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Introduction

The United States is a plural society. Its peoples have defined themselves as members of communities within a larger nation. They remember the histories and extol the accomplishments of their particular ethnic groups. They sing the praises of their regions, states, cities, or towns; and they cheer their local sports teams. They identify themselves as members of the leisured or laboring classes and as representatives of specific industries. The nation's history, in large measure, has been made by the interaction of such groups—their conflicts, their cooperation, their occasional blending under the unifying pressures of commerce, communication, and common causes.

As much as any other state, Colorado has grown within this multicultural framework. It has witnessed deep divisions among Native Americans, Spanish-speaking Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, and the heterogeneous assemblage sometimes labeled Anglo-Americans. The split between entrepreneurs and working people and the contests between economic regions have been equally important. The state's political divisions have often reflected the conflicts among its social and economic groups.

Just as diversity has provided much of the catalyst for historical change in Colorado, its cities and towns have provided the context for much of that change. Cities—engines of growth, change, and progress throughout the

United States—played an especially important role on the American frontier. During the years of pioneering, the frontier city was an advance base of supply, furnishing food, clothing, and tools. When settlers began to produce a surplus of goods, the city provided credit and transportation and found outside buyers. Because the interregional and international exchange of agricultural and mineral products for manufactured goods was the foundation of US economic growth during the first three centuries of settlement, the frontier city was vital not only to the surrounding area but also to the development of the nation as a whole.

Certainly, in the trans-Mississippi West the urban frontier and the frontier of settlement were nearly synonymous. Credit, capital, and supplies for the development of the plains and mountains came initially from cities such as St. Louis and Chicago and a host of smaller urban centers such as Omaha and Kansas City. Cattle towns, farm-market centers, and mining towns soon sprang up in Colorado. Even after the initial excitement of settlement, the new towns and cities provided the money and leadership to develop regional resources.

Within Colorado, Denver monopolized these metropolitan functions after 1859. At the end of the twentieth century the Denver metropolitan area counted a population more than four times that of Colorado Springs and fifteen times that of Pueblo. Denver served similarly as a channel for eastern capital and influence during Colorado's development as a supplier of raw materials for eastern consumption. If Colorado and other western states have been economic colonies of the East, as numerous writers have complained, then Denver for much of Colorado's history has been one of the colonial capitals.

This description remains accurate in the twenty-first century, but with modifications. The shift of population and economic activities to the suburban counties that ring Denver has changed the balance of power within the region. Although the city of Denver gained population between 1990 and 2010, other communities grew even faster. Cities such as Aurora are now large enough to pursue independent development. Colorado Springs has come into its own as a nationally connected city and a rival to Denver. Development north of Denver in Greeley, Loveland, Longmont, and Fort Collins has made the northern piedmont another focus of growth and political power.

Another characteristic plays a special role in the history of Colorado—the land itself. The opportunities and constraints offered by the land have shaped the development of mining, tourism, and agriculture. Those who chronicle Colorado

must borrow from the expertise of the geologist, geographer, botanist, and zoologist. The historian must also examine the ways Coloradans have reacted to their land and record the deep affection for the topography most residents have shared. In the nineteenth century pioneers explored the land and learned to appreciate the scenery. Since the 1960s many Coloradans have fought to save a landscape threatened by rapid development.

Historians also observe changes in the ways Coloradans have perceived both their environment and themselves. Men and women in the 1860s or the 1890s did not react to problems and choices the same way citizens in the 2000s do. Each generation views the world with different perspectives and operates on the basis of different assumptions. Over the years Coloradans have valued different elements of their scenery. They have approached the natural resources with changing ideas about their proper uses. They have rethought their positions about the spheres of activity for men and women and have sometimes haltingly come to appreciate the contributions of differing cultures.

The movement of Anglo-Americans westward across the continent was the central experience of US nation building. When we examine that great adventure, we can still feel the sense of possibility on each new frontier. Historians, however, also need to recapture the conflicts and failures as well as the excitement and progress. Economic and personal success for some Coloradans has come at the expense of others. Native Americans, Hispanics, European immigrants, and women have all struggled to assert control over their own lives. Historic decisions have also closed off possibilities never tried, narrowing as well as expanding the state's future through conscious and unconscious choices.

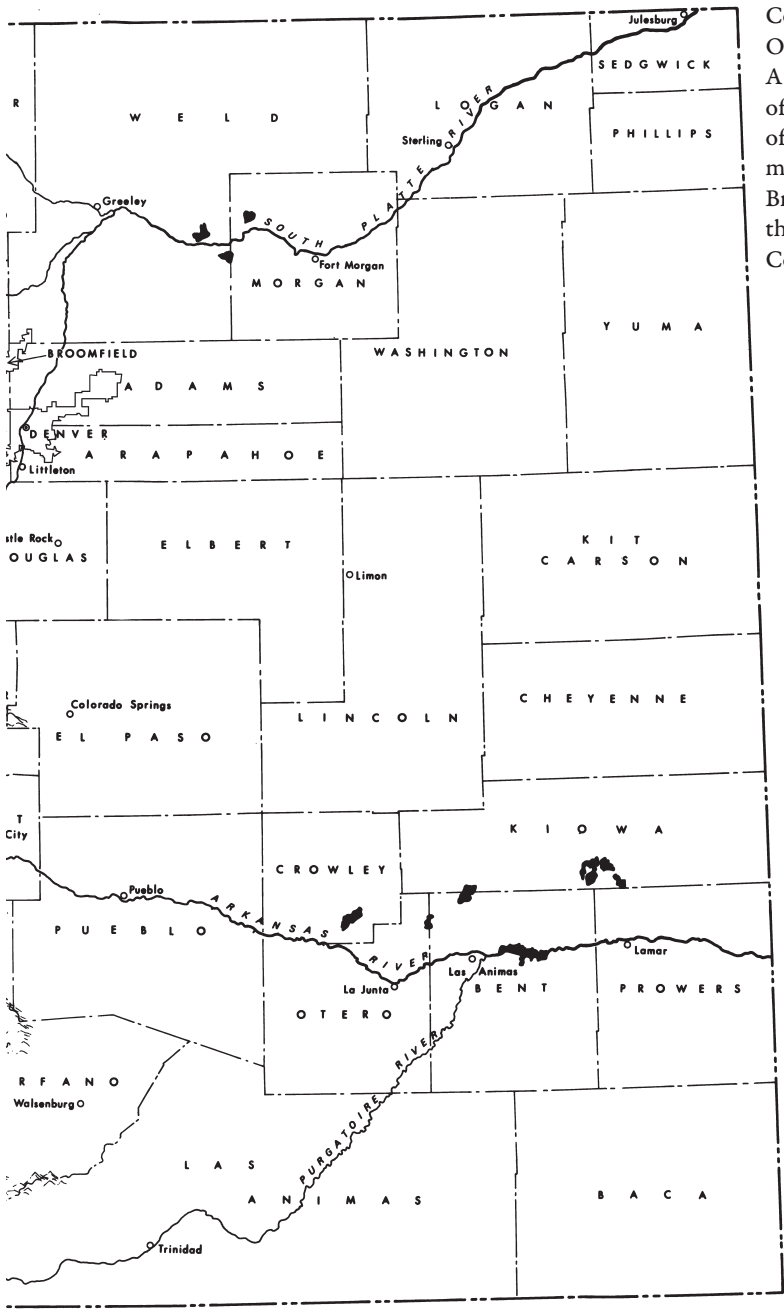
This book explores Colorado's rich, varied, and sometimes contentious history with chapters on Native Americans, Hispanic settlers, women, and the diverse people who make up the state. It treats mining entrepreneurs and mine laborers, city dwellers and farmers. It singles out the varied contributions of mining, agriculture, tourism, and urban finance to the state's economic growth. It looks at Colorado's development as it has been affected by decisions in world capitals and New York boardrooms. The book also follows a broad chronological pattern. Chapters 1 through 5 cover the period of exploration and initial settlement that ended in the 1870s. Chapter 6 focuses on the fate of Native Americans. Chapters 7 through 14 deal with the era of rapid economic growth from the 1870s through 1920. The remaining ten chapters describe the emergence of the modern state.

FIVE EDITIONS OF *COLORADO* . . .

Carl Abbott began *Colorado: A History of the Centennial State* when he was on the faculty at the University of Denver, and the first edition appeared in 1976, marking Colorado's centennial as a state. For the second edition (1982), Abbott invited Stephen J. Leonard of Metropolitan State College to supply sections on women, as well as immigrant and ethnic groups. David McComb of Colorado State University was enlisted to update material from the 1970s and 1980s. In 1994 Abbott, Leonard, and McComb revised the book for its third edition. For the fourth (2005) edition Leonard added much new material, particularly covering the post-1945 period. David McComb left the project, and Thomas J. Noel of the University of Colorado–Denver became part of it, principally as photo editor.

For this fifth edition Leonard created a new chapter “‘Exterminate Them!': Natives 1850s–90s” that focuses on the clash between Native Americans and Anglo-Americans. Much of the chapter comes from earlier editions, where it appeared as subsections in chapters on “The Era of the Booster” and “The Businessman's State.” Leonard has expanded the chapter formerly titled “Measuring the Limits of Growth” and renamed it “Environmental Challenges.” A new chapter, “Sports,” largely written by Noel, includes new material and consolidates information from chapters in the fourth edition. Leonard has updated and revised the final chapters on the economy and cultural and political wars. Other chapters have undergone minor revisions. The sources section adds recent scholarship and provides a guide to Internet resources. Photo editor Noel has included some new photos and maps.

COLORADO
A History of the Centennial State



Colorado Base Map.
 Original map by Kenneth
 A. Erickson, Department
 of Geography, University
 of Colorado–Boulder,
 modified to include
 Broomfield County and
 the expansion of Denver
 County.

