



Agárrala, by Ellie Norton (2015)

Southwestern Literature (ENGL 3371; CRN 26523)

Dr. Gunn

M/W/F 9:30 – 10:20 a.m., Hudspeth 300

This course offers a broad literary survey of a region defined by current popular consensus as “the Southwest.” Ranging from the 16th through the 20th Centuries, we will investigate narratives that depict conquistadors and cowboys, *coyotes* and killers, as well as works by indigenous peoples, settler colonists, and intriguing itinerants that have passed through the physically majestic and often unforgiving terrain that includes our homes here in the El Paso/Juarez borderlands. In the work of surveying the literary and cultural legacies of the diverse hosts of people who have called the southwest home over the last five centuries, particular attention will be paid to the competing interests and storylines that have interacted, and continue to interact, with the physical landscape in the production of “the Southwest” as a particular geographical, social, political, and cultural region. Topics and themes to be addressed include: the Spanish conquest and Native resistance; American imperialism and the U.S./Mexico War; race, ethnicity, and indigeneity; travel, surveying, and physical landforms; linguistic diversity; performance, ritual, religion, and ceremony; immigration, security, and the meanings of “home”; as well as cowboy culture, outlawry, and the cult of “the West” in the American imagination; hunger, thirst, and bodies *in extremis*; and the prevalence of violence in popular cultural understandings of the Southwest. Authors to be considered include: Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca; Lewis Hector Garrard; Mary Austin; Barry Lopez; Leslie Marmon Silko; Simon Ortiz; Luís Alberto Urrea; Cormac McCarthy; and Arturo Islas.