

Steinbeck and the Twenty-First Century:
Identity, Influence, and Impact

May 1-3, 2019

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Library
San José State University

Keynote Speakers

Susan Shillinglaw, San José State University

William Souder, Steinbeck Biographer

Conference Director

Nicholas P. Taylor, Director, Martha Heasley Cox Center for Steinbeck Studies

Conference Steering Committee

Cecilia Donohue, Madonna University (Retired)

Barbara A. Heavilin, Professor Emeritus, Taylor University

Kathleen Hicks, Grand Canyon University

Sponsored by the International Society of Steinbeck Scholars and *Steinbeck Review*

Wednesday, May 1

12:00PM - 12:45PM

Check-In and Lunch

Center for Steinbeck Studies, MLK Library 5th Floor

Welcome

Nicholas P. Taylor

Director, Martha Heasley Cox Center for Steinbeck Studies

1:00PM - 2:15PM (Concurrent Sessions)

Approaches to *The Grapes of Wrath*

Schiro Program Room, MLK Library 5th Floor

Mohamed Ben Ali Chaker

University of 20th August 1955, Skikda, Algeria

“Algerian Immigrants: Contemporary Joads”

Robin Provey

Western Connecticut State University

“Seeds of #MeToo Movement Planted under the Orange Trees in *The Grapes of Wrath*”

Approaches to *East of Eden*

Cultural Heritage Center, MLK Library 5th Floor

Jennifer Ren

Houston Baptist University

“Disappearing Out of Existence: An Examination of Identity in *East of Eden*”

Carter Johnson

Virginia Military Institute

“*East of Eden*: Steinbeck's Monomyth”

2:30PM - 3:45PM

Steinbeck and Millennials

Schiro Program Room, MLK Library 5th Floor

Lori Newcomb

Wayne State College

“Planting a Seed: Steinbeck's Challenge to Millennials”

Ryder Miller

Independent Scholar
"John Steinbeck and Genre Fiction"

4:00PM - 6:00PM

Film Screening: *The Bikes of Wrath*
Schiro Program Room, MLK Library 5th Floor

In this 2018 documentary film, five Australians attempt to cycle 2600 kilometers from Oklahoma to California in honor of the westward migration undertaken by the Joad family in Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*. Through chance encounters with everyday Americans, the cyclists expand on the novel's core themes of migration, inequality and the perceived land of opportunity. The group explores whether America has progressed since the book was written, discussing the wealth gap, immigration and the American Dream.

*The screening will be followed by a Q&A with director **Charlie Turnbull**.*

7:00PM - 8:30PM

Steinbeck Fellows Reading
Center for Steinbeck Studies, MLK Library 5th Floor

Join us for a reading of new fiction by three of the 2018-2019 Steinbeck Fellows in Creative Writing. These fellowships are awarded annually by the Center for Steinbeck Studies to emerging writers of exceptional promise. This event is free and open to the public. Reception to follow.

Thursday, May 2

8:00AM - 9:00AM

Continental Breakfast

Center for Steinbeck Studies, MLK Library 5th Floor

9:00AM - 10:15AM (Concurrent Sessions)

Reading Steinbeck Politically (or Not)

Schiro Program Room, MLK Library 5th Floor

Naama Cohen

Tel Aviv University

“Of Charismatic Radicals and Anarchists: James Franco's *In Dubious Battle* and the Disavowal of Steinbeck's Politics”

Danica Čerče

University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts

“John Steinbeck on East European Markets”

Barbara Heavilin

Taylor University (emeritus)

“whose light burns clear’: Musings on John Steinbeck, America, and Light”

Tracing Steinbeck's Legacy in the US and Abroad

Cultural Heritage Center, MLK Library 5th Floor

Mohamed Ben Ali Chaker

University of 20th August 1955, Skikda, Algeria

“The Influence of John Steinbeck on Algerian Culture”

Kotaro Nakagaki

Senshu University, Japan

“Souls of People: Steinbeck's Cultural Legacy in Japanese Popular Culture”

Cecilia Donohue

Madonna University (retired)

“From ‘Beach Read’ to Ethnic Urban Drama: John Steinbeck's Imprint on the Twenty-First Century Novel”

10:30AM - 11:45PM

Keynote Address

Schiro Program Room, MLK Library 5th Floor

William Souder is the author of the first major Steinbeck biography in 25 years, *Mad at the World* (Norton, 2020). He is the author of three previous books: *A Plague of Frogs* (2000) followed the investigation of outbreaks of deformed frogs across North America. *Under a Wild Sky*, a 2004 biography of John James Audubon, won numerous awards and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. *On a Farther Shore: The Life and Legacy of Rachel Carson*, was published by Crown in September 2012 on the 50th anniversary of Carson's *Silent Spring*. It was a *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year, and was named one of the 25 Best Nonfiction Books of 2012 by Kirkus Reviews. Mr. Souder lives in Grant, Minnesota.

Mr. Souder's talk is sponsored by the SJSU College of Humanities & the Arts and the exhibition "The Art of Biography," currently on display in the 5th Floor Special Collections Gallery.

12:00PM - 1:30PM

Banquet Luncheon and Address

Center for Steinbeck Studies, MLK Library 5th Floor

Susan Shillinglaw is Professor of English at San José State University. For 18 years she directed the Martha Heasley Cox Center for Steinbeck Studies at SJSU and more recently served as Director of the National Steinbeck Center in Salinas. She has published several books on Steinbeck, including *Carol and John Steinbeck: Portrait of a Marriage* (University of Nevada Press, 2013), *On Reading The Grapes of Wrath* (Penguin, 2014), and *A Journey into Steinbeck's California* (2006, rev. 2011). She also wrote the introductions to the Penguin editions of Steinbeck's *Cannery Row*, *Of Mice and Men*, *A Russian Journal* and *The Winter of Our Discontent*.

1:45PM - 3:00PM (Concurrent Sessions)

Digital Steinbeck

Schiro Program Room, MLK Library 5th Floor

David Wrobel

University of Oklahoma

"Teaching *The Grapes of Wrath* in the Digital Humanities Age"

Peter Van Coutren

San José State University

"The Cox-Manville Online Steinbeck Bibliography"

Marisa Plumb

San José State University

"Digital Humanities Possibilities for Steinbeck Studies"

Ethnicity in Steinbeck's Life and Work

Cultural Heritage Center, MLK Library 5th Floor

Noelle Brada-Williams

San José State University

"A Great and Lasting Story': Steinbeck's Representations of Ethnic Identity"

Kevin Hearle

Independent Scholar

"If There Was Any Color Prejudice in Salinas...': Constructions of Race in Steinbeck's Hometown

3:15PM - 4:30PM (Concurrent Sessions)

Steinbeck's Women

Schiro Program Room, MLK Library 5th Floor

Bruce Lawson

Independent Scholar and Publisher

"The Forgotten Wife"

Audry Lynch

Independent Scholar

"Steinbeck and His Women"

Steinbeck's California

Cultural Heritage Center, MLK Library 5th Floor

Brett Shanley

Columbia University

"Steinbeck & Californian-ness in the 21st Century"

Donald Kohrs

Harold A. Miller Library, Hopkins Marine Station, Stanford University

"John Steinbeck's Progressive California"

Friday, May 3

8:00AM - 9:00AM

Continental Breakfast

Center for Steinbeck Studies, MLK Library 5th Floor

9:00AM - 10:15AM

Migrants and Immigrants

Schiro Program Room, MLK Library 5th Floor

James “Jake” Torrie

Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario

“Sources of Solidarity: Tom Joad, Bare Life, and the Displaced Person”

Debra Cumberland

Winona State University

“My Mother and Donald Trump”

Mimi Gladstein

University of Texas at El Paso

“Business and Migration: As Relevant Today As in Steinbeck's Time”

10:30AM - 11:45AM (Concurrent Sessions)

Steinbeck and Human Ecology

Schiro Program Room, MLK Library 5th Floor

Gerard Kuperus

University of San Francisco

“Steinbeck as Environmental Philosopher: Providing Hope in the Anthropocene”

Christopher Bowman

University of Minnesota

“‘The Western Land, Nervous’: An Ecocritical Reading of *The Grapes of Wrath* in a Time of Climate Change”

Jim Kent

Independent Scholar

“John Steinbeck: The First Social Ecologist”

Comparison and Contrast

Cultural Heritage Center, MLK Library 5th Floor

Elisabeth Bayley

Loyola University Chicago

“A Comparative Exploration of John Steinbeck's ‘The Chrysanthemums’ and *The Pearl*”

Kiyoshi Yamauchi

Niimi University

“John Steinbeck and Saul Bellow: Influences and Impacts on Each Other”

Aya Kubota

Bunka Gakuen University

“Novelists as Teachers: Educational Factors of Steinbeck and Achebe”

12:00PM - 8:00PM

Tour of Steinbeck’s Salinas with Professor Susan Shillinglaw

Itinerary:

- Red Pony Ranch
- Steinbeck’s gravesite
- Walk along Main Street Salinas
- National Steinbeck Center
- Dinner at Steinbeck House

The bus will leave SJSU at 12pm and will return at approximately 8pm. Dinner at the Steinbeck House costs \$35 and includes starter, main course, dessert, and wine.

OR

12:00PM - 1:30PM

International Society of Steinbeck Scholars Leadership Lunch