The 1890’s were a period of tremendous social and political upheaval on the U.S. frontier, particularly in Arizona. The intimate nature of boom-bust economies and the end of the Indian wars influenced social life, forming the basis of this talk, which argues that the unsuccessful murder-suicide attempt by ex-Congressman Hiram Stevens which failed to kill his wife Petra Santa Cruz Stevens on March 23, 1893 in Tucson Arizona Territory, set into motion what would later become a life of historical invisibility. This case study demonstrates how economic, social and reproductive conditions of the period literally became a way by which Petra negotiated her childlessness and the botched murder-suicide, producing a micro narrative about the sexual and racial nature of property relations. Tracking Petra Santa Cruz Stevens’ complex history shows the shifting ground of race, skin color, language, and caste systems for those for those families who participated in the Camp Grant Massacre of 1871, who went from economic and social prosperity because of the Indian wars and into a state of economic and social ruin just 22 years later. The talk stages a series of interventions: a reassessment of borderlands history as it is currently practiced, the ways in which material objects account for the affective and social labor of producing legible subjects and a feminist critique of social history and national formation that shifts our attention to how Borderlands negotiations of violence consolidated the U.S. nation-state as a whole.