Why did a group of South African Boers form a colony in Chihuahua and New Mexico after 1903? Far from a mere quirk of history, in this talk Andrew Offenburger argues that the development of this colony reveals how, between 1880 and 1910, the U.S.-Mexican borderlands formed part of a global network of “imperial Western frontiers.” These regions were shaped by similar processes and influenced by the forces of capitalist development, race, labor, social Darwinism, indigeneity, and, particular to this era, a romancing of the frontier.

Image: Boer veterans reenacting their surrender during the South African War at the 1904 St. Louis World’s Fair.