Blood Imagery:

This critic's interpretation of the use of blood as a motif in *All the Pretty Horses* is similar to what I first thought that blood is used to represent the return to human emotions. It is used to represent the raw emotions of man in the wild, of man who is truly living life, of a man who lives passionately. I agree that John starts off as a naïve teenager, trying to find a sanctuary of sorts in the wilderness where he can ride and fulfill his desire to live off the land and to become part of the land. However, I think this critic, as to make the plot work with his thesis, manipulated the meaning of the work. I do not think that the conflict of Blevins was purely an "idealized" action. John did not sell Blevins because that action would have been evil, not because he lived in his own dream world were these things do not happen. I feel that this particular action was more of a testament to goodness in the face of evil, of a compassionate heart in the wake of brutality. Also I found that this critic put too much emphasis on the "technology versus nature" factor. It is a part of the book. It is what drives John into Mexico but it is not a conflict throughout the book. The conflict with at the hacienda was not about the "changing times" in Mexican society. If anything, it was a confirmation of the values of classical Mexican high class society. John is not betrayed because of modernization in Mexican society, rather he is betrayed for being a poor American. He does not live up to the classical Mexican society standards and therefore he is disposed of. There is no real conflict of modern against industrialization and if there is it is very minute in this point in the book.

Mexico and the Borderlands

In this critique the idea of relativism found in McCarthy's novel is explored. This critic came away with the sense that we are all the same. We all have the same desires and we all make the same choices but the ends of said choices are different and that the terms by which we make them are relative. In fact life is relative. This article clarified the theme about the relative nature of life, that I knew McCarthy was portraying but I couldn’t find the words to properly state it. This critique turned a feeling into
substance (if that makes any sense). It is a sobering thought. We came from dust and we shall return to dust and our sufferings and trails mean nothing. History will force the path that it wills and we will all be subjected to it. Man has no home. What is in his heart will remain and no matter how hard man tries to run away or return, one will never find that place of peace. It is nonexistent in the heart of man because the life of man is about chaos and turmoil. Until the nature of man's heart is changed, he will never find a home. Even if he did find this home, it would be relative. According to McCarthy and the critic every thing is relative, even morality. What is bad in one place may be common in another, or its evil is so great that the bad deed is overlooked a child's sin. Some evils are worse than others and that is how man is able to get by in life without feeling guilty. My sin is worse than his sin so I must still be a good person. It seems like a contradictory idea after the idea that morality is relative where man looks at the world at a personal and whole level, to then say that the only thing that matters is the personal. I'm not sure but I think the idea is that my reality is not the reality of the person standing next to me, nor is their reality the reality of the person standing behind them. The only thing that matters is our own personal wholeness, our own personal sense that we are complete in a world full of fissures. The only thing that matters is our own individual sense of belonging because the world will continue to move with or without us.

Works Cited

