

# Center for Texas Studies *at* TCU

FALL 2016 NEWSLETTER • VOLUME 10 / ISSUE 1

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## Place Matters

Mary L. Volcanwek, Ph.D.

Place matters. So proclaimed an article in the *New York Times* in May of 2016. The piece written by a transplanted Californian entitled, "A Look at What Makes Texas Texas," was not wholly flattering as it focused on some of the more bizarre antics of politicians and anecdotes about distrustful, perhaps paranoid, people he had encountered in Texas. Even through that lens, however, the author concluded that "as the world grows smaller, as technology obliterates the significance of where we live and work, as Americans become more transient, Texas resists . . . America needs a superstate."

Yes, place does matter and perhaps Texans know that better than others. Although the second most populous state in the Union, Texas stands out as a superstate. But it's not the outlandish and largeness of things



"Texas;" it is the largess that one finds in Texas. Non-Texans often seize on the caricatures of Texans—twangy bubba types, cowboys carrying holstered weapons, women with big hair and bigger shopping habits, and oil men sitting around a table playing high stakes poker. Texas is much more, though; it's an identity, a sense of connectedness, a set of values that define its citizens regardless of how the political world tries to structure our values for us.

I'm a sixth generation Texan on my maternal grandmother's side and foist that information on many people who could likely care less. That's okay—I'm a Texan with long roots and quite proud of the fact. My dear late husband claimed to never understand my "Texanness." When travelling abroad and asked where I was from, I always replied, "Texas," not "the United States," even during the years when I didn't reside in Texas; he was mystified. "Can't you get over it?" he asked more than once. Then he agreed to move to Texas and TCU with me and like the new convert became more Texan than most Texans, complete with boots, hat, belt, and pride. Texas tends to have that effect on people.

Not all about Texas unfortunately deserves our pride. In July the horrific shooting of multiple police officers shocked Dallas, the state, and the nation. As a state we score poorly on a wide array of demographics. More than one-fourth of Texas children live in poverty, defined in 2014 as a family of four living on \$23,850; nine percent of children in Texas, compared with

six percent nationally, have no insurance coverage; mental health expenditures are almost one-third lower per capita than the U.S. average, second lowest only to Idaho; and teen pregnancy rates remain stubbornly high. Those facts are dispiriting, but I know that Texas can and will do better because of the largess of Texans, who won't wait on the government to act to improve things. Just look at the outpouring of care and support for law enforcement in the aftermath of the Dallas shooting and the statesmanship of city elders and the Chief of Police.

Yes, we as a state have challenges, but we also have a can-do spirit and a strong sense of purpose. I trust that whatever difficulties we face as a collective people, now more diverse than just a decade ago, will be overcome because of a uniquely Texas combination of values. We are a proud, honorable, and generous people. Texan values of individualism, entrepreneurship, and community-mindedness will prevail. Place matters, and our sense of place imbues us with a sense of mission to lift all of our citizens, to improve the lot of all who live in the state, to teach all within our borders to embrace individual responsibility, to buffer people as they strive toward that goal, and, most of all, to make everyone within these borders proud to be Texans.

I'm proud to be a Texan—Texas born, Texas raised—and I ask you to join me as we celebrate all that makes Texas distinctive and move away from distinctions that detract from the generosity and commitment that is uniquely Texas. The Center aims to highlight in new ways and in new places the history and culture that makes Texas, well, the superstate of Texas. 🌵



Courtesy of the Texas State Library



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COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

Center for Texas Studies

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## Connected to our Community

Gene A. Smith, Ph.D.

The last couple of years have seen tremendous changes at TCU, in Fort Worth, and in Texas. Campus growth insures that TCU still lives up to the name Texas Construction University. Fort Worth continues to develop great new places to eat, shop, and hang out. The Texas economy hums along despite the gloom of national and international events. Meanwhile, it's been a busy year for Center staff members with activities that allowed us to strengthen our bonds in the community and around the state.

During the summer of 2016, I worked with Humanities Texas to organize another summer teacher professional development institute entitled, "From Colonists to Revolutionaries." This institute also had sessions on Texas history during the Mexican national and revolutionary periods. It was a repeat of the very successful Center for Texas Studies institute held at TCU during the summer of 2015. Many of the same faculty participated, including TCU history professors Alex Hidalgo, Bill Meier, Ken Stevens, and me, yet the



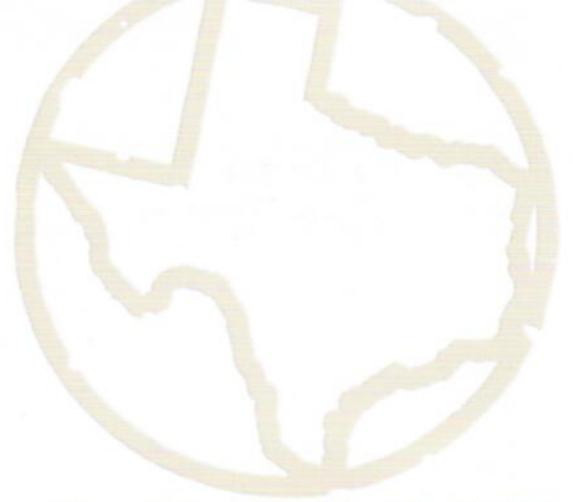
workshop took place on the campus of the University of Texas at San Antonio. The program catered to early-career teachers in low-performing schools and provided close interaction with nationally renowned scholars. Professors taught the teachers how to use primary source materials and employ effective pedagogical strategies in their assignments and activities. The workshop offered a great opportunity to carry the Center for Texas Studies and TCU banners into the heart of San Antonio. Among the teacher participants was Ana Villareal Simpson, a former Fort Worth teacher who participated in many teacher-education opportunities provided by the Center before 2008. The renewed meeting provided us the opportunity to work together again. She and I are trying to extend the Center's teaching services into the San Antonio area, including applying for U. S. Department of Education grant.

The Center has held Saturday morning public history workshops at the Fort Worth Library since the spring of 2003 and this program still draws sizeable crowds. Occasionally we experience hiccups as we did for the September 2016 program. When the scheduled speaker cancelled unexpectedly, I agreed to discuss conducting research in the

Archives of the Indies in Seville, Spain. I talked about the trials and tribulations of conducting research in a language that is not my first. I shared the troubles of navigating cultural and time differences, as well as bureaucratic hurdles one has to cross in such a facility. My conclusion suggested that when conducting research in a foreign country, one must be easy-going, patient, and willing to accept that things will not necessarily work smoothly. Fortunately, Spanish tapas and cervezas made my trip successful and added a colorful ending to what may have otherwise been a mundane story.

In November, I will teach a TCU Extended Education class on Fort Worth's sporting heroes. I happily stepped into the gap while another instructor took a well-deserved break from fall teaching responsibilities. I will focus on the city's rich sporting heritage and share stories about well-known and unknown heroes. Whether it is the thrill of victory or the agony of defeat, sports unite us.

Here at the Center, we hope you feel a deeper connection to history, to Texas, and to each other when you join us for a workshop or register for a course. I know I enjoy connecting with all of you. 🇺🇸



## Tejano Tiger Available Spring 2017

José de los Santos Benavides is the subject of an upcoming Jerry Thompson biography

The *Texas Biography Series*, a joint project of the Center for Texas Studies at TCU and the TCU Press, continues to pursue its mission of publishing cutting-edge scholarly biographies of historical Texas figures who either have no biography or no quality modern biography.

It's been a busy year. Last March we published the latest title in the Series: Laura McLemore's *Adele Briscoe Looscan: Daughter of the Republic*. It tells the story of Looscan, a pioneering Houston civic leader, historian, and historical preservationist, who helped to found the Daughters of the Republic of Texas and who was the longest-serving president of the Texas State Historical Association. The book is playing to rave reviews, and the Center congratulates Professor McLemore, who holds the William B. Wiener, Jr. Professorship of Archives & Historic Preservation at LSU-Shreveport, on the successful completion of this important work.

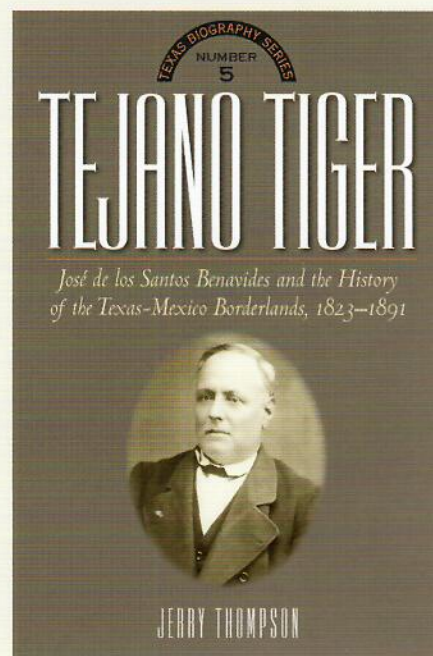
### Calling All Authors!

The Series is always on the lookout for scholars with interesting projects, and I continue to visit with authors who may have promising projects. If you or someone you know is working on a biography that would be appropriate for our series, please drop me a line at [g.cantrell@tcu.edu](mailto:g.cantrell@tcu.edu), and I will be happy to send you a copy of our Author's Guidelines and discuss your project with you.

Gregg Cantrell, Ph.D.  
*Texas Biographer Series*

The next book in the Series is currently at press. *Tejano Tiger: José de la Santos Benavides and the Texas-Mexico Borderlands, 1825-1891*, by Jerry Don Thompson, will be released at the annual meeting of the Texas State Historical Association next March in Houston. Benavides was the highest-ranking Mexican American Confederate officer and an important figure in South Texas politics. Thompson, a prolific author and former president of the Texas State Historical Association, is a regents' professor at Texas A&M International University in Laredo and a leading authority on the history of South Texas in the nineteenth century.

The first several titles in the Series have been underwritten by a generous grant from the Houston Endowment. In 2011, the Center received additional grants from the Carl and Florence E. King Foundation and the Summerlee Foundation, ensuring that the Series will continue into the future. We are grateful to these foundations for their generosity and vision. 🇺🇸



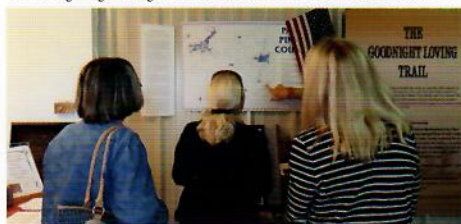


# Program News

## Extended Education Courses Range across Texas History

Through TCU's Extended Education program, the Center for Texas Studies offers distinctive courses for everyone who cannot get enough of Lone Star culture. In spring 2016 independent historian Dan Smith led a day-long trip along the Bankhead Highway to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the bill that created the first all-weather transcontinental highway across America in 1916. An evening class on the preceding Thursday set the stage for the coach tour that took attendees west through Weatherford, Palo Pinto, Millsap, and Strawn with stops at the Old Jail Museum Complex in Palo Pinto, the beautiful rest area at Lovers Retreat, and the W. K. Gordon Center for Industrial History of Texas at the Thurber ghost town.

Quentin McGown's annual excursion wound its way through Fort Worth history by way of its historic cemeteries. A



cool morning mist ended just in time for walking tours of Birdville and Pioneer Rest Cemeteries followed by lunch among the tombstones at Historic Oakwood Cemetery on the north side of the city. The motor coach also paused at the site of a recently discovered prehistoric burial. Situated on the edge of downtown today, the grave appears to be one of several on the bluff overlooking the Trinity River.

During the fall 2016 semester, TCU's own Dr. James Riddlesperger presented "Assessing the 2016 Election: Historical and Contemporary Lessons." As unusual as this election cycle was, Riddlesperger's thirty-plus years in the political science department helped him put things in perspective for students who wanted to go beyond sound bites and headlines. Another longtime TCU professor, historian Gene Allen Smith, will discuss the connections between sports and life in "Champions: Fort Worth's Sporting Heroes." It is not just about winning and losing, Smith explains. Competitions unify communities, define personal identity, and provide an escape during difficult times.



Watch for news about two all new courses in 2017. In February Sandra Guerra-Cline, senior copy editor for the Fort Worth Star Telegram, will help you preserve your personal history in her course, "How to Write Your Own Obituary." Participants will learn the basics and get hands-on experience preparing a draft of their own. In April Quentin McGown's annual spring course will feature the city's beautiful open spaces. After an evening introductory meeting, the Saturday tour will visit Lake Worth, Trinity and Forest Parks, and some lesser-known historic spots to play outdoors. It will be the perfect time of year to study about the history of public recreation in Fort Worth.

For details visit [lifelong.tcu.edu](http://lifelong.tcu.edu) and reserve your spot today! 📍



### DO SOMETHING CLASSY THIS SPRING.

Reserve your spot today: [www.lifelong.tcu.edu](http://www.lifelong.tcu.edu)

FEBRUARY 21 & 28:

#### How to Write Your Own Obituary

with

Sandra Guerra-Cline,  
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

APRIL 27 & 29:

#### Fort Worth Parks: A Study Tour of Our Open Spaces

with

Quentin McGown  
Author, Historian, Probate Judge

# “Every person is a historian.”

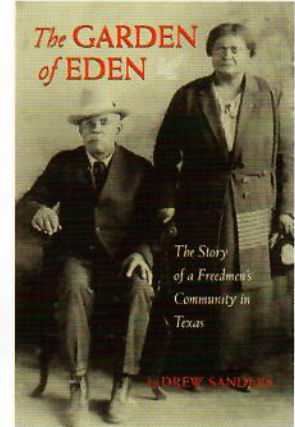
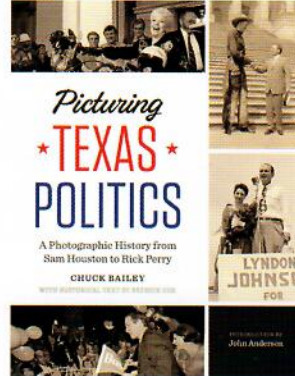
## Great Texas Stories Featured in Speaker Series

Nine hard-working custodians of Texas culture shared their experiences in the Preserving Our Past Community History Lecture Series in 2016. They treated attendees to tricks to navigating online resources, the challenges of restoring an ever-changing garden, the joys of conducting research overseas, and so much more. Speakers in the series often comment on the great questions they receive from our audiences who are always engaged and eager to learn. Everyone at the Center sends a big Lone Star “Thank You!” to all the folks who shared their time and expertise with us over the past year.

June Koelker, dean of the TCU Library, began the year with “TCU Library Special Collections: How Can We Help You with Your Research?” a virtual tour of the newly renovated library and a behind-the-scenes look at the resources it offers for the public both on-site and online. For African American History Month, author Drew Sanders painted an endearing portrait of family life in a historically black Fort Worth neighborhood based on his book, *The Garden of Eden: The Story of a Freedman’s Community in Tarrant County, Texas*. Laura McLemore

joined us for “Adele Briscoe Looscan: Daughter of the Republic.” Looscan left a memorable legacy as the first woman—and longest serving—president of the Texas State Historical Association and a tireless advocate for public education and preservation. Local historian Ruth Karbach delighted music and history lovers alike with “Caruso in Cowtown,” the tale of famed Italian tenor Enrico Caruso’s first Texas performance in the Cowtown Coliseum in the Fort Worth Stockyards in 1920. With spring in full swing, horticulturist Steven Chamblee led the audience on a tour through artist Douglas Chandor’s beautiful Weatherford gardens from past to present.

TCU professor Gene Smith recounted his historical and gastronomical adventures while doing research on Texas characters in Seville, Spain, for Hispanic Heritage Month. In October genealogist and author Edward Wright offered tips and tricks for writing and publishing your family history. In “Picturing Texas Politics: A Photographic History from Sam Houston to Rick Perry,” author Chuck Bailey shared never-before-published photos of Texas politicians and political campaigns with the upcoming election just around the corner. Each



December our partners at the library introduce projects of their own that share the Center’s goal to protect the state’s distinctive past. This year senior librarian Rene Gomez will discuss the city’s early twentieth century growing pains in “The History of Annexation on Fort Worth’s North Side.”

Community History Workshops are held one Saturday a month from January – May and September – December at 10:30 AM in the Tandy Lecture Hall at the Fort Worth Public Library. They are made possible thanks to the support of the Summerlee Foundation and the Sommerfield G. Roberts Foundation.

For a complete schedule of upcoming events, visit [www.texasstudies.org](http://www.texasstudies.org) or like us on Facebook. 🇺🇸

## To All Lovers of True Crime!

The Tarrant County College District (TCCD) Archives and the Center for Texas Studies have partnered on a new book coming soon from TCU Press titled, *Desperados: Stories from the Fort Worth Police Department Wanted Posters, 1894-1905*. This collection of fifty historic wanted notices features a motley crew of murderers, kidnapers, and other bad men and women sought by the law at the turn of the century. An accompanying essay tells the true story behind every crime. More than thirty different authors contributed to the project which is edited by TCCD archivist Tom Kellam and LeAnna Schooley, assistant director of the Center.

Readers will recognize some famous names in the crowd including Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, but most of these perpetrators were long forgotten until now. The Fort Worth Police Department preserved the circulars, sent by law enforcement agencies around

the nation, in ledgers that were later donated to the archives by retired officer Joe D. Galloway. Today, the posters shine a bright light on the rougher side of American society itself during the Gilded and Progressive Eras. The faces looking out from every image humanize the lurid stories that often accompany crime and punishment.

There are no elaborate fonts and artfully charred edges typical of the mythical Old West wanted poster found here. Instead, slick mass-produced Pinkerton’s National Detective Agency advertisements appear alongside distinctive handmade postcard mailers from small sheriffs’ offices around the country. Former Texas state historian Bill O’Neal’s masterful context puts the entire collection in perspective.

Look for *Desperados: Stories from the Fort Worth Police Department Wanted Posters, 1894-1905* in 2017 from TCU Press. 🇺🇸



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