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I want to stand as close to the edge as I can without going over. Out on the edge you see all the kinds of things you can't see from the center.

—FROM *PLAYER PIANO* BY KURT VONNEGUT

*Life beyond the Boundaries*

SARAH A. HERR AND  
KAREN G. HARRY

This volume considers the identities and social experiences of people who chose to live outside archaeological core areas using case studies from the precontact and protohistoric North American Southwest. Areas with similar types of artifacts, architecture, burial practices, and subsistence patterns are assumed to have been inhabited by people who shared a common group identity. Those areas with strongly patterned material culture, suggestive of implicit or explicit social controls, have been (and are) interpreted as cultural cores (Tainter and Plog 1994). Traditionally, shared group identities within core areas were considered the natural outcome of social interaction. Areas exhibiting greater heterogeneity tended to be viewed as simply “impoverished backwater [areas that were] . . . lesser version[s] of the homeland[s]” (Rice 1988:52) and their cultural differences with cores explained by processes of diffusion and dependency. Archaeologists have tended to focus on core zones; as Rice (1988) has noted, when attention has turned to peripheries, it has generally been from the viewpoint of the centers.

In this volume, the authors instead examine edges as places for understanding structural and social change at multiple spatial scales. To do this, they take

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an agency-oriented approach, in which identity is viewed as an active construction (Brubaker 2006; Calhoun 1994; Cohen 1994, 1999; Giddens 1991). According to this perspective, social identities are phenomena that can be created, shaped, and manipulated by people. How that occurs, of course, depends on any number of situational factors. Since its introduction by Barth in 1969, this so-called constructivist approach has dominated discussions of ethnicity and group identity in sociology and cultural anthropology, but it has been slower to impact the field of archaeology (Barth 1969; though see Hodder 1978 and Shennan 1989 for early archaeological applications). Nevertheless, over the last decade agency-oriented approaches to identity have increased in frequency in the archaeological literature, including that of the North American Southwest (Clark 2001; Clark et al. 2013; Hegmon and Nelson 2007; Ortman 2012; Stone 2015).

If social identity can be created and manipulated by individuals, then edge regions must be viewed as more than just watered-down versions of cores. Rather, the study of identity construction in these areas becomes an important topic in its own right. Reflecting this viewpoint, in recent years archaeologists have begun to explore how and why identities were shaped in edge regions (Rodseth and Parker 2005). However, nearly without exception, these studies have focused on either historic or modern societies that have been impacted by colonialist encounters or prehistoric ones that involved contact with or between state-level societies (see Card 2013a; Deagan 1990; Liebmann 2013; Liebmann and Murphy 2011; Lightfoot, Martinez, and Schiff 1998; Mengoni 2010; Naum 2010; Ogundiran 2014; Rodseth and Parker 2005; Silliman 2015; Ylimaunu et al. 2014), with much of the work in the Americas, the Caribbean, and Africa. Identity formation in edge regions from other settings remains understudied; and consideration of identity in situations apart from culture contact is rare. Nonetheless, as place is a critical part of shared experience, we expect that where people resided on the physical, social, and political landscape influenced the development of social identities in middle-range societies as much as it does under more complex or modern situations. We propose that the life experiences of people living in such edge areas would have afforded different opportunities and constraints for identity formation, and the authors in this volume explore these issues using examples from the North American Southwest.

By way of illustration, we expect that people living in edge regions would have been less subject to the social control of the core but also less able to participate in key identity-defining practices that occurred there. This, in turn, would have fostered limitations as well as opportunities in how the inhabitants

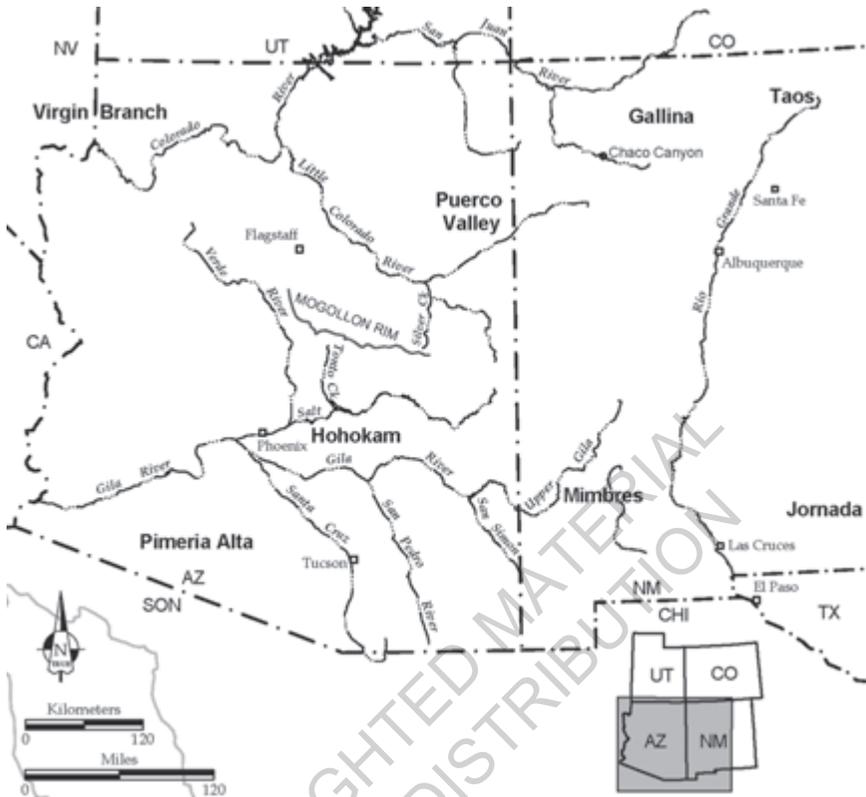


FIGURE 1.1. *Edge regions discussed in this volume.*

elect to define themselves. While they could not participate as full members of the core culture, they would also have had greater freedom to define their economic, social, and political organizations. Similarly, the increased immigration and population mobility that characterized many peripheral areas would have resulted in a greater exposure to diverse ideas and practices, which may have contributed as well to an increased flexibility in identity formation.

In fact, as several chapters in this volume demonstrate, edge areas often served as incubators of change, as places where flexible social identities were tolerated and even encouraged (figure 1.1). Social identity shifted substantially in the marginal Virgin Branch Puebloan region, the Puerco Valley, the Pimería Alta, and the San Pedro River Valley. In other areas, however—including the Jornada Mogollon, San Simon, and Upper Gila areas—identities, while differentiated from those of the core areas, exhibited long-term

stability. Understanding why these differences occurred and why identity formation took the form it did requires the use of a relational approach. Social identities result from relationships with individuals, with landscapes, and with histories. Relying on various types of archaeological evidence, the authors in this volume use a variety of methods and theoretical approaches to examine the contextual setting within which identities were created, modified, and maintained in border settings.

## TYPES OF EDGE REGIONS

Areas outside the heartlands of archaeological cultures have been variously referred to as frontiers, borderlands, peripheries, hinterlands, and marginal zones. Each of these terms connotes something located beyond the geographical edge of a more powerful or established culture, but beyond that, there has been little consensus on their precise meanings. As Hall (2009:25) has noted in regard to the term *frontiers*, “there are almost as many definitions . . . as there are people who have studied them.” Our goal in this volume is to take the emphasis away from the terms themselves and to disarticulate edge regions from connotations that are binary in construction and that ascribe particular economic or political relationships with core areas. Instead, we wish to examine the organization of the people who inhabit these spaces on their own terms. We seek to understand both the motivations and the experiences of the people who resided in these areas, as well as the significance of these spaces for understanding the social and political landscapes of the indigenous Southwest.

Two major considerations are relevant to understanding the construction of identities outside of core areas. The first involves whether the region experienced a major migration event. Some edge areas experienced significant population influxes within the period examined or within the remembered history of the residents, while others were little affected by migration. When migration did occur, an understanding of population dynamics both before and after the population influx is critical to the study of identity formation. A second factor relevant to the issue is demography; specifically, the size and density of the population that inhabited the edge area. Both factors are important because they affect the relationship people have with the available land and other resources, the scale of social networks, and the sustainability of various economic and social formations—all of which play important roles in how and why social identities are formed, modified, or sustained.

The case studies presented in this volume include some that were impacted by one or more migration events and others that were not. By migration, we

do not mean the seasonal rounds or regular relocations that often occur in regions; rather, we confine the term's meaning to the relatively long-term residential relocation of one or more social groups (Clark 2007; Herr and Clark 1997). Such migrations are represented archaeologically as a disjuncture in the material culture of a region or a definitive increase or decrease in regional population. These types of migrations would have been significant events for the people who experienced them. They are distinct from daily and seasonal circulations and multiyear patterns of residential mobility—that is, from the regular movements of people that characterized most areas of the indigenous Southwest at one time or another. It is important to remember that, as conveyed in oral histories and implied in the archaeological record, even these event-scale migrations were the aggregate of numerous small events involving only families or groups of families over many years.

In those edge areas that were impacted by migration, the history of the migrants and their goals for moving are fundamental to understanding the development of social identities in the new lands. Some migrants elected to replicate the practices of their homelands in their new environment, while for others migration was an act of rejection of their homeland's status quo. Either way, the institutional vacuum encountered outside core areas provided the migrants with the opportunity, and perhaps even the demand, to rework aspects of their homeland culture. Where people of other populations were encountered, new types of social communication were developed.

In regions where migration events are not evident, the material culture suggests that social identities were often stable over long periods of time (though not always, as illustrated by the Virgin Branch Puebloan people; see chapter 5). Where migration did occur, its impact was influenced by the causes, size, scale, organization, and timing of the migration(s), as well as the social distance between the migrants in the destination community.

Our second axial variable is demography. Population size and density strongly correlate with expressions of social identity, with the most overtly signaled identities associated with large populations and long occupational sequences. In contrast, where the population is more dispersed or fluid, identities tend to be less strongly signaled (Bernardini 2005:165; Duff 2002). There are several reasons why this might occur. First, lower population densities mean that fewer people regularly interact, which creates fewer opportunities for strongly patterned social behaviors to develop. Second, in sparsely populated areas, the need for labor and for mechanisms by which settlements can sustain themselves reproductively creates a need for broad social networks (Rautman 1993, 1996). Finally, in areas of low densities, there are fewer

contested resources and so less need for establishing exclusive rights to territory and for signaling ownership.

Many archaeological models, particularly those about social identity, are built upon the assumption that resources are contested. When land is scarce relative to the number of people, the transmission of land becomes regulated and exclusionary practices may develop to prevent outsiders from staking claims. Strong group identities are likely to develop to strengthen the group's claim on this resource, and land and material wealth become primary sources of prestige. However, when land is abundant relative to the number of people, the fundamental value system changes, so that people and their labor become more highly valued (Herr 2001). Marriage partners, participants in communal work groups, and social contacts that can pass along needed information may all be more difficult to find in areas of low population. Thus, widespread social ties are necessary for community sustainability, and organizations may develop to encourage cooperation between people of diverse backgrounds. Under these circumstances, exclusionary group symbols will not be present in the material culture.

The relationships between these two key variables, migration and demography, lead us to propose four types of edge areas, which we define as joint-use territories, frontiers, uncontested areas, and contact zones (table 1.1). Though presented here as discrete types, they are parts of a continuum, as are the variables of population and migration. Nonetheless, these four categories provide a heuristic mechanism for examining the different processes involved in the creation of border societies. This typology emphasizes the historical contexts and motivations of people living in these edge areas and reflects our desire to disarticulate considerations of edges from interpretations that assume the historical trajectories of these regions are inevitably determined by more powerful and dominant cores.

#### JOINT-USE TERRITORIES

Joint-use territories refer to areas that have low populations and that were not impacted by migration events. Located between densely populated regions, these areas were visited and occupied by a mixture of people from surrounding areas, yet they lay beyond the political or ideological realm of any single group (Bayman 2007). Their inhabitants included local populations that remained in the area, as well as non-local people who circulated in and out of the region on a regular basis. Settlement patterns generally reflect a high degree of residential mobility.

TABLE 1.1. Types of edge areas

<i>Event-Scale Migration</i>	<i>Population Density</i>	
	<i>Lower</i>	<i>Higher</i>
Absent	Joint-use territory	Uncontested area
Present	Frontier	Contact zone

High mobility and population diversity in joint-use areas resulted in the development of weaker social, political, and ideological organizations than those exhibited in core areas and also affected group identity. Because these areas were occupied by people from different backgrounds, their material cultures were diverse and reflected exchange relationships or ties with a variety of regions. A lack of regular, daily interaction between the inhabitants precluded the development of a shared, cohesive identity within joint-use areas, and identity markers continued to reflect the homelands from which people came. These markers, however, were muted because of the need to facilitate interaction between people of differing backgrounds. Overt social symbols, such as communal architecture or large quantities of locally produced painted ceramics, were rare (Bayman 2007).

Two examples of joint-use territories discussed in this volume are the sub-Mogollon Rim (chapter 7) and the early (pre-AD 750) occupation of the Puerco Valley (chapter 6). Both areas were characterized by sparse populations of residentially mobile farmers from different areas. Their diverse backgrounds are reflected in architectural and ceramic variations, but the variability is subtle and diagnostic cultural markers are less obvious than they are in adjacent core areas. Decorated ceramics are present but infrequent, comprising only about 1 percent of ceramic collections. In both regions architectural variations occur between sites, suggesting that different ethnicities were present but that they tended not to co-reside at the same settlements. Communal architecture is absent in both regions.

A closer look at the sub-Mogollon Rim region highlights the social processes involved in the creation of joint-use areas. As is typical of these regions, settlements were small, rarely containing more than five contemporaneous houses. As Herr and Clark (chapter 7) point out, such small settlements were not sustainable. In fact, the archaeological record suggests that the inhabitants of the area created a variety of social connections needed to sustain their lifeways.

Enculturative technologies (see chapter 7) such as paddle and anvil pottery and house-in-pit construction demonstrate that some households shared an ancient connection with Phoenix Basin populations. An absence of ballcourts

and paucity of pre-Classic Hohokam iconography, however, indicates that they were not active participants in the Hohokam world; nor did they choose to display that aspect of their background. By avoiding the adoption and display of overt Hohokam symbols, households more easily established connections with other people in the region. Far more routine and enduring was an intraregional exchange of utilitarian brown ware ceramics.

## FRONTIERS

As a term that has strong popular associations in American culture, much ink has been spilled over the connotations of the word *frontier*. For our purposes we define it as a sparsely populated area that is located outside core regions and that has been created by one or more migrations. A frontier was not necessarily an empty landscape, but resident populations tended to be dispersed or decentralized. Frontiers differ from joint-use areas in that population influxes were of migrants who came with the intent to establish more enduring settlements.

In chapter 2, Peeples and Mills use social network analysis methods to evaluate the characteristics of sites positioned beyond and between major settlement clusters in the Southwest between AD 1200 and AD 1450. They compare their results with those of frontier theories derived from anthropological and historical literature and explore whether frontier settlements occupy socially advantageous positions. Their analysis suggests that “beyond and between” positioning and low population density are key characteristics of frontiers and that settlements within these zones tend to be more isolated and characterized by more diverse exchange relationships than settlements in core regions. The innovative households of Silver Creek and the Middle and Upper Little Colorado River regions produced more than one type of decorated ceramic ware, contributing to the diversity of exchange noted at these sites.

Two processes in particular shape the social identity of frontier settlements. One is the effect of relatively abundant resources and limited labor on social formations and shared values. As with joint-use territories, low population densities meant that physical resources were plentiful and there would have been no need, at least initially, for migrants to adapt exclusionary land-use practices from their homeland. Further, division of labor was often simplified. Where labor was scarce, its use for the creation of prestige objects was rare, so locally produced material culture assemblages consisted primarily of functional items.

The second process is related to the fact that frontiers were often contested places (Guy and Sheridan 1998). A first act of resistance, or opposition, can be

seen in the decision migrants made to leave their homelands and thus to abandon the economic, social, political, and ideological networks of those areas. A second arena for potential contest was their arrival at the frontier, which was often populated by dispersed farmers or mobile foragers. Potential social tensions between newcomers and local residents required continual social negotiation and made frontiers places where old values and relationships were transformed. In some instances, the new relationships eventually stabilized and population growth resulted in sustainable settlements. In such instances, the frontier might become a stable social entity and possibly even a core in its own right (as noted by Fowles, chapter 3).

Chapters in this volume describe frontier settlements that attempt to recreate parts of the home settlements and those that create a new alternative. After about AD 750, migrants from the San Juan Basin, Mesa Verde, and the Kayenta/Tusayan regions moved into the Puerco Valley and attempted to recreate the social structures of their homelands. The newcomers encountered a landscape occupied only by small groups of residentially mobile farmers. How the frontier process unfolded in this region is exemplified at the site of Allantown, a ninth-century settlement founded by migrants from the Mesa Verde region (chapter 6).

Allantown was constructed on prime agricultural lands, near the mouth of a tributary of the Puerco River. The first part of the village to be settled was the village core, which was architecturally and, presumably, ethnically homogeneous. Initial construction in the village consisted of habitation quarters and a dance court, with two kivas constructed nearby soon thereafter. Shortly after its founding, a heterogeneous mix of people from other cultural traditions, including some from the local population, settled along the village margins. Throgmorton (chapter 6) suggests that the communal architecture served as a catalyst for these other people to join the village. Thus, it appears that the Mesa Verde settlers used ceremonial and public architecture to recruit people, increase their social power, and perhaps legitimize their claims to the land (also, Herr 2001). A legacy of this social strategy, Throgmorton suggests, was the rise of a Chaco-era great house community in the vicinity during subsequent centuries.

In other instances, migrants tried to create an entirely different social world. For example, Borck (chapter 4) proposes that migrations to the Gallina area were acts of resistance against homeland lifestyles. Beginning at around AD 1050, immigrants from a variety of regions moved into the Gallina area where they created a new, shared social identity. This new social order was characterized by an exceptionally homogeneous material culture and by the adoption

of new technological forms, such as pole-notched axes and pointed-bottomed vessels. Despite strong conformity in the material culture, the new society was politically decentralized and characterized by a simple material culture. Objects of prestige, such as long-distance trade goods and decorated pottery, were rare. Borck proposes that the simplicity of the Gallina culture represents an intentional rejection of the social and political centralization seen in core regions and a throwback to earlier periods in the migrants' homeland cultures.

#### UNCONTESTED AREAS

Like cores, uncontested areas were places of deep history and continuity of occupation. Uncontested areas were reproductively sustainable, although population was generally lower than that of core areas. The absence of event-scale migrations combined with relatively higher populations set the stage for historic traditions and strong communities of practices to develop. Distinguishing these regions from core areas was a lack of centralizing bureaucracies, institutionalized leadership, and strong ideological movements. While a lack of territorial unification was present at the regional scale, uncontested areas were often characterized by localized territoriality that resulted in the development of rules of land tenure. The region was not a shared space or commons. Material culture within uncontested areas is expected to show clinal patterns of variation, and identity markers should reflect within-group communication rather than between-group signaling. When there were no event-scale immigrations or other external triggering events, social identities often exhibited long-term stability and continuity. Uncontested areas are represented by four of the case studies discussed in this volume. Three of these (the Jornada Mogollon, the San Simon Valley, and the Gila River Valley) were characterized by long-term stability in their identities, while the fourth, the Virgin Branch Puebloan culture, experienced a substantial shift.

In the Jornada Mogollon region, a shared social identity existed for more than a millennium (chapter 8). This identity, with roots in the Archaic period, was signaled by participation in social practices that included agave fermentation and feasting, ceramic technology and design, and the use of symbolic icons. Despite interaction with people of adjacent core regions and participation in widespread trade networks, this identity remained stable until the region was abandoned at around AD 1450. Thus, the Jornada Mogollon identity persisted well after the demise of the nearby Mimbres-Mogollon culture. Further, as Miller (chapter 8) points out, vestiges of Jornada Mogollon iconography can be seen in later puebloan societies. Miller suggests that this continuity in

material culture reflects a continuation of “an essential Mimbres–Mogollon/Jornada–Mogollon identity” made possible by the remoteness of the Jornada region. This region, Miller proposes, served as a “reservoir of historic memory, tradition, and belief” that ensured the continuation of aspects of the Mogollon culture long after its disappearance in other areas.

A similar situation characterizes the San Simon and Upper Gila River Valleys (chapter 9). Despite a general similarity to the Mimbres culture, Gilman (chapter 9) argues that the people in these valleys maintained separate identities that remained stable for nearly four centuries. In the San Simon Valley, social identity was created in part by long-term social relationships with Mimbres people to the east and Hohokam people to the west. Gilman suggests that individuals from these cultures regularly moved in and out of the valley and that this movement remained a regular part of the social landscape from AD 750 to AD 1130. This heterogeneous population contributed to the emergence of a social identity unique to the San Simon Valley. This identity appears to have been shared by all people living there, regardless of whether their occupation was short-term or long-term.

An entirely different situation characterizes the lowland Virgin Branch region (chapter 5). There, despite population stability, a significant shift in identity occurred during the transition to agriculture. Data presented by Harry and Watson (this volume) suggest that the lowland Virgin Branch Puebloan people descended from an ancestral population genetically related to Great Basin groups. However, sometime between AD 300 and AD 500, their ancestors adopted farming and, nearly simultaneously, renegotiated aspects of their identity to conform to that of nearby Ancestral Puebloan cultures. But this transformation was not total. While adopting many aspects of the Puebloan lifeway, including the use of black-on-white pottery and puebloan-style architecture, they elected to retain key aspects of their ancestral heritage.

#### CONTACT ZONES

Contact zones are areas where migrants come into contact with existing populations of some size and density. Unlike encounters that may occur between migrants and locals in other edge types, in contact zones both the incoming and preexisting populations exhibit strong and cohesive group identities. The relatively large group sizes involved, combined with the well-defined social identities, create a dynamic contact situation with the potential for rapid and pronounced change through a variety of social negotiations, conflicts, and accommodations (Card 2013b; Liebmann 2013).

The Lower San Pedro River Valley (chapter 7) illustrates how migrants and local populations may negotiate these new cultural dynamics. In the late eighth century AD, Hohokam inhabitants from the Middle Gila Valley migrated into the San Pedro region, where they constructed settlements and lived side by side with local inhabitants. Unlike in frontier zones, where migrants encountered only small numbers of dispersed occupants, the Middle Gila immigrants were faced with well-established populations living in permanent irrigation-based communities. Access to agricultural lands and irrigation waters would therefore have required the support of the local population. Herr and Clark (chapter 7) propose that this was accomplished through the promulgation of Hohokam ideology. At least ten ballcourt villages are located in the valley; they are evenly spaced, suggesting that the courts served not only local villagers but also those of surrounding settlements. Although members of the resident population maintained their local identities, their use of ballcourts, as well as of buff ware pottery and the Hohokam cremation and mortuary ritual, indicates that they bought into at least some aspects of the Hohokam belief system. Herr and Clark suggest that the acceptance of this new ideology provided the mechanism through which the immigrants were able win over the hearts and minds of the local people and thus to successfully integrate themselves into the valley.

## **THEMES**

The case studies describe regions distinct from our conventional understandings of the past in the Southwest, yet they demonstrate commonalities in how social identities are formed in edge areas. The ways the resident populations of these regions represent their history relative to populated centers, create inclusive or exclusive social organizations, and construct their landscape are key elements of social identity in new places. These processes are briefly described below.

### **RELATIONSHIP WITH POPULATED CENTERS**

Edge regions exhibit varying relationships with nearby population centers but are not full participants in those cultures. Rather than passive recipients of trends established in dominant cultures, the case studies in this volume suggest that people living in these settings made choices about which aspects of core cultures they wished to adopt. A common theme, however, is that the people who move to the edges are rejecting a core area ideology even as they maintain other organizational characteristics of the homeland.

For example, the lowland Virgin Branch farmers (chapter 5) emulated most aspects of the puebloan lifestyle, signifying that they primarily identified as members of that culture. However, a lack of kivas and mealing rooms indicates that they had no qualms about ignoring those parts of puebloan lifestyles that did not fit into their worldview. Harry and Watson (chapter 5) propose that the absence of these structures reflects an intentional rejection of the rigid communal structures and social behaviors associated with these features. A similar situation occurred in the Upper Gila and San Simon regions, where, despite a general similarity to the Mimbres culture, the inhabitants elected not to adopt the Mimbres religious belief system (chapter 9). Residents of the Tonto Basin, sub-Mogollon Rim, and Papagueria did not adopt the Hohokam ballcourt-focused ideology.

Other people went even further in the rejection of core lifeways. The inhabitants of the Gallina (chapter 4) and Taos regions (chapter 3) appear to have actively rejected membership in the core cultures. Borck (chapter 4) and Fowles (chapter 3) propose that migrants to these areas moved beyond the reach of the cores to establish new lifeways for themselves.

#### TOLERANCE OF THE OTHER AND SOCIAL FLUIDITY

The case studies presented in this volume differ in the degree to which the cultural participants tolerated “active expression[s] of ethnic otherness” (Stone 2015:16). In some areas, there was a very low tolerance for expressions of cultural diversity, while other identities were encouraged or at least allowed. The inclusive or exclusive nature of social group living in edge regions results from strategic and localized choices related to the social and political context and access to resources (Lightfoot and Martinez 1995:477).

At one extreme were the Gallina people (chapter 4), who maintained an insular society and tolerated little variability in expressions of identity. Despite being composed of people from many different backgrounds, their material culture was strikingly homogeneous. Further, a notable lack of contemporary ceramics from other regions suggests that ceramic exchange (and, by extension, presumably interaction) with people of outside cultures was discouraged (chapter 4). In other areas, inhabitants were more tolerant of displays of cultural diversity. In the Puerco Valley (chapter 6), the San Simon Valley (chapter 9), and the San Pedro Valley (chapter 7), evidence suggests that people of varying backgrounds lived side by side. In still other areas there is little or no evidence of ethnic co-residence, but the individuals themselves exhibited substantial flexibility in expressions of identity. The lowland Virgin Branch people

(chapter 5) exhibited identities that were closely linked to Ancestral Puebloan groups, but they retained some technologies of their Great Basin ancestors, such as hunting practices and stone tool technologies. Harry and Watson (chapter 5) argue that the retention of these practices reflects the preservation of deeply held cultural values held in common with other descendants from the Great Basin. Thus, their culture was a hybrid one in which both Puebloan identities and ancestral, Great Basin–related ones were expressed in different aspects of their daily lifeways.

As described by Jelinek and Brenneman (chapter 10), in the early historic period of the Pimería Alta, individual identities also exhibited a great deal of flexibility, triggered by fluctuating political and social alliances. When Spanish colonizers arrived in the Pimería Alta during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, they encountered a region variously occupied by as many as nineteen different indigenous groups. In response to persistent conflict, these groups formed, dissolved, and reshaped alliances with one another, with little apparent regard for ethnic, linguistic, kinship, or religious ties. Negotiation of social identities was a fluid process, and identities and social unions could and did rapidly change as circumstances demanded.

#### PLACEMAKING STRATEGIES

Place plays a strong role in the construction of identity. For the indigenous people of the Southwest, daily life plays out within deeply symbolic landscapes that are inscribed with historical and ritual meanings. Landscape features can serve as “metonyms to evoke stories and values” (Van Dyke 2011:405) and, as such, can contribute to the sense of community and maintenance of group identities. The act of imbuing a landscape with places of significance is referred to as placemaking (Eiselt 2012:145) and has been well-documented among modern-day Southwestern peoples (Basso 1996; Carmean 2002; Eiselt 2012) as well as for those who lived in prehistoric core areas (Duff 2002; Snead 2008; Van Dyke 2011; Whittlesey 2007).

Placemaking played no less a role in prehistoric edge regions. Miller (chapter 8) reports that among the Jornada Mogollon, mountains and caves were part of a “cosmological and conceptual world” that had roots well before the establishment of the Jornada culture. Representations of these landscape features are found inscribed on objects and reflected in cultural practices. Symbols of caves and mountains appear on ceramics, rock art, and other objects; and items associated with these landscapes played important roles in the society. For example, Miller reports that speleothem were often used in dedication

deposits and in the ritual termination of structures. He proposes that these cultural references reinforced connections among the society, its belief system, and the landscape and that expression of these connections was a powerful mechanism for creating and reinforcing group identity and social cohesion.

Placemaking can also play an important role in migration by making new places familiar and legitimizing claims to new landscapes. Migrants often transport cosmogeographies, which link landscape features to primordial narratives, from their homelands to newly occupied areas. As Eiselt (2012:145) notes, this is possible “because cosmogeographies are conceived relative to the body, [which means] they are timeless and transportable. They can apply to any time or place without significant loss of meaning as new lands are discovered or occupied.”

Unlike the Jornada people, whose ancestors had lived in the region for centuries or millennia, the immigrants to Taos were newcomers to the landscape (chapter 3). Connections to place were established in part through the use of constructions and geographical features that metaphorically expressed their origin beliefs and created timeless relationships between them and the area. Claims of ancient connections to the landscape are reflected in the locations in which they elected to construct their villages, ceremonial complexes they built on hilltops, and rock shrines and stone cupules constructed in surrounding vicinities. These constructions anchored the people to the landscape and established the area as their primordial homeland.

## CONCLUSION

Place is a key part of social identity. The chapters in this volume explore how people in the past experienced life in spaces outside the major population centers of the North American Southwest and how these experiences shaped their social characters. Archaeologists studying such areas have struggled to identify the appropriate terminology and models to describe these situations, often borrowing nomenclatures developed in reference to modern or historic situations. Borrowed nomenclatures include the terms *peripheries*, *borderlands*, *frontiers*, and *hinterlands*—all of which involve concepts that implicitly ascribe relationships of political, economic, or cultural dependence between the edge region and its associated core. The chapters in this volume, however, demonstrate the importance of examining edge regions in their own right and not simply from the vantage of the core. They show that, as others have argued (Lightfoot and Martinez 1995; Rice 1988; Van Gijsegem 2006), edge-area inhabitants were not mere recipients of trends and behaviors initiated in core

zones but that they played an active role in the events unfolding in their lives. Lending support to the call for the adoption of new approaches in the study of edge areas are the results of the macro-regional social network analysis presented in chapter 2, which demonstrate that peripheral areas were structurally different from cores in their external social connections.

In this introductory chapter we have argued that despite broad variability in the character of edge areas, there existed commonalities in their formation. We have defined four non-discrete types, with the hope that these will spur other researchers to take a more nuanced approach to investigating such areas. The type templates for joint-use areas, frontiers, contact zones, and uncontested grounds describe the contexts in which edge areas were formed. While the case studies in this volume show how historically contingent and subject to circumstance all edges were, there were also processes common to all. First, residents of these regions defined themselves relative to the population's center, regardless of whether the center was their ancestral homeland. They actively chose what to accept and what to reject, even as they were constrained by circumstances of population size and density and of differences in the economic and social landscapes of their new home. Second, the character of each region is further defined by how inclusive or exclusive residents were in their acceptance of other groups into their settlements and communities. Residents' responses to their transitional space on the landscape were highly variable. Several chapters in this volume demonstrate cultural fluidity and change in edge regions; other regions exhibited remarkable stability and conservatism. Finally, placemaking was a critical part of life in edge regions. Several case studies show that people opted out of participating in a macro-regional ideology, even as more deeply held and localized ideologies endured in what Miller (chapter 8) has described as a "historic reservoir of memory." As migrants adjusted to their new locales, beliefs transported from ancestral homelands were often reconstituted to situate the new homeland at the center of their cosmogeography.

In their review of the frontier concept, Lightfoot and Martinez (1995:472) describe these regions as "socially charged places where innovative culture constructs are created and transformed." This is visible in the edge zone processes of creation and recreation, reconstruction, and negotiations, described above. In the chapters in this volume, the authors describe edges that became centers of new types of social formations, became core areas, were centers of new economic distributions, were founding places for new local or regional ideologies, or were the place where ancient rites were maintained despite new cults.

As we examine edge areas, we are cautioned to avoid projecting modern-day biases into the past. Geographic marginality does not necessarily equate

to economic, political, or social marginality. Although it is tempting to infer that areas characterized by “weak patterns” (a pattern of variability in material culture, *sensu* Tainter and Plog 1994) as “weaker” or less desirable places to live, it is unlikely that the residents of these areas ever viewed them in this manner (chapter 3; chapter 8). Further, we should be aware that some areas considered marginal may only appear so because they have been understudied compared to core zones. For example, the Safford Basin in southeastern Arizona, portions of the Papagueria, and the Colorado River Valley of western Arizona are areas that may have had populations as large as those of many core areas in prehistory but today are characterized by low populations compared to urban centers. The rural nature of these areas today has biased our perspective of prehistory, both because there is a tendency to project current states into the past and because the lack of development has resulted in few cultural resource management investigations, making them appear as voids on interpretative maps.

From the problems of nomenclature to the application of inappropriate models and assumptions, it is clear that the anthropological archaeology of edge regions is under-theorized. Even in the small collection of case studies presented in this volume, the conditions and experiences of life in edge regions are widely variable. The identity of individuals in these socially intermediate places and the organizational structure of the place itself may be transitory or in fluctuation, belying standard expectations of developmental trajectories. Edge regions need new methods, new comparative points of view, and diverse theoretical approaches, from big data and deep history to new ways to examine and understand resistance or persistence. The subject begs for nuanced, multi-scalar approaches to the study of lifeways outside the better-studied, more highly populated, and long-occupied central places. Though this volume cannot pretend to fulfill these many needs, the chapters in this book represent the beginnings of such an effort. Ultimately, we hope these case studies challenge archaeologists working in other regions and encourage them to draw on the tools of archaeological interpretation best suited to understanding heterogeneity, diversity, and nonconformity and consider that the residents of edge regions may be significant agents of change, taking a fundamental role in shaping and reshaping social, political, and ideological practices.

In the following chapters, social identity is examined in edge areas that span the North American Southwest. Authors from different theoretical schools use a variety of methods to consider lifeways in these zones, including the examination of architecture, ceramics, lithics, iconography, human remains, and ethnographic and historical records. In chapter 2, Peeples and Mills examine the structural characteristics of areas located outside the core regions

using social network analysis and demonstrate that such areas are distinguishable from cores in terms of their social ties. Chapters 3 through 7 examine edge regions located near the northern Ancestral Puebloan cores, while chapters 8 through 10 consider edge regions adjacent to the cores located on the desert regions of the southern Southwest. It is our hope that these chapters will spark renewed interest in the study of edge regions and encourage researchers to examine such areas through new lenses.

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