



CLIO

Summer 2012

July 27, 2012

Department of History Newsletter

Modernizing Repression



♦ Police Training and Nation-Building in the American Century ♦

JEREMY KUZMAROV

Assistant Professor **Jeremy Kuzmarov's** second book, *Modernizing Repression: Police Training and Nation-Building in the American Century* (June 2012) is "a probing analysis of the impact of American policing operations abroad." Access [University of Massachusetts Press](#) for detailed description.



Professor Andrew Grant Wood and Alejandra Bronfman, editors and contributors to this new book *Music, Sound & Culture in Latin America and the Caribbean*, examine the importance of sound as a historical source. Access [University of Pittsburgh Press](#) for additional information.

Woody Guthrie's "House of Earth" to be published

In contrast to Woody Guthrie's autobiographical *Bound for Glory*, the popular composer's relatively unknown novel *House of Earth* (Housed at the McFarlin Library Special Collections) offers a plain-spoken portrait of the Texas Panhandle during the hard-scrabble Dust Bowl era of the late 1930s. The story centers on a down on their luck farm couple (Tike and Ella May Hamlin) who endure difficult winter conditions while engaging in a bitter fight with cold hearted bank and local lumber company operators.

The title is drawn from Guthrie's experience traveling in New Mexico where he was afforded the opportunity to learn about traditional [typically Spanish-American] adobe construction (sand, clay, water, sticks, manure, etc. fashioned into bricks and dried). Rather than home building with lumber, Guthrie argued the benefits of adobe, believing these natural shelters (similar to cob or mud brick) could help ease the plight of the common farmer. If only people could gain access to a piece of arable land, Guthrie figured, these "houses of earth" would then keep folks warm and relatively free from the wind, cold, dust and termites that so often plagued residents.

Finished in late 1947, Guthrie put the manuscript away in order to concentrate his increasingly diminished energies on songwriting (he was suffering Huntington's disease). Until just recently, only a few had seen *House of Earth*. Those who did, such as Library of Congress folklorist Alan Lomax, filmmaker Irving Learner and musician-poet Bob Dylan, were suitably impressed.

Then in the mid-1980s, the University of Tulsa acquired the manuscript. Special Collections current director Marc Carlson estimates (although we are not entirely certain) that TU had made arrangements to purchase the singer's novel from filmmaker Irving Learner (Woody had wanted *House of Earth* to be made into a film). The deal, according to Carlson, was probably brokered by the Office of the President or, perhaps, the Provost. No doubt the Guthrie novel came on recommendation of cultural historian and esteemed Woody scholar Guy Logson who worked as TU library chief at the time.

Some five or so years later, Harold Leventhal—then acting Guthrie estate representative/agent--requested a "research copy" from TU librarians. In part, his obtaining a copy was motivated by a desire to have the work published. This endeavor failed, however and subsequently, Leventhal most likely donated this copy of *House of Earth* to the Woody Guthrie Foundation in New York State for safe keeping. There it stayed while the original manuscript remained in Tulsa, part of an ever growing assemblage of books, documents, objects of interest and ephemera which is Special Collections.

Then, just before the start of the Centennial Celebration of Guthrie's birth this year, historian Douglas Brinkley and, curiously, actor Johnny Depp learned of *House of Earth*. In the *Times* they explain their somewhat odd partnership (they met through mutual friend Hunter S. Thompson in the '90s) and then indicate "[w]ith help from the Woody Guthrie Foundation and the singer's daughter, Nora, [we] found the manuscript last fall." In a related *Times* article from the same day they indicate that "the typescript [is] now held at the McFarlin Library at The University of Tulsa." To this one might add, not only is this unique and rare book manuscript "now [being] held at McFarlin," it has been part of Special Collections for more than 25 years!

How exactly Brinkley and Depp came across *House of Earth* is probably not that important. Nevertheless, the story leaves something to the imagination. If neither Brinkley or (the more colorful) Depp (of *Pirates of the Caribbean* fame) were spotted on campus last fall when they first took serious interest in the Guthrie work, access mostly likely came via what Marc Carlson observes (from Special Collection records) was a "research" copy made of the made for Leventhal back in the 1980s. The prospect of *House of Earth* finally being published is truly exciting and we should applaud Brinkley and Depp for their effort to bring *House of Earth* into the light. Perhaps it takes a popular historian and a talented actor playing pirate to help us Okies appreciate what treasure we have here in Tulsa.

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Faculty News

Dr. Kristen Oertel helped teach two NEH-sponsored seminars in Lawrence, Kansas, this summer, where she lectured on John Brown and Clarina Nichols to 90 high school teachers from across the country. She also prepared a new graduate course, "Researching Race in American History," and a new community course that will be funded by the Oklahoma Humanities Council called, "Making Sense of the American Civil War." In June Dr. Oertel attended the Society for Civil War Historians meeting in Lexington, Kentucky, and served on a panel that explored issues of masculinity and political conflict with historians Judy Giesberg and Nina Silber (photo). Dr. Oertel also continued research for her biography of Harriet Tubman, which will be published by Routledge.



Mary Todd Lincoln home

Professor Christine Ruane will be in residence at the [Dumbarton Oaks Library and Collection](#) in Washington, D.C. She is working on a book about Russian kitchen gardens.

Associate Professor Jan Wilson taught her popular course Queer Cinema during summer session one.

Professor Emeritus Thomas Buckley dazzled second session students with his History of World War Two.

Chair Thomas Buoye was invited to participate in the International Conference on The History of Mass Violence in Russia and China at Helsinki, Finland, May 17-18, 2012.

Professor Andrew Wood spent two weeks in Rio de Janeiro (city and state) researching the history of anthropology in Brazil.

Professor Joseph Bradley is currently Director of The Department of History Graduate Program.

Student News

Sara Swearingin is beginning Law School in one month at the University of Arkansas.

Jessica Boggs has been studying Arabic and researching her Senior thesis. Jessica is focusing on Jordan's peace treaty with Israel in 1994, and working with Dr. Omar Rifai who has a long diplomatic career in Jordan. (He held the position of Coordinator for the Middle East peace process and Director of the Special Bureau at the Foreign Ministry in Amman, and was a member of the Jordanian delegation to the Jordan-Israel peace talks.)

Mette Flynt will be attending the University of Utah doctoral program in Western (U.S.) History.

"Life Beyond TU" Dazzles!

On April 13, 2012, as part of an ongoing effort to inform students not only about history, but the history of actual TU students who have graced our fair institution and then gone on to seek fortune and fame, history major **Jessica Boggs** organized a panel of three graduates, **Amanda Lett** (Gilcrease Museum), **Brian Steele** (University of Alabama, Birmingham), and **Kevin Gray** (Tulsa County ADA). Each offered a short summary of their career path in such a way as to feature ways that their training at TU had proved valuable, key decisions and current professional satisfactions/challenges. Earning high hospitality marks, Ms. Boggs catered the affair (which met in the recently remodeled A & S Dean's Conference Room) with tasty Los Cabos (Mexican) food. All would agree that experience shared by our three esteemed alums was well worth considering! Keep a look out for future presentations.

History of the Ancient Americas Students Cataloging Ancient West Mexican Figurines - McFarlin Library Special Collections



Become a History Major - Students and Advisors

Freshmen

Brandon Macy—J. Arnold

Sophomores

James Amstutz—K. Oertel
Casey Johnson—A. Wood
Michael Mancini—B. Hosmer
Hannah Massoth—A. Wood
Austin McDaniel—J. Arnold
Shaun Raguse—A. Wood
Randi Thesenvitz—K. Oertel

Juniors

Micah Bolin—K. Oertel
Nathaniel Cunningham—J. Kuzmarov

Clarissa Dunn—A. Wood
La Tasha Hutchins—A. Wood
Patrick Jeffers—B. Hosmer
J. Christopher Proctor—A. Wood
Puja Sztorc—K. Oertel
James Tindle—J. Arnold
Lauren West—J. Bradley
Randall Young—J. Arnold

Seniors

Kaitlin Bailey—T. Buoye
Jessica Boggs—J. Kuzmarov
Bryan Burnham—J. Kuzmarov
Erin DeClue—A. Wood
Cara Dublin—J. Bradley

Leanna Duncan—C. Ruane
Alexis Elliot—K. Oertel
Phillip Fischaber—J. Arnold
Courtney Handy—A. Wood
Evan Humphreys—A. Wood
Rhett Lange—J. Kuzmarov
Jared St. John—B. Hosmer
Sarah Stokely—A. Wood
Natalie Stompoly—K. Oertel
Austin Weaver—J. Arnold