



Conquering The Borderlands: A Southern Tier Journal: San Diego to St. Augustine by Bicycle

Lorraine Veisz

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In terms of United States history, the Borderlands are the territories, from "Alta California" to "La Florida," that formed the northern frontier of Spain's New World empire. Conquering the Borderlands relates their histories, landscapes, and cultures as they unfolded during the author's Southern Tier bicycle journey from San Diego to St. Augustine. The Southern Tier route intersects the paths of Spanish conquistadors, stagecoach routes, and cattle drives, all of which come alive in the pages of this book. A ferry across the Mississippi evokes Mark Twain's account of life on the river; Louisiana's bayous recall Evangeline, Longfellow's poem about the Acadian exile from Canada. Curious javelinas emerge on West Texas roads, carnivorous plants alongside Deep South highways. On a personal level, the author describes the rigors of the trip and the anxieties that spring from attempting a cross-country ride nearly forty years after the goal first captured her imagination. The author coined the term "chronological borderlands" for that stage in life when professional and family responsibilities have been met, and deferred dreams spring to life with a renewed sense of possibility, coupled with apprehension that physical limits may be closing the door. The book is not intended to replace travel guides and maps, but to serve as a valuable companion piece that can further enrich the experience of Southern Tier travel - by bicycle, car or armchair.

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