

**Robert Howard Schmidt, Jr., Ph.D., passed away on Wednesday, July 26, 2017. He was 77 years old. He was a longtime resident and supporter of El Paso, Texas. Robert moved to El Paso in 1969, where he taught Physical Geography at UT-El Paso for 31 years. Upon his retirement, he earned the honor of Professor Emeritus. He had a passion for the desert, research, adventure, and traveling the world with his loving wife Merced Aida. Robert's survivors are his wife for 32 years, his two sons, Howard (Jennifer), and Justin (Debbie) and his daughter, Andrea Kelly (Rodney) Brewer. He had 5 grandchildren, Bergen, Lauren, Gianna, Channing and Reid. His other survivors are Lourdes Medina and Pilar Medina.**

#### **Books**

**Optimizing climatic and renewable resources in Mexico's arid and semiarid zones**

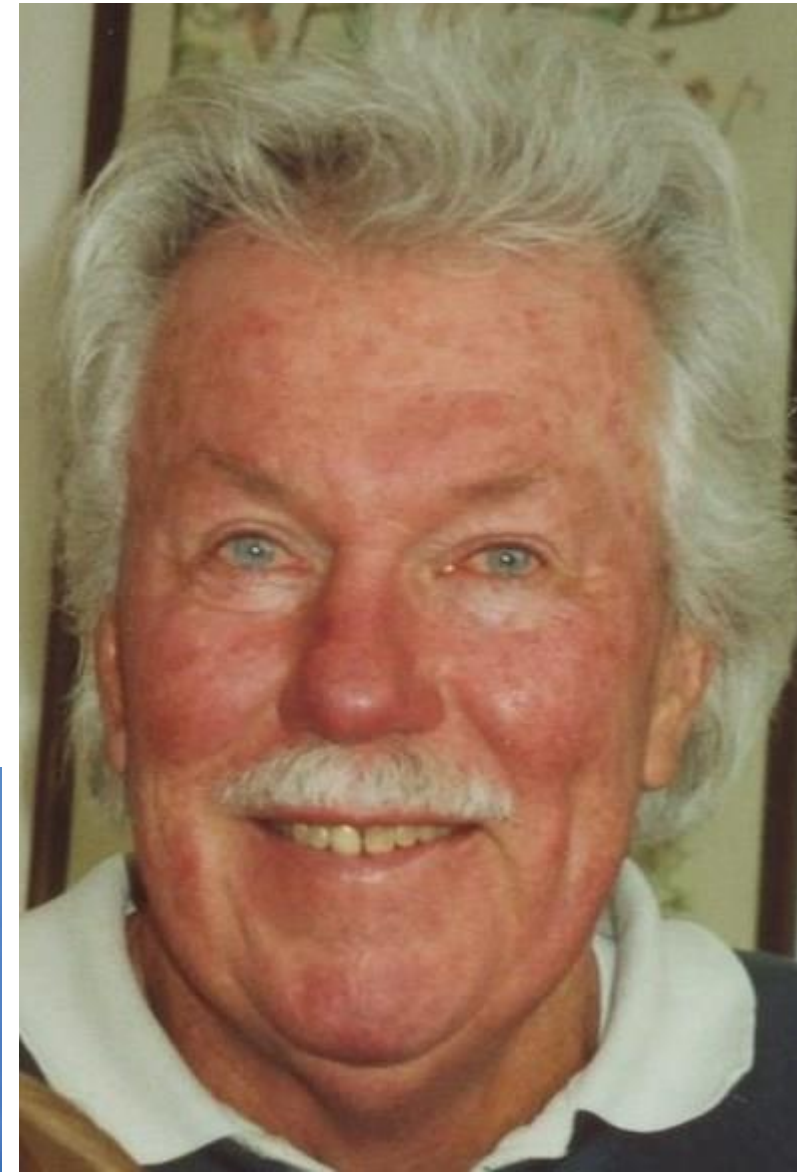
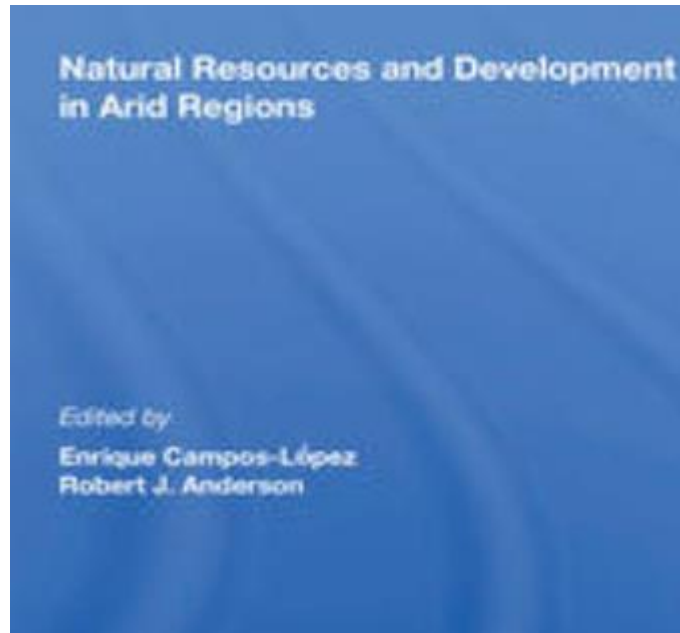
**A geographical survey of Sinaloa**

**A geographical survey of Chihuahua**

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# Climate and the Chihuahuan Desert

*Robert H. Schmidt, Jr.*



“For the geography of the Sierra Tarahumara, the best study is Robert H. Schmidt, Jr.’s *A Geographical Survey of Chihuahua.*”  
 From “Mexico’s Sierra Tarahumara: A Photohistory of the People of The Edge” By William Dirk Raat, 1996



The Chihuahuan Desert, considered the largest desert in North America, covers 140,000 square miles (360,000 km<sup>2</sup>) or 6.5 percent of the continent. Nearly three quarters of the area and 90 percent of the population live in the desert. The Chihuahuan Desert is a vast, arid region that stretches from the Colorado Plateau in the north to the Yucatan Peninsula in the south. It is a unique and diverse landscape that has shaped the lives of the people who live there for centuries.

**REGIONAL CLIMATOLOGY**  
 The desert is a unique and diverse landscape that has shaped the lives of the people who live there for centuries. It is a vast, arid region that stretches from the Colorado Plateau in the north to the Yucatan Peninsula in the south. The climate is semi-arid, with hot summers and mild winters. The desert is a unique and diverse landscape that has shaped the lives of the people who live there for centuries.

**PRECIPITATION CONDITIONS**  
 The most annual precipitation for the Chihuahuan Desert is 9.4 in (240 mm) (median = 9.7 in / 247 mm). The lowest annual precipitation is 4.9 in (125 mm) (median = 5.2 in / 132 mm). The precipitation is highly variable, with some years receiving as little as 4.9 in (125 mm) and other years receiving as much as 14.1 in (358 mm). The precipitation is highly variable, with some years receiving as little as 4.9 in (125 mm) and other years receiving as much as 14.1 in (358 mm).



**FACES AND PLACES OF THE CHIHUAHUAN DESERT**  
 The concept for *Faces and Places of the Chihuahuan Desert* began with Dr. Robert H. Schmidt's incredible slide history of the Chihuahuan Desert. During this time the desert underwent dramatic changes. What caused this change? Is all the change bad? What can we learn from this? What can we share? This exhibition explores the topography and natural beauty of the Chihuahuan Desert and considers the human impact upon it over the last three decades.

*Faces and Places of the Chihuahuan Desert* conveys the impressive landscape and culture of this area through the color photographs taken by Dr. Schmidt. *Faces and Places of the Chihuahuan Desert* was created with sponsorship by Chamizal National Memorial and support from Humanities Texas. The exhibition is made available through the Humanities Texas traveling exhibitions program.

Faces and Places of the Chihuahuan Desert is composed of thirty-one photographs from the work of [UTEP - The University of Texas at El Paso](#) professor emeritus Dr. Robert H. Schmidt. Dr. Schmidt's background is in natural resources and physical geography. For the last three decades he has tracked changes in the Chihuahuan Desert. This exhibition presents, in visual form, an interpretation of scientific information about the region of the Chihuahuan Desert.