

# Delve Deeper into "The Last Conquistador"

A film by John J. Valadez & Cristina Ibarra

This multi-media resource list, compiled by Shaun Briley of the San Diego Public Library, provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the upcoming P.O.V. documentary "The Last Conquistador" that premieres on July 15th, 2008 at 10 PM (check local listings at [www.pbs.org/pov/](http://www.pbs.org/pov/)).

Renowned sculptor John Houser has a dream: to build the world's tallest bronze equestrian statue for the city of El Paso, Texas. He envisions a stunning monument to the Spanish conquistador Juan de Oñate that will pay tribute to the contributions Hispanic people made to building the American West. But as the project nears completion troubles arise. Native Americans are outraged — they remember Oñate as the man who brought genocide to their land and sold their children into slavery. As El Paso divides along lines of race and class in "The Last Conquistador," the artist must face the moral implications of his work. A co-production of Independent Television Service (ITVS). A co-presentation of Latino Public Broadcasting, Native American Public Telecommunications and KERA Dallas/Fort Worth.

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## ADULT NONFICTION

**Campbell, Randolph B.** *Gone to Texas: A History of the Lone Star State.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2004. Campbell, a leading historian, discusses the history of Texas, encompassing dealings with Mexico, African-Americans, and the native tribes all intertwined.

**Fehrenbach, T.R.** *Lone Star.* New York: eReads, 2004. Fehrenbach, a native Texan, describes the history of his home state and the events that give Texas its unique character.

**James, H.L.** *Acoma: The People of the White Rock.* Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 1997. Acoma mesa pueblo, located 65 miles west of Albuquerque, is said to be one of the oldest continuously inhabited communities on the North American continent. This book discusses the Acoma people and their history.

**John, Elizabeth Ann Harper.** *Storms Brewed in Other Men's Worlds: The Confrontation of Indians, Spanish, and French in the Southwest, 1540-1795.* Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996. John describes the Spanish, the French, and American colonization spanning from the Red River to the Colorado Plateau.

**Kammen, Michael.** *Visual Shock: A History of Art Controversies in American Culture.* New York: Vintage, 2007. Pulitzer Prize winner Kammen examines how particular pieces of public art in America's history have sparked controversy and the value of these debates.

**Kessell, John L.** *Spain in the Southwest: A Narrative History of Colonial New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, and California.* Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003. Kessell covers 350 years of the history of the Southwest.

**Mangan, Frank.** *El Paso in Pictures.* Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 2007. First published in 1971, *El Paso in Pictures* takes the reader through the history of El Paso first with woodcuts and drawings and then photographs up through 1970s. These include some rare photos of the Mexican Revolution.

**Metz, Leon C.** *Turning Points in El Paso.* El Paso: Mangan Books, 1985. Metz gives an overview of the history of El Paso in this short 128- page book.

**Minge, Ward Alan.** *Acoma: Pueblo in the Sky.* Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1991. A history of the Acoma Indians.

**Powell, Philip Wayne.** *Tree of Hate: Propaganda and Prejudices Affecting United States Relations with the Hispanic World.* Vallecito, CA: Ross House Books, 1985. An examination of "the Black Legend" — the belief that the Spanish conquistadors were the most brutal of the European colonizers in their conquest of the Americas.

**Riley, Carroll L.** *Rio del Norte: People of the Upper Rio Grande from the Earliest Times to the Pueblo Revolt.* Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1995. A book about Pueblo Indian culture and history.

**Roberts, David.** *The Pueblo Revolt: The Secret Rebellion That Drove the Spaniards Out of the Southwest.* New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004. Roberts describes the Pueblo revolt of 1680, which resulted in a decade of independence before the Spanish reasserted dominion over the area.

**Schama, Simon.** *The Power of Art.* New York: Ecco, 2006. Schama follows eight artists who created their masterpieces against a backdrop of personal and professional distress.

**Simmons, Marc.** *The Last Conquistador, Juan de Oñate and the Settling of the Far Southwest.* Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1991. The most authoritative work on Oñate.

**Spivey, Nigel.** *How Art Made the World: A Journey to the Origins of Human Creativity.* New York: Basic Books, 2005. This book, which accompanies the PBS miniseries of the same name, is an introduction to art history.

**Sturtevant, William C., ed.** *Southwest, Volume 9, Handbook of North American Indians.* Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1979. An invaluable resource for anyone interested in Southwestern Culture.

**Weber, David J.** *The Spanish Frontier in North America.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994. This book describes the impact of Spanish colonization on Native Americans in the Southwest from 1513 to 1821.

**Perez de Villagra, Gaspar.** *History of New Mexico.* Alcalá, 1610. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2004. This epic poem was written by one of Oñate's senior captains during the conquest of New Mexico. Considered one of the New World's first major works of literature, it includes an account on the revolt and the punishment of Acoma. It also describes the hopes and fears



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of the other Spaniards on the expedition.

**Simmons, Marc.** *New Mexico: An Interpretive History.*

**Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1977.** The cultural mosaic of New Mexico is historically contextualized into a nuanced look at America's 47th state. Spanning pre-Columbian times up to the modern day, Simmons sets out to arrive at an understanding of the state's character. His is an interpretive, sensitive, individual—even personal—account. He shows that across the centuries the collision and mingling of cultures dominates New Mexico's history. Out of this complex interplay of human and natural forces he selects his examples of Pueblo life ways, Spanish domination, and Anglo control to make immediate and memorable the state's rich history.

**Jaramillo, Nash.** *The Conquest of New Mexico: Don Juan de Oñate, 1595-1608.* **N. Jaramillo, 1983.** Important resource that describes Oñate's time as governor of New Mexico. Includes the Acoma Tribe's 1598 revolt, Oñate's retaliatory response and his ultimate recall to Mexico City in 1606, where he was called to answer for his actions. Addresses specifically the different strains of collective memory and its impact on present day New Mexico.

**McGeagh, Robert.** *Juan De Oñate's Colony in the Wilderness: An Early History of the American Southwest.* **Santa Fe: Sunstone Press, 1990.** By 1598, Juan de Oñate had established the first permanent settlement in the American Southwest, twenty-two years before the Pilgrims founded Plymouth Colony. The story of this first colony, the explorations, the defeats and successes, the hopes blighted and the hopes fulfilled are told in this concise history of the era.

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## ADULT FICTION

**Encinias, Miguel.** *Two Lives for Oñate.* **Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997.** A fictionalized historical account of the life of Juan de Oñate (1549 to 1624), the founding of Spanish New Mexico, and Oñate's relationship with his son Cristóbal.

**Harrigan, Lana M.** *Ácoma : A Novel of Conquest.* **New York: Forge Books, 1999.** Harrigan writes a historical romance based on the Spanish conquest of New Mexico. She describes the amputation of the feet of the Acoma Indian males that the film, *The Last Conquistador*, talks about.

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## NONFICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

**Ancona, George.** *Earth Daughter: Alicia of Acoma Pueblo.* **New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 1995.** Ancona describes the life of a little girl from the Acoma tribe in this photo-essay.

**Metz, Leon Claire.** *El Paso Chronicles: A Record of Historical Events in El Paso, Texas.* **El Paso, TX: Mangan Books, 1993.** Reading level: Ages 9-12. The history of El Paso for a younger audience.

**Hunt, Wolf Robe.** *The Dancing Horses of Acoma, and Other Acoma Indian Stories.* **Cleveland: World Pub. Co., 1963.** Folklore of the Acoma Indians.

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## FILMS/DOCUMENTARIES

**"How Art Made the World: How Humans Made Art and Art Made Us Human."** **BBC Warner, 2006.** **PBS miniseries. (290 minutes).** Generates public awareness about art history's relevance to contemporary culture.

**"Simon Schama's Power of Art."** **BBC Warner, 2007. (400 minutes).** The film is narrated by the author Schama and explores eight artists' creations using biography and historical context to understand their works.

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## ARTICLES

**Thompson, Ginger.** "As A Sculptor Takes Shape In Mexico, Opposition Takes Shape In The U.S." **The New York Times.** 17 January 2002.

The plans to erect a statue in honor of Don Juan de Oñate were met with opposition from the very beginning. John Houser said he was "thunderstruck" by the protests against the colossal statue of one of New Mexico's most controversial historical figures. The choice of Oñate was a divisive issue in New

Mexico and polarized much of El Paso along largely ethnic lines; Hispanics seeing him as an early figure in what would become a Hispanized region. Many Indian tribes however, view Oñate as a conqueror guilty of genocide, and liken him to a Nazi exterminating Jews. This article chronicles the first stirrings of an angry opposition to Houser's vision and puts Oñate, once again, in the spotlight.

**Blumenthal, Ralph.** "Still Many Months Away, El Paso's Giant Horseman Keeps Stirring Passions." **The New York Times.** 10 January, 2004.

In an 11-hour effort to reconcile opposing views related to statue of Don Juan de Oñate, the City Council of El Paso acted in posthaste to alter the final impact of what many believed to be the largest equestrian statue in the world and its corresponding controversy. This article highlights the final battles before the completion, placement and official title of the Oñate Statue.

