



Married To A Daughter Of The Land: Spanish-Mexican Women And Interethnic Marriage In California, 1820-80

Maria Raquel Casas

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Until recently, most studies of the colonial period of the American West have focused on the activities and agency of men. Historian Maria Raquel Casas examines the role of Spanish-Mexican women in the development of California. She finds that, far from being pawns in a male-dominated society, Californianas of all classes were often determined creators of their own destinies, finding ways to choose their mates, to leave unsatisfactory marriages, and to maintain themselves economically. Using a wide range of primary and secondary sources in English and Spanish, Casas unveils a picture of women's lives in these critical decades of California's history. Casas' discussion ranges from California's burgeoning economy to the intimacies of private households and ethnically mixed families. "Married to a Daughter of the Land" is a significant and fascinating contribution to the history of women in the American West and to our understanding of the complex role of gender, race, and class in the borderlands of the Southwest.



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