UTA Establishes Endowed Chair in Southwestern Studies and the History of Cartography

A major goal of the UTA Center for Greater Southwestern Studies and the History of Cartography—the establishment of an endowed chair—became a reality as the Sid Richardson Foundation of Fort Worth provided a grant of $600,000 for the creation of the Jenkins and Virginia Garrett Endowed Chair in Southwestern Studies and the History of Cartography. This generous endowment will permit the University to hire an internationally recognized scholar in Southwestern Studies and the History of Cartography. “Every great university does have places within its program...where they do, in fact, lead the rest of the academic world,” said Valleau Wilke, executive director of the Sid Richardson Foundation. “In my view this is one of the places where UT-Arlington can say, ‘We have a peak of excellence that is second to none.’”

The chair is named in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins Garrett of Fort Worth, whose passion for history and historic maps helped lead to the creation of UTA’s nationally-recognized Special Collections when the Garretts donated their significant collection to UTA in 1974. Since its founding, UTA’s Special Collections has grown into a major repository of historical materials focusing on the Southwest and its cartographic history. The Garretts have been active supporters of education in the region; in addition to involvement with UTA, Mr. Garrett served as a regent of the University of Texas System and was one of the founders of the Tarrant County (Texas) Junior College System. Virginia Garrett is a collector of historical maps and atlases with a long standing interest in the history of the region. At a reception announcing the establishment of the Endowed Chair in their honor, Mr. Garrett said “This is a happy and joyful day for Virginia and me, as well as the University of Texas at Arlington.”

The Endowed Chair will be a faculty member in the UTA History Department, College of Liberal Arts, and will work closely with the Center for Greater Southwestern Studies and the History of Cartography. According to the Center Director, Richard Francaviglia, “Cartography—the art and science of map making—has a rich history, as does the greater Southwest—a huge geographic region that includes Texas and the Southwestern states of the U.S. and northern Mexico. The Endowed Chair will continue the University’s tradition of excellence in teaching, research, and public programming about the region.” The Center will offer many amenities to the Endowed Chair, including Center Fellowship, travel funding, secretarial assistance, and the Sandra Myres Graduate Research Assistantship.

Ideally, the Endowed Chair will be a historian of the Southwest who has an established academic reputation in the history of cartography. According to History Department Chair, Kenneth Philp, “The Endowed Chair will complement a nationally-recognized research-based history program, and will help bring the resources of the Special Collections area of the Library to both the classroom and community.” After the national search, the Chair is expected to begin in the Fall semester of 1995. For further information, contact Professor Kenneth Philp, Chair, History Department, The University of Texas at Arlington, Box 19529, Arlington, Texas 76019, (phone 817-273-2861); or Richard Francaviglia, Director of the Center for Greater Southwestern Studies and the History of Cartography, The University of Texas at Arlington, Box 19497, Arlington, Texas 76019, (phone 817-273-3997).

Flanking a historic map of North America, Val Wilke (left), Jenkins Garrett, Virginia Garrett, and UTA President Ryan Amacher share news of the establishment of an endowed chair at UTA.
Student Project Brings Historic El Paso to Life...
My Visit to El Paso of the 1880s

by Patricia Marcum

As a history student, I never imagined that taking a cartography course could change the way I would view, and gain access to, the past. As part of my Historical Geography and Cartography course assignment at The University of Texas at Arlington, I had decided to research Augustus Koch's 1884 Bird's Eye View of El Paso. Up to this point, my eye had not been trained to view maps as historic evidence that can provide insight into the culture of a community. The course project set out to answer an important question: How accurately does this map portray the place and its history?

I began by researching the main buildings labeled on Koch's map to make sure that they did exist, and in the process discovered their importance to El Pasoans of the 1880s. My reading revealed that each building was associated with a rich history that reflected El Paso's growth during this crucial decade. In addition to consulting the resources at the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA), whose Special Collections has more than 30 books and historic reports on El Paso, I decided to travel to El Paso and study the photograph collections held at the Special Collections Center at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). All of the historic photographs that I was able to view confirmed that Koch's map was an accurate depiction of El Paso in the 1880s. Not only that, the map had also given me leads as to what to look for when reading primary materials. In fact, what appeared to have been a still picture of El Paso in the 1880s came alive before my eyes, as I realized that the city was being transformed from an adobe village into a true crossroads of the region during that crucial period.

I did not know what to expect when I arrived at the airport for the first time, for I had never been to El Paso before, and I had not even taken the time to look at the modern photographs of the city. One thing I knew for certain was that El Paso had grown tremendously from the period that I was studying, and that tall buildings probably had replaced the old structures on the historic map. Surely, I thought, El Paso had changed, and my vision of the city would have to be modified as I was being guided by a map that was now 110 years old. To my surprise, as the shuttle took me to UTEP, I began recognizing all the streets that appeared on Koch's map. With the exception of two streets (Utah and St. Louis), all the streets are still there, and today they are the main streets in the city. Even some of the buildings on Koch's map can still be recognized. It was exciting to know this city so well before even getting there. From researching the map, I felt I knew El Paso; I knew its culture; I knew its history. Moreover, El Paso was beautiful: the Franklin Mountains did indeed make the city look "majestic," as many of the accounts I had read testified.

Of all the primary sources that I had an opportunity to read, Sylvester Baxter’s article, “Along the Rio Grande,” which appeared in Harper’s New Monthly Magazine (April 1885), made the most lasting impression on me. Baxter described the expectations that El Pasoans of the 1880s had for their city, and how they expected to beautify it. What made this article even more special was the fact that Baxter was describing things which were happening right before his eyes, and that I was getting to see the same structures looking back in time. For example, whereas Baxter probably saw the streetcar system at full operation, I got to see the [motorized] tourist version of it. Although I was disappointed to find that El Paso Street no longer has a route, not even a trace of the rail, to my consolation, part of the old rail still exists at the intersection of Stanton and Seventh Streets. “Old Mandy,” as El Pasoans once affectionately called one of the street car mules, may not walk the streets anymore, but her replica reminds us of her services, and the old fountain reminds us where the end of the route was. Baxter probably saw a flimsy wooden bridge that connected El Paso and Juarez. I got to see the Good Neighbor Bridge that rises high above the river. He wrote about the Grand Central Hotel. This beautiful structure burned down in 1896 and was replaced by the Mills Building which still stands tall and seems magnificent in front of San Jacinto Plaza, where people still gather to hear different bands play or look at people walking by.

In fact, El Paso exploded into a bustling, vibrant city in the 1880s. I learned that the dormant, adobe village was awakened by the sounds of the news that the railroad finally was coming. Immediately, coaches, wagons, and all sorts of vehicles were running almost hourly to the end of the track, bringing in crowds of new residents and visitors to the very un-American-like city. The population grew rapidly, and by the time the Southern Pacific Railroad arrived on May 13, 1881, fifteen hundred people were huddled in a few adobe huts built for a third of that number. People slept anywhere they could find a place, and it is reported that hundreds slept in saloons. Land prices skyrocketed. Tents were pitched on the streets to accommodate new businesses sprouting like mushrooms everywhere.

However, the boom brought some drawbacks with it. According to accounts by visitors or new settlers, in those days there were no paved streets; only a few sidewalks had been covered with tar and gravel. Mud was everywhere when it rained, and in some areas the suffocating dust, created by the carriages as they went by, could be ankle deep. Typical of the frontier town, “Hell Paso” (as the community was nicknamed) saw its red light district established; saloons and gambling halls opened nearly on every corner. Drifters, gamblers, and bandits were everywhere. Anyone seeking unrestrained pleasure headed to El Paso. As Owen P. White reported in his The Autobiography of a Durable Sinner, “The thing that brought customers from afar into their stores was El Paso’s invitation to step right up to the sinner’s bench, and they [businessmen] took advantage of it. They even encouraged it.” It would be many years before El Paso could suppress the frontier behavior, the reckless characteristics of the time.

Of course, during all these years the more sober elements of the community were hard at work to create a modern city. Indeed, the year 1881 proved to be the “miracle” year for El Paso. Not only did the Southern Pacific, Santa Fe, and Texas & Pacific arrive, but El Pasoans saw numerous churches built, the first Post Office erected, and the State National Bank established. El Pasoans witnessed the construction of The Stanton-Lardo Bridge, forever connecting El Paso and Juarez and replacing the chalanes, the square boats used for ferries. The Times, Herald, and The Lone Star newspapers were started during this decade.

The metamorphosis of the 1880s took place quickly. El Paso was transformed from its adobe roots to structures of fired brick and wood with board floors, some of them three stories high. Impressive structures completed by the end of the decade included Central School, The Grand Central Hotel, the Old Courthouse, the Myar’s Opera House, The Merrick Building, and a smelter with four furnaces. As the 1880s came to an end, El Pasoans had great expectations for El Paso, and consequently, the city continued to grow and improve.

By the end of the 1880s, El Paso had matured into a lively and vital city. The population had jumped to 10,000 and more people were continuing to arrive. In the nine years that followed the coming of the railroad, El Paso was revolutionized from a small adobe community in the desert to a very exciting, energetic city, a true crossroads. In such a short time, tremendous improvements were made that are still part of El Paso today. Even a century later, when a visitor strolls through downtown El Paso, the imprint of this boom decade still speaks through the old buildings, the street names, and traces of a streetcar system. One could even venture to say that much of the fabric of this decade is still intact, and that the past, as studied in a historic map, helps give character to the present.


Editor’s Note: Patricia Marcum, a native of Barranquilla, Colombia, is a senior undergraduate in the history program at UTA. Her class project entitled “The 1880s, Decade of Firsts for El Paso” underscores the importance of maps in historical interpretation.
Two new books feature Texas architecture:

1. Architectural historian Jay Henry has studied Texas architecture for more than two decades. His latest book, "Architecture in Texas, 1895-1945," describes the forces that shaped architecture in the Lone Star state during a crucial 50 year period: Whereas this half century began with influences of the Victorian past, it ended as modernistic modes of design found expression in steel and glass. This book covers residential, institutional, and commercial architecture, and is well illustrated with several hundred black and white photographs of buildings that characterize the diverse styles. Architecture in Texas is highly recommended for its scholarly interpretation of architects and their products. For more information, contact University of Texas Press, Box 7819 University Station, Austin, Texas 78712, Phone 1-800-252-3206.

2. Dugout to Deco - Building in West Texas 1880-1930, by Elizabeth Skidmore Sasser, interprets the remarkable architecture of West Texas from the 1880s to 1930—a crucial period that found the area developing from its frontier roots into the Thirties. Dugout to Deco is highly readable, informative, and beautiful. Most of the illustrations are in color, and the text of the book follows several major themes, including ranch architecture, vernacular buildings, the Queen Anne style, Main Street, the eclectic architectural styles, and art deco. A glossary of architectural terms is also included. Readers interested in architectural history and the development of West Texas will appreciate this book. For more information, contact Texas Tech University Press, Lubbock, Texas 79409-1037, Phone 1-800-832-4042.

Other Important Books

**Railroad Crossings Interprets Ambivalence Toward the Iron Horse**

In 1868, California editor/writer Henry George viewed the forthcoming completion of the transcontinental railroad with trepidation and concern, noting that "The locomotive is a great centralizer," which "...kills little towns and builds up great cities, and in the same way kills little businesses and builds great ones." Historians know that the railroad was one of the major forces in the development of the West and Southwest, but are still attempting to determine its impact on the lives of individuals and communities in the West. In *Railroad Crossing: Californians and the Railroad 1850-1910*, William Deverell describes the often ambivalent relationship that Californians had to the railroad: whereas it brought economic growth and development, the railroad also brought with it many problems—including economic change and instability, massive social change, and pollution. Through the use of primary source materials, including government reports, newspaper articles, and journals, this interesting and well written book helps students of history better understand the love/hate relationship that Californians (and most westerners) had with the railroads. For more information, contact Princeton Fulfillment Services, 1445 Lower Ferry Road, Ewing, New Jersey 08618, Phone: 1-800-822-6637.

**Ranching Frontiers Offers Thorough, Controversial Interpretation**

Many readers of *Frontiers* will recognize cultural geographer Terry G. Jordan as the author of significant works such as *Texas: A Geography; Texas Graveyards;* and numerous articles about the historical/cultural geography of the Southwest. Jordan’s latest book, *North American Cattle-Ranching Frontiers—Origin, Diffusion and Differentiation*, represents the results of more than twenty years of scholarship, travel, and research. After identifying three major source areas of importance to North American ranching (Spain, North Africa, and England) Jordan takes the reader on a phenomenal journey through space and time in describing and interpreting the significance of each of these regions on North America and the American West. Jordan’s major conclusion—that the character of western ranching was determined not by Texas (and Mexican) ranching, but rather by English ranching traditions that spread by way of the American Mid-West—is liable to generate heated controversy among western historians. One reviewer described this book as “magisterial,” and *Frontiers* agrees: it is a major contribution to the history and geography of North America. Students of North American history, geography, and culture will want to add it to their libraries. *North American Cattle-Ranching Frontiers—Origins, Diffusion, and Differentiation*, is available from The University of New Mexico Press, 1720 Lomas Blvd., N.E., Albuquerque, New Mexico 87131, Phone: 505-277-2346.
Center Fellows Travel & Research

The Center Fellows continued their travel and research pertaining to Southwestern Studies and the History of Cartography during the academic year 1993-1994:

Brooks Ellwood conducted an archaeological excavation in Giddings, Texas to determine the authenticity of the burial site of William Langley.

Robert Fairbanks presented a research paper entitled “A Master Plan for Dallas: Planning and Politics in the 1940s” at the National Conference of the Society for American City and Regional Planning History in Chicago, Illinois.

George Green attended several meetings of the Texas State Historical Association in Austin, Texas. He is Chairman of the TSHA Program Committee and also serves on the Executive Council of the Association.

Jeff Hanson presented a paper entitled “Ethnographic Analogy and Rock Art Interpretation: The Mysterious Case of the Bisected Circle” at the annual meeting of the Texas Archaeological Society in Laredo, Texas.

Sam Haynes travelled to Austin, Texas to present a paper entitled “Sam Houston’s Antagonists” at the Texas State Historical Association meeting.

David Narrett continues to conduct his study on the Texas Republic and its relationship to the Republic of Vermont.

Dennis Reinhartz travelled to Vancouver, Washington, to attend the meeting of the Society for the History of Discoveries, where he was named President of the society for the 1994-1995 year.

Doug Richmond visited Guadalajara, Mexico where he presented a paper entitled “The Failure of Mexican Liberalism in the Yucatán, 1850-62” at the annual meeting of the Southwest Council of Latin American Studies, for which he also serves as the Chairman of the Scholarship Committee. Dr. Richmond also attended the Southwest Social Science annual meeting in San Antonio as a panel commentator on “Foreign Interests and Latin American Revolutions” and “The Mexican American War.”

Kenneth Roemer travelled to Arizona and New Mexico and experienced the Navajo Nightway Ceremonies, as described in the Spring, 1994 issue of Fronteras.

New Phone Number for Center

Readers who wish to call the Center for Greater Southwestern Studies and the History of Cartography should make a note of our new phone number: (817) 273-3997. This direct line replaces an earlier system by which people called through the University Library switchboard.

◆ NOTICIAS ◆

Río Bravo

We call to your attention Río Bravo, a journal of research and issues pertaining to the Southwest. It is published annually by the University of Texas-Pan American Center for International Studies, and contains important information and articles in both Spanish and English pertaining to the borders. For more information contact Río Bravo, Center for International Studies, The University of Texas-Pan American, Edinburg, Texas 78539-2999, (210) 381-3572.

“Exploring Community History” to Emphasize Historians as Detectives

UTA’s Center for Greater Southwestern Studies, Special Collections, and the Texas State Historical Commission are co-sponsoring a one day intensive symposium entitled “Exploring Community History” on Saturday, October 15th. This symposium, which will be held at UTA, emphasizes the role of local historians as detectives who, with the proper training, help solve many important mysteries about their communities’ past. The symposium was funded in part by the Summerlee Foundation of Dallas. The purpose of this symposium is to introduce local historians and prospective historians to the rich content of historical resources—including archives, material culture, and oral history—that can help them understand and interpret their communities’ past.

“Exploring Community History” will feature eight presentations:

- A.C. Greene, Salado, Texas - Overview: The Local Historian as Detective
- Richard Francaviglia, UTA - Reading the Landscape for Community History
- Kate Singleton, Historical Preservation Consultant - Historic Buildings: Researching Historic Properties
- Carol Roark, Dallas Public Library - What’s in a Picture? Photographs as a Tool for Understanding Local History.
- Mike Campbell, UNT - The World of Community History
- Peter Mooz, Texas State Museum of History - Object Lessons: Learning from Material Culture
- Gerald Saxon, UTA - Oral History: Listening to the Past
- Darwin Payne, SMU - The Paper Trail - Archival Records

After the presentations are made, time will be provided for a panel discussion on identifying and using historical resources. A packet of reading materials illustrating the types of resources that are consulted in exploring a community’s past will be provided to symposium participants. The $15 fee includes lunch and all materials. For more information, contact the Center at 817-273-3997.
New Courses in Southwestern Studies Added to the Curriculum

Undergraduate students at UTA interested in Southwestern Studies will be pleased to learn that several new courses have been added to the curriculum, or have been modified to permit greater in-depth study of the region:

- **Images of the Southwest** (GEOG 3371 & HIST 3371) Examines the cultures, architecture, and landscapes of the American Southwest as depicted in literature, art, film, television, and advertising.

- **The Southwest** (HIST 3352) A multi-cultural history of the southwestern United States from Pre-Columbian times to the 20th century.

- **Conference Course in Geography** (GEOG 4391) This is an independent study course, which may be used for Southwestern Studies when the focus or content of the independent study pertains to the geography and/or cartography of the Southwest.

- **Texas to 1850** (HIST 3363) The multi-cultural heritage of early Texas from the pre-Columbian period to statehood.

- **Texas Since 1845** (HIST 3364) The history of Texas since statehood, including the Civil War, Reconstruction, and developments in the 20th century.

Students interested in minoring in Southwestern Studies or Geography should contact the Center at (817) 273-3997.

Meet the Center Faculty

At first, and maybe second glance, it may seem as if Ken Roemer (Professor of English) is “out of place” as a Center Fellow. He was raised in the Northeast (Harvard B.A., Penn Ph.D.), has lectured in five countries and been a Visiting Professor and Senior Scientist Fellow in Japan (he is completing *A Sidewalker’s Japan*), and began his academic career by studying “no place”—utopia, about which he has written three books: *The Obsolete Necessity* (nominated for a Pulitzer by Arthur O. Lewis, editor of the *NY Times* Utopian Literature Collection), *America as Utopia* (author/editor), and a small textbook, *Build Your Own Utopia*.

Despite his non-Southwestern roots and varied interests, Roemer has a long-standing interest in the Native American literature of the region. He has worked on the Navajo reservation and directed NEH seminars on Indian literature. His *Approaches to Teaching Momaday’s The Way to Rainy Mountain* appeared in the MLA’s respected Approaches series and is in its third printing. Currently Roemer is the editor of the Dictionary of Literary Biography’s *Native American Writers* volume.

Roemer’s awards and honors include being selected for a Chancellor’s Teaching Award and chosen as an Editorial Board member of *American Literature*. He has served as a Center Fellow since 1991.