

THE PUEBLO REVOLT OF 1680: POWER, STRATEGY, AND RESISTANCE

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As the United States commemorates the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, Americans are reflecting on the people, events, and ideals that shaped our nation's history. Yet nearly a century before delegates gathered in Philadelphia, another revolt unfolded in what is now New Mexico. In August 1680, Pueblo communities united around Santa Fe to drive Spanish authorities from the region, forcing them to abandon New Mexico for the next twelve years. Despite its extraordinary success, the Pueblo Revolt remains largely absent from the way early American history is taught.

The Santa Fe Plaza is one of the most recognizable public spaces in the American Southwest. For more than four centuries it has served as the political, commercial, and cultural heart of New Mexico. Thousands of visitors cross it every day, stopping to admire the Palace of the Governors, browse the work of Native artists beneath its portal, or simply enjoy one of the oldest continuously occupied public squares in the United States (Figure 1). Few realize they are also standing on one of the most significant battlefields in early American history. Archaeological excavations conducted in and around the Plaza have uncovered lead musket balls, gunflints, and stone projectile points dating to the late seventeenth century. No single artifact can be conclusively linked to the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. Archaeology rarely offers that degree of certainty. Instead, historians and archaeologists rely upon the weight of evidence: the dating of the artifacts, where they were recovered, the types of weapons they represent, and contemporary Spanish accounts describing a siege centered on this very location. Together, the archaeological and documentary evidence strongly indicate that the fighting of August 1680 unfolded beneath the streets and sidewalks crossed by millions of tourists each year.¹

Figure 1. The Palace of the Governors, built in 1610 in Santa Fe, New Mexico.



Those discoveries remind us that the Pueblo Revolt was far more than an isolated act of resistance. It was one of the most carefully planned and coordinated Indigenous uprisings in North American history. Within just eleven days, from August 10 through August 21, 1680, Pueblo communities attacked Spanish settlements across northern New Mexico, surrounded the colonial capital at Santa Fe, and forced Governor Antonio de Otermín, together with soldiers, missionaries, settlers, women, and children, to retreat nearly 300 miles south to El Paso del Norte.²

How did this happen? How did dozens of politically independent communities, speaking different languages, separated by mountains, mesas, and river valleys, and lacking any centralized government, coordinate one of the most successful anti-colonial

campaigns in North American history? To answer that question, we must first understand the people who carried out the revolt, the colonial system they resisted, and the extraordinary level of planning required to unite communities across one of North America's most challenging landscapes.

Who Were the Pueblo Peoples?

The Spanish word *pueblo* simply means *village*, but the term can be misleading. It suggests a single people when the Pueblo world consisted of dozens of independent communities spread across what is now New Mexico, northeastern Arizona, and southwest Colorado. Taos, Pecos, Jemez, Cochiti, Santo Domingo (today Kewa Pueblo), Acoma, Zuni, Hopi, Ohkay Owingeh, and many others each maintained their own leadership, traditions, alliance-

es, and histories. They spoke several distinct languages, including Tewa, Tiwa, Towa, Keres, and Zuni, and were never united under a single political authority.³ Many of these communities traced their ancestry to the great Ancestral Puebloan (formerly Anasazi) civilizations that built places such as Chaco Canyon and Mesa Verde. Although those population centers had been abandoned centuries before Spanish arrival, their descendants continued to farm the Rio Grande Valley, cultivating corn, beans, and squash through sophisticated irrigation systems while constructing the multi-story adobe villages that so impressed early European visitors.⁴

Appreciating that diversity is essential because it immediately raises one of the central questions of the Pueblo Revolt. How could communities this independent coordinate a common military campaign? Looking at a modern map begins to illustrate the challenge (Figure 2). Some pueblos lay only a few miles apart. Others were separated by mountain ranges, broad deserts, and river valleys, with many communities speaking entirely different languages. Historian David Roberts describes seventeenth-century New Mexico as a landscape that naturally encouraged local independence rather than centralized authority. The distances between communities, combined with the region's rugged geography, made large-scale political cooperation extraordinarily difficult under ordinary circumstances.⁵

Yet, in August 1680, communities across northern New Mexico acted with remarkable coordination. That achievement becomes even more extraordinary when viewed against the geography of the region. Today we can drive between Santa Fe, Taos, Acoma, Jemez, and Zuni in a matter of hours. In the seventeenth century, every mile had to be walked, every message had to be carried by hand, and every agreement depended upon trust between communities that had governed themselves independently for generations.

The geography also reminds us that the Pueblo Revolt was not predestined. It required communication, planning, and leadership. And, most importantly, cooperation among communities that had every reason to remain independent. Understanding that challenge is the first step toward discerning why the revolt remains one of the most remarkable military achievements in North American history. Before exploring how Pueblo leaders coordinated that effort, however, we must first examine the colonial system they were resisting.

Spanish Exploration and Colonization

Conflict between Spanish colonists and Pueblo communities did not begin in 1680, nor did it even begin with the establishment of Santa Fe. Its roots stretched back more than a century, to the first Spanish expeditions into what is now New Mexico. In 1540,



Figure 2. Map of the 19 still active, sovereign Pueblos in New Mexico.

Francisco Vázquez de Coronado led an expedition north from New Spain in search of the legendary Seven Cities of Gold.⁶ Instead of finding wealthy kingdoms, Coronado encountered thriving Pueblo communities unlike anything his expedition had expected. These were not small, nomadic villages. They were permanent settlements built of stone and adobe, supported by sophisticated agriculture, carefully engineered irrigation systems, and regional trade networks that had developed over centuries.⁷

As was the way with Spanish conquistadors, initial curiosity quickly gave way to conflict and oppression. During the winter of 1540–1541, Coronado's soldiers occupied several Tiwa pueblos near present-day Albuquerque in what historians now call the Tiguex War. Spanish forces seized food and shelter for the winter, demands that placed enormous strain on Pueblo communities already preparing for the cold months ahead. When Pueblo residents resisted, fighting broke out. Spanish soldiers burned villages, executed prisoners, and used cavalry and firearms against communities that had never encountered European military tactics.⁸

Although Coronado abandoned New Mexico in 1542 without discovering the wealth he sought, the expedition permanently changed Spanish perceptions of the region. The pueblos were no longer unknown, mythical places; Spain now believed they could eventually be incorporated into its expanding empire. And almost sixty years later, that ambition became reality. In 1598, Juan de Oñate led approximately four hundred colonists, soldiers, priests, servants, and their families north across the Rio Grande, establishing Spain's first permanent colony in New Mexico. Unlike Coronado's expedition, Oñate did not intend to explore and leave. His mission was to establish communities, spread Christianity, and extend Spanish authority into the northern frontier of New Spain.⁹ Twelve years later, in 1610, the colonial capital was established in Santa Fe. At its center stood the Palace of the Governors, which still overlooks the Santa Fe Plaza today and remains the oldest continuously occupied public building in the United States (Figure 1).¹⁰

On paper, the new colony appeared secure. In reality, it occupied one of the most isolated frontiers of the Spanish Empire. Unlike the wealthy mining centers established in Mexico or Peru, New Mexico possessed no major deposits of gold or silver. It attracted few Spanish settlers, remained hundreds of miles from the nearest large population centers of New Spain, and depended upon supply caravans that traveled months across difficult terrain.¹¹ That dependence created an important contradiction, with the colony relying upon the very communities it sought to control. Pueblo farmers produced much of the food that sustained Spanish settlements. Pueblo labor constructed churches, government buildings, irrigation systems, roads, and homes. Through systems of tribute and repartimiento Pueblo communities were expected to provide both goods and labor to support the colony.¹² Religion intensified those tensions even further.

Franciscan missionaries viewed New Mexico as a mission frontier where Pueblo communities would gradually abandon their traditional beliefs and embrace Catholicism. Missions spread throughout the colony; churches were constructed in Pueblo villages, and traditional ceremonies were either discouraged or fully prohibited. Sacred masks, ceremonial objects, and prayer sticks were confiscated or destroyed. In some communities, churches were deliberately built alongside, or even directly above, traditional ceremonial spaces known as kivas, symbolizing both the physical and spiritual reach of Spanish authority.¹³ To the missionaries, these efforts represented the spread of Christianity. But to Pueblo communities, religion was not simply a matter of personal belief. It shaped agriculture, seasonal ceremonies, Pueblo leadership, kinship, and the relationship between people and the natural world. Efforts to suppress Pueblo religious practices therefore threatened much more than worship; they challenged the social and cultural foundations of Pueblo life itself.¹⁴

Figure 3. Acoma Pueblo today, also known as Sky City, as it sits high atop a mesa.



If Pueblo communities needed a reminder of what resistance to Spanish authority could bring, they received one in 1599. Following the deaths of thirteen Spanish soldiers during a confrontation at Acoma Pueblo, Oñate ordered a punitive campaign under the command of Vicente de Zaldivar. Perched atop a sandstone mesa rising 350 feet above the surrounding plain, Acoma was one of the most naturally defensible communities in North America (Figure 3). Yet after a fierce three-day assault, Spanish forces captured the village using firearms, crossbows, scaling ladders, and overwhelming military force.¹⁵ The aftermath became one of the most infamous episodes in the history of early Spanish New Mexico. Historians estimate that approximately 500 Pueblo men and as many as 300 women and children were killed during or immediately after the assault at Acoma. Hundreds of survivors were enslaved. Official Spanish records further describe twenty-four adult men being sentenced to the amputation of one foot, a punishment intended not only to cripple those individuals but to warn other Pueblo communities of the consequences of resisting Spanish authority.¹⁶

While Spanish officials viewed Acoma as the suppression of a rebellion, Pueblo communities remembered it as something else entirely. For generations, stories of Acoma became part of a collective memory of colonial violence. While the massacre did not immediately cause the Pueblo Revolt to come, it demonstrated the costs of resistance and became one of the experiences passed from one generation to the next as memories of Spanish rule accumulated. By the middle of the seventeenth century, those tensions had only deepened. And then the environment began working against the colony.

The Crisis of the 1670s

By the 1670s life under Spanish rule had become an ongoing negotiation between adaptation and survival. Colonial officials demanded tribute and labor. Missionaries continued their efforts to suppress traditional religious practices. The memory of earlier violence, including Acoma, had not disappeared. And beginning in the late 1660s and continuing into the 1670s, New Mexico experienced a prolonged period of drought. Harvests declined across the region, placing increasing pressure on Pueblo farmers who depended upon successful crops to sustain their own communities. Yet despite failing harvests, Pueblo villages were still expected to provide tribute that helped support Spanish settlements. The demands of the colonial system did not diminish simply because crops failed.¹⁷

At the same time, raiding war parties from surrounding Apache tribes increased throughout the region. Both Pueblo communities and Spanish settlements suffered attacks, and Spanish officials often proved unable to provide the protection they claimed colonial rule would bring. The result was a growing sense of insecurity that affected nearly every community in northern New Mexico.

Environmental hardship alone, however, did not produce the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. Neither did religious conflict, or the memory of Acoma. Rather, it was the convergence of decades of political, religious, economic, and environmental pressures that created the conditions in which revolt became possible. History often turns on moments when long-standing tensions collide with an immediate catalyst. For New Mexico, that catalyst arrived in 1675. In 1675, Governor Juan Francisco de Treviño, determined to suppress the continued practice of Pueblo religion, ordered the arrest of forty-seven Pueblo religious leaders. Spanish authorities

accused them of practicing sorcery; a term they commonly used to describe the continuation of traditional Pueblo religious ceremonies.¹⁸ These arrests were intended to weaken Pueblo religious leadership; instead, they exposed just how much influence those Pueblo leaders still possessed. Spanish accounts differ slightly on the details, but historians agree that three of the prisoners were executed, while another died in custody before his execution. The remaining religious leaders were publicly whipped and imprisoned, somewhere near the Palace of the Governors overlooking today's Santa Fe Plaza.¹⁹



Figure 4. Statue of Po'pay, sculpted by Jemez Pueblo sculptor Cliff Fragua, that stands in the National Statuary Hall Collection in Washington D.C.

While the punishment was meant to send a message, it was not the one Treviño intended. News of the arrests quickly spread across Pueblo country. And according to Spanish accounts, approximately seventy-armed Pueblo men, representing several different Pueblos, traveled to Santa Fe to demand the prisoners' release.²⁰ Treviño suddenly faced a difficult reality, as he did not possess enough soldiers to risk provoking a larger uprising. So, he

reluctantly ordered the surviving prisoners to be released. From the Spanish perspective, the immediate crisis had passed. From the Pueblo perspective, however, something equally important had been learned: collective action worked. For the first time, communities across northern New Mexico had tangible evidence that acting together could force Spanish officials to change course.

Planning an Uprising

One of the men released from prison that day was a Tewa religious leader from Ohkay Owingeh known to history as Po'pay (or Popé) (Figure 4). For generations, Po'pay has often been portrayed as the singular architect of the Pueblo Revolt. Modern scholarship presents a more nuanced interpretation. Po'pay was certainly one of the revolt's most important religious and political leaders, but the uprising itself depended upon cooperation among dozens of autonomous communities. No single individual possessed the authority to command every pueblo. Rather than diminishing Po'pay's importance, modern historians argue that his greatest achievement may have been helping to build consensus among communities that had governed themselves independently for centuries.²¹

And in August 1680, those same communities rose together. According to surviving Spanish accounts, runners carried cords tied with a series of knots from pueblo to pueblo. Each knot represented one day. As each sunrise passed, another knot was untied, counting down to the beginning of the uprising.²² Whether every detail of that account is historically accurate remains impossible to know. Like much of what survives from the revolt, it comes through Spanish testimony recorded after the events themselves. Historians therefore approach those accounts with appropriate caution.

What cannot be disputed is the larger conclusion. Some sophisticated communication networks clearly existed, and the simultaneous attacks that followed could not have occurred otherwise. The revolt appears to have been planned for August 11, 1680. Then, on

or about August 9, Spanish authorities intercepted at least two young Tesuque messengers, Catua and Omtua, who were tortured and killed, revealing the purpose of the knots before their deaths (Figure 5).²³ At this point, years of planning suddenly hung in balance. And when Po'pay and Pueblo leaders received word of Catua and Omtua's deaths, they faced an impossible choice: abandon the revolt or act immediately. The leaders chose the latter. They dispatched new runners with updated instructions to attack immediately, a day earlier than planned. And on the morning of August 10, 1680, years of planning gave way to action.

Eleven Days That Changed New Mexico

On August 10, 1680, across northern New Mexico, Pueblo communities launched coordinated attacks against Spanish missions, settlements, and isolated ranches before colonial officials had time to organize an effective response. The decision to move the revolt forward by one day proved critical. Had Pueblo leaders waited until the original date, Spanish authorities, already alerted by intercepted messengers, might have begun arresting organizers or reinforcing vulnerable settlements. Instead, Pueblo communities seized the initiative.²⁴

The first targets, the churches, were deliberate. Mission churches represented far more than places of worship. For Pueblo communities, they embodied decades of Spanish political authority and sustained efforts to suppress traditional religion. By attacking the missions, Pueblo fighters challenged one of the most visible symbols of colonial rule. Churches were burned or dismantled, and religious images were destroyed. Of the approximately thirty-three Franciscan missionaries serving throughout New Mexico, twenty-one were killed during the uprising.²⁵

As reports of attacks spread across the province, Spanish settlers fled toward Santa Fe, the administrative center of the colony. Governor Antonio de Otermín quickly realized that he was confronting

Figure 5. Bronze sculpture of Catua and Omtua, runners from the Tesuque Pueblo who were tortured and killed the day before the Pueblo Revolt began, created by sculptor and former Pojoaque Pueblo Governor George Rivera. Full page, caption on side



something far different from the isolated conflicts Spanish officials had experienced before. Communities separated by great distances were acting in concert, and communications with much of the colony were rapidly collapsing.

Throughout the uprising, Pueblo fighters seized Spanish horses whenever opportunities arose. Horses provided speed, mobility, and communication; advantages that Spanish authorities had long enjoyed. Their capture not only strengthened Pueblo forces but also limited the ability of Spanish soldiers to carry messages or reinforce threatened settlements.²⁶ At the same time, Pueblo forces effectively isolated Santa Fe as a siege point by controlling the approaches to the city and restricting Spanish movement. Survivors from surrounding settlements crowded inside the capital seeking protection, while Otermín gathered the soldiers and armed settlers available to defend Santa Fe.

By August 13, Pueblo forces had surrounded Santa Fe, beginning the defining military engagement of the revolt.²⁷ And unlike many famous battles in American history, the siege of Santa Fe was not decided by a dramatic assault. Instead, Pueblo leaders quickly identified the city's greatest vulnerability: water. Santa Fe depended upon an acequia, an irrigation canal that supplied much of the settlement's fresh water that trickled down from the mountain snowmelt. Pueblo fighters quickly cut that supply, and without dependable access to water, drinking supplies dwindled. Preparing food became increasingly difficult. Sanitation deteriorated. Livestock suffered. Each passing day weakened the Spanish position while strengthening the leverage of the besieging Pueblo forces.

Otermín did not remain passive. Spanish defenders immediately launched several offensives to reopen access to the acequia and drive Pueblo fighters away from the city. Hackett's publication of Otermín's correspondence makes clear that these counterattacks briefly disrupted portions of the siege, killing Puebloan fighters, and allowing the Spanish to recover limited supplies and temporarily relieve pressure on the settlement. They did not, however, break the overall Pueblo control of the surrounding area. Each effort ultimately failed to alter the strategic situation, and the siege tightened once again.²⁸

As the days passed, the effectiveness of Pueblo coordination became increasingly apparent. The uprising had begun simultaneously across much of northern New Mexico, but it did not dissolve into isolated local conflicts. Pueblo communities continued to maintain pressure on Spanish positions while preventing meaningful communication or reinforcement from reaching Santa Fe. The same cooperation that had made the revolt possible now sustained it.

By the third week of August, Otermín faced an increasingly impossible situation. His food supplies were limited; water remained scarce, and communication with much of the colony had collapsed. As a result, there was little reason to believe that meaningful reinforcements would arrive. And on August 21, 1680, Otermín made the decision to abandon Santa Fe. Spanish soldiers, surviving Franciscan clergy, settlers, women, children, and servants evacuated the city and began the long retreat south along the Rio Grande toward El Paso del Norte, roughly 300 miles away.²⁹ This decision carried enormous risk, as the retreat included hundreds of civilians moving slowly through territory now controlled by Pueblo forces. Had Pueblo leaders chosen to pursue and destroy the retreating Spaniards, the results would have been catastrophic. Instead, the Spanish withdrawal continued unimpeded, with Pueb-

lo fighters on foot and on horseback following behind for several miles. Historians have offered different explanations for this decision. Some suggest Pueblo leaders had already achieved their principal objective, the removal of Spanish authority from New Mexico. Others caution that the surviving evidence is simply too limited to determine their intentions with certainty. What is clear is that Otermín's column successfully reached El Paso, preserving the remaining core of New Mexico's Spanish population; and that the Pueblo fighters let them go.³⁰

But this retreat represented far more than a military withdrawal. Spanish colonists abandoned homes, churches, farms, livestock, government records, and nearly eighty years of colonial investment in New Mexico. By late August of 1680, the northernmost province of New Spain had effectively ceased to exist. Only weeks earlier, these same colonists had represented the northern edge of one of the world's largest empires. Now they were refugees. Historians' estimates vary, but approximately 400 Spanish colonists, including soldiers, settlers, women, children, and clergy, died during the uprising.³¹ The number of Pueblo casualties remains unknown. Pueblo communities left no written casualty reports, and much of what survives in the historical record reflects the perspective of those who fled rather than those who remained. That imbalance reminds us that important parts of the Pueblo experience remain beyond the reach of written history.

But, for the first time since permanent colonization began in 1598, Spanish authorities had been forced to abandon New Mexico. Few Indigenous resistance movements anywhere in the Americas achieved such complete military and political victory.

The Legacy of the Revolt

For the next twelve years, from 1680 to 1692, New Mexico existed without a permanent Spanish colonial government. But the aftermath of the Pueblo Revolt did not create a single unified Pueblo nation (nor was that the intent of the Revolt). Instead, individual Pueblo communities resumed governing themselves according to their own traditions, leadership structures, and religious practices. Communities that had lived under Spanish political and religious authority for eighty years once again determined their own affairs.

Life after the revolt, however, was not without its own challenges. The same independence that had made the coordinated uprising so remarkable also meant that Pueblo communities continued to make decisions locally rather than through a centralized government. They rebuilt homes, renewed ceremonial life, restored religious practices that had long been suppressed, and resumed many traditions interrupted by decades of colonial rule. At the same time, drought, shifting alliances, and continued conflict with neighboring Indigenous groups remained realities of life throughout the Southwest.³² The revolt had removed the Spaniards, but it had not removed every hardship.

Meanwhile, Spanish authorities regrouped in El Paso. Governor Antonio de Otermín made several attempts to recover the colony during the years immediately following the revolt, but none of his endeavors succeeded in restoring permanent Spanish control.³³ But in 1692, Spanish forces returned successfully under the leadership of Don Diego de Vargas. Marching north, de Vargas hoped to restore Spanish rule over New Mexico. Early Spanish chroniclers described his return as a peaceful reconquest, emphasizing negotiation and the voluntary submission of Pueblo communities. Modern historians tell a more complicated story. While some pueblos

negotiated with de Vargas, others resisted. Violence resumed, and in 1693 Spanish forces retook Santa Fe by force. Three years later, another significant Pueblo uprising erupted in 1696, demonstrating that resistance to Spanish rule had not disappeared with the return of the colonial government.³⁴



Figure 6. Controversial bronze statue of Don Diego de Vargas, which now stands between the New Mexico History Museum and the Palace of the Governors. Sculpted by local Santa Fe artist Donna Quasthoff, and initially installed in 2007.

Although Spanish political authority was eventually restored, the colony that emerged after 1692 was not the same colony that had collapsed in 1680. The Pueblo Revolt had permanently altered the relationship between Spanish officials and Pueblo communities. Missionaries continued their work, and Spanish governors continued to rule New Mexico. Yet colonial authorities adopted a more pragmatic approach toward Pueblo communities than they had before the revolt. Attempts to completely suppress Pueblo religion had proven politically dangerous. Pueblo languages endured. Traditional ceremonies continued. Religious practices survived despite continued missionary efforts, and Pueblo communities retained a degree of cultural continuity that might otherwise have

been impossible.³⁵ That legacy remains visible in Santa Fe today.

Visitors walking through Santa Fe often admire its distinctive blend of Pueblo and Spanish traditions, its adobe architecture, plazas, churches, and vibrant Native American presence. It is easy to assume that this cultural landscape simply evolved over time. But it was the Pueblo Revolt and its aftermath that helped shape it. By demonstrating that colonial authority had limits, Pueblo communities forced Spanish officials to govern differently than they had before 1680. The result was not equality, nor the end of colonial rule. It was a negotiated coexistence that allowed many Pueblo traditions to survive into the present.

Even the memory of Don Diego de Vargas in Santa Fe reflects those continuing conversations. For many years, a bronze statue of de Vargas stood near the Santa Fe Plaza as a symbol of the Spanish reconquest. To some residents it commemorated the restoration of the Spanish government. To others, it represented the return of colonial rule after twelve years of Pueblo independence. In 2020, following renewed public debate over historical memory, the statue was removed from public display and relocated to the New Mexico History Museum in 2024, only steps from the Palace of the Governors.³⁶ Today it sits in an outdoor corridor between the two buildings (Figure 6). The discussion surrounding that monument reminds us that the Pueblo Revolt is not simply a story about the seventeenth century; it remains part of New Mexico's living history.

Conclusion

If we return once more to the Santa Fe Plaza, where this story began, it becomes easier to appreciate why the Pueblo Revolt continues to matter more than three centuries later. Every day, thousands of people walk across the Plaza without realizing they are standing on the landscape where one of the most remarkable Native American resistance movements in North American history reached its climax. Beneath their feet lie musket balls, gunflints, and stone projectile points, small archaeological reminders of eleven extraordinary days in August 1680 that fundamentally changed the history of New Mexico. The Pueblo Revolt reminds us that colonial power was neither absolute nor inevitable.

Spanish authority appeared formidable, backed by one of the world's largest empires, experienced soldiers, horses, firearms, and the Catholic Church. Yet beneath that appearance lay an isolated frontier colony dependent upon the labor, agriculture, and cooperation of the very communities it sought to govern. Pueblo leaders recognized those vulnerabilities and, through careful planning, effective communication, and extraordinary cooperation among politically independent communities, acted upon them. Their achievement deserves to be remembered not simply because they forced Spanish authorities to abandon New Mexico for twelve years, but because they demonstrated what determined, coordinated Indigenous resistance could accomplish.

The revolt did not end Spanish ambitions in the Southwest, nor did it erase the hardships Pueblo communities continued to face after 1680. Spanish authority eventually returned. Yet it returned to a New Mexico that had been permanently changed. Pueblo languages endured. Religious traditions survived. Community identities persisted. The relationship between Spanish authorities and Pueblo communities would never again be exactly what it had been before the summer of 1680.

As the United States reflects on the 250th anniversary of its own independence, the Pueblo Revolt invites us to broaden our understanding of the many struggles over power, resistance, and self-government that shaped early North America. It is not a re-

placement for the stories Americans already know. It is an essential addition to those stories. The evidence of that history remains beneath the Santa Fe Plaza. Its legacy remains all around it.

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