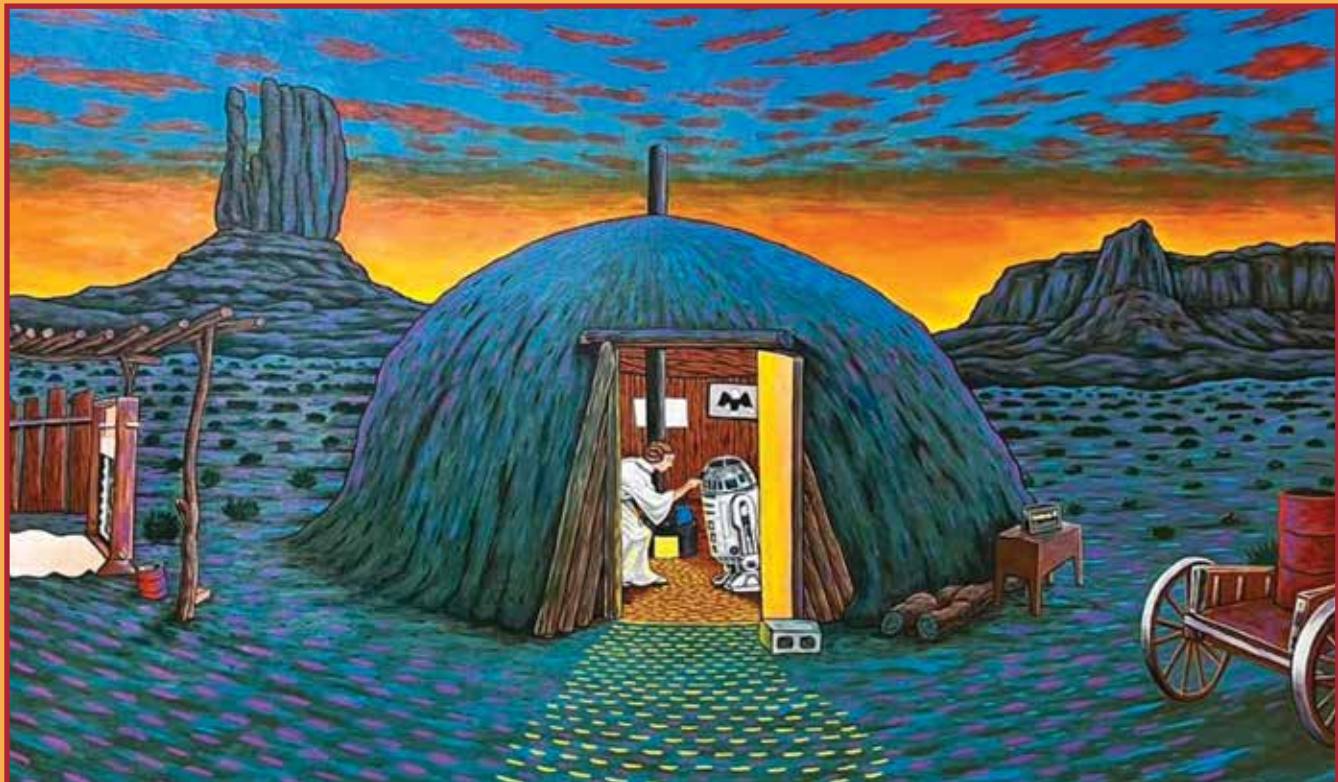


Western Literature Association

2024 Conference



Speculative Territorializations of New Western Literatures

Tucson, Arizona

October 2–5, 2024

Hotel Layout

MEETINGS

With over 100,000 sq ft of flexible indoor and outdoor meeting space, we can accommodate events of any size, from small to grand gatherings. Offering two 12,000 sq ft ballrooms, an Executive Conference Center, as well as spectacular outdoor venues with views of Pusch Ridge. Additionally, our team of catering professionals will help ensure your event is both successful and memorable.

EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE CENTER

Our 11,000 sq ft Executive Conference Center is an exceptional venue for your next meeting. Featuring eight distinct meeting rooms, including a boardroom with a built-in 70" LED television for presentations. All rooms are equipped with state-of-the-art audio/visual equipment, ergonomic seating, work tables with non-reflective surfaces, built-in outlets and specially-designed energy efficient lighting.

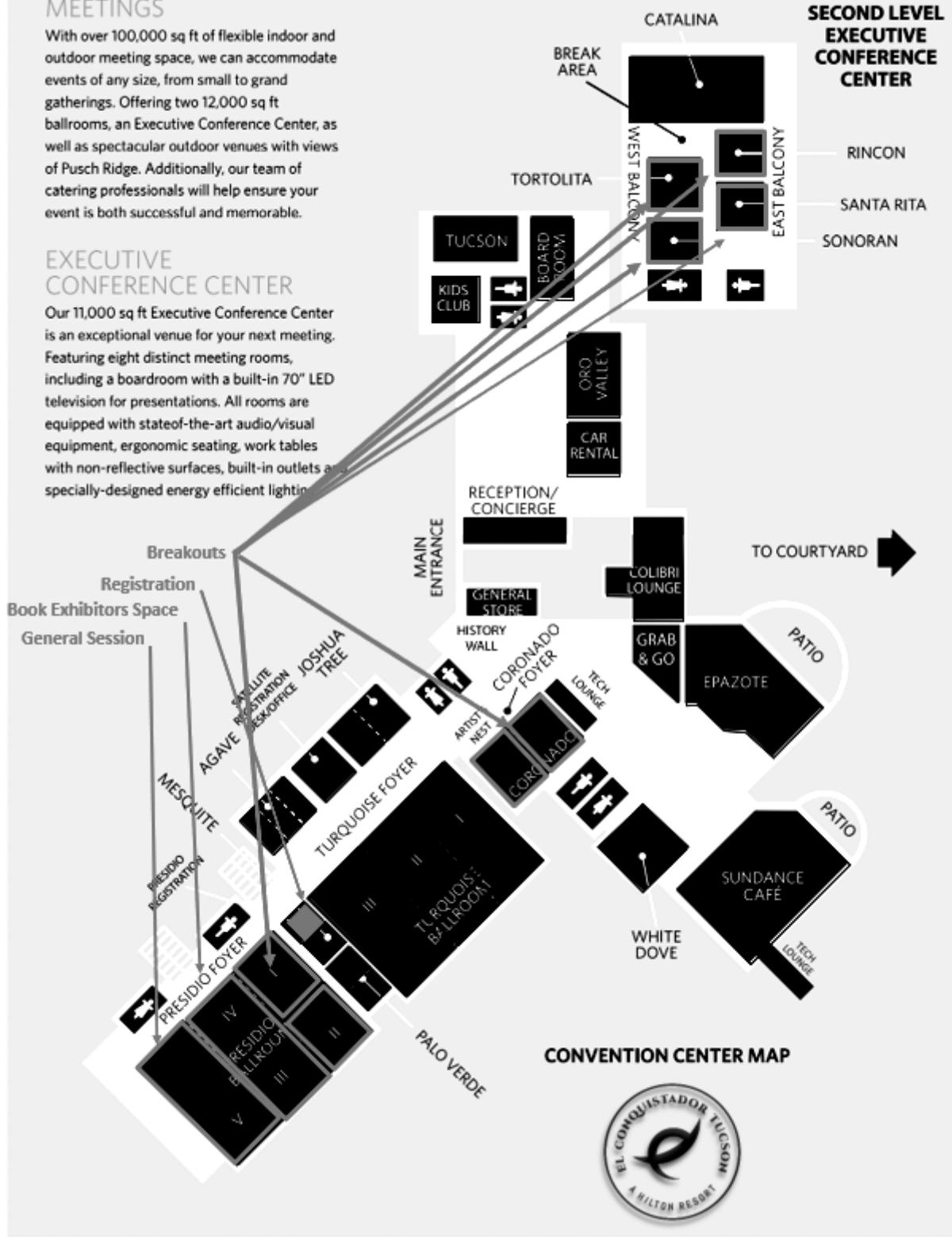


Photo credit front cover: Hope in a Hogan © Ryan Singer, 2022

President's Welcome Message

S-keg Tas! ¡Bienvenido! Welcome! to the 2024 Western Literature Association's annual conference, themed "Speculative Territorializations of New Western Literatures." This year's gathering in the wonderful city of Tucson, Arizona, covering a place known as Cuk Son to the Tohono O'odham people who call these lands home, is one we hope you will find to be a welcoming, intellectually stimulating, and enriching experience. The incredibly diverse range of topics, themes, disciplinary perspectives, and cultural voices that make up the conference program reflects the Western Literature Association's strong and ongoing commitment to fostering critical conversations about the West's complex past, present, and future in a way that speaks through the greatest number of perspectives from among the peoples and cultures who call the American West home.

As is apparent from my original call for papers, to the striking painting Ryan Singer graciously allowed us to use as an illustration there and on our program cover, the wonderful group of participating keynote and plenary speakers, and the agenda detailed in the finished program, this

year's gathering of the WLA has an exceptionally strong emphasis on Native and Indigenous voices. The choice of Tucson as the site and thematic emphasis is my way of highlighting and honoring the place of my graduate education at the University of Arizona, as well as the knowledge I am so blessed to have gained from the absolutely amazing teachers, scholars, writers, and storytellers I had the good fortune of learning from in the American Indian Studies Program. Included among these are the venerable Kiowa-Cherokee novelist N. Scott Momaday (1983 DAA recipient), who passed on last year. Momaday, of course, is distinguished as being the first Native American writer awarded the 1969 Pulitzer Prize for fiction in recognition of his sublime initial novel, *House Made of Dawn*, a book credited with launching the so-called Native American Literary Renaissance.

The Native writers gathered here for this conference all bear a connection to the wonderful literary legacy Momaday inaugurated, while extending on his literary contributions in unique and powerful ways. Among these are former colleagues of Dr. Momaday from his time as faculty at the U of A, including Tom Holm, Ofelia Zepeda, Luci Tapahonso (2022 DAA recipient), and Franci Washburn—who is also this year's Distinguished Achievement recipient. Added to these were Gerald Vizenor (2005 DAA recipient) and Stephen Graham Jones (2020 DAA recipient), two especially prolific writers who have greatly expanded the possibilities and Native fiction in profound ways through stories steeped in humor and joy. With the addition of artist Ryan Singer, these esteemed writers come together in creating enduring narratives of Native presence in the face of victimry and tragedy that actualize the promise of what Gerald Vizenor termed "survivance."



Billy J. Stratton, WLA President

From the opening reception at the stunning Sunset point on Wednesday to its close with the WLA business meeting on Saturday, my sincere hope is that this conference provides a rich array of opportunities for attendees to engage in meaningful and respectful dialogue with a robust and hardy exchange of diverse ideas. All in a manner and mood that fosters a genuine sense of shared community, as well as struggle and collaboration. Features of life and our common human experience that have long served as rich sources of literary and artistic creativity as displayed through all of our guest's literary works and art.

On a broader level, a further aim is that this year's conference cultivates and reinforces the WLA's commitment to creating an engaging, inclusive, accessible, and safe experience and intellectual community. This is reflected in the conference program that emerged from the amazing proposals and panels submitted to us by all of you through a variety of modes and formats, including traditional panels, lightning talks, roundtable discussions, and literary readings, ensuring that all attendees can find sessions that resonate with their curiosities, interests, and passions. Furthermore, this year's agenda features practical, hands-on guidance on managing goals and multitasking, along with professional development sessions tailored for the needs of graduate students and early-career scholars. Complimenting two special sessions organized by our wonderful graduate student representatives, we're also holding a new event in collaboration with the professional journal editors and University Press representatives in attendance. In the session "Meet the Western Presses," they will be offering us an opportunity to learn about what goes into successful article submissions and book proposals and the subsequent steps one can take to ensure successful publication. As it has always been since attending my first WLA conference back in 2013, my sincere hope is that the 2024 WLA meeting lives up to the promise established in previous years to inspire the continued exploration of the West's rich literary and cultural heritage in critical conversations about its complex histories and realities, bringing us all together to imagine its possible futures.

Before I bid you all adieu, I'd also like to share my heartfelt thanks and deep sense of appreciation for all the invaluable advice, assistance, counsel, patience, help, good humor, and work so generously granted me by Sabine Barcatta, the rock on which the WLA stands tall, and the bundle of energy, passion, and sheer force of nature that is Bernadette Russo. None of what we are now about to experience would have ever made the vital transition from idea into reality without their tireless dedication and enthusiasm they never failed to show me, while demonstrating a faith in me that I didn't have in myself at times in my ability to transform my vision into something valuable and worthy of our time and attention. In my time in Tucson, I learned that there is no word for "thank you" in O'odham because sharing is simply implied and because they believe that all good actions come back to those who give in some way as an inherent function of himdag (O'odham culture, way of life and values). What words could be more fitting than those? Such a wonderful sentiment encapsulates the truest meaning of the balance and harmony that we all strive to achieve in our lives, and always more successfully so when working with and for others. Finally, as the Presidency is passed on to Dr. Kalenda Eaton of the University of Oklahoma, we hope you will come together with us again in Oklahoma City for what promises to be an exciting and thought-provoking event in its own right.



58th Western Literature Association Conference

Speculative Territorializations of New Western Literatures

HIGHLIGHTS

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Wednesday

**1:00PM – 4:00PM WLA Executive Council Meeting
(Rincon)**

4:15PM – 6:00PM Registration (Mesquite)

**5:30PM – 7:00PM Opening Reception (Sunset Point):
OFELIA ZEPEDA AND STEPHEN GRAHAM JONES**

Ofelia Zepeda holds the position of Regents' Professor of Tohono O'odham Language and Linguistics at the University of Arizona. She is the author of the only pedagogical textbook on the Tohono O'odham language *A Papago Grammar* (1983), a book she wrote as part of a Tohono O'odham language course she developed at the university. Her research and scholarly publication extends into the interdisciplinary fields of language study. Her individual and collaborative works have been published in venues such as *Diogene*, *The Bilingual Research Journal*, the *Journal of American Linguistics*, and the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, while also appearing in numerous edited books. In recognition of her groundbreaking work in language education and preservation, Dr. Zepeda also holds the distinction of being a recipient of a MacArthur Foundation "genius" Fellowship. Lastly, but certainly not of least significance, she is also a renowned poet celebrated for a voice that centers the unique geography, culture, and climate of the Tohono O'odham Nation and traditional territory, along with the larger Sonoran Desert region. This poetry has been published in several collections and chapbooks including *Ocean Power* (1995) and *Where Clouds Are Formed* (2008), as well as in a chapbook, *Jewed 'i-hoi: O'odham c milga:n s-ke:g ha'icu cegítodag=Earth Movements: a Collection of Poems in O'odham and English* (2005), which exquisitely capture the essence and spirit of the landscapes she calls home.

Ofelia Zepeda



WEDNESDAY 5:30PM–7:00PM

5:30PM OPENING RECEPTION

with Ofelia Zepeda and Stephen Graham Jones

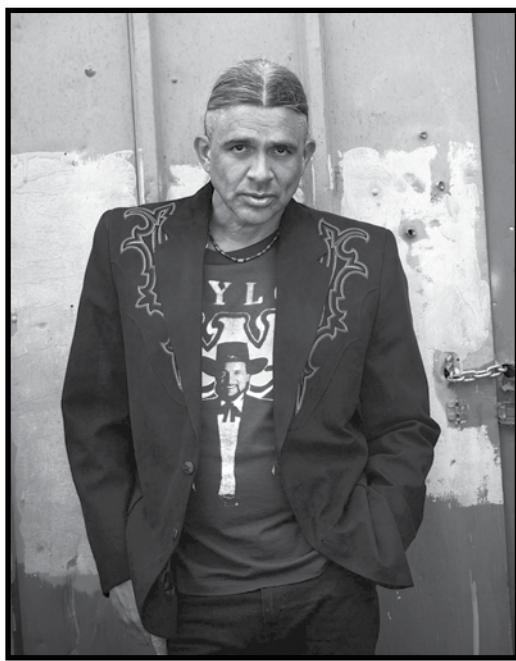
Location: Sunset Point

Session Chair: Billy J. Stratton, University of Denver

Ofelia Zepeda will welcome us to Tohono O’Odham lands and read some of her poetry about place. Stephen Graham Jones will read a piece relevant to the conference theme.

Stephen Graham Jones is the Ivena Baldwin Professor of English, as well as a Professor of Distinction at the University of Colorado Boulder. Jones, a Blackfeet novelist who grew up among the cotton fields of West Texas, wrote thirty-six-and-a-half novels and story collections. This includes his recent body of award-winning horror noves, *I Was a Teenage Slasher* (2024), the recently concluded Indian Lake Trilogy consisting of *The Angel of Indian Lake* (2024), *Don’t Fear the Reaper* (2023), and *My Heart Is a Chainsaw* (2021), along with *Night of the Mannequins* (2020) and *The Only Good Indians*. Works before this include *Mapping the Interior* (2017), *My Hero* (2017), *Mongrels* (2016), *After the People Lights Have Gone Off* (2014), *Not for Nothing* (2014), *The Least of My Scars* (2013), *Sterling City* (2014), *Flushboy* (2013), *The Gospel of Z* (2014), *Three Miles Past* (2013), *The Last Final Girl* (2012), *Zombie Bake-Off* (2012), *It Came From Del Rio* (2010), *Demon Theory* (2006), *Ledfeather* (2008), *The Long Trial of Nolan Dugatti* (2008), *Bleed Into Me* (2005), *All the Beautiful Sinners* (2010), *The Bird Is Gone* (2003) and *The Fast Red Road* (2000), wow! He is widely praised for his unique and captivating contributions to ‘fourth wave’ Native writing, while changing the face of contemporary horror. His writings have garnered numerous awards, including the Texas Institute of Letters Award for Fiction, the LA Times Ray Bradbury Prize, the Mark Twain American Voice in Literature Award, the Independent Publishers Award for Multicultural Fiction, as well as the 2023 American Indian Festival of Words Writers Award, the Locus Award, four Bram Stoker Awards, three Shirley Jackson Awards and six This Is Horror Awards.

Stephen Graham Jones



Thursday



7:00AM–8:00AM • Presidents' Breakfast (WLA presidents only) (Sundance Café)

8:00AM–5:00PM • Registration (Mesquite)

8:00AM–5:00PM • Book Exhibits (Presidio Foyer)

8:00AM–9:15AM • Sessions T1

9:30AM–10:45AM • Sessions T2

9:30AM–10:45AM • Creative Re/Inscriptions: A Roundtable Reading from Terrain.org (Coronado)

11:00AM–12:15PM • Sessions T3

11:00AM–12:15PM • Demi-Plenary: Conversations about the Where of US: Reflections from Living West as Feminists (Presidio I)

11:00AM–12:15PM • Professional Development I—Scholarly Publishing (Coronado)

12:30PM–1:45PM • Plenary—A New Sun Rises in the West: A Conversation with WLA Distinguished Achievement Awardees Stephen Graham Jones, Luci Tapahonso, & Franci Washburn (Presidio IV)

2:00PM–3:15PM • Sessions T5

2:00PM–3:15PM • New Trends in María Amparo Ruiz de Burton Scholarship (Roundtable) (Presidio IV)

3:30PM–4:45PM • Sessions T6

5:00PM–6:15PM • Heartsongs of the West: Native/Indigenous Poetics with Sherwin Bitsui, Luci Tapahonso, Ofelia Zepeda

8:30PM–10:00PM • Graduate Student Social (Colibri Lounge)

8:30PM–10:00PM • Plenary—Campfire Stories with Stephen Graham Jones (The Last Territory)



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Access the most up-to-date program on Conftool or—with abstracts—on your smart device! Download the Conference4me app.

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T1—THURSDAY 8:00AM–9:15AM

T 1A: Steinbeck: American Dreams and Nightmares (sponsored by the Steinbeck Society)

Location: Tortolita

Session Chair: Jeffrey Wayne Yeager, Bluefield State University

The Problem of Evil: Re-Reading *East of Eden* through Thomistic Metaphysics

Jeff Yeager, Bluefield State University

Mediated *mestizaje*: *The Pearl*, *mexicanidad*, and Cross-Cultural Adaptation

Jennifer L Jenkins, University of Arizona

Native Echoes in John Steinbeck's *Deserts*

Kathleen Hicks, Arizona State University

T 1B: Waking up from the Western Invasion Narrative

Location: Sonoran

Session Chair: Bernadette V. Russo, Mount Saint Vincent University

Vampires as Metaphor in Western Invasion Narratives Spiritual Activism and Reorienting Manifest Destiny in Marisela Treviño Orta's *Somewhere: A Primer for the End Days*

Cathryn Merla-Watson, UTRGV

"The Thirst of the Colonizers Is Unending": Vampires in Speculative Westerns

Michael K Johnson, University of Maine-Farmington

RECIPIENT OF THE THOMAS J. LYON AWARD

Decolonizing the Western Epic, Dreaming of Transmodern Latinx Futures: Anaya's *The Adventures of Juan Chicaspatas*

Micah Donohue, Eastern New Mexico University

T 1C: Borderland Futurisms

Location: Santa Rita

Session Chair: Cordelia Barrera, Texas Tech University

Speculative Storytelling in *The Last Cuentista* and *Sanctuary*

Carolina Hernandez-Bachman, UCR

RECIPIENT OF THE LOUIS OWENS AWARD

***Sueños Americanos*: Immigrant's Dystopian Trauma in Americans' Nation of Utopian Delusions**

Vanessa Ramirez, University of North Texas

Borderpunk Tejanx Futures

Sophia Martinez-Abbud, Utah State University

T1—THURSDAY 8:00AM–9:15AM

T 1D: Exposing Stone: Speculation in Western Landscapes

Location: Rincon

Session Chair: Matthew Evertson, Western Colorado University

“Every kind of weather”: Wind, Water, and Erosion in Contemporary California Literature

Will Lombardi, Feather River College

Reading the Rocks: Toward a Lithic Literary Criticism in the Mobile Geology of the West

Lars Erik Larson, University of Portland

Duration and Valuation in James Michener’s *Centennial*

Sylvan Goldberg, Colorado College

Mine

Rachel Heise Bolten, Stanford University

T 1E: The Remembered Earth

Location: Presidio I

Session Chair: Kary Doyle Smout, Washington and Lee University

Migrant Glyphs

Edgar Garcia, University of Chicago

Earthworks Dreaming, Songlines Speculations

Chadwick Allen, University of Washington

Indigenous Timekeeping and Immersive Technologies

Joanna Hearne, University of Oklahoma

T 1F: Southwest Eco-poetics and Environmental Reflections

Location: Coronado

Session Chair: Patrizia Zanella, Swiss National Science Foundation

Repurposing Acequias, Cisterns, and Arroyos: Historical Eco-poetics and Water Sustainability in the Native American Southwest

Anna Maria Brígido-Corachán, University of Valencia

Sonoran Soundscapes: Listening beyond the Border in Multiethnic Poetry, Music, and Memoirs

Dominique Vargas, University of Texas at San Antonio

The Ocean in the Borderlands: Rituals, Hauntings, and Unsettling the Desert

Lydia Marie Heberling, California State Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo

T1—THURSDAY 8:00AM–9:15AM

T 1G: Engagements with Nature: From the Root

Location: Presidio II

Session Chair: Alex Hunt, West Texas A&M University

Animated Aesthetics, Desert Developments, and the Western Water Crisis in Gore Verbinski's *Rango*

Aaron Gabriel Montalvo, Pennsylvania State University

A Settler Colonial Symbol: The Shifting Significance of Eucalyptus Trees in Twentieth-Century California Literature

Emma Catherine Zumbro, University of California, Davis

Melissa Broder's Trickster Desert

Gary Reger, Independent Scholar

T2—THURSDAY 9:30AM–10:45AM

T 2B: Willa Cather Society–Sponsored Panel I

Location: Tortolita

Session Chair: Mark Madigan, Nazareth University

"The Man Who Gave Me My First Chance": S. S. McClure and Willa Cather's "Before Breakfast"

Robert Thacker, St. Lawrence University

Gypsies, "B/bohemian/ism," and Other Ambiguities in Cather's Early Fiction

Evelyn Funda, Utah State University

Mortal Endings: California as End of the Road in Willa Cather's *My Mortal Enemy* and Tillie Olsen's *Tell Me a Riddle*

Susan Naramore Maher, University of Minnesota Duluth

Wild Dirt

Jordan Savage, University of Essex

COVID-19 ETIQUETTE:

As cases of Covid-19 are rising again throughout the country, please be mindful of the fact that we are sharing indoor spaces with hundreds of people during the conference. If you have or develop any symptoms of illness, please consider wearing a mask for the protection of others.

T2—THURSDAY 9:30AM–10:45AM

T 2C: Artful Portrayals and Betrayals

Location: Sonoran

Session Chair: Kristen Brown, Northern State University - Aberdeen, SD

Visual Imperialism and Redface Minstrelsy in J.M Barrie's *Peter Pan*: An Archival Study of *Peter Pan's* Tiger Lily and "Indians"

CR Dean, University of Florida

The Risky Performances of Bill Pickett: Intersectionality in the Wild West Show

Susan Nance, University of Guelph

Embodying Indigenous Sonic Agency: Experimental Sound Art Practices and the Subversion of the Sublime

Christopher Muniz, University of Southern California

Power Between the Old Frontier Myth and the New Industrial Frontier Myth

Crista Diane Fiala, Dartmouth College

T 2D: Cormac McCarthy

Location: Santa Rita

Session Chair: Sara Spurgeon, Texas Tech University

Desert Phenomenology in Nuclear Semiotics

Christopher Scott Boggs, Montana State University

Poetics of Extraction in McCarthy's *The Passenger* and *Stella Maris*

Susan Doherty Osteen, University of South Carolina

T 2E: Edward Abbey and Desert Roads

Location: Rincon

Session Chair: Rob E King, TTU Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library

The Hermann Hesse of the American West: *Der Steppenwolf* as a Companion Piece to *Desert Solitaire*

Eytan Pol, Texas Tech University

Natural Landscapes and Resources of the Desert Southwest: Representations of Environmental Ethics in Edward Abbey's Nature Writings

Meng Wang, University of Arizona

Navigating Wilderness and Civilization: The Dual Nature of Roads in Edward Abbey's *Desert Solitaire*

Juliette Amaris Higareda, Texas A&M International University

T2—THURSDAY 9:30AM–10:45AM

T 2F: Bad Indians & Storyteller: Accessing the Archival Past to Move Indigenous Storytelling Forward

Location: Presidio I

Session Chair: Brian J Twenter, University of Central Oklahoma

Written Tension: Orality and English in Silko's *Storyteller* and Miranda's *Bad Indians*

Noelle Buffo, University of Central Oklahoma

***Bad Indians*: Belonging within a Mestiza Identity**

Masheli Bully, University of Central Oklahoma

Surfing the Tsunami of Trauma: The Power of Storytelling in *Bad Indians*

Sterling Haws, University of Central Oklahoma

T 2G: Creative Re/Inscriptions: A Roundtable Reading from Terrain.org

Location: Coronado

Session Chair: Simmons Buntin, Terrain Publishing

Temporal Gulch: The Natural and Human Histories of a Borderlands Canyon

Eric Aldrich, Pima Community College

Land as Memory: A Diné Speculative Reflection

Byron F. Aspaas, San Juan College

Shapeshifters of the Great Salt Lake: Oolitic Sand, Brine Shrimp, Drought, and the Human Body

Nicole Walker, Northern Arizona University

Stopover: Fatherhood, Awe, and Sandhill Cranes on the U.S.-Mexico Border

Simmons Buntin, Terrain Publishing

Raspberry Creek to Muddy Gulch: Mapless in the Changing Climate

Elizabeth Dodd, Terrain.org; Kansas State University

Please use the hashtag #westernlit2024 and share some images on Instagram!

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T3—THURSDAY 11:00AM–12:15PM

T 3A: Demi-Plenary: Conversations about the Where of US: Reflections from Living West as Feminists

Location: Presidio I

Session Chair: Krista Comer, Rice University

Finding What I Was Not Looking For: Literature, History, and the Great Plains(e)scape Kalenda Eaton, University of Oklahoma

The Where of Here is Now

Krista Comer, Rice University

Re-mudding, Remembering: My Nuevomexicana Education in Language, Culture, and Love

Elena Valdez, New Mexico Highlands University

Relational Feminist Praxis as Theory and Community Building

Dina Gilio-Whitaker, Independent Scholar

T 3B: Global Westerns

Location: Rincon

Session Chair: Lydia Marie Heberling, Cal State Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo

'49-'77-'68: Ruth Ann Baldwin, Lina Wertmüller and the Memory Western Richard Parker, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile

Italian Westerns: From Traditional Narratives to Violent Cinema and Comics

Stefano Rosso, University of Bergamo

T 3C: Photographs and Creating the West

Location: Santa Rita

Session Chair: Jillian Moore, College of Western Idaho

Photographing (Epi)genetic Landscape in Danielle Geller's *Dog Flowers: A Memoir, An Archive* (2021)

Joanna Ziarkowska, University of Warsaw

Keeping Time: Reading Lottie Tillotson's Photographic Diary

Jillian Moore, College of Western Idaho

Karnak Ridge, Pattern Recognition, and Extractive Preservation

Patrick Vincent, University of California, Riverside

T3—THURSDAY 11:00AM–12:15PM

T 3D: Professional Development I—Scholarly Publishing: Papers, Articles, Reviews, Oh My

Location: Coronado

Session Chair: Elizabeth Martinez, University of Texas at Austin

Participants: Jada Ach, Arizona State University

Sarah Jane Kerwin, Oberlin College

Chaney Hill, Rice University

T3E: Wild Words: Writing and Teaching Climate Change and Environmental Literature Today—Evolutions in the Field (A Conversation)

Location: Sonoran

Session Chair: Laura Pritchett, Western Colorado University

Participants: Laura Pritchett, Western Colorado University

Brenda Lanphear, Western Colorado University

Pam Uschuk, *Cutthroat, a Journal of the Arts*



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T4—THURSDAY 12:30AM–1:45PM

T 4: Plenary—A New Sun Rises in the West: A Conversation with WLA Distinguished Achievement Awardees: Stephen Graham Jones, Luci Tapahonso, and Franci Washburn

Location: Presidio IV

Session Chair: Billy J. Stratton, University of Denver

Luci Tapahonso is Professor Emerita of English at the University of New Mexico and had the honor of serving as the inaugural Poet Laureate of the Navajo Nation. She is recipient of a 2018 Native Arts and Culture Foundation Artist Fellowship and WLA Distinguished Achievement Award for 2022. She is the author of three children's books and six books of poetry including *A Radiant Curve* (2008), *Songs from Shiprock Fair* (1999), *Blue Horses Rush In* (1997), *Sáanii Dahataał, The Women Are Singing* (1993), *A Breeze Swept Through* (1987). She has served as a reader for Poetry Out Loud, the New Mexico High School Poetry Competition and was selected as "2016 Best of the City—Our City and State's Prolific Authors" by *Albuquerque: The Magazine*.

Professor Tapahonso has delivered keynote addresses at prestigious conferences, literary events and institutions around the world including Harvard University, Gallup Central High School, Kenyon College, Institute of American Indian Arts, the Tbisili International Literature Festival in the Republic of Georgia and "Creativity Week" at the University of New Zealand at Auckland and Wellington. More recent activities include the composition of a script for an exhibition titled "Creating Tradition: Innovation and Change in American Indian Art" for the American Heritage Gallery at Walt Disney World's Epcot Center and has been at work on new stories and poems for an upcoming manuscript. Finally, Luci resides in Santa Fe with her husband, Dr. Robert Martin, president of the Institute of American Indian Arts.



Luci Tapahonso

T5—THURSDAY 2:00PM–3:15PM

T 5A: Leslie Marmon Silko: *Ceremony*

Location: Tortolita

Session Chair: Travis Franks, Utah State University

Remapping and Rewriting Territories in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*

Pauline Boisgerault, Rennes 2 University

Tayo's Journey to Healing and Ceremonial Awakening in *Ceremony*

Oralia Guadalupe Anai Ramos, Texas A&M International University

Leslie Marmon Silko, Alaska, and the Rise of Cli-Fi

Alex Hunt, West Texas A&M University

Gold Framed Ceremonies

James Cooper Benjamin Segura, West Texas A&M University

T 5B: Lightning Talks on Re-Reading Photo Narratives and Museum Spaces in the Southwest

Location: Sonoran

Session Chair: Lisa Tatonetti, Kansas State University

An Archive of Home in the Photographs of Louis Carlos Bernal

Karen Roybal, Colorado College

Spatial Testimonies to Nuclear Colonialism: Lee Marmon's Aerial Photography

Lucie Raphael, Colorado College

The Obscured Medrano Network in the Oeuvre of Robert Runyon

Annette M. Rodriguez, University of Texas at Austin

Perpetual Precarity: Reading Visual Arts in and about Concho, Arizona

Vanessa Fonseca-Chávez, Arizona State University

Decolonial Views of the Southwest: The Photography of Miguel Gandler

Savanah Pennell, University of Arizona

T5—THURSDAY 2:00PM–3:15PM

T 5C: Stephen Graham Jones (sponsored by the SGJ Society)

Location: Santa Rita

Session Chair: Bernadette V. Russo, Mount Saint Vincent University

Anthropocene Reterritorialization: The Ecogothic in Stephen Graham Jones's *The Only Good Indians*

Cordelia Barrera, Texas Tech University

Reinscribing the West and Geoidentity in the Works of Stephen Graham Jones

Bernadette V. Russo, Mount Saint Vincent University

Who's Afraid of Small Town Me?: Western Identity through Horror in Stephen Graham Jones's *The Indian Lake Trilogy*

Samia Anderson, University of Denver

T 5D: Creative Expression of Identity

Location: Rincon

Session Chair: Sean Woodard, University of Texas at Arlington

Truths Be Told: LGBTQ Coming Out Experiences in Texas

Annette Rachelle Bever, Vernon College

The Wasp and the Roach

Colton Monroe Campbell, University of New Mexico

Too Much Horse: Revisioning the American West

Sharon Reynolds, Retired U.S. Navy and Palomar College

T 5E: Eco-Poetics and Western Prose

Location: Presidio II

Session Chair: Brigitte Georgi-Findlay, Technische Universität Dresden

Mostly Sitting Haiku (1978) : Allen Ginsberg's Eco-poetics

Tomomi Tanioka, Hiroshima Institute of Technology

Louis Bromfield's West

Erin N. Bistline, The Ohio State University

Commemoration on the Work of Annette Kolodny

Brigitte Georgi-Findlay, TU Dresden

On the Plain of Snakes on a Plane: Literary and Literal Battles over U.S./Mexican Borders

Matthew Heimburger, University of Utah

T5—THURSDAY 2:00PM–3:15PM

T 5F: Desert Feminisms: Praxis, Leadership, and Friendship (Roundtable)

Location: Presidio I

Session Chair: Amanda Gradisek, Columbus State Community College

Practicing the Feminisms I Learned in the Desert across Academia

Amanda Gradisek, Columbus State Community College

Desert Feminist Practice in the Rural Midwest: The Lessons of Aridity in the Woods and on the Water

Amy Hamilton, Northern Michigan University

Feminist Practice in Western Valleys

Marlowe Daly-Galeano, LEWIS-CLARK SC

Feminist Queer Kinship: Theory, Pedagogy, and Practice over the Decades on Stolen Indigenous Lands

Ari Burford, Northern Arizona University

Story and Place: Desert Feminisms in Public Health Writing

Laura Gronewold, University of Arizona

T 5G: New Trends in María Amparo Ruiz de Burton Scholarship (Roundtable)

Location: Sonoran

Session Chair: José Aranda, Rice University

Ruiz de Burton and Religious Choice

Sara Flores, Washington University in St. Louis

On Racial Capitalism: Speculating Sovereignty in María Amparo Ruiz de Burton's *Who Would Have Thought It?* and her New York City Letters

Miriam Juárez, NYU

Hospitable Power Struggles in María Amparo Ruiz de Burton's *The Squatter and the Don*

Elizabeth Martinez, University of Texas at Austin

Black Marginality and Speculative Histories: Reassessing Tisha in *The Squatter and the Don*

Miriam Santana, UT Austin

T6—THURSDAY 3:30PM–4:45PM

T 6A: The Streams of Story in the Work of Leslie Marmon Silko

Location: Rincon

Session Chair: Aaron Gabriel Montalvo, Pennsylvania State University

“Desert” and Ocean: Leslie Marmon Silko’s Tidal Imagination

Kyoko Matsunaga, Hiroshima University

Oceanstory: Landsea

Reid Gómez, University of Arizona

Cosmological Forms and Indigenous Planetarity in Leslie Marmon Silko’s *Almanac of the Dead*

Josh Beckelhimer, University of Southern California

RECIPIENT OF THE J. GOLDEN TAYLOR AWARD

T 6B: *La Familia: Mi Historia*

Location: Santa Rita

Session Chair: Christopher David Rosales, California State University, Long Beach

The Future of the American West through Family Histories in Kali Fajardo-Anstine’s *Woman of Light*

Jacqui Haynes, Texas Christian University

Cultural Identities and the American West in Marytza Rubio’s *Brujería for Beginners* and Kali Fajardo-Anstine’s *Remedies*

Jaroslav Kusnir, University of Prešov, Slovakia

Hidden Histories and Haunting Stories within the Southwest Borderlands

Tania García, University of New Mexico

“I live in an ecotone”: Borderlands in Sáenz’s 2012 Novel *Aristotle and Dante*

Carly McGown, Montana State University

T 6D: Seeing Red: Reading Indigenous Intellectual Production in Film, Text, and Art (sponsored by ASAIL)

Location: Tortolita

Session Chair: Laura M Furlan, UMASS Amherst

Wendy Red Star and the Counter-Archive

Laura M Furlan, UMASS Amherst

All Her Relations: Jaune Quick-to-See Smith’s Memory Maps

Susan Bernardin, Oregon State University

Dead Cowboys & Living NDNs at the James Museum

Scott Andrews, California State University, Northridge

T6—THURSDAY 3:30PM–4:45PM

T 6E: Creative Expressions Place and Being

Location: Presidio I

Session Chair: Elizabeth Dodd, Terrain.org

New Poem

Richard Robbins, Minnesota State University

SoBo, or Why I Cited a John Muir Trail Guidebook in My Dissertation

Sarah Jane Kerwin, Oberlin College

Once, My Father Showed Me an Arrowhead

Sara Spurgeon, Texas Tech University

How to Spot a Liar

Melody Graulich, Utah State University

T 6F: Archive Soul Searching and the Latinx 19th Century

Location: Presidio II

Session Chair: José Aranda, Rice University

Who Would Have Thought It? Or, How Modernity Preserves the State from Failure

José Aranda, Rice University

Recovering (from) Our Southern Latinx Literary Heritage

Jesse Alemán, University of New Mexico

Futures Past: Latino Political Speech in the 19th Century

Erin Murrah-Mandril, University of Texas at Arlington

Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo's *Recuerdos* and the California Archive

Vincent Perez, University of Nevada Las Vegas

T 6G: The Weldon Kees Search Party: Place-based Service Learning on the Great Plains

Location: Coronado

Session Chair: Todd Richardson, University of Nebraska at Omaha

Participants: Todd Richardson, University of Nebraska at Omaha

Troy Romero, University of Nebraska at Omaha

Patty Patton Shearer, University of Nebraska at Omaha

Danica Prom, University of Nebraska at Omaha

Todd Robinson, University of Nebraska at Omaha

PLENARY—THURSDAY 5:00PM–6:15PM

T 7: Plenary—Heartsongs of the West: Native/Indigenous Poetics Sherwin Bitsui, Luci Tapahonso, Ofelia Zepeda

Location: Presidio IV

Session Chair: Billy J. Stratton, University of Denver



Sherwin Bitsui

Sherwin Bitsui, a Diné poet from the Navajo Nation who currently serves as an Associate Professor in the Department of English at Northern Arizona University, while also teaching in the low-residency MFA program at the Institute of American Indian Arts. Bitsui is widely celebrated for his innovative and evocative poetry that explores the complexity of language, history, and human experience. He is the author of collections, including *Shapeshift* (2003), *Flood Song* (2009), and *Dissolve* (2019), with works also appearing in numerous collections and journals. Bitsui's poetic vision is distinctive in the way it weaves together important aspects of Diné culture and historical experience, with incisive observations on the landscape, creating a unique and powerful poetic voice. He is widely recognized for his capacity to bridge the space between traditional modes of storytelling and contemporary poetic forms, offering a unique perspective on the complexities of Indigenous life and experience in the 21st century. Finally, Bitsui's evocative work has garnered much critical acclaim and numerous awards, including the American Book Award and the Whiting Award, as well as awards from the Witter Bynner Foundation for Poetry and Truman Capote Creative Writing Fellowship.

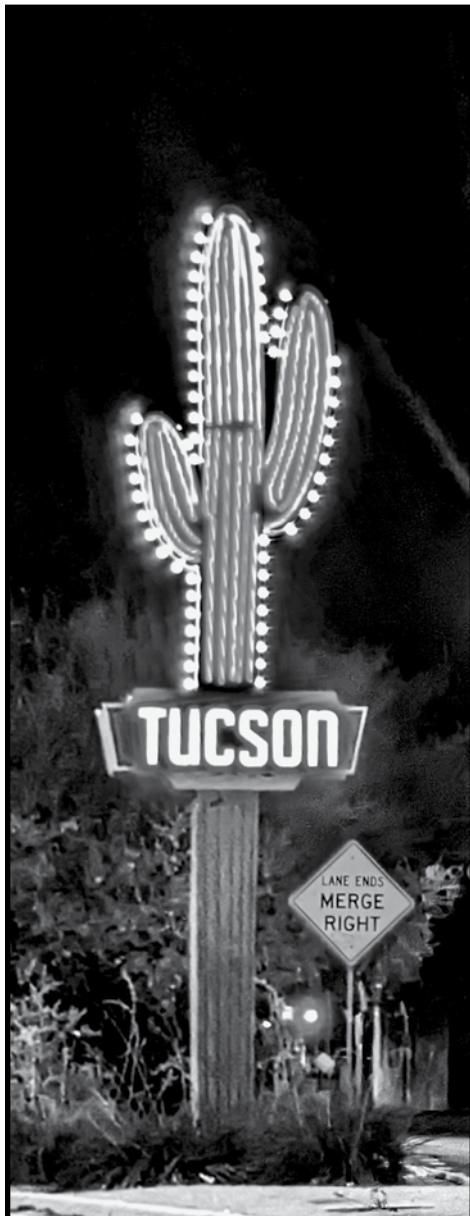
THURSDAY 8:30PM–10:00PM

T 8A: Graduate Student Social

Location: Colibri Lounge

T 8B: Plenary—Stephen Graham Jones Campfire Stories

Location: The Last Territory



Tucson—Merge Right.
By Billy J. Stratton



Friday



- 8:00AM – 5:00PM
 - Registration (Mesquite)
 - Book Exhibits (Presidio Foyer)
- 8:00AM – 5:00PM
 - WLA Presidents' Breakfast (Sundance Café) [Presidents only]
- 8:00AM – 9:15AM
 - Sessions F1
 - Professional Development II—Managing Goals and Multitasking (Presidio II)
- 9:30AM – 10:45AM
 - Sessions F2
- 11:00AM – 12:15PM
 - Plenary—Cherokee Life, Stories, Fiction, and Noir—Tom Holm's Oklahoma Trilogy (Presidio IV)
- 12:30PM – 1:45PM
 - Graduate Student Luncheon (Presidio IV)
 - Open Lunch Time
- 1:45PM – 3:00PM
 - Sessions F 5
- 3:15PM – 4:30PM
 - Sessions F6
- 4:45PM – 6:00PM
 - The Art and Imagination of Ryan Singer (Presidio IV)
- 6:00PM – 7:00PM
 - Open Bar Reception (Sunset Point)
- 7:00PM – 11:00PM
 - WLA Awards Banquet (Presidio V)

F1—FRIDAY 8:00AM–9:15AM

F 1A: Lightning Talks: Skoden, Stoodis—Perspectives on *Reservation Dogs*

Location: Presidio I

Session Chair: Joanna Hearne, University of Oklahoma

Indigenous Arts Entrepreneurship in *Reservation Dogs*

Timothy Petete, University of California - Riverside

Indigenizing Television in *Reservation Dogs*: An Interview with Dallas Goldtooth

Brian J Twenter, University of Central Oklahoma

“Re-storying Deer Woman as hane’tonomy”

Renae Watchman, McMaster University

It’s How Community Works’: Resisting Incarceration and Reestablishing Kinship in *Reservation Dogs*

Shannon Claire Toll, University of Dayton

“Can’t Be Tamed”: Queerness, Camp, and Romantic Refusals in *Reservation Dogs*

Lisa Tatonetti, Kansas State University

Muscogee Storytelling, Creek Nation Typographies, and Community-Based Identity in *Reservation Dogs*

Tereza Szeghi, University of Dayton

A Fighting Chance: Modeling Youth Protective Factors in *Reservation Dogs*

Amy S. Fatzinger, University of Arizona

***Reservation Dogs* as Indigenous Resurgence Media**

Angelica Lawson, University of Colorado-Boulder

Decolonativization in *Reservation Dogs*

Michelle Raheja, University of California, Riverside

F 1B: The Mexican Revolution and National Mythologies

Location: Tortolita

Session Chair: Jennifer Lei Jenkins, University of Arizona

Maternal Bodies: Teresa Urrea, National Mythologies, and Brianda Domecq’s *La Insólita Historia de la Santa de Cábora*

Zachary Robert Hernandez, Texas A&M International University

The Weaponry of Her Words: Women’s Life Writing from the Mexican Revolution

Caroline Straty Kraft, University of Texas at Austin

Jack London and the Representation of the Mexican Revolution

Nathaniel Racine, Texas A&M International University

F1—FRIDAY 8:00AM–9:15AM

F 1C: Creative Expressions: Voices of the Borderland

Location: Sonoran

Session Chair: Nate Mickelson, New York University

La Yarda

Eva Angelica Morales, Texas A&M International University

How Much Can a Bag Hold?

Renata Golden, author

“[Appendix 23]” from *Barnes Dance*

Aristotle Johns, University of Utah

RECIPIENT OF THE CREATIVE WRITING AWARD

F 1D: Recovering and Reclaiming Women Writers of the West

Location: Rincon

Session Chair: Elise McHugh, University of New Mexico Press

Gender, Community, Publishing and the Work of Joaquina Ballard Howles

Nancy S. Cook, University of Montana

Postwestern Queerness: Reconsidering Jane Rule’s *Desert of the Heart*

Lindsay R. Stephens, Oglala Lakota College

The Critical Role of Publishing in Recovery

Brad Bigelow, Boiler House Press

Counter-Geographies in White Women’s Yosemite ‘Wilderness’ Climbing Narratives

Peter Bayers, Fairfield University

F 1E: Writing the West: Crafting Monsters and Other Horrors in Literature (sponsored by PAMLA)

Location: Coronado

Session Chair: Anne Mai Yee Jansen, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

The White Guy Dies in This One: Reshaping the Monster through Horror Fiction

Anne Mai Yee Jansen, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

aka Monsters: Integrators in Chicanx Fiction

Christopher David Rosales, California State University, Long Beach

Adventures in Sugarland

Joshua T. Anderson, Walsh County Three Rivers Soil Conservation District

Hybridity in Colonized Landscapes: Cervidae-Hominidae and the Post?-human in the Monstrous West

Meredith Harvey, Aurora University

F1—FRIDAY 8:00AM–9:15AM

F 1G: Professional Development II—Managing Goals and Multitasking: A Conversation for the Overwhelmed

Location: Presidio II

Session Chair: Maria T. Kane, Washington University in St. Louis

Presenters: Jillian Moore, College of Western Idaho

Surabhi Balachander, Oregon State University

Sara Spurgeon, Texas Tech University

F2—FRIDAY 9:30AM–10:45AM

F 2A: Dwelling, Storytelling, and Imagining the Otherwise in Desert Spaces

Location: Presidio I

Session Chair: Renata Golden, author

Rocks, Snakes, Cacti, and Monsters: Animating Leslie Marmon Silko's and Graciela Iturbide's Desert Gardens

Audrey Goodman, Georgia State University

"Same thing over and over again": Radical Repetition in the Petrified Forest

Jada Ach, Arizona State University

Storied Deserts and the Poetry of Ofelia Zepeda and Leslie Marmon Silko

Celina Osuna, University of Texas at El Paso

F 2B: Lightning Talks on Speculative Memory

Location: Tortolita

Session Chair: Jennifer Ladino, University of Idaho

Memories of Future Wests: The Confluence Project and Climate Change Memorials

Jennifer Ladino, University of Idaho

Transregional Collaborations: Interdisciplinary Partnerships, Grassy Spaces, and the Possibilities of Memory

Amy Hamilton, Northern Michigan University

"Waiting for something true": Recursive, Speculative Reterritorialization in *There There*

Ryan Hediger, Kent State University

[continued on next page]



F2—FRIDAY 9:30AM–10:45AM

"The Age of the Trufflepig: Speculative Memory in the Texas/Mexico Borderlands in *Tears of the Trufflepig*"

Chaney Hill, Rice University

RECIPIENT OF THE DORYS CROW GROVER AWARD

The Unlikely Environmentalists of the Owens Valley

Ryan Lillestrand, Georgetown University

F 2C: Indigenous Literatures and Public Memory

Location: Sonoran

Session Chair: David Jeffrey Carlson, California State University San Bernardino

The Atomic Bomb Dome and the Ghosts of Fascism: Structures of Memory in Gerald Vizenor's *Hiroshima Bugi*

David Jeffrey Carlson, California State University San Bernardino

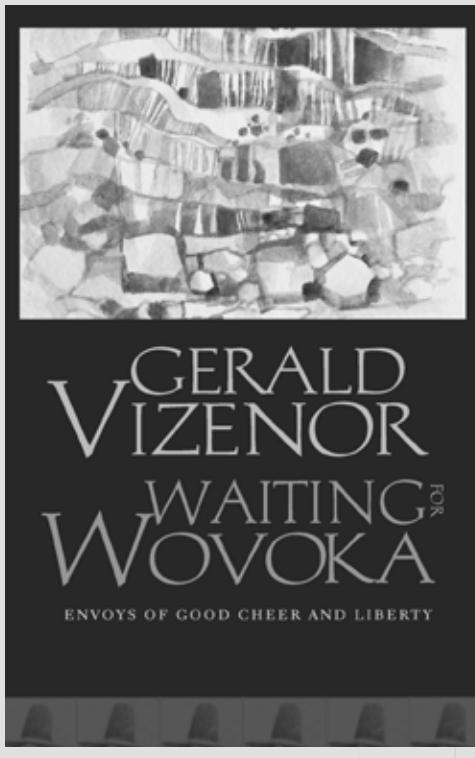
Ceremony as Public Memory: Queer Storytelling in Contemporary Navajo Art and Writing

Louise Siddons, University of Southampton

Unsettling the Colonial Archive: Mnemonic Territories of North Dakota in the Work of Louise Erdrich

Rebecca Macklin, University of Edinburgh

Explore new books by keynote speaker Gerald Vizenor



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F2—FRIDAY 9:30AM–10:45AM

F 2D: Western Eco-Criticism

Location: Santa Rita

Session Chair: Evelyn Funda, Utah State University

Imagining Aridity: Paolo Bacigalupi's "The Tamarisk Hunter" and Environmental Violence

Michael Gorman, Hiroshima City University

Responding to Climate Vulnerability and Eco-Fascism in Bruce Holsinger's *The Displacements*

Matt Burkhart, Case Western Reserve University

F 2E: Re-Storying the "American West:" Trans-Indigenous Methods and Textualities

Location: Rincon

Session Chair: Lois Ann Goossen, Sonoma State University

Reterritorializing Allotment: Indigenous Marginalia and Kinscapes

Jonathan Radocay, University of Washington

Unsettling Forms: Weaving a Literary Lei of Resistance in Nineteenth Century Hawai'i

Erin M. Cheslow, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

RECIPIENT OF THE LOUIS OWENS AWARD

Waheenee's Garden and the Precision of Agricultural Memory

Lloyd Sy, Yale University

Indigipunk: Re-storying the Land through Indigenous Futurisms

Renata Ryan Burchfield, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

F 2F: West Via South: Regional Intersections in American Literature

Location: Presidio II

Session Chair: Susan Osteen, University of South Carolina

The Confederate West in *True Grit*

Quinn Grover, BYU-Idaho

Regionalism and Romance in John Rollin Ridge's First Published Poem

Travis Franks, Utah State University

South and West: Joan Didion, Historical Violence, and the Unmaking of Region

Alex Trimble Young, Arizona State University

Teaching the African-American West in the Anti-CRT Political Environment

Amanda J. Zink, Idaho State University

F2—FRIDAY 9:30AM–10:45AM

F 2G: Manifest Destinies and the Play of Paternalism

Location: Coronado

Session Chair: Iris Jamahl Dunkle, UC Davis

Allegories of California Mission Secularization

Kristian Ayala, Stanford University

The Regeneration (1915): Making Poverty as American as Apple Pie

Margie Judd, University of Nevada, Reno

F3 Plenary—FRIDAY 11:00AM–12:15PM

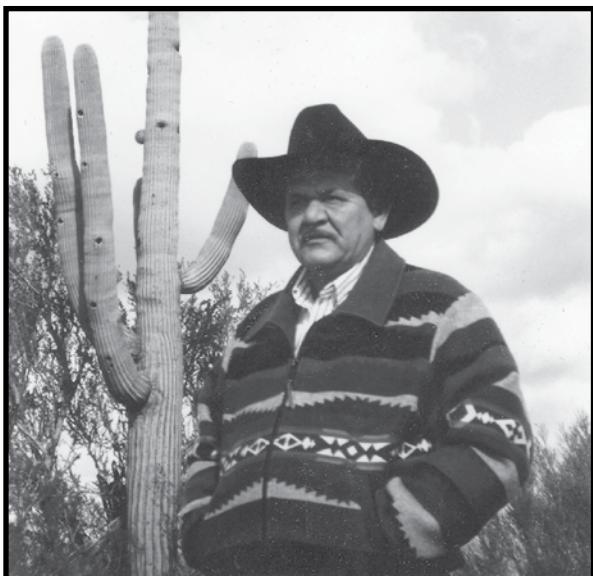
F3—Keynote—Cherokee Choctaw Life, Stories, Fiction, and Noir: Tom Holm's Oklahoma Trilogy

Location: Presidio IV

Session Chair: Kirby Brown, University of Oregon

Thomas Holm is a professor emeritus of American Indian Studies at the University of Arizona and distinguished for being one of the program's founders—with Vine Deloria and Robert K. Thomas—the first PhD-granting program in this area in the world. He is well-respected for his lifelong contributions to the field of Native American Studies, having published over fifty articles, pamphlets, government reports, reviews, editorials, and book chapters. An enrolled citizen of the Cherokee Nation with Muskogee Creek ancestry, Dr. Holm has also displayed a dedication to community through work on the boards, panels, and working groups of numerous Native American organizations. His innovative approaches to history are ap-

parent in works such as the recently published historical biography *Ira Hayes: The Akimel O'odham Warrior, World War II, and the Price of Heroism* (2023), as well as *Code Talkers and Warriors* (2007), *The Great Confusion in Indian Affairs* (2005), *Strong Hearts, Wounded Souls: Native American Veterans of the Vietnam War* (1996). Holm is also an accomplished novelist who has drawn on Cherokee storytelling traditions in his trilogy *The Osage Rose* (2008), *Anadarko: A Kiowa Country Mystery* (2015), and the recently released *Panther Creek* (2024), historical mysteries centering on the Oklahoma oil boom of the 1920s, while currently working on a work of speculative fiction. He is a Marine Corps veteran of the Vietnam War and has taken part in several programs dealing with veterans' affairs.



Thomas Holm

F4—LUNCH 12:30PM—1:45PM

F 4A: Graduate Student Luncheon

Location: Presidio IV

F 4B: Open Lunch Time

F5—FRIDAY 1:45PM—3:00PM

F 5A: Voices of the Borderlands

Location: Tortolita

Session Chair: Yingwen Yu, Texas Christian University

Manifold Borderlands of Empire: Américo Paredes's Travel Writing from Tokyo to the Texas-Mexico Border

Diana Noreen Rivera, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

Discipline, Punishment, and *La Facultad*: Speculating Border and Borderlands Functions in Marcelo Hernandez Castillo's *Children of the Land: A Memoir*

Ramon Guerra, University of Nebraska Omaha

“Counting the Steel Posts”: Margo Tamez’s Poetics of Resistance at the Texas-Mexico Border

Ewelina Banka, John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland

Deep Divides in Contested Space: Dark Tourism in Southeast Texas

Jennifer Dawes, University of Arkansas at Little Rock

F 5B: Western Gender and Sexualities

Location: Coronado

Session Chair: Keri Holt, Utah State University

“Through the Pressured Landscape:” David Wojnarowicz, Queer Movement, and the North American West

Dominic Dongilli, University of Iowa; Smithsonian Institution

“Above all compassing of words:” Weaving Possibility in Mary Austin’s *The Land of Little Rain*

Elizabeth Mathias, U.S. Air Force Academy

Postcards of a Western Mind: Women’s Words as Epistemology of Place in the Memoirs of a Male Regional Author

Maeve Daley, Montana State University

F5—FRIDAY 1:45PM–3:00PM

F 5C: Native American Voices: Deserts, Gardens, and Oceans

Location: Santa Rita

Session Chair: Audrey Goodman, Georgia State University

Chasing Capitalist Desires: Delena and Big Candy's Race for the American Dream in Silko's *Gardens in the Dunes*

Lois Ann Goossen, Sonoma State University

Desert People and the Poetics of Place in the Work of Ofelia Zepeda and Natalie Diaz

Melina V. Vizcaíno-Alemán, UNM

Love Lessons from Native and Queer Studies: Food Sovereignty and Unsovereign Love in Diane Wilson's *The Seed Keeper*

Jesse Nguyen, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

F 5D: Indigenous Monstrosity

Location: Presidio II

Session Chair: Bernadette V. Russo, Mount Saint Vincent University

The Church and Neocolonialism in Cherie Dimaline's *Empire of Wild*

Ifeyinwa Edna Ndukuba, Idaho State University

Decolonizing the Vampire: Indigenous Reimaginings in A.A. Carr's *Eye Killers*

Kaylee Cheyenne Jule Lamb, University of Florida

Diné Storytelling Autonomy: Re-storying Deer Woman

Renae Watchman, McMaster University

F 5E: Weird Wests and Indigenous Speculative Fiction

Location: Presidio I

Session Chair: Jeffrey Wayne Yeager, Bluefield State University

Transcorporeal Boundaries and the Anthropocene in the Weird Western

Sean Woodard, University of Texas at Arlington

Building Up: The Soil of Genre in Indigenous Speculative Fiction

Miriam Brown Spiers, Kennesaw State University

F 5F: Digital and Popular Wests

Location: Rincon

Session Chair: Heidi Skurat Harris, University of Arkansas at Little Rock

Willy Vlautin's Arizona (and Beyond): Thirteen Cities and the Tradition of Southwestern Rock and Roll Poetry

Rob Wallace, Northern Arizona University

F5—FRIDAY 1:45PM–3:00PM

No Clear Lines: How Norman Maclean Wrote “A River Runs Through It”

Heidi Skurat Harris, University of Arkansas at Little Rock

F 5G: 19th Century Literatures of the Imagined Frontier

Location: Sonoran

Session Chair: Susan Naramore Maher, University of Minnesota Duluth

The Frontier Cure: Nineteenth Century North American Gothic Fiction, the Wild West, and Tuberculosis

Jennifer McMahon, Northern Michigan University and Western American Literature

West Coast, Best Coast?: Dwelling with the Disappointment of Regional Difference in John Muir’s Account of Ralph Waldo Emerson

Patricia Jewell, University of Michigan

F6—FRIDAY 3:15PM–4:30PM

F 6A: Evolutions in the Filmic West

Location: Santa Rita

Session Chair: Eric Aldrich, Pima Community College

Disability in the American West: *Streets of Laredo*

Brittany Maloy, Brigham Young University

“How high can a bird count?”: Extractive Ecologies and Life beyond the Human in the Coen Brothers’ West

Susan Kollin, Montana State University

(Re)mapping Native American Cinematographies

Matt Herman, Montana State University

F 6B: Decolonizing the Tools of Hegemony

Location: Coronado

Session Chair: Jerome Tharaud, Brandeis University

Linguistic Imperialism: Imposition of Language and Cultural Assimilation Focusing on Native Speaker (1995)

Sungbean Son, Texas Tech University

Indigenous Literary Challenges to Settler Monolingualism

Patrizia Zanella, University of Manitoba

F6—FRIDAY 3:15PM–4:30PM

The Oppressor Learning from the Oppressed: Freirean Pedagogy in A. A. Carr's *Eye Killers*

Seth Gabriel Garwood, Idaho State University

Returning to Tucson: A Settler Scholar Reflects on Reading Native American Literature

Donovan Gwinner, Aurora University

F 6C: Indigenous Graphic Novel

Location: Rincon

Session Chair: Manuela Borzone, Nebraska Wesleyan University

The Spatial Mapping of Home and “Transmotion” in Native American Storytelling through *Moonshot: The Indigenous Comics Collection*

Aniqa Jahangeer, Idaho State University

RECIPIENT OF THE DORYS CROW GROVER AWARD

Indigenous Voices, Graphic Formats

Lawrence Archuleta, Idaho State University

Jim Terry's *Come Home, Indio* and 21st Century Indigenous Storytelling

Steven Sexton, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

F 6D: Dark Archives of the Mythic and Hidden West

Location: Tortolita

Session Chair: Louise Siddons, University of Southampton

Processing the Archival Paratextuality of Elmer Kelton's West Texas Archives

Rob E King, TTU Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library

In-land Borderlands and Hidden Western Histories

Amy Von Lintel, West Texas A&M University

Fabulating the Archive: Loss and Remembering in Valeria Luiselli's *Lost Children Archive*

Jim Miranda, Bentley University

Charles Bowden Speculates in *Dreamland* about a “Decent” X-Ray Machine

Stephen Tatum, University of Utah

F 6E: Haunted Indigenous Wests

Location: Presidio I

Session Chair: Lindsay R. Stephens, Oglala Lakota College

“The owls are not what they seem”: Native American Horror Narratives and the Haunting of the West

Jeffrey Chisum, University of Southern California

F6—FRIDAY 3:15PM–4:30PM

“You Can’t Assimilate Native Ghosts” in Settler Colonial America: Spectral Presence in Louise Erdrich’s *The Night Watchman*

Alex Harmon, Montana State University

Reclaiming the [Indigenous] Gothic: Comparing *Until Dawn* and Erdrich’s *The Round House*

Sierra Lynn Pritchard, University of Nevada, Reno

F 6F: Western Women Modernists

Location: Sonoran

Session Chair: Margie Judd, University of Nevada, Reno

Riding Like the Wind: The Life of Sanora Babb

Iris Jamahl Dunkle, UC Davis

Echoes of Antiquity: The Influence of Greek Mythology on Late 19th and Early 20th Century Western American Women Writers: Part 1, Gertrude Atherton

Megan McGilchrist, The American School in London

The Vivid, Humble Fictions of Mildred Walker

Theo Davis, Northeastern University

F 6G: Indigenous Epistemologies

Location: Presidio II

Session Chair: Michael K Johnson, University of Maine-Farmington

Scientific Territorialization: Reclaiming Native American Knowledge and Imagination in Scientific Spaces

Hayley Blair, Fordham University

Contemporary Cherokee Wonderworks: *Riding the Trail of Tears and Amped*

John Gamber, University of California, Irvine

High Plains Wendigo: Ways of Knowing in Mari Sandoz’s *Slogum House*

Matthew Evertson, Western Colorado University

Momaday and Indigenous Eurasia: Writing beyond Renaissance

Naomi Caffee, Reed College

“The Singing of the Soil”: A Tribute for N. Scott Momaday

Susan Scarberry-García, University of New Mexico & Institute of American Indian Arts

F7—FRIDAY 4:45PM–6:00PM

F 7—The Art and Imagination of Ryan Singer

Location: Presidio IV

Session Chair: Billy J. Stratton, University of Denver



Ryan Singer

Ryan Singer, whose painting *Hope In a Hogan* graces our conference materials, is a talented Diné artist producing vibrant, distinctive works that celebrate the confluence of pop culture and contemporary Native experience. Singer hails from Tuba City, Arizona, within the Navajo Nation and is currently enrolled in a graduate program in art at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. He has garnered much critical praise for his contributions to the “Indigenous Futurisms” movement through work inspired by childhood memories, iconic figures from science fiction, film and pop culture, especially the Star Wars franchise, skateboarding and punk music within the context of contemporary Diné life. Singer’s bold, vivid, and colorful art has been exhibited or held in prestigious galleries, collections and museums around the world, including the the Blue Rain Gallery in Santa Fe, Wyld Gallery in Austin, TX, the Heard Museum in Phoenix, the Gorman Museum of Native American Art in Davis, CA, the Autry Museum of the American West in Los Angeles, the Center of Southwest Studies at Fort Lewis College, the Navajo Nation Museum and the Kiva Gallery and Collection of Native American Art, Uppsala, Sweden. Singer’s work has earned numerous accolades and honors, including awards from the Santa Fe Indian Market.

FRIDAY 6:00PM–7:00PM

Open Bar Reception

Location: Sunset Point

FRIDAY 7:00PM–11:00PM

WLA Awards Banquet

Location: Presidio V

Frances Washburn is a Lakota/Anishinaabe writer, scholar, and critic who grew up in and around the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. She is an emerita professor of American Indian studies and English at the University of Arizona. She has published articles on Native literary and critical theory in journals such as *Wíčazo Ša Review* and is also the author of four novels, *An Endangered Species* (2024), *The Red Bird All-Indian Traveling Band* (2014), *The Sacred White Turkey* (2010), and *Elsie's Business* (2006), along with a critical biography of Louise Erdrich, *Tracks on a Page* (2013). Franci Washburn continues to write, with a special interest in sci-fi, and she is an avid guitarist.

She is the WLA's 2024 Distinguished Achievement recipient!



WLA President Billy J. Stratton with
Distinguished Achievement Award
Recipient Frances Washburn



2024 WLA Award Recipients

Distinguished Achievement Award

For an influential scholar or creative writer in western American literature

Franci Washburn

Delbert & Edith Wylder Award

For outstanding service to the association will not be awarded this year

Thomas J. Lyon Book Award

For most outstanding book published last year in western American literary or cultural studies

Michael K. Johnson, University of Main-Farmington

for *Speculative Wests: Popular Representations of a Region and Genre* (University of Nebraska Press)

Don D. Walker Prize

For best essay or book chapter published in western American literary and cultural studies in 2023

Daniel Vallella, University of Michigan

for "Crystal City's 'Alien' Farmworkers: Tomás Rivera's ... y no se lo tragó la tierra and the Shared Histories of Chicanx and Japanese American Detention," *MELUS* 48.1

Creative Writing Award

For best creative writing submission to the conference

Aristotle Johns, University of Utah

for "[APPENDIX 23]" from *Barnes Dance*

J. Golden Taylor Award

For best essay presented at the conference by a graduate student

Josh Beckelhimer, University of Southern California

for "Cosmological Forms and Indigenous Planetarity in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Almanac of the Dead*"

Dorys Crow Grover Awards

For outstanding papers presented at the conference by graduate students who contribute to our critical understandings of region, place, and space in western American literatures

Chaney Hill, Rice University

for "The Age of the Trufflepig: Speculative Memory in the Texas/Mexico Borderlands in *Tears of the Trufflepig*"

Aniqa Jahangeer, Idaho State University

for "The Spatial Mapping of Home and 'Transmotion' in Native American Storytelling through Moonshot: An Indigenous Comics Collection"

Louis Owens Awards

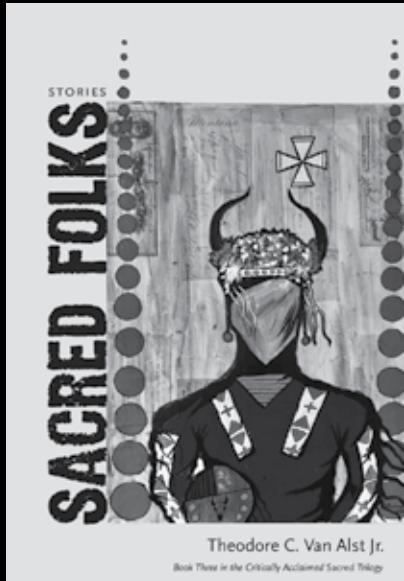
For graduate student presenters contributing exceptional scholarship and expanding diversity in the association

Erin M. Cheslow, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

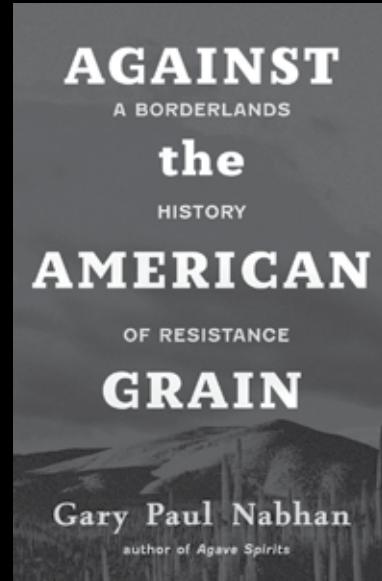
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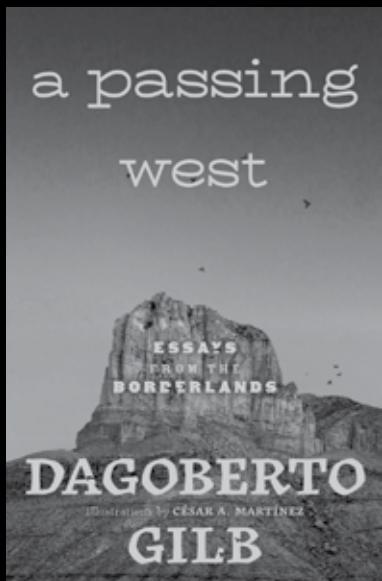
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Saturday

8:30AM – 11:30AM • **Registration (Mesquite)**

8:30AM – 11:30PM • **Book Exhibit (Presidio Foyer)**

8:30AM – 9:45AM • **Sessions S 1**

10:00AM – 11:15AM • **Sessions S 2**

• **Meet the Western Presses—A Conversation**

11:30AM – 12:30PM • **Business Meeting**

All WLA Members are encouraged to attend.



Acknowledgments

A big thank you goes to our Sponsors and Contributors:

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We would also like to thank our exhibitors for being here with us and the press representatives for participating in the "Meet the Western Presses" session.

We are also grateful to our advertisers.

In addition, we would like to thank those of you who so generously donated to the WLA in general and the conference in particular during registration.

And, of course, we would not be here without all of you who made the trip to Tucson—often despite funding restrictions—to participate in the 58th WLA Conference.

THANK YOU ALL!

S1—SATURDAY 8:30AM–9:45AM

S 1A: Colonial Simulacra and Survivance

Location: Tortolita

Session Chair: Nicolas S. Witschi, Western Michigan University

Paper Power: Recording the Real in Sarah Winnemucca's *Life among the Piutes*

Emily Azad, California State University, Chico

Testimony and Territory: Sarah Winnemucca's Reversal of Civilizational Discourse

Kristen Brown, Northern State University - Aberdeen, SD

Exploring Resilience and Survival in Tommy Orange's *There, There*

Manish Pandey, Texas Tech University

S 1B: Dystopic Westerns

Location: Sonoran

Session Chair: Patrick Vincent, University of California, Riverside

Sam Shepard's Anthropogenic West in *The God of Hell*

Tamas Dobozy, Wilfrid Laurier University

"Everyone Who Walks Walks on the Freeways Sooner or Later": Octavia Butler's Speculative West in *Parable of the Sower*

Lauren White, University of Southern California

The Wandering Jew in the American West: *A Canticle for Leibowitz*

Julie Grandjean, Texas A&M University-Commerce

S 1C: Gendered Violence and Erasure

Location: Santa Rita

Session Chair: Nathan Straight, Utah State University

Wolves and Wilderness: Settler Colonialism and the Myth of the Vanishing Native

Tia Tidwell, Debbie Mekiana, University of Alaska Fairbanks

RECIPIENT OF THE LOUIS OWENS AWARD

Spectral Past, Speculative Future: Indigenous Presence in *Tears of the Trufflepig*

Yingwen Yu, Texas Christian University

S1—SATURDAY 8:30AM–9:45AM

S 1D: The Willa Cather Society Panel II

Location: Rincon

Session Chair: Robert Thacker, St. Lawrence University

“It Ain’t My Prairie”: Cather and Settler Colonialism

William Handley, University of Southern California

“The Education You Have to Fight For”: Willa Cather, Academic Populism, and the Land-Grab University

Jerome Tharaud, Brandeis University

Rereading the West in Cather’s Fan Mail

Maria T. Kane, Washington University in St. Louis

S 1F: The Western Landscapes of Wallace Stegner

Location: Presidio I

Session Chair: Melody Graulich, Utah State University

Wallace Stegner’s Figural Histories

Zak Breckenridge, University of Southern California

Wallace Stegner on the American West as Living Space

W. Dana Phillips, Towson University

Wallace Stegner on the Oil Industry: Good Settler Colonialism?

Kary Doyle Smout, Washington and Lee University

S2—SATURDAY 10:00AM–11:15AM

S 2A: The Word and Song: Diné Poetics, Futures, and Language—with Sherwin Bitsui, Jake Skeets, Manny Loley

Location: Presidio IV

Session Chair: Jake Skeets, University of Oklahoma

Participants: Sherwin Bitsui, Northern Arizona University

Jake Skeets, University of Oklahoma

Manny Loley, University of Oklahoma

S2—SATURDAY 10:00AM–11:15AM

S 2B: Western Dispossession and LandBack

Location: Presidio II

Session Chair: Sylvan Goldberg, Colorado College

Jordan Abel's Textural Landscapes: Re(righting) Land Relations through Experimentation

Jenny Kerber, Wilfrid Laurier University

Land-Grant Speculations: Re-Visioning the Colonialist Fantasy of the 1862 Morrill Act

Nathan Straight, Utah State University

The Biological Station as Literature Classroom

Emily J. Rau, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

S 2C: Other Wests, Historical, National, Global

Location: Tortolita

Session Chair: Naomi Caffee, Reed College

From "Tuskon" to "Tumbston": A Fictitious Southen Arizona in Two Hebrew Pulp Westerns

Rachel Leket-Mor, Arizona State University

West from Georgia: State Passports in Early America

Thora Brylowe, University of Colorado Boulder

Exploring Eco-affiliations and Literary Intersection of Community Aesthetics of the Ngas Kwat-teng and Tucson Indigenous Hunting Festivals

Peace Sorochi Longdet, Federal College of Education, Pankshin, Plateau State

Cultural Revival and National Consciousness as Alternatives to Corruption in the 21st Century: A Study of Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Petals of Blood* and *Wizard of the Crow*

Audu Vennap, Federal College of Education Pankshin, Plateau State, and Manasseh Terwase Iortyer

S 2D: Tracking the Trans-Pacific West

Location: Rincon

Session Chair: Michelle Raheja, University of California, Riverside

Staging Chinese American Identity in Maxine Hong Kingston's *Tripmaster Monkey*

Klara Szmańko, University of Opole

Minute Particles and Cosmic Expanses in Mei-Mei Berssenbrugge's Recent Poetry

Nate Mickelson, New York University

The Intimacy of Others: Asian Settler Structures of Feeling

Ryan Tan Wander, Valdosta State University

Returning Westward from the West: On Asian American Memoirs of Diasporic Return

Surabhi Balachander, Oregon State University

S2—SATURDAY 10:00AM–11:15AM

S 2E: Trails, Territory, and Community

Location: Santa Rita

Session Chair: Stefano Rosso, University of Bergamo

Indigenous Territoriality and the Santa Fe Trail, (Re)Speculated

Robert Gunn, University of Texas at El Paso

Reversing the Trail: Undoing Silence through Self-fashioning and Community in Hernán Díaz's *In the Distance* and Gabriela Cabezón Cámara's *The Adventures of China Iron*

Manuela Borzone, Nebraska Wesleyan University

Mining Imaginary Gold: Speculative Translations of Cibola and the Seven Cities

Keri Holt, Utah State University

S 2F: Meet the Western Presses

Location: Presidio I

Session Chair: Clark Whitehorn, Bison Books/University of Nebraska Press

Participants: Kristen Buckles, University of Arizona Press

Simmons Buntin, Terrain Publishing

Amy Hamilton, Northern Michigan University

Elise McHugh, University of New Mexico Press

Clark Whitehorn, Bison Books/University of Nebraska Press

SATURDAY 11:30AM–12:30PM

WLA Business Meeting

Location: Presidio I

All WLA Members are encouraged to attend.

To nominate a WLA member for the Executive Council: Find out if your nominee is willing to serve. Nominations will be taken at the Business Meeting. Self-nominations are accepted. Council members must be WLA members and must attend the next three WLA meetings, including the Wednesday afternoon Executive Council meeting. All nominees are advised to attend the Saturday morning Business Meeting, although voting will take place online after the conference.





Executive Council

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| Kristen Brown | 2026 | Northern State University |
| Bernadette V. Russo | 2026 | Mount St. Vincent University, Halifax, Canada |
| Brian J Twenter | 2026 | University of Central Oklahoma |

WLA Annual Conference Sites + Presidents

| Year | Location | President/s |
|------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1966 | Salt Lake City, Utah | C. L. Sonnichsen |
| 1967 | Albuquerque, New Mexico | Delbert E. Wylder |
| 1968 | Colorado Springs, Colorado | Jim L. Fife |
| 1969 | Provo, Utah | Morton L. Ross |
| 1970 | Sun Valley, Idaho | Don D. Walker |
| 1971 | Red Cloud, Nebraska | John R. Milton |
| 1972 | Jackson Hole, Wyoming | Thomas J. Lyon |
| 1973 | Austin, Texas | Max Westbrook |
| 1974 | Sonoma, California | John S. Bullen |
| 1975 | Durango, Colorado | Maynard Fox |
| 1976 | Bellingham, Washington | L. L. Lee |
| 1977 | Sioux Falls, South Dakota | Arthur R. Huseboe |
| 1978 | Park City, Utah | Mary Washington |
| 1979 | Albuquerque, New Mexico | Richard Etulain |
| 1980 | St. Louis, Missouri | Bernice Sloté/Helen Stauffer |
| 1981 | Boise, Idaho | James H. Maguire |
| 1982 | Denver, Colorado | Martin Bucco |
| 1983 | St. Paul, Minnesota | George Day |
| 1984 | Reno, Nevada | Ann Ronald |
| 1985 | Fort Worth, Texas | Gerald Haslam |
| 1986 | Durango, Colorado | Tom Pilkington |
| 1987 | Lincoln, Nebraska | Susan J. Rosowski |
| 1988 | Eugene, Oregon | Glen Love |
| 1989 | Coeur D'Alene, Idaho | Barbara Meldrum |
| 1990 | Denton, Texas | Lawrence Clayton |
| 1991 | Estes Park, Colorado | James C. Work |
| 1992 | Reno, Nevada | Joseph Flora |
| 1993 | Wichita, Kansas | Diane Quantic |
| 1994 | Salt Lake City, Utah | Stephen Tatum |
| 1995 | Vancouver, BC | Laurie Ricou |
| 1996 | Lincoln, Nebraska | Susanne K. George |
| 1997 | Albuquerque, New Mexico | Gary Scharnhorst |
| 1998 | Banff, Alberta | Robert Thacker |
| 1999 | Sacramento, California | Michael Kowalewski |
| 2000 | Norman, Oklahoma | Robert Murray Davis |
| 2001 | Omaha, Nebraska | Susan Naramore Maher |
| 2002 | Tucson, Arizona | Judy Nolte Temple |
| 2003 | Houston, Texas | Krista Comer |
| 2004 | Big Sky, Montana | Susan Kollin |
| 2005 | Los Angeles, California | William R. Handley |
| 2006 | Boise, Idaho | Tara Penry |
| 2007 | Tacoma, Washington | Ann Putnam |
| 2008 | Boulder, Colorado | Karen Ramirez & Nicolas Witschi |
| 2009 | Spearfish, South Dakota | David Cremeen |
| 2010 | Prescott Resort, Arizona | Gioia Woods |
| 2011 | Missoula, Montana | Nancy Cook & Bonney MacDonald |

| Year | Location | President/s |
|-------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2012 | Lubbock, Texas | Sara Spurgeon |
| 2013 | Berkeley, California | Richard Hutson |
| 2014 | Victoria, Canada | Anne L. Kaufman & Laurie Ricou |
| 2015 | Reno, Nevada | Susan Bernardin & David Fenimore |
| 2016 | Big Sky, Montana | Linda Karel |
| 2017 | Minneapolis, Minnesota | Florence Amamoto & Susan Maher |
| 2018 | St. Louis, Missouri | Michael Johnson & Emily Lutenski |
| 2019 | Estes Park, Colorado | SueEllen Campbell & Alex Hunt |
| 2020 | Virtual Environment | Kerry Fine & Rebecca Lush |
| 2021/22 | Santa Fe, New Mexico | Audrey Goodman & Lisa Tatonetti |
| 2023 | Fort Hall, Idaho | Jennifer Ladino & Amanda Zink |
| 2024 | Tucson, Arizona | Billy J. Stratton |



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Who We Are

Based out of West Texas A&M University (WTAMU), the Center for the Study of the American West's (CSAW) mission is to promote the study of the American West as both a region culturally unique and as a product of broad historical forces. CSAW is housed in the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum (PPHM), the largest history museum in Texas.

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Since its founding, CSAW has established itself as an organization seeking to promote the American West, both on the local scene and in terms of the larger scholarly field. In this endeavor, CSAW focuses on development of interdisciplinary scholarship through research, education, and public outreach and remains dedicated to cultivating a critical vision of region and place in a globalized era.

How to Get Involved

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The Bonney MacDonald Book Award recognizes a book that demonstrates excellent scholarly or creative insight concerning the North American West. Books from any discipline, genre, or publisher are eligible. The 2024 winner will be announced later this year. Books published in 2024 can be submitted for consideration for the 2025 award cycle.

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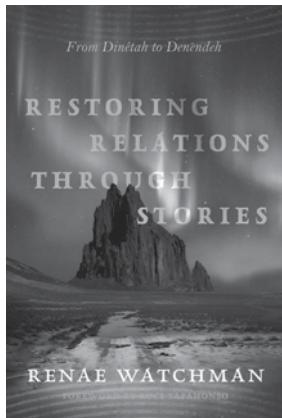
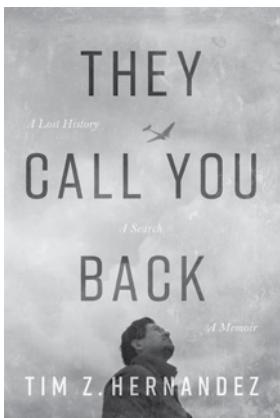
The Forgotten Frontera project aims to recognize and document the history of Mexican American and Tejano history in the Southern Great Plains region, where these people made a significant contribution not adequately recognized in the region's written histories.

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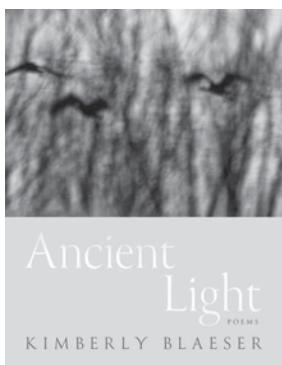
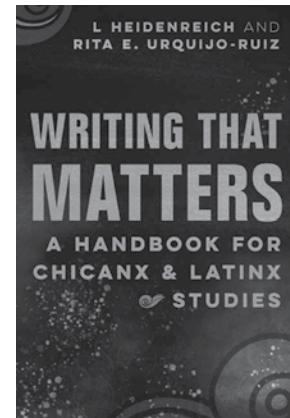
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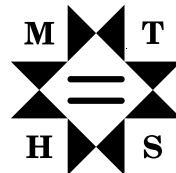


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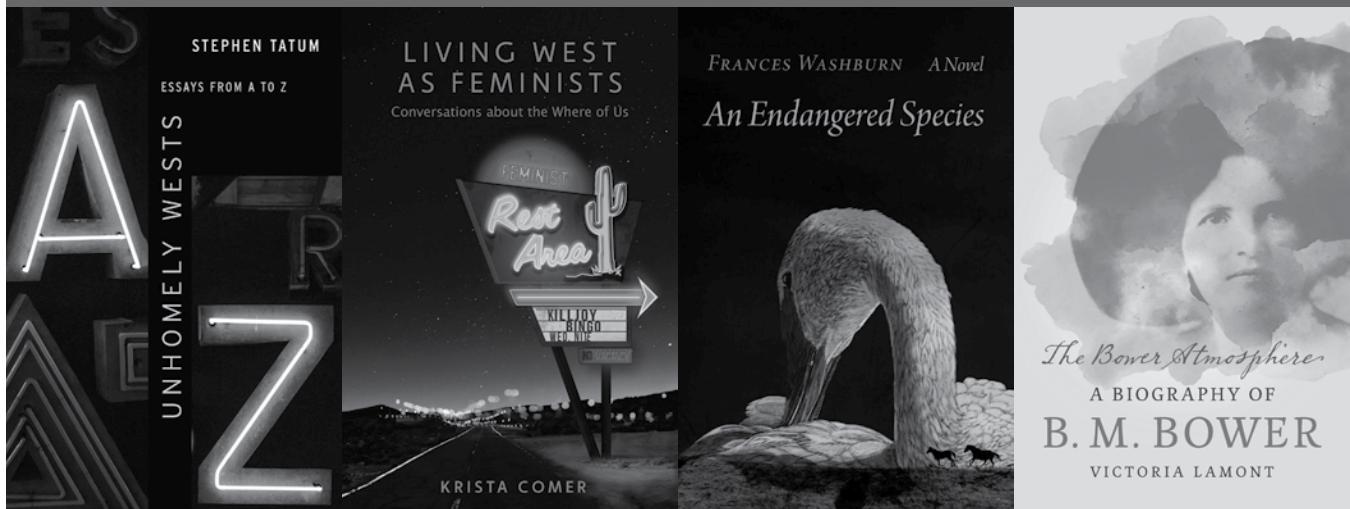


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WLA 2025: Words of Fire

HONORING THE MULTICULTURAL WESTERN NARRATIVE

The 2025 Western Literature Association Conference

September 21-24, 2025

Okana Resort and Indoor Waterpark, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Situated next to the First Americans Museum and built by the Chickasaw Nation, the Okana Hotel celebrates and honors the rich cultural tapestry of the region. Oklahoma's history is a testament to Indigenous resilience and empowerment amidst a complex multicultural landscape.

The conference theme seeks to explore the transformative power of words across diverse cultural narratives. We aim to (re)center multiculturalism in the western narrative, examining how diverse histories have shaped and continue to influence our understanding of western literature.

We invite abstracts that engage with, but are not limited to, the following topics:

- Oral traditions and narratives
- Multicultural perspectives in western literature
- Indigenous Oklahoma
- Multiculturalism in the Archives
- Literary responses to historical and contemporary issues in Oklahoma
- Black feminist thought and stories of the American west
- Representations of resilience and community in western fiction and drama
- Latine/Latinx narratives
- The role of environmental and social justice in western literature
- Asian American Plains histories
- Gender and sexuality in the western narrative
- Afro-indigeneity in western literature
- Young Adult novels and Children's Literature
- Contemporary Oklahoma in popular culture, media, and film
- Memoir
- The Poetic West/ The Dramatic West
- ...and more!

Join us in Oklahoma City as we explore the dynamic intersections of literature, culture, and history. See the conference website for more details. For more information, contact **WLA 2025 President Kalenda Eaton at wlaconference2025@westernlit.org.**

WLA 2025 is a call to action to critically examine and celebrate the multicultural foundations of western literature. We look forward to your contributions in shaping this important dialogue.