

NEWS RELEASE

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PROFESSOR AND OAH DISTINGUISHED LECTURER TO SPEAK ON THOMAS JEFFERSON'S LOVERS

LAWRENCE— Virginia Scharff, Distinguished Professor of History at the University of New Mexico, and Director of the Center for the Study of the Southwest, will speak at the Lied Center Pavilion on "The Women Jefferson Loved." The talk is at 7:30 p.m. Monday, February 6, and is free and open to the public. The event is sponsored by the Hall Center for the Humanities and is co-sponsored by the Hall Center's Gender Seminar.

Scharff's lecture stems from her critically acclaimed book of the same title. The book reveals how Jefferson's love of women shaped his ideas, achievements, and legacies. Her historical narrative also puts Jefferson's free and slave families into the same story, offering readers a more expansive understanding of his legacy. The book was named a *New York Times* "Editors Choice."

Scharff served as co-curator of "Home Lands: How Women Made the West," an exhibition sponsored by the Autry National Center, which opened in Los Angeles at the Autry in April 2010. It traveled to the Missouri History Center, the Museum of New Mexico, and the Gilcrease Museum. She is also a Fellow of the Society of American Historians and served as President of the Western History Association in 2008.

Her scholarly publications include *Taking the Wheel: Women and the Coming of the Motor Age* (1991); *Twenty Thousand Roads: Women, Movement, and the West* (2003), and the edited volume, *Seeing Nature Through Gender* (2003). Her writing extends beyond her historical scholarship, including four mystery suspense novels written under the name of Virginia Swift: *Brown-Eyed Girl* (2000), *Bad Company* (2002), *Bye, Bye, Love* (2004), and *Hello, Stranger* (2006).

Scharff is an Organization of American Historians Distinguished Lecturer. The OAH promotes excellence in the scholarship, teaching, and presentation of American history, and encourages wide discussion of historical questions and equitable treatment of all practitioners of history.

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