The first impression of a traveler entering El Paso from the airport is now of a large statue of a conquistador on horseback, a statue inspired by Juan de Oñate. Although often cruel and violent in his methods, Oñate was without question a major figure in the history of New Mexico and the Spanish borderlands.

Why then has so much controversy developed around this statue? Why have many residents of the city been so bitterly opposed to it, while others have defended the statue as recognition of an important period in our history?

The symposium Memory and Monuments looks at these questions in a broader perspective, asking what it is that communities and nations choose to remember of their histories and how they choose to commemorate critical events and individuals.

Commemorating and Confronting History on the U.S.-Mexico Border

The Department of History
The Centennial Museum
Cordially invite you to attend a series of events

Thursday, February 22, 2007
5:30 p.m.
Undergraduate Learning Center, Room 106
“American History, Native Memories and Juan de Oñate”
Jennifer Nez Denetdale
Assistant Professor of History
University of New Mexico

6:30 p.m.
Centennial Museum
Opening Reception for the Exhibit
“Memory and Monuments: Statues and Murals in El Paso and Ciudad Juárez”

Friday, February 23, 2007
5:30 p.m.
Undergraduate Learning Center, Room 106
“Power, Resistance and Monuments”
Martha Norkunas
Lecturer, American Studies
The University of Texas at Austin

Saturday, February 24, 2007
10:00 a.m.
El Paso Natural Gas Conference Center
“Monuments of Conformity: Commemorating and Protesting Oñate on the Border”
Yolanda Chavez Leyva
Associate Professor of History
The University of Texas at El Paso

11:00 a.m.
El Paso Natural Gas Conference Center
“Who Should We Commemorate?: A Public Roundtable”

The University of Texas at El Paso