

Gift of the Desert Dog

STUDY GUIDE

Note to the teacher: The source materials, chapter summaries, topics/themes, and *Borderlands for Peace* position paper, are important parts of this guide. Use them in support of your integrated teamwork and lesson planning.

Suggested lesson activities; G = group, I = individual

1. Character study G, I. Choose from the following list of characters and then: write a 1-2 paragraph summary of that character's strengths and weaknesses. Give examples from either description or dialogue to support your opinions, beliefs.

Danny Rivas

Diego 'Digs' Ramirez

Tony Rivas

Cecilia Rivas

Joseph Estes

2. Identifying the 'hook' in a story I. Reread chapters 1, 2, and 3 of *Gift of the Desert Dog*. While you read, on a separate sheet of paper, take note of anything described by the author i.e., scene, mood, time of day, action, dialogue, that is interesting to you (draws you into the story).

3. Book Discussion G. Bring the products from lesson activity 2 into one or all of the following:

Team roundtable

Character dress-up

Class debate

Character role-play

4. Identifying conflict in a story G, I. For each of the following characters, identify two sources of conflict i.e., Cecilia Rivas vs. Danny and Tony Rivas.

Danny Rivas

Joseph Estes

Write a 250-word summary describing the conflict and suggesting possible ways each character could avoid the conflict. Be prepared to defend your positions in a group/class discussion to follow.

5. Storyboards and cartoons I. Draw/create a storyboard or cartoon of your favorite character in action. Place this character in your own scene, setting, situation, and allow them to fail/succeed based on their strengths, weaknesses, as identified in lesson activity 1.

6. Native American/Spanish language study G, I. Use a Spanish/English, English/Spanish dictionary to learn the meaning of unfamiliar words found in the story. Invite your school's Spanish teacher(s) to join your class to help you with the proper pronunciation of these words.

7. Illegal Immigration study I. Locate an article on immigration from your local newspaper. Read and then write a short summary. Bring the article to class to report. Follow the reports with a full class discussion. Create a bulletin board display on immigration, using the arguments from your class discussion to construct both pro and con columns.

8. Making Indian Fry Bread G, I. As a math and/or home economics/family-consumer science learning activity, use the following traditional Indian fry bread recipe to create bread for four people (similar to the bread made by Cecilia Rivas in *Gift of the Desert Dog*):

Ingredients:

1 cup unbleached flour

¼ teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon powdered milk or buttermilk

1 teaspoon baking powder

½ cup warm water

Vegetable oil for frying

Preparation:

-Sift together the flour, salt, powdered milk or buttermilk, and baking powder in a large bowl. Pour the water over the flour mixture and stir the dough with a fork until it starts to form a clump.

-Turn out onto a lightly floured surface and gently knead until the dough is just elastic and comes together. Do not overwork. Shape the dough into a ball and wrap tightly with plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

-Divide the dough into four (4) equal pieces. Flatten each piece and pat to form a 7 inch circle, making as thin as possible.

-In a large sauté pot or deep fryer, heat the vegetable oil to 360 degrees F. Slip the rounds 1 at a time into the hot oil and cook for 2 minutes, turning once with a long-handled spoon. Drain on paper towels.

-Fry bread can be kept warm in a low heat oven for about 1 hour. They can be refrigerated and reheated in a 360 degree F oven for 10 - 12 minutes before serving.

Important questions as you read *Gift of the Desert Dog*

- 1. How does Danny release the black coyote trapped in the flooded wash? How does the animal help *him* to escape?**
- 2. How would you describe Danny's and Digs' friendship?**
- 3. What makes Danny sad? How does he deal with his sadness?**
- 4. How important is Joseph in Danny's life? Explain.**
- 5. How important is Cecilia in Danny's life? Explain.**
- 6. In your own words, tell the creation story of the Tohono O'odham.**
- 7. Describe Paul Jensen, Danny's science teacher at San Xavier School.**
- 8. Do you think Jensen is a good teacher? Why or why not?**
- 9. What's not to like about Jake Boyle?**
- 10. Theft is rare on Indian reservations. Why does Danny take the eggs from Mister Delgado's hen house? How does he excuse it in his mind?**
- 11. Describe a ceremonial kih.**
- 12. What is one spiritual interpretation of the Tohono O'odham symbol, 'the man-in-the-maze?'**

13. Why do you think the author caused Danny and Joseph to separate in the final chapters of the story?
14. What is an epiphany? What is Danny's epiphany?
15. After reading of the story, how would you write the next chapter in Danny's life? Take one class period and a one-hour homework session the same night to write a short, three-page chapter. To the best of your ability; create a 50-50 balance of description and dialogue.

Characters in *Gift of the Desert Dog*

Danny Rivas

Diego 'Digs' Ramirez

Tony Rivas

Cecilia Rivas

Sophie Rivas

Joseph Estes

Delores Estes

Paul Jensen

Theresa Cerona

Jake Boyle

Eddie Vincent

Nick Peters

Tom Charro

Burt Delaney

Gift of the Desert Dog

Topics & Themes

Topics:

- **Illegal immigration along the Arizona/Mexico border, Tohono O’odham reservation boundaries, drug smuggling, U.S. Border Patrol**
- **Alcohol abuse, family impact, relationships**
- **Custom, tradition, and religious belief of the Tohono O’odham, reservation life**
- **Geography of the Desert Southwest, animal behavior, environmental impact of drought, climate change**

Themes:

Man vs. nature

Man vs. self

Man vs. society

Gift of the Desert Dog

Chapter Summaries

Part One *Danny’s Trial*

Chapter 1

Twelve year-old Danny Rivas, a Tohono O’odham Indian living on a reservation in southern Arizona, is caught in a wash by a flash flood. Trapped by the current in the branches of a fallen sycamore, he encounters a frightened coyote entangled in the same tree. He is able to release the coyote and secure his own escape by taking advantage of the animal’s natural instincts. Danny also exhibits anger caused by a disconnect from his parents, particularly, a negligent father with a drinking problem.

Chapter 2

Met by his friend, Diego ‘Digs’ Ramirez, Danny returns home scraped and battered where mother, Cecilia, and older sister, Sophie, offer little sympathy or support for

his near-death experience. Accused by Sophie of making up the story of his injuries, he explodes in anger and runs from the house into the desert.

Chapter 3

Danny retreats to a remote hideaway called Sheep's Head Rock where he and his grandfather, Joseph, have built a ceremonial hut (kih). At a natural spring, he washes his wounds and tries to calm his angry spirit. In the process, he decides to punish his family and detractors at San Xavier Mission School by skipping class and relying on Digs for food and necessities. He also decides against keeping the coyote story secret. Instead, he will boast of his new status as 'Coyote-meeter' based on impressive lessons taught by his grandfather.

Chapter 4

Danny's father, Tony, returns home after a quick search for his runaway son. He learns from questioning Digs, and surmises that Danny is hiding out to get back at the family. In an argument with Cecilia, he announces that he will leave Danny alone for a while in the desert to stew in his juices. Meanwhile, Danny picks up supplies from Digs and adopts the role of a bandit to steal eggs from a neighbor's hen house.

Chapter 5

Danny spends the following day at the kih contemplating his next move. It is apparent as the hours pass that no one is going to come looking for him, and his thinking begins to change about staying in hiding. He realizes that he is only punishing himself while life on the reservation continues uninterrupted, and he grows increasingly lonely for his friends and the daily routine of school. When Digs leaves class early to pay him a visit, Danny gets angry with his friend for skipping! Their discussion (argument) leads Danny to decide to return home on Saturday morning when his father is working. Digs promises to spread the word about Danny's quest at school.

Chapter 6

A desperate Cecilia telephones her father, Joseph, for help. Tony is determined to let Danny find his own way home, and she is near frantic with worry over his safety. Joseph agrees to come to his grandson's aid, driving from the other side of the reservation to spend the night. He hikes alone to Sheep's Head Rock where he and Danny have a heartfelt talk about the disconnect from his father.

Chapter 7

Joseph shares the story of Danny's early relatives while discovering the true source of the boy's pain. He questions him about his responsibility to his father and

privately resolves to face Tony with the facts about Danny's low self-esteem. When he learns of his wild encounter in the wash, he reinforces Danny's status as 'Coyote-meeter.'

Chapter 8

Joseph listens to more of the tale of Danny's unforgettable experience. In turn, he relates the equally haunting O'odham legend of Coyote, P'ittoi-the Elder Brother, Earth maker, and Buzzard; the creation story of Woodpecker saving the people from the great flood by hanging onto the sky. Danny is fascinated by his grandfather's narrative and begins to see himself in a different light. Returning along the trail in the dark, they meet Tony, finally coming to the rescue.

Chapter 9

Tony tries to break the ice with Danny, letting him know that they have been very worried. Danny isn't so sure that things have changed since he ran away, but proudly informs his father of his newly acquired status. Tony accepts his son's announcement with a bit of skepticism. As they near the settlement, Joseph privately signals Tony that they need to talk seriously about Danny.

Part Two *Joseph*

Chapter 10

Danny and Joseph have an early morning encounter with a mountain lion behind the Rivas property. Danny's tutelage continues when he learns about the tragic impact of global warming on the natural order—wild animals drawn close to civilization by an on-going drought in the Southwest. When he rejoins his family for breakfast Danny gets another lesson in reality; a two-week grounding for running away, his sentence beginning at suppertime. After Tony leaves for a weekend landscaping job, Danny relates to Cecilia the story of the coyote and his near-death experience in the wash.

Chapter 11

Danny rejoins Digs and his schoolmates at the Saturday soccer game. He gets a less than enthusiastic response from his closer circle about the coyote affair, and an outright hostile greeting from two school bullies. A fight breaks out between Danny and a ringleader named Jake Boyle. When Danny's science teacher and soccer coach, Paul Jensen, steps between them, only Digs' quick thinking saves his friend from suspension. Required to sit on the sideline near the team, Danny learns he is likely the highest scorer on Jensen's science test.

Chapter 12

At his Monday detention, Danny gets back his test; a 97! Jensen offers him and another student a special assignment at Kitt Peak Observatory. The news is the break Danny needs, bolstering his sagging spirit. During a heart-to-heart with Theresa, Danny reveals the real reason for the distance between him and his father; Tony's drinking, and the neglect that has resulted. As they leave the building they encounter a surprise visitor; Joseph arriving to retrieve his grandson.

Chapter 13

On the drive to Joseph's house in Pan Tak, Danny learns that the first week of his grounding will be with his grandparents (Joseph has intervened on his behalf). He will return to be with Tony and Cecilia after a Sunday birthday party for Joseph at nearby Pena Blanca Lake. Joseph entreats Danny not to assume blame for the break with his father, but instead, to accept his new position as 'Coyote-meeter' and look for answers on a higher spiritual plain. Joseph takes Danny for an unexpected visit to meet the oldest member of the O'odham nation. Jonathan Luhya Gray Horse is a tribal elder...and the only other living 'Coyote-meeter.'

Chapter 14

When Jonathan Gray Horse hears of Danny's special connection with Coyote, he honors him with the gift of an antelope medicine pouch containing sacred objects (see Key to the Illustrations). Gray Horse provides Danny with a powerful lesson in tribal history and tradition by showing him a peace medal given to the elder's father by Theodore Roosevelt.

Chapter 15

On the way home, Danny and Joseph stop at a store in Sells for a snack. Danny learns from the store clerk of the reverence the Indian community holds for Joseph, but not necessarily for him as "Coyote-meeter.' The next day in school Danny shares his experiences, expressing both disappointment and confusion over the way people are reacting to his status. Everyone seems to have lost the faith his grandfather says is so important. In science class, Jensen announces that Danny has been chosen for the Kitt Peak program.

Chapter 16

The confusion continues for Danny after his first two days at Kitt Peak when he notices a waning of Joseph's enthusiasm. His grandfather's eager smile and spirit had always been the beacon toward which Danny steered his ship of life. It was the main reason he felt so safe with him; he was always right. But now, Joseph admits he is generally ignorant of modern science and reveals to Danny details of his poor schooling. And when he urges Danny to use his heart rather than his head, doubt begins to creep into the boy's mind. Sunday arrives and Danny accompanies his grandparents to the party at the lake.

Chapter 17

Joseph's eightieth birthday party is an old-fashioned waila (O'odham word for 'dance' from the old Spanish 'baile') festival. Danny enjoys the food and fun with relaxed abandon; an important change from recent stress and tension felt toward his immediate family. The important connection fortifies him with new energy to succeed in his science project and remain loyal to his beloved grandfather. Danny waits in suspense for a progress report from Jensen and chooses a topic on the constellation Virgo for his science presentation. He calls Joseph to invite him to the school presentation. Danny builds a three-dimensional model of the Constellation.

Chapter 18

Danny gives his presentation at a school assembly that includes the principal, Father Dobson, Cecilia, and Joseph replete in a stiff white shirt and fancy bolo tie. His performance is a success and he sheds the 'dumb little punk' mantra that has burdened him for so long. Danny's grounding ends and he is rewarded with a day of adventure with Digs at a canyon swimming hole. When the new school week begins, Jensen informs Danny that he will receive an 'A+' on his presentation; a grade the teacher rarely gives. He proposes to Danny that he consider a scholarship to attend private DeMassey Academy in Denver, Colorado. Completely stunned, Danny is gripped by a sudden fear of the unknown. They have an emotional exchange during which Jensen implores Danny to think globally, envisioning himself as a proud Tohono O'odham living in a rapidly changing world.

Chapter 19

Danny ponders Jensen's proposal in the days ahead. The idea that sounded so unachievable at first now seems within the realm of possibility. But Danny isn't sure the idea will go over big with his parents, especially Tony, who lacks a positive attitude toward school. He decides to try to use Joseph as a go-between. His talk with Joseph leads to a pivotal decision to trust his grandfather's judgment and seek guidance from the spirits of his ancestors. At Joseph's suggestion, they hit upon a plan to travel to the cave of I'toi near the summit of Baboquivari Peak.

Part Three *The Journey*

Chapter 20

Danny shares his plan with Digs at school. When Digs offers to join them, Danny declines, citing the personal nature of the decision he made with his grandfather. He also tells his friend about Jensen and the school in Colorado. Digs warns him about the dangers they face. Joseph picks up Danny after school on Friday for the drive to the trailhead. Their journey begins near the tiny town of Pitoikam.

Chapter 21

Danny and Joseph climb into the rugged hills surrounding Baboquivari Peak. Their goal is to reach a natural rock formation called ‘Lion’s Ledge’ that night. They are forced off the main route by a group of ‘mules,’ or drug smugglers, camped along the trail. The new path is steeper and more treacherous, but they press forward diligently. Back at the market in San Xavier, Theresa learns of the dangerous hike from Digs. She smartly decides to tell Cecilia and Tony.

Chapter 22

Danny and Joseph thread their way through a field of giant boulders and a forest of saguaro cacti on the upper hillsides. Joseph tells Danny about the water at Scorpion’s Pool, situated just below the place where they will camp for the night. While scaling the side of a rock wall Joseph nearly falls, but is pulled to safety by Danny. Sensing that Joseph is weakening, Danny uses his own reserves to support his grandfather along the trail. Having received the news from Theresa, Tony, along with Digs and Tom Charro, a long-time friend on the O’odham police force, head out in pursuit of Danny and Joseph. Tom reassures his worried friend that the U.S. Border Patrol will provide a helicopter search in the morning. Tom knows the mountain well and guesses correctly about the trailhead at Pitoikam.

Chapter 23

Danny’s emotional pep talk keeps Joseph going when the elder’s strength is nearly gone. As darkness falls on the mountain, they struggle to reach the hidden spring at Scorpion’s Pool. There they encounter a black coyote; the same coyote from the wash. Joseph sees the meeting as a positive omen of what lies ahead at I’itoi’s cave. With the rest and fresh water they make it to their camp at Lion’s Ledge, but barely. Joseph is weak and hardly able to eat. He sleeps fitfully, realizing that he cannot continue in the morning and that Danny must go on alone. The rescue party rises early to hit the trail. They hike quickly in a desperate attempt to close the gap. Burt Delaney, a U.S. Border patrolman, arrives in the helicopter.

Chapter 24

Spotting what he believes to be Danny and Joseph’s fire, Delaney maneuvers his copter in for a closer look. The camp he has located is actually the smugglers. A pistol slug fired at the copter penetrates his windshield, but causes only minimal damage. He radios their position to the Naco Station base. He continues his search of the vast mountainside. Danny rises to find Joseph deeply entranced in a tribal ritual. In spite of Danny’s protests, Joseph is able to convince him to continue to the summit alone. Joseph shows Danny an ancient map and reveals the secrets of the ‘man-in-the-maze.’

Chapter 25

The rescuers gain ground, arriving at the spot where Danny and Joseph left the trail to avoid the smugglers. Danny braves the wind and rain near the heights of Baboquivari. Just as he is about to give up and return to Joseph, the storm clears and the howl of a coyote calls him onward. He stops frequently to read Joseph's map and decipher the strange design. By unraveling cleverly concealed clues he is able to advance toward the cave.

Chapter 26

Delaney radios the rescuers that his fuel is running low, but won't return to base until he covers the Lion's Ledge area. Danny has a harrowing experience crossing a tree bridge above a deep chasm. He is forced to leave his backpack behind. The rescuers reach the rocky saddle below Scorpion's Pool. Delaney makes a startling discovery on Lion's ledge; Joseph's deathly still figure huddled by the fire pit!

Part Four *Baboquivari*

Chapter 27

Danny solves the mystery of the whirlwind as he nears I'toi's cave. Tony and the rescuers get the troubling message from Delaney and race for Joseph on Lion's Ledge.

Chapter 28

Danny discovers the Shrine of I'toi in a secluded glen near the summit. He is amazed to find a treasure of sacred objects left in the cave by his ancestors. He offers Joseph's antelope skin map as a gift. As dusk descends, a strong wind and the murmur of voices call him into a dark and twisted stand of oaks. He is swarmed by bees that do not sting, but warn him of powerful spirits. Tony, Digs, and Tom reach Lion's Ledge where they find Joseph deep in a trance. When he awakens momentarily for water, they learn that he is in direct communication with Danny.

Chapter 29

Terror grips Danny as he faces the spirits of his ancestors in the glen. The black coyote appears on the trail, following him back to the cave. Twice, the dog disappears, only to reappear. The coyote's beckoning combined with a mysterious signal Danny receives from the night sky provides him with a new awakening and the answers he seeks. Joseph's ritual concludes in stunning fashion and Danny's safety and well-being is assured. Joseph explains the proceedings to an astonished group of rescuers.

Chapter 30

The black coyote pays Danny a final visit. Danny performs a sage ritual before starting the dangerous descent to Lion's Ledge. An impatient Tony wants to continue up the mountain to find Danny, but is discouraged by Joseph. Tony is skeptical of Joseph's explanation. Joseph evokes the legends of their people and the memory of Jonathan Gray Horse.

Chapter 31

Danny returns to Lion's Ledge where he experiences a joyful reunion with Tony, Joseph, Tom Charro, and Digs. Danny and Tony express sincere contriteness toward one another, resolving to begin a new chapter in their lives together. They gather by the fire to hear Danny's tale of adventure and spiritual awakening. Danny announces that he will decline Jensen's offer and stay on the reservation where he feels a powerful connection with his people.

Gift of the Desert Dog

Source Materials for Teachers

A Natural History of the Sonoran Desert, Steven J. Phillips & Patricia Wentworth Comus, Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum Press, Univ. of California Press.

Animal Energies, Gary Buffalo Horn Man, Dancing Otter Publishing.

Answered Prayers: Miracles and Milagros Along the Border, Eileen Oktavec, Bernard Fontana, Univ. Arizona Press.

Beliefs and Holy Places: A Spiritual Geography of the Pimeria Alta, James S. Griffith, Univ. Arizona Press.

Cultures of Habitat: On Nature, Culture, and Story, Gary Paul Nabhan, Counterpoint.

Enduring Seeds: Native American Agriculture and Wild Plant Conservation, Gary Paul Nabhan, North Point Press.

Gathering the Desert, Gary Paul Nabhan, Paul Mirocha (Illustrator), Univ. Arizona Press.

Ocean Power: Poems from the Desert, Ofelia Zepeda, Univ. Arizona Press.

Of Earth and Little Rain: The Papago Indians, Bernard L. Fontana, John P. Schaefer (Photographer), Univ. Arizona Press.

O'Odham Creation and Related Events, (The Southwest Center Series) as told to Ruth Benedict, Univ. Arizona Press.

Papago Woman, Ruth Murray Underhill, Waveland Press.

Rainhouse & Ocean: Speeches for the Papago Year, Ruth Murray Underhill, Donald M. Bahr, Baptisto Lopez, Jose Pancho, Univ. Arizona Press.

Singing for Power: The Song Magic of the Papago Indians of Southern Arizona, Ruth Murray Underhill, Univ. Arizona Press.

The Desert Smells Like Rain: A Naturalist in Papago Indian Country, Gary Paul Nabhan, North Point Press.

The Geography of Childhood: Why Children Need Wild Places, Gary Paul Nabhan, Stephen A. Trimble, Beacon Press.

Additional Materials for Teachers

The Tohono O'Odham, Jacqueline D. Greene, Franklin Watts/Grolier Publishing.

Myths & Legends of the Indians of the Southwest, Bertha Dutton & Caroline Olin, Bellerophon Books.

Southwestern Indian Arts & Crafts, Mark Bahti, K C Publications, Inc.

Southwestern Indian Ceremonials, Tom Bahti, K C Publications, Inc.

Southwestern Indian Tribes, Tom Bahti, K C Publications, Inc.

The Papago Indians and their Basketry, Terry DeWald, author/publisher.

Source Materials for Students

Animal Energies, Gary Buffalo Horn Man, Dancing Otter Publishing.

Gathering the Desert, Gary Paul Nabhan, Paul Mirocha (Illustrator), Univ. Arizona Press.

Ocean Power: Poems from the Desert, Ofelia Zepeda, Univ. Arizona Press.

Of Earth and Little Rain: The Papago Indians, Bernard L. Fontana, John P. Schaefer (Photographer), Univ. Arizona Press.

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Gift of the Desert Dog

Position paper

Robert L. Hunton is the author of novels for young readers, including *The Borderlands Trilogy-Gift of the Desert Dog, Secrets of the Medicine Pouch: Adventure in the Borderlands, Coyote-meeter's Abyss: Adventure in the Borderlands*

Borderlands for Peace

A comprehensive immigration plan that recognizes the strengths and contributions of all the peoples of the Americas is needed now more than ever.

A comprehensive illegal drug enforcement strategy that is multi-national in scope; encourages, supports, and protects the welfare and integrity of all the peoples of the Americas is needed now more than ever.

Background

I've been an educator all my adult life; more than 32 years in the public school classroom. The cornerstone of my work as a teacher (that foundation upon which I labor and for which I receive taxpayer reward) is that education is the key; the greatest driving force for good in the community, indeed, the world, and that I'm part of a collaborative movement of life-long learners dedicated to its advancement. And that without it, fear, prejudice, and hate will not only thrive but eventually form the basis for policy-making decisions.

No one can argue that acquiring an education is difficult. I said 'acquire' because it doesn't come to a person by osmosis, or because a terrific teacher passed it on. It's hard work, plain and simple. It requires patience, discipline, and respect for the views and opinions of others. To me, respect means tolerance. And so, acquiring an education also assumes that the learner will accept other's differences as equally

valid and valued. For this reason, perhaps above all others, I place the words 'education' and 'respect' together as defining beacons in our efforts to solve the problems we face.

As a writer living in a border region of the southwest, I've come to appreciate the Hispanic heritage and culture of the area, and along with it have gained a respect for the unique qualities of the people who live here. Those who call this land home are unavoidably joined by history, tradition, family, work, play, and a mutual desire to leave the world a better place for their grandchildren. And speaking to this end, no discriminatory policy enacted by a government, no selfish and uncaring act committed by a citizen, no circumstance of fate used to distract or excuse, in fact, no fence designed to keep the rest of the world out will solve our border issues or discourage those heralding education and respect as the real and rightful tools with which lasting solutions can be fashioned.

I'm in an enviable position as a teacher and as an author to bring facts to light. Those I'm unable to reach in the classroom, I can, perhaps, reach through printed media. I will continue to write stories that entertain, but also provide lessons about growing up, living in peaceful coexistence, making wise decisions, helping others, remaining true to one's name, and building a proud tradition for future generations.

Moving Ahead with an Immigration Plan

The current slowdown in illegals crossing our southern border is a direct result of the downturn in the U.S. economy. Those industries (places where job opportunities exist, i.e. housing, construction, manufacturing, and service employment) that have traditionally drawn from a multi-cultural labor force have been especially hard hit by the financial crisis. However, recent trends created (including the performance of stock market investment portfolios) are cyclical and unlikely to remain on a downward slant. People come here for jobs (frequently returning to their homes south of the border and/or sending their earnings home to family members). When, not if, the American economy picks up, those illegal immigration numbers will again increase. The problems along our border are not going away, and the need for a long term plan still remains an essential concern.

What a thoughtful immigration plan should include:

- The ideas, concepts, proposals, and initiatives of a wide range of people representing governments, agencies, and municipalities north and south of the border. Illegals aren't just from Mexico, and those calling the loudest for action along the border aren't just U. S. citizens. Due respect and consideration, including the use of majority rule principles, should be extended to all groups and individuals involved.

- An efficient, all-inclusive, new temporary worker visa system needs to be in place.
- A clear and well defined path to U. S. citizenship needs to be in place, both for those coming in and those who have been living here for a longer period.

**** The two preceding parts of the plan will likely need to include specific language to address issues unique to the southwest. Moving quickly on these programs should be a national priority. The executive and legislative branches in Washington and throughout the various states need to take leadership.**

- With the cooperation and assistance of the U. S., Mexico, and other Latin American countries, greater efforts must be made to educate and provide mutual exchange opportunities. Existing institutes/programs for international understanding should be supported and new ones encouraged. Openness offers the best chance for success in solving our immigration problems, not retraction or withdrawal.

Moving Ahead with a Drug Enforcement Strategy

Recent reports of drug faction/gang-related murders, shootings, and kidnappings in Mexican border communities like Ciudad Juarez, Nogales, and Tijuana are not exaggerated and are no longer restricted to just nighttime activity. The cross-border economy; both in terms of travel and general tourism, have been greatly impacted. Renewed efforts to fight drug importation and a new bi-lateral policy designed to combat the problem are needed now. But progress cannot be made without the commitment and cooperation of governments from Canada to Peru and Argentina. New signals and suggestions from Washington would certainly help.

What a thoughtful drug enforcement strategy should include:

- The ideas, concepts, proposals, and initiatives of law enforcement agencies/officials north and south of the border. If this sounds very much like the first bullet above that's because I believe ownership requires total participation. Without it, you're left with just the views of some.
- Drug abuse is a societal problem. In order to fight trafficking and selling it is necessary to attack problems related to health, poverty, hunger, and

despair. Increased education, money to build schools and clinics, and widespread participation in social programs like: Amigos de las Americas, Cross-Cultural Solutions, Global Services Corporation, and Orphanage Outreach. These are a few of the many ways individual citizens can make a difference.

- Increased security enforcement and international cooperation to go after drug lords and cartels. If the U.S. is asked to assist in areas beyond our borders, and we can identify clear ways to focus our resources then we should respond appropriately.

****Final note from the author**

I've provided this position paper because I feel the problems are immediate and serious. I also think I can use my teaching and writing to have an impact. Two of the underlying themes in *Gift of the Desert Dog*, and repeated in *Secrets of the Medicine Pouch* and *Coyote-meeter's Abyss*, are the issues of drug trafficking and illegal immigration. There are particular concerns when this activity occurs along the sixty miles of border connecting Tohono O'odham reservation land with Mexico. A long history of broken promises and mistrust exists between federal and state law enforcement agencies and the O'odham nation. Cooperation is certainly more difficult and the illegals and their guides (coyotes) know this. The number of immigrants crossing here are four times greater than along the rest of the Arizona/Mexico border.

There is a sizable readership out there looking for stories that entertain *and* inform, and in this case, provide information that will lead to more reasoned judgments about the immigration challenge. Although the downturn in the economy is foremost in people's minds, there remain the added concerns discussed in this paper. I'm looking forward to the opportunity to refocus attention on them.