

Human-environment relationships in New Mexico: a retrospective of the last 1000 years

Emily Lena Jones

The landscapes of New Mexico, popularized by artists such as Georgia O'Keefe and the tourism industry alike, hold a powerful place in the American imagination. Although often presented as "natural," however, these environments reflect a long history of human presence in, and interaction with, the environment in a variety of ways. Four case studies – Chaco Canyon (ca. AD 1000), the Pueblo IV period (ca. AD 1300-1400), initial Spanish colonization (AD 1598 – 1680), and the coming of the railroad (ca. AD 1800) – illustrate the dynamic nature of human-environment interaction in New Mexico over the last 1000 years.