

Virginian to Give Public Lecture at SWOSU

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Will Thomas

Will Thomas, director of the Virginia Center for Digital History and assistant professor of history at the University of Virginia, will be guest speaker on the Southwestern Oklahoma State University campus in Weatherford on Thursday, March 3.

Thomas will be at SWOSU as part of the Oklahoma Scholar-Leadership Enrichment Program. His talk, "I Shall Die a Trying for our Rights," about the African American soldier and the end of slavery will be held at 7 p.m. in the Fine Arts Center on the SWOSU campus. Admission is free, and the public is invited.

Thomas teaches the history of the United States since 1865 survey course as well as modern Virginia history and thesis seminars for history majors. He is the author of *Lawyering for the Railroad: Business, Law, and Power in the New South*, published in the fall of 1999.

He is currently co-authoring with Edward L. Ayers a fully electronic scholarly article for publication in the *American Historical Review*, titled "Two American Communities on the Eve of Civil War: An Experiment in Form and Analysis." The article is based on their research in the award-winning Valley of the Shadow project. Ayers, Thomas, and Anne S. Rubin shared the Lincoln Prize in 2001 from the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College in recognition of the project's scholarly significance.

University students from across Oklahoma will be on the SWOSU campus from March 2-6 as Thomas directs an OSLEP course on "The Civil War in the Life of Two Communities." The course examines the Civil War era in American history and seeks to understand the war as a social as well as military and political experience. Every aspect of the course is comparative, presenting Northern and Southern life, people, events, and narratives.

OSLEP is a unique intercollegiate, interdisciplinary program designed to develop the scholarship and leadership abilities of Oklahoma's outstanding college and university students. The program is sponsored by the [Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education](#).

For more information on the public lecture, contact Dr. Roger Bromert at 580.774.3281 or roger.bromert@swosu.edu.