

Delve Deeper into "The Ballad of Esequiel Hernandez"

A film by Kieran Fitzgerald

This multi-media resource list, compiled by Debby DeSoer of the Ellensburg Public Library, provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the upcoming P.O.V. documentary "The Ballad of Esequiel Hernandez" that premieres on July 8th, 2008 at 10 PM (check local listings at www.pbs.org/pov/).

In 1997, U.S. Marines patrolling the Texas-Mexico border as part of the War on Drugs shot and killed Esequiel Hernández Jr. Mistaken for a drug runner, the 18-year-old was, in fact, a U.S. citizen tending his family's goats with a .22 rifle. He became the first American killed by U.S. military forces on native soil since the 1970 Kent State shootings. "The Ballad of Esequiel Hernández," narrated by Tommy Lee Jones, explores Hernández's tragic death and its torturous aftermath. His parents and friends, the Marines on patrol and investigators discuss the dangers of militarizing the border and the death of one young man.

ADULT NONFICTION

Andreas, Peter. *Border Games: Policing the U.S.-Mexico Divide*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000.

Andreas contrasts the inconsistencies between an increased focus on border law enforcement with the upsurge of the global economy.

Bigelow, Bill. *The Line Between Us: Teaching About the Border and Mexican Immigration*. Rethinking Schools, 2006.

Explores the history of U.S.-Mexican relations and the roots of Mexican immigration, all in the context of the global economy.

Chacon, Justin A. *No One is Illegal: Fighting Violence and State Repression on the U.S. - Mexico Border*. Haymarket Books, 2006. Exposes the racism behind the anti-immigration vigilante movement while putting a face to the immigrants risking their lives to cross the U.S.-Mexico border.

Chavez, Leo R. *Covering Immigration: Popular Images and the Politics of the Nation*. University of California Press, 2001. Leo Chavez analyzes over 70 cover images from politically diverse magazines.

Davidson, Miriam. *Lives on the Line: Dispatches from the U.S.-Mexico Border*. Tucson, Arizona, University of Arizona Press, 2000.

Davidson portrays the struggles of communities in Nogales, Arizona and Nogales, Sonora as they deal with everyday issues of life on the border, from the maquiladora boom to confrontations with law enforcement.

Ford Jr., Don Henry. *Contrabando: Confessions of a Drug-Smuggling Texas Cowboy*. El Paso, TX: Cinco Puntos Press, 2004.

From the 1970s through the mid-1980s Ford made his living as an outlaw, smuggling marijuana across the U.S./Mexico border in the Big Bend region.

Fox, Claire F. *The Fence and the River: Culture and Politics at the U.S.-Mexico Border*.

Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999. A look at the cultural representations of border life, through novels, photography, performance art, and film.

Gonzales, Manuel G. *Mexicanos: A History of Mexicans in the United States*. Indiana University Press, 2000. Survey of historical literature about Mexicans in the United States.

Gonzalez, Juan. *Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America*. New York: Penguin, 2001. Gonzalez compares U.S. border control to the Great Wall of China and praises Latino pioneers and the importance of their impact on U.S. culture.

Herrera, Juan Felipe. *187 Reasons Mexicanos Can't Cross the Border*. City Lights Publishers, 2007. Herrera, a professor of creative writing at the University of California, Riverside, offers this collection of texts about what it's like to be Mexican American.

Laufer, Peter. *Wetback Nation: The Case for Opening the Mexican-American Border*. Ivan R. Dee, Publisher, 2004.

Peter Laufer helps readers understand the background of Bush's proposals for the U.S.-Mexican border, and argues that the border with Mexico should be completely open, with a free flow of people between the two countries. He offers a step-by-step blueprint for making it happen.

McDowell, J. H. *Poetry and Violence: The Ballad Tradition of Mexico's Costa Chica*.

Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2000. Book and CD. Provides an in-depth study of a body of poetry that takes violence as its subject: the Mexican ballad form known as the *corrido*. Through interviews with *corrido* composers and performers, both male and female, and a generous sampling of ballad texts, McDowell reveals a living vernacular tradition that amounts to a chronicle of local and regional rivalries.

Nevins, Joseph. *Operation Gatekeeper: The Rise of the 'Illegal Alien' and the Remaking of the U.S.-Mexico Boundary*.

Routledge, 2001. In 1994 the Clinton administration doubled the budget for fences and trained agents along the border. Journalist Joseph Nevins investigates the Clinton administration's effort to prevent illegal border crossings in the context of the mid-90s.

Payan, Tony. *The Three U.S.-Mexico Border Wars: Drugs, Immigration and Homeland Security*. Westport, Conn: Praeger, 2006.

Illuminates the connection between homeland security policies, drug laws and illegal immigration at the U.S.-Mexico border.

Price, Patricia L. *Dry Place: Landscapes of Belonging and Exclusion*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press,

2004. Price looks at the Mexico - U.S. border in a historical context, and researches the many peoples who have laid claim to it.



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Romero, Fernando. *Hyperborder: The Contemporary U.S.-Mexico Border and Its Future*. Princeton Architectural Press, 2007. Romero offers a multidisciplinary look at the border.

Santa Ana, Otto. *Brown Tide Rising: Metaphors of Latinos in Contemporary American Public Discourse*. University of Texas Press, 2002. In this publication, Santa Ana shows how metaphorical language portrays Latinos.

Urrea, Luis Alberto. *Across the Wire: Life and Hard Times on the Mexican Border*. New York: First Anchor Books, 1993. Urrea chronicles the lives of Mexicans in poverty across the border and a mere twenty minutes from downtown San Diego.

Wood, Andrew Grant. *On the Border: Society and Culture Between the United States and Mexico*. S.R. Books, 2004. A collection of essays about the border that addresses the region's social and cultural history.

Annerino, John. *Dead in Their Tracks: Crossing America's Desert Borderlands*. Basic Books, 2003. Follows John Annerino, a noted photojournalist from Newsweek, and the four Mexican nationals determined to illegally immigrate who became his companions while on assignment in the land between Mexico and The U.S.

ADULT FICTION

Brown, Dale. *Edge of Battle: A Novel*. New York: William Morrow, 2006. A thriller that details the drug smuggling business, the Mexican-American border, the military and terrorism.

Cisneros, Sandra. *Women Hollering Creek: And Other Stories*. New York: Random House, 1991. Short stories about life on the Mexico/Texas border, involving love, family and homeland.

Kelton, Elmer. *Jericho's Road*. New York: Forge Books, 2004. Set in the 1870's the players were different, cattle rustlers and the Texas Rangers, but the issues remain the same, conflicts on the border between clashing cultures and the law.

Mazziotti, Maria and Jennifer Gillan, editors. *Growing Up Ethnic in America: Contemporary Fiction about Learning to be American*. Penguin, 1999. A collection of fiction on the complex subject of race and ethnicity in America.

Miller, Tom, ed. *Writing on the Edge: A Borderlands Reader*. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2003. Miller edits this collection of stories, song lyrics and poems from a variety of writers all inspired by the unique experience of the U.S./Mexico border.

Palmer, Karen. *Border Dogs: A Novel*. New York: Soho Press, 2002. A novel about California border cop James Reece, his suspicious younger co-worker, and the "coyotes," guides of illegal Mexican immigrants, they patrol.

Yanez, Richard. *El Paso del Norte: Stories on the Border*. Reno, NV: University of Nevada Press, 2003. This is a collection of stories about characters living in El Paso's Lower Valley.

Padilla, Mike. *Hard Language: Short Stories*. Arte Publico Press, 2000. A collection of short stories about Mexican immigrants trying to make the most of their new lives in the U.S.

NONFICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Miller, Debra A. (editor). *Illegal Immigration*. Gale/Greenhaven, 2007. Grades 6-9. Current speeches, articles and newspaper columns look at the immigration issue.

Ouellette, Jeannine. *A Day Without Immigrants: Rallying Behind America's Newcomers*. Compass Point, 2007. Grades 5-8. Ouellette focuses on the history, policies and prejudices surrounding the issue of immigration.

FICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Hobbs, Will. *Crossing the Wire*. Harper Collins, 2006. Grades 5-8. A 15 year old attempts to cross the border into the U.S. without a guide and runs into drug traffickers.

Jaramillo, Ann. *La Linea*. Roaring Brook/Deborah Brodie. 2006. Grades 5-8. Teenage brother and sister undergo the horrors of crossing the border to reunite with their parents.

FILMS/DOCUMENTARIES

The Border. Universal Studios. A film by Tony Richardson. 1982, 107 min. A border guard faces corruption in his department when the infant of a poor Mexican girl is kidnapped.

Border Patrol: America's Gatekeepers. A&E. Produced in 2001, released in June 2008. Documentary about the border patrol.

Bordertown. A film by Gregory Nava. 2006, 112 min. Nearly 400 women have been murdered in the border town of Juarez, Mexico, since 1993. Reporter Lauren Fredericks (Jennifer Lopez), assigned by her editor (Martin Sheen) to investigate, discovers cover-ups by the local authorities. With the help of colleague Alfonso (Antonio Banderas), she helps the only survivor find the courage to tell her story.

Border War: The Battle Over Illegal Immigration. Genius Entertainment. 2006, 95 min. Documentary. The issue of illegal immigration and the continued conflict taking place at the U.S.-Mexico border are brought to life in this documentary.

Dying to Get In: Undocumented Immigration at the Mexico / U.S. Border. A Film by Brett Trolley. 2006, 39 min. Documentary. Filmmaker Brett Trolley embeds himself with those who cross and provides a first-hand experience of the journey across the US-Mexico border.



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Kent State: The Day the War Came Home. Produced by Pictures in Motion and Single Spark Pictures. 2000, 47 min. A compilation of interviews with witnesses, national guardsmen, and victims.

The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada. A film by Tommy Lee Jones. 2005, 121 min. Ranch hand Pete Perkins looks to fulfill the promise to his recently deceased best friend by burying him in his hometown in Mexico.

Touch of Evil. A film by Orson Welles. 1958, 95 min. A story of murder, kidnapping, and police corruption in a Mexican border town.

MUSIC CD

Corridos Famosos en la Tierra Caliente (Spanish) Various Artists. Universal Music Latino, 2008.

Powerful *corrido* songs interpreted by some of the best Mexican artists in the genre.

ESSAYS

Dunn, Timothy J., 2001. "Border Militarization via Drug and Immigration Enforcement: Human Rights Implications." *Social Justice*, v. 28, no. 2, pp. 7-30

