December 1, 2014

2015 OAH China Residency Program Committee
Organization of American Historians
112 N. Bryan Avenue
Bloomington, Indiana 47408-4141

Dear Program Committee Members,

I am writing to request consideration for the 2015 OAH China Residency Program with a specialty in the history of the American West. My own training, research and teaching experience has been in the area of the American West with a concentration on the U.S./Mexico Borderlands. Directing graduate students in seminars and research, as well as teaching undergraduate courses, has prepared me to engage students in the China seminar in cutting edge issues in the discipline.

My training in the American West began in graduate school at Yale University which specialized in the field. During that period, I took courses in the regional history, worked as a TA and led my own courses in sub-fields of the American West. My first position at the University of Utah further added to my grounding in the discipline. There I designed an American West survey course for undergraduates. In 2000-2001, I held the Clements Fellowship in Southwestern Studies at Southern Methodist University under David Weber. Most recently, I have continued to teach graduate courses in the American West and Spanish American Borderlands at the University of Houston. My professional involvement in the field has continued through participation in the Western History Association and the Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association.

If there are any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Raúl A. Ramos, Ph.D.
Proposed Seminar Outline:

**History of the American West: Borders, Empires and Migrations**

Raúl A. Ramos, Ph.D.
University of Houston

This seminar is designed to provide a broad overview of the current research and literature on the American West while raising critical questions about the field. Rather than limiting the scope of the course to a geographic West, we will consider sets of processes and ideologies that take root over time in the region and beyond. These include conquest and colonization, migration, ethnic and racial formations, nation-state building, gender construction, market capitalism and mineral extraction and varieties of interactions with the environment. The focus on these themes de-center the east in the analysis of the region to include alternate readings of the same place, also defined as the north or the east for some peoples. Ultimately, the American West appears not as an isolated, exceptional locale, but rather as a significant arena of convergence and contestation of national and transnational peoples, cultures, ideas and markets.

The American West also holds a prominent place in the self-image in American culture. Films will be used to expand the discussion of themes initiated in the seminar. Films include:

- Giant (1956)
- The Searchers (1956)
- Thelma and Louise (1991)
- Lone Star (1996)
- Sleep Dealer (2008)

**Course Schedule/Calendar:**

The typical course day will involve several elements of lecture, multi-media viewing and discussion of reading excerpts. Much of the discussion will connect the West with the global movement of people, ideas and markets. Particular attention will be directed towards a discussion of the contemporary implications of many of these historical developments. These include current American debates around immigration, border enforcement and race relations.

**Day One: Mythic West and National Imaginations**

**Readings:**

- Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" (1893)
- Richard White, "It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own", (1991), 3-4.
Excerpted Readings:
- Kropp, California Vieja: Culture and Memory in a Modern American Place
- Ramos, Beyond the Alamo: Forging Mexican Ethnicity in San Antonio, 1821-1861

**Morning Session:** The Idea of the “West” as a Place
**Film:** Giant

**Afternoon Session:** The Alamo and Symbols of the West

**Day Two:** Indigeneity and Conquest

**Readings:**

Excerpted Readings:
- Barr, Peace Came in the Form of a Woman: Indians and Spaniards in the Texas Borderlands
- Blackhawk, Violence over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West
- Jacoby, Shadows at Dawn: An Apache Massacre and the Violence of History
- White, Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815

**Morning Session:** The Dynamics of Indian Civilizations before 1492
**Film:** The Searchers

**Afternoon Session:** Rethinking States and Empires on the Frontier

**Day Three:** Borderlands and Empires

**Readings:**

Excerpted Readings:
- Gomez, Manifest Destinies: The Making of the Mexican American Race
- Johnson, Roaring Camp: The Social World of the California Gold Rush

**Morning Session:** Making Borders: Nation-States on the Frontier
**Film:** Lone Star

**Afternoon Session:** Making Race on the Borderlands
Day Four: Rethinking Environmental and Urban Spaces

Readings:
- Phil Deloria, “What is the Middle Ground Anyway?” The William and Mary Quarterly, (2006)
- Earl Pomeroy, "Toward a Reorientation of Western History: Continuity and Environment," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, 41 (1955), 579-600.

Excerpted Readings:
- Cronon, Nature’s Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West
- Scharff, Twenty Thousand Roads: Women, Movement, and the West
- Self, American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland
- Shah, Stranger Intimacy: Contesting Race, Sexuality, and Law in the North American West
- Widener, Black Arts West: Culture and Struggle in Postwar Los Angeles
- Worster, Rivers of Empire: Water, Aridity, and the Growth of the American West

Morning Session: The Idea of Wilderness and the Western Imagination
Film: Thelma and Louise
Afternoon Session: Experiencing the Urban West

Day Five: Transnational/Transpacific West and Citizenship

Readings:

Excerpted Readings:
- Molina, Fit to Be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles, 1879-1939
- Mitchell, Coyote Nation: Sexuality, Race, and Conquest in Modernizing New Mexico, 1880-1920
- Ngai, Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America
- McKeown, Chinese Migrant Networks and Cultural Change: Peru, Chicago, Hawaii, 1900-1936
- Lee, At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration during the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943

Morning Session: State Enforcement of Racial Regimes: America Becomes Western
Film: Sleep Dealer
Afternoon Session: Transnational Networks and Western Economic and Social Landscapes
List of References

Vicki Ruiz
Professor, History
President-Elect, American Historical Association
University of California, Irvine
School of Humanities
3100 Humanities Gateway
Mail Code: 3375
Irvine, CA 92697
(949) 824-5133
vruiz@uci.edu

Jonathan Holloway
Professor, American Studies, African American Studies and History
Dean of the College
Yale University
1 Prospect St.
New Haven, CT 06511-6816
(203) 432-2902
jonathan.holloway@yale.edu

Susie Porter
Associate Professor, History
Director, Gender Studies Program
University of Utah
290 S. 1500 E., Rm 218
Salt Lake City, UT 84112-0442
(801) 585-5693
s.porter@utah.edu
RAÚL A. RAMOS

Department of History, University of Houston,
524 Agnes Arnold Hall, Houston, TX  77204-3003
(713) 743-3116
raramos@uh.edu

CURRENT POSITION

2009- Present  
Associate Professor  
University of Houston, Department of History

EDUCATION

1999  Ph.D., Yale University  
History  
Fields: History of the American West; American Social and Labor History; Mexican History

1992  M.A., Yale University  
History

1989  A.B., Princeton University  
History with Latin American Studies Certificate

SELECTED HONORS, AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

2011  Publication Award, San Antonio Conservation Society, for Beyond the Alamo.

2010  NACCS-Tejas Book Award, National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies (NACCS) Tejas Foco, for Beyond the Alamo.

2009  T.R. Fehrenbach Book Award, Texas Historical Commission, for Beyond the Alamo.


SELECTED PUBLICATIONS AND RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

MANUSCRIPTS:

ARTICLES, EDITED VOLUMES, AND CHAPTERS:


Co-editor, with Monica Perales, Recovering the Hispanic History of Texas, (Houston: Arte Público Press, 2010), with an introduction by the editors.


ENCYCLOPEDIA ENTRIES:


ESSAYS AND NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS:


**ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH EXPERIENCE**

**CURRENT:**
- 2009- Associate Professor, University of Houston, Department of History.
- 2012- Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of History.

**PREVIOUS:**
- 2010—2013 Faculty in Residence, Cougar Village Residence Hall, University of Houston.
- 2002—2009 Assistant Professor, University of Houston, Department of History.
- 1999—2002 Assistant Professor, University of Utah, Department of History and Ethnic Studies Program.
- 2001 Visiting Professor, Southern Methodist University, Clements Center for Southwest Studies.
- 1993 Teaching Fellow, Department of History, Yale University, “History of the American West to 1850.”
- 1992 Teaching Fellow, Department of History, Yale University, “Sectionalism, the Civil War, and Reconstruction.”

**CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION**

**University of Houston**
- Chicano/a History to 1912
- American West to 1848
- American West
- Rethinking Borders and Citizenship
- Texas History to 1865

**Southern Methodist University**
- Chicano/a History

**University of Utah**
- Chicano/a History
- Introduction to Ethnic Studies
- American Civilization
- American History to 1877
- Chicano/a Experiences
- Rethinking Borders and Citizenship
- Research Seminar- Native American Oral History
Williams College
Latino Ethnic Identity

Yale University
Chicanos in 20th Century American Society
Latino Ethnic Identity
Civil War- Teaching Assistant
Trans-Appalachian West before 1850- Teaching Assistant

Graduate Courses
Readings in the History of the American West - UH
Research in the Spanish American Borderlands - UH
Chicano/a History - SMU

SELECTED LECTURES AND PAPERS PRESENTED


“Battle Without End: Public Discourses of the Texas War,” Western Historical Association, Salt Lake City, October 22, 2008.


“Battle Without End: Public Discourses of the Texas War,” Texas State Historical Association, Corpus Christi, TX, March 6, 2008.

“Jose Antonio Saucedo,” Tejano Leadership in Mexican and Revolutionary Texas Symposium, San Marcos, TX, October 14, 2006.

