

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIAN



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(2019-2020)**

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THE
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY OF
SOUTHERN
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1883

MESSAGE FROM THE HSSC PRESIDENT

In my Spring 2019 Newsletter column, I described a book publishing initiative launched by the Society to expend revenue that had accumulated from two Ahmanson grants that henceforth directed towards the *Southern California Quarterly*. We solicited applications from authors seeking to defray various costs of producing their , or for books that were being self-published. We weren't able to give authors much lead time as we wanted to award the grants by early June, and calculated that the initiative would be deemed a success if we received about 15 proposals. Imagine our surprise when we received over 40 applications! Not only that, but the applications ranged widely. Junior and senior faculty members, independent scholars, and authors publishing for a general audience all responded to the call. The projects were varied as well – monographs, anthologies, and even a historical novel. We weren't surprised to hear from authors planning to self-publish, but perhaps were a bit surprised to find that university presses were also leaving authors to cover many costs.

Many thanks to board members Peggy Renner, Eileen Wallis, and Will Cowan, whose work on the selection committee was nearly threefold what was anticipated. When all was said and

done, the Society funded 13 projects with publication dates within the next year or so, focusing on the history of Southern California or California more generally. The awardees and their projects are listed on pages 2 and 3. We know of one book on the list that was published this fall, and others are due out in Spring 2020. Congratulations to all of our grantees!

Clearly the HSSC's book publishing initiative tapped into a pressing need in the history community. Authors were enormously grateful for the opportunity to seek these funds, as there are few similar grant programs available. As a result, we are exploring ways to transform what started as a one-off program to expend left-over funds into an on-going initiative. And in future Newsletters and *Quarterly* issues, we will feature our award-winning authors and their publications.

In addition, the Society recently announced the 2019 winner of the Doyce B. Nunis Award, given for the best demonstration of scholarship in the *Southern California Quarterly* by a rising historian. Congratulations to Elsa Devienne, whose article “The Life, Death, and Rebirth of Muscle Beach: Reassessing the Muscular Phy-

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HSSC ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF NEW AHMANSON PUBLICATION GRANTS

Academic publishing is getting increasingly expensive—for authors. New books published by university presses require not only a substantial investment of time but often hard-earned cash from authors for such essentials as copyright clearances, image licensing and indexing.

That's why the Historical Society of Southern California (HSSC)'s innovative new pilot program to help authors meet such expenses drew such an overwhelming response from scholars, drawing proposals from as far away as Paris for individual publication grants of up to \$5,000.

A generous grant from the Ahmanson Foundation made it possible for the HSSC to offer grants to support the publication of books on the history of Southern California, California, and the American West.

"We easily could have awarded three times as many grants had the money been available," says HSSC President Donna Schuele. "Authors are really starting to feel the pinch as academic presses require them to meet more of the costs of publication. It's clear from the response that our pilot program addressed a real need."

The pilot program drew 42 proposals from scholars from around the country and overseas to help meet the cost of copyediting, proofreading, permissions, creating maps and drawings, design, and marketing.

The program attracted responses from a wide range of authors, from tenured professors to adjunct faculty and independent scholars, many of whom had signed book contracts with major presses including Harvard, Yale, the University of California and Duke. Subject matter ranged from African-American history, native American activism, and the political history of Silicon Valley to environmental history and rap music in Los Angeles.

"We wish we had the resources to be able to fund more than a dozen proposals from among the many impressive pieces of scholarship that were submitted," Schuele says. "The response was far greater than we had anticipated."

The awardees are (in alphabetical order):

Emily Bills, adjunct faculty, Woodbury University: *Linking Up in Los Angeles: How the Telephone Built a City* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2020)

Judy Branfman, research affiliate, UCLA Institute for Research on Labor and Employment: *Public Los Angeles: A Private City's Activist Futures* (University of Georgia Press, 2019)

Terri Castaneda, professor of anthropology, Cal State Sacramento: *Marie Mason Potts: The Lettered Life of a California Activist* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2020)

John DeSimone, freelance writer and author: *Road to Delano* (historical novel based on the work of Cesar Chavez) (Rare Bird Press, 2019)

Elsa Devienne, lecturer, Northumbria University: *Shifting Sands: An Environmental History of Los Angeles' Shoreline* (Sorbonne Editions, 2021)

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HSSC ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF NEW AHMANSON PUBLICATION GRANTS

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Vanessa Diaz, assistant professor of Chicano/a and Latino/a Studies, Loyola Marymount University: *Latino Paparazzi and Women Reporters in Hollywood* (Duke University Press, 2020)

Elizabeth Faletta, teaching professor, USC Price School of Public Policy: *By Right, By Design: Housing Design versus Housing Development in Los Angeles* (Routledge, 2019)

Ken Farsing, retired Carson city manager: *Black Gold in Paradise—Reclaiming Signal Hill* (self-published, 2019)

Alison Jefferson, independent scholar: *Living the California Dream: African American Leisure Sites during the Jim Crow Era* (University of Nebraska Press, 2020)

Elaine Lewinnek, professor of American studies, Cal State Fullerton: *A People's Guide to Orange County* (University of California Press, 2020)

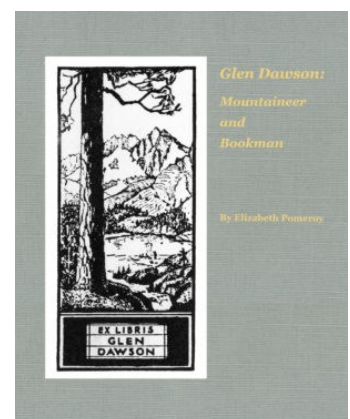
Susan Phillips, professor of environmental analysis, Pitzer College: *The City Beneath: A Century of Los Angeles Graffiti* (Yale University Press, 2019)

Felicia Viator, assistant professor of history, San Francisco State: *L.A. County Blues: Los Angeles Rap in the Age of Reagan* (Harvard University Press, 2020)

Congratulations to all of the grant recipients.

The HSSC also provided support for the publication of *Glen Dawson: Mountaineer and Bookman*. Glen Dawson was born into a world of books, libraries, and mountain climbing, only seven years after his father opened Ernest Dawson's Antique Book Shop on South Broadway in Los Angeles in 1905.

His father would be his early mentor and his destiny was set, a destiny now engagingly told by Elizabeth Pomeroy. She invites you into his several worlds—and more—as she skillfully unpacks Glen's remarkable life story, showing how his footprints measured the Sierra Nevada and other mountain peaks, as his presence measured the antiquarian book world of Los Angeles.



HSSC 2019 DOYCE B. NUNIS, JR. AWARD

Congratulations to Elsa Devienne, the winner of the 2019 HSSC Doyce B. Nunis, Jr. Award for her article “The Life, Death, and Rebirth of Muscle Beach: Reassessing the Muscular Physique in Postwar America, 1940s-1980s,” *Southern California Quarterly* 100, no. 3 (Fall 2018): 324-367.

Devienne’s article on Muscle Beach is both informative and engaging in documenting the history of the body-building and acrobatic location, first on Santa Monica’s beach, later at Venice beach. But the author also explores the athletic exhibitions, how they were represented in the press, and their fan following to uncover changing attitudes toward the body, muscularity, and gender over the course of the 1940s to 1980s period. The article makes a significant contribution to the fields of gender and body studies and popular culture.

Congratulations also to David J. Neumann, who received an honorable mention for his article, “A Respectable Militancy: Reverend J. Raymond Henderson and the Civil Rights Struggle in Los Angeles, 1941-1963,” *Southern California Quarterly* 100, no.4 (Winter 2018): 471-504.

Neumann’s sympathetic treatment of Rev. J. Raymond Henderson, the pastor of L.A.’s Second Baptist Church from 1941 to 1963, illuminates the internal tensions of one leader of the African American community who personified dignity and respectability as a path toward racial equality when the Civil Rights movement began advocating a more dynamic demand for racial justice.

ELSA DEVINNE’S RESEARCH

Elsa Devienne’s research lies at the intersection of urban history, environmental history, and the history of gender, body, and sexuality, with a focus on the 20th century. She is particularly interested in the history of Americans’ intense engagement with their coastlines, from the 19th-century beach-bathing boom until today’s climate crisis and its catastrophic consequences for coastal communities.

Her first book, *Shifting Sands: An Environmental History of Los Angeles* (Sorbonne Editions, forthcoming in February 2020), recounts the formidable beach modernization campaign that transformed Los Angeles into one of the world’s greatest coastal metropolises, revealing how the city’s man-made shores served as a central locus for the reinvention of seaside leisure and the triumph of modern bodies. More specifically, the project sheds light on how a Los Angeles-based “beach lobby” made up of businessmen, city officials, and engineers combined planning, policing and environmental strategies to prevent a “white flight” from the coast, thereby destroying the traditional leisure spaces of African-American, working-class, and gay Angelenos. By fully integrating environmental, cultural, and social history, *The Sand Rush* not only uncovers how the Los Angeles coastline was constructed (both literally and discursively), but also how this major planning and engineering project affected the lives of ordinary city-dwellers and their relationship to nature.

The *SCQ* article on Muscle Beach grew out of this research (originally conducted as a Ph.D. dissertation) but represents a distinct project on the history of the muscular body. While researching the history of the famous Santa Monica beach playground, Devienne was struck by how little historians had paid attention to muscularity in the postwar period. When did Americans start caring about looking “ripped”? When did muscles become respectable? Few scholars had sought to answer these questions and Muscle Beach provided an ideal case study to delve into them.

In her next project, a social history of the Spring Break phenomenon, Elsa Devienne plans to continue researching the history of the modern body and the role of Southern California in influencing western beauty ideals.



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY RESEARCH NOTE: THE VISUAL HISTORY OF JAZZ AND SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH IN LOS ANGELES

The Tom & Ethel Bradley Center collects, preserves, and disseminates the visual history of Southern California, with an emphasis on ethnic minority communities. The images in the Bradley Center have been used in books, documentaries, films, and exhibitions across the country. Recently, two of the collections have been featured in articles in the *Southern California Quarterly*, Dr. Satya Satya-Murti and Jennifer Gutierrez's "Addressing the Social Determinants of Health: A Los Angeles Community Center's Narrative from 1913 to 1925," and Alan Ainsworth's "'A Private Passion': The Jazz Photography of Bob Douglas."

The Plaza Methodist Church and Community Center (PMC) collection is the oldest photographic collection deposited in the Bradley Center. The photographs were taken between the 1910s and 1950s. Most of the images document the area around Olvera Street and the Plaza, the birthplace of Los Angeles. The Plaza Community Center included the chapel and various social service offices, a dental and medical clinic, and the first Goodwill Industries store in Los Angeles.

The PMC collection proves that the importance of archival work can never be anticipated or underestimated by the collection creator, collection managers, or researchers. Dr. Satya-Murti is a neurologist, so we were not sure what he had in mind when he con-

tacted Jennifer Gutierrez, executive director of the Plaza Methodist Church's Museum of Social Justice about using the PMC images. We had no idea that his research would uncover just how significant and progressive the members of a small church on the Plaza could be during the 1910s.

Dr. Satya-Murti and Gutierrez's article, "Addressing the Social Determinants of Health: A Los Angeles Community Center's Narrative from 1913 to 1925," uses those images to bridge the past and the present to enlighten the reader and proves the old adage that "history repeats itself." "Addressing the Social Determinants of Health" has a place for both an academic and non-academic audience. Using the



PMC images housed at the Tom & Ethel Bradley Center at California State University, Northridge, the article effectively demonstrates how the Plaza Community Center's healthcare program merged with social caring and provided a twentieth century blueprint for health issues that continue into the twenty first century.

The Tom & Ethel Bradley Center African American Collection has nearly one million images taken by African American photographers based in Los Angeles. They document the social, cultural, and political aspects of African American life in post-war Los Angeles and Southern California. Presented are nationally significant themes such as racial segregation and discrimination, the civil rights movement, African American entertainment and cultural leaders, and major political and cultural events.

Thanks to a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to digitize 17,000 images in the African American collection, the images have exposure across the globe. The Bradley Center has a rich collection of the visual history of the music scene in post World War II Los Angeles, which attracted the attention of author Alan Ainsworth. When Alan reached out to the Bradley Center from across the Atlantic Ocean from Great Britain looking for materials for his book about jazz photography, we knew it was a

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WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS



Margie Brown-Coronel is an Assistant Professor in the History Department at CSU Fullerton. She received her Ph.D. from UC Irvine. The Winter 2020 issue of the *Pacific Historical Review* will include her article, "Intimacy and Family in the California Borderlands: The letters of Josefa del Valle Forster, 1876-1896."

Peter Sebastian Chesney is a Ph.D. candidate at UCLA. His dissertation is titled *To Live and Drive in L.A.: Race and Sensations of a Cold War City*.



PRESIDENT'S COLUMN CONTINUED

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sique in Postwar America, 1940s-1980s," appeared in the Fall 2018 issue. The selection committee also awarded an Honorable Mention to David J. Neumann, for his article, "A Respectable Militancy: Reverend J. Raymond Henderson and the Civil Rights Struggle in Los Angeles, 1941-1963," which appeared in the Winter 2018 issue of the *Quarterly*. The Francis Wheat Award, for the best demonstration of scholarship in the *Southern California Quarterly* by an established historian, is now given in even years.

Next, I would like to thank our outgoing board members and welcome the new additions to the Board. Many, many thanks to Ken Marcus for over a decade of service, beginning as a Board Member in 2008 and later serving as President of the Society from 2014 to 2017. Ken led the Society through the move from the Lumis House and onto firm financial and organizational footing. And

much gratitude to Linda Mollno, who served alongside Ken also beginning in 2008, and Jeremiah (Jem) Axelrod, who joined the Board in 2016. Linda was also instrumental in helping to put the Society on firmer organizational footing, and Jem facilitated Society programs held in conjunction with the Institute for the Study of Los Angeles at Occidental College. We will miss all three but will no doubt reach out to them for their rich institutional history as we forge ahead.

We would also like to thank our inaugural graduate student board members, Kristen Hayashi and Will Cowan, who are leaving the board after three years of service for precisely the reason we like to see: Kristen recently completed her Ph.D. at UC Riverside and Will will soon file his dissertation at USC. Both Kristen and Will went above and beyond the expectations we had for graduate student members, confirming that the wisdom of opening board members to rising scholars. Kristen

was instrumental in assisting with the deaccessioning of the Society's archival collection, and Will's service included bringing a knowledge of cutting-edge scholarship to our book publishing grant committee.

Finally, I would like to welcome two new board members. Assistant Professor Margie Brown-Coronel joins us from Cal State Fullerton, providing a long sought-after board connection to Orange County. Margie holds a Ph.D. from UC Irvine, where she studied under Vicki Ruiz, and is a specialist in 19th century borderlands and public history. And Peter Cheney joins us as our new graduate student board member. Peter is working on a Ph.D. at UCLA under the direction of Eric Avila and Steve Aron, focusing on the history of Southern California and public history. We look forward to the expertise that both Margie and Peter will bring to the HSSC Board of Directors.

RESEARCH NOTE CONTINUED



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great opportunity for the photographers and their images to be included in something special. During his first research trip to Los Angeles, Ainsworth realized the Bradley Center contained the work of some very talented and dedicated photographers.

Ainsworth's decision to write an article on the Jazz photography of Bob Douglas is a perfect example of the commitment and dedication of the photographers whose works are in the Bradley. Ainsworth does a remarkable

job of condensing Douglas's fifty years as a photographer into less than fifty pages of text and images. He includes biographical details supported by the sensitive images captured by Douglas of Jazz legends such as Billie Holiday, Charlie "Bird" Parker, and Dizzy Gillespie. Ainsworth does not ignore or overlook the fact that as a Black photographer working during the mid-twentieth century Douglas encountered many race-based challenges. In Ainsworth's analysis of Douglas as a photographer I believe his most important observation is how Douglas's "rapport with the musicians and his sensitivity to their music is an important contribution to the history of both jazz and photography."

The articles written by Dr. Satya Satya-Murti and Jennifer Gutierrez on the Plaza Community Center and Alan Ainsworth on the Jazz photography of Bob Douglas are significant contributions to their perspective fields of research. The creators of these collections have long since departed this earth, but the Bradley Center's level of commitment to preserve and make them available to the public continues in their memory.

-By Keith Rice (pictured below)
Historian/ Archivist, Tom & Ethel Bradley Center and President, Board of Directors Museum of Social Justice



The Historical Society of Southern California publishes the *Southern California Quarterly* four times a year through University of California Press. *The Quarterly* carries forward the tradition of fine regional history scholarship begun with the Society's first annual publication in 1884.

The *Quarterly* is a scholarly journal devoted to the publication of articles and edited documents relating to the history of the Southern California, California as a whole, and the American West. The *Quarterly* welcomes contributions, not only by Society members, scholars, and research workers, but also by persons who are working in related disciplines and professions.

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Issue 3

“Sea Otter Hunting and Conservation in Southern California Since the Gold Rush” by Richard Ravalli And Michael C. McGrann

“The 1942 Santa Anita Detainment Center Labor Strike and Japanese American Incarceration During World War II” by Stephanie Hinnershitz

“‘A Private Passion’: The Jazz Photography of Bob Douglas” by Alan John Ainsworth

Issue 4

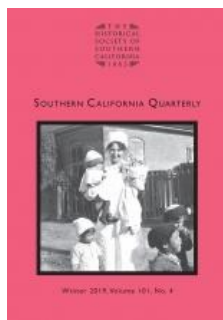
“Addressing the Social Determinants of Health: A Los Angeles Community Center’s Narrative from 1913 to 1925” by Saty Satya-Murti and Jennifer Gutierrez

“‘We Were Involved with the Club’: Louisiana Creole Social Clubs, Los Angeles, and the Great Migration” by Faustina M. DuCros

“Coming Home to The Brady Bunch: In Search of Latina/o Identity” by Miroslava Chávez-García

Telephone
 323-222-0546
 Website:
 thehssc.org

Email:
 hssc@thehssc.org



HSSH
 PO Box 50019
 Long Beach, CA 90815