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FIG. 1. *The Chrisman Sisters in Custer Country, Nebraska, 1886, by Solomon D. Butcher.* Courtesy of Nebraska State Historical Society Photograph Collections [RG2608PH01053].

EDITOR'S NOTE

In May 2007, the Center for Great Plains Studies held their 33rd Interdisciplinary Symposium. The topic was *Homesteading Reconsidered*. Chaired by Homestead National Monument Historian Todd Arrington, and organized by the staff of the Center, the conference examined homesteading and its legacy from many angles: reviewing recent and forthcoming scholarship, probing conflicting interpretations, and covering differing perspectives on the historical and ecological significance of homesteading. Competitive papers and invited presentations examined such diverse topics as: Native American views of homesteading; federal land policies in the U.S. and Canada; ecological impact on the natural environment of the Great Plains; the importance of

technology to homesteading and westward expansion; the roles of homesteading and agriculture in the eventual onset of the Dust Bowl and droughts of the 1930s; the legacy of the Homestead Act/Dominion Lands Act; the importance of homesteading on modern farming and ranching operations on the Plains; and the future of homesteading and modern homesteading programs.

Many excellent essays were submitted to *Great Plains Quarterly* for peer-review. In forthcoming issues of the journal we will publish a variety of these papers which extend our understanding and appreciation of the significant impact homesteading had, and continues to have, on the land and people of the Plains. This issue includes three such essays.