Tales from the Chihuahuan Desert: Borderlands Narratives about Identity and Binationalism

Syllabus with Readings List

National Endowment for the Humanities
A Summer Institute for Secondary School Teachers (Grades 6th – 12th)

Sponsored by The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP)
Department of English
and
Department of History

In Collaboration with the
Center for Inter-American and Border Studies (CIBS)
and Institute of Oral History (IOH)

July 16th – July 30th, 2017

Project Directors
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Assistant Professor, UTEP Department of English

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Assistant Professor, UTEP Department of History
Institute Core Content

The Institute aims to provide Summer Scholars with core content in two areas:

(1) an inquiry-based understanding of historiography and narratology and how they are used to interpret past and current border cultures of the Chihuahuan Desert, and
(2) an examination of the succession of binationalism and the ways in which border people have historically adapted their identities to regional and national interests.

Institute Learning Outcomes

The intended learning outcomes of the Institute are as follows:

1. To explore the range and variety of literature created by writers from the Chihuahuan Desert, both classic and contemporary;
2. To achieve an understanding of the histories and cultures of a region often stereotyped and misunderstood;
3. To provide professional development opportunities for teachers so that they can become better educators;
4. To encourage teachers, who will be from across the country and from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines, to engage each other in thinking critically about important issues in order to expand the intellectual depth and experience of all teachers; and
5. To broaden teachers’ experience and understanding as they are challenged through the historical and literary narratives explored in the Institute and through the activities and events experienced during the two-week Institute.

Historical Periods

To that end, we have identified three key historical periods and accompanying themes that coincide with the Institute’s overall goals and timeframe:

(1) The period of Spanish colonization and settlement (1600–1821),
(2) the period of American expansion and early border industrialization (1848–1950),
(3) the period of migration, border enforcement, NAFTA, and the drug wars (1950–2010).
PROGRAM OF STUDY

Structure and Questions
The Institute named *Tales of the Chihuahuan Desert: Borderlands Narratives about Identity and Binationalism* examines the role of narrative in the making of history and its place in the construction of identities and binationalism.

Three questions form the foundation for inquiry-based learning in the Institute:

1. **How can the study of the Chihuahuan Desert, of its history and its people, help us tell a more complete story of the American experience?** American history continues to be dominated by narratives of American exceptionalism and of the heroic westward expansion of the nineteenth century. Historians Vicki Ruiz and Felipe Fernández-Armesto have called for a reinterpretation of U.S. History in order to give proper weight to its Indigenous, Spanish, and Mexican past. Over the course of the Institute we will link narratives to significant milestones in history and toward contemporary issues.

2. **What can we learn about the histories and literatures of border people by examining their stories?** In particular, this question will guide us in our application of inquiry-based learning about whether the U.S. literary narrative has a distinctive approach to imagining the border and which narratives are advanced as the official tale, or telling, of the Chihuahuan Desert.

3. **How does binationalism inform border people’s cultures and literary production?** We propose to address the dual issues of identity and binationalism to show that underneath this tumultuous history resides another story: a story of cooperation and negotiation, of amity and cultural similitude, and of national and binational identities.
### Summary of 2017 Summer Institute Study Plan

**WEEK 1: July 16th – July 22nd, 2017**

**Historiography in the Chihuahuan Desert and Inquiry-Based Learning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Topics and Activities</th>
<th>Readings (see also Appendix B)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction to the Institute: Setting the Stage and Beginning with the End in Mind</td>
<td>Required and to be Mailed 05/20 (Read BEFORE Institute):</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. History as the study of the past and present in texts and orality</td>
<td>(1) <em>Border People: Life and Society in the U.S.–México Borderlands</em> (1994) by Óscar J. Martínez</td>
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<td>5. Spain in the Southwest</td>
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<td>6. Define border and borderlands in the El Paso–Ciudad Juárez metroplex (Paso del Norte Region)</td>
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<td>7. Identities of border people</td>
<td><strong>Resources to Review:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Construction of two nations in proximity</td>
<td>(1) The Institute of Oral History at UTEP</td>
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<td>10. Types of historical narratives: textbooks and orality</td>
<td>(2) U.S. Library of Congress, Teaching with Primary Sources Program</td>
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<td>12. Introduction to resources for classroom application and e-portfolio projects</td>
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<td>13. Field trips: Guided tours of UTEP Special Collections, UTEP Oral History Institute, El Paso, Union Pacific Railroad’s Santa Teresa Terminal, and historical Spanish missions.</td>
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<td>14. Brainstorming on Summer Scholars’ individual e-portfolio projects</td>
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Tales from the Chihuahuan Desert: Borderlands Narratives about Identity and Binationalism
## Summary of 2017 Summer Institute Study Plan

**WEEK 2: July 23rd – July 29th, 2017**

**Narratology and the Construction of Identity and Binationalism**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Topics and Activities</th>
<th>Readings (see also Appendix B)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Defining narratology</td>
<td><strong>Required (partial listing):</strong></td>
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<td>3. Internal and external conflicts as well as interests</td>
<td>(2) <em>The Devil’s Highway</em> (2004) by Luis Alberto Urrea</td>
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<td>4. Binationalism and external interests</td>
<td><strong>Resources to Review:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Literary production and analysis</td>
<td><strong>Resources to Review:</strong></td>
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<td>8. Close reading in practice</td>
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<td>9. Inquiry-based activity: Identity formation and affirmation</td>
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<td>10. Additional resources for classroom application and individual e-portfolio projects</td>
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<td>12. Presentation of Summer Scholars’ e-portfolio projects</td>
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<td>13. Final Discussion</td>
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<td>14. Institute Evaluation</td>
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APPENDIX A
Expanded Syllabus: Study Plan
July 16th – July 30th, 2017

The following schedule provides an overview of the topics addressed in each day of the two-week Institute, the general flow of activities, and the readings associated with each day. Institute readings include articles and selected chapters—some considered classics, some more recent interpretations, some written by UTEP faculty and visiting guest lecturers. Together, these documents provide valuable background and varying perspectives about our topic.

The required books as full readings should be read in advance of the Institute including the primary books assigned for the Institute. Optional related readings provide additional information on selected topics. You may refer to them as appropriate for your e-portfolio development with instructional lessons.

The course e-readings will be available to download from the Institute project’s website by June 15th, 2017.

Additional handouts—mostly primary sources and instructional lesson support—will be posted on the project website by June 15th, 2017. The handouts will available electronically throughout the two weeks of the Institute.

Each weekday is organized with morning and afternoon sessions. The mornings are dedicated to lectures and dialogue related the guiding questions and assigned readings, while afternoons will be dedicated to e-portfolios specific learning workshops, field site visits (may vary based on heat advisories), and e-portfolio development with independent study as follows:

**Morning Session** 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM (MT)

**Afternoon Session** 1:20 PM to 4:30 PM (MT)

Based on the pre-scheduled engagements only, **evenings** will likely begin at 5:45 PM (MT) through 8:30 PM (MT).
Sunday, July 16th: Arrival, Welcome, and Orientation

- Late Afternoon: The UTEP NEH Institute directors and UTEP faculty members will be in the UTEP Miner Village, Community Study Lounge to welcome the Summer Scholars and assist with check-in.
- Evening: Meet-and-greet reception with light appetizers will held and be followed by a short, guided tour of the campus.
WEEK ONE: July 16th – July 22nd, 2017

Setting the Stage: Historiography in the Chihuahuan Desert and Inquiry-Based Learning
The Origins of History and Narratives at the Border

GUIDING QUESTIONS.
1. What is history?
2. What are the roles of a chronicler of history?
   a. From the border?
   b. From afar?
3. Why do we tell the story of the border as we do?
4. What can we learn about literature by examining the points of view?

Monday, July 17th: Setting the Stage: Approaches to History and Narratives

Required Readings


Lecture and content
- Welcome and Overview [Martínez, Rodríguez]
- Approaches to History and Narratives [Leyva, Rodríguez, Martínez]
- Introduction to UTEP and Resources [Leyva, Martínez, Rodríguez]
- Roundtable Discussion of Readings: What is history? What are our roles as teachers and tellers of histories? [Martínez, Leyva]
- Introduction to E-Portfolio Projects [Rodríguez, Varela]
- Workshop Course, Tales of the Chihuahuan Desert: Developing Instructional Lesson Plans through Inquiry-Based Learning [Rodríguez, Varela]

Field Site Visits
None

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Tuesday, July 18th: What’s History and Whose Shall We Teach?

Required Readings


Lecture and content
- Background on Chihuahuan Borderlands and Its People [Leyva, Martínez]
- Spain in the Southwest: Introduction to the colonial history of the American Southwest and understanding the legacy of conquest. [Martínez]
- Roundtable Discussion of Readings: How can a focus on bi-national communities such as the El Paso–Ciudad Juárez metroplex inform our understanding about citizenship, history, and identity? [Leyva, Martínez]
- Workshop Course, The Borderlands in Digital Worlds: E-Portfolio Project and Lesson Plans Development [Varela, Creative Studios Team]
Focus Question: (1) What makes historical events into milestones in the making of literary narratives and border people’s identities in the Chihuahuan Desert borderlands region?

Field Site Visits
**Border Patrol and Inspection Station**
- Tour of station
- Tour of border wall

Wednesday, July 19th: Oral History for History’s Sake

Required Readings


Tales from the Chihuahuan Desert:
**Borderlands Narratives about Identity and Binationalism**
Lecture and content

- Introduction: Practice of Ethnography and Oral History [Leyva, Mora, Perales]
- Reading Oral Histories from the Chihuahuan Desert and Borderlands [Levya, Mora, Perales]
- Roundtable Discussion of Readings: What are the roles of a chronicler of history and narratives? [Leyva, Mora, Perales]
- Share E-Portfolio Project and Lesson Plans Development in Learning Pods
- Afternoon Tour of Museo Urbano and Chihuahuaita
- Afternoon Tour of Railroad Museum of El Paso
- Afternoon Tour of Union Plaza
- Share E-Portfolio Project and Lesson Plans Development

Field Site Visits

Driving/walking tour of downtown El Paso and historic neighborhoods

- Guided tour of several historic neighborhoods

Thursday, July 20th: Textbooks and Methods about History

Required Readings


Lecture and content

- American History in Textbooks [Leyva, Perales]
- Narratives as History (how to tell the peoples history) [Leyva, Mora, Perales]
- Looking at the Borderlands through the Prism of Stories and Storytelling [Leyva, Mora, Perales]
- Roundtable Discussion of Readings: How can understanding border people and their history alter/reorient our conceptual understanding of US history? [Leyva, Martínez, Mora, Perales]
- Tour of UTEP Special Collections
- Maps of the Chihuahuan Desert Borderlands (featured in Special Collections)
- Workshop Course, Using Music as a Literacy Element for Engagement: E-Portfolio Project and Lesson Plans Development [Varela, Creative Studios Team]

Field Site Visits

None
Friday, July 21st: An Artist’s Sense of Place via Historical and Literary Narratives

Required Readings


Lecture and content
- Introduction to Smeltertown [Perales]
- Roundtable Discussion of Readings: How can we gain more perspectives about the complex process of identity formation? [Mora, Perales, Staudt]
- Literary Dialogues: Reading the Narratives of the Chihuahuan Borderlands [Rodriguez]
- The Chihuahuan Borderlands and Desert Women in Literature [Mora]
- Tour of Center for Inter-American and Border Studies (CIBS) [Heyman]
- Workshop Course, Curriculum Resources: E-Portfolio Project and Lesson Plans Development [Varela, Creative Studios Team]
  Focus Question: (2) What are the basic theories and methods of historiography and narratology?
- Literary Reading by Pat Mora [Mora]

Field Site Visits
Evening Event (symphony/performance)
- Evening event at Fox Plaza

Saturday, July 22nd: Independent Study

Field Site Visits
El Paso Mission Trail
- The Tigua Indian Cultural Center
- Lunch (on our own) at Cattlemen’s Steakhouse at Indian Cliffs Ranch (12:30 PM)
Sunday, July 23rd: Independent Study

- E-Portfolio Project and Lesson Plans Development [Creative Studios Team]

Field Site Visits

Mesilla, New Mexico

- Mesilla Plaza (National Historic Landmark)
- The Gadsden Purchase (known in México as “Venta de La Mesilla,” “Sale of La Mesilla”) (1853)
WEEK TWO: July 23rd – July 30th, 2017

Narratology and the Construction of Identity and Binationalism: Telling the Stories of the Chihuahuan Desert Borderlands

GUIDING QUESTIONS
1. What is narratology?
   a. In history?
   b. In literature?
2. What influences the making and establishing of borders?
   a. External interests?
3. How does binationalism inform border people’s cultures and literary production?

Monday, July 24th: Teaching Narratives through History and Literature

Required Readings


Lecture and content
- Performance and Literary Arts [Dominguez, Rodríguez]
- Literary Dialogues: Reading the Narratives of the Chihuahuan Borderlands [Rodríguez]
- Morning Tour of UTEP Centennial Museum and Chihuahuan Desert Gardens
- Morning Tour of Lhakhang at the UTEP Centennial Plaza
- Professors’ Dialogue: Teaching and Learning in Higher Education [Martínez, Rodríguez]
- Afternoon Theatre Performance
- Workshop Course, Using the Popular Culture about the Borderlands: E-Portfolio Project and Lesson Plans Development [Varela, Creative Studios Team]

Field Site Visits
None

Tales from the Chihuahuan Desert:
Borderlands Narratives about Identity and Binationalism
Tuesday, July 25th: Borders and Politics in Action

Required Readings


Lecture and content
• The Politics of Narratology and Binationalism [Bustamante, Staudt]
• Performance as Political Narrative [Dominguez]
• Roundtable Discussion of Readings: How does binationalism inform border people’s cultures? [Bustamante, Dominguez, Staudt]
• Morning Tour of U.S. Customs and Border Protection Station
• E-Portfolio Project and Lesson Plans Development [Varela, Creative Studios Team]
  Focus Question: (3) What are the shifting ideologies in the making of two neighboring nations?

Field Site Visits
Downtown Plaza
• Visit the El Paso Museum of Art and San Jacinto Plaza
Wednesday, July 26th: Documented Borders via Narratology

Required Reading


Lecture and Content
- Journalism and Popular Writing about the Chihuahuan Borderlands [Bustamante]
- The Documented Border via Narratology and the Arts [Bustamante, Dominguez]
- Roundtable Discussion of Readings: How does narratology and performance influence the making and establishing of borders? [Bustamante, Staudt, Dominguez]
- Literary Dialogues: Reading the Narratives of the Chihuahuan Borderlands [Rodriguez]
- Final Edits of E-Portfolio Project and Lesson Plans Development [Varela, Creative Studios Team]

Field Site Visits
*Chamizal National Memorial* (U.S. National Park Service)
800 South San Marcial Street
El Paso, TX 79905
- Hiking tour of waterway area and park
- Professional learning by Education
Thursday, July 27th: Narratives and Influences on the Stage

Required Reading


Rodríguez, R. Joseph. “In the Antropoetas and Muses We Trust: Reading and Teaching the Poetics about the Borderlands and Chihuahuan Desert.” Selection from Latino Poetics, Ruben Quezada (editor). University of New Mexico Press, 2018. (forthcoming)

Lecture and content
- Women and Theatre of the Chihuahuan Borderlands [Dominguez]
- How do Border People Perform their Identities [Bustamante, Dominguez, Staudt]
- Roundtable Discussion of Readings: How can theatre and narratologies engage students in the practice of literacies? [Bustamante, Dominguez, Staudt]
- Literary Dialogues: Reading the Narratives of the Chihuahuan Borderlands [Rodríguez]
- Final Edits of E-Portfolio Project and Lesson Plans Development [Varela, Creative Studios Team]

Field Site Visits
None
**Friday, July 28th: E-Portfolios**

**Required Readings**

**Lecture and content**
- Roundtable Discussion of Readings: Which histories and literatures of the Chihuahuan borderlands have influenced our teaching and learning? [Martínez, Rodríguez]
- Complete E-Portfolio Project and Lesson Plans Development for Viewing by Public [Varela, Creative Studios Team]
- Dinner and evening for independent exploration

**Field Site Visits**
None

**Saturday, July 29th: Presentations and Farewell**
- Morning Reception and Farewell
- Showcase: Documenting Tales of the Chihuahuan Borderlands [Summer Scholars]
- Institute Evaluation

**Field Site Visits**
Final meal together (Downtown El Paso)

**Sunday, July 30th: DEPARTURE**
Sample Primary Sources and Electronic Documents

WEEK 1: Historiography in the Chihuahuan Desert and Inquiry-Based Learning
1. John L. O’Sullivan, On Manifest Destiny, 1839
2. Polk Asks for War on México, 1846
3. Calhoun Opposes Incorporating México, 1848
4. Before and After: Map of México and the United States, 1846, 1848
5. Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, 1848
6. N. A. Jennings, “A Little Standing Army in Himself: Telling of the Texas Rangers”, 1875
8. Robert Runyon Collection, Texas Border Photographs, 1900–1920
9. Photographs, Mexican War Series, 1910–1917

WEEK 2: Narratology and the Construction of Identity and Binationalism
1. Selden C. Menefee, “Mexican Migratory Workers in South Texas: Crystal City,” 1938
2. Bracero History Archive and Institute of Oral History at The University of Texas at El Paso, Oral Histories and Artifacts of a Guest Worker Initiative, 1942–1964
9. Strachwitz Frontera Collection of Mexican and Mexican-American Recordings, 2010
APPENDIX B
Institute Reading List

PRIMARY TEXTS (Distributed to Summer Scholars as Pre-Reading before Institute)

SECONDARY TEXTS (Excerpts distributed to Summer Scholars) Confirm listing below.

JOURNAL ARTICLES AND BOOK CHAPTERS (Excerpts distributed to Summer Scholars)


**RECOMMENDED WEB RESOURCES**

1. **Borderland: NPR**  
   http://apps.npr.org/borderland/

2. **Documented Border: An Open Access Digital Archive**  
   http://speccoll.library.arizona.edu/events/documented-border-open-access-digital-archive

3. **The Institute of Oral History at UTEP**  

4. **Museo Urbano**  
   https://www.facebook.com/MuseoUrbanoElPaso

5. **U.S. Library of Congress, Teaching with Primary Sources Program**  
   http://www.loc.gov/teachers/tps/