

Deed of Gift Presentation to New Mexico Commission of Public Records for the Dr. Stanley M. Hordes Collection (former Chair, NMCPR and former State Historian, NMCPR)
Presented by Felicia Lujan, Director, SANM on August 30, 2022

Good morning, Chair and Members of the Commission~ Today is a special day as we present for your consideration, the research collection of one of our very own, Dr. Stanley M. Hordes, a former Chair of the New Mexico Commission of Public Records as well as former New Mexico State Historian. Dr. Hordes always insisted I call him Stan, but my knowledge of his long and articulate career as a professional historian simply made that difficult for me. My early years in the archives were spent assisting him on his regular trips to research within our repository. He is an author who has written numerous articles and delivered what seems to be an immeasurable number of historical consultations and presentations. A quick composition of the professional timeline of Dr. Hordes revealed that he has been very active from the 1970s through the twenty-first century.

Between the 1970s and the 1980s Dr. Hordes made clear his appreciation for culture and his need to work tirelessly to preserve identity. During this time, the search for personal identity clearly increased within New Mexico and across the country. The *Colorado Springs Gazette* ran an article confirming that. This article was published via the *New York Times* as “the homogenized West” left many ethnic groups searching for the roots of their past. The headline of that article read “Maintaining Culture, Identity No Easy Task.”

Between 1980 and 2012, there were many instances of the media covering the work of Dr. Hordes. In 1980, The *Delphos Herald* documented his work on a sunken Spanish vessel which unveiled mysteries of eighteenth-century shipping. The *Daily Texan* subsequently ran an article which declared... “Historians identify sunken ship: Treasure-laden vessel capsized in 18th century hurricane.” Between 1983 and 1985 both *Taos News* and the *Farmington Daily Times* covered his work as a historian. By 1987, his work reached United States Congress and that summer Dr. Hordes worked on a paper which is featured on the Princeton University web site. This research focused on “Technologies for the Preservation of Prehistoric and Historic Landscapes” and was published by the Office of Technology Assessment.

As State Historian in the 1980s, Dr. Hordes started “to encounter Catholic and Protestant Hispanic New Mexicans whose families observed customs suggestive of a Jewish background.” These customs included dietary laws, celebration of the Sabbath on Saturday instead of Sunday, and the ritual of male circumcision, in addition to other observances. As he took a deep dive into his findings, the documentary evidence he unearthed was overwhelming. His research conducted in the archives of New Mexico, Mexico, Spain and Portugal, revealed descendants of the secret Jews, persecuted by the Inquisition in Mexico and Spain.

Though he was extremely devoted to his research, Dr. Hordes also remained a committed husband, father and now grandfather. His devotion to his family meant that he took on additional tasks in the 90s such as working with the schools and working to obtain proper funding for the school system. At that time Dr. Hordes served as the regional vice president of the New Mexico Congress of Parents and Teachers. That group worked on House Bill 78, the Local Operational School Tax Levy, which was intended to find “additional money for teacher salary increases and

other school improvements.” Dr. Hordes is quoted in the *Farmington Daily Times* and said “if the legislature is unwilling or unable to provide us with the funds necessary to run our schools, then they should at least give us the opportunity to tax ourselves so that we can have better schools for our kids.”

His work with ancestry/Crypto-Jew research continued into 90s and today with articles published by newspapers such as the *Santa Ana Orange County Register*, *Taos News*, the *Clovis News Journal*, the *Associated Press*, the *Observer at Augustana College*, the *Toronto Globe*, the *American Israelite*, and *Odessa American*. *Historical Archaeology Newsletter* also published information about Dr. Hordes and his research.

In the twenty-first century, Dr. Hordes’ research continued to take ROOT (no pun intended) in our local, national, and international collective memory. During this time an article was featured in the *Chicago Daily Herald* and was titled “Out of the Dark: Hispanic New Mexicans intrigued by a past that sheds light on Jewish roots.” This feature was published via the *Associated Press*. An interest in this research remains active today, as many Hispanics seek their hidden Jewish ancestry. *Taos News* also noted that people from New Mexico and elsewhere were “choosing to be chosen” regarding their family histories. These articles detail the stories of Hispanic New Mexicans fascinated by possibility of a hidden Jewish past.

Today, Dr. Hordes remains an Adjunct Research Professor at the Latin American and Iberian Institute of the University of New Mexico. He received his B.A. in History from the University of Maryland in 1971, his M.A. in Latin American History from the University of New Mexico in 1973, and his Ph.D. from Tulane University in 1980. He received a Fulbright dissertation fellowship and his doctoral dissertation, "The Crypto-Jewish Community of New Spain, 1620-1649: A Collective Biography," synthesized research conducted across multiple archives.

The research of Dr. Hordes has uncovered the religious customs and career patterns of the descendants of Spanish Jews. These were Spanish Jews forced to convert to Catholicism in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Through his research, he established that these *conversos* sustained “ancestral faith” and practices. This was done in secrecy within our Spanish colonies of the New World to remain undetected by the Inquisition. Dr. Hordes’s book is a culmination of this research and is titled, *To the End of the Earth: A History of the Crypto-Jews of New Mexico*. The book was published by Columbia University Press in 2005 and was awarded the “Gaspar Pérez de Villagrà Prize” by the Historical Society of New Mexico. In 2007, this book garnered the Southwest Book Award, by the Border Regional Library Association.

Chair and Members of the Commission, I greatly appreciate your time and attention. Dr. Hordes has demonstrated a commitment to his research, to New Mexico History, to our agency, to our commission, and to our people. He has been a dedicated public servant and remains keeper of our historical flame. Dr. Stanley M. Hordes embodies professionalism, and I am honored to present his collection for your consideration.