

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Texas Filmmakers Premiere New Documentary, *Alligator-Horses*

Film Reveals How Davy Crockett, Jim Crow And A Motley Crew Of Characters
Helped Shape A New American Frontier

“It shall never be said that I sat by in silence and refused to advocate their cause.”

*David Crockett, speaking to
the House of Representatives in 1829*

HOUSTON, TX – You have heard of Davy Crockett, “King of the Wild Frontier.” *Alligator-Horses* tells the story of David Crockett, the U.S. congressman who, years before his famous stand at the Alamo, campaigned against Andrew Jackson and fought for the cause of the poor in West Tennessee.

Alligator-Horses, a documentary film by Brian Huberman and Ed Hugetz, presents a vivid collage of stories and interviews with scholars and historians that reveal the 1830s as a pivotal decade in American history, when a growing underclass first began to struggle against the invisible grip of the “aristocracy” and emerging industrial capitalism.

Retracing Crockett’s political tour of the Northeast and examining the comic almanacs that first popularized him as an urban working class hero, the film recounts lesser known events from the “Age of Jackson,” including early labor strikes organized by women, the rise of the blackface minstrel show, anti-abolitionist riots in New York, and the scandalous murder of a prostitute that evolved into something like an O.J. Simpson trial of its time.

In our present decade, the “Occupy” movement speaks out against man-made forces that create income inequality and secure the status of the “1 percent.” *Alligator-Horses* argues such a division has been present in America for almost 200 years, since the time when the national identity was in the midst of an ornery, anarchistic adolescence.

This experimental documentary, 14 years in the making, may look at a small slice of the American story. But in its weave of past materials into the present, it gives us a larger scope through which to examine history—and, by extension, ourselves.

FILM INTERVIEWS INCLUDE: social historian **Eric Lott**; *New York Times* bestselling author **David Shields**; cultural critic and historian **Richard Slotkin**; professor emerita of History, American Culture, and Women's Studies, **Carroll Smith-Rosenberg**; historian, author and former New York firefighter **Capt. William Groneman**...and many more.

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Short summary for calendar listings:

Texas filmmakers Brian Huberman and Ed Hugetz premiere their latest collaborative work, *Alligator-Horses*, an epic documentary film about 1830s America. Through interviews with historians, scholars, artists and the filmmakers themselves, *Alligator-Horses* shows how lesser known vignettes from history (the murder of the prostitute Helen Jewett, Davy Crockett's political tour of the Northeast, etc.) played a key role in shaping America's national identity, and arguably continue to influence it today. *Film screening and reception: March 21, 6-10 p.m. Conference (featuring best-selling author David Shields and scholar Carroll Smith-Rosenberg): March 22, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. All events are free and open to the public. Location: Rice Media Center, Houston, TX. More info at brianhuberman.com*

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EVENT DETAILS

The premiere screening of *Alligator-Horses* will be complemented by a one-day conference, featuring guest speakers and discussion with the filmmakers.

DAY 1

***Alligator-Horses* Film Screening & Reception**

Friday, March 21, 2014

6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

Rice Media Center (on Rice University campus)

Enter campus at University Blvd. & Stockton Dr. Google map link: <http://goo.gl/maps/aFRbn>

Admission is free and open to the public

DAY 2

Conference: "Making Films About History: Specifically, the Role of Sex & Violence in 1830s America and Its Relationship to Race, Class and Nationalism"

Saturday, March 22, 2014

9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Rice Media Center (on Rice University campus)

Google map link: <http://goo.gl/maps/aFRbn>

Admission is free and open to the public

Saturday Conference Schedule

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.: Guest lectures from author David Shields and scholar Carroll Smith-Rosenberg

12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.: Lunch break

1:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.: Afternoon program includes David Shields, Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, the filmmakers and a panel of Rice faculty in discussion with the audience.

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ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

Brian Huberman, associate professor of film at Rice University, is a working filmmaker interested in American history, Western film, the myth of the frontier and its complicated heroes. His work has been screened internationally both on television and at festivals. Selected titles include *Citizen Provocateur: Ray Hill's Texas Prison Show*; *John Wayne's The Alamo*; and *Return of The Texas Chainsaw Massacre: The Documentary*. Selected production credits include director of photography for directors James Blue, Kim Henkel and Eagle Pennel.

Ed Hugetz is the Associate Vice Chancellor for Planning and University Outreach, UH System, and Associate Vice President of Planning and University Outreach for University of Houston. His background is in documentary filmmaking. His television series "The Territory," has enjoyed over three decades of showcasing experimental and documentary films. The series has been supported by the National Endowment for the Arts, the MacArthur Foundation, and others. Mr. Hugetz has also served as President of the Board of the Independent Television Service (ITVS) which supports documentaries produced for PBS.

Huberman and Ed Hugetz have been collaborating on film projects since the 1970s. Among others they have created *The De La Peña Diary* (2000), about the controversial written account authored by a Mexican citizen who may or may not have witnessed, first hand, the death of Davy Crockett at the Alamo; *To Put Away the Gods* (1983), about the Lacandon Maya Indians of Chiapas; and *Who Killed the Fourth Ward* (1978), which examines the price of progress when in an inner city neighborhood in Houston is gentrified.

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Image credit: Alligator-Horses poster design by Carlos Hernandez