

Leland K. Turner, PhD
Associate Professor of History
MSU Texas
(940) 397-4014
leland.turner@msutexas.edu

WRITTEN CURRICULA VITA

Leland Turner is an Associate Professor of History at Midwestern State University. He specializes in the history of the American West, Texas, Australia, and cattle ranching cultures. He holds a BA from the University of Tulsa and the PhD in History from Texas Tech University where he studied under Paul H. Carlson. Carlson is one of the leading scholars of West Texas and ranching in the region. He also wrote *Plains Indians*, a significant contribution American Indian History. Thus Turner's academic training makes him well suited to tackle the courses which he teaches at MSU Texas.

RESEARCH

The bulk of Turner's research considers the livestock industry and attendant themes such as arid land environments, the diffusion of agricultural science and technology, the influence of cattle raisers associations, the popular culture surrounding the mythical cowboy. He has recently launched a larger project – *The Ranch in the History of Texas*. The project is meant to be a geographical and historical survey of ranching in the Lone Star state and why the icons and imagery of the cowboy, are so closely associated.

Turner has published several peer-reviewed articles about cattle raisers in Texas and endeavors to change the manner in which ranchers are seen as rugged individuals building empires on the challenging frontier. They were in fact business people who bound together and took collective action to improve their bottom line. In particular they used the power of cattle

associations to influence political leaders in Washington and across the American West. Murdo Mackenzie, a Scottish estate manager who came to the United States in 1885, was quite active in both the Texas association and the national as well. His association with President Theodore Roosevelt proved productive. Roosevelt fancied himself a cowboy assisted the “Livestock Lobby” in getting legislation in their favor, particularly concerning the railroads and the Beef Trust. In addition to his Livestock Lobby article in the Panhandle-Plains Historical Review, he is also working on a book titled “CEO on the Range: Murdo Mackenzie – International Cattleman.”

In addition to the Mackenzie project Turner is also working on a book-length comparative study of Queensland Australia and Texas with a particular consideration of cultural influence on cattle production. British culture has long held sway in Australia. With American influence in the 20th century Australians who had endeavored to produce proper British cattle began to embrace American crossbreeds. With introduction of the Sana Gertrudis a breed developed by the legendary King Ranch, Australian attitudes began to change. A 2007 Fulbright Fellowship to Australia allowed Turner to consider the international effect of American ranching culture through a transnational study of the cattle cultures and economies in Queensland, Australia and Texas. The resulting manuscript is “Outback by Southwest: King Ranch Cattle in the Australian Grasslands.” Nonetheless, Turner’s interest in cultural history has led him down the road of popular culture. His experience with live country music in Australia stirred his interest in another comparative study of the U.S. and Australia.

TEACHING

When Turner joined the MSU Texas history department the undergraduate research initiative EURECA had just launched. In that first year Turner also worked grad students doing important work. He has always encouraged students to new and important work. Even introductory survey course have at least a small element of research.

Turner teaches both U.S. survey courses, the American West, American Indian, and Texas history and has supervised both undergraduate and graduate study in those fields. To date Turner has supervised six successful Masters of Arts students. He has also supervised four EURECA undergraduate research projects. At least on undergraduate had his study of the relationship between Quanah Parker and Samuel Burk Burnett published in the west Texas Historical Review.

Furthermore, Turner, while not a digital native has not shied away from digital learning and online teaching. He was the MSU Advisor for a COPLAC Digital America Seminar, "Wichita Falls at War: The Great War on the Homefront." Joseph Hadwal and Laura Galbraith were the MSU undergraduate investigators. He also participated in the COPLAC Digital Distance Seminar "Cultural Crossroads: Migration and Community Transformation," The course was offered in the Fall 2017 Semester. COPLAC digital courses are multi-campus, team taught, distance mentoring in the liberal arts. Moreover student teams of two from any COPLAC institution may apply to the course.

When Turner arrived at MSU Texas only one history faculty member taught online courses. When asked he willingly accepted the challenge and has taught online courses ever since. Moreover he has introduced an online element in all to introduce a line communication, make more documents and primary sources, and provide students a more convenient way to track their progress.

I have introduced new courses to give students more options in their studies. In particular, I developed the American Indian course which has been popular with students. I also developed two geography courses mainly for the benefit of social studies students. And finally I developed an online section of Texas History with a graduate option.

SERVICE

Turner is a long-standing member of the University Core curriculum committee and has not ignored the importance of service to the university. He has previously served on the University Assessment Committee, the EURECA Assessment Team, The Council of Undergraduate Research High Impact Practices Research Workshop “Integrating Faculty Workload into Undergraduate Research,” Within the MSU Texas history department Turner served as the Assessment Coordinator for nine years, wrote various Core Curriculum proposals, advisor and co-advisor of the history honor society. And he served on hiring committees and an Internet Instruction committee.

Turner’s service extends to the historical profession as well. He served on the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Field of Study Advisory committee, has been Vice President of the Australia New Zealand Studies Association, he is serving his third term of the West Texas Historical Board of Directors, and has served on various program and conference host committees.

And Turner doesn’t forget his local community. He served as a board member three years at the Museum of North Texas History and two as board president and coordinated two Quanah Parker exhibits at the museum. Finally, for the last ten years he has held together a local group of historical professional, buffs, and the Wichita Falls chapter of Westerners International

promotes the study and publication of all things pertaining to the history of Texas and the
American West