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## 07. History

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## **Abstracts from the 2013 Oklahoma Research Day**

**Held at the University of Central Oklahoma**

### **04. Liberal Arts**

### **07. History**

#### **04.07.01 Hyphenated Citizen: How American Federation of Labor Organizer Clemente Idar Fought for Labor and Citizenship Rights for Mexicans and Mexican Americans in South Texas, 1918-1934**

**Stephanie Diaz,**

*University of Central Oklahoma*

Based on primary research conducted at the University of Texas, this paper explores Clemente Idar's career as a general labor organizer for the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and his work on behalf of Mexican nationals and Mexican Americans in the borderlands of Texas and Northern Mexico during the early 20th century. Originally from Laredo, Texas, and fluent in English and Spanish, Idar came from a large Mexican American family of activists shaped by the social and geographical ramifications of the Mexican Revolution. His father, Nicasio, gained regional notoriety for his newspaper, *La Cronica*, and his involvement in El Primer Congreso Mexicanista of 1911 brought Clemente, to the attention of Samuel Gompers as a potential employee able to walk between two worlds. Idar's rise to fame was quickly stalled, however, by the relationships between the Mexican Revolution & American Labor; Mexican & US governments; and the relationship between the AFL & US government.

## **04.07.02 Women's Lives in New Netherland**

**Megan Stockton,**

*Cameron University*

Historians have studied New Netherland's history, but they have too often ignored a certain group of people: the women of the colony. My research focuses on women within the colony during its existence from 1624 to 1674 and mainly on how the women of New Netherland lived, the laws that ruled them, and their status within the society. The point of this research has been to establish the liberties which the women of New Netherland received and what they did with those liberties. The project reveals that women in New Netherland were men's commercial and economic equals in many ways, but they were men's inferiors when it came to public matters, such as access to public authority. The methodology used to exhibit this thesis was based chiefly in analyzing representative samples of certain kinds of conduct from the court records of New Amsterdam and Fort Orange. In general I searched through court cases to find cases of women using their liberties. To realize fully the meaning of these court cases, I also relied on a qualitative study of the laws and ordinances of New Netherland. While the colony of New Netherland was patriarchal in nature, women were able to gain an education and, because of that option, were able to be a part of New Netherland's economy and could join in many different occupations. They also had property rights and could defend themselves and their families in court. Yet, women were still made to act in a certain way compliant to men.

## **04.07.03 Decolonizing the Histories of Helen Hunt Jackson (1830-1885) and Gertrude Simmons Bonnin (1876-1938)**

**Barbara Bilek,**

*University of Central Oklahoma*

What is decolonization and how does it work? The concept of decolonization surfaced during "the global Indigenous activism in the 1970s." Although the idea is not new, it has been given little attention by mainstream western historians. In *Native Historians Write Back*, Susan A. Miller, and James Riding In, stated, "Decolonization is a process designed to shed and recover from the ill effects of colonization." In this thesis, I utilize the case studies of two women to demonstrate how decolonizing history using an Indigenous lens can construct a new history producing a new narrative with a different perspective. Many literary scholars studied the lives of Jackson and Bonnin, but their work has been largely overlooked by western historians. This researcher saw the women as the progenitors of the modern day Native American rights movements. The object of this research project was to use an Indigenous perspective to observe and report whether the histories about Jackson and Bonnin would change as a result. The results have produced a manuscript that provides an example of how to apply the principles of Indigenous discourse, specifically regarding decolonization. Decolonizing the history of two very different women with synchronistic goals may encourage other historians whether Native American, western, or American to present alternative perspectives in the histories they write.

#### **04.07.04 2012 Oklahoma Civic Health Index: Civic Skills and Voter Education**

**Alyce Vigil, Danielle Hernandez, Janelle Grellner, Lauren Craig, Patti Loughlin,**

*University of Central Oklahoma*

A research team from the University of Central Oklahoma's American Democracy Project, Oklahoma Campus Compact, and the National Conference on Citizenship produced the first Oklahoma Civic Health Index in 2010. We examined the civic health of Oklahoma by looking at five indicators of civic health: volunteering and service, political action, social connection, belonging to a group, and working with neighbors. Building on the first report's findings, the 2012 Oklahoma Civic Health Index concentrates on civic skills and voter education, including Oklahoma politics and citizen engagement. The report includes new measures such as trust, confidence, online engagement, and local voting. The key findings of the report are as follows: 1. The road to engagement could start at the dinner table, but it doesn't. 2. Oklahomans' hearts beat strong for volunteering. 3. We don't talk about politics nor do we frequently engage in political acts. 4. Confidence in public institutions is moderate in Oklahoma and across the nation. 5. Oklahoma civic skills are on track to improve. The report will be shared with policymakers, educators, community agencies, city planners, universities and other community partners to promote and facilitate engaged community conversations.

#### **04.07.05 The Big Break: Race and Gender in Pawnee Bill's Wild West Show, 1888-1913**

**Alyce Vigil,**

*University of Central Oklahoma*

Gordon William "Pawnee Bill" Lillie's (1860-1942) Historic Wild West was in operation from 1888-1913. Wild West shows were the unofficial national entertainment of the United States and attempted to teach Euro-Americans about life on the western frontier. Much has been written regarding Buffalo Bill Cody and his show, the first of these enterprises. Academic writers, however, have largely neglected Pawnee Bill's show. We cannot truly understand Wild West shows unless we explore more than one incarnation of it. Similarly, we cannot truly understand any one Wild West show unless we explore all of its participants—not only the Euro-American men, but men and women of ethnic minorities whose voices have so far remained silent. After conducting extensive secondary and archival research, I argue that, whether show organizers or audiences realized it, involvement in Pawnee Bill's Historic Wild West provided social, cultural, and economic opportunities for three previously marginalized groups. Euro-American women showcased their strength and independence by traveling without male chaperones, wearing split skirts, and doing a man's work. American Indian women hid their traditions in plain sight at a time when they were threatened by the reservation and boarding school systems. Finally, Georgian men and women earned more money than they ever could in their civil war-torn country and sent it home.

#### **04.07.06 Gold Dust Sisterhood: The Shadowy World of Prostitution in Mining Towns of Southwest Colorado, 1880-1920**

**Sherri Duncan,**

*University of Central Oklahoma*

Building on the work of historian's Ann Butler, Duane Smith, and Alan Bird, *Gold Dust Sisterhood* examines prostitution in mining towns of Southwest Colorado focusing on their unmistakable contributions to the development of frontier society. After the Pikes Peak gold rush in 1858, immigrants flooded the Rocky Mountains establishing overnight boomtowns. During this brief phenomenon of rapid growth, an intricate stratification pattern developed reflecting differences in class, race, and sex. Prostitutes and madams flocked to these temporary towns of riches becoming engaged in the trade that eventually shaped the town's reputation and geographical layouts. This work includes primary sources from the Animas County Historical Society, San Juan Historical Society, and the Center for Southwest Studies. Newspaper articles revealing conduct and arrest, and death notifications of prostitutes were taken from the *La Plata Miner*, *The Silverton Standard*, and the *Durango Democrat*. Today, tourist visit mining towns of Durango and Silverton, Colorado to experience the days where just-paid boisterous miners relieved the boredom of long days in the mines with the company of frontier prostitutes. Their streets are lined with an ever present reminder of how thousands of women who worked the steamy brothels and saloons shaped social landscapes and contributed to their development. Sherri Duncan, Graduate student, University of Central Oklahoma Dr. Patti Loughlin, Faculty Advisor

#### **04.07.07 The Barefaced Tory: Sir Dudley North and the Consolidation of Monarchical Power**

**Suzanne Farmer,**

*Northeastern State University*

The consolidation of monarchical power throughout the 1680s is often viewed at best as arbitrary. However, this was not a universal sentiment among contemporaries. Not all citizens who engaged in the political arena were necessarily opposed to Charles II or James II's grabs for power, even in London, the opposition's stronghold. Tory Sir Dudley North entered the political sphere as an agent of the Crown in the controversial London shrieval election of 1682. As sheriff, North actively worked to quash opposition to the Crown within the City of London. Throughout his short political career, North continued to act in a manner that upheld both Charles II and James II's attempts at personal rule. North is most famous for his role in selecting the juries that tried and convicted Rye House plotters, including William Lord Russell, and Algernon Sidney, but these were not his only acts at aiding the Crown to consolidate its authority. One of North's last political actions was his efforts to ensure that the Crown was so financially stable that Parliament would be rendered unnecessary. This paper will argue that North, as a Tory ideologue, was working to strengthen the reigns of monarchs who were attempting absolutist regimes. By examining North's Parliamentary record and his acts as Commissioner of the Customs, this paper argues that North, as a Tory ideologue an agent of absolutism, was working to strengthen the reigns of monarchs who were attemptin

## **04.07.08 Through the Frozen Mountain: The Vosges Campaign of World War II, October 1944 to January 1945**

**Darrell Bishop,**

*University of Central Oklahoma*

In October 1944, the US 7th Army pushed German Army Group G out of Southern France and into the Vosges Mountains. The Germans held the Americans back until the end of January 1945. In 1994, Historian Keith Bonn wrote the first history of the Vosges Campaign in *When the Odds Were Even*. In the book, he made the argument that the two sides were evenly matched; however his thesis is flawed in that the odds were not even. Reviewing American and German archival sources found that the Germans were attempting to delay the 7th Army's advance through the Vosges. The Germans were retreating towards the Rhine River and using the mountains to slow down the Americans. The Germans relied heavily on roadblocks, mines, barbed wire, pill boxes and small engagements. They only used offensive assaults when the Americans tried to progress out of the mountains, and this was only done to push them back into the Vosges. The German supply records clearly show that Army Group G was in desperate need of supplies and were outmatched by the Americans. The 7th Army also had superior manpower and a larger reserve of manpower than the Germans. The study used divisional records from the 45th Infantry Division, regimental reports from the 45th and 36th Infantry Divisions and German reports, including Army Group G's supply records for the time period.