**Some topics to be discussed during the panel:**

Texas stereotypes: condescension toward the South and Texas. Finding a way to write characters who tick off some of the stereotypical boxes but that also reflect the complex reality of the individuals and communities they represent.

The challenge of writing about Texas under the shadow of the state’s mythical status. The idea that Texas can never be a neutral character. So if a character is from Texas or a character is set in Texas, you have to deal with the tone that sets.

Places that mix iconic Texas imagery with their own sensibility.

Literary images of San Antonio (cactus, tacos, la llorona) versus actual experiences of the city.

The lack of respect given to San Antonio nationally and the tendency to overlook much of its character in favor of its tourist attractions.

The national focus on the tragedy at the border and why the border/South Texas/Rio Grande Valley only gets attention when something awful is happening there.

The land and the history of the land. Places like Palo Duro Canyon that were once home to native peoples and then utterly changed by “famous Texans” like Charles Goodnight.

How the myth of Texas was written over and in many ways, built over the graves of people. The ghosts of the lone star state. The true history of Texas, beautiful and ugly.