

CLEMENTS CENTER FOR  
SOUTHWEST STUDIES  
SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

You are invited to the Brown Bag Lecture Series

Wednesday, November 16, 2011  
12 noon to 1 pm  
Texana Room, DeGolyer Library  
6404 Hyer Lane & McFarlin Blvd.

***"Bury My Hero at Wounded Knee:  
Gender, Race, and Historical Practice in the Long 1970s"***

**Susan Lee Johnson**

**Clements Center Research Fellow for the Study of Southwestern America , 2011-2012**



Focusing on two amateur but published historians, Quantrille McClung and Bernice Blackwelder, this talk maps relationships between women historians and male historical subjects and between professional and nonprofessional U.S. western historians during the long 1970s. Both women had published books about Christopher “Kit” Carson in the 60s, and they continued to work on Carson and other iconic westerners through the 70s. But they did so at a key historical moment: when social movements for racial and gender justice shook historical practice to its core and when academics began to eclipse buffs in the field of western history. As a result of activism among racialized residents of the West, exemplified by the Indian occupation of Wounded Knee, agents of empire like Carson fell from grace, and defenders and detractors fought pitched battles over his memory. The talk follows local Indigenous and *hispano* activists in New Mexico and Colorado as well as western historians both inside and outside academia as they clashed over Carson and his ilk, and it examines how McClung and Blackwelder responded to such shifting

assessments. It also suggests the reciprocal relationship between Blackwelder and McClung’s quotidian lives and their historical practice—both were aging white women subsisting on limited incomes in urban neighborhoods transformed by human migration and capital flows, and their twentieth-century city lives can’t be separated from their nineteenth-century hinterland passions. Theirs was a traffic in men.

Susan Lee Johnson is a professor in the department of history at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and received her PhD in history from Yale University. She is spending the fall semester at SMU as a Clements Center Fellow for the Study of Southwestern American completing her book manuscript, *A Traffic in Men: The Old Maid, the Housewife, and Their Great Westerner*, for publication.

*Image: Tombstone found in Kit Carson Park Memorial Cemetery, Taos, New Mexico.*

For more information or if you need special accommodations,  
please contact [swcenter@smu.edu](mailto:swcenter@smu.edu) or 214-768-3684.



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