



Gonzales: Come and Take It!

A documentary

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Press Kit

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I. Synopsis

On September 30, 1835, on the high ground bank of a flooded river, eighteen men stood defiant against an army of more than 100 Mexican *soldatos*. They alone stood in defense of the town's hopes of prosperity: a cannon. Mexico had given it to them, the Native Americans feared it, and now that Mexico had come back to retrieve it... they would not relent. Within days, reinforcements arrived and resolve increased. The stage was set for a battle that became a tinderbox for the Texas Revolution. This documentary examines the battle, and the background of the town of Gonzales, Texas. Through a combination of Scholar/Specialist interviews and historical reenactments, *Gonzales: Come and Take It!* strove to include the voices of *Texians*, *Tejanos*, and Mexican *Soldatos*. Filmed in locations ranging from Gonzales, Austin, San Antonio, Buda and Bourne with reenactors that participated in such films as Disney's *The Alamo*, this documentary educates as it entertains.

II. About the film

Inspired by the works of authors such as Dr. Randolph "Mike" Campbell, Dr. Andrés Tijerina, Dr. Jesus F. de la Teja, as well as studies undertaken in Texas History when I was working on my MA in History, I always found Gonzales to be a curious case. From its rugged foundation to its conflict with Mexico, Gonzales spoke much about the reasons and causes of the Texas Revolution. Beyond this examination I also noted the vibrant and vital role that *Tejano* (a Texan of Mexican heritage) and *Texian* (Anglo-American settlers) alike played in the founding of modern Texas. As this convergence is often overlooked, I longed to include it.

III. Director Bio



Andy Galloway was born and raised in Dallas, Texas. He earned his B.S. in R-T-F from the University of Texas at Austin, an M.A. in History from UT Pan-American, and is working on his M.F.A. in Documentary Studies and Production from UNT. He has taught and has numerous publications on Texas History. In film, his documentaries have tended to focus on those on the periphery of society. This is reflected in his award-winning films such as *Round Pegs, Square Hole* (2013), and *Wally* (2014).

IV. Director's Statement

In my studies of Texas history during the end of Spanish rule and the Mexican colonial period as well as republic, voices of *Tejanos* have been absent. This only allows half the picture. In this documentary I longed to include those voices and also place Texas into the stream of Mexican History.

V. Cast

The Specialists—



Dan Arellano – Is a scholar whose focus is pointed towards the Tejano heritage and experience in Texas. His family has been in Texas since it was a part of New Spain and his ancestor was a Spanish Officer at the Battle of Medina. His publications include articles in numerous publications and his book *Tejano Roots: A Family legend*.

<http://therivardreport.com/history-textbooks-undervalue-minority-narratives/>



Dr. Andrew Torget – Dr. Torget is a member of the faculty at The University of North Texas. His knowledge and expertise in nineteenth-century America as well as his integration of technology into research, scholarship, and education has propelled him to the fore. He has been a featured speaker at Harvard, Stanford, Rice, Duke, Johns Hopkins, and the Library of Congress. He was named the inaugural David J. Weber Research Fellow at the Clements Center for Southwest Studies at Southern Methodist University in 2011. His most recent work, *Seeds of Empire: Cotton, Slavery, and the Transformation of the Texas Borderlands, 1800-1850* has won numerous awards and acclaim.

<https://andrewtorget.com/>



Dr. Jesus F. de la Teja - Dr. de la Teja is the Jerome H. and Catherine E. Supple Professor of Southwestern Studies, Regents' Professor of History, and Director of the Center for the Study of the Southwest at Texas State University. During and following his doctoral work at the University of Texas, de la Teja is a prolific author who has published extensively on Spanish, Mexican, and Republic-era Texas. His most recent publication is *Faces of Bexar: Early San Antonio and Texas* and *Lone Star Unionism*,

Dissent, and Resistance: The Other Civil War Texas.

<http://www.txstate.edu/history/people/faculty/de-la-teja.html>

The characters--



David Vickers (*Green De Witt*) – David Vickers found an excellent way to combine his passions and profession. He is a teacher during the week, and a Living Historian everytime else. He has received acclaim in both areas. For the last eighteen years he has organized the reenactment seen every year of the Goliad massacre. Though he is familiar with portraying characters ranging from the American revolution to Depression Era Texas his favorite time period is the Texas Revolution.

http://www.mysoutex.com/view/full_story_bee/24773743/article-Beeville-man-has-passion-for-living-Texas--rich-history?



Robert Rendon (*Martin De Leon*) – Has been an active participant in the San Antonio Living History Association as well as the Alamo Legacy/Mission Association Incorporated.



C. Tasolla Hernandez (*Placido Bienavides*) – Beyond his work with the San Antonio Living History Association and the Alamo Legacy/Mission Association, Tasolla Hernandez is also very active in participating in Civil War reenactments.



Jorge Cervantes, Jr. (*Juan Seguin*) – Jorge Cervantes had recently joined the San Antonio Living History Association yet he embraced his role as Juan Seguin very well.



Grant Maloney (*Almeron Dickinson*) – Grant Maloney has embraced Living History. Not only has he carved out a specific niche for himself playing the role of Almeron Dickinson, but the San Antonio Living History Association entrusted him to be the event coordinator for the reenactment of the fall of the Alamo.

<http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/local/article/City-study-re-enactments-help-us-remember-the-5291846.php>



Amanda Maloney (*Susanna Dickinson*) – As her husband Grant has been set as Almeron Dickinson, Amanda portrays Alamo survivor Susanna Dickinson. Amanda is very active with the San Antonio Living History Association. Due to the characters she portrays, Susanna must carry a knowledge of what home life was like as well as the recipes and preparation of period meals.



Martin Vasquez (*Col. Domingo de Ugartechea*)- Martin Vasquez is very active in Living History. He also is a member of the San Antonio Living History Association as well as the Alamo Legacy/Missions Association.



Charles Travis Lara (*George Washington Davis*) - Reflective of his father and sister's (Charles and Dena) participation in the San Antonio Living History Association/Alamo Legacy/Mission Association. Reenactment has been with Charles all his life.



Domaso Torres (*Lt. Francisco De Castaneda*) - Although Domaso Torres was a new member of the Alamo Legacy/Missions Association his excellent portrayal was unhindered.



Dena Lara (*Naomi De Witt Matthews*) – Reflective of her father and brother’s (Charles and Charles Travis) participation in the San Antonio Living History Association/Alamo Legacy/Mission Association. Reenactment has been with Dena all her life.

VI. Reviews/Rewards



9/21/2016 **Award of Recognition Documentary Short, Best Shorts Competition**, La Jollie Ca



9/11/2016 **Official Selection**, IndieWise Film Festival, Online



9/7/2016 **Official Selection**, *Accolade Global Film Competition*, Los Angeles



9/6/2016 **Nominee Best Documentary – Short**,
Top Indie Film Awards, Los Angeles.



5/26/2016 **Award of Recognition** –May competition, *Hollywood International Independent Documentary Awards*, Los Angeles, <http://www.hiida.com/may-2016-winners.html>



2/28/2016 **Best International Historical Documentary Short** – February Competition, *Texas Ultimate Shorts*, <http://texasshorts.wixsite.com/texasshorts/february-2016>

VII. Links

IMDb page: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt5360582/>

Andy docs: www.andydocs.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Gonzales-Come-and-Take-It-762558773857452/>

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/155432649>

VIII. FAQ

*Green De Witt was the second most successful empresario in Texas

*Martin De Leon was the only Mexican empresario

*Every year, the town of Gonzales holds a three day “Come and Take It!” festival to celebrate this event

*Gonzales did not have a high slave population, and included Tejano residents who had been given the land for service in the Mexican Army.

IX. Anecdotes

I was in a tight spot. Complications over my first second year documentary, (the award winning “Wally” <http://www.andydocs.com/#!awards/chrj>) meant that I had to complete another film. I was up to the task regardless. Similar to “Wally”, although I had some time for preparation, I only had a three-week window of actual production. A small window for such a large project.

From my studies in Texas History, as well as a visit to the town I knew I wanted to make a film about the battle of Gonzales. However, I knew that many challenges might arise to make successful completion difficult.

The first of these was distance. I lived in Denton, Texas. This might be fine, but all my locations, actors, EVERYTHING would be about 300 miles away, give or take a couple of miles. Just part of the fun of living in Texas I suppose. I had to ask specialists for interviews. Finally, I wanted to have characters that were historically accurate, as well as be able to speak Spanish, and I had less than a month to write a script. Sounds simple?

Well the first thing I needed was to get the specialists. I began my inquiries right before school started and many of my professors were on vacation. Although this made me nervous, I had to let it ride. As I was in the middle of planning other items for the documentary responses began to trickle back. Some, like Dan Arellano were quick to respond, while others, like Dr. Andrés Tijerina, had to decline due to conflicts in their schedule. With Dr. Torget and Dr. de la Teja’s acceptance however, I knew I would have some incredible interviews.

Well what about collecting the people. Well a lot of that was actually made simple due to a happenstance meeting that had taken place a few months prior. At the 2015 Texas History Day, I met Charles Lara. We were both judging student history documentaries and I discovered that he was a reenactor who lived in San Antonio. He proved crucial in arranging the actors, suggesting locations and collecting other reenactors who spoke Spanish and had period correct costumes. His ability to suggest locations became vital when ideal locales, such as the Spanish Governors Palace or some of the Missions locations in San Antonio had changes to their schedule. In my shooting at Gonzales, the assistance I received from Megan O’Neal (curator at the Gonzales Memorial Museum) and Robert Bland (organizer of the “Come and Take It!” Festival) was indispensable.

As can be seen, the help of others proved indispensable in the successful completion of “Gonzales: Come and Take It!” Regardless of possible obstacles, good people all along the way were more than willing to help make this documentary a successful production.

X. Credits

Andy Galloway produced, directed, edited, camera, audio, and lighting.

XI. Production Stills



Burial of the Cannon



De Witt in Mexico



Mexican Soldatos



Night time meeting on the Battlefield



The shot that started the Texas Revolution