Hispanic Colorado Resource Guide

By Dana Echohawk

Contributors:

VINCENT C. DE BACA, PhD, Professor of History / Metropolitan State University of Denver

VIRGINIA SANCHEZ, MSTD, Historian / Denver Colorado

ARTHUR LEON CAMPA, PhD, Associate Dean, Letters, Arts and Sciences and Professor Anthropology / Metropolitan State University of Denver

MARY SOMERVILLE, PhD, Professor and University Librarian, University of Colorado Denver / Director, Auraria Library / Co-Director of the Center for Colorado & the West at Auraria Library

THOMAS J. NOEL, PhD, Professor of History, Director of Public History, Preservation & Colorado Studies at University of Colorado Denver / Co-Director of The Center for Colorado & The West at Auraria Library

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Dana EchoHawk, a graduate student at the University of Colorado Denver, is focusing on American West history including the public history topics of historic preservation, heritage tourism and cultural history. Her graduate degree is complimented by a B.A. in Visual Cultural Journalism and Social Documentary Photography from Metropolitan State University of Denver.

Dana is King Fellow for the Center for Colorado & the West and a Coulter Scholar in Colorado history. In 2009, she was a Koch Fellow at the Colorado Historical Society and 2010 received the Ward Family Prize in Public History.

PROJECTS:

2010: Collection and captioning of 500 historic photographs that best depict Latino / Hispanic history in Colorado. The collection is hosted online by the Denver Public Library, Auraria Digital Collection: http://digital.denverlibrary.org/. Funding was provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services award, distributed through Colorado State Library.

Project manager for two educational videos titled: “What is Native American History in Colorado?” and “Salvaje y Libra”. Videos are hosted by the Center for Colorado and the West at Auraria Library: http://coloradowest.auraria.edu/

2011: Collection and captioning of 100 additional historic photographs that depict Latino / Hispanic history in Colorado. The collection is hosted online by the Denver Public Library, Auraria Digital Collection: http://digital.denverlibrary.org/

Project manager/interviewer for four videos focusing on conversations with Hispanic community members about the ‘Hispanic Experience’ in Colorado. Videos are available online for elementary school teachers on the History Colorado Museum web site.
A Note Regarding Terminology

The terms Hispanic, Hispano, La Raza, Latino, Chicano, Mexican, Mexican-American, Spanish-American, and others reflect the diverse and dynamic traditions of different members of this ethnic group. As is apparent in the following sections, all of these terms are used hopefully without offense to anyone to explore the history and resources of Hispanic Colorado over the past 400 years.
Colorado—within our state boundaries is land once claimed by Spanish Kings and Mexican governors. Although native people first lived in the region, the first Europeans to visit came from Spain or Mexico. Early Hispanic families moved north from New Mexico to settle in Southern Colorado. Newcomers from Central and South America continue to enrich the State’s population.

The *Hispanic Colorado Studies Resource Guide* identifies resources providing perspectives on the diverse experiences of Hispanics in Colorado — who they are, where they came from, how they lived, and what they contributed. In collaboration with Hispanic, Chicana/o, and Latino/a scholars, project manager and graduate student Dana EchoHawk produced this annotated list as a beginning point for exploration of a vast subject.

With grant funding from the Kenneth King Foundation and the Colorado State Library’s Library Services and Technology Act, King Fellow Dana EchoHawk also collaboratively produced a 600 image digital photography collection and an educational video, *Salvaje y Libre*, with members of the statewide Hispanic community.

In a further collaboration with the Hispanic community, History Colorado, Metropolitan State University of Denver, and Center for Colorado & the West at Auraria Library (CC&W), CC&W produced four educational video vignettes. As ‘Conversations on History’, six community members reveal their own experiences of “who we are”, “where we came from”, “how we lived in the past”, and “what we contributed to the state of Colorado”. To view CC&W digital content on Hispanics in Colorado, go to: [http://coloradowest.auraria.edu/](http://coloradowest.auraria.edu/) and [http://history.denverlibrary.org/](http://history.denverlibrary.org/)

**MARY M. SOMERVILLE, PhD**, Professor and University Librarian, University of Colorado Denver; Director, Auraria Library; and Co-Director, Center for Colorado & the West at Auraria Library

**THOMAS J. NOEL, PhD**, Professor, History; Director, Public History, Preservation & Colorado Studies, University of Colorado Denver; and Co-Director, Center for Colorado & the West at Auraria Library
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ancestral Pueblo Indians settle southwestern Colorado.</td>
<td>0-1300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cristóbal Colón (Christopher Columbus) has first contact with the Americas.</td>
<td>1492</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conquistador Hernán Cortés leads expedition to the mainland from Cuba, occupies the central valley of Mexico, and defeats the Aztec Empire.</td>
<td>1519-1521</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca and companions, survivors of the ill-fated Narváez expedition to Florida, journey through the Southwest seeking return to New Spain.</td>
<td>1528-1536</td>
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<tr>
<td>Francisco Vásquez de Coronado, a Spanish conquistador appointed by the Viceroy of New Spain, leads a large expedition to explore the Provincias Internas (modern day New Mexico, Arizona, and Kansas).</td>
<td>1540-1542</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan de Oñate leads the first Spanish colonizing expedition to northern New Mexico and may have been the first known European to set foot in present day Colorado.</td>
<td>1598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan de Archuleta excursion into Colorado to El Quartelejo on the Arkansas River near present day Las Animas</td>
<td>1664</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diego de Vargas followed the Rio Grande and ‘marveled’ at a herd of five hundred buffalo in the San Luis Valley. His journal mentions names of Colorado rivers, creeks and mountains.</td>
<td>1694</td>
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<tr>
<td>Juan de Ulibarri crosses southeastern Colorado in pursuit of Indians approximately as far as present day Las Animas.</td>
<td>1706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antonio de Valverde crossed the Raton Mountains.</td>
<td>1719</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pedro de Villasur traveled the Santa Fe Trail past El Quartelejo to the junction of the North and South Platte River and were attacked and killed by Pawnee.</td>
<td>1720</td>
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<tr>
<td>Juan María de Rivera explored southwestern Colorado along the San Juan Mountains as far as the Gunnison River near present-day Delta.</td>
<td>1765</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Domínguez-escalante expedition produces a journal and the first map of Colorado and the Southwest.</td>
<td>1776</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Mexico Provincial Governor Juan Bautista de Anza engages, defeats, and enforces a peace agreement with the Comanches led by Cuerno Verde (Chief Greenhorn) and his warriors near present-day Pueblo, Colorado.</td>
<td>1779</td>
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<tr>
<td>Louisiana Purchase.</td>
<td>1803</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zebulon Pike explores the western boundary of the Louisiana Purchase, enters Spanish territory illegally, and is captured by Spanish soldiers.</td>
<td>1806</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adams-Onís Treaty defines Spanish Colorado as the area south of the Arkansas and west of its headwaters.</td>
<td>1819</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mountain men and Trappers move into Colorado.</td>
<td>1820s</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mexican Independence from Spain.</td>
<td>1821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Fe Trail crosses Colorado linking a trade route between Santa Fe, New Mexico and western Missouri.</td>
<td>1822-1880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bent’s Fort established on the Arkansas River dividing the U.S. from Mexico.</td>
<td>1833</td>
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1835  Fort Vásquez is founded by Louis Vásquez and Andrew Sublette near current day Platteville, Colorado.

1842  El Pueblo Trading Post founded on the Arkansas River, which promotes trade between Native Americans and Euro-Americans.

Governor Manuel Armijo approves multiple land grant partitions within the border of modern Colorado. (Tierra Amarilla; Conejos; Maxwell (also known as Beaubien and Miranda); Vigil and Ceran St. Vrain (also known as the Las Animas); Nolan; Sangre de Cristo; Luis María Baca No. 4)

1845-48  U.S. – Mexican War.

Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo cedes northern third of Mexico to U.S. but in theory guarantees former Mexican citizens the right to their land, language, and religion.

1850  New Mexico becomes a U.S. Territory (includes current day Colorado, Utah and Arizona). It remains a territory for 62 years, the longest of any territory.

1851  San Luis established as first permanent Hispano town in Colorado.

1854  Ute warriors attack El Pueblo.

1857  Mexicans find gold in the South Platte River in present-day Denver at Mexican Diggings.

1858  Russell Party discovers gold in Cherry Creek and the South Platte, triggering the great Colorado gold rush.

1861  Colorado becomes a U.S. territory.

1862  Felipe Baca establishes the town of Trinidad.

1866  Colorado becomes a state.

1891  U.S. Congress authorized settlement of the land grant claims by the Court of Private Land Claims.

1898  La Sociedad Protection Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos (The Society of Mutual Protection of United Workers, SPMDTU) is founded by Celedonio Mondragón.

1900  The Great Western Sugar Company recruits Hispanic workers to work in northern Colorado.

1910  Ludlow coal strike on April 20, 1914.

1914-18  World War I.

1917  Immigration Act of 1917 (allows massive influx of Mexican migrant workers).

1930s  The Great Depression.

A Works Progress Administration (WPA) weaving project is started involving Hispanic women. “Rio Grande Blankets” made on looms during the project are coveted by collectors today.

1936  Governor “Big” Ed Johnson declares martial law at the New Mexico border to hold back ‘hordes’ of migrant workers.

The San Luis Institute of the Arts and Crafts is established in the town of San Luis, Colorado. As a Works Progress Administration project, the college served a population that was 90 percent Spanish-American.
World War II. 1941-45

Crusade for Justice and other Chicano rights organizations founded in Denver. 1960s

Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzalez is fired from the Neighborhood Youth Corps Directorship. Soon after Corky founded the Crusade for Justice in Denver, Colorado. 1966

The Young Chicanos for Community Action evolves into the Brown Berets, one of the largest non-student organizations in the country. A chapter in Denver, Colorado was formed. 1967-1968

The first national Chicano Youth Liberation Conference is sponsored by Crusade for Justice in Denver, Colorado. 1969

United Farm Workers of America, lead by coordinator Chester Ruiz, boycott the sale of grapes, lettuce and Gallo Wine at locations across Colorado. 1971

Richard Castro, twenty-five years old, is elected as a Colorado State Representative.

Denver Urban Renewal Authority (DURA) began phase two of its demolition of the predominately Hispanic Auraria neighborhood in preparation of building the Auraria campus for three institutions of higher learning. 1974

Rubén Valdéz first Hispano Speaker of the House in the Colorado General Assembly. 1976

First Hispanic woman senator, Polly Baca-Barragán elected to the Colorado State Legislature. 1978

Sergeant William “Billy” Gallegos, twenty-two years old and a United States Marine Corp guard, returns home to Colorado after being held as one of 52 hostages in Iran for 444 days. 1981

Federico Peña elected as Denver’s first Hispanic mayor. 1983

Denver’s first Cinco de Mayo celebration is organized. By 2010, over 400,000 people annually attend the event in downtown Denver. 1987

Celeste C de Baca begins career as a Denver County Court Judge. As a Hispanic woman, she also served as past president of the Colorado Hispanic Bar Association and was a founding member of the League of Latin American Citizens. 1990

Henry Solano is appointed as United States Attorney for the District of Colorado. 1994

Colorado Supreme Court rules that descendants of the original settlers of the Sangre de Cristo Grant had the right to the traditional uses of access from grazing, firewood, and timber on communal land that had become part of the Taylor Ranch. 2002

Ken Salazar elected to U.S. Senate and his brother John to the U.S. House of Representatives. 2005

Immigration rights reform rallies held on March 25, 2006 in cities across the county, including at Denver’s Civic Center Park. Denver Police estimated there were 50,000 people at the park. 2006

Kenneth Lee “Ken” Salazar is confirmed as U.S. Secretary of the Interior. 2009

2010: Hispanics Comprise 20.3 % of Colorado’s population as by far the largest ethnic group. 2010
Colorado has a rich and unique Hispanic heritage. Spanish exploration and prospecting in Colorado was more frequent than the records reveal. Between 1540 and 1542, Francisco Vásquez de Coronado, a Spanish explorer looking for the mythical Seven Golden Cities of Cibola, may have crossed into Colorado. Old Spanish records indicate that as far back as 1598 Juan de Oñate reported gold discoveries in the San Luis Valley. These early Spanish expeditions usually traveled trails that Native Americans before them had worn into the deserts, plains and mountains. Native Americans typically also served as guides to European explorers.

On April 30, 1598, during Juan de Oñate’s expedition north from Mexico up the Río Grande del Norte, he claimed all of that river’s drainage for Spain. The Adams-Onís Treaty of 1819 between Spain and the United States more precisely defined, Spanish Territory in present day Colorado as everything south of the Arkansas River and west of a line running due north from the Arkansas River Headwaters on Fremont Pass up to the 102nd parallel.

Juan de Archuleta led a Spanish excursion into what in now Colorado in 1664. Following an unknown route, he chased runaway Taos Pueblo Indians to El Quartelejo, an Apache settlement on the Arkansas River near present day Las Animas. The first traceable Spanish expedition into Colorado came in 1694 when Diego de Vargas, the governor of New Mexico, followed the Río Grande to a tributary, Culebra Creek. Vargas skirmished with Ute Indians, marveled at a herd of five hundred buffalo in the San Luis Valley, and left a journal in which he mentioned the names of Colorado rivers, creeks, and mountains, indicating that the Spanish had already explored parts of southern Colorado.

In 1706, Juan de Ulibarri and forty soldiers traveled north to the Arkansas River, skirting the Spanish Peaks. Like Archuleta, Ulibarri headed for El Quartelejo, the Apache settlement that had become a haven for Pueblo Indians fleeing Spanish rule. Ulibarri claimed the Río Grande and Arkansas drainages for King Philip V of Spain in officially claiming “the province of San Luis,” Ulibarri’s party first sang the Te Deum Laudamus, then he made a speech, cut the air in all four directions with his sword, and presided over a discharge of guns.

Antonio de Valverde, governor of New Mexico, became the next known official visitor in 1719. He crossed the Raton Mountains and headed for El Quartelejo, where he apparently failed to build a planned
fort and mission. In the following year Pedro de Villasur set out from Santa Fe with forty-five Spanish soldiers and about sixty Indian allies. Pushing beyond El Quartelejo into unknown territory, Villasur’s party explored the South Platte River, which he named the Rio Jesus y Maria. They camped near the junction of the North and South Platte rivers, where Pawnees, encouraged by the French, surprised the camp at dawn, killing Villasur and all but thirteen of his party.

Juan Maria de Rivera became the first recorded explorer of southwestern Colorado in 1765. Rivera skirted the San Juan Mountains and got as far as the Gunnison River near present-day Delta, where his troop carved a cross, a name, and the date into a tree. Rivera reported finding silver in what are still called the La Plata Mountains.

Hoping for an overland link between her New Mexico settlements and those in California, Spain sought to establish a route between Santa Fe and the West Coast. To this end, two Franciscan priests, Fathers Francisco Atanasio Domínguez and Silvestre Vélez de Escalante, set out from Santa Fe in 1776 for Monterey, the Spanish capital of California. In their ten-man party was Captain Bernardo y Pacheco Miera, an engineer and artist, who drew the first surviving, detailed map of Colorado [see Figure 1]. In his honor, a particularly spectacular and craggy canyon of the Dolores River was christened El Laberinto de Miera (Miera’s labyrinth) because he found a way through it. The Domínguez-Escalante party followed more or less Rivera’s route along the Dolores, San Miguel and Uncompahgre rivers to the Gunnison River. Pushing westward into modern Utah, they reached Utah Lake but the approaching winter blizzards and formidable mountain ranges still ahead inspired them to abandon their California goal. They returned to Santa Fe via the Grand Canyon. Escalante’s diary and Captain Miera’s map made this the most important Spanish expedition into Colorado and gave the world the first detailed map and description of western Colorado.

In 1779 New Mexico Governor Juan Bautista de Anza led 645 men on the last major Spanish thrust into Colorado. Marching through the San Luis Valley and over Poncha Pass, Anza’s army then turned east to corner Chief Cuerno Verde (Green Horn) and his Comanches, whom they routed on what is still called Greenhorn Creek. Other Spanish and Mexican expeditions have gone unrecorded in a state that Hispanics were the first Europeans to explore, map, write about and settle. As the Spanish advanced into the northern frontier to trade with the Ute, they began use of a trail that in 1844 John C. Fremont labeled the Spanish Trail. As the Santa Fe Trail crossed to the east to establish trade from Santa Fe with the Americans, the Old Spanish Trail started out going the opposite direction as a trade route to the west connecting Santa Fe with Los Angeles. Old wagon ruts can still be seen in the southern part of the state, evidence of Spain’s early occupation.

After winning independence from Spain in 1821, Mexico grew concerned about protecting its northernmost territory, where it faced not only hostile Native Americans, but aggressive United States citizens who had erected Bent’s Fort just across the Arkansas River, the border between U.S. territory and Mexico. To reinforce Mexican claims to what is now part of Colorado; Gov. Manuel Armijo of New Mexico made land grants to attract settlers.

The Tierra Amarilla Grant along the upper Chama River went to Manuel Martinez, his eight sons, and several associates. Most of the area lay in New Mexico, but a small wedge protruded into parts of what became Archuleta and Conejos counties in Colorado.
FIGURE 1: Miera’s Map of Western Colorado for the Dominguez-Escalante Expedition. Credit: Denver Public Library.
The Conejos Grant was awarded at the request of citizens of Taos County, New Mexico. The large grant covered much of the western half of the San Luis Valley, including Conejos and Rio Grande counties in Colorado and some of New Mexico. An 1843 attempt to settle on the Conejos River was frustrated by hostile Utes. Not until 1854 did the town he town of Guadalupe become established. Later, Guadalupe was moved across the Conejos River onto higher, less flooded ground, and became the town of Conejos.

The Maxwell Grant (also known as the Beaubien and Miranda) was awarded to Charles Beaubien and Guadalupe Miranda. Lucien B. Maxwell, a son-in-law of Charles Beaubien, gained control of this vast New Mexico estate, which included a slice of the future Las Animas County in Colorado. This huge grant extended from the crest of the Sangre de Cristo Range eastward for around 50 miles and as far south as Taos, New Mexico.

The grant to Cornelio Vigil and Ceran St. Vrain covered four million acres that stretched from the Sangre de Cristo Mountains on the west to the Purgatoire River on the east, and from the Arkansas River on the north to Trinidad on the south. Cornelio Vigil was a judge in Taos. Ceran St. Vrain, a trapper and trader born a U.S. citizen in St. Louis, became a naturalized Mexican. Charles Autobees, James Beckwourth, William Bent, Thomas O. Boggs, Christopher “Kit” Carson, Joseph B. Doyle, Lucien B. Maxwell, and Felix St. Vrain were among the early settlers on the Vigil and St. Vrain Grant, building adobe towns such as Greenhorn (1846), Hardscrabble (1840), and Pueblo (1842).

The Nolan Grant to Gervasio Nolan, a French-Canadian living in Taos, was made by Governor Armijo a few days after the Vigil and St. Vrain grants. This tract of more than half a million acres stretched from the Arkansas River southwest of Pueblo to the Wet Mountains on the east where it adjoined the Vigil and St. Vrain Grant. Nolan, an illiterate frontiersman, began planting corn on his grant in the 1840s, but he may have been a front man for Cornelio Vigil, who was legally entitled to only one claim.
The Sangre de Cristo Grant, presented by Governor Armijo to Stephen Luis Lee and Narciso Beaubien, stretched from the crest of the Sangre de Cristo range westward to the Rio Grande, embracing all of what is now Costilla County and some of northern New Mexico. Although Lee and Beaubien, two residents of Taos, did not settle on their grant, others did. The town of San Luis, the oldest permanent town in Colorado, was established there in 1851. San Luis still uses its 1852 communal water ditch called an Acequia and the Vega, a 600-acre public commons.

The Luis Maria Baca Grant No. 4 in the San Luis Valley was made in 1860 when the U.S. government gave the 100,000-acre site to the Baca family in exchange for some of the original Baca Grant in New Mexico. The original New Mexico Vegas Grande Grant was issued to Luis Maria Cabeza de Baca and his seventeen sons in 1823.

These Mexican land grants suffered various fates after 1848, when Mexico surrendered this territory to the United States in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ended the Mexican War. Although the treaty guaranteed property rights of Mexican settlers, much land was stripped away from the original owners. Complex and controversial circumstances surrounded the disposition of these vast grants. United States courts cast doubt upon the claims by citing an 1824 Mexican law forbidding government grants larger than eleven square leagues (a square league was about 4,400 acres). All of these Mexican grants were larger than that and thus could be construed as illegal. Under the terms of the original grants, settlement had to take place within a specified number of years or ownership would revert to the government. Thus lack of settlement became another legal cloud.

Many of the original grantees were dead or no longer had written records of their grants by 1891, when the U.S. Congress authorized settlement of the land grant claims by the Court of Private Land Claims. This court threw out the Conejos grant, declaring that the land had not been settled within the time specified by the terms of the grant. The Vigil and St. Vrain grant was reduced from over 4 million acres to 97,390.95 acres in an 1860 U.S. court decision, which was upheld in 1898. The Maxwell, Sangre de Cristo, and Baca claims were upheld, but the Nolan grant was reduced to eleven square leagues (48,700 acres).

A century and a half of judicial assaults on Mexican land grants ended on June 24, 2002 when the Colorado Supreme Court ruled, by a four to two vote, that descendants of the original settlers the Sangre de Cristo Grant had the right to the traditional uses of access for grazing, firewood, and timber but not for fishing, hunting, and recreation on the communal land that had become part of the Taylor Ranch. North Carolina timber baron Jack Taylor purchased 77,500 acres of the Sangre de Cristo Grant in 1960 and fenced off locals pursing traditional grazing, hunting, wood gathering and other communal uses.

Life changed for Spanish speaking farmers and ranchers after railroads arrived in Colorado in the 1870s. Along with the railroad came English-speaking settlers who influenced economic and political change. Poorer Hispanics from the southern part of the state often migrated to work in the northern Colorado mines, in the steel mills of Pueblo, and to work in the sugar beet industry. In 1900 Celedonio Mondragon formed Sociedad Protección Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos (SPMDTU). The Society for the Mutual Protection of United Workers helped prevent the usurpation of Hispanic land ownership and to combat discrimination against wage laborers. But, transformation
wrought by the influx of Anglos, the federal and state governments remained difficult for Hispanics living in rural areas. In 1936, Governor “Big” Ed Johnson declared martial law at the New Mexico border and attempted to hold back ‘hordes’ of migrant workers. The effort was a total failure.

Hispanos served in the U.S. military during the Indian Wars and the Civil War at Glorieta and Valverde. After World War II, the Works Progress Administration (WPA), established programs to help returning service men and their families in rural Colorado towns. Women contributed to a WPA traditional weaving program and in the town of San Luis the Institute of Arts and Crafts was founded by Adams State College president for the purpose of providing industrial skills and training to returning Hispanic servicemen. After World War I and World War II however, Hispanic servicemen increasingly moved their families from rural agricultural locations into the larger urban centers of Denver, Pueblo, Greeley and Ft. Collins. Many moved into neighborhoods such as southwest Denver’s Auraria.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Chicano rights organizations begin to emerge in Colorado. The Crusade for Justice was founded by Rodolfo ‘Corky’ Gonzales and during the same years, another Chicano youth group, the Young Chicanos for Community Action evolved into the Brown Berets. With an agenda of improving unfair labor and wage practices for Hispanic farm workers, the United Farm Workers of America became a force in Colorado when they picketed for the boycott of Gallo Wine, and other agricultural products grown primarily in California.

Hispanic political clout increased as Latinos took to the polls electing leaders to positions within the State legislature. Richard Castro, only twenty-five years old when he was elected as a Colorado State Representative in 1974, brought a new contemporary Hispanic history to Colorado. In 1978, Polly Baca-Barragán was the first Hispanic woman elected to the Colorado State Legislature and by the 1980s, growing Latino clout led to the elections of Federico Peña as mayor of Denver (1983-1991), Ken Salazar as U.S. Senator (2005-2009) and U.S. Secretary of the Interior (2009-present) and John Salazar as U.S. Representative (2005-2011).

The 2010 U.S. Census confirms that Hispanics are the largest and one of the fastest growing ethnic groups in Colorado. Roughly one out of every five Coloradans is Hispanic, one out of every three Denverites, and one out of two residents of the San Luis Valley. As the first and the largest group on non-natives to settle Colorado, their story is essential to the history of the highest state.
I. Publications

SPANISH EXPLORATION


**MEXICAN LAND GRANTS IN WHAT BECOMES COLORADO**

Note: Land Grants are often mislabeled as Spanish land grants. Land grants established after Mexico’s independence in 1821 are “Mexican Land Grants”


SELECTED HISPANIC STUDIES


Rivera, José A. *Acequia Culture: Water, Land, and Community in the Southwest*. 1st ed. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998. ssvi + 243 p., illus., maps, index, bibliography. José Rivera presents the contemporary case for the value of acequias (ditches) and the communities they nurture in the river valleys of southern Colorado and New Mexico.


**GENEALOGY**


ART AND ARCHITECTURE


Campa, Arthur L. *Hispanic Culture in the Southwest*. 1st ed. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1979. xii + 316p., index. endnotes. bibliography. photos. maps. drawings. Campa, a DU professor, devoted over half of the book to the historical evolution of Hispanic peoples in the Southwest, with several chapters to cultural aspects such as arts and crafts, music, dance, foods, religious beliefs, and values. Two chapters on Colorado.


Wedding party of Felix Gallegos and Florence Torres, 1934
*Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, contributed by Magdalena Gallegos*

Mills, George. *The People of the Saints*. Colorado Springs: Taylor Museum, 1967. 71p endnotes, selected bibliography. 32 color plates. Covers the Hispanic people of northern New Mexico and southern Colorado and the religious images that they have painted (retablos) and carved (bultos) since 1700.


SAN LUIS VALLEY


*Sunny San Luis: A Complete Description of This Great Agricultural Empire, with Illustrations of the Methods of Irrigation*. Denver, CO: Pub. under the auspices of the San Luis Valley Association, 1889. 1889. 49 p., illus. map.


Alamosa County


Conejos County


**Costilla County**


Huerfano County

Albright, Zella Rae. *One Man’s Family: The Life of Hiram Vasquez.* 1984
Zella Rae Albright. 324 p., illus, photos, map, notes, bibliography, index.


Las Animas County


**Rio Grande County**


**Saguache County**


**CHILDREN’S BOOKS**


MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS


The Upper Rio Grande Legacy collection. #MSS 1831


The Jose Esteban Ortega Papers: “This collection contains photographs, a vintage collection of community newspapers and other publications documenting the Chicano Movement of the 1960s and ‘70s from throughout the state of Colorado, rare books on Chicano history, as well as silk-screened banners and t-shirts emblazoned with the Movement’s slogans and artwork”.

The Ruben Archuleta Collection: This collection has an emphasis on the penitentes and their religious rituals.

The Trujillo collection: “This collection includes the Juan Federico “Freddie Freak” Miguel Arguello Trujillo Chicano Movement Collection with audio, visual, and printed material related to the Mexicano peoples’ struggle against racism and discrimination in Colorado.

The Jose Esteban Ortega Papers: contains photographs, a vintage collection of community newspapers and other publications documenting the Chicano Movement of the 1960s and 70s from throughout the state of Colorado, rare books on Chicano history, silk-screened banners and t-shirts emblazoned with the Movement’s slogans and artwork.

The Voices of Protest: This is an oral history project, that highlights the contributions of Latino/a’s during armed conflicts of the 20th and 21st centuries.


“DRSW provides the research tools and finding aids to the written record that began with the arrival of the Spanish explorers in the 1530’s. 1,500 microfilm reels of documents, many of them collected by the Jesuit historical Institute includes the diaries of explorers and reports of missionaries and soldiers”.

Center for Southwest Research, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Paul Kutsche papers from the Cañones ethnographic field research project, 1988-1996. MSS 737 CD, University Libraries, “This collection consists primarily of ethnographic data collected in Cañones, New Mexico in the mid-late 1960s. The fieldwork resulted in the several publications, including Survival of Spanish American Villages by Kutsche (1979), Cañones: Values, Crisis, and Survival in a Northern New Mexico Village by Paul Kutsche and John Van Ness (1981), and Hispanos in Northern New Mexico by Van Ness (1991).”

MEDIA AND INTERNET

Audio Oral Histories


DVD’s and Video Recordings


Chispa Productions. *La Tierra Last Stand in Costilla County*. The story of the people of Costilla County in southern Colorado and their struggle to maintain their identity as well as the rights to their land in the Sangre de Cristo land grant dispute, 1981. Available from: Auraria Library, Denver, Colorado.

Havey, Jim and Jean Sharer. *The Five States of Colorado.* Colorado
Available from: Auraria Library, Denver, Colorado.

**Hispanos en el Valle,** Denver, Colorado, Council for Public Television,
Channel 6, Inc. 1996. Video recording. Available from: Auraria Library,
Denver, Colorado.

**La Cultura de San Luís.** Denver, CO, Council for Public Television,
Channel 6, Inc. 1996. Video recording. Available from: Auraria Library,
Denver, Colorado.

Rio Grande Valley Series. *Los Kokos y Las Kokonas Abuelos and Their Role.*
Storytelling as an oral history tradition is demonstrated, especially
disciplinary stories for children which are peopled by ghosts, monsters
and devils. Traditional costumes for characters in the tales are shown.
Available from: Denver Public Library, Denver, Colorado

**La Raza de Colorado.** Denver, CO, Rocky Mountain PBS, Colorado Historical
Society, Denver Public Library Western History Collection, 2 part.
Part I: “Explores history and heritage of Colorado’s Latino culture
from the 1500s to the 1940s.”
Part II: “Features rare film footage and interviews with the people
who lived this fascinating history.” Available from: Auraria Library,
Denver, Colorado

**Memorias de Last Tres Colonias (Memories of the Three Colonies).** Poudre
Tres Colonias, Fort Collins, Colorado. (970) 221-0533.

**Mi Gente (My people).** The Fort Collins experience / written and produced
Available from: Auraria library, Denver, Colorado.

Rosales, Francisco A. *Testimonio: A Documentary History of the Mexican
American Struggle for Civil Rights,* The Hispanic Civil Rights Series.
from: Auraria Library, Denver, Colorado.

**Salvaje y Libre (Wild and Free).** Illustrated the value of a collection of 500
online images that document local Hispanic history for past, present,
and future generations. Daniel Salazar and Center for Colorado and the
West. Available Online: http://coloradowest.auraria.edu/?q=node/137.

**In Search of Displaced Aurarians.** In Search of Displaced Aurarians
illustrates the scholarship benefit for former residents of Denver’s
Auraria neighborhood. Since the community was relocated in the 1970’s
to build the Auraria Higher Education Center in Denver, Colorado,
Displaced Aurarians and their descendants have received scholarships to
attend the three institutions on the Auraria Campus – the University of
Colorado Denver, Metropolitan State University of Denver, and the
Community College of Denver. Available Online: http://coloradowest.auraria.edu/?q=node/139

Websites


Newspapers


La Sierra. 401 West Church Place, San Luis, Colorado, 81152. (719) 672-3356. Weekly. English. Print.


ARKANSAS VALLEY

Bent’s Old Fort National Historic Site

35110 Hwy. 194, northeast of La Junta, Colorado.

National Historic Landmark 12/19/1960, National Register 10/15/1966,
Additional documentation 7/5/1985, 5OT.149

This site northeast of La Junta once contained Bent’s Old Fort, an important
trading post near the Arkansas River along the Mountain Branch of the Santa
Fe Trail. Constructed around 1833 by brothers Charles and William Bent and
partner Ceran St. Vrain, the fort sat on the Arkansas River, then the border
between the United States and newly independent Mexico. The fort became
the hub where Hispano, French, U. S citizens and various Plains Indian tribes,
notably the Cheyenne, Kiowa, Arapaho, interacted. The reconstructed adobe
fort on the historic site dates to the mid-1970s.

(719) 383-5010

Stagecoach at Bents Fort. Denver Public Library collection.
Baca House / Trinidad History Museum

300 E. Main Street, Trinidad, Colorado

National Register 2/26/1970, 5LA.1630

Built in 1870, the interior of this adobe house blends Hispanic folk art with Victorian furnishings. History Colorado now operates the Baca House as part of the Trinidad History Museum.

(719) 846-7217

COLORADO SPRINGS

Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center (Educational Tours)

30 West Dale Street, Colorado Springs, Colorado

History is alive at the CSFAC. Students will remember this interactive history lesson as they experience the diverse cultures and arts of Southwest and Hispanic peoples through a docent-guided gallery tour, a hands-on look at American Indian and Hispanic artifacts, and a “make it and take it” art project. Focus may be on early Colorado Indians, Plains Indians, the Pueblo Peoples, or Hispanic Heritage. Two hours.”

http://www.csfineartscenter.org/tours.asp


Taylor Museum of the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center

Committed to educating the public about the breadth of artistic expressions in the Americas through the presentation of a world renowned permanent collection, dynamic exhibitions from around the world, and related cultural and innovative programs.

http://www.csfineartscenter.org/taylormuseum.asp

Accessed March 9, 2011.
DENVER AREA

Auraria 9th Street Historic District

9th between Curtis & Champa

National Register 3/26/1973, 5DV.102

This surviving block of Victorian era residences typifies a middle class Denver residential neighborhood spanning the years from 1873 to 1905. Located adjacent to the central business district, on an urban campus shared by the University of Colorado at Denver, Metropolitan State University of Denver, and Community College of Denver, the residences within the district are among Denver’s oldest. During the 1970s, a grassroots preservation effort saved the block from demolition and led to the rehabilitation of the buildings for use as campus offices. This historic district includes Casa Mayan, one of the first Mexican restaurants in Denver to welcome gringos. It has been restored as a conference center and mini-museum celebrating the Gonzales Family who lived there while turning it into the popular restaurant known for Hispanic music and dance as well as Mexican food. Another Hispanic landmark in the Ninth Street Park Historic District is St. Cajetan’s Church. With the adjacent school, rectory, convent, health clinic and credit union this parish was a hub of Hispanic life until the congregation was forced to move out. In the early 1970s when the area was urban renewed to construct the Auraria Higher Education Center campus. The church has been restored as an events center.

Bobby Herrera in 1948 at 10th and Lawrence. Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, contributed by Gloria Rodriguez.
Auraria Casa Mayan Heritage
This organization aspires through tours, research and cultural events to increase community awareness of Auraria’s rich cultural heritage and the contributions that were made by the area’s early Latino population, as well as, other ethnic groups that resided and contributed to this community.

http://acmh.cfsites.org/index.php

CHAC (Chicano Humanity and Arts Council)

772 Santa Fe Drive, Denver, Colorado
This nonprofit organization encourages and facilitates the development of Chicano/Latino cultural expression through the arts.

(303) 571-0440. http://chacweb.org

Founding members of Chicano Humanities and Arts Council (CHAC) 2009 c. Denver Public Library Auraria Collection. Photographer: Shannon Garcia.

Colorado Society for Hispanic Genealogy


Consulado General de Mexico, Denver

Suite 100, 5350 Leetsdale Drive, Denver, Colorado 80246
http://portal.sre.gob.mx/denver/
Accessed February 9, 2011.
Denver’s Cinco de Mayo Celebration

Cinco de Mayo is celebrated each year in Denver, Colorado around the weekend of May 5th. Traditionally, the event is a celebration of freedom and culture that has become Colorado’s largest ethnic festival.

![Image of Cinco de Mayo dancers](image.jpg)


Denver Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

924 W. Colfax Ave, Suite 201, Denver, Colorado  
http://www.dhcc.com  
(303) 534-7783

El Centro Su Teatro

721 Santa Fe Drive, Denver, Colorado 80204  
This organization is dedicated to the development, preservation and promotion of Chicano/Latino history and culture through theater.  
http://www.suteatro.org  
(303) 296-0219

Hispanic Heritage Center

924 W. Colfax Avenue, Denver, Colorado, 2009  
(303) 573-4935
Latina Chamber
7505 E. 35th Ave., Suite 302, Denver, Colorado 80238

Latino Arts & Culture
http://www.denvergov.org/culturalitineraries/LatinoArtsCulture/tabid/427460/Default.aspx

Latino Market
3770 Astrozon Blvd.: Denver, Colorado.

Mexican Cultural Center Denver
Promotes and maintains the richness of the Mexican culture in the State of Colorado.
http://www.mccdenver.org/
Accessed February 9, 2011.

Museo de las Americas
861 Santa Fe Drive, Denver, Colorado.
This nonprofit works to foster understanding and appreciation for the achievements of the Latino people of the Americas by collecting, preserving, and interpreting the diverse cultures inhabiting this region from ancient time to the present.
(303) 571-4401

Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church
3555 Kalamath St., Denver, Colorado 80211

Thornton Spanish School
NORTHERN COLORADO

Fort Vásquez

13412 U.S. Highway 85, Platteville, Colorado

Site of an 1835 fur-trading fort founded by Louis Vásquez and Andrew Sublette in 1835.
(970) 785-2832

Museo de las Tres Colonias

425 10th St., Fort Collins, Colorado 80524.

This museum conveys, through use of oral histories, the story of early twentieth-century Hispanic pioneers who carved out a rich life in the Fort Collins area while working in the sugar-beet industry.

http://www.poudrelandmarks.com/plf_museo.shtml

970-221-0533

Accessed March 8, 2011.

PUEBLO

El Pueblo

301 N. Union Avenue, Pueblo, Colorado

National Register 2/16/1996, 5PE.303

El Pueblo, occupied from 1842 to 1854, is important for its association with the exploration and settlement of what became Colorado and the larger Rocky Mountain West; for its association with commerce and trade, both in the local area and as part of a regional trail system; and for its association with the social history of the upper Arkansas River, a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, and multi-national population. The museum opened in 2001 in the center of a National Historic District.

(719) 583-0453
SAN LUIS VALLEY

Fort Garland

29477 Hwy. 159, Fort Garland, Colorado, 81133
South of US 160

National Register 2/26/1970, Boundary Increase:
State Register 12/11/1996, 5CT.46

Fort Garland is important for its association with the settlement of the San Luis Valley and southern Colorado. Built in 1858, the fort served as a base of military operations until it was abandoned in 1883. Company G of the Ninth Cavalry, a unit of Buffalo Soldiers, operated out of the fort from spring 1876 until September 1879. The Buffalo Soldiers were African American troopers nicknamed by Southern Plains Indians who perceived similarities between the soldiers’ curly black hair and the matted fur between the horns of the buffalo. In 1876, troops marched to the La Plata region to prevent conflict between Ute Indians and white prospectors. The oldest military fort in Colorado, it was converted to a museum operated by History Colorado.

http://www.coloradohistory.org/hist_sites/fr_garland/fr_garland.htm
(719) 379-3512

Freight wagons are loaded with sacks of wool at Fort Garland 1900c. Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, contributed by Frank Gallegos.
La Capilla de San Antonio de Padua

Lasuses: County Rd. 28
State Register 12/10/1997, 5CN.477

This adobe chapel completed in 1928 incorporates a wall of the original 1880 church. The building reflects the importance of churches as centers and symbols of southern Colorado Hispanic communities. It is the only remaining public/community building representing the depopulated village of Lasuses.

Luther Bean Museum. Adams State College

208 Edgemont Blvd., Alamosa, Co 81102. Richardson Hall, Rm 256

Mission to “preserve, enhance, and promote the study of the diverse culture and history of the San Luis Valley”.

Plaza de San Luis de la Culebra Historic District

CO Hwy. 159
National Register 12/22/1978, 5CT.47

Established in 1851, San Luis is the oldest continuously inhabited town in Colorado. The district contains an important collection of buildings that includes the county courthouse, the convent and Church of Most Precious Blood, numerous residences, and the town’s commercial core. The district also includes the Vega, a common ground for animal grazing, and the San Luis People’s Ditch. Listed under Culebra River Villages of Costilla County Multiple Property Submission.

San Luis Museum and Cultural Center

401 Church Place, San Luis, Colorado 81152

The Museum features murals and works of art from its own collection and on loan from various artists and collectors, many of whom are local residents. The Gift Shop offers paintings and other art objects by various local artists.

The north wing of the complex houses the Carlos Beaubien Theatre, which shows movies on summer weekends and in the past has been used to host the Santa Ana / Santiago Queen Pageant. The theatre has also been the setting of several stage performances, presentations, and concerts. Because much of the original decor has been maintained throughout the building, the original vigas and fireplace still grace the theatre.

(719) 672-3611
SPMDTU Concilio Superior

603 Main St., Antonito, Colorado

National Register 3/29/2001, 5CN.817

As the headquarters for La Sociedad Proteccion Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos since 1925, the building represents an important aspect of Hispano history. Originally created to combat racism against Hispanics in the San Luis Valley, this fraternal organization later expanded to provide mutual aid, thereby playing an important role in the overall social history of Colorado. Construction of this building popularized the use of steel trusses, introduced changes in massing, and promoted hybridized Southwest vernacular designs subsequently utilized in other Hispano enclaves.
Trujillo Homestead

Four miles north of 6N Lane, Mosca vicinity

National Register 2/4/2004, 5AL.706

The Trujillo Homestead is an important part of Hispanic settlement in the San Luis Valley in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Pedro Trujillo, a first generation Hispanic-American, established the property in 1879. The homestead is representative of small-scale pioneer cattle enterprises which typified the first ranches established in the area. The homestead is also associated with the pattern of violence and intimidation experienced by early Hispanic ranchers as large Anglo-American cattle operations expanded and consolidated their holdings. The two-story log ranch house represents a rare resource type in the San Luis Valley and in the state as a whole. The fact that a Hispanic-American settler on an isolated ranch erected the two-story log house instead of building a traditional adobe dwelling typical of the first era of construction in the vicinity adds to the building’s significance.

Colorado Historical Society
By Thomas E Simmons, Front Range Research Associates, Denver
Sociedad de Nuestro Padre Jesus Nazareno

(San Francisco Morada), San Francisco

State Register 3/8/2000, 5CT.200

This circa 1908 building represents an important aspect of Hispano history in southern Colorado. The building reflects the limited religious and governmental support in poor rural areas of predominately Hispanic populations and the aid societies that formed as a result. Los Hermanos Penitentes (a lay religious, fraternal organization) constructed and used the building as a chapel and meeting hall. The organization also served as a cultural force, preserving language, lore, customs, and faith within the isolated communities. The elongated adobe building was constructed following the traditional linear plan of northern New Mexico. Restoration shown in the photo is now complete.
III. Where to Find Specific Hispanic Colorado Resources

HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHS

Auraria Library Photo Collection at Denver Public Library: http://digital.denverlibrary.org/. (see Auraria Library listing in right column).

The collection includes 600 historic photographs that depict the Hispanic Experience in Colorado history.

Center for Colorado and the West at Auraria Library:
http://coloradowest.auraria.edu

Andy and Angela Trujillo in Fort Collins. Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, contributed by Nora Trujillo Castellanos / Fort Collins Local History Archive.
Where to Find Specific Hispanic Colorado Resources

**CURRICULUM**


### Hispanic Legislators in the Colorado State Legislature

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CCC=Colorado Constitutional Convention
H=House S=Senate TC=Territorial Council TH=Territorial House
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Table: Courtesy, Vincent C. De Baca
Appendix B:
Hispanic Experience Photographic Collection

Erinea Trujillo Vigil and her grandchildren in San Luis (Costilla County), Colorado. Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, contributed by Bertha Gallegos

Jerry Rodriquez and Jackie Torres on 9th Street Denver. Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, contributed by Julia Torres-Vigil.
Jim (Skipper) Herrera at 12th Street, Auraria neighborhood, Denver, Colorado.
Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, contributed by Gloria Rodriguez.

Frances Miera Montez.
Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, contributed by Gloria Montez.

Margaret Torres on 10th Street, Denver, Colorado.
Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, contributed by Magdalena Gallegos.
Young men on the steps of St. Cajetan’s Catholic Church on 9th Street, Denver, Colorado. 
*Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, contributed by Magdalena Gallegos.*

Rivera School, Las Animas County, Colorado. 
*Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, contributed by Ed Cordova.*
Appendix B: Photographic Collection

Cipriano Montoya and Crisanta Montoya, Fort Collins, Colorado. Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, contributed by Fort Collins Museum & Discovery Science Center.

Maria Salome Cordova spinning wool. Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, contributed by Hope Yost Gallegos.

Hermanos Penitentes, Stations of the Cross, Southern Colorado. Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, photographer Dana EchoHawk.
Capilla de Todos los Santos, part of the Shrine of the Stations of the Cross, San Luis, Colorado. Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, photographer Dana EchoHawk.

San Acacio Catholic Church, San Acacio, Colorado. Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, photographer Dana EchoHawk.
Railroad workers.
Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, contributed by Denise Lovato Duran.

Miners Eloy Cruz and Leandro Vigil.
Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, contributed by Gene A. Vigil.
Juan de Jesus Paiz.
Denver Public Library
Auraria Collection,
contributed by
Denise Lovato Duran.

Mexican workers recruited and brought to the Arkansas Valley.
Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, contributed by Library of Congress.
Appendix B: Photographic Collection

Chicano theater group.
Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, photographer Daniel Salazar.

Lucille Campa in Spanish dance costume.
Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, contributed by Arthur L. Campa.
Exhibition boxing match.
*Denver Public Library
Auraria Collection,*
*contributed by James A. Maestas.*
Mr. James Beauty Salon, Denver, Colorado. Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, contributed by James A. Maestas.

Jose Eufemio Trujillo. Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, contributed by Fort Collins Museum & Discovery Science Center.
R & R Market
(Romero’s Market, Colorado’s oldest, Established 1857. Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, photographer, Dana EchoHawk.

Political cartoon of Senator Casimiro Barela.
Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, contributed by Ed Cordova.
Appendix B: Photographic Collection

Costilla County courtroom, San Luis, Colorado.
{
Denver Public Library Auraria Collection, contributed by Frank Gallegos.

State Senator
Richard Castro.
Denver Public Library
Auraria Collection,
photographer
Shannon García.