

# The William P. CLEMENTS CENTER for Southwest Studies

Fall/Spring 2025-2026  
Volume 25

Established in fall 1996, the William P. Clements Center for Southwest Studies at Southern Methodist University promotes research by awarding grants and fellowships, supporting the publication of academic investigation, and providing public programming on fields of inquiry related to Texas, the American Southwest, and the U.S.-Mexico borderlands.

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## MESSAGE FROM THE CLEMENTS CENTER DIRECTOR, ARIEL RON

**F**riends, a lot is going on! At least at the Clements Center, it's been mostly good. We did have to say farewell to Ruth Ann Elmore, who retired in February. Ruth Ann was a fantastic connector of people and will be missed. She is succeeded by Ashton Reynolds, who has picked things up quickly. Besides his Clements Center duties, Ashton is finishing his PhD in US religious history here at SMU, having previously written an MA thesis about religion in Reconstruction-era Texas. This fall we also welcome

Jordan Villegas-Verrone, SMU's newly hired assistant professor of Mexican American history. Check out his profile further down in this newsletter and his article, "For the Girls': Organizing Mexican American Girlhood in Depression-Era Texas," in the March 2025 issue of the *Journal of American History*.

The new fellows this year are Leonard Smith (Oberlin), Cristina Urias-Espinoza (Arkansas State, campus Querétaro), Adrian Chavana (Texas A&M), and Cori Simon (Oklahoma). I'm very excited about this group, which includes the Clements Center's first French historian (comparing Texas and French Algeria in the nineteenth century), a Mexican scholar (examining the "Mexican West"), and two groundbreaking projects on, respectively, San Antonio's mission Indians and Indian Country before Oklahoma statehood. I urge you to read further on in this newsletter. From my perspective, this cohort embodies all the traditional strengths of the Clements Center while adding a broader comparative outlook and strengthening the Dallas-Mexico connection we aim to build, for instance, through the annual Kahn Distinguished Lecture in Mexican history. This year we are also inaugurating a regular seminar together with the Center for Presidential History. Like us, the CPH hosts several fellows-in-residence each year and is closely connected to SMU's history department, particularly the PhD program. The seminar will thus be a way for fellows, graduate students, and faculty to engage intellectually, build community, and gain fresh perspectives from outside their own fields.

The Center has already or will sponsor three symposia in 2025. "Rethinking the 'Indian Wars,'" co-led by Catherine Franklin, former fellow Maurice Crandall, and former Weber book award winner Lance Blyth, had its second workshop in April at the Arizona Historical Society's museum in Tucson. Special thanks to David Turpie, Jaynie Adams, and the rest of the AHS staff for hosting and drawing upward of 100 attendees to the highly engaging public roundtable. September will see the first workshop of "Indigenous Crossings," led by veterans of various Clements Center endeavors, Sam Truett, Josh Reid, Elizabeth Ellis, and Rani-Henrik Andersson, to be followed up in February 2026 at the Newberry Library in Chicago in conjunction with the Newberry Consortium for American Indian Studies. We anticipate a livestreamed component to this second meeting, so keep a lookout for the announcement. Finally, this coming November we are collaborating with the SMU English Department to host a two-day symposium critically marking the fortieth anniversary of the publication of *Lonesome Dove*: "McMurtry,

**SMU**

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# Research Fellows

## INTRODUCING THE 2025-26 CLEMENTS CENTER RESEARCH FELLOWS

**Leonard V. Smith** is this year's Bill and Rita Clements Senior Fellow for the study of Southwestern America. He received his Ph.D. from Columbia University in 1990 and is presently the Frederick B. Artz Professor of History at Oberlin College, Ohio.



Since his doctoral dissertation, Smith has been interested in the tangles and contradictions of liberal democracy. For most of his career, he has explored these issues as a Europeanist, specifically as a historian of World War I and its aftermath. First through teaching and then through his most recent book, *French Colonialism from the Ancien Régime to the Present* (Cambridge, 2023), he examined the uncomfortable intersection between republicanism and imperialism in France.

The Clements fellowship has offers the chance to take these long-standing interests in an exciting new direction. Entitled "Liberalism and the Law in Texas and French Algeria in the Nineteenth Century," this project uses law and its creation as an ordering discourse of history. Early Texas and French Algeria were two settler colonies, both self-styled as "liberal" and annexed to their respective metropolises at about the same time. Their founders sought in different ways to articulate and instrumentalize the legacy of revolution in the 18th century. Liberalism in the first half of the 19th century revolved around constructing rule *through* rather than *over* society. To build liberal societies, the founders of Texas and French Algeria developed distinct legal structures. The project seeks neither to praise nor to bury liberalism, rather to examine its roots and proper historical contexts. It begins in the pre-annexation period of the 1830s and concludes in the 1870s, with the decline of Reconstruction in Texas and the suppression of the massive Mokrani revolt of Arabs and Berbers in Algeria, a revolt brutally suppressed by the then-new Third French Republic.

Research on this project began during a sabbatical leave in 2023-23, supported by a Fernand Braudel Senior Fellowship at the European University Institute in Florence, Italy. Smith carried out research in three archives in France, as well as at the Texas State Library and Archives.

**Cristina Urias-Espinoza** is this year's Clements Fellow for the Study of Southwestern America. She received her PhD in History from the University of Arizona in 2022 and is currently an Assistant Professor of History at Arkansas State University, campus in Queretaro, Mexico. Her research focuses on the social and cultural history of the U.S.-Mexico border region, specializing in the expansion of American capitalism into Mexico during the late nineteenth century, immigration, urban history, and architecture.

During the fellowship year at the Clements Center, Cristina will work on the book project "The Mexican West: Land Speculation and the U.S. Colonization of Northwest Mexico, 1854-1936," which explores the history of U.S. expansionism in Mexico through the lens of land speculation. The book discloses how American corporations influenced the settlement of U.S. colonies in northwest Mexico from the mid-nineteenth century to the Mexican Revolution. By highlighting how U.S. companies commodified Mexico's land and natural resources for capitalist gain, this project demonstrates how Americans' powerful desire for land opened venues for new immigration flows from north to south, reshaping northwest Mexico's social, cultural, and physical landscape.



The research for this project received support from diverse institutions in Mexico and the U.S., including El Colegio de Sinaloa, the Tinker Foundation, The Huntington Library, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and the Latin American and Iberian Institute at the University of New Mexico. Additionally, as a dissertation, this work received national recognition in Mexico, winning the Premio Gastón García Cantú from INEHRM in 2023 and an Honorable Mention from Premio Citibanamex Atanasio G. Saravia for the best dissertation on Mexico's regional history in 2024.



**Cori Simon** is this year's David J. Weber Fellow for the Study of Southwestern America. She is a historian of the nineteenth-century U.S. West and Native North America and works as an assistant professor at the University of Oklahoma. Cori received her Ph.D. in History from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2020.

During her time as a Clements Center fellow, Cori will complete her first book project, tentatively titled "Shadowland: Indian Territory's Contested Past and Uncertain Future, 1800-1910." The book traces the history of Indian Territory as a place—a place that no longer exists on contemporary maps of North America. It considers where, how, and why it was created, who created it, how it evolved over the nineteenth century, and why it vanished. While most histories of the region treat Indian Territory as a corollary to the present-day state of Oklahoma, the project finds that the territory's boundaries were initially expansive but amorphous, that its geographic limits contracted over time, and that this process of creation and evolution was shaped by the contesting visions of the diverse peoples who claimed space there. The project begins with Indian Territory's creation as a destination for the forced resettlement of Indigenous peoples and focuses on moments when its fate came into question. The tentative title—"Shadowland"—references how outside perceptions and ambitions have obscured what Indian Territory meant for the many peoples who lived there. The book argues that for an increasingly diverse array of residents, Indian Territory operated as a borderlands space: a complex crossroads of Indigenous nations and emerging U.S. territories and states where no single polity exerted complete control, and where Native and non-Native peoples leveraged the territory's undefined status and shifting borders to pursue their own visions of the future. This framework calls into question the power of outsiders to impose geographic and racial boundaries on Indian Territory. In doing so, it emphasizes flashpoints of contention over the territory's future and centers the stakes of those contests for the lives of the territory's residents. Ultimately, the project illustrates a larger story of contingent western expansion and racial formation in the nineteenth-century U.S.

"Shadowland" is a substantive revision of Cori's 2020 dissertation, which won the Western History Association Dissertation Prize in 2021 (now the Beverly Purrington/Richard White Western History Dissertation Prize). The project has received support from the University of Oklahoma Office of the Vice President for Research and Partnerships and the Dodge Family College of Arts and Sciences, the Doris G. Quinn Foundation, the Mellon Foundation, the University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of History and Graduate School, the Kansas Historical Society, and the D'Arcy McNickle Center for American Indian and Indigenous Studies at the Newberry Library.



**Adrian V. Chavana**, this year's Bill and Rita Clements Fellow, is a historian of American Indian and Chicana/o/x history with a particular interest in the U.S./Mexico borderlands. He received a Ph.D. in History from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities in 2023 and is an Assistant Professor in the Department of History at Texas A&M-College Station.

Adrian will use his time at the Clements Center to finish work on his first book, tentatively titled "Becoming *Gente de Razón*: The San Antonio Mission Indians and Their Descendants." Pushing back on narratives of Indian extinction in the largely outdated literature, the book critically unpacks issues of Indian survivance, *mestizaje*, and the politics of recognition to argue that not only did the San Antonio Mission Indians—and their descendants—survive through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but that they are in the midst of a cultural and political resurgence, including the fight for state recognition as an Indian tribe in Texas. Creating new lenses of historical analysis,

Adrian explores how a Tejano ethnogenesis, or the beginning of a new Tejano people, more readily explains what happened to the San Antonio Mission Indians.

Adrian worked closely with the tribal community at the center of the study to research and write his dissertation, which serves as the foundation for the forthcoming book, and was supported by the Erickson Graduate Fellowship in Law and History (Summer 2022), the Western History Association's Walter Rundell Jr. (2021) and Sara Jackson (2021) Graduate Student Awards, and the Paul Murphy Fellowship in American Constitutional and Legal History (Summer, 2021), among other awards. He is also a member of the Alamo Museum Planning Committee, advising museum planners about the Indigenous people of San Antonio for the new Alamo Visitor Center and Museum scheduled to open in Alamo Plaza in 2027.



## THE CLEMENTS CENTER WELCOMES DR. JORDAN VILLEGAS-VERRONE



Jordan Villegas-Verrone is excited to be joining the faculty of the William P. Clements Department of History at SMU as an assistant professor of Mexican American history in fall 2025. Born and raised in Houston, Texas, Villegas-Verrone graduated summa cum laude from Harvard University with an undergraduate degree in anthropology and women, gender, and sexuality studies, and he received his PhD in history from Columbia University.

He specializes in twentieth-century Mexican American history, and his main research interests include gender history, history of sexuality, and histories of youth and childhood. His first book, *Club Chapultepec: Mexican American Girls and Radical Politics in the Great Depression* (under contract with University of California Press) weaves together threads of cultural, intellectual, and social history to examine how girls articulated a unique and heretofore unacknowledged vision of “Mexican American” culture and politics distinct from — and in some cases directly oppositional to — the political cultures of adult male-led ethnic Mexican organizations in Depression-era Texas. The book identifies Mexican American girls’ radical politics expressed not just in manifestos, speeches, organized labor actions, and rigorous, self-directed public affairs study programs but also in the choreography of folk-dance expositions, the planning of enchilada dinner fundraisers, girls’ choices of entertainment at their birthday parties, and in the contours of everyday life for working-class Mexican American girls at the height of the Great Depression. Villegas-Verrone’s scholarship has been supported by fellowships from the Social Science Research Council and has been awarded the Organization of American Historians’ Louis Pelzer Memorial Award and Harvard University’s Bowdoin Prize. His writing has also been featured in the *Journal of American History*, *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, and *Latina Magazine*.



(continued from page 1)

Mythmaking, and the Reimagining of the American Southwest.” This event is intended to kick off a longer partnership with the folks in English under the rubric of the “Narrative Now” initiative created by Christopher Gonzalez, who has written widely about narrative theory and Latinx literary and cultural production, with particular interest in Texas and the Southwest.

As usual, we have a range of other public programming, so please take a look at our schedule. One final event worth mentioning, which is not on the schedule because a final date remains TBD (but will probably occur in late February or early March), is a collaboration with the Meadows School of the Arts and the Corsicana Artist and Writer Residency to put on a concert of original works by Cody Criswell-Badillo, a composer whose “music deals with the American Southwest, the working class, rural poverty, and his complicated attitude toward his Texas cowboy, Tejano, and indigenous Mexican heritage.” Finally, be sure to note the information box about the Rees-Jones Library of the American West, currently under construction a stone’s throw from the Clements Center office. This promises to be an important research base for years to come and we are working to be able to step up support for those who wish to take advantage of the collections.

**Flannery Burke** (2002-2003) shares the great news that her book, *Back East: How Westerners Invented a Region*, is to be published in July by the University of Washington Press. The book includes a chapter about the El Paso poet, Ricardo Sánchez.

**Marice Crandall** (2016-17) received an ACLS fellowship for the 2025-2026 academic year. He will spend the year finishing his second book, a history of the later lives of Yavapai and Apache former U.S. Army Indian Scouts.

**Max Floman** (2023-2024) had a chapter published recently in an edited volume: "Bad Talks: Rebels, Rumors, and the Politics of Fear in the Gulf Borderlands, 1700s-1760s," in Paul Barba, ed., *Gulf South Rebels, Insurgents, and Revolutionaries, 1700-1860: Bonds of Rebellion* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2025), 23-48.

**Tiffany González** (2022-2023) shares that she was elected to serve of the Board of Directors for the Alliance for Texas History.

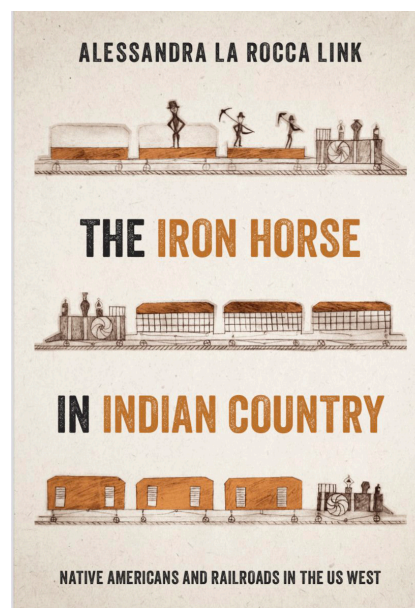
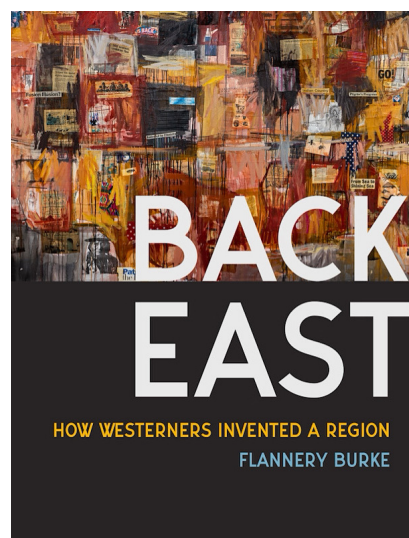
**Laura Hooton** (2023-2024) is pleased to announce she began a new position in the History Department at New Mexico State University last year, and will take over as Director of Graduate Studies this fall. Her monograph, *Little Liberia: A Dream of Black Freedom in the US-Mexico Borderlands* is slated for publication with OU Press in Spring 2026. She recently received a significant NMSU seed grant for her next book project about Black people in the US-Mexico borderlands. She was also recently elected secretary for the Collegium of African American Research (CAAR).

**Khalil Anthony Johnson** (2023-2024) is pleased to announce that he has been promoted to Associate Professor of African American Studies with tenure at Wesleyan University. He shares that this would not have been possible without his fellowship year at the Clements Center, which enabled him to get a completed book manuscript submitted to the press and his tenure file.

**Farina King** (2016-2017) was promoted to full professor at the University of Oklahoma in the Department of Native American Studies. She also co-edited a book, *COVID-19 in Indian Country*, that came out in December 2024.

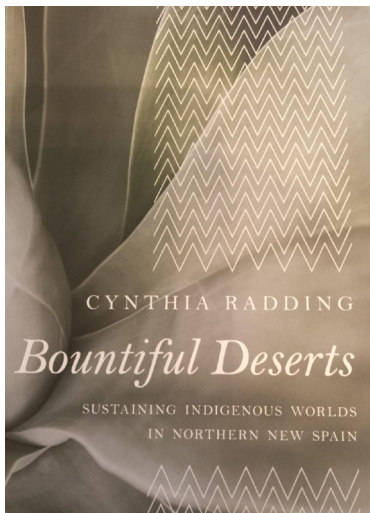
**Alessandra La Rocca** (2018-2019) is happy to share that her book, *The Iron Horse in Indian Country: Native Americans and Railroads in the US West* is out with Oxford University Press this spring!

**Andrew Offenburger** (2014-2015) edited together a compilation of articles published in *Safundi* from the last 25 years published in four compendiums by Routledge.



# Fellows News

**Cynthia Radding** (2006-2007) retired from teaching at UNC Chapel Hill, July 2024. She is the Gussenhoven Distinguished Professor Emerita, and she maintains ties to the History Department and the Institute for the Study of the Americas. She resides in Mexico City, in the beautiful Alcaldía of Tlalpan, where she currently is a visiting scholar at the Instituto de Investigaciones Historicas of the UNAM (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México). Her recent publications include: *Bountiful Deserts. Sustaining Indigenous Worlds in Northern New Spain* (University of Arizona Press, 2022) with a subvention from the SMU Clements Center, and *Naciones entre fronteras. Hacia una historia de la violencia en la región fronteriza México-Estados Unidos (siglos XVIII-XXI)* (UNAM, Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, 2023) as co-editor with Marcela Terrazas y Basante. Radding remains active as past-president of the American Society for Ethnohistory and as a member of the Americas Research Network.



**Marc Rodriguez** (2003-2004) will take his first half-sabbatical since moving to Portland State University. He will use this time to begin work on a new book after doing the research in prior years. In the Spring of 2026, Rodriguez will be in residence at the Roosevelt Institute for American Studies (RIAS) and looks forward to his time in the Netherlands.

**Sarah Rodriguez** (2017-2018) reports that she published her first book, *One National Family: Texas, Mexico and the Making of the Modern United States*, with Johns Hopkins University Press. She also accepted a new position at Florida Gulf Coast University (Go Eagles!). Finally, she was fortunate enough to be awarded the 2025-2026 Fulbright Canada Research Chair in Constructing Democracy and the Nation State in Nineteenth-Century North America at the University of Calgary and the Fulbright Canada Research Chair in Comparative Canada-U.S. Studies at Trent University in Ottawa.

**Julia Maria Schiavone Camacho** (2007-2008) published an article, "Chinese Latinos and an Imagined Latin America: Transpacific Family, Identity, Culture, and Memory in Hong Kong, Macau, and Southern China," in the *Journal of Chinese Overseas*, November 2024. Additionally, she published a short historical fiction piece: "Misinterpretation," in the Women's Fiction Writers Association Historical Fiction anthology, *Feisty Deeds: Historical Fictions of Daring Women* (summer 2024--the *Feisty Deeds* anthology has since won several awards). Inspired by the life of Afong Moy, the first known Chinese woman in the U.S., Julia's story is told from the perspective of her companion and interpreter, Atung.

**Tatiana Seijas** (2020-2021) will be on sabbatical for the 2025-2026 academic year and living in Santa Fe, NM in the Spring. She will be inspired by the landscape as she continues writing *First Routes*. Her monograph *American Metropolis: The Making of Mexico City* is forthcoming from Cambridge University Press.

**Aimee Villarreal** reports that she published an article, *DEIA assault on higher education in Texas*, in "Communication and Democracy." This article connects ongoing assaults on academic freedom and diversity, equity, inclusion, and access (DEIA) initiatives within higher education in Texas to previous struggles to include Ethnic Studies in K-12 public schools.

**John Weber** (2008-2009) was promoted to full professor at Old Dominion University.

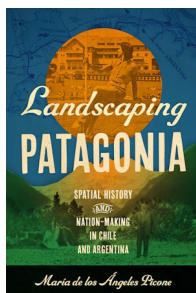


## RECENT BOOKS PUBLISHED WITH SUPPORT FROM THE CLEMENTS CENTER



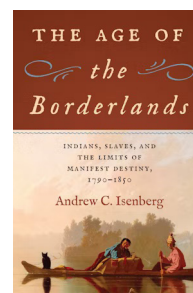
***The Purifying Knife: The Troubling History of Eugenics in Texas*** (University of Oklahoma Press, 2025). Michael Phillips (fellow 2022-23) and Betsy Friauf, in this first history

of the eugenics movement in Texas, create a narrative that intersects with debates over race, immigration, abortion, the role of women in society, homosexuality, medical ethics, and the politics of disability in the state – debates resonating today in Texas and beyond.



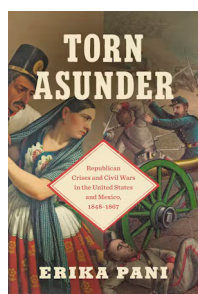
***Landscaping Patagonia: Spatial History and Nation-Making in Chile and Argentina*** by Maria de los Angeles Picone (David J. Weber Series, University of North Carolina Press, 2025) tells the

story of how people living, governing, and traveling through northern Patagonia sought to construct versions of Chile and Argentina based on their ideas about and experiences in geographical space in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.



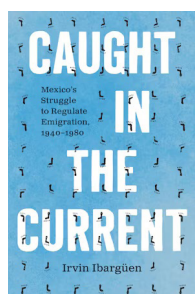
***The Age of the Borderlands: Indians, Slaves, and the limits of Manifest Destiny, 1790-1850*** (David J. Weber Series, University of North Carolina Press, 2025). Andrew C. Isenberg offers a

new history of manifest destiny that breaks from triumphalist narratives of US territorial expansion noting that while the manifest destiny paradigm begins with an assumption of US strength, the government and the agents it dispatched to settle and control the frontier had only a weak presence.



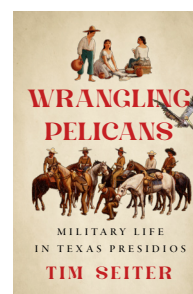
***Torn Asunder: Republican Crisis and Civil Wars in the United States and Mexico, 1848-1867*** (David J. Weber Series, University of North Carolina Press, 2025). In this volume, Erika Pani weaves two tales of

crisis, war, and political experimentation into a single story arguing that by consecrating these episodes as epic and exceptionalist in both nations' histories, scholars have overlooked the coincidences and connections between the United States and Mexico.



***Caught in the Current: Mexico's Struggle to Regulate Emigration, 1940-1980*** (David J. Weber Series, University of North Carolina Press, 2025). Irvin Ibarguen offers a Mexico-centered history of migration in the

mid-twentieth century. As a transnational history, the book highlights how Mexico's policies to moderate out-migration were contested both by the United States and migrants themselves, dooming them to fail – which ultimately reveals how both countries manipulated the border to impose control over the phenomenon that quickly escaped legal and political boundaries.



Tim Seiter's ***Wrangling Pelicans: Military Life in Texas Presidios*** (the University of Texas Press, November 2025) recreates the complexities of life at the empire's edge, where survival mattered more than

royal decrees. This book brings to life the world of Presidio La Bahia's Hispano soldiers, whose duties ranged from heated warfare to high-stakes diplomacy, while their leisure pursuits included courtship, card playing, and cockfighting.

# SMU Graduate Student News

**Roberto Andrade Franco** (PhD, 2020) was a finalist for the 2025 National City and Regional Magazine award for “The Great Escape” in *Texas Highways*.

**Emma Armstrong** (PhD Candidate) was awarded travel grants and fellowships by the Truman Institute, Eisenhower Institute, and the Kennedy Institute for her dissertation!

**Tim Bowman** (PhD, 2011) has two articles coming out. One is titled "'The Voice of the Farmworker:' Antonio Orendain, AM Radio, and the Radicalization of the Farmworkers Movement in the Mexico-Texas Borderlands, 1969-1975," and will be published in *Labor: Studies in Working Class History*. The second piece, which is coauthored with Brent Campney, is called "Vigilante Violence, the Rise of the New Right, and the Persistence of the Texas Farmworkers, 1975-1980," and will be published in *Modern American History*. Beyond that, he continues to work on his next book, which is a history of the Texas farmworkers movement in the 1960s, 70s and 80s.

**Kyle Carpenter** (PhD, 2020) is pleased to announce that his book, *Globalizing the Lower Rio Grande: European Entrepreneurs in the Borderlands, 1749-1881*, was published with University of North Texas Press. He also has taken on the roll of Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs at the University of Arkansas – Rich Mountain.

**Skye Cranny** (PhD, 2024) has taken a position as a professional tour guide in Washington, D.C. for a private company called Unscripted Tours. She gives tours of the National Archives, the three main Smithsonian museums (American History, Natural History, and Air and Space), the Capitol and Library of Congress, the Presidential portraits of the National Portrait Gallery, and a Lincoln Assassination Tour which goes into both Ford's Theater and the Peterson House!

**George T. Diaz** (PhD 2010) presented his paper “Revolutionaries in ‘Barbarous Texas’ Prisons,” at the Organization of American Historians Conference in April 2025 and is scheduled to present, “‘Little Mexico’: The Carceral Community of Blue Ridge State Farm,” at the American Historical Association Annual Meeting in January 2026. These papers are drawn from research from his monograph project *Mañana Land: Life and Death in a Mexican Prison in Texas*, which should be out for review by the time you read this.

**Austin Miller** (PhD 2024) successfully defended his dissertation, “Salt and Sand: Deep History in the Permian Basin” in August 2024. He returned to Dallas to participate in the May 2025 Commencement Ceremonies. He has accepted a faculty position teaching American Studies at Holland Hall, an independent college preparatory Episcopal school in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

**Thomas Pelchat** (PhD Candidate) shares that in June he will be attending the 2025 SHAFR Summer Institute at Yale University, where he will present my research and participate in workshops on professional development, teaching, and publishing, while considering how historians of U.S. foreign relations should write history within the context of a global polycrisis. From there he will speak about my research on the 1981-2 Pipeline dispute that divided an Alliance and broke an energy empire at the SHAFR annual conference. In August, he will continue to speak on this topic at the Age of Reagan Conference, when he presents on the similarities and differences between President Carter and Reagan's energy foreign policy.

**Tim Seiter** (PhD, 2024) is excited to announce his first book, *Wangling Pelicans: Military Life in Presidios* will be published by the University of Texas Press this coming fall. Additionally, Tim launched a website called [TexasDocuments.com](https://TexasDocuments.com) which hosts research guides on topics of Texas History.

**Christopher Walton** (PhD Candidate) is entering his second year of teaching high school history classes at Lakeland Christian School, in Lakeland, Florida. He and his wife also welcomed their second child, Caroline, into the world in December!



## THE REES-JONES LIBRARY OF THE AMERICAN WEST

The Rees-Jones Library of the American West, now under construction on the north side of Fondren Library, numbering close to 30,000 items, is the finest private collection of its kind in the country, and when the new building opens to house the collection in 2027, will dramatically enhance the profile of SMU as a center for the study of the trans-Mississippi West.

“The opportunities for teaching, research, and public programs at SMU will be extraordinary,” says Russell L. Martin, III, the Director of the DeGolyer Library. “We have a lot of work ahead of us to get ready for the opening, but it is a privilege to witness something like this as it takes shape. SMU was already fortunate to have the DeGolyer collection, but now, to have a donor like Trevor Rees-Jones, who is giving us not only his collection but a beautiful new building to house it and the resources to see it continue to grow in the future, is remarkable indeed. This doesn’t happen every day.”

The Rees-Jones Library consists of thousands of rare books, pamphlets, broadsides, manuscripts, photographs, maps, and printed ephemera, as well as paintings, prints, sketches, and sculptures. The primary collecting period extends from the late 17th century to the mid-20th century, with emphasis on the 19th century. The geographic focus is perhaps strongest on the Southwest, Texas, and the northern regions east of the Rocky Mountains, including Montana, Wyoming, and Colorado. Secondary areas of interest include California, the Oregon Country, the Great Basin, and the Central Plains. Mr. Rees-Jones is an aggressive buyer, taking in whole collections that may have taken decades to form, as well as important single items at auction that fill in gaps and enhance the library’s usefulness for scholars.

While the steel beams and concrete foundations are put into place, the materials in the library are getting cataloged, processed, and digitized, thanks to the efforts of Meg Wang (cataloging), Christina Wood (archival processing) and the Norwick Center for Digital Services. According to Christina Wood, “processing the Rees-Jones Collection is both daunting and thrilling. To have the chance to work with such a rich collection is a privilege. Making the collection available by opening day requires focus and careful planning. I can’t wait to share the material with the larger academic community.” “We’re processing items from Thomas Jefferson and Stephen F. Austin, as well as works by influential Western artists like Joe De Yong and Carl Borg,” Wood says. “Alongside those boldfaced names are treasures such as the overland diary of a ’49er who was as interested in the flowers of the Rocky Mountains as he was in finding gold; the wry correspondence of a soldier in the Mexican War writing to his wife in Wisconsin; and a phonetically spelled letter from a newly

## CLEMENTS CENTER-DEGOLYER LIBRARY RESEARCH GRANTS AVAILABLE

The Clements Center for Southwest Studies offers Research Travel Grants to applicants who live outside the greater Dallas-Fort Worth area in order to encourage a broader and more intensive use of the special collections at DeGolyer Library. Great strengths of the Library include early voyages and travels, especially those bearing on the European exploration of the New World. The collection of Western Americana is numbered among the finest in the country, and the library also has exceptionally well-developed collections in the fields of business history and transportation history, in particular the history of railroads. Their holdings in the history of science, especially geology, also have much to offer the researcher, as do our special collections in the history of art, especially in the Stanley Marcus collection.

For information about applying for a Clements/DeGolyer Travel Research Grant, please visit our website at [www.smu.edu/swcenter](http://www.smu.edu/swcenter) and follow the links under Grants.

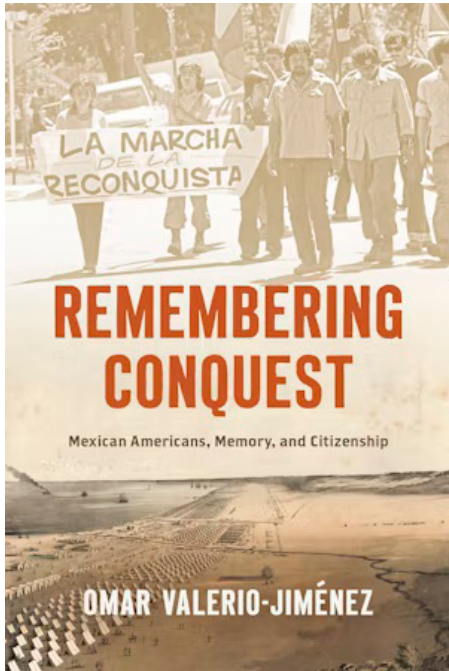
settled farmer in Van Zandt County, Texas, describing the local social life to a friend back home.”

“SMU will have one of the best collections devoted to the Trans-Mississippi West in the country,” Martin says. “We’re all looking forward to 2027 and the grand opening. Each day is filled with anticipation and delight.”

For more information, see <https://www.smu.edu/libraries/rees-jones/western-americana-at-smu>

# Book Prize Winner & Finalist

## ANNOUNCING THE DAVID J. WEBER BOOK PRIZE WINNER AND FINALIST

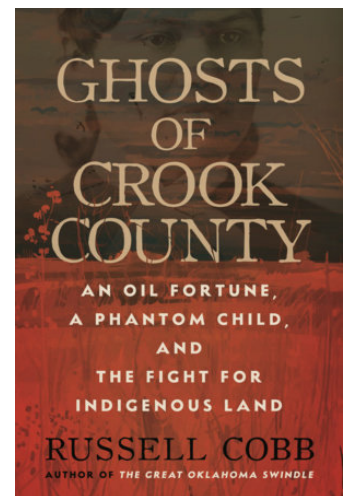
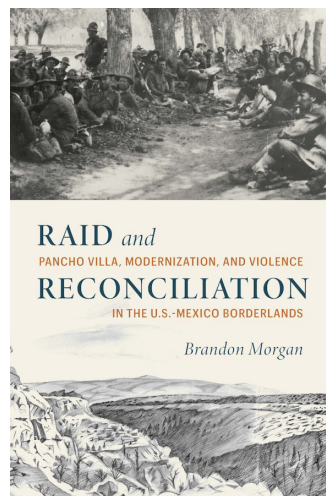


The 2024 David J. Weber Prize for the Best Nonfiction Book on Southwestern America will be presented to **Omar Valerio-Jiménez** at a special ceremony and book signing at SMU honoring his volume, *Remembering Conquest: Mexican Americans, Memory, and Citizenship*. See our website for date and time.

The judging committee wrote:

“Omar Valerio-Jiménez’s *Remembering Conquest: Mexican Americans, Memory, and Citizenship* provides a shrewd model for analyzing the political memories and historical consequences of borderland wars. Expansive in scope and ambitious in argument, this book shows how the memory of the U.S.-Mexico War lingered in the minds of Mexican Americans for more than a century. The author examines a wide array of archival evidence—more than a century’s worth of legal activism, social organizing, academic insurgency, and political theater—to reveal how historical memory became a tool in claims for citizenship rights, and a motivation for political action. *Remembering Conquest* demonstrates that the trauma of the U.S. conquest of Mexico reverberated well beyond the nineteenth century, and even lingers today as a source of both collective grievance and action.”

The judging committee also recognized two finalists: Brandon Morgan, *Raid and Reconciliation: Pancho Villa, Modernization, and Violence in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands* (University of Nebraska Press, 2024), and Russell Cobb, *Ghosts of Crook County: An Oil Fortune, a Phantom Child, and the Fight for Indigenous Land* (Penguin Random House, 2024).



In 2011, the Clements Center and the Council of the Western History Association agreed to sponsor a new book prize to be administered by the WHA. **The David J. Weber Prize for the Best Nonfiction Book on Southwestern America** was presented for the first time at the 2012 annual meeting of the WHA. The purpose of the prize is to promote fine writing and original research on the American Southwest. The competition is open to any nonfiction book, including biography, on any aspect of Southwestern life, past or present, copyrighted in the previous year.

## 2024-25 SYMPOSIUM: RE-THINKING THE 'INDIAN WARS'

A joint symposium held in 2024-25 co-sponsored by the William P. Clements Center for Southwest Studies at SMU and the Arizona Historical Society, co-organized by Catherine R. Franklin (Texas Tech University), Maurice Crandall (Arizona State University), and Lance R. Blyth (United States Air Force Academy).



*Rethinking Indian Wars participants at work at SMU Taos.*



*Group Photograph of Rethinking Indian Wars participants*

This two-part symposium examined the so-called “Indian Wars.” Once the subject of great interest by scholars, the “Indian Wars” have become practically the exclusive domain of popular historians. If, as recent work suggests, we cannot understand U.S. history without understanding American Indian history then it follows that we cannot understand Native History without understanding the conflicts between

### Participants:

Ryan Booth (**Washington State**), Nathan Braccio (**Lesley University**), Bonnie Cherry (**Berkeley School of Law**), Gregory Downs (**UC Davis**), Luis Alberto Garcia (**Universidad de Monterrey**), Ari Kelman (**UC Davis**), Stuart Marshall (**Sewanee**), Nicholas Myer (**National Park Service**), Darren Perry (**Utah**), Sherry L. Smith (**SMU**), Lindsey Stallones Marshall (**Illinois State**), Cecily Zander (**Texas Women's**).

Participants met twice to present and workshop their papers: once at SMU's satellite campus in Taos, New Mexico, in fall 2024, and a second time at the Arizona Historical Society in Tempe, AZ, spring 2025. Each Clements Center symposium follows a similar model that results in a book published by a leading academic press.



## 2025-26 SYMPOSIUM: INDIGENOUS CROSSINGS

**C**o-sponsored by Clements Center for Southwest Studies at Southern Methodist University and The Newberry Library, with support from the University of New Mexico, University of Washington, and Princeton University, and co-organized by Rani-Henrik Andersson (University of Helsinki), Boyd Cothran (York University), Elizabeth Ellis (Princeton, Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma), Joshua L. Reid (University of Washington, Snohomish Indian Nation), Samuel Truett (University of New Mexico).

This two-part symposium will anchor visions of the past and future into a deeper planetary archive, one linked to Native nations and Indigenous communities and their historical border crossings world-wide. It will seek to connect exciting new work in global indigenous studies with Native-centered work on place, mobility, climate-change and justice, human and other-than-human kinship, migration and sanctuary, borderlands and border crossings, Native trans-national relationships and social movements, and indigenous politics, identities, diplomacy, and cross-community relations in historical contexts of global change.

The symposium will gather first in fall 2024 at SMU's satellite campus in Taos, New Mexico, and a spring 2025 gathering at the ....—will lead to a published volume edited by co-conveners.

**Participants:** Camden Elliott, Auburn University, "Smallpox and Wabanaki (Border)Lands, 1675-1764;" Robin Garcia, University of Virginia, and Kumu Kanoelani Davis, Ho'aka Mana, "Chanting to Maui Ola; Hawaiian Cultural Arts, Well-being, and Climate Resilience on Molokai," with additional authors including Dr. Naseemah Mohammed Ogunnaike, UVA, Sophia Gibby, UVA, and Grace Cray, UVA; Jessica Jiang, UC Berkeley, "Intimate Exclusions: Disentangling Chinese-Salish Families at the Forty-Ninth Parallel;" Ryan Tucker Jones, University of Oregon, "Sperm Whale Clans and Kahiki: The Diasporic Pacific Worlds of Polynesian Whalers and their Prey;" Kendall Lovely, UC Santa Barbara, "From Seas to Southwest Jewelry: Precious Stones and Indigenous Cross-Currents in Time and Space;" Yusuf Mansoor, University of Connecticut, "Navigating an Atlantic World of Slavery: Indigenous Transatlantic Movements from New England to Tangier, 1675-1683;" Pedro Munaretto, Universidad Nacional de San Martín (Argentina), "Invisible Crossings: Indigenous Malvinas Veterans and the Limits of National Memory;" Hayley Negrin, University of Illinois at Chicago, "Indigenous Women and Masculinist Portrayals of Power in Borderlands History;" Jon Parmenter, Cornell University, "Transboundary Trade and the Covenant Chain: The Mohawks of Kahnawà:ke, 1700-2023;" Jorge Ramirez-Lopez, UC Santa Barbara, "Indigenous Migration within Mexico and the United States as Global Indigenous Histories;" Lindsey Willow Smith, University of Minnesota, "Native Women's Roles in Activism in 1970s Detroit through Newspaper and Oral Histories;" Mary Peterson Zundo, Independent Scholar, "Of Skulls and Skeins: Indigenous Art Activism, Sovereign Herding, and Cross-Border Mobilities through Sápmi and Diné Bikéya."



# 2025-26 EVENTS CALENDAR



**Noon Talk:**  
**Wednesday, September 10, 2025**  
**Philip Smith**  
 SMU History PhD Candidate  
*Philip will talk about his summer research made possible by a Steve Densen Graduate Research Grant from the Clements Center for Southwest Studies.*  
 12 noon to 1 PM  
 The Texana Room, Fondren Library  
 6404 Robert S. Hyer Lane, SMU



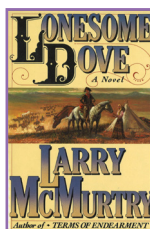
**Kahn Distinguished Lecture:**  
**Thursday, October 2, 2025**  
**Corinna Zeltsman**  
 Princeton University  
*Debating the Boundaries of Press Freedom: Printing Politics in Nineteenth-Century Mexico*  
 6 pm and Q&A  
 The Texana Room, Fondren Library  
 6404 Robert S. Hyer Lane, SMU



**Conference: October 15-18, 2025**  
**Western History Association's**  
**Concurrent Annual Meeting**  
*Roots/Routes: Relationality in Times of Disenchantment*  
 The Clyde Hotel, Albuquerque, New Mexico — Visit the Clements Center's booth in the exhibition area and join us for our annual reception.



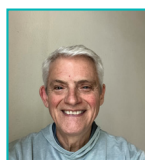
**Noon Talk:**  
**Wednesday, November 5, 2025**  
**Adrian Cavana**  
 Clements Fellow for the Study of Southwestern America  
*Becoming Gente de Razón: Indigenous Sovereignty in the San Antonio Missions, 1770-1824*  
 12 noon to 1 PM  
 The Texana Room, Fondren Library,  
 6404 Robert S. Hyer Lane, SMU



**Lonesome Dove Symposium:**  
**Friday and Saturday, November 14-15, 2025**  
 Time and Location TBD  
 Co-sponsored with the SMU English Department

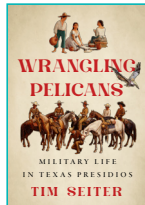


**Noon Talk:**  
**Wednesday, February 4, 2026**  
**Cristina Urias-Espinoza**  
 Clements Center  
*U.S. Colonies in Mexico: Americans' Appetite for Land and the Transformation of the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands*  
 12 noon to 1 PM  
 The Texana Room, Fondren Library,  
 6404 Robert S. Hyer Lane, SMU



**Evening Lecture:**  
**Tuesday, February 17, 2026**  
**Leonard V. Smith**  
 Oberlin College  
*Liberalism and the Law: Land Appropriation in Texas and French Algeria in the 19th Century*  
 6 PM Lecture and Q&A  
 The Texana Room, Fondren Library  
 6404 Robert S. Hyer Lane, SMU

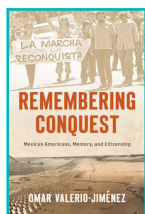
**Discussion:**  
**"Contested Commemorations: Public Memory in the South and West," February 26, 2026**  
 Jones Hall, Meadows Museum



**Evening Lecture:**  
**Tuesday, March 10, 2026**  
**Tim Seiter**  
 University of Texas, Tyler  
*Wrangling Pelicans: Military Life in Texas Presidios*  
 6 PM Lecture and Q&A  
 The Texana Room, Fondren Library,  
 6404 Robert S. Hyer Lane, SMU



**Conference:**  
**April 16-19, 2026**  
**Organization of American Historians' Annual Conference**  
*Re-Thinking American History at 250*  
 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
 Visit the Clements Center's booth in the exhibition area



**Book Prize Award Lecture:**  
**Date to be announced**  
**Omar Valerio-Jiménez**  
 University of Texas, San Antonio  
 6 PM and Q&A  
 The Texana Room, Fondren Library  
 6404 Robert S. Hyer Lane, SMU

Please check our website for updates

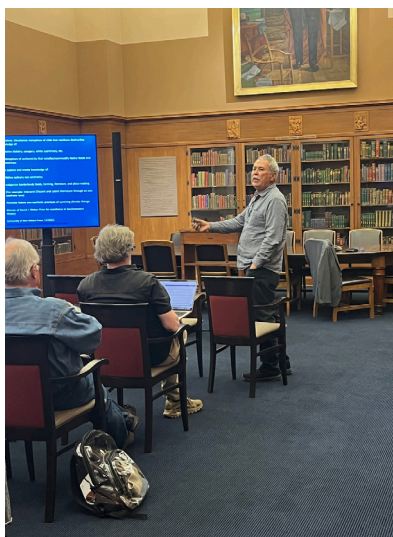
and for any fall or spring events that may be scheduled: [www.smu.edu/swcenter](http://www.smu.edu/swcenter).



# Seen and Heard



**Wesley Phelps** responds to a question following his lecture *Before Lawrence v. Texas: The Making of a Queer Social Movement*.



David J. Weber book prize winner **Victor Valle** gives his award lecture at SMU on his book, *The Poetics of Fire: Metaphors of Chile Eating in the Borderlands*.



**ToniAnn Trevino** (center) with her outside readers **Holly Karibo** (right) and **Andrew Sandoval-Strausz** at a luncheon in her honor following her manuscript workshop.



**Benjamin Francis-Fallon** and **Andy Graybill** together in Washington, D.C.



Center Fellow **Alyssa Quintanilla** (center) with her outside readers, **Kristi Ulibarri** and **Kaitlin Murphy** at a post-Workshop lunch in Alyssa's honor.





Associate Director **Neil Foley** with his daughter **Sabina Hinz-Foley** at the Alliance for Texas History Conference. (photo credit Conference Photographer)



Beloved RuthAnn Elmore's retirement is celebrated at a lunch with the directors and current fellows.



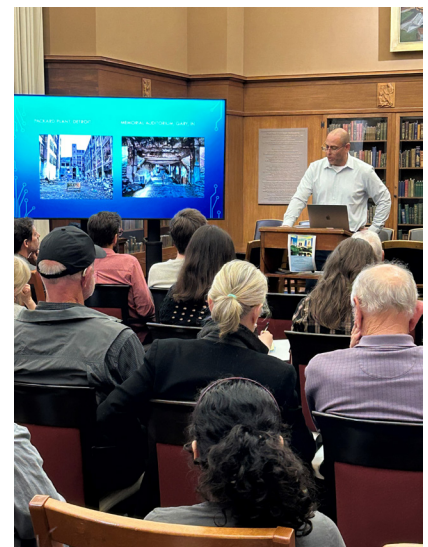
Members of the symposium, *Rethinking the Indian Wars* present at a public event held at the Arizona Historical Society.



Clement's center sponsored panel at the AHA, "Contested Commemorations." Pictured left to right are **Martha Jones**, **Thavolia Glymph**, and **Ariela Gross**.

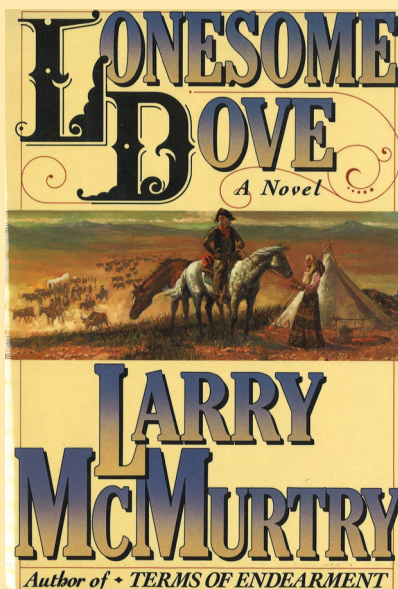


Clements Center fellow **Kevan Malone** (center) with outside readers **Benny Andres** (right) and **Julian Lim** (left) at a luncheon in Kevan's honor following his Manuscript Workshop.



Clements Center Senior Fellow **Andrew Busch** delivers his evening lecture in the Texana Room of Fodren Library at SMU.

## 2025 SYMPOSIUM: LONESOME DOVE AT 40: MCMURTRY, MYTHMAKING, AND THE REIMAGINING OF THE AMERICAN SOUTHWEST



Forty years after its publication, Larry McMurtry's *Lonesome Dove* continues to cast a long shadow across American literature, screen culture, and the cultural memory of the Southwest. A critical and commercial triumph, the novel earned McMurtry the Pulitzer Prize and inspired a massively successful 1989 television adaptation. And yet McMurtry, always a skeptic of romanticized frontier mythology, expressed ambivalence about the reception of *Lonesome Dove*, calling it “the *Gone with the Wind* of the West”—a work he feared had reinforced rather than dismantled myths of Western heroism, racial innocence, and masculine stoicism.

This inaugural Larry McMurtry Symposium, co-sponsored by the Clements Center for Southwest Studies and the SMU English Department invites scholars, critics, writers, archivists, and cultural historians to reflect on the literary and cultural afterlives of *Lonesome Dove*, as well as the wider legacy of Larry McMurtry as novelist, screenwriter, bibliophile, critic, and public intellectual. Hosted at Southern Methodist University in Dallas—just two hours from McMurtry's hometown of Archer City—this event marks the beginning of a biennial tradition honoring major contributions to Southwestern letters and American narrative culture.