

INGL 3300-066--“**Post-Apocalyptic Literature and Film**” (UPRM, Fall 2015)  
Assignment #4—Critical Response #2 (First draft Th Nov. 5; Final draft due Th Nov. 12)

**Format/requirements.** There is no specific number of required quotes from the text, but it is expected that you will demonstrate close reading of *The Road*, and that you will use multiple citations to help build your argument. Cite quotes by page number. Use of secondary sources (suggestions below) is encouraged but not required. (However, the use of one academic source will be required for the final revised/expanded essay due Dec. 3). Length: 300-350 words, including at a minimum a short introductory paragraph with a thesis statement, two body paragraphs, and a concluding paragraph. *1 ½ -2 double-spaced page.* Times New Roman 12 font, 1” margins. Bring a full draft to class **Th Nov. 5** for peer review. The revised **final draft** is due **Th Nov. 12**, 2015 at the beginning of class.

**CRITICAL ESSAY questions [CHOOSE ONE]**

- 1) Analyze the boy’s “silent treatments” in the last third of the novel as an “articulate silence.” [IF YOU NEED ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES]:  
What are the main reasons for the boy’s silence? What message does he convey to his father, through silence? Compare the significance of what the boy *chooses to say* when he does talk, and what he *chooses not to say* (after the father’s repeated insistence that he must talk).
- 2) Compare the role of the father’s dreams, and the boy’s dreams.  
[MORE GUIDELINES]: What does the father teach the boy about dreams?  
What does the boy learn about dreams from his father, vs from experience?  
What do you think are in the boy’s dreams that he cannot express?
- 3) The father tells Ely that he doesn’t know what his son believe, but that whatever it is, he will never get over it. What do you think the son believes?  
Support your argument with multiple citations from the novel, *The Road*.
- 4) Describe and compare the boy’s *immediate* and *delayed* reactions to two scenes of horror: the human “meat” in the basement, and the human infant roasted over a fire. How might these scenes push him to create an imagined community; or, re-evaluate his father’s “Old stories of courage and justice”?

- 5) “The God of *The Road* is the impossible presence...” (Skrimshire 2011: 7). Using quotations from at least three sections of the novel, discuss the possible meanings of this statement. Take into consideration both dystopian (the silent or absent god), or utopian interpretations (“dream the impossible dream”; or, the “impossible” sufferings of Job, which fortify his faith).

### SOURCES CITED in lecture and ADDITIONAL SUGGESTED READINGS

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. London: Verso, 1983. Revised and expanded 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1991.

Collado-Rodríguez, Francisco. "Trauma and Storytelling in Cormac McCarthy's *No Country For Old Men* and *The Road*." *Papers on Language & Literature* 48.1 (2012): 45-69.

De Bruyn, Ben. "Borrowed Time, Borrowed World and Borrowed Eyes: Care, Ruin and Vision in McCarthy's *The Road* and Harrison's *Ecocriticism*." *English Studies* 91.7 (2010): 776-789.

Millán Alba, José Antonio. "El Discurso Sobre Dios en *La Carretera*, de Cormac McCarthy." *Pensamiento Y Cultura* 17.2 (2014): 182-207. *Academic Search Complete*. Web. 2 July 2015.

Morgenstern, Naomi. "Postapocalyptic Responsibility: Patriarch at the End of the World in Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*." *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, 25.2 (2014): 33-61.

Rambo, Shelly L. "Beyond Redemption?: Reading Cormac McCarthy's 'The Road' after the End of the World." *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 41.2 (2008): 99-120.

Schaub, Thomas H. "Secular scripture and Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*." *Renascence: Essays on Values in Literature* 61.3 (Spring 2009): p153(15). [non

Skrimshire, Stefan. "'There Is No God and We Are His Prophets': Deconstructing Redemption in Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*." *Journal for Cultural Research* 15.1 (2011): 1-14.

Weilenberg, Eric J. "God, Morality, and Meaning in Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*." *Cormac McCarthy Journal* (Fall 2010): 1-16.