

## Acknowledgments

The genesis of this volume illustrates how scholars benefit from reaching beyond their expertise, from thinking together, and from teaching. The summer before I started my first faculty appointment at Southern Methodist University, my dissertation advisor, David D. Hall, gave me a collection of essays about consumption in eighteenth-century British North America (*Of Consuming Interests: The Style of Life in the Eighteenth Century*), which, along with his good guidance about the early modern European world, led me to locate the origins of consumer culture in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, long before assembly lines, department stores, and slick-paper magazines. Thus the undergraduate course on the history of consumer culture that I teach at SMU begins several centuries earlier than comparable courses at other institutions. Doing so has habituated me to seeing consumer culture in places that have been overlooked (one-room dwellings) or characterized only as “material culture” (native American communities).

At the same time as I developed my approach to the history of consumer culture, my association with the Clements Center at SMU as a member of its Executive Board, particularly my good fortune in getting to know many of its fellows, including the inestimable Raul Ramos, Flannery Burke, and Sam Truett, piqued my scholarly interest in the borderlands. So, when David Weber and Sherry Smith agreed to fund a Clements Center Symposium under my aegis, investigating consumer culture in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands seemed particularly appealing. That so many scholars responded to the open call for papers confirmed my sense that there was indeed

something to this subject other than my own effort to bring various interests together under one rubric.

It is thus natural that I would be as grateful as I am for the assistance of several different academic units at SMU and to colleagues at SMU and elsewhere. I deeply appreciate the Clements Center's logistical and financial support: it paid for and took care of the many logistics associated with meetings in Taos and Dallas during the 2005–6 academic year. The Center also subvented the publication of this volume; while SMU's Clements Department of History contributed to the expenses associated with illustrating the volume; and SMU's Dedman College provided me with a semester's leave during which I edited the volume's marvelous essays and finished writing my own contributions. The department's secretary, Sharron Pierson, was so helpful during critical moments of the book's production, and the Clements Center's dynamic duo—Andrea Boardman and Ruth Ann Elmore—did much of the hard work associated with bringing me and the contributors together for two very productive meetings. Russell Martin, director of SMU's DeGoyler Library, mounted a show about business in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands that coincided with a conference at which the volume's contributors presented their work. My gratitude extends to Howard Campbell, Josiah McC. Heyman, Mauricio Tenorio, Melissa Wright, and the two anonymous readers for Duke University Press: they read all the volume's essays with sharp eyes and then took the time to fashion useful suggestions for the contributors and me. Above all else, I am deeply grateful to the twelve contributors to this volume: they are wonderful scholars, generous interlocutors, and creative thinkers.

This volume showcases scholarly essays, but images are nearly as important as text in the volume as a whole. The contributors and I thank the many librarians who assisted us in our image hunts, the photographers who have allowed us to reproduce their depictions of the borderlands and consumer culture, and SMU's History Department, the Clements Center, and Duke University Press for making it financially possible to add a visual component to the volume. We are deeply grateful for the opportunity to so heavily illustrate an edited collection of essays. I want to thank my editor Valerie Millholland and her assistant Miriam Angress for accommodating the inclusion of so many illustrations. That they believed in the book made it possible for it to take what I hope is compelling form.

I have dedicated *Land of Necessity* to my recently deceased father, Preston G. McCrossen, who would have loved every contribution and every contributor had he had the chance. He devoted his life to the notion that the economy

matters, not because it could lead to wealth for the few, but because if and when its fruits were equitably shared, it could foster cultural and social vitality. In this lifelong endeavor my father sat at the feet of his father, George McCrossen, a radical, an aesthete, as well as a businessman. With his wife Helen and brother Preston (my father's namesake), George was part of a migratory stream of Americans disaffected with machine civilization. They fled to the U.S. Southwest, a region that to them embodied the exotic, the foreign, and the forbidden. Cheap land made it possible for them to lead lives that seemed to them more authentic and more ethical than the lives of their counterparts in America's cities. They perhaps recognized that consumerism exercised as significant a power over the borderlands and its sojourners as it did on the residents of the cities they left behind, Detroit and New York City. After all, after a go at designing, producing and marketing handmade textiles, my grandfather ran a small advertising company with offices on Santa Fe's "Radio Plaza."

I thank my friend Amy Greenberg, my mother Macon McCrossen, and my husband Adam Herring for sharing a dream of a just and beautiful society with me and for inspiring much that constitutes my share of this volume. I am especially grateful to Adam for the innumerable ways that he has helped to bring this volume to fruition, including taking photographs of our favorite taco stand and an Omnilife storefront. Finally, my young daughter Annie Herring deserves more than a nod for enduring the indignity of being upstaged by "Mommy's book," for giving me a few pep talks as I worked on its many components, and for reminding me more than once that, in her words, "different people say different things."

*Alexis McCrossen*  
*Dallas, Texas*  
*October 2008*