

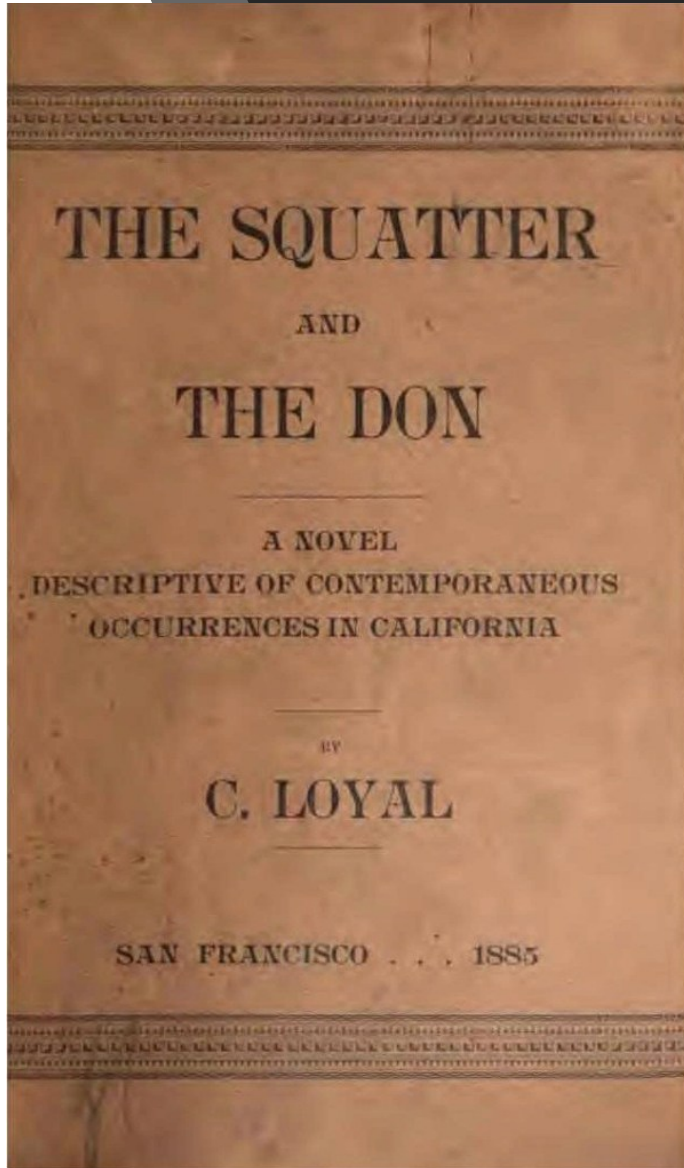


**SPAN322:  
“North of the Río Grande”  
US Latino/Chicano  
Literature**

*The Squatter and the Don IIb*

January 23, 2020

# THE SQUATTER AND THE DON



# *The Squatter and the Don*

- In what sense is Ruiz de Burton a “Ciudadano Loyal”?
- What does the book have to say about the role of the law and the legal system?
- What does the book say about the state, politics, and political representation?
- How does the love story mesh with the story about land and territory?
- How does affect interact with reason?

Mr. Darrell continued: "All I want before I leave here is to give your greaser father-in-law a sound thrashing and another to that puppy, Gabriel, who is so airy and proud, and such an exquisite, that it will be delightful to spoil his beauty."

"But why should you wish to do that? What has Don Mariano done to you? and if Don Gabriel threw his *lazo* on you, it was to protect his father."

"What has the old greaser done? He inveigled you into that land business, and you together have made me ridiculous. That is what the matter is."

"Then you don't believe me?" Mrs. Darrell said.

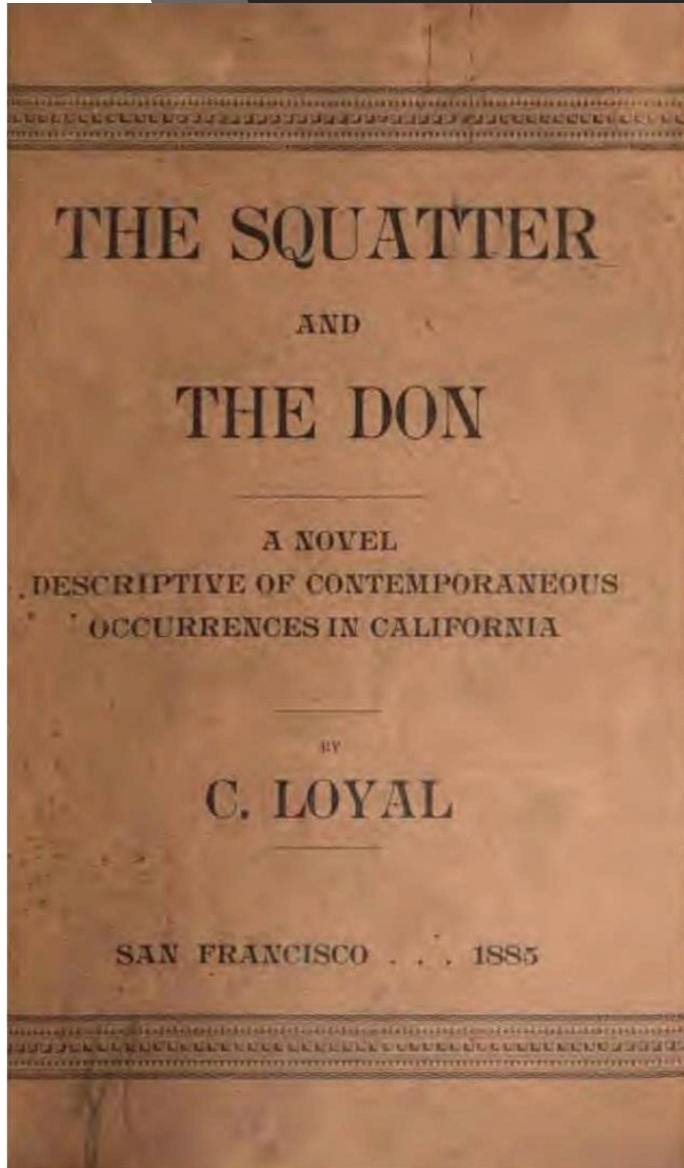
"Don't you take so much credit to yourself, and throw yourself into the breach like a heroine. If the Don hadn't had that pretty daughter, Clarence would not have been so obedient to his mother, perhaps."

Clarence rose to his feet, very pale, but he sat down again, and controlling himself, said as calmly as possible:

"I had never seen one, not one of Don Mariano's daughters when I went to offer to pay for this land."

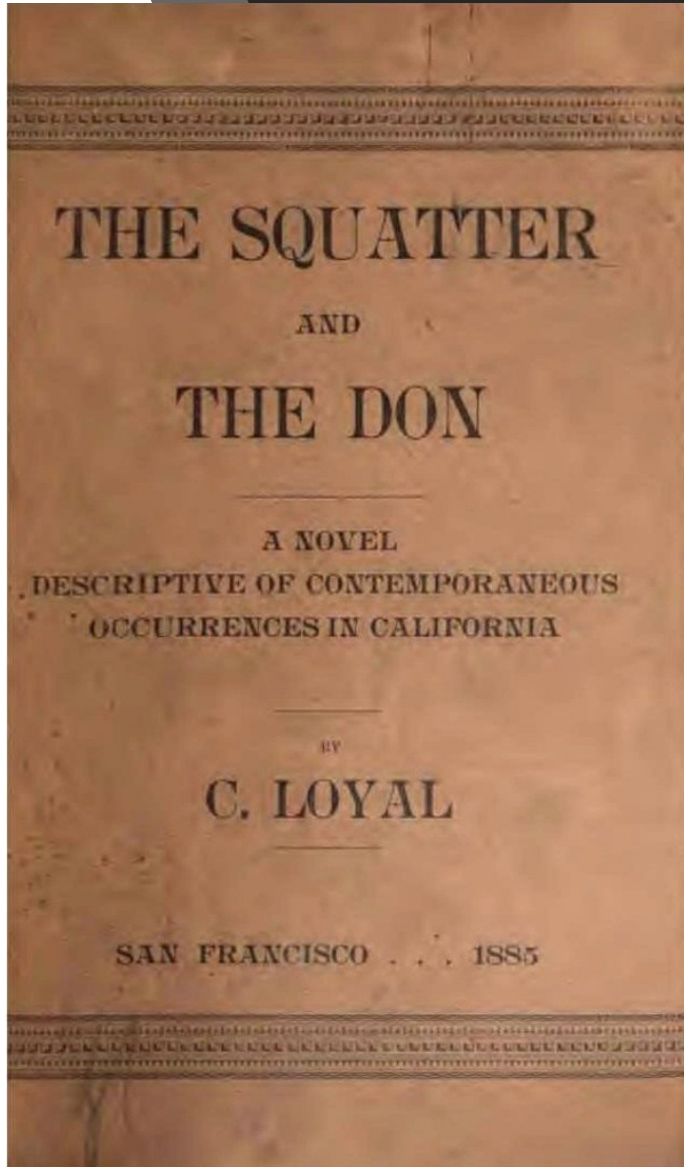
"Do you mean that you wouldn't have done so if your mother hadn't wished it?"

"No sir, not that. I think I would, for I felt great sympathy with the Don for the contemptible manner in which the squatters received the propositions he made them. I was convinced then that the land belonged to him, and nobody had a right to take it without paying for it." (252-3)



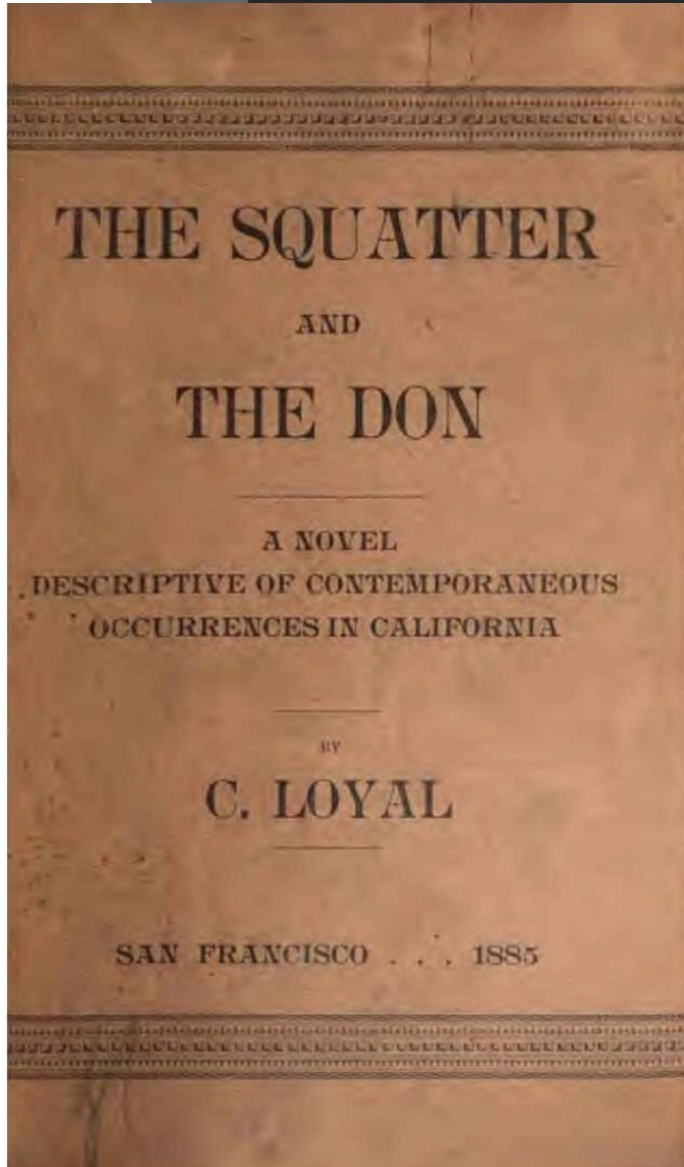
# *The Squatter and the Don*

- What are the “kinks” in/of this novel?
- Slight linguistic discrepancies and deviations indicate a bilingual landscape.
- Mexican-American land claims reveal the vapidness of the doctrine of “terra nullius.”
- Bribery and corruption are also kinks, perverting the course of justice/history.
- Is the novel itself a “kink” within/outside the canon? Idiosyncratic and anomalous?



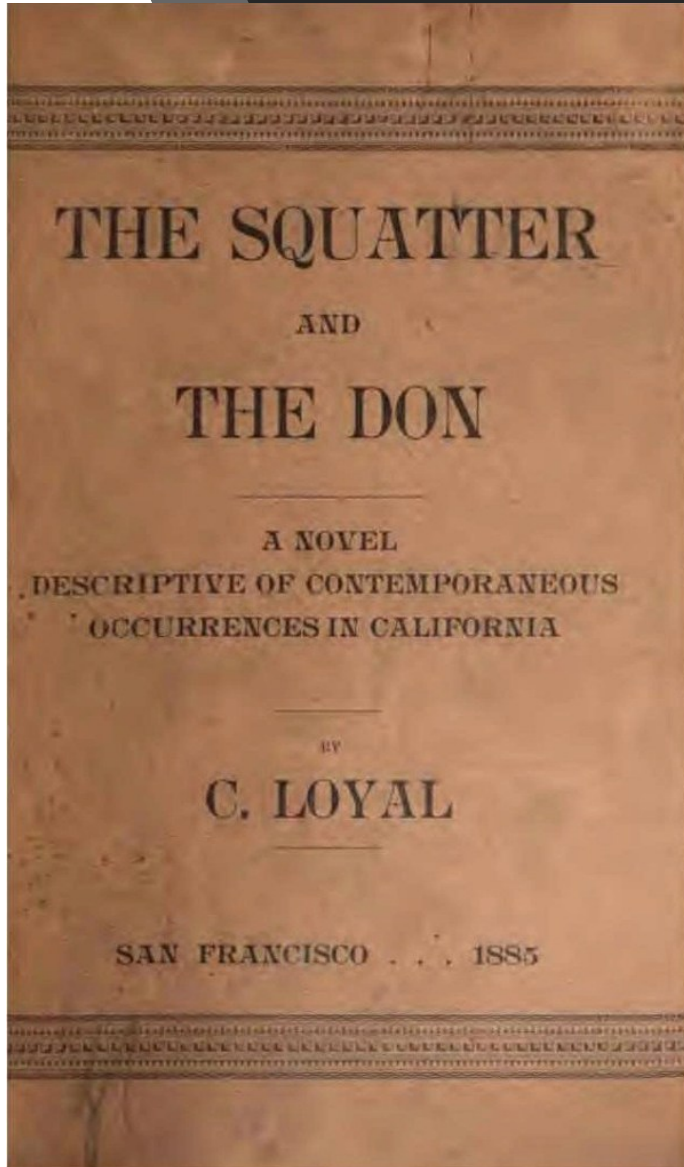
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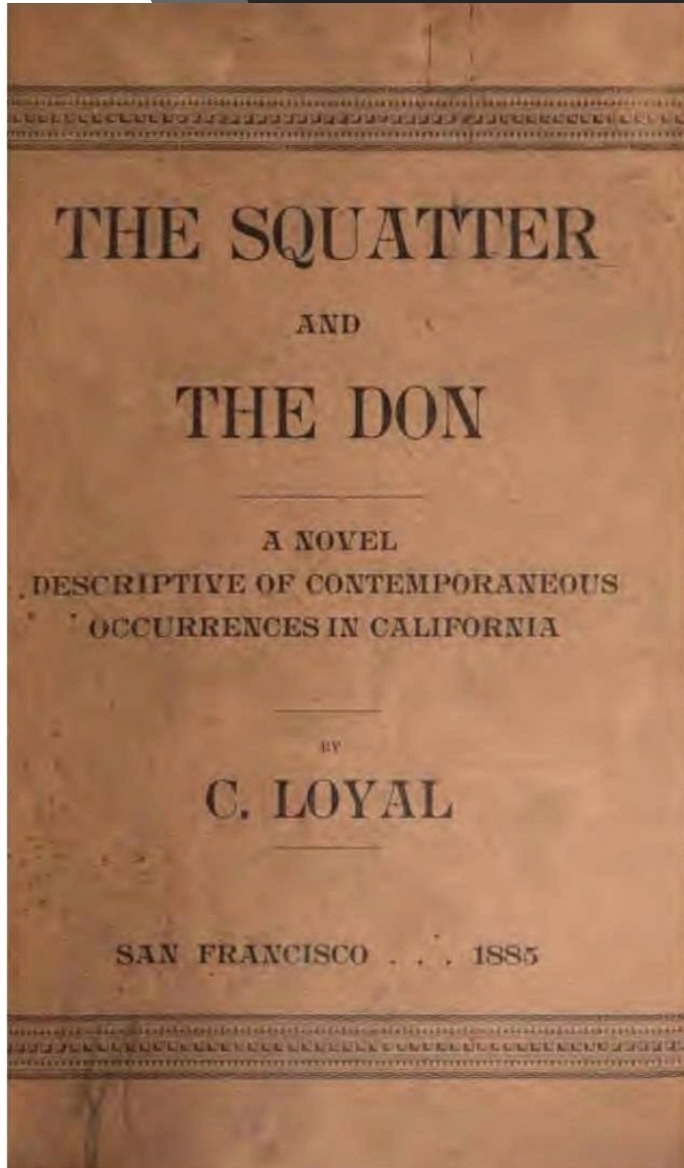
- A reminder of some key concepts...
- Identity, Community
- Belonging, Difference
- Race, Gender, Language
- History, Time / temporality
- Trauma, Fantasy
- Performance / appearance



# *The Squatter and the Don*

- A reminder of some key concepts...
- Representation, The Law, The State
- Crime, Deviance, Violence
- Territory, Space / spatiality
- Affect, Shame, Pride
- The Particular, The Universal





# *The Squatter and the Don*

- *The Squatter and the Don* is the portrait of a society in transition, and a social order that is vanishing.
- A triple transition: Spanish sovereignty to Anglo ascendancy; a form of feudalism to “venture” capitalism; and venture capitalism to the reign of monopolies.
- It is a story of loss, disintegration, and trauma remembered; but it has a utopian (even messianic) vision for the future.

**WIKIPEDIA**

# Why a Wikipedia Assignment?

- Wikipedia is one of the top-ten Internet sites, and often is the first result in Google searches.
- We all use it as our first (and often last) stop to get information about almost anything and everything.
- But to use it well, you need to know how it is made... which is best done by helping to make it.



# Why a Wikipedia Assignment?

- Writing for Wikipedia also involves you in one of the university's central missions: the creation and dissemination of knowledge.
- Unlike conventional exams and essays, what you write for Wikipedia has a long-term purpose, audience, and impact beyond your personal learning and assessment.



# Why a Wikipedia Assignment?

- Wikipedia has many strengths, but also many weaknesses; it is very uneven. But it is a work in progress: it can always be improved.
- One of its weaknesses is that while it is good on, for example, pop culture and military history (which reflects the interests of active editors), it is poor on, for example, women, minorities, and the non-Anglophone world.



# Why a Wikipedia Assignment?

- Editing Wikipedia will therefore help you develop your skills in using Wikipedia, evaluating online and other sources, research, and writing for a public audience.
- It will also add to the encyclopedia's information on an otherwise under-represented topic, and help future students and the public learn about US Latino/Chicano literature.



# Editing Wikipedia

- Remember that you cannot break Wikipedia: anything you do can later be undone.
- Look at the documentation and resources linked from our project page.
- But also start editing: write something on your user page. Make an edit (even if just adding a comma) on an article or two.
- Read the article we will be working on, and think about how they might be improved.



# Editing Wikipedia

- Wikipedia is built through countless minor increments and revisions. NB those who contribute to it are called “editors,” rather than “writers.”
- You are also participating in an established culture with its own expectations and standards. Respect that, and be prepared to communicate.
- All this means that you *cannot* postpone the Wikipedia assignment. It will continue through the semester.





# Editing Wikipedia

- An encyclopedia article is very different from an argumentative essay, which is driven by a thesis.
- An encyclopedia article is a synthesis of “reliable sources.” You are compiling information that comes from elsewhere.
- What matters is “verifiability” (and not “truth”!)
- The “Five Pillars” include a “neutral point of view.”



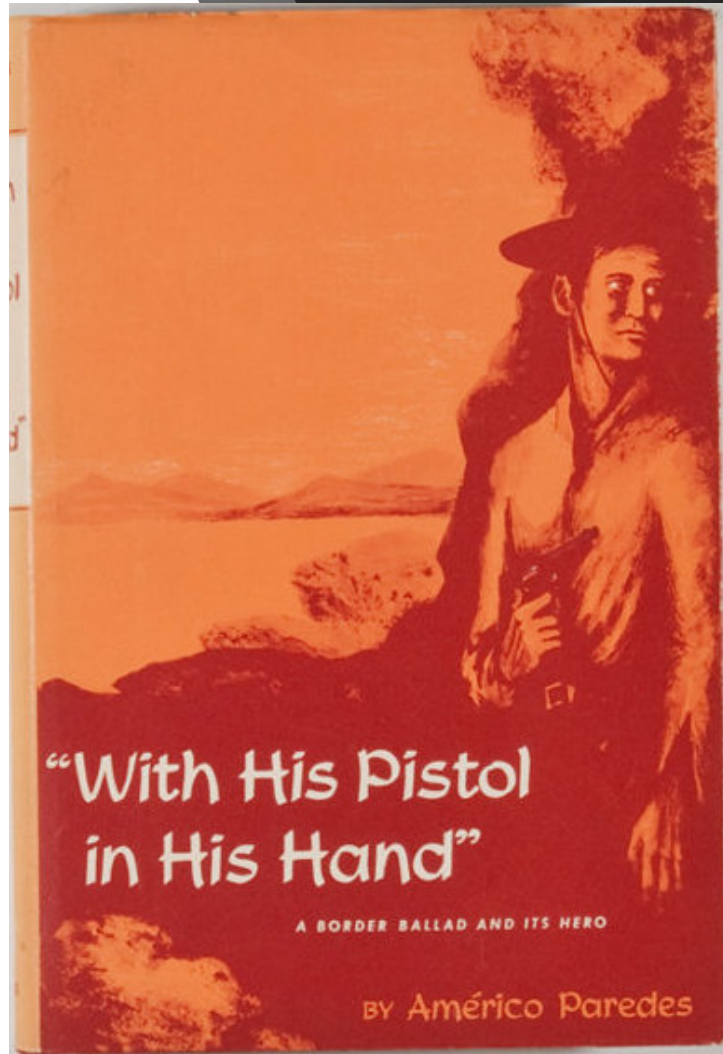
# Editing Wikipedia

- Talk pages are places to plan, dialogue, and collaborate.
- Watchlists help you keep on top of what has been added recently.
- History tabs and “diffs” help you analyze what is new and who has done what.



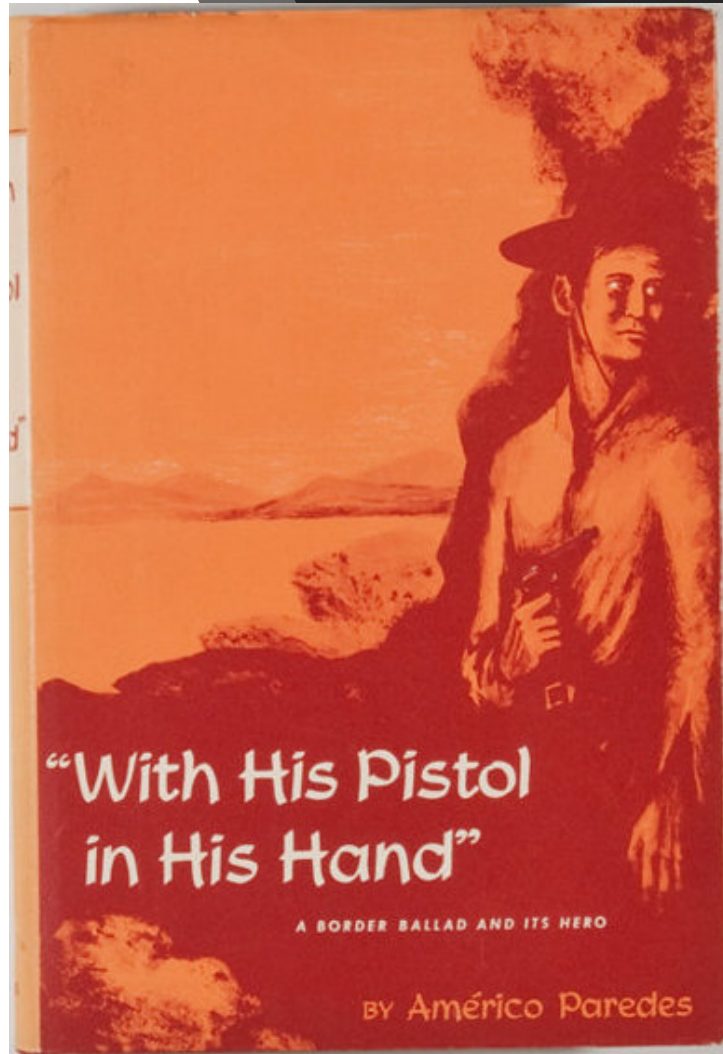
**“WITH HIS PISTOL IN HIS  
HAND”**

# “With His Pistol in His Hand”



- By Américo Paredes (1915-1999), one of first scholars of Chicano culture
- Based on his PhD dissertation
- A study of a *corrido* or border ballad
- The ballad (and the book) is about Gregorio Cortez, who shoots a sheriff and flees the Texas Rangers.
- “Dissect[s] the roots, the impact, and the significance of border struggle”

# *“With His Pistol in His Hand”*



- What are the different kinds of conflict that this book depicts?
- How does the presence of a border influence culture, politics, or history in Southern Texas?
- What is the use, purpose, or social function of a) oral “legend” and b) popular balladry? Is this “literature”?
- What does the book say about History and the best way to study Chicano history?

**NEXT STEPS**

# For Tuesday

- Read Part One of *“With His Pistol in His Hand.”*
- Watch the movie version (*The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez*) also if you wish.
- Write a blog post (c. 400 words) about your reading, and publish it Monday evening.
- Continue reading and experimenting with Wikipedia.