

Selected Readings

By Nina Otero-Warren:
Old Spain in Our Southwest
Nina Otero

About Nina Otero-Warren:
Nina Otero-Warren of Santa Fe
Charlotte Whaley

About her time and place, its people and events:
Santa Fe: The Autobiography of a Southwestern Town
Edited by Oliver LaFarge

Pinon Country
Haniel Long
Santa Fe and Taos: The Writers' Era
Marta Weigle and Kyle Fione

Will Shuster: A Santa Fe Legend
Joseph Dipenza and Louise Turner
Letters of Witter Bynner
Ed. by James Kraft

I-Mary: Biography of Mary Austin
Augusta Fink
Santa Fe Then and Now
Sheila Morand

Leading Facts of New Mexican History
Ralph Emerson Twitchell

The Santa Fe and Taos Colonies: Age of the Muses, 1900-1942
Arrell Morgan Gibson

My Nine Years as Governor of the Territory of New Mexico
Volume 2 of Autobiography by Miguel A. Otero

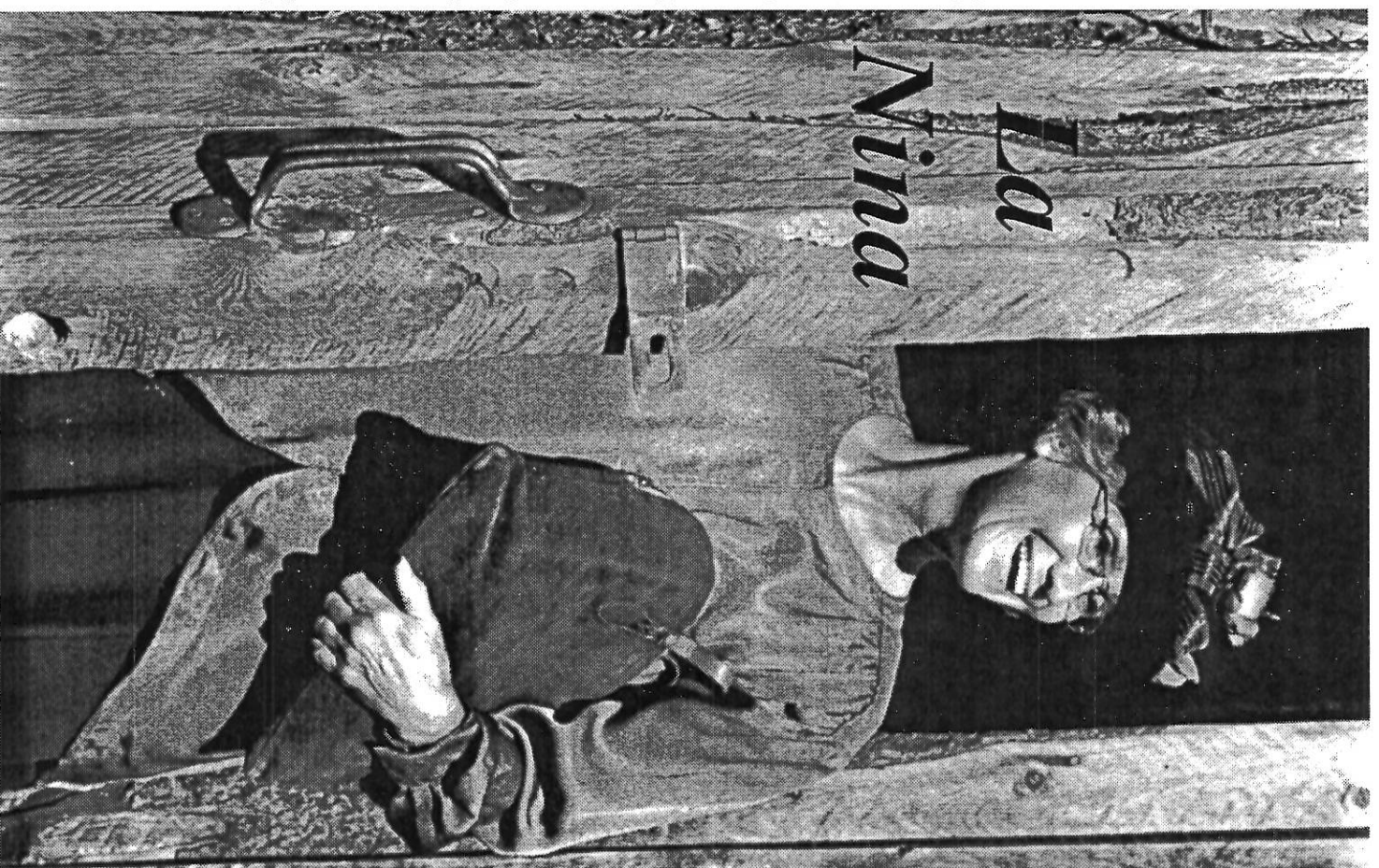
Hispanos: Historic Leaders in New Mexico
Lynn I. Peritigo

New Mexico Women: Intercultural Perspectives
Edited by Joan M. Jensen and Darlis A. Miller

"The Ballad of Manuel B." in *Murder and Mystery in New Mexico*
Erna Fergusson

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by Deborah Blanche

Maria Adelina Isabel Emilia (Nina) Otero-Warren (1881-1965) was born in Valencia County near Los Lunas into two of the most prosperous and influential families in New Mexico. Her father was killed in a land dispute before she turned three years old, and she moved with her mother, brothers and step-family to Santa Fe in 1897 when her cousin Miguel A. Otero, II, became territorial governor. Except for schooling in St. Louis, social work in NYC and her brief marriage to Ralston Warren, Santa Fe and *la casa grande* on Grant Avenue were her home for a lifetime thereafter. Throughout the 'teens, her political prowess and organizational know-how benefited the General Federation of Women's Clubs and National Women's Party. Nina is often credited as being the woman who was most influential in seeing the National Women's Suffrage Amendment through the NM Legislature. Soon after she became the first woman in the state to run for US Congress. Nina served as Public Welfare Director and Indian Inspector as well as elected Superintendent of Santa Fe County Schools for 12 years. She was among the organizers of the Spanish Colonial Arts Society, the revival of Santa Fe Fiesta, Indian Market and a host of other interests to preserve and enliven the multicultural traditions of New Mexico. Her book *Old Spain in Our Southwest* was published in 1936 and following its publication much of her energy turned toward adult literacy programs throughout the region. During the war years she worked as Santa Fe County Director of Price Administration and, as had been the case since 1918, her longtime companion and associate Mamie Meadors was Nina's quiet partner and official assistant. In 1947, at an age when others might consider retirement, she and Mamie opened the doors to their last venture together, *Las Dos Realty and Insurance*, on Palace Avenue.

Deborah Blanche was born and raised in Oklahoma where she earned a Master of Fine Arts Degree in Theatre at the University in Norman. After working in regional theatres, a fellowship took her to England where she studied with the Royal Shakespeare and National Theatre Companies. There she became interested in creating her own work. Since arriving in New Mexico in 1973, she has become best known for the one-woman shows, storytelling and Chautauqua programs that she writes as well as performs. Deb has toured her work from England to Mexico, to Alaska and throughout the American West, to wherever she is invited to share "herstories".

Setting. We meet La Nina as she prepares to celebrate her 70th birthday in late October of 1951. It is not as elaborate a celebration as many before or after. This one is at her home, known by family and friends as *la casa grande*, 135 Grant Avenue, Santa Fe, New Mexico. As she reminisces with the audience (her friends and well-wishers), we are taken back to the days when she was on campaign for Congress in 1921, traveling the back roads of Santa Fe County as Superintendent of Schools circa 1927, homesteading near Tesuque Pueblo in the early 1930's, and hosting one of her famous pre-Fiesta night parties that preceded the *Historical Hysterical Parade* of 1941.

A Quote from Nina. A glance around showed this a rolling country, with huge mountains for a background. Cedars and piñons tortured by the wind were twisted, bent, knotted and dwarfed. The arroyos had cut through the ground and though they seemed innocent enough were greatly to be feared in the event of a storm, for they were capable of felling trees and rolling boulders as easily as children roll marbles... So it is with my country... beautiful beyond words, but it needs to be watched lest it bruise those not acquainted with its moods.

A first draft of Chapter 1 for *Old Spain in Our Southwest*

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Bookings for Deborah Blanche's Chautauqua programs, one-woman shows, readings, workshops, lecture-demonstrations and storytelling performances are available by contacting:

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