

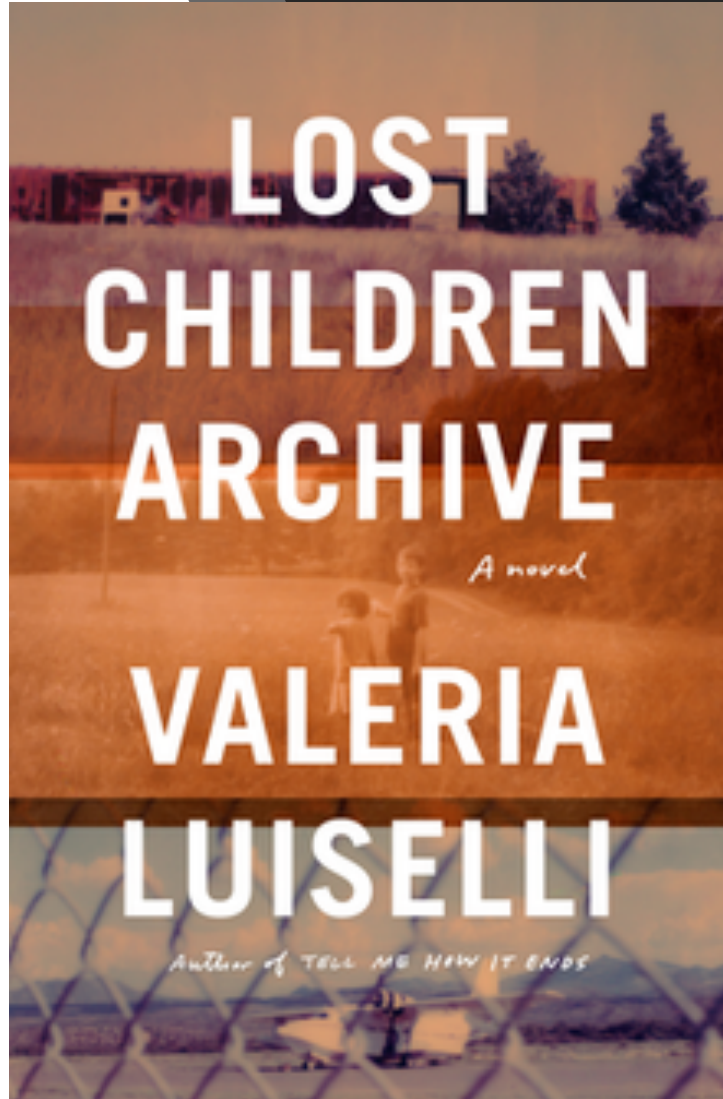


SPAN322: “North of the Río Grande” US Latino/Chicano Literature

Lost Children Archive Ib
April 2, 2020

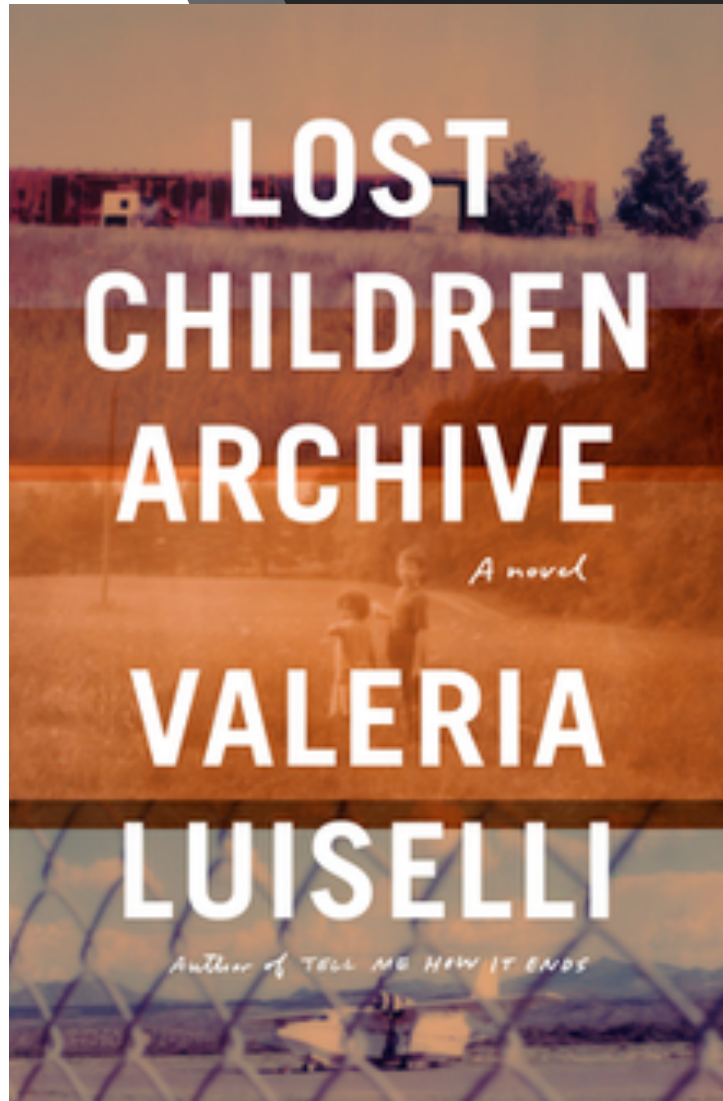
LOST CHILDREN ARCHIVE

Lost Children Archive



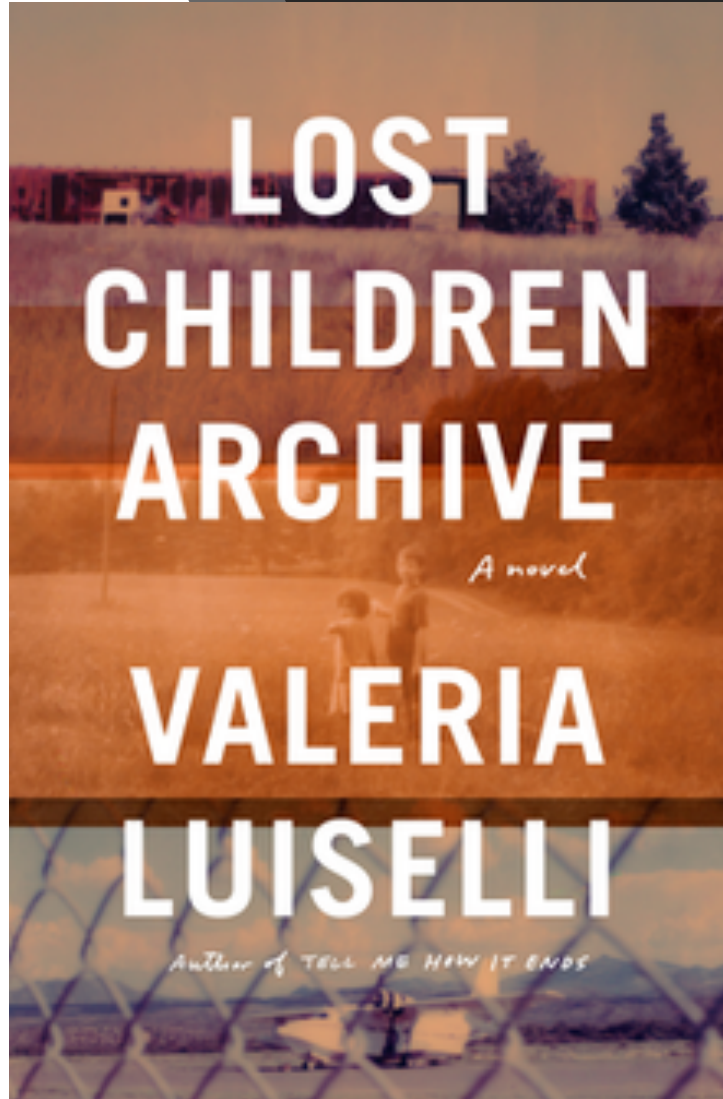
- By Valeria Luiselli (1983-)
- Based on Luiselli's experience as a translator for migrant children in the US court system; published 2019
- Also a road novel, and the tale of a dysfunctional family
- "A fascinating demonstration of the interplay between fiction and nonfiction"

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- What is the place of children in this book?
- How does the family's story relate to the larger story?
- How would you compare the father's and the mother's projects?
- What is the effect of the mother's point of view and interior monologue?
- What does the book have to say about time (and history)?
- What does it say about space?

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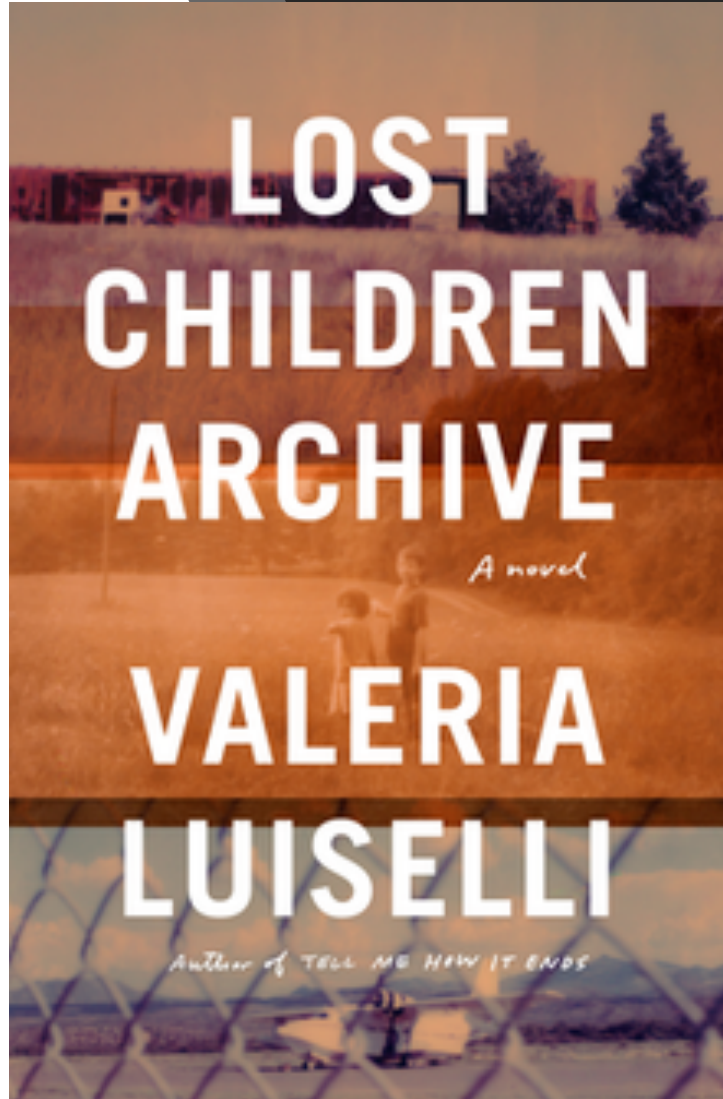
- What does this book say about relationships?
- What is the relationship between the family and what they see and pass through?
- What does this book say about archives?
- What does it say about sound?
- About images?
- And about stories?
- What does it suggest should be the role of the storyteller?

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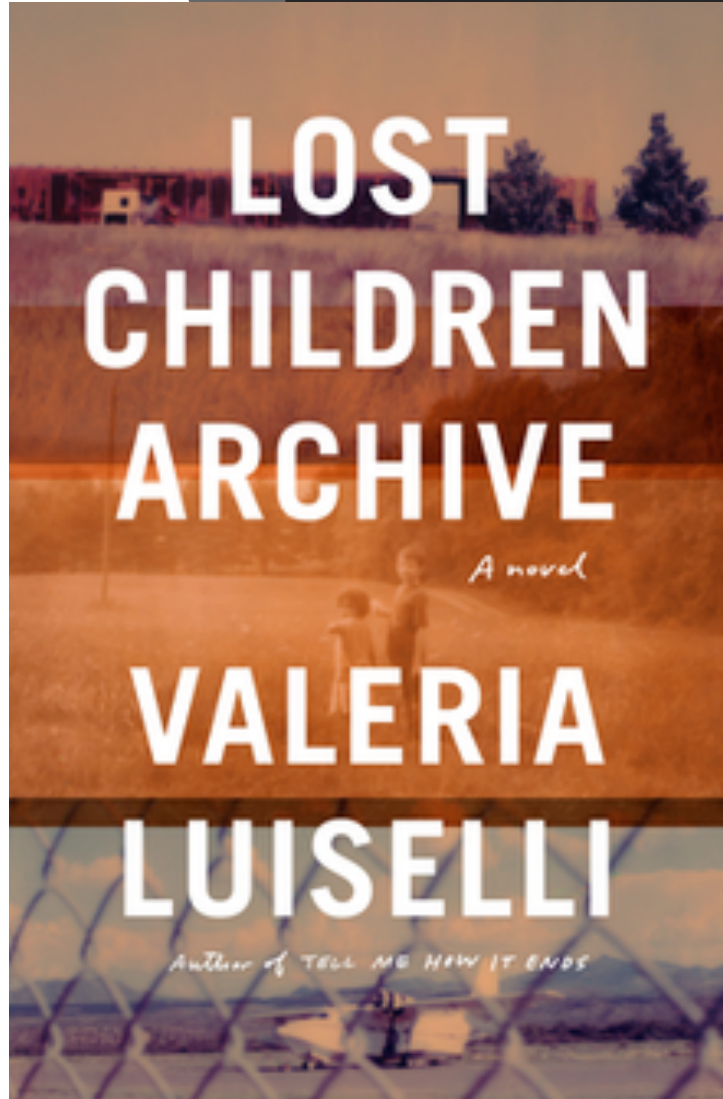
- This is a self-reflexive novel, that at times is as much about other texts as it is about the “real” ...
- And yet it is very concerned with the real, and with the relationship between texts (and textuality) and reality.
- What is the role of all these other stories and sounds: books, audiobooks, music, conversations, memories...?
- How does the novel avoid solipsism, being only about itself?

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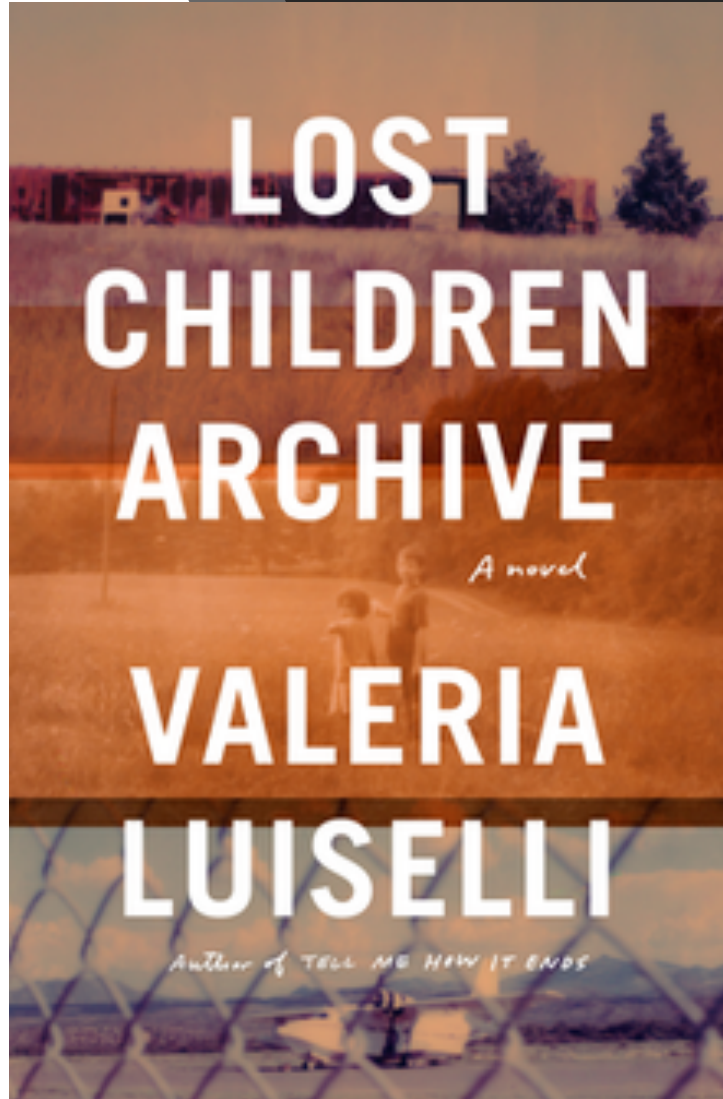
- Similarly perhaps, this is also a novel that is very much focused on the individual, on a particular voice, on the “I” ...
- And yet it troubles the certainties of autobiography. (Starting with the question of the narrator’s name.)
- It questions the relationship between self and other, and the barriers between them.
- It is interested in the potential but also pitfalls of communication: What can we ever know of anyone else?

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- What is the role and status of the border here?
- There are borders everywhere: within the car; between the car and the outside; between Anglo and Latino; between the USA and Mexico.
- All of these borders are fraught, and offer obstacles; they are not easily crossed, not without some sacrifice.
- These borders also have echoes, resonances, and ramifications.

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- What might this book (or the others we are reading) have to say to our current condition?
- We see the reassertion of borders and the prohibition of mobility, on both global and local scales.
- Fear and anxiety have become dominant affects, almost overwhelmingly.
- There is a fear of contamination, of infection, from both people and objects.
- We are redefining and rethinking the nature and limits of “community.”

NEXT STEPS

For Tuesday

- Finish *Lost Children Archive*.
- Write a blog post (c. 400 words) about your reading, and publish it Monday evening.
- Keep an eye on Wikipedia articles, for Good Article Review. Revise, improve, and copy-edit.
- Wash your hands and stay safe.