The United States' Mexican population has come to the forefront of public and academic exchanges amidst the past two presidential campaigns and ensuing political debates regarding immigration policy and border security. Yet, these discussions consistently neglect Mexicans' long-term history in what is now the United States, along with their enduring social influence throughout the nation. A prime example of this neglected history is the ethnic Mexican past of the Southern Great Plains, a vast transregional grassland larger than California that stretches from southeastern Colorado and southwestern Kansas, down across eastern New Mexico and western Oklahoma to central Texas.

Using manuscript materials, personal papers, hundreds of archived and original oral histories, combined with art, photographs, print media, archeological studies, songs, and folklore, this research follows the physical, economic, cultural, and even emotional connections ethnic Mexicans have long had with the plains. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Mexican people crossed ethnic and national borders and exchanged goods, gifts, captives, and bloodlines with Indigenous plains peoples. Moreover, Mexicans hunted bison and grazed livestock on the plains. They formed their foodways and various parts of their folk culture via the plains. When the U.S. Army dispossessed Southern Plains tribes of their territory in the 1870s, ethnic Mexicans from New Mexico were among the first to establish communities deep in the region. Then, throughout the twentieth century, Mexicans became the laboring class of much of the Southern Plains. Overall, this research counters the depiction of Mexicans as recent arrivals to the United States and asserts their long-term presence beyond the Southwest.

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**This is a hybrid event that will be held in person at the Latin American and Iberian Institute (801 Yale Blvd NE) and via Zoom. Please register here if you would like to attend via Zoom.**