men, even though the soldiers have informed
Villa that the “man” who shot Gallardo is a woman. Hence, this version plays into the
national reading promoted by writers like Guzman of Villa as a treacherous, pathological man. Put differently, he is the kind of man who metes out punishment irrespective of gender. The second version of Nacha’s life after serving Villa directly counters the first. Not only is she still alive in the second version, but she exists as a negation of several possibilities: she could have married a high-ranking general in Villa’s army, she could have been one of the most famous women in the revolution. The fact that Nacha chooses not to travel these paths indicates her self-empowerment. The fact that Nacha lives reflects differently on the character of Villa.

In fact, many of the critics such as Dennis Parle and Irene Matthews specifically target the function of violence in Cartucho. Referring to the novel as “the most poetic and the most violent . . . of the Revolution,” Parle argues that Campobello describes violent acts in a seemingly emotionless, or “objective,” manner in order to elicit the reader’s emotional involvement.96 Matthews believes the graphic violence portrayed in the novel forces the reader to seek solace, as does the child-narrator, in the figure of the Mama.97 Rather than gauging the impact that violence has upon the reader, I want to consider its impact on the national imaginary. The impulse which both critics gesture towards, some form of solace or respite from the violence, seeks to undermine the very source of this novel’s power. The endless barrage of victims of violence, the bodies of the Revolution, cannot be forgotten. Post-revolution requires that the violence of the Revolution, especially the violence that is law-preserving, be strategically forgotten.

The will to nationhood scripts all memorable violence as law-making and therefore necessary. However, *Cartucho* maps the memories of violence onto not only the victims of the Revolution, but also onto the child-narrator, her mother, and other members of Hidalgo de Parral. Hence, erasing the memories of violence would be performing violence on the bodies of the living and defiling the bodies of the dead. The memories and words of Nellie and her mother become weapons. In the vignette entitled “General Rueda,” Nellie’s mother reacts to Rueda’s invasion of her home: “[her] eyes . . . hardened, reloaded in the rifle barrel of her memory” (33). Nellie inherits her mother’s ability to transmogrify her body into an implement of war at the end of this same vignette where she “sends a child’s smile . . . [which] turned into a carbine resting against the shoulders” of the firing squad facing Rueda (34). Hence, the body becomes the site of revenge — revenge through memory which defies the national narrative.

Campobello’s mastery over her own body, signaled by its transformation into a weapon for recording and relaying memories defiant to the nation, culminates in mastery or authoring over other bodies. At one moment in the novel, a young Nellie seems to gesture towards the source of the narrative’s authority by claiming ownership over a dead man’s body. In “From a Window,” Nellie writes: “I became accustomed to seeing the scrawl of [the dead man’s] body. . . The dead man seemed mine” (37). Death has become everyday, so common that Campobello learns how to read the corpse. Considering that most of the novel emulates necrology, thus following the logic of the graveyard, it is not surprising that Campobello’s narrative masters the art of reading the body, or what I term necrography, to the extent that she decodes Babi’s death sentence on his face (27). However, in her corporeal scripting Campobello resists a direct correlation
between the parts’ subordination to the narrative of the larger corpus of revolutionary texts.

I would like to argue that the reliance of the master narrative of the nation on the Aristotelian concept of subordination of the part to the whole is actually the source of its own undoing because precedents exist in which the parts exceed the whole. Take for example refraction and reflection in the case of a prism: a single beam of light passes into the prism and results in both the light ray and a light spectrum whose individual beams exceed the original one. This same concept can be applied to literature about the Revolution: both Campobello’s *Cartucho* and Elena Garro’s *Los Recuerdos del Porvenir* share a structure in which the parts surpass the whole. Campobello’s text forms its version of part to whole dynamics through the multiplicity of voices and embodied memories whose sum challenges the national whole. Garro’s text recreates this physical anomaly through the character of Isabel who becomes transmogrified into a stone, the ultimate representation of the town of Ixtepec.

If in the narration of the nation the backwards glance into the anticipates reflections of the nation in various proto-national stages, the same dynamics apply in Campobello’s and Garro’s texts. In Garro’s novel, the stone of Ixtepec, prior to becoming the embodiment of Isabel, takes the form of the various stones comprising the floor of Ixtepec’s zocalo. Because these stones are made of obsidian, they reflect the image of General Rosas who has temporarily taken over the town. When the General’s lover abandons him, she divests herself of the memory of the town and its people literally “on the stones.”\(^98\) She transfers her reflective property on the stones and in doing so,

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\(^98\) This and all subsequent references to *Recollections of Things to Come* are taken from the Ruth L.C.
generates the possibility for multiple signifiers. The corpse becomes a mirror, reflecting the violence of the aggressor. However, the sheer magnitude of the dead bodies whose tales are memorialized in *Cartucho* threaten to perform violence onto the nation’s reading of the Revolution because they form the symbolic equivalent of a shattered mirror. Whatever object is placed before it undergoes violent displacement, disfiguring, a literal forgetting of how the pieces fit together as a whole. Considering the role that the indigenous population played in the Revolution functions like the shattered mirror because it refuses the lie of a whole, integrated nation.

Imagine the national narrative to operate on the principal exhibited when two mirrors are placed facing each other. The illusion created of ceaselessly repeating sameness only differentiated by the size of the images simultaneously projected and reflected replicates the deep structure of nationalism, which envisions itself as the necessary conclusion of an evolution of proto-national moments increasing in size and scope with their proximity to the moment of nationhood. It is important to note, however, that beyond the constructed nature of this narrative that emerges out of two facing mirrors, there is the illusion’s dependence upon an undiffused light source. Were the light source, undiffused to enter a different set of conditions, represented by a prism, the results would be violently different. The prism, which operates simultaneously on the principles of refraction and reflection, takes the same light source, but transforms it, fragments it, into a spectrum. The process of refraction is virtually irreversible because of the impossibility of recontaining and then redirecting the spectrum. The prism not only defies the movements inherent in the construction of a nation because it is

Simms translation published by the University of Texas Press and will appear parenthetically in the text.
unidirectional, but also because it refuses to cohere. It alerts us to the lie of unitary trajectory be
ing a national narrative because it truly is a one-way process and as such does not behave in the same circuitous manner as the former.

The prism can be used as an analogy for understanding how a nation attempts to aestheticize violence as a means of justifying it. I am referring specifically to the function and purpose of war memorials. Many of them take the form of statues which are artistic renditions of male bodies conceived of as representative for a larger body of people. Elaine Scarry in *The Body in Pain* refers to a descriptive convention, here materialized in a war memorial, which abstracts to the level of imaginary wounds in an imaginary body and argues that its ironic function is to deflect attention away from actual wounds on human bodies.\(^9^9\) Hence Aristotelian logic is temporarily arrested when the part stands in for the whole. The only dilemma one faces is in the selection of that representative body because, following this logic, the violence perpetrated against this body should be remembered. It occupies a place in national history (such as the literal space in the U.S. of Arlington Cemetery) created by strategic amnesia of other bodies which suffered lawmaking violence.

In terms of the Mexican Revolution, the embodied memories of victims of the Carrancistas become the forgotten subjects under the will to nationhood. This is due in part to the shift in allegiances which Carranza performs during the Revolution. Initially, Carranza and Pancho Villa were allied *revolucionarios*; however, the principles under which each engaged against the national government differed radically. Carranza, as a member of the upper class, not only did not engage the appeal of the working class

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agrarians who rallied around Villa, but rather was followed by a group who wanted to end corruption in the Mexican government. What historian John Mason Hart defines as two critical moments between the two leaders are Villa’s recapturing of Torreón against Carranza’s orders, and a demand that Villa made in September of 1914 which Carranza refused. At the Aguascalientes meeting of 1914, Villa finally demanded that Carranza “approve measures for the redistribution of the land”\(^{100}\) Villa announced that the División del Norte would not attend any general convention of the revolutionary forces that did not include the basic demands of the *campesinaje*. The following day Villa rejected Carranza as leader of the revolution because he failed to support Villa’s agrarian plan and was therefore not a representative of the people’s will (275). Carranza’s previous and subsequent attempts to overthrow Villa and take control of the División del Norte functioned to align him and his troops with law-preserving violence. Carranza’s honoring of the *hacendado* system, coupled with the support he received from the U.S. government in the form of money and weapons, presumably for including U.S. land holdings and mining rights in Mexico under his protection, further signaled Carranza’s transition from lawmaking to law-preserving violence.

Hence, Campobello’s employment of necrography not only reads and writes on the bodies of the Revolution’s victims, but in doing so calls from memory the violence forced into amnesia by the nation’s scripting of the Revolution. To write a counter-narrative, Campobello claims authorship over not only her own body, but over the corpses of Parral which become mirrors, reflecting law-preserving violence and

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1985, p. 71.

projecting lawmaking violence. Mastery over her own body as a site of resistive memory which retells the lives and deaths of Villistias killed by the Carrancistas projects lawmaking violence which, like the prism, is fueled by the reflection of law-preserving violence.

In “Flowering Judas,” Eugenio’s haunting of Laura after his suicide enacts on a personal scale the kind of violence that threatens the nation-building narrative. Similarly, the innumerable dead bodies that litter the streets and dominate the pages of Campobello’s Cartucho and My Mother’s Hands perform the same function. Mena’s heroine, Carmelita, is liberated by the death of her second husband, Baltazar. Because the story ends with Carmelita and Aquiles groping their way towards each other in the smoke, I do not believe we are meant to see romance as foreclosing on Carmelita’s independence. Rather, we should realize how she has orchestrated the entire deadly scene between her husband and General Bisco, and thus created the future she wishes for herself – one free from Baltazar. Porter and Campobello narrate the stories of these dead soldiers, the victims of the Revolution, and in so doing, introduce women into the national imaginary by virtue of their relationship to print media, one of the three domains of the nation-building project. Pratt summarizes this dynamic by stating: “though lacking political rights, [women] remained able legitimately to assert themselves in national print networks . . . [and] maintain their own political and discursive agenda, and express demands on the system that denied them full status as citizens” (31).

By writing their versions of the Mexican Revolution, Porter, Mena, and Campobello all position their female characters on the verge – at the moment of possibility. What binds the tie between the Revolution’s possibility for women (the
suffrage movement) and its reality are the stories that perform their own violence by exploding hegemonic narratives that either erase women altogether, or else relegate them to the nineteenth-century role of republican mothers.
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