


C&AW CENTER FOR THE STUDY
OF THE AMERICAN WEST
 West Texas A&M University™

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CONFERENCE

shaping a sense of place

FEBRUARY 22-23, 2018

Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum

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CENTER FOR THE STUDY
OF THE AMERICAN WEST

 West Texas A&M University.

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PANHANDLE-PLAINS HISTORICAL MUSEUM

*thanks to a generous grant from
The Tecovas Foundation*

Welcome!

Thank you for attending the Southern Plains Conference, an event that has been held biannually for close to 30 years. Since 1990, the Southern Plains Conference has been organized as a day-long event with speakers, panel presentations and exhibit booths to educate and engage a broad spectrum of citizens in a topic of regional interest.

Ogallala Commons took over the Southern Plains Conference in 2003, and conducted it annually until 2013, when it was discontinued. All told, through the 11 Southern Plains Conferences facilitated by Ogallala Commons, we reached an audience of more than 3,000 people in Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska and Colorado. Over this run, the conferences focused on themes of the "12 Key Assets of Commonwealth," which include the water cycle, history, spirituality, soil and mineral cycle, education, arts and culture, energy and the natural environment.

This year, the Center for the Study of the American West (CSAW), in partnership with Ogallala Commons, the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum and The Tecovas Foundation, has brought the conference back to West Texas A&M University in Canyon, Texas. An exciting series of speakers from academia, business and industry, agriculture, public policy, media and other diverse fields will join community members, educators, professionals and students to explore this year's theme, "Shaping a Sense of Place."

In general, Sense of Place might be defined as the intersection of physical geography and community narrative, or where a people's story engages a particular environment. For the Southern Plains, Sense of Place includes an evolving appreciation of big sky and open prairie; awareness of indigenous and Hispano heritage and names on the land; an identity historically or imaginatively linked to the pioneer era; recurring cycles of migration, immigration and cultural change; landscapes of labor that might involve cattle, farming and oil; and concerns for the future that include issues of economics, water and rural community sustainability. Developing and cultivating Sense of Place is essential to our future on the Southern Plains. In keeping with our diverse interests and points of view, our Sense of Place will not be singular or unified, but we can work toward common elements that will produce a useful outline by the conclusion of the symposium.

Alex Hunt and Darryl Birkenfeld

Thursday, February 22, 2018

10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Hike: Palo Duro Canyon, led by David Horsley, meet inside the park gates at *Palo Duro Canyon State Park*

3:00 - 4:15 p.m. Scholarly Panel: "What Do We Mean by 'Sense of Place'?"

Hazlewood Room, Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum
Bonney MacDonald, WTAMU, English
Byron Pearson, WTAMU, History
Ray Matlack, WTAMU, Wildlife Biology
Michael Grauer, PPHM, Art and Western Heritage
Sidnye Johnson & Warren Stricker, WTAMU Archivists

7:00 - 9:00 p.m. Opening Plenary, "Place Matters: Writing the Llano"

Shelley Armitage, Las Cruces, NM/Vega, TX
Hazlewood Room, Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum
Exhibit: Photography of Place, "Expanse,"
Jim Livingston, Amarillo, TX

Dessert Reception and Book Signing to follow

Friday, February 23, 2018

8:00 a.m. Introduction and Welcome, A History of the Southern Plains Conference & Comments on Theme
Darryl Birkenfeld and Alex Hunt
Hazlewood Room, Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum

"no place is a place until it has had a poet"
—Wallace Stegner, *Where the Bluebird Sings to the Lemonade Springs*

8:15 a.m. "The Long-Term Ethnic Mexican Sense of Place on the *Llano*"
Joel Zapata, Southern Methodist University, Austin, TX

8:45 a.m. "Indigenous Homelands"
Jonathan Wilson, Clovis, NM; Ashland University

9:15 a.m. "Education and Identity on the Southern Plains"
Michael Roberts, Canyon, TX

9:45 a.m. "Voices of the High Plains: The Community of Public Radio"
Kathleen Holt, Cimarron, KS

10:15 - 10:45 a.m. Morning Break

10:45 a.m. Morning Plenary, "Without a Poet, There Is No Place :: Without a Place, There Is No Poet"
Andy Wilkinson, Lubbock, TX

11:30 a.m. Lunch and Commonwealth Activity
Assigned tables outside Hazlewood Room

12:00 p.m. Commonwealth Fair
presented by Ogallala Commons

12:30 p.m. "Placing the Contemporary High Plains Ranch"
Jay O'Brien, Amarillo, TX

"When we reach for a 'sense of place,' we posit an intimate relationship to a set of stories connected to a particular location..."
—William Kittredge, *The Nature of Generosity*

1:00 p.m. "Mining the Skies on the Southern Plains: Wind, Solar and Our Energy Future"
Wes Reeves, Amarillo, TX

1:30 p.m. "The Geography of Production Agriculture"
Rachael Van Horn, Woodward, OK

2:00 p.m. "The Panhandle Sense of Place: Reconciling the Urban with the Regional"
AJ Fawver, AICP, CNU-A, Amarillo, TX

2:30 p.m. "Sense of Place in a New Homeland"
Debra Bolton, Garden City, KS

3:00 p.m. "The Impact of Boom-Bust Cycles on Small Communities in Petroleum Producing Areas"
Wayne Hughes, Amarillo, TX

3:30 p.m. Afternoon Plenary, "A Question of Dragonflies"
Amey Hale Auker, Prescott, AZ

4:15 p.m. Closing Session: Summing Up, Assessment & Suggestions for Action
Darryl Birkenfeld and Alex Hunt

4:30 p.m. Adjournment

"Sense of place is the sixth sense, an internal compass and map made by memory and spatial perception together."
—Rebecca Solnit, *Savage Dreams: A Journey into the Landscape Wars of the American West*

Presenters

Dr. Shelley Armitage is professor emerita and Roderick Professor at the University of Texas at El Paso. A former Fulbright Chair in American Literature, she has published eight award-winning books, the most recent, *Walking the Llano: A Texas Memoir of Place*. She divides her time between Las Cruces, New Mexico and Vega, Texas where she manages the family farm.

Amy Hale Auker is an author and cowboy who writes and thrives on a ranch in Arizona where she is having a love affair with the Santa Maria Mountains. Her writing springs from a strong sense of place and is rooted in the real world.

Dr. Debra Bolton works as an extension specialist for Kansas State University. She's engaged in multi-lingual research to increase Extension's reach into under-served audiences. A recent recipient of a Research and Exploration Grant from National Geographic Society, Debra's project is "Creating a Pathway to STEM for Females."

AJ Fawver, AICP, CNU-A is the Planning Director in Amarillo, Texas. Her undergraduate and graduate work focused on government and public administration. She is certified through the American Planning Association and the Congress of New Urbanism. Fawver was recently named a Top 100 Local Government, and just became a Certified Public Manager.

Kathleen Holt hails from Cimarron, Kansas, where she and several dedicated friends started the country's first, rural, community-licensed public radio station, known today as High Plains Public Radio. Retired, she now enjoys spending time with friends in politics, education, fundraising, consulting, child advocacy, elder services, history, preservation, humanities and community development.

Wayne Hughes retired as executive vice president of the Panhandle Petroleum Producers and Royalty Owners Association

in 2013 after 23 years of service. He was legislative liaison for the Association's members in surrounding states and Washington, D.C. Wayne is a 1967 graduate of WTAMU with a degree in journalism and radio-tv production.

Jim Livingston started using photography as therapy to deal with the chronic pain from a severe back injury. He has taken nearly 3 million photographs mostly of the Southwest plains of the panhandle of Texas. Before taking up photography he did social work and was a legal assistant

Jay O'Brien has been in the cattle business since 1967. He currently manages or co-manages ranches in four Texas Panhandle counties and he serves on various community and industry boards of directors. O'Brien has been honored with multiple awards, including the Society of Range Management's Excellence in Grazing Management Award and the National Golden Spur Award.

Wes Reeves is the senior media relations representative for Xcel Energy in Texas and New Mexico. He grew up in Wellington, Texas, and holds a journalism degree from the University of Texas at Austin. He helped found Class 4 Winds & Renewables, an early advocate for regional wind energy development.

Michael Roberts, a retiree of Canyon, spent 42 years working in the oil and gas business and the agricultural industry. He has served as the International Baccalaureate Coordinator for Amarillo ISD and currently serves on the Board of Directors of WTAMU's Center for the Study of the American West.

Rachael Van Horn, veteran journalist of Rosston, Oklahoma presently works at the Woodward News. She has written for numerous publications across the US and has recently submitted to Pulitzer an essay about the historic, killing wildfires that swept across Northwest Oklahoma, Kansas and Texas. The harsh landscapes of western Oklahoma provide the backdrop for much of her writing, especially her book *Sage*.

Andy Wilkinson, award-winning poet, songwriter, singer, and playwright whose particular interest is the history and peoples of the Great Plains, has recorded twelve albums of original music and has written six plays. He is Artist in Residence at the Southwest Collection at Texas Tech University, where he also teaches songwriting and creative process.

Dr. Jonathan Wilson is the Chair of the English Program and Associate Professor at Ashford University. He holds a PhD in English Studies from the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA). He specializes in Native American literature(s) and has emphases in 19th and 20th century American fiction. Currently, he is Vice-Chair of the Faculty Senate and member of various University committees.

Joel Zapata is a Ph.D. candidate in history at Southern Methodist University. His dissertation project, titled "The Mexican Southern Plains: The Making of an Ethnic Mexican Homeland," centers upon the ethnic Mexican history of that region from the second half of the eighteenth century to the present day.

"Our task is to build cultural fortresses to protect our emerging nativeness. They must be strong enough to hold at bay the powers of consumerism, the powers of greed and envy and pride. One of the most effective ways for this to come about would be for our universities to assume the awesome responsibility to both validate and educate those who want to be homecomers—not necessarily to go home but to go someplace and dig in and begin the long search and experiment to become native."

—Wes Jackson, Becoming Native to this Place



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Panhandle–Plains Historical Review

General Call for Papers

The Panhandle-Plains Historical Review welcomes submissions on diverse topics including:

- *ranching and agriculture*
- *pioneers and early settlers*
- *Native American history and culture*
- *environmental history*
- *the role of the military*
- *Hispanic history*
- *modern settlement and economic development*
- *cultural and historiographical analyses*

Learn more at our website: wtamu.edu/pphr

PPHR
Panhandle–Plains Historical Review

The Sense of Place

Wallace Stegner

“Neither the country nor the society we built out of it can be healthy until we stop raiding and running, and learn to be quiet part of the time, and acquire the sense not of ownership but of belonging. ‘The land was ours before we were the land’s,’ says Robert Frost’s poem. Only in the act of submission is the sense of place realized and a sustainable relationship between people and earth established.”

The logo for the Center for the Study of the American West, featuring the letters 'C&AW' in a large, bold, black, stylized font.

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The logo for the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, featuring the letters 'PPHM' in a large, bold, red font, with 'PANHANDLE-PLAINS HISTORICAL MUSEUM' in a smaller, red, sans-serif font below it.The logo for Gallala Commons, featuring a circular icon with a green arrow pointing right and a blue arrow pointing up, next to the text 'gallala' in blue and 'Commons' in green.

thanks to a generous grant from The Tecovas Foundation