CREATING AN ARCHIVE: FRONERIZA AUTHORS WRITING HISTORIES, DOCUMENTING U.S.-MEXICO BORDER MILITARIZATION

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DEDICATION

Para mi madre, Petra Álvarez Carrizales

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ABSTRACT

This research stems from the idea that fronteriza authors, from both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border, record the development of militarization along the region through their literary production. I argue that their texts are embedded with historical references of policing, surveillance and policies woven either as memories, testimonies, personal and collective accounts, and primary sources that become alternative histories. With this in mind, I propose that the collection of fictional narratives I analyze construct a literary archive from a fronteriza lens that offers an insight into their communities, region, and resilience against border militarization that also contest historical erasure.

Chapter One, "Revisiting the Past: Contesting a Mechanism of Militarization," analyzes mechanisms of militarization performed by Texas Rangers and the Border Patrol to prove the presence of a border militarization during the nineteenth century through the analysis of *Shame the Stars* by Guadalupe García McCall, *Canícula: Snapshots of a Girlhood en La Frontera* by Norma E. Cantú, and *Callejón Sucre y otros relatos* by Rosario Sanmiguel. As a result, three historical events emerged: The Plan de San Diego (1915), bath riots (1917), and the Mexican Repatriation (1920-1939) documented through memories, testimonies, and primary sources.

Chapter Two, "Collective Memories: Documenting the Emergence of Militarization," examines surveillance practices by Border Patrol agents to reveal an escalation of border militarization through the narratives of Norma E. Cantú, Rosario Sanmiguel, and Lucrecia Guerrero's collection of short stories *Chasing Shadows.*

Through memories and personal accounts fronterizas reveal the emergence of militarization woven in events such as Bracero Program (1942-1964), Operation Wetback (1954), and Operation Blockade (1993).

Chapter Three, "A Record of Defiance: Challenging a Militarization System," analyzes US policies that transformed the border into a hyper-surveillance region as recorded in the narratives of *Delincuentos: historias del narcotráfico* by Arminé Arjona. The narratives document through testimony, memory and personal accounts a history of marijuana policies embedded in the United States War on Drugs campaign, mass incarceration, and the beginning of major federal funding on the U.S.-Mexico border militarization.

This work began with collections of short stories whose record of historical references confirmed the presence and evolution of a border militarization. As part of the development of this fronteriza literary archive, other fronteriza authors are to be incorporated as I intend to transfer my research into a digital humanities project for multiple publics to engage with the border region through fiction.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION iii

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS...iv

ABSTRACT...v

I. INTRODUCTION: CREATING AN ARCHIVE: FRONTERIZA AUTHORS WRITING HISTORIES, DOCUMENTING U.S.-MEXICO BORDER MILITARIZATION...1

II. CHAPTER ONE: REVISITING THE PAST: CONTESTING A MECHANISM OF MILITARIZATION...20

III. CHAPTER TWO: COLLECTIVE MEMORIES: DOCUMENTING THE EMERGENCE OF MILITARIZATION……………………………………..67

IV. CHAPTER THREE: A RECORD OF DEFIANCE: CHALLENGING A MILITARIZATION SYSTEM……..…………………………………………118

V. CONCLUSION: THE FUTURE OF THE FRONTERIZA LITERARY ARCHIVE 142

BIBLIOGRAPHY..148

Introduction:

Creating an Archive: Fronteriza Authors Writing Histories, Documenting U.S.-Mexico Border Militarization

I write fiction not only because I have a passion for literature,

but also because I am frustrated with history's texts and archives.

—Emma Pérez, "Queering the Borderlands"

As a fronteriza from Laredo, Texas—a border city with a population of ninety-six percent Latinos—I witnessed my city transformed into a hyper-surveillance region and wondered how such militarization came to be. After extensive research I was able to locate a body of work by fronteriza authors[1] that not only documented border militarization through historical references woven in narratives either as memories, testimonies, personal and collective accounts or primary sources, but also recorded a fronteriza/o knowledge and resilience against marginalization and historical erasure. I argue that their record of historical events unveils a mechanism of militarization—one that operates through policing, surveillance and policies that target non-Anglo communities in order to control the land and bodies along the border and that these acts of alternative documentation construct a literary archive from a fronteriza lens that offers

1. I will use term to refer to women authors from both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border and explain the term later in the chapter.

2. For a detail analysis of the emergence of the borderlands see Sonia Hernández, *Working Women Into the*

an insight into their communities and region that contest colonialist practices that privilege a white male history.

With this in mind, I built my research from feminist theories mostly by women of color that offer strategies for transformative practices. For my theoretical framework I focus on two theories, the decolonial imaginary proposed by historian Emma Pérez on *The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas into History,* and theory in the flesh by Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa on *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color.* I analyze fictional texts by fronteriza authors whose narratives document policing, surveillance, operations and policies linked to the militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border described by sociologist Timothy J. Dunn on *The Militarization of the U.S.-Mexico Border, 1978-1992: Low-intensity Conflict Doctrine Comes Home*.

Primary Texts

In accordance with Debra A. Castillo and María Socorro Tabuenca Córdoba, when it comes to border studies, it is important to clarify what side of the border is to be analyzed since it is important to recognize the differences and similarities involved in transnational analyses in order to prevent an intellectual colonialism (4). Similar to their work, *Border Women: Writing from La Frontera*, my research includes fronteriza authors form both sides of the border region.

I focus on short stories since the succinctness of the narratives encapsulates references of a mechanism of militarization that facilitates the analysis of documentation of a historical record in the works of Rosario Sanmiguel, *Callejón Sucre y otros relatos* (1994), Norma Elia Cantú, *Canícula: Snapshots of a Girlhood en la Frontera* (1995), Lucrecia Guerrero, *Chasing Shadows* (2000), Arminé Arjona*, Delincuentos: historias del*

narcotráfico (2009), and Guadalupe García McCall, *Shame the Stars* (2016). This latter work is an exception due to the historical focus of the novel and the incorporation of primary sources such as newspapers and historical documents in the novel. This research endeavors to give fronteriza authors a history of their own rooted in a women's history tradition distinct from the white male historiography models that merely include women—especially of women of color—as a backdrop to men's history.

Theoretical Framework: Understanding Decolonial Imaginary and Theory in the Flesh Practices

The Literary Archive

In order to analyze the corpus I study here, it is important to define and discuss the concept of archive. There are various debates with regard to the concept of the archive, but what is at its core is knowledge and how those who have access conceptualize, organize, approach and control it. Philosopher Jacques Derrida on *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression* argues, "[T]here is no political power without control of the archive, if not memory. Effective democratization can always be measured by this essential criterion: the participation in and access to the archive, its constitution, and its interpretation" (11). For instance, in *The Imperial Archive: Knowledge and the Fantasy of Empire* by literary critic Thomas Richards, the creation of the fantasy of the imperial archive is presented as a mode to control the production of knowledge of the territories it overseen and documented under the belief of "a universal and essential from of knowledge" (6-7). Richards indicates that this belief served to maintain an illusion of colonial power even when this was absent due to the vast territories the British Empire

controlled. He also observed what he referred to as an imperial fiction, which is the literary production by various writers of the century along with civil servants of the Empire that reproduced and perpetuated the illusion of control generated by the imperial archive. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak observed also acknowledged this problem in a nineteenth century memoir, "Statistical and Geographical Memoir of the Hill Countries Situated Between the Rivers Tamas and Sutlej," that became an authoritative and accurate colonial record in India although it was written "out of hearsay and interpreted conversations" (36).

With regard to the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, a land overseen by various Empires, what archive and written history has been constructed around this region? Pérez observes in "Queering the Borderlands: The Challenges of Excavating the Invisible and Unheard," how the borderlands are "imprinted by bodies that traverse the region, just as bodies have been transformed by the laws and customs in the regions" and how "land is imprinted and policed by those traversing and claiming it as they would claim a body—both becoming property for the colonizer. Native Americans became as much the property of the Spanish as did the land that came to be known as the Spanish Borderlands" (123), that is to say that the borderlands are under a colonial record that must be contested. Thus, the work of the authors I study here have contested and re-signified the border region creating an alternative literary archive in which they provide narratives that official archives do not include, as I will analyze throughout this dissertation.

Decolonial Imaginary

In order to understand other histories, Pérez proposes a decolonial imaginary that challenges a colonialist ideology that believes in a normative language, race, culture,

gender, class, and sexuality and operates as the rulers versus the ruled ("Queering the Borderlands" 123). This decolonial imaginary is "a rupturing space…an alternative history," in other words, an opportunity to insert what is absent or left out of archives and the written History (*The Decolonial Imaginary* 6). Furthermore, Pérez observes a problem with historiography, and thus the archive, that often fails to conceptualize women as part of it, or merely includes women as a backdrop to men's history. She finds this problematic and proposes sexing the colonial imaginary by historically tracking women's voices and actions for agency (7). Although this seems the logical route to take, "a historian must remain within the boundaries, borders, the confines of the debate as it has been conceptualized if she/he is to be a legitimate heir to the field. Breaking out of the borders is like choosing to go outside, into the margins, to argue or expose that which no one will risk" (xiii). It is Pérez frustration with the official History and the archives that leads her to writing fiction. Just as Richards observed the production of imperial fiction as a way to support the Empire, Pérez sees fiction as a way to inscribe an alternative history as she indicates in her novel, *Forgetting the Alamo, Or Blood Memory*,

> I write fiction not only because I have a passion for literature, but also because I am frustrated with history's texts and archives…I've always wanted to find in the archive a queer vaquera from the mid-nineteenth century…impatience led me to create a *tejana* baby butch, named Micaela Campos, who must avenge her father's death at the battle of San Jacinto, just a month after the fall of the Alamo. (Queering the Borderlands 122)

This effort is what Moraga and Anzaldúa describe as theory in the flesh, "one where the physical realities of our lives—our skin color, the land or concrete we grew up on, our

sexual longings—all fuse to create a politic out of necessity…We do this bridging by naming our selves and by telling our stories in our own words" (19). As a fronteriza myself, I insert my personal knowledge through this feminist practice as well by presenting my research as a counter discourse to the national toxic rhetoric against border communities and region, one that offers alternative interpretations and notions of the border/la frontera.

Therefore, it is in the rupturing space that the literary archive I propose here is situated. It is a collection of fictional narratives by fronteriza writers that include historical references, personal archives, oral stories, collective and personal experiences, as well as primary sources. The narratives center on: 1) the documentation of policies, operations, and forms of policing; 2) the record of resilience of border communities against a mechanism of militarization; and 3) a fronteriza experience that succeeds in sexing the colonial imaginary. This literary archive is not an attempt to replace historical archives or replicate traditional archival methods embedded in colonial practices of erasure and white male privilege. This is an archive that includes voices, experiences, stories, and narratives in general that provides other perspectives about the border region that ought to be considered.

Theory in the Flesh Practices

I argue the documentation done in the work of fronteriza writers analyzed in this research demonstrates a militarization of the border emerging along with the development of the two nation-states and industrialization.[2] Their record of historical events through fiction as an alternative written history contest a colonial mindset about

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2. For a detail analysis of the emergence of the borderlands see Sonia Hernández, *Working Women Into the Borderlands* introduction.

the border/la frontera as well as a resistance to the toxic rhetoric of xenophobia and prejudice. Pérez proposes that in order to decolonize our history "we must uncover the voices from the past that honor multiple experiences, instead of…allowing the white colonial heteronormative gaze to reconstruct and interpret our past" ("Queering" 122).

Fronteriza writers work support Pérez's argument. For example, Cantú on *Canícula* alerts the reader that there is some truth in her stories since it includes personal photographs, and so what may "appear to be autobiographical is not always so…many events are completely fictional, although they may be true in historical context…although it may appear that these stories are [her] family's, they are not precisely, and yet they are…I guess it is a fictional autobioethnography" (xi). The incorporation of personal photographs within the vignettes creates a new genre that Cantú refers as autobioethnograhy due to the fact that it is about her life and her community explored through the intimacy of her personal archive. The conundrum is where does fiction end and reality take over? As Pat Mora claims in *Canícula* "life en la frontera is a raw truth, and stories of such life, fictitious as they may be, are even truer than true (xi).

Arjona in *Delincuentos* states, "La importancia de esta obra no es sólo literaria, también nos ofrece una visión preocupada de su circumstancia histórica, ya que todos los cuentos tienen su base en lo que para muchos es su realidad cotidiana…" (14). Once again, the writer alerts the reader that the narratives that proceed are not all fictional since they are inspired by real events and are linked in some way to historical circumstances. Moreover, García McCall in *Shame the Stars* writes how her son informed her about the history of Mexicans in Southern Texas in 1915 and how she, after reading about it, remembered how "[t]hese were things [her] father had talked about, but which had meant

very little to [her] as a child, as [she] had never heard of them anywhere else other than at home when [her] father was 'storytelling,'" (291-292).

Furthermore, García McCall writes, "What I can do, I have done. I've included in this book a small ofrenda, a different point of view—a rebellious, contentious voice…" (293), which echoes Pérez's work as she declares her frustration with historical text and archives. García McCall's offering is a rebellious contentious voice that presents a different point of view, an oral history passed on by her father. These fronteriza writers offer through fictional narratives an alternative view of history embedded in theory-in-the-flesh practices that decolonize the imaginary of the border/la frontera.

Historiography Against the Grain

Pérez points out because women are not considered and unseen through a historical consciousness they remain marginalized. She argues that historiography—the writing and the study of history—"will tend to follow traditional history's impulse to cover 'with a thick layer of events.' As Foucault writes, 'the great silent, motionless bases' that constitute the interstitial gaps, the unheard, the unthought, the unspoken" (*The Decolonial Imaginary* 5). For Pérez, it is in these gaps that "Chicana, Mexicana, India, mestiza actions, words spoken and unspoken, survive and persist whether acknowledge or not" (7), which incites us to revisit and interpret historical records and narratives through a new lens.

The work by theorist and historian Maylei Blackwell, *¡Chicana Power! Contested Histories of Feminism in the Chicano Movement,* challenges traditional historiography models by utilizing oral history and archives to interrupt normative narratives. Her work documents the participation of Chicanas during the 1960s and 1970s Chicano movement.

Blackwell focuses on the participation of Anna NietoGómez and the Hijas de Cuauhtémoc and the lack of documentation on their work, despite their activism, due to a masculinized rendering of Chicano history. She also brings to attention the women's movement as accomplice to this silence since the movement concentrated on a hegemonic distorted history focused on middle-class, white women's groups (9-10).

One of the practices Blackwell proposes to combat marginalization is retrofitted memory, which creates alternative records of meaning and authority (12). It is within these sanctioned narratives that new subjects emerge and "not merely recuperated, then, but retrofitted into new forms of political subjectivity that may draw from one historical geographic context to be refashioned in another" (Blackwell 13). This intervention on how history is documented and written is crucial and needed since in various instances individuals from underrepresented groups are objectified, stereotyped, and erased. García McCall, for instance, by incorporating primary sources in her novel reinscribes histories that create an alternative record of the 1915 state violence in the Southwest of Texas and allows new subjects to emerge. By incorporating such primary sources in her novel she allows young readers to be in contact with an otherwise limited resource found in archives or academic publications.

According to historian Monica Muñoz Martinez[3] various scholars have demonstrated how histories of the Southwest of Texas during the nineteenth century are embedded with state violence and requires "reading institutional archives against the grain…when scholars attend to generational memories, new opportunities emerge to help recuperate marginalized histories" (663). Muñoz Martinez indicates,

3. For detail information on state violence in the Southwest of Texas see Monica Muñoz Martinez "Recuperating Histories of Violence in the Americas: Vernacular History-Making on the US–Mexico Border."

> census records, state records, and Texas Rangers reports…demonstrate the long legacy of state-sanctioned violence against ethnic Mexican subjects who appear in institutional archives as anonymous criminals…oral histories, memoirs, documentaries, memorials, and private archives produce alternative historical narratives, circulated from one generation to the next, which seek to prevent the victims of state violence from being criminalized or erased. (663)

In other words, reinscribe practices on early nineteenth century state violence disrupt a normative historical model and colonial mindset, and create political subjects each in their own way by using primary sources and other forms of documentation.

Leonor Villegas de Magnón's memoir, *La Rebelde* (2004) */ The Rebel* (1994), which records the Mexican Revolution and the role of women in the La Cruz Blanca (White Cross) is an example of Pérez's decolonial imaginary and Blackwell's retrofitted memory as well. Villegas de Magnón's work is unique since she not only documented the participation of women and a border activism by fronterizos in Spanish and English, but also through photographs. Her awareness of the value of historical record and the importance of ownership led her to contract Eusebio Montoya, an official photographer, for La Cruz Blanca and remind him that "photographs are history, and [he] must not let anyone have a negative or sell the pictures. They are [her] personal property. [She] pay[s] for the supplies" (qtd. in *The Rebel* xxxviii). These documentation practices by Villegas de Magnón are the result of a constant struggle within a patriarchal culture that marginalized women who dared to write about history, since by doing so they assumed authorship and authority that openly defied the social gender codes (*The Rebel* xxxiii).

Villegas de Magnón education, social status, and privileges were not enough to

break with literary traditions within the historical memoirs and autobiographical writings as postcolonial scholar Clara Lomas indicates, "[t]he autobiographical/memoir genre imprisoned her story within a narrative form which has historically privileged male authority, authorship, and discourse, and ignored or devaluated those same female qualities" (*The Rebel* xxxi). After Villegas de Magnón's death, only four women were recognized for their Mexican Revolution autobiographical narratives: Nellie Campobello, Consuelo Peña de Villarreal, Sara Aguilar Belden de Garza, and Luz Jiménez[4] (*The Rebel* xxxv-xxxvi). It was Lomas' archeological pursuit that led to the recovery of Villegas de Magnón's memoir to be published in Spanish and English by Arte Público Press over a half a century after it was written (vii-ix).

Her fronteriza identity and transnational participation were problematic for a national historical documentation since her narrative recorded the deeds of individuals who knew no national boundaries. Villegas de Magnón's interruptions was her way to disrupt normative historiography practices as she wrote in regards to the Mexican Revolution, "history has assumed responsibility for documenting the facts, but it has forgotten the important role played by the communities of Laredo, Texas and Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas and other border cities which united themselves in a fraternal agreement" (qtd. in *The Rebel* xxxix). *The Rebel* transnational record of the Mexican Revolution is a one of a kind historical narrative where multiple reinscribe subjects emerged, allowing new ways of understanding and viewing this deeply masculinized and nationalized rendering of Mexican history and the border.

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4. Nellie Campobello, *Cartucho: Relatos de la lucha en el norte de México* (1960) and *Las manos de mamá* (1960); Consuelo Peña de Villarreal, *La Revolución en el Norte* (1968); Sara Aguilar Belden de Garza, *Una ciudad y dos familias* (1970); Luz Jiménez, *De Porfirio Díaz a Zapata: Memoria nahuatl de Milpa Alta* (1974).

While Villegas de Magnón documents an early twentieth century Laredo, Texas and Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas border, through similar techniques Cantú documents the lives of fronterizos—especially fronterizas—and a transnational late twentieth century Laredo-Nuevo Laredo region. Cantú's insertion of history through personal stories, as analyzed in later chapters, and Villegas de Magnón's memoir give the reader a better understanding of the culture, history, and community along this particular border from a fronterizas' view, which reiterate the importance of literary production by women.

Another fronteriza from the Southwest of Texas who challenged a colonial mindset was Gloria E. Anzaldúa, a queer Chicana, writer, poet, and cultural theorist. Her book, *Borderlands / La Frontera: The New Mestiza,* explores infinite interpretations of physical, personal, and metaphorical borders. Anzaldúa understood the importance of historical documentation. Thus, it is not surprising that *Borderlands* chapter one, "The Homeland, Aztlán / El otro México," is a historical overview that questions the white colonial gaze. In this chapter she writes,

> [b]orders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish *us* from *them...*The prohibited and forbidden are its inhabitants. *Los atravesados* live here…Gringos in the U.S. Southwest consider the inhabitants of the borderlands transgressors, aliens—whether they posses documents or not, whether they're Chicanos, Indians or Blacks. Do not enter, trespassers will be rapped, maimed, strangled, gassed, shot. The only 'legitimate' inhabitants are those in power, the whites and those who align themselves with the whites…The oldest evidence of humankind in the U.S. was found in Texas and has been dated to 35000 B.C. In the Southwest…archeologist have found 20,000-year-old campsites of the Indians

> who migrated through or permanently occupied the Southwest…The Gringo, locked into the fiction of white superiority, seized complete political power, stripping Indians and Mexicans of their land while their feet were still rooted in it…we were jerked out by the roots, truncated, disemboweled, dispossessed, and separated from our identity and our history. (25-30)

For Anzaldúa, the normative historiography models and practices that have erased communities and individuals from the borderlands and national discourse could be contested through theory-in-the-flesh practices that create politics out of necessity by telling our own stories in our own words.

Borderlands disrupts and challenges historical narratives to give way to political subjects with agency and authority through its eclectic approach where poetry, essays, and personal narratives document the struggles and history of indigenous people, mestizos, Chicanos, Mexicans, Tejanos, among other groups, while it also celebrates the richness of the borderlands and the multiple identities that live within it. In the interview by Karin Ikas included at the end, Anzaldúa mentions how young Chicanas embraced *Borderlands* at the time because it legitimated them. Her use of code-switching, her writings about *corridos*, *la Llorona*, *La Virgen de Guadalupe*, and the border itself, opened the doors for young Chicanas, “To them, it was like somebody was saying: You are as important as a woman as anybody from another race. And the experiences that you have are worth being told and written about” (*Borderlands* 231-232); which resonates with the statements of historians and fronterizas previously mentioned.

Pérez’s decolonial imaginary, Blackwell’s retrofitted memory, Muñoz Martinez’s alternative archive approaches, Villegas de Magnón’s photographical documentation,

Anzaldúa's semi-autobiographical practices and Cantú, Arjona, and García McCall's personal experiences reiterate the importance of representation within historical narratives and the importance of new forms of documentation that challenge historiography models. Through these actions voices from the past can be uncovered to contest and revise what has been written about colonized lands and bodies in history.

Relevant Concepts

Border/La frontera: I define the border as space where different cultures co-exist under strong political, economic, and social hegemonies as well as a space were regions influence and interact with each other. This perspective resonates with Mary Louis Pratt's concept of contact zones[5] and Gloria Anzaldúa's description of the borderlands as a third country where the "lifeblood of two worlds [merge] to form…a border culture" (*Borderlands* 25). I also argue that co-existing under such structures border communities maintain their own identities and not merge as one when analyzed as a third space. Failing to address the border communities and regions individually and recognizing their similarities and difference could lead to the erroneous interpretation of it as a homogenous space and the erasure of one or the other.

Border Region: What I consider as the U.S.–Mexico border region for this research are cities close to the current border division such as McAllen, Texas; Reynosa, Tamaulipas; El Paso, Texas; Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua; Eagle Pass, Texas; Piedras Negras, Coahuila; Nogales, Arizona; Nogales, Sonora; San Ysidro, California; Tijuana, Baja California; among others, since they are interconnected by the history they share. They also exist under an intricate 24/7 surveillance set by the United States'

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5. Contact zones are "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of domination…" (Pratt 7).

militarization captured in the narratives by the fronteriza authors analyzed.

Fronteriza/o: For the purpose of this research I use fronteriza/o to refer to individuals who have experienced living on the border. The term in Spanish is essential for my analysis since unlike English it has a gendered form that emphasizes the importance of research on the literary production by women writers from either side of the border and highlights the complexity of identity, culture, and the history of their border regions.

Militarization: In regards to a militarization, Dunn research indicates that it is through the War on Drugs initiated during the Ronald W. Regan Administration (1981-1988) and continued through the George H. W. Bush administration (1989-1992) in order to limit the flow of illegal drugs mainly through the U.S.-Mexico border region—that gave way to the current border militarization. Both administrations targeted domestic and international drug flows by involving a wide range of government agencies whose antidrug operations targeted areas that are considered areas of low-intensity conflict[6] where civilian police and military agencies worked together, overlapping immigration and drug enforcement efforts to varying degrees (*The Militarization* 103). In other words, civilians along the U.S.-Mexico border are now under a militarized law enforcement.

According to Dunn, the origin of the LIC dates back to the John F. Kennedy administration's (1961-1963) formulation of counterinsurgency doctrine that fell out of favor during the 1970s following the Vietnam War. By the late 1980s and early 1990s "it had become a relatively institutionalized component of both the doctrinal-theoretical apparatus and the formal command structure of the U.S. military-security establishment…" (20). The U.S. Army's official definition of low-intensity conflict (LIC)

6. From now on I will use the acronym LIC for low-intensity conflict.

is broad,

> a limited politico-military struggle to achieve political, social, economic, or psychological objectives. It is often protracted and ranges from diplomatic, economic and psycho-social pressures through terrorism and insurgency…is generally confined to a geographic area and is often characterized by constrains on the weaponry, tactics, and level of violence. (*The Militarization* 20)

What follows is Dunn's overview of LIC characteristics; it is crucial to list some in order to recognize similar practices through the historical documentation of fronteriza authors and to grasp what current militarization implicates:

- Military equipment and hardware associated with LIC and antiterrorism efforts
- The police acting more like the military and vice versa
- Expanded intelligence and surveillance efforts, and expanded communication systems
- An emphasis on training efforts for local forces
- Increased contact by military, paramilitary, and police forces with civilians in benevolent, public-service activities
- Psychological operations to influence political and social attitudes among civilians populations
- Various other operational characteristics of the four LIC mission areas:[7] foreign internal defense, antidrug operations, peacetime contingency

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7. "The principal concern of LIC doctrine has been with countering revolution, followed by a concern for maintaining social control in other unstable settings. With these areas, there are general focal points of LIC doctrine: 1) an emphasis on the internal defense of the nation, 2) an emphasis on controlling targeted civilian populations rather than territory, and 3) the assumption by the military roles, along with the adoption by the police of military characteristics" (*The Militarization* 21).

operations, and terrorism counteraction. (*The Militarization* 29-30)

According to Dunn, people under the LIC doctrine suffer human rights violations frequently. With this in mind, my research builds on the LIC practices to identify a mechanism of militarization through fronteriza authors' narratives.

Methodology and Chapter Organization

The current U.S.-Mexico border militarization has suppressed the histories of fronterizos/as for almost two centuries and its colonial record must be contested. Utilizing Emma Perez's decolonial imaginary and theory-in-the-flesh practices, I analyze fictional narratives by fronteriza authors that document policing, operations and policies that unveil a mechanism of militarization along the border region. These acts of alternative documentation and history construct a literary archive of the border militarization that offers alternative interpretations and notions of the border/la frontera. My research is supported by an interdisciplinary approach which includes sociological research about border militarization and operations, feminist theories that offer strategies for transformative practices, historical studies that go against the grain to contest normative historiography models, journalistic publications that represent a national view, digital humanities projects on borderlands histories, law reviews on immigration enforcement, and scholarly research on literary production from the border region.

This research is not intended to be an exhaustive history of the border militarization, but rather an overview of the historical events documented in the literary production by the fronteriza authors analyzed in this work. The periodization of the chapters is the result of the histories that emerged from the narratives that led to the following chapters' historical periods: Chapter 1 - Border Policing (1848 – 1940);

Chapter 2 – Border Militarization: (1942-1954); and Chapter 3 – War on Drugs (1970s-2005). Moreover, it is essential to point out that this research traces the presence of a border militarization created by the United States. This does not signify the absence of Mexican interference or participation; on the contrary, it demonstrates the complex dynamics of the United States and Mexico's binational relationship. That is, the infrastructural power[8] of both nations are symbiotic, in other words, both the physical and law enforcement infrastructure along the border region are built into one another (Alvarez 5-6).

Chapter 1, Revisiting the Past: Contesting a Mechanism of Militarization

Guadalupe García McCall opens each chapter of *Shame the Stars* with either an excerpt of a primary source, a fictional newspaper or letters. This inspired the structure of my analysis for the novel where I take excerpts that address policing tactics as part of the mechanism of militarization. Through primary sources García McCall narrates the South Texas Rio Grande Valley state-sanctioned violence by Texas Rangers against non-Anglo communities during 1915. She deconstructs the heroic and iconic Texas Ranger figure and problematizes the history that surrounds it. As a result, three historical events emerged: The Plan de San Diego (1915), bath riots (1917), and the Mexican Repatriation (1920-1939) documented through memories, testimonies, and primary sources.

Chapter 2, Collective Memories: Documenting the Emergence of Militarization

In this Chapter, I explore surveillance through feminist scholar Marilyn Frye's concept of "the arrogant eye" in narratives by Norma E. Cantú, Rosario Sanmiguel, and Lucrecia Guerrero. These authors document monitoring tactics and discourses of criminalization,

8. Michael Mann's infrastructural power "is the ability of a polity to implement policies throughout a given territory" (Álvarez 5-6).

either through border patrol performances against fronterizas/os or reference to "Operation Wetback" which set out to regulate, oppress and marginalize border communities. Concurrently, memories and general accounts in narratives by fronteriza authors archive border histories that contest militarization impositions that aim to control bodies, communities and life at the border/la frontera.

Chapter 3, A Record of Defiance: Challenging a Militarization System

In this final Chapter, I analyze how fronteriza author Arminé Arjona narratives document fronterizas who transgress boundaries as they participate in the public space challenging gender norms and systematic oppression within binational relationships between the US and Mexico border. The narratives document through testimony, memory and personal accounts a history of marijuana policies embedded in the United States War on Drugs campaign, mass incarceration, and the beginning of major federal funding on the U.S.-Mexico border militarization.

Chapter One:

Revisiting the Past:

Contesting a Mechanism of Militarization

What I can do, I have done. I've included in this book a small ofrenda,
a different point of view—a rebellious, contentious voice…
—Guadalupe García McCall, *Shame the Stars*

The current militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border and the toxic rhetoric against it are indications of a colonialist ideology that believes in a normative language, race, culture, gender, and class that operates as the rulers versus the ruled.[9] Since the 1800s this colonial mindset set forth a mechanism of militarization, [need to go back and use the same term in the Intro "militarized" where appropriate] that is, policies, strategies, and operations—to maintain control over the border region. This chapter focuses on how fronteriza authors contest this ideology by creating a reinscribe history through fiction, in other words, an alternative record of meaning and authority through primary sources, memories, testimonies and personal archive, as well as other forms of historiographical models that revise the past in order to document a fronteriza/o experience. The analysis of this chapter highlights policing by law enforcement agencies such as the Texas Rangers and the Border Patrol, and policies documented in texts by Guadalupe García McCall, Rosario Sanmiguel, and Norma E. Cantú through historical references such as

9. For more information on colonialist ideology see Emma Pérez, "Queering the Borderlands: The Challenges of Excavating the Invisible and Unheard."

the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848), Plan de San Diego (1915), and the Mexican Repatriation (1920s-1930s). This documentation gives rise to a fronteriza literary archive; a collection of fictional narratives that contests and challenges what has been written about colonized lands and bodies through written history.

Guadalupe García McCall: Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848) and Plan de San Diego (1915)

For the analysis of the novel, *Shame the Stars* (2016) by Guadalupe García McCall, the focal point is recurrent events of policing by law enforcement and acts of resistance by fronterizas. This later is analyzed mainly in two characters, Dulceña Villa and Doña Jovita Del Toro, whose roles are reflections of real fronterizas that have fought for their communities. The vigilantism is highlighted through the documentation of primary sources—that is, an original document of the time such as newspaper clippings that García McCall inserts in various chapters to accompany the narrative. Guadalupe García McCall opens each chapter of *Shame the Stars* with either an excerpt of a primary source, a fictional newspaper, Joaquín's journal or letters. This inspired the structure of my analysis of the novel where I take the excerpts of the primary sources plus the fictional newspaper *El Sureño* to address the mechanism of militarization.

Along with the fictional newspaper *El Sureño,* she incorporates nonfiction articles that published alarming events along the Rio Grande Valley[10] border region in south Texas. Eleven primary sources are incorporated in *Shame the Stars* that include excerpts of a handbill of the Plan de San Diego from 1915; newspapers such as *Burlington Weekly Free Press*, Burlington, VT; *The Ronan Pioneer*, Ronan, MT; *The Sun*, New York, NY;

10. From here on the Rio Grande Valley will be refer as the Valley, as is known by the locals.

Honolulu Star-Bulletin, Honolulu/Oahu, HI; *The Ogden Standard*, Ogden, UT; *Weekly Times-Records*, Valley City, ND; *The Intelligencer*, Anderson, SC; *The Carlsbad Current*, Carlsbad, NM; *Omaha Daily Bee*, Omaha, NE, as well as other type of primary sources, such as the *True Politeness: A Hand-book of Etiquette for Ladies* (García McCall 297-299).

Shame the Stars develops in Morado County, a fictional place in the Valley. It centers on two established families, the Del Toro family, proprietors of Las Moras, six hundred acres of land owned by the family since 1775, and the Villa family who owned *El Sureño,* a family-run local newspaper for more than twenty-five years in the town of Monteseco (8). Don Acevedo Del Toro and Don Rodrigo Villa's years of friendship are put to the test by the presence of the Texas Rangers in Morado County when their teenaged son and daughter establish a romantic relationship. In the struggle to protect their family, prejudice and terror surrounds them while in search of protection and justice for their loved ones.

From the beginning of the novel, García McCall alerts the reader to the turmoil in the border region of the Valley during the early 1900s. Chapter 1 opens with an excerpt from a handbill for the Plan de San Diego, a revolutionary manifesto against United States imperialism named after a small town in south Texas written in February 20, 1915. The manifesto is composed of fifteen statements in response to the surveillance, racial attacks, and terrorist policing by the Texas Rangers on non-Anglo communities. The following are five of the fifteen statements listed on the Plan de San Diego that highlight the resentment of oppressed generations of Tejanos, Texans-Mexicans and Mexicans[11]

11. The terms Tejanos, Texans-Mexicans and Mexicans are used according to *Shame the Stars* descriptions to refer to individuals of Mexican descent. The distinction of generations is highlighted by the use of the "j"

ready to raise arms against their oppressor: 1) the uprising against the U.S. government on February 20, 1915 at 2:00 to proclaim the liberty of blacks and the independence of the states seized in 1848 by the Tratado de Guadalupe Hidalgo, 2) the formation of an army under the leadership of commanders of the Supreme Revolutionary Congress of San Diego, Texas, 5) the policy of no prisoners (civilians) or soldiers, 6) the execution of armed foreigners regardless of race or nationality who cannot prove[? Need different word] the right to carry arms, 7) the killing of North Americans over sixteen years of age as well as traitors that would exempt aged men, and women and children, and 15) the refusal of revolutionists to accept any type of aid from the Government of Mexico (Harris and Sadler 2-4).

The inclusion of a primary source such as the handbill for the Plan de San Diego on the opening of Chapter 1 to reference the prejudice against fronterizo communities in the Valley highlights the importance of historical documentation in this novel. The handbill calls attention to a greater issue that gave rise to these conflicts, the loss of land. With the emergence of two nation-states, such as the United States and Mexico, during the XIX century a state of violence in the south Texas was inevitable. According to historian Richard Griswold del Castillo:

> The boundary line separating the two countries was established through centuries of diplomatic and armed conflict, and is an inheritance bequeathed to the New World by the European colonial powers of Spain, England, and France. In the nineteenth century, disputes over the exact location of the old dividing line separating Spanish and English America created many opportunities for people in

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or "x", the latter representing assimilation and historically the possession of land by the United States in 1848.

the United States to move into the western and southern lands and ultimately to claim them for the United States. (3)

The Treaty of Limits in 1831 by the United States and Mexico government, which delineated the Nueces River as the boundary that recognized the sovereignty of Mexico over Texas, did not settle the dispute.[12] In 1836, Texas pursued independence declaring the territory north and east of the Rio Grande from Mexico as theirs. These claims were never recognized by Mexico and in 1845, with the annexation of Texas under the administration of President James K. Polk, the U.S. acquired the controversial boundary (Griswold del Castillo 8).

Polk's multiple failed attempts to secure the U.S. claim to Texas through diplomacy lead him to a military approach. He ordered General Zachary Taylor to invade the territory which led to a battle between U.S. and Mexican troops providing Polk the reason for a declaration of war (14). Griswold del Castillo points out the result of the Mexican-American War (1846-1848)[13] was initiated against the backdrop of Manifest Destiny, "the body of ideas and sentiments by which English speaking Americans justified territorial expansion into lands held, occupied, or claimed by Mexicans and Indians" (4).

John O'Sullivan, editor of the *Democratic Review,* published his views on this matter and coined the term Manifest Destiny, which saw Anglo-Americans[14] as the "'pioneers of the continent,' who would inevitably spread the benefits of democracy and

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12. Mexican land-grant maps drawn by Stephen F. Austin in 1829, 1833, and 1836 also indicated the Nueces River as the limits of department of Texas and the state of Coahuila (Griswold del Castillo 10-11).
13. According to historian Benjamin Herber Johnson, "The Mexican-American War began in the territory that today is south Texas—the strip of land between the Rio Grande and Nueces rivers, the lower portion of which is known as 'the Valley'" (7).
14. For this research Anglo-American refers to citizens of the United States of European decent.

freedom to the lesser peoples inhabiting the region" (Griswold del Castillo 4). This colonialist ideology of superiority and racist sentiment towards non-Anglo communities is evident in Senator John Calhoun's statement during the Congressional Globe of 1848 with regard to the annexation of Mexican territory:

> I know further, sir, that we have never dreamt of incorporating into our Union any but the Caucasian race, the free white race. To incorporate Mexico, would be the very first instance of the kind of incorporating an Indian race; for more than half the Mexicans are Indians…I protest against such a union as that. Ours, sir, is the Government of a white man…And yet it is professed and talked about to erect these Mexicans into a Territorial Government and place them on equality with the people of the United States. I protest utterly against such a project. Are we to associate with ourselves as equal, companions, and fellow citizens, the Indians and mixed race of Mexico? Sir, I should consider a thing as fatal to our institutions. (Congress, United States 65)

Though the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo negotiated property rights and American citizenship for Mexican citizens through Articles VIII and IX, these were ignored (Griswold del Castillo 40).

With this history as a backdrop, *Shame the Stars* highlights the prejudice in the Valley against Tejanos, Texans-Mexicans and Mexicans and how the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo impacted generations. This sentiment is captured in the excerpt of the handbill of the Plan de San Diego in Chapter 1, and documented throughout the novel. For instance, the prologue captures the tensions along the border region when Don Acevedo Del Toro finds out that a poem titled "Tejanos" in the Sunday newspaper is by

Joaquín, his son. The poem is inserted in the prologue as "Excerpt from *El Sureño,* Easter Sunday, March 23, 1913," which makes reference to land dispossession from the seized territory by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the violence it brought to the region, "These are dangerous / times in South Texas, / times of trouble, / times of loss…Never mind the injustice. / Your father's land is not your / own anymore. It has been sold, / passed hands, bought and paid / for. It's history. It's gone" (García McCall 1). The poem continues to mention the tensions between the locals and the Texas Rangers' authoritarian and racist policing, causing differences between Don Acevedo and Don Rodrigo Villa.

Although Don Rodrigo was unaware of the author who wrote it, Don Acevedo reprimands his long-time friend's judgment as the editor, in fear of what could happen to Joaquín and their families, "This makes you look like an agitator, trying to stir something up between the people of Morado County and the Rangers, as if there isn't enough racial tension between us already. It's the wrong tone for a family-run paper. Don't you think?" (9). Don Acevedo's criticism continues, questioning Don Rodrigo's judgment for previously writing "the outrageous editorials glorifying insurrection" of the Mexican Revolution, as well as the criticism of Texas Rangers, to which Don Rodrigo responds that as a journalist it is his responsibility to do so since, [t]hese things need to be said. They need to be read and talked about, discussed by every member of our community… (11). He then questioned Don Acevedo disapproval, "Then whose job is to start these conversations, if not yours and mine…As leaders of this community, as landowners and businessmen, we owe it to our friends and neighbors to speak out against such prejudice!" (García McCall 12). Joaquín agrees with Don Rodrigo, "He's right

[papá]…'As an American citizen, as a tejano. It concerns me to watch our people be mistreated and robbed, to have their spirits trampled on" (12).

It is evident that newspapers[15] were essential to keep communities informed about the injustice that against ethnic Mexicans. However, journalists constantly risked their lives and their loved ones lives in their quest for news and justice since the press was, at the moment, one of the forms to denounce the massacres, terrorization and oppression by the Texas Rangers. In various instances, it was men of power, like Don Acevedo and Don Rodrigo, who were the only ones who could intercede for the less privileged. That being said, social status did not guarantee the safety of wealthy families with Spanish, Mexican and indigenous ancestry since they represented a threat to Anglo-Americans. At the core of Don Acevedo and Don Rodrigo's discussion is the racial discrimination against non-Anglo-American communities rooted in a colonized ideology of white supremacy and the resistance against it by Tejanos, Mexicans and Texan-Mexicans.

Don Acevedo warns Don Rodrigo of the consequences that this may bring, "'The only thing you're going to accomplish by printing these riotous stories is to get yourself killed…what's your family going to do without you? Go live in Colonia Calaveras like the rest of those poor souls whose husbands cared more about politics than their own families?," and orders him to stay out of his sight and property for as long as he keeps publishing such "garbage" (García McCall 13). Don Acevedo's apprehension is directed to the reaction of Elliot Munro, captain of the Texas Rangers, to these publications since he was responsible for upholding the law in Morado County and was feared more than the Sheriff Benjamin Nolan (10), which suggests the presence of vigilantism by the Texas Rangers. These tensions are captured in the opening of Chapter 3 excerpt of the

15. See Nicolás Kanellos and Helvetia Martell, *Hispanic Periodicals in the United States, Origins to 1960.*

newspaper *Burlington Weekly Free Press* from Burlington, VT published on August 12, 1915 whose headline reads, "People of Southern Texas Fear Race War: Sleep Under Arms: Wild Scheme Backed by Ignorant Mexicans, Escaped Convicts and American Fugitives from Justice to Turn Back to Mexican Control Responsible for Hostilities" (García McCall 54). Newspaper publications such as this, and statements like those made by Don Acevedo unveil the absence of federal and state interference, thus leaving border communities at the mercy of local law enforcement and vigilantism.

These sentiments of fear and frustration with regard to the presence of Texas Rangers at the Valley border region is evident in Chapter 6 when Doña Jovita Del Toro, Don Acevedo's wife, conceded to the Tejanos acting against white settlers to protect their lands, "'Forget the Spanish land grants,'…'We don't need a piece of paper to stake our claim on this country. My hair, my skin, the color of my eyes is proof enough. My ancestors—our ancestors—were here first!'" (92). Unlike Don Acevedo, whose family owned the land since the Spanish land grants, Doña Jovita was born in the United States, but her family was from Monterrey, Mexico, thus their different ways of challenging the Texas Rangers. She explains to her son Joaquín how his father, "[is] not as keen on the idea of fighting the law, not in subversive ways. But then again, he's never had to…He has integrity and a good heart, but rebellion and revolution are not in his blood…tejanos…believed in cultivating friendships with local law enforcement and politicians" (143).

The comparison between Mexicans and Tejanos marks a distinction between the two identities. On the one hand, Mexicans are referred to as rebellious and revolutionary due to the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920) taking place during the Plan de San Diego

revolt, where the oppressed class rebelled against hacendados for the right to own land. On the other hand, Tejanos are viewed as diplomatic, the result of the dispossession of land and their struggle to maintain it by sustaining their relationship with the new government. Doña Jovita's reference to skin color and her ancestors, however, indicates her indigenous origins that are marginalized by three entities along the border region: Spanish colonization, Mexican nationalism, and United States imperialism, with the latter emphasizing the idea of white supremacy supported by Manifest Destiny since the 1800s. These references to ancestry are recurrent in the novel, which as reminders of the complexity of the border region, its history, and identities.

As the story develops, the newspaper excerpts escalate to violent reports. Chapter 4 opens with the fictional news on *El Sureño* published in August 20, 1915 that reads, "One Dead, Two Arrested at Morado Creek Sugar Mill" (García McCall 67). Morado Creek separates Las Moras from Monteseco town and the closeness of the event soon involves Don Acevedo when Doña Flora's son, Gerardo is accused of being one of the two sediciosos[16] arrested. Doña Flora is aware that such accusations will result in her son hanged without a trial, another victim of the Texas Rangers, just like her husband who was killed in Cameron County unjustly. In an attempt to save her son she seeks help from Don Acevedo whom she is loyal to since both her son and she are workers from Las Moras. Don Acevedo intervenes on her behalf with Elliot Munro but fails to convince him of Gerardo's innocence:

> Why are you questioning my authority? I don't need you to tell me how to deal with this. I make the law around here. And I will enforce it in whatever way I see

16. According to Johnson, a sediciosos is a Mexican or Texas-Mexican rebel that fought against Anglo-Texans, especially Texas Rangers, by destroying businesses, post offices, bridges, railroads and other infrastructures that supported the Anglo economy and political dominance (90-102).

> fit! This is my county and Monteseco is my town. Nola [the Sheriff] does what I say. Judge Thompson does what I say. There is no higher power than me in Morado County. (85)

The excerpt and accusations against Gerardo indicate the presence of a resistance against Texas Rangers and Anglo-Americans settlers. However, Munro's declaration supports the gravity of the situation at the Valley, as there is no justice only terrorization from the Texas Rangers towards non-Anglo-American communities and representatives of the law, as Nolan does nothing to stop Munro or his men in fear of the consequences.

The violence that reigned over the Valley is documented once more in another newspaper, *The Ronan Pioneer* from Ronan, MT published on August 13, 1915. The headline states, "Mexicans Killed by Texas Rangers: Several Outlaws Reported Slain in Fight Near Norias, Texas: Americans Are Reinforced" (112). This opening for Chapter 8 compared to the previous chapter, highlights the death of Mexicans denoting justice and security for Americans by the Texas Rangers. García McCAll weaves fiction along with primary sources published outside of Texas to disrupt the discourse that continues to colonize bodies by labeling people of color as dangerous, ignorant, criminals, outlaws, *sediciosos* and bandits. The reality of south Texas emerges as characters from *Shame the Stars* represent the various identities whose voices challenge the presence of a mechanism of militarization that operates through policing and policies that target non-Anglo communities in order to control the land and bodies that inhabit it.

Voices like Doña Flora, who seeks justice for her son Gerardo, unites with others such as Carlos, Doña Jovita Del Toro's half brother, to denounce injustice by Texas Rangers. Carlos' testimony recounts how he lost his land because he couldn't prove

ownership due to the loss of the documents during a fire. No one would help his family, not even the lawyers since county officials demanded paperwork from the United States[17] and all they had were Mexican documents from "a hundred years ago when [his] ancestors were granted the land" (García McCall 129). The request to his property resulted in the death of his sixteen-year-old son who was hung in the backyard by Texas Rangers. His wife moved with her parents in Matamoros and he stayed to help displaced families and fight against Texas Rangers as a rebel (129-130). Doña Flora's experience and Carlos' testimony is the story of many that suffered the same injustice. The documentation of it in *Shame the Stars* serves to contextualize the complexity of communities along the border region and challenge discourse about Mexicans based on prejudice.

The opening of Chapter 17, with an excerpt of *The Ogden Standard* from Ogden, UT published in September 2, 1915, reads, "U.S. Troops in a Border Battle: Mexican Bandits Eleven Miles North of Brownsville, Texas Set Fire to Bridge" (206) and highlights the tensions along the Valley border region. The presence of U.S. troops and reference of a battle against Mexicans reinforce the presence of a mechanism of militarization along the region to prevent any rebellion and secure the border. According to historian Monica Muñoz Martinez, in 1915, when word of an organized insurrection in south Texas spread, Governor James Edward Ferguson authorized "the systematic execution of anyone affiliated with revolutionary activities…This plan gave the governor… ammunition to justify state-sanctioned violence on an intensified scale and

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17. Historian Douglas W. Richmond claims, "The governor of Texas ordered an 'investigation' of all land titles issued prior to 1836 and… declared 'vacant' all communal and municipal lands distributed earlier. The General Law of 1852 validated some original Spanish land grants but many claims were lost simply for lack of representation before the commission as required by the law. The 'vacant' lands were then sold to Anglos at very low prices. (3)

put ethnic Mexicans at further risk for being targeted as enemies of the state" that led to a period of violence described as an "orgy of bloodshed" and a "reign of terror" (Muñoz Martinez 667-668). Muñoz Martinez indicates that regardless of citizenship, social status or evidence of guilt, Texas Rangers killed Mexicans merely for their proximity to a nearby crime that resulted in profiling them as "bandit" or "bandit sympathizer," which Johnson describes as ethnic cleansing.[18]

With the Plan de San Diego manifesto circulating, the Mexican Revolution taking place across the border, the dispossession of land, lynching and massacres by vigilantes and Texas Rangers in south Texas, it was common to falsely accuse Mexicans or non-Anglo-Americans of being rebels, bandits or sediciosos. *Shame the Stars* documents the indifference and neglect by the local, state, and national government through Don Acevedo and Don Rodrigo families who are forced to take arms to protect their land and lives when Munro accuses the rebels of assaulting Don Acevedo and stealing his cattle. Similarly, he blames the rebels for the burning of Don Rodrigo's print shop, which coincidently took place after it was published in *El Sureño* that it was two Texas Rangers that had stolen and attacked Don Acevedo and not the rebels, "Mamá…beamed with pride when she opened the newspaper and read how Slater and Davis, [Munro's men], had been taken into town tied and gagged and strapped to their saddles. There was no doubt in anybody's mind that they were responsible for the assault on Papá and the stolen cattle" (García McCall 207).

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18. For more on the practice of ethnic cleansing, see Benjamin Heber Johnson's chapter "Repression" in *Revolution in Texas: How a Forgotten Rebellion and Its Bloody Suppression Turned Mexicans into Americans.*

The heroic and iconic[19] Texas Ranger documented by historian Walter Prescott Webb in, *The Texas Rangers in the Mexican War* (1975) is deconstructed and problematized in *Shame the Stars*. The organization was problematic since its foundation by Stephen F. Austin in 1823, as they "blurred the lines between enforcing state laws and practicing vigilantism" to which various historians viewed them as the first "prominent Western vigilantes to be endowed with legal authority" (Muñoz Martinez 665-666). Under the administration of Governor Ferguson, the number of Texas Rangers increased at an alarming rate during the years 1913-1915[20] when the Texas legislature raised the state budget for Rangers salaries, and "Governor Ferguson accordingly increased the number of Texas companies and appointed captains to select paid regular Rangers and unpaid special Rangers to fill their ranks" (667). This became problematic due to the fact that many men enlisted to become Rangers without having any military training.

Shame the Stars Chapter 2 documents the problem of Rangers' enlistment. When Munro presents itself looking for Gerardo, Joaquín describes how Munro was standing next to two other Rangers that he didn't recognize and figured they must be new to his company, "Because of the rebellion, [his] company had grown exponentially. Most of the new men were sent to him through the ranks. Others, however, were handpicked from among his friends. Consequently, a lot of his men didn't have any military training," their qualifications were "their animosity for Mexican bandits and their willingness to do whatever Munro said without question" (28). Even Webb, sympathetic to the Rangers,

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19. According to historians Charles H. Harris III and Louis R. Sadler, "Good publicity contributed to the Rangers' reputation. 'One riot—one Ranger," with its implication of almost superhuman prowess, is a little gem attributed to Captain Bill McDonald, who happened to be the greatest publicity hound in the history of the Rangers. He had a positive gift of pithy sayings that were immediately seize upon by reporters and that contributed to the glamorous image of the organization" (1).
20. In 1913, a mere thirteen rangers patrolled the Texas border with Mexico…By April 1915 it doubled to 26 rangers… and by the end of WWI it grew to approximately 1, 350 (Muñoz Martinez 667).

described some of these enlisted men as incompetent (Muñoz Martinez 667).

Careless enlistments of men as Texas Rangers had extreme consequences and acts of violence reached women and children, a reflection on its poor management and governor Ferguson's racist administration. Chapter 10 documents how Doña Jovita visited the Colonia Calaveras, "a cluster of jacalitos, rough-made huts that housed the poorest among us…the place where our displaced people went to live after they were run off their properties where they disappeared to when they had nowhere else to go" (García McCall 146). She went to see Adelita, a young girl who was raped and almost killed by the Texas Rangers. Doña Jovita tended to her swollen face that was "batter to the point of disfigurement" (146) while Doña Sarita, Adelita's grandmother, mentioned how she was not eating and how she constantly wished to be dead. As Doña Jovita cured her wounds she commented, "'There is no trust, no faith, no honesty in men, especially not when they join the Rangers.'" Joaquín found the violence against women difficult to understand. For Doña Sarita the answer was simple, "They know our men are our strength'…'But women—well, women are our corazón. They go after our girls to tear us apart, to keep our hearts from growing strong'" (150).

Her statement was followed by an alarming comment from the old man at the table, "'At least they didn't kill her like they did that Gonzales girl last month" a total of five girls have been attacked "'Two of them [were] missing...There's no way of finding out where they dump their bodies, though. They could be anywhere out there in the monte'" (150-151). Muñoz Martinez in her research documents an oral testament of a granddaughter of one of the various victims of the Texas Rangers. She mentions that in her search for the truth she has been "reading cases of whole families, small children,

killed or hung. Lynched…There was a lot of unrest and the [Mexican] Revolution made it easy to disguise killings…just say 'bandido' or 'sympathizer,'" violence had no gendered parameters (681).

In light of this, it is crucial to recognize the research on racial violence during the early 1900s in south Texas and the efforts done to recover such histories to revise the past. Initiatives such as *Refusing to Forget*,[21] "a multifaceted project that seeks to stimulate public conversations through efforts such as: museum and online exhibits, historical marker unveilings, lectures, and curricular materials for public school teachers," propose a new approach for research, one that connects with the communities beyond the documentation of their experiences. For instance, the unveiling of historical markers is accompanied by ceremonies where the families and community affected by the racial violence are present, as well as city officials. These initiatives, whose reach extends beyond scholarship, work to connect with individuals in order to create meaningful changes about how history is approached, viewed, and taught in order to prevent and perpetuate marginalized histories, especially of people of color. Since 2014 the Texas State Historical Commission has approved various markers proposed by the project *Refusing to Forget* such as: the recognition of the unknown victims of *La Matanza* (The Massacre) in 1915 at Cameron County; the unveiling of civil rights pioneer Jovita Idar in Webb County; the tragic murders of Jesus Bazán and Antonio Longoria in 1915 in Hidalgo County; and the *Porvenir Massacre* in 1918 in Presidio County. These alternative forms of documentation and histories are decolonized practices that contest a colonialist ideology since it is a collective effort to recover and revised the past.

21. For more information, https://refusingtoforget.org/historical-markers/

Shame the Stars presents an effort that moves beyond the novel by including primary sources for its readers and presenting an alternative history of south Texas of the early 1900s. While the newspapers utilized in the novel documented specifically issues during 1915 from outside publishers, it incites further research on local publications and their documentation of such events. For example, initiatives such as Borderlands Archives Cartography (BAC),[22] a project founded by Sylvia Fernández and myself, supports the conclusion that there is a rich production of newspapers along the region. The project is dedicated to locating, mapping and facilitating access to nineteenth and mid-twentieth-century newspapers from the past and current border region. Through visualizations, this digital tool maps the geographic location of newspaper publishing establishments to provide a deeper historical and archival context in order to foreground the history of the borderlands and its communities before and after the current division line was drawn. BAC's transnational data, digital transborder archive and digital map serve as tools to question colonial impositions on the region, its archives and maps, by highlighting the borderlands' binational history found in archival material and primary sources such as newspapers. According to Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa, our personal experiences told from our own words allow us to name ourselves; this bridging then creates a politics of necessity (19) that recognizes these experiences as valid as it becomes a collective rather than individualistic record that disrupts a colonized written history. These decolonizing practices are presented in the novel through Dulceña Villa and Doña Jovita allowing a written history by fronterizas to emerge.

Dulceña Villa, editor of *El Sureño* and daughter of Doña Serafina Estrada and Don Rodrigo Villa, is an eighteen-year-old woman who enjoys working with her father at

22. For more information on the project visit, www.bacartography.org.

the print shop instead of staying at home with her mother and her tutor Madame Josette, "I'd rather be interviewing victims and writing editorials than sitting around with the women all day…I have so much to offer the world, both as a woman and as a reporter. Things are changing in this country, and our role as women has to change with it" (García McCall 24-25). Dulceña challenges the private and public space by declaring that her gender should not limit her to the house and restrict her from participating actively in the public space like her father especially in a country that stands for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.[23] She shared these thoughts with Joaquín who expressed his desire to whisk her away to Neverland in order to protect her from the turmoil surrounding their families and community. However, Dulceña reminded him that she was no Wendy and she had her own adventures in mind, "I am going to travel. I'm going to pack my bags and go see this great big world and write all about it, like those reporters in the magazines my father reads" (26). Dulceña contested the norms set for women by stating her goals not as dreams, but affirmations and comparing herself to other published journalists.

Joaquín is startled by her declaration since he never thought of "Dulceña's plans for herself outside of [his] love for her and [his] desire to marry her someday" (26); the common stereotype of female characters in stories as passive and damsels in distress is broken. Dulceña does not renounce her goal of being a journalist or marriage. Instead she reminds Joaquín that she has a free will too and that both should "always respect each other's dreams" (García McCall 27). These acts of agency by Dulceña not only disrupt gender roles set for women but also for men since Joaquín transgresses male behaviors by being supportive, caring and open with his emotions. This is crucial since the rhetoric of

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23. See Declaration of Independent transcript, https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration-transcript

the time described Tejanos, Mexicanos, and Texan-Mexicans as criminals, violent and nothing else.

As the story progresses Dulceña secret identity is revealed as she shares with Joaquín her active role as the journalist A.V. Negrados, a pen name that echo the voice of A.V. Negra,[24] "the reporter who wrote articles for *La Crónica* to call attention to the poor working conditions of the families of campesinos working on this side of the border" (García McCall 181). As a fronteriza journalist, Dulceña is the representation of women writers and editors that transgressed their gender roles to be the voice in their communities in a period of racial violence. She reminds Joaquín that, "As a reporter, [she] has a responsibility to the people of this community…[She] need[s] to be A.V. Negrados—[She] need[s] to keep writing their stories. If [she] were to leave, to run away, who would speak for them? Who would voice their fears and document their suffering?" (185). Scholar, Clara Lomas, in regards to fronteriza journalists claims,

> Although few women in the borderlands had the cultural capital required to express themselves in writing, the women who did were able to create alternative means to do so…women's work as activists and their intellectual, written contributions have remained virtually unrecognized. Either due to their political affiliations or to gender discrimination, their work has not been recognized in Mexico. In the United States, these factors, as well as racial and

24. "'A.V. Negra,' which phonetically reads 'Ave Negra' ("Black Bird"), connoting the bearer of tragic news, … [was] Jovita Idar [pen name, an] author and disseminator of culturally-specific and working-class-based feminist ideas. Through the use of [her] pseudonyms evoking justice and the bearer of news, Jovita Idar launched her political ideas in *La Crónica* about the need for political organization on the part of the Mexican community in the United States for cultural and linguistic nationalism and for working-class women's social, political, and economic emancipation. Although a few such articles have been recovered, her articles on her involvement in the violent phase of the Mexican revolution have not. It is through the recovery of Leonor Villegas de Magnón's autobiography that we learn of Idar's transborder political activism" (Lomas 63-66).

> linguistic biases, have relegated their work to oblivion. Nevertheless…their publishing efforts capture the realities of a people, the significance of whose daily existence transcends the limitations imposed by national, political, gender, and class boundaries. (52)

García McCall not only recognizes the contributions of fronteriza journalists by creating Dulceña's character, she also reinscribes through fiction histories that recognize Dulceña as the representative of marginalized fronteriza journalists.

Similar to Dulceña, Doña Jovita contests the norms delimiting women's activities and through her García McCall honors those who risked their lives in the battlefields defending their families, communities, and land. As the safety of Las Moras is jeopardized Doña Jovita is forced to reveal her secret identity as La Estrella, the protector of the people and the rebels. Besides attending to the victims of the Texas Rangers, as La Estrella she has been "helping rebels, providing for them, taking care of their families, harboring them at Las Moras," (119) making her a wanted rebel. This revelation changed Joaquín's view of his mother,

> I'd never seen my mother in this light. She was like a soldadera, a true warrior woman, fighting in the Mexican Revolution. I had seen pictures of soldaderas in the paper the last few months, with their belts of ammunition hanging across their chest and riffles resting in their arms, solemn and grave and ready to go into battle to fight for justice. (132)

Newspapers like the one used as an excerpt for the opening of Chapter 10, whose headline is accompanied by a photo of a train with soldaderas, reads "'Modern Amazons of Mexico Keep Armies Alive: Soldaderas Rustle the Grub for Fighters and Thereby

Effect Gigantic Saving for Leaders,' *The Sun* (New York, NY), March 4, 1915," (138), allowed Joaquín to make the comparison. For the first time he sees his mother as a strong woman capable of defending herself and others, a warrior in search of justice just like the women in the newspaper.

García McCall continues to revisit the past through Doña Jovita in order to highlight the transgression of women in the public sector as well as their resilience and contributions. While Dulceña's pen name A.V. Negrados honors Jovita Idar journalism, Doña Jovita Del Toro acknowledges Idar's transborder activism as her own actions resonate with Leonor Villegas de Magnón's memoir[25] that documents Jovita Idar's contributions as well as the participation of others,

> While official history of the Mexican Revolution has focused on male political intellectuals and military leaders, *La Rebelde* attempts to highlight the contributions of some women, such as Jovita Idar, Teresa Villarreal, and Teresa Villarreal's sister, teacher-poet Andrea Villarreal, as well as other borderlands heroines. As official history nearly erased the memory of the nurses' involvement in the Mexican Revolution of 1910, especially those from the Texas-Mexico border area, Leonor Villegas de Magnón made it her duty to leave a written record of that participation through her memoirs of the medical relief group she founded in 1914, La Cruz Blanca (the White Cross), comprised of women and men of both sides of the border, Laredo, Texas, and Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas. Unlike the memoirs of revolutionary generals, however, *La Rebelde* focuses on the names of the women of the various Cruz Blanca brigades as well as vignettes

25. For more information on Leonor Villegas de Magnón see her memoir *The Rebel* or *La Rebelde.*

> of women turned spies, female military officers dressed as men, and valiant heroines…Her narrative pointed to their deeds as acts of an international social justice, which knew no national boundaries. For her, all border-area participants, regardless of gender, were equally important. (Lomas 66-68)

García McCall's multidimensional female characters are a reflection of real fronterizas who have risked their lives in their fight against racial violence and gender oppression. Both Dulceña and Doña Jovita are a reminder that when it comes to justice women of all ages have been in the frontline alongside men.

As both women continued to fight against Texas Rangers vigilantism their identities became known to Munro. He was informed that Dulceña was A.V. Negrados and as a reporter he was certain she "had direct access to La Estrella for months, maybe even years, and [he] intend[ed] to find out just how closely associated they have become, what her role is in the rebellion" (García McCall 238). Munro pulled his pistol out and called on Dulceña "you are under arrest for conspiring to commit treason'…and pulled Dulceña out of [Joaquín's] arms" just as they were celebrating their marriage with their families (239). Things escalated rapidly as Mateo, one of Del Toro's workers, pointed to Doña Jovita revealing her identity in an attempt to save his girlfriend Conchita, Dulceña's maid and friend, who had been arrested by Munro, "'She's La Estrella!'… 'Dulceña and Conchita have nothing to do with it. They didn't even know about her. I swear. They're innocent!'" (239). As Doña Jovita fought her way to Joaquín who was being held by a deputy, a lawman tried to restrain her, then a deputy standing no more than ten feet away from them aimed his rifle in her direction and pulled the trigger "shot after shot whistled through the air" (240).

Chapter 20's newspaper excerpt headline reported the death of a woman during a confrontation echoing the tragedy at Monteseco, "Trouble on the Mexican Border Continues: Five Mexican Bandits and Woman Killed in Fight at Nonis Sunday," *The Intelligencer* (Anderson, SC), August 10, 1915. In Doña Jovita's last moments of breath Munro approached her "like a vulture" and asked her if it was true that she was La Estrella and if all was worth it to which she replied, 'Sí…I am La Estrella…I'm the ghost you've been chasing'…'I regret nothing,'…'What I did…I did for my people…my love…my devotion…that's something you can never take away from them' (García McCall 242). The death of La Estrella was felt throughout the region and newspapers published her story in both Spanish and English, "[she] was no longer a legend…The death of Jovita del Toro, an American woman of Mexican descent, killed by a deputy sheriff on American soil, outside a courthouse no less, drew a lot of attention…Her face was plastered over every front page in our newspapers" (250).

Munro's eagerness to apprehend Dulceña and capture La Estrella by any means necessary, even killing, emphasizes the dangers that women encountered for transgressing the norms, that is, women of color. This is evident early on in the novel; Chapter 5 opening excerpt is from *The Hand-Book of Etiquette For Ladies* by an American Lady, 1847-1915 (78), which suggest norms set for ladies of a certain class. Nevertheless, the handbook is by an Anglo-American who determines the norms and that those who do not follow them, were by default, unladylike. Dulceña is exposed to these regulations from the beginning, as two of Munro's deputies attack her while being with Joaquín one night at the creek. Her father's accusation against them upsets Munro and emphasizes the only person responsible is Dulceña since she placed herself in danger by

leaving the dance with Joaquín late at night to go to the creek, "'I'm not saying it's her fault,' Munro said. 'But the fact is she put herself in this position and now we have to face the repercussions of her lack of propriety'" (82). Munro's fails to meet his obligation as a law enforcement officer to see to the security and protection of civilians, especially the vulnerable: children, women and elderly. His condemnation of Dulceña denotes a sexist attitude that underscores a patriarchal system set to keep women under control.

For the Texas Rangers, women of color were incapable of civility and could only be controlled by force. His emphasis on propriety, manners and women's place in alerted women to what fronterizas would confront besides racial violence. Yet these norms were contested in multiple ways—like Doña Jovita who defied Munro until her last breath. Dulceña defiance, however, enrages Munro as she confronts him,

> 'Why are we still standing here pretending you're going to do anything about this?'…'Everyone here knows you're going to cover this up. You've said as much. As long as men like you rule this world, women like me, innocent women, will have no justice. Do you think I care about my reputation? I don't care what people think or whisper about me. All I care about is making things better for our people, and if that tarnishes my reputation, then so be it. I will not be victimized by your goons!' to which Munro replied, 'Young lady! You mind your manners and remember your place!...Now, if I were you Rodrigo, I would take my daughter home and make sure she doesn't get out again. Make sure she understands this is what happens to young women when they sneak around at night como prostitutas.' (García McCall 85-86)

Munro's declaration besides being sexist is also racist since he used Spanish to condemn

her behavior as that of a prostitute, which reveals his view about non-Anglo-American women and explains the attacks on young girls like Adelita and the Gonzalez's girls.

The last two excerpts of newspapers on the novel announce the imprisonment of a priest. Chapter 24 is a from *El Sureño* dated Friday, September 17, 1915 with the headline, "Martyr of Las Moras to Hang!" and nothing else leaving to the reader's imagination the published story, while Chapter 25 published in *Omaha Daily Bee* (Omaha, NE) dated March 13, 1915 reads, "Mob Tries to Free Mexican Priests: Two Thousand Storm National Palace in Effort to Rescue Imprisoned Men of the Cloth; Chief of Police is Stabbed." The two reference the situation of Tomás, Doña Jovita's son, a priest who was arrested after hitting the deputy who killed his mother on the head with the lawman's weapon. Whereas the deputy was not charged for Doña Jovita's murder, Tomás was charged with attempted capital offense for beating a deputy (García McCall 246). A few days after he is sentenced to be hanged without even the benefit of a trial, a decision reached after Munro and Judge Thompson had a private meeting (255).

At the end, it would be the power of the press that would help bring justice to Tomás and the people of the Valley. Tomás' lawyer's failed attempts through the judicial system to set him free soon realized that the only way to fight against Munro and his men was the newspapers and suggested to Joaquín and Dulceña to publish the story,

> 'She can write a long, scathing editorial letter addressed to the governor himself. An exquisite ballad, a corrido in English condemning the Rangers and glorifying your brother' to which Dulceña agreed, 'Words are important…If we do this right, if we get the public's attention, we could very well force the governor's hand'…'Munro's biggest fear is exposure'… 'Getting an important editorial

circulation shouldn't be a problem…' (264-265)

Joaquín began to write about his family, especially about his mother and the injustice that reigned over their town and the Valley. He was inspired by the fearless journalists who dedicated their lives to reporting the stories of those in need like A.V. Negra and his wife A.V. Negrados, "How would they *address* the problem? What angle would they take?... Mimicking [Dulceña] style, I started by quoting the laws of man and the laws of God. I referenced history both recent and past, from both sides of the border" (267). Joaquín not only recognizes the contribution of fronteriza journalists, he also embraced both cultures as equal and important to him, his family, and community, something he learned from his mother and Dulceña.

With the help of Dulceña and Don Rodrigo Joaquín's article was printed under his name, "five thousand copies…a two-page spread, an exclusive, just long enough to get the story out in both Spanish and English. Its enormous heading line screamed out in bold letters the word Rebellion" (García McCall 271). The newspaper reached one end of the town to the other, as well as nearby towns in the south of Texas and as far north as Agua Dulce, near Corpus Christi, "By the time we all got back to Monteseco, there was a huge crowd outside the old print shop" and soon people began chanting "Free Tomás! Free our brother" (273-274). Joaquín spoke to the crowd about justice and "the freedom to live and love and speak our minds here, en los Estados Unidos" (272), referencing the rights set in the *Declaration of Independence* and emphasizing the inclusion of everyone—not just Anglo-Americans—by using Spanish to refer to the United States. Through the guidance of his mother, family and Dulceña, Joaquín found the courage to stand against injustice as he signed the article under his name instead of anonymously, as he did when

he submitted the poem "Tejano" printed in *El Sureño* on Easter Sunday. This action emphasized the importance of newspapers, not only as sources of information but also as forms of representation and empowerment.

To support Joaquín, Dulceña lifted the issue of *El Sureño* in the air and waived it while saying "'*El Sureño* lives. It speaks *our* truth!'…'Her words set the place on fire,'" (García McCall 274). Munro approached her and ripped the paper out of her hands while she fought him "he backhanded her across the face, sending her sprawling sideways into the dirt…Dulceña stood up and spit in Munro's face, an act that had him reaching for his gun. But he didn't get to it because [the sheriff] Caceres drew his own pistol" (274) against Munro. Caceres reminded Munro that according to the law the press had the right to be there to which he replied, "'She's an insurgent—just like the rest of them'…'She has no respect for the law'" and in an attempt to knock Caceres down a fight broke out and Joaquín as well as others watching got involved as they tried to stop Munro from killing the sheriff or anyone else. Indeed, it was the exposure of the press and solidarity among communities towards La Estrella, that brought Munro to justice.

As Munro was arrested for attacking the sheriff, Joaquín was also arrested for stopping Munro from killing Caceres. The outrage among the crowd was such that "people from Monteseco… stood outside the jailhouse the rest of the day and the whole night throughout…There were so many…and they were so riled up, the governor was forced to grant a stay of execution for Tomás until they could *clear things up*" (García McCall 279-280). After a week of phone calls and from Caceres and the lawyers, "to their *new* friends at the capitol, Judge Thompson had no other choice than to have Tomás released. After all, the governor [Ferguson] himself had read the papers, studied the case,

and granted [Tomás] a full pardon" while Joaquin charges were dropped as well as he acted in defense of the sheriff. According to Muñoz Martinez,

> The year 1915 emerged as a stark period of anti-Mexican violence resulting from state administrations [Governor Ferguson] encouraging Rangers and local agents to abuse legal authority. As a result, when Texas Rangers and local enforcement officers collaborated to take the law into their own hands, there were countless violations of residents' civil and social rights… In 1919 the high number of deaths attributed to Texas Rangers led State Representative José T. Canales to initiate a committee to investigate their conduct. At the hearing, he cited eighteen abuses of power in which Texas Rangers inflicted harm or incited terror on ethnic Mexican communities. The investigation proved valuable for documenting state agents' crimes and regular abuse of power, and also revealed a high tolerance of some local residents for state-sanctioned violence. (668-669)

Shame the Stars documentation of Texas Rangers constant aggressions towards women, non-Anglo individuals, the press, and authorities unveiled the gravity of oppression that governed the Valley at the time. The use of newspaper publications from 1915, as the opening for various chapters, served as reminders of the mechanism of militarization set in place along the south of Texas. This period, without a doubt, "produced a discourse about policing the border region that informs contemporary forms of anti-Mexican and anti-immigrant violence on the US–Mexico border" (Muñoz Martinez 683).

Bath Riots (1917) and the Mexican Repatriation (1920-1939)

With the Mexican Revolution as a backdrop (1910-1920) Rosario Sanmiguel and Norma E. Cantú's work unveil two policies that support a mechanism of militarization,

the Bath Riots (1917) and the Mexican Repatriation (1929-1939). Through fiction, Fronteriza authors' reinscribe and document a written history using personal archives and knowledge to contest ethnic cleansing practices grounded in a U.S. colonial ideology of white supremacy. Their texts record the two historical events that are not included in Texas History textbooks; thus challenging the white hegemonic historiographical models by incorporating a transborder experience, in this case the realities of Pasoans and Juarenses at the border, archived through a collection of transborder fictional narratives.

Rosario Sanmiguel

Rosario Sanmiguel *Callejón Sucre y otros relatos* (1994) short story "Vientos del Sur," is one of seven short stories under the "El reflejo de la luna" section that is analyzed in this segment. The set of stories focus on the life of Nicole Campillo and Arturo Alcántar relationship and their life in El Paso, Texas – Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua border. Nicole is a Chicana lawyer from El Paso that handles cases of undocumented immigrants and migrant workers while her husband, Arturo Alcántar, is a businessman on exportation of agricultural machinery. Their unstable relationship is tested through a set of events related to their work, community, and upbringing. This collection of texts are embedded with memories and experiences that document three generations of fronterizos' resilience against gender, race and class differences, unveiling the complexity of border communities, identities and history.

Sanmiguel's "Vientos del Sur" is analyzed under this segment due to the fact that it records a mechanism of militarization along the U.S.-Mexico border through the effects of the Mexican Revolution and the Bath Riots at the El Paso – Cd. Juárez border during 1917. This short story documents the lineage of the Alcántar's through three generations.

Sanmiguel begins the record with Don Manuel Alcántar, Arturo's grandfather, a rich man from Chihuahua that immigrated to El Paso during the Porfirio Díaz regime (1876-1911) in order to protect his family fortune. He settled in Sunset Heights, "Un barrio de mansiones construidas con reminiscencias sureñas en lo alto de una colina, desde la cual podía ver el agitado y polvoriento pueblo del otro lado del río: Paso del Norte vivía, como el resto de México, las vicisitudes del movimiento armado" (Sanmiguel 125). Don Manuel Alcántar, a wealthy Chihuahuense, was one of the thousands Mexicans that crossed the border to escape the Mexican Revolution.

From the comfort of his mansion in the hills, "veía llegar con disgusto las primeras hordas de campesinos que huían del hambre y la balacera," (125) which indicates the flow of refugees rich and poor to the United States during the early 1900s. Nevertheless, the reference to campesinos fleeing due to starvation and the shootings occurring across the river is crucial since this group is not welcomed as reflected by Don Manuel Alcántar's disdain, a reminder of the disparity of social classes in Mexico that led to the Mexican Revolution. He despised everything that surrounded him and was obsessed with the memory of his life in the city of Chihuahua where his family lineage originates,

> Echaba de menos los veranos, cuando paseaba…en el Paseo Bolívar. También las animadas noches de verbena en el Parque Lerdo. Extrañaba la Plaza Hidalgo, donde le gustaba lustrarse los botines después de atender sus asuntos en el Palacio de Gobierno. Pero lo que más falta le hacía era su recorrido dominical —acompañado de su esposa, quien moriría tan pronto como se mudaran a El Paso—. Primero, misa de once en Catedral. Ahí se encontraba la alta sociedad

> chihuahuense...vestida con sus mejores galas…después…el aperitivo en el gran salón del Hotel Palacio. (Sanmiguel 125-126)

Unlike Don Manuel Alcántar, campesinos who crossed the border “se integraban a las cuadrillas de negros y mexicanos que construían la ruta del ferrocarril Southern Pacific” (125). According to historian Abraham Hoffman, “the railroads offered an opportunity for escape which was taken by thousands of Mexicans. Once in the United States, however, many Mexicans felt little obligation to remain with the railroads that had recruited them at the wage of a dollar a day” (7).

As analyzed in *Shame the Stars,* since the early 1800s, Anglo Americans were eager to secure the U.S.-Mexico border region. Before the 1880s few Mexicans crossed over to the United States and little attention was given to border crossing until railroad construction, which led the U.S. federal government to keep track of border crossings around 1908[26] (Hoffman 6). Historian Mae M. Ngai states,

> Before the 1920s immigration into the United States was numerically unrestricted …Freedom of movement was a right acquired in Europe and North America with the emergence of capitalism, as peasants became unshackled from their places of birth and servants from the authority of their masters…Thus, until the late nineteenth century in the United States, immigration was encouraged and virtually unfettered. State control of migration was considered either a matter of local police powers (vagrancy, dependency, etc.) or a matter of commerce. (17)

Later, in the early 1900s tactics to restrict border crossing escalated as documented in “Vientos del Sur” when Don Manuel Alcántar views how, “Los inmigrantes se sometían

26. By 1910, “almost fifteen thousand miles of railroad tracks had been laid, enabling Mexicans from the central plateau region of Mexico to head north without much difficulty” (Hoffman 6).

a una humillante inspección sanitaria a cargo de las autoridades norteamericanas, tan pronto como cruzaban el endeble puente de madera —el Santa Fe— tendido sobre el río" (Sanmiguel 125), a humiliating "sanitary inspection" by U.S. customs officials performed at the border crossing in El Paso Disinfection Plant[27] located at the Santa Fe wooden bridge.

Sanmiguel's documentation of this event unveils a period of racial tensions at El Paso - Ciudad Juárez that according to historian Miguel Antonio Levario prevailed from 1916-1933, "immigration policy and law enforcement evolved into an entity with multiple tentacles… restrictive immigration policies, labor controls, and Prohibition forced federal law enforcement into a dynamic authority structure that followed a 'militaristic blueprint'" (95). With the violation of the neutrality laws by the U.S. that detonated the massacre at Santa Ysabel, Chihuahua by Villistas on December 1915[28] resulted in years of intense racialized conflicts. On the afternoon of January 13, 1916, a riot among Anglo American civilians and soldiers against the Mexican community of El Paso escalated to the point that women, children and elderly were not spared by the vigilante mob that sought revenge (48).

Nevertheless, Levario indicates that Anglo Americans met resistance from what was referred to *la mexicanada*, "Once the word of the turmoil spread…groups from "El Segundo Barrio" began to show up with sticks, bats, pipes and anything else they could muster…resident of Ciudad Juárez, including soldiers, joined their Mexican brethren from El Paso" (49). In order to control the riot, General John J. Pershing at Fort Bliss sent

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27. For more details on sanitary inspections and bath riots see *Militarizing the Border: When Mexicans Became the Enemy* by Miguel Antonio Levario.
28 "The death train carrying the bodies of the seventeen Americans murdered at Santa Ysabel, Chihuahua, arrived in Juárez on the morning of January 13" (Levario 45).

the Sixteenth Infantry to the downtown area to aid police officers, instituted martial law enacting dead lines to contain the Mexican neighborhoods, closed the international bridge, and had Fort Bliss soldiers ransacked Mexican homes to prevent them from obtaining weapons (Levario 49-51). Sanmiguel description of the Plaza San Jacinto near Segundo barrio at the downtown area as a busy place where, "Los recién llegados —casi todos mexicanos— , sin trabajo u otra cosa que hacer, se reunían ahí. Algunos relataban las inhumerables hazañas que protagonizaba Villa, otros se lamenaban de las hambres sufridas y sus peripecias para llegar hasta el norte" (127), is a glimpse of the location and community that was intentionally targeted during the riot of 1916. These actions against the El Paso Mexican community legitimized white supremacy as the US Army protected Anglo Americans and classified Mexicans as the enemy and inferior.

However, racial tensions flourished once again as the scare of typhus fever contagions increased. Dr. Carlos Husk, an American physician for the Smelting and Refining Company, reported to the El Paso Medical Society that he believed that the typhus—at Aguascalientes, Mexico and other cities in central Mexico—would arrive to El Paso and precautions were needed (Levario 57). In January 1916, El Paso city health officials, "with the cooperation with Carranza officials in Ciudad Juárez, subjected all Mexicans crossing into El Paso to a steam-shower-disinfecting facility…consequently labeled as a threat to public health and safety" (57). Due to the lack of facilities in Ciudad Juárez, El Paso secured funds to build one in order to tackle the "dirtiest Mexicans ever [seen]" according to United States Public Health Service doctor John W. Tappan and used dangerous methods of "cleansing" such as a bathing in a mixture of kerosene, gasoline, and vinegar (Levario 57).

Additionally, gasoline baths were recommended for Mexicans admitted to the city hospital and jail as per Doctors Pierce and Tappan recommendations (57). The inspection was performed also on questionable citizens along the El Paso side of the river, which coincidently were Mexican neighborhoods. However, the campaign did not target white Americans, evidence that the "hysteria in the border region was unfounded and largely racialized" since inspections conducted by El Paso Health officials in different districts did not find a single case of typhus (Levario 58). Once again, threats of closing the border arose as carrancista General Gabriel Gavira in Ciudad Juárez found the treatment of Mexicans disturbing and alerted officials at El Paso that if it continued he would stop the inspections and prohibit Americans crossing into Juárez (58).

The situation escalated on March 6, 1916, when the El Paso city jail performed the bathing ritual where prisoners were gathered at the "roundabout" stripped nude in order to dip their bodies into a kerosene solution to then return them to their cells to wait for their fumigated clothes to dry (59). As a match was lit in the enclosed space the fire spread, "numerous men found themselves in agonizing pain before they met their death" as some escaped to the streets while others were trapped inside. In the end there were twenty-seven dead prisoners, and nineteen were of Mexican origin (Levario 61-63). Diego Acebes, one of the burned victims, escaped the fire and ran naked through the downtown streets and crossed to Juárez claiming that Americans were burning Mexican prisoners. As a result El Paso officials alerted all Americans in Juárez to return to the U.S. in fear for their security (64). Mexicans on both sides of the border believed it was a systematic murder. The grand jury assembled did not file any indictments against any medical or city officials (65). As Levario claims, "the bath did more than subject

Mexicans to inspection; it further marginalized the community as a threat to American security" and what began as a typhus scare continued for several decades (66).

Despite the deaths caused by the baths at the city jail, officials continued "disinfecting" Mexicans and on January 28, 1917 a riot began as Mexican women refused to be disinfected before crossing, "Reports circulated that American soldiers and immigration officials were photographing the women while nude and making the photographs public" (91). Women resented the tone of quarantines set by Anglo American officials who suggested Mexicans were dirty and unacceptable and preferred not to cross. Their resistance brought economical consequences to the smelting company and households that depended on Mexican servants. As hundreds of women and men gathered on the bridge one seventeen-year-old woman stood out, Carmelita Torres, who led the protesters against the inhumane health policies, such "commotion on the bridge forced military personnel from both sides of the river to restore order" (Levario 91). What the riots, quarantine, and fire made evident was an anti-Mexican sentiment at a state and national level as immigration policy reached beyond restrictionist policies by supporting eugenic philosophies,[29] "the proverbial ethnic cleansing" (93) and prejudice against Mexicans since the early 1800s.

Without a doubt, the Mexican Revolution played a major role in the development of a mechanism of militarization at the border region during the early 1900s. In order to secure the southwest international boundary "the militarization of border law enforcement forced various entities to assume militaristic characteristics and recognize the Mexican as the enemy" (Levario 95). The most affected by this were working class

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29. "The eugenicists were strict biological determinists who believed that intelligence, morality, and other social characteristics were permanently fixed in race. They believed racial boundaries were impermeable and that assimilation was impossible" (Ngai 24)

fronterizos from both sides of the river and the refugees of the Revolution as they faced discrimination of race and class from both nations. The Mexican elites such as Don Manuel Alcántar, however, continued their lives in comfort in the U.S. for generations.

"Vientos del Sur" documented not only events that impacted the fronterizo community for generations to come, but also the identities that emerged from such volatile times. After the death of Don Manuel Alcántar the fortune passed on to his only son, Manuel Arturo Alcántar who, as his father, was a workaholic, womanizer, and elitist. He also had only one son from his second marriage to a poor distant cousin from Chihuahua, Arturo. Unlike his father, Arturo did not care for the family business and had no determination as he did whatever his father ordered. He had an admiration for his grandfather and idealized "la figura de un hombre —que existía a través de fotografías amarillentas (donde posaba acompañado de políticos y militares que luego la historia llamaría traidores)— con mayor fuerza que si estuviera vivo" (Sanmiguel 129), the image of a man he could never be.

Arturo Alcántar grew in the exclusive sector of the city, went to the private schools where his classmates were Anglo Americans or like him, "descendientes de mexicanos, hijos de las clases privilegiadas…Su lengua maternal era el español, pero la mayor parte de las veces se comunicaba en inglés" (130). At the university he did not fit in with the chicanos that organized,

> en agrupaciones políticas y los mexicanos en la asociación de estudiantes extranjeros…Nunca se había sentido discriminado. El racismo para él no era una experiencia viva…Era vomo si Arturo viviera siempre en la frontera. A un paso de pertenecer, pero al mismo tiempo separado por una línea imperceptible trazada

por la historia. (Sanmiguel 130)

Through the story of the Alcántar men, Sanmiguel emphasizes how the three Arturos' social status, male privilege and citizenship allowed them to live without a worry as everything was handed to them. The history recorded by each one of them about the El Paso-Ciudad Juárez border community reflected their indifference to the struggles the region encountered during the early 1900s since the mechanism of militarization had no consequences for their daily routines or their family business as it did for the working class. The recording of such violent events resonates with the documentation of the riots since people of high status were exempt from the baths, martial law enacting deadlines and soldiers ransacks. The trauma passed on to the next generations is evident in the last Alcántar as Arturo is unable to connect or sympathize with other fronterizo identities due to their different personal experiences.

Norma E. Cantú

Canícula: Snapshots of a Girlhood en la Frontera (1995) by Norma E. Cantú is a collection of vignettes that document life at the Laredo, Texas-Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas border. Accompanied by a personal archive of Cantu's family photographs, *Canícula* becomes a fictional autobioethnography—a mix of autobiography and ethnographic fictional work—whose stories could represent her family yet not precisely (xi). Cantú claims the photographs tell the story, "and so what may appear to be autobiographical is not always so. On the other hand, many of the events are completely fictional, although they may be true in a historical context" (xi). This analysis focuses on "Crossings," the third vignette of *Canícula* and one that is not accompanied by a photograph, perhaps because it is the story of many.

"Crossings" opens with three generations of fronterizas, the grandmother, her daughter and granddaughter returning to the United States, crossing the Puente de las Americas international bridge—the only pedestrian crossing between Laredo and Nuevo Laredo. Nena recalls through collective memories how her family in 1948 crossed back to Laredo and what that meant to her grandmother,

> Bueli and Mami and Papi crossed the bridge on foot from one Laredo to the other; they took turns carrying me, or maybe only pushing my blue stroller. Chirinola, our dog, came too, papers and all. It was 1948. For Bueli the move brought back memories, mental photographs gone now, except for the stories she told…(Cantú 5)

This particular crossing signals a permanent stay in the United States, however, the memories the move brought back indicates that leaving the country was not easy. The fact that Chirinola, the dog, even has its documents is also an indication that this crossing from one Laredo to the other is different since it requires dogs to have permits in order to enter the country.

This short story is a record of the Mexican Repatriation (1920-1939), a massive national operation by the United States and the Mexican government who supported such action yet many stories, like Bueli's, remain in the memory of those affected by it. Historian Julian Nava[30] states,

> Memory can be merciful, and the originators and administrators of this program

30. Nava's family was to undergo repatriation, however, Julian, at that time eight-years-old, developed appendicitis and while he recovered his parents decided not to leave to Mexico. He grew up "in Los Angeles, served in the navy in World War II, received a Ph.D. from Harvard, and was elected to the Los Angeles Board of Education. Although it would hardly be valid to assert that repatriated Mexican-American children could have achieved similar success had they remained in the United States, the fact remains that their opportunity to make the effort to do so in American society was denied by the repatriation movement" (Hoffman 149).

> doubtless have tended for a number of reasons to forget their roles.
>
> But, Mexicans and Mexican Americans who underwent the process find it hard to forget the shame of repatriation. That a mighty nation with high principles could eagerly seek workers from across the border and, after benefiting from their labor, reject them coldly made Mexicans feel like unwanted *things*, rather than people.
>
> Thousands of adults still remember repatriation: the provocations, the provision of funds, and the pressure upon Mexicans to leave their homes because they were not wanted. Remarkably little about repatriation has been written by Mexicans and little more by Americans. In a situation somewhat akin to the treatment of the Indian or the relocation of the Japanese, all concerned seemed to want to forget the discreditable experience. (Hoffman ix)

Although the government did little to diligently record this historical account, through oral stories Cantú's characters pass along their experience to the next generations, an indication of the impact and trauma caused by such racial discrimination since it is Nena now recounting her grandmothers' memories.

This practice, allows Cantú to document a true historical event in a fictional autobioethnography narrative through oral history, thus challenging historiography models that rely on documentation rather than oralities and privilege men over women's experiences—especially that of Anglo Americans over people of color. Debra Castillo and María Socorro Tabuenca Córdoba indicate that traditional studies of autobiographies are specifically associated with white male subjects recapitulation of personal success and failures while contestatory models "create their dialogical response: not Eurocentric,

not white, not male" (95). Unlike the individualistic, reductive and narrow Georges Gusdorfian model, postcolonial writers "deriving from their cultural circumstances complexly negotiate modalities for puzzling out the question of self-definition in a format that is both individually based and communitarian in reach" (95).

Although the "Crossings" is a brief story, it records almost two decades of history of prejudice, xenophobia, discrimination and terrorization as well as a dramatic change in border crossings due to new immigration policies. The title itself is also an indication of the different types of crossings documented in the narrative as initially it mentions the returning of Nena's family to the U.S. and afterwards the reason for their exodus. Nena recalls Bueli's stories about how in 1935 she and Maurilio, her Texas-born husband, and two daughters, packed everything they owned in a pickup truck and drove down to the border from San Antonio, Texas, "They felt lucky; most deportees left with nothing but the clothes o their back—sent in packed trains to the border on the way to Mexico, even those who where U.S. citizens…" (Cantú 5). This indicates that Nena's family returned after thirteen years to the United States because of the Mexican Repatriation and highlights how this operation was discriminatory since even U.S. citizens, like Nena's grandfather and daughters, were forced to leave the country due to their Mexican heritage.

Historian Abraham Hoffman defines repatriation as "a return to one's homeland––more than a return—a sending back" (24), and not a deportation since Mexican and Mexican-Americans left "voluntary." According to Hoffman, "writers dealing with repatriation have sometimes found it necessary to precede the word with 'voluntary' or 'forced,' with quotations to distinguish the catalyst" (25). Nevertheless, Cantú records

repatriates as deportees in the story as they were forced to leave the country. This selection of one word over the other is crucial since it challenges the national rhetoric that minimizes the gravity of the operation given that various individuals and families encountered an atmosphere of terrorization and fear of deportation that obligated them to leave "voluntary".

Transportation is another critical reference to the treatment of Mexicans in that this massive self-deportation relied heavily on trains. Although Nena's grandparents left in their pick-up truck many were sent to Mexico in packed trains with little to no money and with no possessions other than what they were carrying. For instance, the consul in Ciudad Juárez learned in August 1930 that the Mexican Migration Service had announced,

> that a special train would deliver two thousand people at a time from the border to the interior of Mexico. This was the second such train in ten months [in Ciudad Juárez]…[it's] estimated that almost twenty-seven hundred repatriates had crossed through Nuevo Laredo in the first fifteen days of December 1930. With the start of 1931, consular dispatches continued to describe a torrent of people passing through their border stations, an amalgam of *repatriado* and deportee, with a growing percentage of them penniless and hungry…On a single day, 9 January 1931, eight hundred repatriates were counted entering Mexico through the ports of Nogales and Nuevo Laredo, divided among some two hundred automobiles. Mexican border stations were swamped…the Mexican government now found it necessary to provide transportation on at least weekly basis. (Hoffman 37)

The use of trains as the main form of transportation was preferred by both governments because it was cheaper and allowed the transport of hundreds of repatriates to the interior of Mexico in order to prevent them from staying at border cities.

It is important to note that, according to historian Mae N. Ngai, the first repatriation arose during the post World War I,

> due to an economic recession, in a program sponsored by the Mexican government. The Mexican *Secretaria de Ralaciones Exteriores* established a department of repatriations, which administered the program through the network of Mexican consuls in the United States. Between 1920 and 1923, the program repatriated some 100,000 Mexicans with 'free return transportation to the Mexican interior and subsistence.' (72)

These initial groups were Mexicans of "modest means who decided to leave before things got worse," which it did (Ngai 73). Between the end of WWI and the Great Depression (1929-1939), the United States gradually enforced laws that restricted immigration. President Herbert C. Hoover (1929-1933) intended to reduce unemployment, "believing that aliens were holding down jobs that could have been held by native-born Americans, [he] endorsed a strenuous effort to curtail both legal and illegal[31] entries and to expel undesirable aliens" (Hoffman 39). Even when the campaign by the federal government was aimed at aliens in general, undocumented Mexican immigrants as well as the deportable immigrants were prime targets (Hoffman 37).

With the appointment of William N. Doak on December 9, 1930, as secretary of labor, President Hoover initiated what a writer from that time denounced as a

31. The word illegal and aliens are used according to the verbiage of government documents and kept to highlight the rhetoric of criminalization and prejudice.

"gladiatorial spectacle" (qtd. in Hoffman 39). Doak calculated that out of the four hundred thousand aliens illegally in the United States, one hundred thousand could be deported under the provisions of the immigration laws (39). These declarations were problematic due to the fact that many Mexican enter under irregular immigration policies[32] since: before 1908 there was no restrictions and the government did not keep a record of those crossing; before 1917 there was no head tax or literacy test; before 1924[33] there was no visa fee; and prior to 1929[34] it was not a misdemeanor failing to pay the crossing fee. Thus, the government expectations for those entering the United States to comply with the current immigration laws were unrealistic (Hoffman 50).

For the plan to be successful, Doak proposed that immigration agents intensify their hunt for deportable aliens, which led to the "[raid] of private homes and public spaces in a search that extended from New York to Los Angeles" (39). His campaign reached illegal aliens in general, but the most affected were Mexican immigrants. With the repatriation programs "organized by local, public and private welfare agencies…and the federal government's campaign of threatened deportation" approximately half a million Mexicans left willingly and by force the United States during 1929-1939, among them U.S. citizens (38). This massive repatriation impacted many generations since it

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32. For instance, at El Paso, "the service exempted all Europeans and Mexicans arriving by first class rail from line inspections, the baths, and the literacy test. Racial presumptions about Mexicans laborers, not law, dictated the procedures at the Mexican border" (Ngai 68).

33. This act was the "first *comprehensive* restriction law. It established for the first time *numerical limits* on immigration and a global racial and national hierarchy that favored some immigrants over others…it drew a new ethnic and racial map based on new categories and hierarchies of difference…[and] it articulated a new sense of territoriality, which was marked by unprecedented awareness and state surveillance of the nation's contiguous land borders" (Ngai 3). Additionally to the Act of 1924, Congress assigned a million dollars for the establishment of the Border Patrol to surveillance the Canadian and southern land borders to control the European and Mexican immigration (Hoffman 31).

34. The Act of 4 March 1929 made illegal entry a punishable crime. According to this Act, "aliens who entered the United States by illegal means subsequent to that date were guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a year in prison or a fine up to one thousand dollars. Under the same act, the attempted return of a previously deported alien was a felony charge" (Hoffman 33).

defined "people along cultural instead of national lines, county officials deprived American children [and adults] of Mexican descent of rights guaranteed them by the [Fourteenth Amendment of the] Constitution"[35] (Hoffman 3).

It was during the second repatriation that Nena's grandparents were forced to leave and as a collective memory they remembered that day, "She told of crossing from one Laredo to the other and losing everything—Buelito's pride and joy, a black Ford pickup truck and all their belongings—to the corrupt customs officials at the border" (Cantú 5). This act of injustice sends a message to repatriates that they are unwanted in the U.S., and they had no rights to take anything with them simply because they were of Mexican descent. While Hoffman documents eyewitness descriptions of the repatriates from officials and writers located at the border crossings, none of the documentation mentions repatriates stripped of their valuables by custom officials. However, they did record the site of hundreds of cars traveling to and from the border. For instance, American consul at Piedras Negras estimated that about twenty-five percent of the repatriates, "'bring back with them farm implements, automobiles, trucks, farm animals, household furnishings, and a certain amount of money'" (Hoffman 128). Additionally, the Nuevo Laredo consul noted, "'In crossing the international bridge each day one can always see a line of cars with licenses from nearly half the United States…'" and the consul of Matamoros describes how Mexican repatriates "'resemble gypsies as they usually return by either wagon or broken down motor car in which children, household furniture, and domestic animals are loaded…'" (129).

35. The XIV Amendment reads, "All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws" (National Archive)

As the story continues, it is evident that impact of such events is embedded in Nena's aunt who was a child at the moment, "Tía Nicha still talks of how weeks later she saw a little girl wearing her dress—a mint green dress she'd hemmed herself with pastel blue thread, a memorable dress…But there was nothing to be done, except cry and go on" (Cantú 5). While the loss of the truck, a symbol of mobility and status represents a denial of opportunities; Nicha's dress, an intimate and personal possession denotes the dignity stripped away by both governments that complicity deprived thousands of people the right for a better life, liberty, or property. In regards to the children affected by the Repatriation Ngai claims that, "an estimate 60 percent were children[36] or American citizens by native birth; a contemporary observed that the "vast majority" spoke English and that many had been in the United States at least ten years'" (72).

For those returning to the U.S., like Nena's grandparents "crossing meant coming home, but not quite" (Cantú 5). The Repatriation left emotional and psychological scars, not only on people who suffered directly the effects, but also on the generations that followed like Nena. Even after the Repatriation was over, for those who tried to return to the U.S. it was difficult to do so since both governments discouraged repatriates. For example, they prevented them from "making legal application for visas by the stringent enforcement of the rules" and treating their attempt to reenter "as if [they] were seeking entry for the first time" regardless of the years they resided in the United States before, or how many American-born children raised (Hoffman 151). The actions against repatriates such as raids throughout the nation by immigration agents, denial of welfare, harassment,

36. Hoffman also indicates that the Repatriation "separated families, the children in some instances remaining with friends or relatives in the United States while the parents returned to Mexico" (149)

brutality, terrorization, among other mistreatment,[37] along with the poor documentation on Repatriation from both governments, suggest that other injustices went unnoticed and were only known to those affected by it.

However, by recording the corruption by agents on the "Crossings" Cantú allows an alternative history to emerge and become archived through collective fictional narratives that together recount a border history. Castillo and Tabuenca Córdoba explain that Cantú, along with other writers,

> following upon the insights offered by testimonios…define their work less as a reconstruction of an individual self, and more as a patchwork of collective of fragmentary units that help flesh out comprehension of a collective reality…all speak to the critical project of reconstituting and resituating textual authority and appeals to generic demands for authentic narratives about (marginalized) women's lives. (98)

Through generations of fronterizas, the "Crossings," documents the Mexican Repatriation and its effects resulting in Nena's personal archive as well as a collective history since it was an event that affected her family along with thousands of repatriates and millions of lives for generations to come.

By reinscribing through fictional narratives fronteriza authors disrupt the mechanism of militarization such as policing and policies set to control border communities. Similarly, they contest the current militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border and the toxic rhetoric against it given that their alternative histories focus on a fronteriza/o experience that creates subjects of agency and authority otherwise

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37. For more on these actions against repatriates see Abraham Hoffman, *Unwanted Mexican Americans in the Great Depression: Repatriation Pressures (1929-1939).*

marginalized by a national written history. Their text addresses this later by honoring fronterizas resilience against gender oppression and violence through the legacy of fronteriza journalists, activists, intellectuals, revolutionaries, either represented through main characters or historical context.

Authors such as Guadalupe García McCall, Rosario Sanmiguel and Norma E. Cantú contest a white supremacy mindset rooted in a colonialist ideology still present along the border region since the XIX century. Their literary production is a record of the racial violence during the early 1900s by Texas Rangers in the Rio Grande Valley, the Riot of 1916, Bath Riot of 1917, El Paso city jail fire, and the Mexican Repatriation of masses of people on a national scale. Additionally, their narratives reference major historical events such as the Texas Revolution, Mexican-American War, Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Plan de San Diego, and the Mexican Revolution documenting almost a century of resilience by fronterizas and fronterizos through primary sources, memories, testimonies and personal archives.

Chapter Two:

Collective Memories: Documenting the Emergence of Militarization

...life en la frontera is raw truth, and stories of such life,

fictitious as they may be, are even truer than true.[38]

—Pat Mora

Compared to the early border policing that categorized fronterizas/os along the Texas-Mexico border as bandits, rebels and *sediciosos*, a shift on migration from Mexico propelled the U.S.-Mexico border militarization in the mid twentieth century, which developed draconian laws and Border Patrol surveillance that implemented Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) doctrine rhetoric and techniques. In light of this, I analyze surveillance through feminist scholar Marilyn Frye's concept of "the arrogant eye" in narratives by Norma E. Cantú, Rosario Sanmiguel and Lucrecia Guerrero that document monitoring tactics and discourses of criminalization either through border patrol performances against fronterizas/os or when setting out to regulate, oppress and marginalize border communities. Concurrently, memories and general accounts in narratives by fronteriza authors archive border histories that contest militarization impositions that aim to control bodies, communities and life at the border/la frontera.

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38. Norma E. Cantú. *Canícula: Snapshots of a Girlhood en la Frontera* (xi).

Norma E. Cantú: Operation Wetback (1954)

Photographs often accompany *Canícula's* vignettes, however, the texts analyzed in this Chapter such as "Políticos" is approached as a memory while "Los Pulido" is a reference to a photograph. The first narrative addresses institutional oppression[39] along the Laredo border region while the latter focuses on the effects of such oppression through Operation Wetback (1954). The vignette "Políticos" is addressed first since it sets the stage for the analysis of institutional oppression via Nena's criticism of politicians at a national, state and local level. It is crucial to highlight this oppression to understand the militarization along the U.S.-Mexico border since it is the political power that established it and those in power who maintain it.

As mentioned, surveillance practices are analyzed in the narratives through Frye's concept of the "arrogant eye" that are set out to regulate, oppress and marginalize border communities. She describes this concept as a male arrogant gaze that organizes everything with reference to himself and his own interest (67). She also argues that the arrogant perceiver is supported by a community of arrogant perceivers "who control the material media of culture and most other economic resources" (72), in other words, what bell hooks calls "'imperialist white-supremacist capitalist patriarchy,' to describe the interlocking political system that is the foundation of our nation's politics" (1). Frye's arrogant eye resonates with Michel Foucault's[40] panopticon[41] metaphor that allowed him to explore systems of social control by monitoring the behavior of individuals and

39. According to social work scholars Katherine S. van Wormer and Rosemary J. Link, "Oppression can be viewed as an institutionalize system of power that encompasses a web of cultural practices that serve to exploit and deprive some groups in order to privilege other groups" (180).
40. See Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*

groups. Foucault believed that constant surveillance of the individual resulted in acceptance of regulations and discipline. This is possible because the observer gains power through mechanisms of observation from his place of privilege. The danger of this lies in that only members of privileged groups, or individuals that serve them, can use it as a way of oppression.

For the purpose of this dissertation, I am interested in the arrogant eye rather than the panopticon metaphor given that Frye observes the importance of gender and race in mechanisms of oppression, especially against women of color. Unlike Foucault, Frye contests the arrogant eye, she argues that "[t]he point is…to imagine women not enslaved, to imagine these intelligent, willful and female bodies not subordinated in service to males, individually or via institutions (or to anybody, in any way); not pressed into a shape that suits an arrogant eye" (76). In other words, by revealing and understanding the mechanism of oppression it is possible to imagine women as subjects with agency, which echoes Emma Pérez's thesis, decolonizing the imaginary, that proposes sexing the colonial imaginary by historically tracking women's voices and actions for agency (*Decolonizing the Imaginary* 7). Cantú's *Canícula: Snapshots of a Girlhood en la Frontera* contests the arrogant eye since the stories are center in a fronteriza experience, told from the Laredo-Nuevo Laredo border region. Multiple female voices emerge as, "[t]he woman Nena begins to shape her story…[t]he stories of her girlhood in that land in-between, la frontera, are shared; her story and the stories of the people who lived that life with her is one" (2).

In the vignette "Políticos," Cantú challenges institutional oppression from the

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41. The Panopticon, a nineteenth century architectural design by Jeremy Bentham, consisted of a high central tower unseen by those being observed. This architectural building was used in prisons, insane asylums, schools, hospitals, and factories.

start by using a title in Spanish—a dominant language along the Laredo border region—to call on politicians' apathy, self-interests and corruption against her community. Spanish, which often triggers different forms of violence[42] towards Latinos in the US becomes a weapon against the oppressor. For instance, Nena begins by recounting President Dwight D. "Ike" Eisenhower's (1953-1961) flash visit to Laredo,[43] "we line Saunders Street to see a convertible speeding by from the airbase to the bridge. A gringo waving to the brown faces of all ages that have come to see him. '¡Viva Ike!' someone shouts. But, he doesn't hear, doesn't seem to see us waving in the hot morning sun" (30). The reference to the president as a gringo[44] waving at the brown faces serves as a reminder of the racial discrimination in the US. Spanish is used once more as a weapon to demarcate the oppressor and to contest the oppression. The fact that Nena as a young woman of color—a fronteriza from the US side of the border—refers to the President as a gringo, an outsider, indicates her discontent against a government that "doesn't hear, doesn't seem to see [her]" as well as the other brown faces[45] in her community.[46]

It is no coincidence that Eisenhower is the only president mentioned in *Canícula* and in the vignette "Políticos" given that it was his administration that launched Operation Wetback in May of 1954, which targeted undocumented Mexican nationals through aggressive campaigns, raids and mass deportations. Historians Paul Ganster and

42. See BBC article "Why Spanish speakers in US are getting into trouble" https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-44201444 and journalist Jose Fermoso article, "Why speaking Spanish is becoming dangerous in America" https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/may/22/speaking-spanish-dangerous-america-aaron-schlossberg-ice.
43. A headline of *The Dallas Morning News* newspaper from Dallas, Texas published on October 10, 1953 reads, "Ike Itinerary Revealed for Texas Visit," which mentioned President Eisenhower two nights and one day visit to the Rio Grande Valley for the inauguration of the Falcon Dam and his passing through Laredo.
44. Used often as a derogatory term to refer to foreigners from the United States.
45. The city of Laredo data in 2017 indicates 97.3% of the population as Hispanic http://www.city-data.com/city/Laredo-Texas.html.
46. Se historian Octavio Herrera, *Nuevo Laredo: Historia de una ciudad fronteriza Mexicana: Origen, traslado, transformación y modernidad.*

David E. Lorey state that during 1953-1955 the infamous Operation Wetback “deported two million Mexicans (and many U.S. citizens of Mexican heritage) to the region across the boundary” (119). With this in mind, President Eisenhower in “Políticos” is the arrogant perceiver[47] whose politics control the border and his visit a merely political tour, which is problematic since tourist exercises—such as that by an arrogant perceiver—result in objectification of those observed (e.g., fronterizas/os). Feminist scholar María Lugones proposes “world”-travelling[48] rather than mere tourist exercises in order to understand someone’s world in a less superficial manner given that “we can understand *what it is to be them and what it is to be ourselves in their eyes.* Only when we have travelled to each other’s ‘worlds’ are we fully subjects to each other…”[49] (17). Lugones also observes that “[a]s outsiders to the mainstream, women of color in the U.S. practice ‘world’-travelling, mostly out of necessity… [and] much of our travelling is done unwillfully to hostile White/Anglo ‘worlds’” (3) such as Nena whose recount of the event reflects her struggle understanding male privilege and institutional oppression, especially against women of color like her.

Nena addresses the hostile White/Anglo “worlds” in multiple ways, first, by criticizing Eisenhower’s political tour from a fronteriza perspective, and secondly, by criticizing the educational system when she recalls at school Miss. Montemayor asking the class for the name of the current president,

I rise my hand, impress my teacher, ‘Eisenhower, and the vice president is Nixon,

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47. From now on I will utilize arrogant perceiver to reference the Frye concept of the arrogant eye.
48. Lugones mentions that “world”-travelling “makes a connection between what Marilyn Frye has named “arrogant perception” and the failure to identify with persons that one views arrogantly or has come to see as the products of arrogant perception” (4).
49. Lugones is particular concern with women “world”-traveling; however, I am concern with male arrogant views and travels since history is written from a white male lens.

> but we don't like them; they're not Democrats.' Repeating in English what I've heard in Spanish at home…That year, because I know their names, I make good grades in social studies and in English, I get to have my picture in the paper with Mr. Valle the principal who speaks our names in English…We arrive in his Buick, meet the superintendent and the photographer who proceeds to line us up…Soon sweat runs down Superintendent Nixon's red face. Sweat beads into droplets on Mr. Valle's balding head. Some years later, both are dead; other men have taken their place. (Cantú 30-31)

Her indifference while describing the principal and superintendent as sweaty and replaceable rather than distinguished men indicates a discontent towards their authority given that the principal does not bother to pronounce the students name correctly and both are only interested in the photo for reasons of self-interest. As a young woman of color Nena is aware that institutions—such as the educational system—do not expect much from her, a bilingual Mexican-American woman raised in a border city whose population is mostly Hispanic[50] and where the "dropout rate remains between 50 and 80 percent" (Cantú 30). She understands that the recognition by the teacher, principal, and superintendent is due to her knowledge of a white male history and English language. However, when she impresses the teacher with her knowledge she emphasizes that she is repeating what she hears in Spanish at home—once more, language becomes a tool of power to navigate two worlds. Nena's awareness of politics and institutional oppression as well as her fronteriza knowledge empowers her to question, criticize and challenge the arrogant perceiver.

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50. I use the term according to the city data reference. See footnote 5.

After demonstrating her discontent against the government and educational system, she continues to criticize the corruption at a local and state level,

> And Mami and Papi sacrifice to pay their poll tax, then give their vote to their compadre who works for the city so he won't get fired. At twenty-one I'll still ask why and rebel, and won't give my vote to the machine. Papi shrugs, 'We'd vote Democrat, anyway. And this way if the smelter lays off again, I may get a job with the county.' I don't understand. Remain angry at the machine, the bosses who control, who deprive. (Cantú 30)

Nena documents how her parents gave up their right to vote in order to maintain a job, which highlights the flaws of a democratic system that deprives people of their rights and benefiting only those in power. Her frustration is such that once she is able to vote she refuses to participate knowing that people like her parents are forced to relinquish their right while nothing is done to fix the problem. Her story reveals a level of corruption that trickles to the core of the United States political system and openly condemns the arrogant perceiver,

> The políticos. Our money lines their pockets, paves roads on their ranches, while our streets unpaved, run like rivers after every rain, while our public library remains as small as someone's private library…while judges, mayors, sheriffs, high and low powerful ones abuse, rape, embarrass, harass, taunt, demean women. I see pain, the hopelessness, the survival strategies of the poor. At eighteen, I can't forgive. At eight I ponder what makes men so important. (Cantú 30)

"Políticos" is a glimpse into the reality of various border communities whose population

is mainly Latino and how they are neglected while arrogant perceivers control the region. Nena as a "world"-traveller understands the struggles of her community and disapproves of the apathy of politicians towards minorities, especially against fronterizas/os.

The use of the Spanish words políticos along with *gringo* to criticize the political system is a stand against politicians who marginalize her community based on race, politics and legal status, and serves as a reminder of the contribution of Latinos to the economy and the benefits they are denied. From an early age Nena is aware of the presence of a patriarchal system[51] and as a teenager resistant to conforming, while as an adult she stands against institutional oppression, "I march to Austin protesting with the farmworkers; march in rallies protesting Vietnam, march for ERA; wondering what else [she] can do, a lowly office clerk; wear a César Chávez button, read Marx" (Cantú 31). Gloria Anzaldúa in *This Bridge We Call Home: Radical Visions for Transformation* indicates:

> breaking out of your mental and emotional prison and deepening the range of perception enables you to link inner reflection and vision…with social, political action, and lived experiences to generate subversive knowledge. These conocimientos challenge official and conventional ways of looking at the world, ways set up by those benefiting from such constructions. (542)

From a young age Nena is aware of a mechanism that is set out to regulate, oppress and marginalize border communities and defies it by learning about the oppressor and resisting through language, education, activism, "world"-travelling and empowerment.

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51. bell hooks defines patriarchy as "a political-social system that insist that males are inherently dominating, superior to everything and everyone deemed weak, especially females, and endowed with the right to dominate and rule over the weak and to maintain that dominance through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence" (2).

Nena's view of politicians in "Políticos" enabled her to document institutional oppression along the Laredo border region through personal experience while in "Los Pulido" she unveils the presence of surveillance established by Operation Wetback, a policy set in place by the Eisenhower Administration.

Nena remembers the Pulido's while looking at a photograph. In the first half of the vignette, she documents Fina's family history and how their large family consisted of Mexican and US citizens and how their last name connected with their physical appearance and how difficult it is for her to recognize them in the photo as they seem to be faded borrados:

> [o]nly four of the sixteen stand shyly in our front porch. Socorro, Leonor, Toño, Irene, Sofía, Mercedes, Fidel, Elena, Lucía, Clementina, Patricia, Javier, Sara, Emilio, Josefina, and Cecilia: names of eight born in Mexico and then the other eight born in the States… A family [Fina] wouldn't have imagined as a child growing up in the Anglo-owned ranch near Big Wells, Texas…She was U.S. born and married to a real Mexican macho who wooed her back to Mexico with promises of wealth…four of them…in the faded black-and-white picture, I can't even tell who they are. But Pulido they are; 'borrados' we called them because of their light skin and hazel eyes… (Cantú 18)

As a "world"-traveler Nena is able to document such intimate information given that this is shared through the bond between *comadres,* her mother and Fina, while chatting under the *pirul* tree and in Nena's presence, which indicates a trust between the three women.

Nena brings to the attention characteristics the arrogant perceiver exploits against non-Anglo communities at the Laredo border: race, politics, class and legal status, which

reveals surveillance by the arrogant perceiver that Nena contests as a "world"-traveler. First, Nena highlights the differences of legal status in the Pulido's family, a reference to the origins of the United States as a country built by immigrants, yet who because of their Mexican ancestry become a threat given the history between Mexico and the United States. Secondly, she emphasizes their skin color "Pulido they are; 'borrados' we call them because of their light skin and hazel eyes," which implies that they are singled out by the community based on race. The Pulido children are aware of this and Nena observes this too in the photo when she describes them:

> grin[ning] shyly, and [feeling] their embarrassment; the other kids tease them and call them 'mojados' because they are new to the neighborhood, although they have come from Big Wells and not directly from Mexico. The same kids called mojados by the white kids pick on them. They will soon leave to work the fields in the Midwest—Nebraska, Wisconsin, Michigan— only to return in the fall, way after school has begun. (Cantú 18)

Lastly, Nena observes that as migrant workers who are in constant movement searching for work the Pulido's family is vulnerable to aggressions due to class. As a result of this, individuals who do not align to the world organized in reference to the arrogant perceiver navigate a mechanism of surveillance that relies in this instance on self-regulation practices to maintain control.

Nena unveils a colonialist ideology deeply embedded in the US to the point that even children monitor each other as the white kids scrutinize those who are not white by labeling them as *mojados*[52]—"illegals"—, which then those harassed replicate to chasten

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52. Mojado or wetback is a derogatory term to refer to undocumented crossers. According to sociologists Ronald L. Mize and Alicia C.S. Swords, the border is a formalized treaty sustained through social

those who stand out in their communities as a way to divert the oppression, that is, the oppressed becomes the oppressor. What triggers this surveillance is the label *mojado*, a term created by the capitalist system during the 1940s[53] with the Bracero Program and reinforced during Operation Wetback. It became a weapon used against people of color to regulate and chastise individuals based on race, politics, class and legal status. According to historian Mae M. Ngai:

> The construction of the 'wetback' as a dangerous and criminal social pathogen fed the general racial stereotype 'Mexican.' A 1951 study by Lyle Saunders and Olen Leonard…stated, 'No careful distinctions are made between illegal aliens and local citizens of Mexican descent. They are lumped together as 'Mexicans' and the characteristics that are observed among the wetbacks are by extension assigned to the local people.' Wetbacks, said one official, were 'superficially indistinguishable from Mexicans legally in the United States.' (149)

In other words, people of color in the eyes of the arrogant perceiver are "criminals," especially people who live along the border/la frontera.

During the 1950s, wetback or *mojado* became a term consonant with criminality term to refer to undocumented crossers; this was possible given that in 1951 the US government took over the Bracero Program with the passage of Public Law 78, a legislature that "empowered the Department of Labor to be the official contractor for

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constructions whose symbolic representation shifts depending on US-Mexican relations. With the Rio Grande—also known as Rio Bravo—between Texas and Mexico, this natural boundary became a "major symbol for undocumented border crossers…before a wall was built… The river is the source for the favored term of denigration for undocumented Mexicans, "wetback," as people have to wade through it to cross into the US" (180).

53. "In the years immediately after the war…[c]ritics associated 'wetbacks' with 'misery, disease, crime, and many other evils.' An INS official repeated the conventional view that illegal aliens were by definition criminal: Because the 'wetback' starts out by violating a law, he said, 'it is easier and sometimes appears even more necessary for him to break other laws since he considers himself to be an outcast, even an outlaw'" (Ngai 149)

corporate agriculture," leaving Mexico completely out of the contracting process (Akers and Davis 142). As the US government became the hired hand the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) became complicit to the process notoriously referred to as "drying out the wetbacks" [54] that consisted of allowing undocumented crossers into the US to then legalize them as farm workers breaking with any contractual obligations set by the Bracero Program (Ngai 153). The loophole created by the US government for cheap labor increased undocumented crossings, which in turn triggered Operation Wetback in June 1954:

> The project was conceived and executed as though it was a military operation. According to lieutenant general Joseph M. Swing,[55] commissioner general of the INS, the 'alarming, ever-increasing, flood tide' of undocumented migrants from Mexico constituted 'an actual invasion of the United States.' Operation Wetback commenced…a 'direct attack…upon the hordes of aliens facing [the US] across the border.' The campaign involved approximately 750 immigration officers, Border Patrol officers, and investigators; 300 jeeps, cars, and buses; 7 airplanes, and 'other equipment.' The INS transferred personnel, vehicles, and radio equipment from northern and eastern districts to the Mexican border district. This

54. Ngai documents two incidents, one in 1948 at El Paso: "the INS (with the approval of the White House) opened the border…to allow the entry of some seven thousand migrants…The INS 'arrested' them and then paroled them to employers, explaining that this was a humanitarian gesture because both the laborers and farmers were 'desperate'…The 'specials' program was supposed to be for illegal workers who performed skilled labor, such as tractor driver or machine operator, but in practice employers used it to legalize unskilled farm hands as well. A second "border incident" took place in January 1954, when the INS orchestrated the legalization of several thousand farm workers by allowing them to effect a voluntary departure—in some cases stepping eighteen inches over the international boundary line—and then 'enter' the United States under the Ninth Proviso" (153).
55. Swing also wanted "to build a chain-link fence along sections of the border in California and Arizona and towers at strategic locations. He argued that a fence would be particularly effective in deterring the illegal migration of 'disease-ridden' women and children who he said comprised over 60 percent of those entering surreptitiously after Operation Wetback" (Ngai 156).

‘full mobilization’ of its forces and equipment was deployed in ‘direct action at the line’. As Swing described, ‘Planes were used to locate wetbacks and to direct ground teams working in jeeps. Transport planes, trucks, and [buses] were used to convoy the arrested aliens to staging areas, and to discourage reentry, many of those apprehended were moved far into the interior of Mexico by train and ship.’ A ‘special mobile force’ made ‘searches in the interior’ and ‘seize[d] those who have illegally crossed the border.’ The operation [that began in the Southwest, especially south Texas and southern California] extended to Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Chicago…

> At the Nuevo Laredo [border], a Mexican labor leader reported that ‘wetbacks’ were ‘brought [into Mexico] like cows’ on trucks and unloaded fifteen miles down the highway from the border, in the desert. (Ngai 155-156)

The implementation of Operation Wetback along the U.S.-Mexico border effectively militarized the border in 1954. With Swing’s military knowledge and expertise, Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) [56] doctrine techniques were employed along the region such as: 1) internal defense of a nation, 2) controlling targeted civilian populations, and 3) police military characteristics and military police-like roles (Mize and Swords 37). The federal government under the Eisenhower Administration funded various militarized equipment such as radios and vehicles as well as an increase of personnel and Special Forces that implemented tactics to seize undocumented crossers within the US and along the U.S.-Mexico border.

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56. See Timothy J. Dunn, *The Militarization of the U.S-Mexico Border, 1978-1992: Low-Intensity Conflict Doctrine Comes Home*

Nena, as a "world"-traveler, empathizes with the Pulido's children given that she has been target of such aggressions as well.[57] She addresses the harassment from both the white and non-white children by stating the facts about the Pulido children: they are from Big Wells, Texas, migrants, new to the neighborhood and not "illegal." She then finds a way to connect with them to highlight their similarities rather than their differences:

> Years later, after the older ones marry, they'll move to California, change their migrant route and travel only in that state, following the crops, buy a piece of land in the middle of an orange grove near Fresno. Así es la vida. But while still our neighbors, they have corn tortilla tacos with beans for breakfast—so unlike our own flour tortillas filled with papas con huevo. Still, we'll drink the same café con leche Pet each morning before going to school. (Cantú 18)

Nena documents the mobility and struggles of migrant workers like the Pulido family and how despite marginalization they continued to thrive. Furthermore, she records through food the similarity and differences of habits and culture that highlighted the multiple voices of her community. For instance, she mentions how the Pulido eat corn tortilla tacos while her family have flour tortilla tacos, which according to the writer of Los Angeles Times, Gustavo Arellano, were eaten in Northern Mexico and the borderlands for more than 150 years. "And, more importantly, to this day they're eaten by millions of Mexican-Americans in the United States all with their own unique traditions"[58]

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57. *Canícula* opens up with the vignette "Las Piscas" were Nena narrates about working in the fields with her family, and in the story "China Poblana One" she remembers when she was called wetback by one of the kids of the neighborhood.

58. In an interview with Francis Lam, Gustavo Arellano, author of *Taco USA: How Mexican Food Conquered America*, talks about how flour tortillas, "[b]ut here's the key about Northern Mexico. You have to imagine we're talking about the 1500s, the 1600s, where the country of Mexico is still being conquered by the Spaniards. The Spaniards are sending people off to basically subjugate tribes. A lot of the people who wanted to go to the most northern outreaches – we're talking about New Mexico, Chihuahua and all that – these are people that in Spain were already quote, unquote "mongrels." They were undesirables. So,

(Lam). This particular observation of food by Nena challenges the rhetoric of marginalization created by the US against fronterizas/os along the border since it points out the deep roots her family and los Pulido's have in the borderlands given that a great part of the territory was Mexican. Nena's recounts—triggered by a photograph—disrupt the arrogant perceiver toxic rhetoric by documenting a border community of multiple voices that thrives in a militarized region.

Rosario Sanmiguel: Bracero Program (1942-1964), Operation Wetback (1954), Operation Blockade (1993) and the Border Patrol

Rosario Sanmiguel *Callejón Sucre y otros relatos* (1994) is a collection of short stories about life in the border sister cities Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua – El Paso, Texas. Sanmiguel narratives capture the private and public space through its characters day-to-day experiences unfolded, a side to Juárez unknown by many. *Callejón Sucre* is about individuals, space, history, and communities struggle and resilience in a highly surveillance region. This chapter analyzes the stories "Memorial Park" and "Bajo el puente" to address the effects of militarization established by Operation Wetback and Border Patrol surveillance techniques along the region. Sanmiguel texts document the complexities of life at the border especially its binational supply and demand dynamics.

"El reflejo de la luna," is a section of *Callejón Sucre* that consists of seven short stories that focus on the relationship of Nicole Campillo and her husband Arturo Alcántar. In "Memorial Park," the last story of the section, pregnancy becomes a mystical

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you're getting a lot of people who are Jews – hidden Jews, mind you, because we're still in the Inquisition – and you're also going to get Muslims as well, the Moros. They're going up there and they're going to use whatever they can to be able to recreate not just the foods of the quote, unquote "Spaniards," but also their native cuisine. I wouldn't even say the tortilla is like a pita. I would call it almost more like a lavash, like a Persian flatbread… Because this looks exactly like a flour tortilla" (Lam).

vehicle that enables Nicole to travel to her past and confront a lost memory, the dehumanization of border militarization, and her mother's absence. Sanmiguel weaves memories in the narrative with what philosopher Julia Kristeva calls "women's time," a non-linear time that is represented through biological cycles and recognize as a cyclical or monumental temporalities, which "traditionally [are] linked to female subjectivity… [and] are found to be the fundamental, if not the sole, conceptions of time in numerous civilizations and experiences, particularly mystical ones" (17). That is to say, pregnancy becomes an instrument of empowerment rather than a state of frailty.

After finish dinner at a restaurant Nicole and Arturo each drive their own cars to head home and although Nicole could take a different route while following Arturo decides to take the usual road since she was "una mujer que desde niña acostumbraba seguir el camino conocido, el que con seguridad le ofrecería únicamente los sobresaltos acostumbrados" (Sanmiguel 146). For three generations—grandmother, mother and herself—have been migrant workers that used to travel year after year the same routes due to the harvest, such routine spared Nicole of surprises. When both arrive home Nicole suggests going on a walk at the park to which Arturo was reluctant to do given how late it was and because of her state, but eventually he yielded to the idea: "caminaron por las oscuras veredas del Memorial Park.[59] La maternidad de Nicole lo ponía nervioso; a ella más plena, más vibrante," but there was something else about Nicole that made him uneasy that night, how the "terroso viento cuaresmal [que] agitaba

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59. Located in the Manhattan Heights Neighborhood that used to be a smelter area in the late and early nineteenth century demolished by 1912 in order to build the current residential area by the late 1930s. The neighborhood became a historic site in 1979 to preserve buildings that represent Georgian Revival, Foursquare, Tudor, American bungalows and Spanish-Italian architectural influences. [The Veterans Memorial Park was set aside by the city and] began taking shape with thousands of trees and shrubs planted in 1921…[it has] won national recognition…" (Peters 7-8).

los árboles…estremecía el cuerpo preñado de [Nicole]" (146). Sanmiguel highlights the mysticism that surrounds pregnancy with the Christian period of Lent.[60] This connection between life and death enables her to empower the female body given that it is the source of life subverting masculine control as is evident in Arturo's nervousness and Nicole's vibrancy.

This mystical force is what enables Nicole to connect with her past. As they continued to walk she felt how in her body "yacía una fuerza, aún no esclarecida, que la impulsaba a avanzar entre las sombras del parque, que la envolvían paso a paso, como si se tratara de una espesa membrana vegetal y ella fuera la semilla dormida en el centro" (146). The unknown power she felt with each step she took into the shadows of the park wrapped her as if she was a seed in a womb transporting her to her childhood: "Por unos instantes se vio rodeada de agua y luz. Tenía diez años y su madre había vuelto para llevarla al mar. Corpus Christi. La niña rodeada de agua miraba la orilla iluminada por el sol; luego, al salir, su madre ya no estaba. Asustada permanecía en el sitio donde se había instalado…" (Sanmiguel 146-147). Nicole is confronted with the absence of her mother and their lives as migrant workers that left little to no time to spend as a family. As a soon to be mother, Nicole begins to understand the struggles her mother had to overcome in order for her to have a better life.

While she is living this memory, Arturo calls on Nicole three times before she hears his voice, however, she immediately is transported back to the past,

Imágenes perdidas en la memoria de Nicole empezaban a revelarse con la nitidez

60. "a period of penitential preparation for Easter, [the resurrection of Jesus Christ]. In Western churches it begins on Ash Wednesday, six and a half weeks before Easter, and provides for a 40-day fast…, in imitation of Jesus Christ's fasting in the wilderness before he began his public ministry" (*Encyclopedia Britannica*).

recobrada de una foto sumergida en los químicos:

> Veía el rostro de un muchacho y una pick-up azul. Dieciséis años. Una nieve en la Dairy Queen. El paseo por las fueras del pueblo, los algodonales bajo la luna amarilla y redonda, la oscuridad y los primeros besos, la piel ensalivada, la estrechez de la cabina. (147)

The allusion to a photograph slowly being developed indicates that it is a memory she had forgotten of a young teenage boy and a young love. Although she was sitting next to Arturo looking at the city lights her eyes saw "los ojos del muchacho, la boca mojada que la tocaba, las manos que encontraban la tibieza de la piel, el calor de junio a la orilla del algodonal…el principio del dolor de los amantes…" (Sanmiguel 147-148). She saw fragments of the teenage boy, but not his face: "[i]maginó al muchacho sin rostro. Los nervios de Arturo se exacerbaron. Caminaba en cualquier dirección, luego volvía sobre sus pasos. 'Nicole, regresamos'" (148). As she wondered around, she struggled to remember the teenage boy, a memory she could not recall completed and that troubled her:

> Le había bastado un segundo para ver al muchacho sin rostro. Solo en su juventud, de una labor a otra. De día el lomo doblado sobre el algodonal. En la carpa, de noche, la amorosa cintura ceñida por los muslos de la joven. Al paso de los días, en el vientre lo hostigaba un dolor. La joven se adelantaba en la ruta del *wes.* Nicole oía a su madre contar la historia del muchacho. No lo volvería a ver. Había muerto. El capataz ordenaba: no tiene el documento,[61] la border patrol que

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61. Milton Plumb, an American labor official "acknowledge that the INS had 'performed a major task in clearing the border areas of literally hundreds of thousands of wetbacks' but added that Operation Wetback had 'dumped' thousands of illegal workers over the border, creating problems on the Mexican side. In July 1955 'literally hundreds of thousands of braceros were roaming about the streets' of Mexicali, he reported.

se encargue de él. A la orilla del camino su padre sin rostro yacía. (Sanmiguel 148)

The inexplicable power she felt that windy night of lent transported Nicole to a past when her mother revealed the truth about her father, an undocumented immigrant. She was unable to see his face given that she only knew about him through her mothers' memories. Together, their memories enabled her to document the impact of border militarization implemented by the arrogant perceiver that oversaw the supply and demand binational dynamics along the region during the 1940s under the Bracero Program, which also set forth Operation Wetback, a militarized project that dehumanizes people of color in order to justify the politics and policies implemented by those in power.

As World War II (1939-1945) occurred the immigration pattern in the southern border changed once again. The "Bracero Program" (1942-1964) was a negotiation between the US and Mexican governments that led to a labor contracting system, which consisted on temporary importation of Mexican workers—primarily in agriculture—to the US (Akers and Davis 137). The majority of the workers originated from the southern states of Mexico to prevent an overflow at the border and were sent primarily to California, Arizona and Texas once in they entered the US (Mize and Swords 3-7). While both governments administered the program, the US participated in the recruiting and paid the costs of distributing workers to worksites, while the Mexican government was allowed to monitor "the treatment of its workers in the United States" (Akers and Davis 142). The contract dictated the work tasks, duration and pay rate, and was signed by the worker, Mexican government official, the US Department of Labor, and the growers

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Some eighty-eight braceros died of sunstroke as a result of a round-up that had taken place in 112-degree heat, and he argued that more would have died had Red Cross not intervened" (Ngai 156).

association for it to be official (Mize and Swords 11). Under the contract, workers "were guaranteed work, a minimum wage, transportation, and housing, while they covered their own food, health service, and other expenses through payroll deductions" (Akers and Davis 140), unfortunately, the terms of these contracts were not met by many contractors.

Furthermore, the contract stipulated that wives and children of braceros were not allowed into the country, and that ten percent of their wages would be retained by the government until the end of their contract in order to ensure their return to their country at the end of the harvest (Akers and Davis 143). Failing to comply resulted in deportation; this individualization of the contract "detached bracero labor from the rest of the working class and legally redefine temporary workers as the virtual property of the growers" (140), thus remaining segregated "like a separate caste inside the political boundaries of the country" (Akers and Davis 145). As part of the contract, braceros, at the processed centers on the US side of the border were:

> deloused, given medical exams and processed *en masse:* 'Upon arrival at the US labor reception center, the worker and his luggage [were] thoroughly dusted with DDT powder as a sanitary measure and to prevent insects from being brought into the US. [Then they would have] a chest X-ray, and [finally] photographed for passport purposes. (qtd. in Mize and Swords 10)

The exam consisted of a thorough body examination, which several braceros described as humiliating. Men would be disrobed and their genitals and anus would be checked for infections. Their hands were checked for calluses as an indication of capable men; those with clean hands were unqualified and even descried at times as "secretary" hands. The process centers were responsible for "delivering a homogenous product." The braceros

were touted as disease-free, unattached, hard-working, experienced and, above all, subservient young men" (Mize and Swords 10-11).

The "Bracero Program" lead workers to believe that the United States was a land of opportunity; however, the living conditions these workers faced violated basic human rights. Such programs, approved by the U.S. and Mexico, initially intended as a wartime relief measure continued until 1964 to which around 4.5 million work contracts were signed (Mize and Swords 3). As Akers and Davis indicate, "It is entirely implausible to regard the United States' role in undocumented entry as unintentional, naïve, or innocent. Policymakers…must have been aware that recruitment activities…encourag[ed] those who would not be admitted legally to enter without inspection" (146). Similarly, National Agricultural Laborers Union organizer Ernesto Galarza argued:

> 'Braceros and 'wets' are the two sides of the same phony coin' that aimed to 'cut down the wages of farm labor, to break strikes and to prevent [union] organization; to run American citizens off farm jobs, especially on the corporation ranches.' Both were forms of unfree labor: the 'wetback' was 'legally a criminal in connivance by and with' the government, kept in 'a position of peonage'; the contracted laborer likewise had no 'civil rights.' Each was 'democracy in reverse.' Contract labor was not compatible with a 'system of free men,' which included 'freedom of mobility, association, [and] anything else meaningful.' Braceros were 'unassimilable, not by nature but by an act of Congress.' Organized labor's opposition to contract labor was echoed by liberals: the bracero was a 'legal slave,' a 'rented slave, 'kept as if in [a] concentration camp.' (Ngai 161)

By the end of the program in 1964, the program had brought not only economic benefits to both countries, but also the institutionalization of "legal" versus "illegal" mode of border crossing. The "illegalized" labor migration dismantled the last vestiges of "legal migration" and became the default for the US capitalist system[62] (Akers and Davis 147). Ultimately, migrants, braceros and undocumented workers who worked at the fields encountered poor treatment since cheap labor was available, in large supply and under little to no supervision by the government.

From the beginning, the Bracero Program was interconnected with other branches of government such as the Border Patrol as well as the new program in the making, Operation Wetback. The state apparatus utilized the Border Patrol to regulate the flow of labor set by the contracting system as indicated in the report of 1949 by the Immigration Commissioner, which explained to Congress that the "'Border Patrol would not go on the farms in search of 'wetbacks,' but rather confine their activities to the highways and places of social activities" to which the Immigration commissioner Watson Miller "told the House committee on agriculture …that it was the 'duty' of the agency 'to protect valuable and necessary crops.'" (qtd. in Akers and Davis 144). The indication of "wetbacks" and not bracero workers in the report highlights the fine line between the legal statuses of these two types of workers, which soon would be taken care of by Operation Wetback that enabled the use of militarize tactics to control the deportation of unwanted immigrants. Nicole returned home with Arturo and at dawn, unable to sleep, left her bed: "en su vestidor, iluminado por un haz de luz que entraba por la ventana,

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62. "As much as the 1965 INA sought to rectify the discriminatory elements in immigration law, it also reproduced the marginal status of low-wage immigrant workers by including the H-2 temporary visa provisions so that growers would be assured that the US government would continue to guarantee their access to cheap, temporary, foreign labor" (Mize and Swords 40).

frente a la luna del armario posó su desnudez. Y del otro lado del abismo, como si hubiera atravesado todas las aguas del mundo, los ojos de la madre, en la serena superficie del espejo encontraron a Nicole" (Sanmiguel 149). The moon, symbol of femininity, fertility and mysticism guides her to the mirror where she sees her pregnant body and then her mother looking back in that reflection. Pregnancy once more transports Nicole and in a mystical way the two women as mothers who reconcile, for they see and recognize each other in their reflection. Sanmiguel's disruption of linear and historical time allows a woman's time to take over revealing the power of the female body breaking with stereotypes of women as fragile and powerless. Nicole lineage is of strong, powerful and resilient women that have withstand and overcome hardship in a region under the eyes of arrogant perceivers.

It is relevant to mention that for my research I use the first edition of *Callejón Sucre y otros relatos* (1994) Ediciones del Azar -CONACULTA given that the edition by Artes Impresas Eón (2004) and the Arte Público Press (2008) bilingual edition do not include the word soldados in the story "Bajo el puente," the second short story analyzed in this work. The word has been replaced by mojados/wetbacks; the reason is unknown. However, given the year of publication of the first edition it situates it around the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1993 and the implementation of Operation Blockade/Operation Hold the line (1993), which triggered Operation Gatekeeper in San Ysidro (1994), Operation Safeguard in Arizona (1994), and Operation Rio Grande in South Texas (1997).

Rosario Sanmiguel in "Bajo el puente" writes openly about the reality of the border division and does not evade the violence it generates nor romanticizes either side;

on the contrary, her characters reveal the complexity of the space, individuals and dynamics along the border as a division line. The story addresses the capitalists' supply and demand dynamics challenging the stereotypes set by US and Mexican political rhetoric and inciting us to look beyond the obvious and through the lens of a fronteriza/o experience. "Bajo el puente" is the story of a young couple from Ciudad Juárez, Martín and Mónica. She works at a restaurant as a waitress and Martín as a *pasamojado*[63] at the Puente Negro "el mejor lugar para pasar mojados" according to him (Sanmiguel 93). Martín just got out of jail where he had been several weeks because of stabbing another *pasamojado* for saying offensive comments about Mónica.

Sanmiguel, through their relationship begins to document the happenings at the border under militarization. For example, on her way to meet Martín at the *malecón* Mónica noticed, "Ese día, las banquetas…estaban despejadas, sin gringos ni soldados" (93-94). Two important things to note is that first, this is the only reference of Mexican soldiers at the border in the analyzed literary production in this research. Secondly, the reference to soldiers resonates with the various operations created to prevent immigration through deterrence during the 1990s. Sociologist Timothy J. Dunn states that "The [Operation Blockade] emphasis was to deter unauthorized border crossing in the urban area by using 400 Border Patrol agents at the banks of the Rio Grande, patrol vehicles around the clock with the addition of low flying helicopters surveillance along the twenty-mile stretch" (*Blockading the Border* 59-60). The frustration by locals was such that Juarenses took the bridge to protest, "On the third day of the operation, several hundred undocumented crossers took the Paso del Norte bridge blocking traffic for two

63. A person who crosses undocumented immigrants. It is deeply embedded in the history of Operation Wetback that used the word mojado/wetback as a form to criminalize unwanted individuals.

hours demanding access to work, chanting ¡Queremos trabajar!" (64), paralyzing part of the local economy since that no one could enter or leave El Paso.

The operation tactics brought concern to the Clinton administration in light of the U.S. congressional vote on the NAFTA in November 1993 (66). The demonstrations by border crossers and "Mexican diplomatic protest as well resulted in the change of the operation's name from Operation Blockade to Operation Hold-the-line due to the war metaphor of the first one, which Mexicans found offensive and the administration inappropriate for the collaborative ties between Mexico, United States, and Canada" (*Blockading the Border* 77). This international form of trade was a sophisticated and developed capitalist system of supply and demand built from the "Bracero Program" which besides the need of workers also dealt with consumer products on a global scale. Sanmiguel records how negotiations take place at a smaller scale when individuals, not countries, take part in the trade of supply and demand of workers. For example, at the riverbank Mónica waits for Martín who according to other *pasamojados* was on the other side of the river. When Martín appears, he is arguing with a border patrol agent at the train yard: "Parecía que discutían, levantaban los brazos como si quisieran golpearse. El de la migra agarró a Martín de un hombro y lo sacudió…Todos los que estábamos de este lado nos quedamos muy atentos, a ver qué iba a suceder. Martín se soltó y salió por el hoyo que tiene la malla de alambre.[64] Bajó corriendo por la rampa de cemento. El agua sucia del río le llegaba hasta la cintura." (Sanmiguel 94) These negotiations are problematic given that one individual is a *pasamojados* and the other a border patrol

64. "The most visible physical manifestation of the militarization of the border region has been the construction of walls and fences to separate urban sister cities, first suggested by Lieutenant General Joseph Swing at the time of Operation Wetback. A series of INS border campaigns from 1993 to the present have all physically defined the line in the sand or the rivers that symbolically mark the divisions between Mexico and the US" (Mize and Swords 95).

agent and such dynamics disrupts the rhetoric of national security. That is to say, the Border Patrol agency is shown as corrupt organization since an agent it is profiting and negotiation with a "criminal." The fact that Martín is not apprehended and instead crosses back to the Mexican side through a hole in the fence reiterates an agreement between the two. Moreover, Sanmiguel's reference of the holes in the fence captures border dynamics before the prevention through deterrence as, "numerous holes in various stretches of border fencing were patched and closed" during Operation Blockade/Hold the line given the new implemented techniques of militarization (*Blockading the Border* 59-60). The imposing human and virtual wall performance in 1993 with Operation Blockade intended to "diverted much of the flow of undocumented border crossers to mountains and vast desert areas just west of El Paso in New Mexico," as a result, border-crossing activity in the urban area was "out of sight, out of mind"[65] (88).

Sanmiguel also calls attention to the multiple witnesses of what goes on at the riverbank by indicating the presence of Mónica, *pasamojados,* and other people watching attentively that day. The latter group of people is what I refer to as ephemeral witnesses, those whose testimonies are not recorded given the circumstances. For example, those who witness the confrontation between Martín and the agent seem to disappear when this is over. This particular witness is crucial as the narrative develops. The reaction of the people watching suggests these activities are common and it is confirmed later when Mónica asked Martín about the incident:

> Ese verde se llama Harris, lo conozco desde hace mucho tiempo, casi desde que ando en esto. Empezamos a trabajar muy bien, sin broncas, pero después ya no

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65. Undocumented crossers apprehended within the early days of the operation in El Paso to nearby Juarez were returned some sixty miles west of the city port of entry leaving returnees walk home through the dessert (Dunn 66-67).

> porque me quiso pagar cualquier baba. Me pidió gente para camellar en el Chuco. Le pasé sirvientas,[66] jardineros, meseros y hasta unos mariachis con todo y los instrumentos. Eran para su cantón y los de sus compas. Me pagaba bien; si la bronca empezó cuando crucé gente pa' la pizca del chile en Nuevo México, porque también los llevé hasta las meras labores; como era más riesgo le pedí más feria. No me quiso pagar y nos bronqueamos. (Sanmiguel 97)

According to Roberto Martinez of the American Friends Service Committee Border Project, these relations between [*pasamojados*], customs and border patrol agents are common. There have been hundreds of agents indicted for allowing smuggling, not only of drugs but of people too, through different ports of entry (Akers and Davis 212-213). Through these characters, Sanmiguel documents the binational supply and demand dynamics of local communities that depend on each other, especially for cheap labor. In this instance, both individuals negotiate and benefit from the transaction, but frictions arise in the struggle to control negotiations. Through these negotiations Sanmiguel also challenges two known icons of the border, —the *pasamojado* and the border patrol agent as he breaks away from the stereotypical *pasamojado* as a "criminal" that prays on undocumented crossers through Martín's complex character since he is also someone who aspires to something better and despite the high risks of the job does it to earn a living. However, the heroic icon of the border patrol agent is problematic since he is bound to an oath[67] as the protector of the nation:

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66. "As the employment of domestics becomes a major status distinction for the US wealth and wealthy-aspirant, the poorly remunerated labor performed by Mexican immigrant women is taken for granted," that is to say, these arrangements are not as employers, but as consumers (Mize and Swords 130).
67. CBP Mission Statement states that it exists "To safeguard America's borders thereby protecting the public from dangerous people and materials while enhancing the Nation's global economic competitiveness by enabling legitimate trade and travel." Its Vision Statement indicates that the agency aspires "To serve as

Vigilance is how we ensure the safety of all Americans. We are continuously watchful and alert to deter, detect and prevent threats to our nation. We demonstrate courage and valor in the protection of our nation.

Service to Country is embodied in the work we do. We are dedicated to defending and upholding the Constitution of the United States. The American people have entrusted us to protect the homeland and defend liberty.

Integrity is our cornerstone. We are guided by the highest ethical and moral principles. Our actions bring honor to ourselves and our agency. ("About CBP")

Sanmiguel's approach to both figures highlights the role the border division plays and the ways in which different individuals navigate and interact within it, revealing the complexity of the space and contesting the good and evil rhetoric that justifies border militarization.

Later on, Martín has another confrontation with Harris and threatens that he will report him to his superiors making Mónica fear for Martín's safety, which he dismisses by assuring that everything is under control "no es la primera vez que tengo broncas con uno de la migra" implying that he did business with other border patrol agents. Despite the tensions, they both plan on crossing to El Paso since Mónica has never been to the other side of the border. She migrated to Juárez as a young adult with her parents and stayed in the city. As soon as they arrived, her mother found a job as a housekeeper[68] in El Paso and crossed the river twice a week to work. Within a few days of arriving her father could not find a job and decided to migrate north into the US as an undocumented

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the premier law enforcement agency enhancing the Nation's safety, security, and prosperity through collaboration, innovation, and integration" (U.S. Customs and Border Protection).

68. "Household workers in El Paso's suburbs include both commuter maids with green cards and undocumented [crossers] who dodge *la Migra* as they cross the borders" (Mize and Swords 129).

immigrant and never came back. Regardless of their family situation, Mónica had no interest in leaving Juárez, especially after knowing the ordeal undocumented immigrants, and perhaps her father, underwent in freight train cars "a esperar horas, a veces todo el día, hasta que al fin el tren se mueve, y ellos allí metidos, ahogándose de calor y miedo" (Sanmiguel 96).

According to Timothy J. Dunn, during the 1990s Border Patrol officials estimated that 65% of the undocumented crossers…[were] local commuters [going to work at El Paso] and 35% were long-distance migrants bound for the interior" to which a research for the Colegio de la Frontera Norte (COLEF) in Juárez and border rights activists confirmed through their work (*Blockading the Border* 86). Dunn argues that one of the main reasons for this large flow of local unauthorized crossing in Juárez is due to "the relatively difficult and bureaucratic process" required to apply for a local-travel border crossing visa, as well as the fact that many could not meet the somewhat unrealistic documentation criteria for eligibility stipulated by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) (88). Sanmiguel records the complexity of border crossing and some of the obstacles that individuals like Mónica's mother, father and Martín confront on a daily basis in an attempt of a better life.

Although Mónica is no longer interested in crossing due to the tensions between Martín and Harris, Martin is adamant about spending the day with Mónica at El Paso:

> a empujones [la] subió al tubo que usaba como balsa…Jaló el tubo despacio para que el agua no me salpicara. Serían las tres de la tarde…Bajo el puente, mujeres y hombres esperaban su turno para cruzar. Arriba en el puente, otros con los dedos enganchados en el alambrado miraban a todos lados. Nos miraban a Martín y a

> mí. A pesar del miedo que llevaba me ilusionó pensar que allá nos quedaríamos el resto del día…(Sanmiguel 98).

On this occasion, Sanmiguel documents a border crossing using an inner tube, which Operation Blockade targeted to control. The frustration of border crossers with the operation in 1993 was that unauthorized daylight crossing had been happening for decades without many consequences given that people had crossed "illegally for years at well-established crossing locations, some just under the international bridges, either by wading or being taken across on an inner tube pulled with a rope, or literally carried on someone's back" in order to work at El Paso (*Blockading the Border* 63). Nevertheless, border crossing in the urban area became a nighttime activity while others crossed through the mountains and vast deserts west of the city through New Mexico territory (88). Once more, there is the presence of ephemeral witnesses, men and women waiting to cross and people on the bridge looking down as Martín and Mónica crossed, a common scene at the riverbank in plain daylight. However, once they reached the US side of the border Mónica noticed a man that was hidden "entre los vagones; su inconfundible uniforme verde. —¿Qué pasa, Martín? —pregunté paniqueada. —¡Agáchate! —gritó, al tiempo que se ocultaba detrás del tubo. Se oyó otro disparo. Martín se dobló. El agua oscura del río lo cubrió" (Sanmiguel 98), Martín was killed by the border patrol agent as soon as he reached the other side of the border to justify the murder. According to Ngai in January 1930:

> officials of the Bureau of Immigration testified about the Border Patrol before a closed session of the House immigration committee. Henry Hull, the commissioner general of immigration, explained that the Border Patrol did not

> operate "on the border line" but as far as the hundred miles "back of the line"…[it] was a 'scouting organization and a pursuit organization.' Officers operate on roads 'without warrants and wherever they find an alien they stop him. If he is illegally in the country, they take him to unit headquarters'…Congress had authorized the Border Patrol to arrest aliens without warrant in 1925…the law provided the arrest without a warrant when an alien 'enters in the presence or view…of the officer, but this does not necessarily mean that the officer must see the alien at the exact moment that he crosses the border into the United States. Entry is a continuing offense and is not completed until the alien…reaches his interior destination.' (56)

With the militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border since "Operation Wetback" in 1954 created even greater complications and negotiations often went unnoticed at the borderline. It is evident that Harris killed Martín to save his job because he had threatened to denounce him to his superiors. The agent Mónica saw was hiding behind the train containers and he waited until they reached the US side to cover up the crime since no one would claim the death of a *pasamojado* who was breaking the law. Nevertheless, since its foundation, the Border Patrol role was to apprehend undocumented individuals and not to kill them, especially when they do not represent a threat to their lives.

Mónica in disbelief of what happened did not know what to do "Grité aterrada. Quise bajarme del tubo pero el miedo no me dejó. Volví a sentarme. Busqué auxilio con la mirada. Ya no había ni una alma bajo el puente, tampoco arriba, por ningún lado" (Sanmiguel 98-99). Although various people were watching everything unfold, like the

time when Martín and Harris argued by the train tracks, the ephemeral witness were gone in fear of retaliation from the Border Patrol, leaving Mónica by herself at the river, "[s]entí un ardor intenso en los ojos, —es el sol de agosto pensé—, los cerré con fuerza y hasta entonces pude ver todo el silencio que arrastra el río" (Sanmiguel 98-99). Mónica for the first time understands the injustice that goes unnoticed along the border and all the deaths that the river has swallowed covering the abuse of power that happens with the militarization of border that was set up to protect the US, but not fronterizo communities from both sides of the border:

> The border is much more than the line on the map that divides two nations; it has a symbolic, political, physical, and militarized presence. From the strictly political definition that emerged at the end of the US-Mexico War, the border is now marked by newly erected walls, fences, and entry inspection stations. The physical construction has been accompanied by a more deadly militarization of the entire region…the US Border Patrol has employed an LIC policy along the border…As a result, the border[line] has become much more dangerous place. (Mize and Swords 180)

The killing of a Mexican citizen at the river in plain daylight by a Border Patrol agent is a Testament to the tensions between the U.S. and Mexico to secure the border. *Pasamojados*—like Martín are the outcome of a demand caused by the US and for his death to go unnoticed demonstrates the danger of policies and surveillance by US government officials who do not understand the dynamics of communities along the border. The disconnection of politicians from the border is problematic since it continues to dehumanize and criminalize human beings who simply seek work and a better life and

whose labor helps to sustain the U.S. economy.

Lucrecia Guerrero: Border Patrol

In an interview about her book, *Chasing Shadows* (2000), when asked what inspired her to choose the writing profession Lucrecia Guerrero stated it was the people she met over the years and their stories, “their strength, courage, a fleeting expression; in my writing, I can give voices to these folks that are in my heart” (*The Latino Author*). Guerrero’s collection of short stories captures life at Mesquite, a fictitious border city between Arizona, United Sates and Sonora, Mexico. Her work documents life at the border and in various instances the dynamics between the two communities. In this section the analysis focuses on “Even in Heaven” and “The Curse,” two stories that unveil the presence of an arrogant perceiver, surveillance by the Border Patrol and tactics of militarization against non-Anglo fronterizas/os.

Guerrero sets the story “Even in Heaven” in the town Mesquite along Frontera Street, a dead-end street whose “chain-link fence that center-cuts the length of the street, separates Mesquite from Mexico” (11). From her backyard at the top of the hill Cookie McDonald overlooks an “apartment building of crumbling bricks [sitting] in the U.S….If only she had her binoculars with her” (11). From the beginning Guerrero brings attention to the landscape and geopolitical division line to define the importance of the location of the story and her place of enunciation, the border. Immediately she highlights the complexity of the region with a pair of binoculars, a tool for surveillance, in the hands of a woman of color, Cookie McDonald, who uses them to spy on her neighbors and who feels uneasy about it especially when her daughter Nancy is in the house, “Better she doesn’t find out about them, Cookie thinks. Anyway, she has been considering not

informing anymore, returning the binoculars to Peter" (11). This latter statement reveals that she is acting against her will and is being forced to monitor others because the binoculars do not belong to her.

In the privacy of her home her behavior reveals a self-regulation indicating the presence of an arrogant perceiver. This is evident in her habits, cooking and culture rejection, all criticized by Nancy, her fifteen-year-old daughter. For instance, she dislikes the Arizona sun, "harsh as truth herself, [that] normally forces her inside, out of the light that could turn her an Aztec brown" (Guerrero 11). In Ohio she did not have to worry about it "after she married Bill and escaped the tomato fields, it was easy to maintain her winter-skin shade of sallow tan (lighten with a generous layer of ivory Angel Face powder)" (11-12). Her concern about skin color reveals a self-regulation embedded in a colonialist ideology of a white supremacy. Thus, the color gradient, Aztec brown being indigenous, tan still problematic and ivory Angel acceptable, signals a white supremacy as the ruler. Her daughter criticizes this behavior when she sees her wearing a long-sleeved blouse in the almost a hundred degrees Arizona climate, "[t]his isn't Ohio, you know. Everybody's got a tan down here, it's okay to be dark like you. Cookie swallows. Nancy knows how sensitive she is about her complexion" (Guerrero 12). This remark highlights Nancy's privilege and obliviousness to US and Mexico history, especially about the border region. For Cookie, living in Arizona was more difficult than Ohio where she could pretend to be an American woman,[69] however, Mesquite was a militarized region under a 24/7 surveillance due to the threat it represented to white supremacy and she, a brown woman, was a threat.

Her attempt to erase her Mexican ancestry is such that she continuously cooks all-

69. Guerrero uses this term to refer to white-Anglo women.

American food even to celebrate her wedding anniversary, which coincides with her arrival to the US. While she peels Granny Smith apples for her celebration dinner, she realizes that it has been “[t]wenty years. Can it be that long since she left Mexico and her position as a maid in Doña Inez’s house?” (Guerrero 12). She wishes to forget her past and focuses on celebrating her life as a US citizen and “ignore all that happened before she married, another self shed somewhere along the way. Although lately, with the marking of her anniversary in the US, memories long since buried, gauze-faint tendrils, creep up, crawl through her dreams” (12). Even her sense of smell transport her to the past, “[o]dors waft up to Edwards Street from Frontera: chiles roasting, beans frying in lard, tortillas warming on the comal…Her eyes follow the scent, memories of the child she used to be” (12). However, she is brought back to reality as the presence of an arrogant perceiver emerges with Nancy’s remarks, “[the apple pie] never taste right the way you make them…at least can’t we make something sort of southwestern?...It’s a lot like Mexican food. You can cook that, can’t you? You’re Mexican. ‘I have twenty years in this country.’ Cookie slaps the last word down, exclamation point” (Guerrero 13). While culture can be a source of strength, it is use as well as a tool of oppression:

> Our legitimate cultures can offer us a great source of strength, but we often find ourselves fighting against that very source. It is a real struggle to see our cultures without the white overlay. It is a struggle to own the characteristics from our cultures which the dominant culture has turned into vilifying caricatures. We try to deny and avoid those stereotypes by assimilation. We adopt the basic tenet that we must be ‘better than’ to have real worth…We find ways to legitimize the ‘privileges’ this hierarchy provides us while being victims of it. (Harris and

Ordoña 306-307)

Nancy is unaware of the struggles of her mother and her criticism motivates Cookie to erase her ancestry and alter her skin color—two forms of oppression used against her.

This is noticeable in her antipathy towards Chicanos, like Joaquín de la Torre, a nineteen-year-old Chicano who lives in the crumbling bricks apartments at Frontera Street. Cookie attempts to separate him from her daughter who "[suddenly finds an] interest in a culture that has nothing to do with her?" (Guerrero 14). Cookie dislikes everything about Joaquín, his complexion, his stories about the Malinche and Cortés, his ideals, his poverty since it reminds her of her past, her struggles and her Mexican heritage. Nancy finds her mother's attitude baffling, "'It's just so weird, you never want to talk about Mexico. What's the big deal?'" to which Cookie responds, "'[t]he past is gone, not important for nothing. To survive it is necessary to concentrate on now.' 'Tell that to my history teacher, Nancy says'" (15). Cookie insistence in forgetting her past and her identity in order to be accepted as an American woman indicates a trauma caused by an oppression based on race, class, gender and culture—not only in the US but also in Mexico—given that she does not want to remember her past and refuses to embrace her identity. Scholars Virginia R. Harris and Trinity A. Ordoña argue that:

> Racism seeps into our systems like poison, kills off pieces of our selves as we build tolerance for it. We have learned to survive with our insides, our essential selves, rotting away. We build protective walls to ward off the poison and the "protection" becomes a prison. The prison limits our choices to be and we live only as others have determined. The poison of oppression becomes our food, food that nourishes the prison but not the self. Just like our bodies build up a tolerance

for additives and chemicals and may seem to thrive on them, our psyches build tolerance for the pain inflicted by oppression. (305)

Cookie's mode of survival is to be someone who she is not by self-regulating and monitoring people like Joaquin to conform to the arrogant perceiver.

Nancy continues to talk about Joaquín and his knowledge of Mexican history but her mother becomes enraged when she mentions the story of Malinche and Cortés and how Mestizo people, "Like us" came to be, "Lots of people say she was a traitor but Joaquín says we got to consider her situation. I don't see how anybody can excuse her, but that just goes to show you what kind of guy he is" (Guerrero 16). Cookie questions his knowledge by highlighting Joaquín's social status: "Ridiculous talk from an ignorant cotton picker. Maybe those people make problems, do what they are not supposed to do, don't want to accept their destiny. He will fill your head with illusions.' She did not realize how ragged her breathing had become until she saw Nancy's expression" (16). She finds troublesome the idea that Nancy is identifying herself as a mestiza and also how she judges Malinche, an indigenous woman who collaborated with the Spaniards—just like she is helping Peter to surveil Chicanos.[70] Again, race, class and culture become tools of oppression as Cookie continues to depict Joaquín as troublesome based on others opinions, "Forget him. He is nothing, a dreamer. I ask about him to the neighbors. Mrs.

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70. "Romero and Serag investigated the joint operation of the Border Patrol and Chandler Police Department to target working-class Chicano neighborhoods in the Phoenix metropolitan area. In what has come to be known as the Chandler Round-Up, the detainment and inspection of papers of those who looked like 'illegals' or were of Mexican ancestry certainly represent profiling. It also deployed class profiling, by targeting neighborhoods slated for redevelopment and by unannounced house to house visits and by stopping pedestrians in public shopping areas, on residential streets, and at bus stops (2005). In 2010, this informal practice became the law of the land with the passage of Arizona's SB1070 immigrant profiling law. (181-182) In March 2010, the governor of Arizona signed the SB1070 into law. Dubbed the 'Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act,' it requires law enforcement to check the papers of any person suspected of being in the state illegally by empowering them to 'lawfully stop any person who is operating a motor vehicle if the officer has reasonable suspicion to believe the person is in violation of any civil traffic law'" (Mize and Swords 183).

Peterson say he is involved with students from the university –but don't think he is one of them, and something with the migrant workers, telling them who knows what" (Guerrero 16). Her argument and Mrs. Peterson comments reflect a dislike and surveillance of migrant workers and Chicanos by other members of the community. Life at the border was challenging, she did not want to leave Ohio and live in a "city that splits into two countries…" where her daughter "insists on pretending she is one of these Chicanos…she doesn't see that it could close doors to her" (18). Once again, Cookie's comments signal an oppression and marginalization based on race.

Cookie, "wishes she could tell Nancy a story that would help her understand why she should be grateful for her complexion—a story that would explain [her] concern with color. But even the memory humiliates her" (Guerrero 17). While she falls asleep she remembers how in her native Mexico she was Refugio Alvarez—not Cookie McDonald—the daughter of poor peasants; her father left to the north in search for work when she was a baby and never returned. Her mother died of tuberculosis a few years after and decided to leave her village in search of a better life in Mexico City where she found work with the Montalba household as a housemaid (Guerrero 21). The Montalba's lost much of their land and power during the Mexican Revolution, but were still cautious of "[dañado] de sangre" as they claim to be "Christian Europeans who could trace their roots back to the Spanish aristocracy" (20). In Mexico like in the US, skin color is a tool of oppression and marginalization, Doña Inez Montalba, a representation of the arrogant perceiver, reminded Cuca—Refugio Alvarez—now and then, "'Even in heaven,'…'the angles are not equal. Qué se puede hacer?'" (Guerrero 21), in other words, hierarchies are meant to sustain those in power, a colonialist ideology. The lack of opportunities for a

woman like her, poor, brown complexion, and uneducated, led her to migrate north like her father in search of a better life, "she [took] the money she had saved…[and] promised herself her children would never be anyone's servant…With those thoughts, she made plans to join her friends in the tomato fields of Ohio" (Guerrero 23) were she "got [herself] pregnant and reeled in a husband and citizenship" (17). Cookie opens her eyes, "as if she could force her memories out. Remembering only complicates her life, makes decisions more difficult," that is to say, she feared her daughter's judgment about her past, a life she is ashamed of and worked intensely to erase to the point of creating a new identity and life in the US where she struggles to be accepted as an American.

Her fears make her vulnerable against Peter, a new friend of Bill, her husband, who he met at a bar. One night Bill invited Peter to their home and while standing at Cookie's kitchen he looked down the window at Frontera Street and commented:

> We're being overrun by illegals, they're coming in left and right. I tell you, we got our work cut out for us. Word is, somebody down there's not helping the situation. Sure would be nice if a good citizen would keep an eye on things, let us know who's coming and going, license plates, stuff like that, maybe give us a call down to the Border Patrol. (18)

Peter's psychological tactic of good versus evil—us versus them—intimidates Cookie given that in the privacy of her home she is being recruited to surveil her neighbors, specifically non-Anglo fronterizos like Joaquín. This reiterates the consequences of laws such as the 1975 Supreme Court case United States v. Brignoni-Ponce decision that allowed the Border Patrol to use racial profiling, especially against Mexicans, legitimizing the public perceptions that Mexican-origin persons are likely to be "illegals"

and also likely to be criminals:

> The public and the courts have begun a long overdue reconsideration of race profiling—the formal and informal targeting of African Americans, Latinos, and other racial minorities for investigation on account of their race—in criminal law enforcement. Race, however, remains central to the enforcement of the United States immigration law, particularly in the southwestern part of the country. In fact, the Supreme Court proclaimed in 1975 that "Mexican appearance" constitutes a legitimate consideration under the Fourth Amendment for making an immigration stop…U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents bear the brunt of race-based immigration enforcement, which cuts to the core of their belonging to the national community. (Johnson 676-677)

The fact that a border patrol agent is having this type of conversation in the kitchen of a woman of color of Mexican ancestry indicates the reach and effects of militarization along the border region because psychological tactics are one of the various practices of the low intensity conflict doctrine.

Peter attempts to convince Cookie a second time by sharing his family immigration experience in order to connect with her, "It's not like I don't understand people wanting to get ahead. Why, my own grandmother came over here from County Cork, Ireland, but it's got to stop someplace, for Chrissakes" (Guerrero 18). This statement indicates that immigration is acceptable only when it applies to white European immigrants, like his grandmother; however, when he refers to immigrants of color he uses the term "illegal" to indicate that a criminal act has been committed. Thus, Peter comment resonates with Doña Inez Montalba expression "'Even in heaven,'…'the angles

are not equal," in other words, immigrants of color are a threat for the US while white Europeans are not[71] and laws are created to ensure so:

> The Johnson-Reed Immigration Act of 1924 marked both the end of one era, that of open immigration from Europe, and the beginning of a new one, the era of immigration restriction. The law placed numerical limits on immigration and established a quota system that classified the world's population according to nationality and race, ranking them in a hierarchy of desirability for admission into the United States. Paradoxically, the quota system, while closing America's gates to the 'undesirable races' of southern and eastern Europe, redrew the color line around Europe instead of through it. Restriction also demanded a system of visa controls to track the allocation of quotas and border surveillance to ensure that only persons with the proper documents entered the country. The new regime had two major consequences: it remapped the ethno-racial contours of the nation and generated illegal immigration as the central problem in immigration law. (Ngai 17)

Cookie understands Peter's message given that she was once an undocumented immigrant and is aware that immigration laws and policies have controlled the entrance of unwanted immigrants at the southern border, which explains her silence, fear and shame of her Mexican ancestry as well as her instance of being accepted as an American woman. As a final tactic, Peter manipulates her to accept: "He held out the glasses to her.

71. See Mae M. Ngai *Impossible Subjects,* Kevin R. Johnson "The Case Against Race Profiling in Immigration Enforcement," Kitty Calavita, *Inside the Sate: The Bracero Program, Immigration, and the I.N.S.,* Pew Research Center interactive digital map, "From Ireland to Germany to Italy to Mexico: How America's Source of Immigrants Has Changed in the States, 1850 – 2013" https://www.pewresearch.org/hispanic/2015/09/28/from-ireland-to-germany-to-italy-to-mexico-how-americas-source-of-immigrants-has-changed-in-the-states-1850-to-2013/#total.

'Now, don't feel obligated. But I tell you what, it's people like you who can do the most good.' He placed one hand on her shoulder. 'It'd be a real nice gesture, a chance to show where your heart is. Know what I mean?' She hesitated before taking the binoculars. 'Nobody would suspect you,' Peter said and laughed" (Guerrero 18). The degree of intimidation and psychological manipulation is such that she is unable to decline and takes the binoculars sealing the agreement even when Bill tells her not to feel obligated and "[l]et them do their own dirty work" (18). However, this was her way to "prove her loyalty once and for all" and even agreed with Peter in that "one cannot be concerned with the world's problems" she had her own and after all as "[a] peasant and housemaid in her native Mexico, here she is a homeowner and considered a member of the middle class. Doesn't she have a right to protect her position?" (18-19).

Cookie's determination to be accepted as an American forces her to surveil Frontera Street, but feels uneasy about it especially when she noticed Joaquín's mother while spying on him, "A woman like so many [she] remember from her youth. Good, strong. A woman who adores her child. What if something happens to Joaquín?" (Guerrero 24). For a moment she feared the consequences of her actions that made her doubt if what she was doing was right, "She sways, suddenly tired. Nancy is right about her pies: all these years and she still cannot get the recipe right. Forget the apple pies. Forget the binoculars?" (24). All that he desired is to distance herself from people like Joaquín and the border itself. She even considered running a barbed wire around her fence "[l]ike the taller one at the border…And something dense to grow along the perimeter. Someday it will grow so high she won't be able to see the street below. But until then, she will keep the binoculars (24). Cookie's decision to continue monitoring is

based on her fear of losing everything: her daughter, home, status and even citizenship. However, she implies that it is because of her view of Frontera Street that she was recruited and if that is to be obstructed she will not be forced to do it anymore. In other words, to free herself from the Border Patrol she will build a fence at her home. The self-regulation set by the arrogant perceiver is such that she prefers to become a prisoner within her home than continue to surveil her neighbors in fear of the consequences it can bring to others.

Lucrecia Guerrero short story “The Curse” develops in Frontera Street and focuses on three children: Tonantzin, Flaco and Riquis. The text is divided into two stories: Flaco and Riquis’ relationship as brothers and the struggles they face at home such as poverty, violence and neglect, while the second story is Tonantzin and Flaco’s friendship that emerges during a humanitarian act. For the purpose of this research I focus on Tonantzin and Flaco’s friendship that reveals the presence of an arrogant perceiver, militarization and Border Patrol surveillance against non-Anglo fronterizas/os.

Tonantzin is new to Mesquite; her father, El Kid Salazar is a broken-down boxer and Flaco and Riquis besides being her neighbors are also her classmates at school. Riquis dislikes Tonantzin—Toenail as he calls hers—for rejecting the marshmallow cookies he offered once and even more so for staring at him and wrinkle up her own nose as he swiped his runny nose with the back of his hand at that moment. Since then Riquis blames Tonantzin for everything bad that goes on in Mesquite including his mother rejection for him:

> ‘Who do you think put a curse on me?’…‘That’s why Mami caught *me,* not you. And, anyway, don’t you notice how things have been worse since she came here?’

> He jerks his head toward the apartment to their side…'I bet you anything she's been putting curses on people…things have been bad since *she* moved into the barrio…'And why is she putting this curse on you?' [Flaco] asks, want to better understand…'Who knows why anything is? But think about it. Don't she always go into those hills?' He points his chin toward the deserted hills beyond Frontera Street. 'There's nothing back there except lizards and snakes. And all normal girls are afraid of them, but this one, she goes back in there all alone, except for that cat. Think about it. Who likes cats? Uh-huh, witches.' (Guerrero 29-31)

Riquis embarrassment when she rejected him was such that he began to make fun of her name and create stories in order for others to dislike and fear her. Flaco knew the truth and did not want to play along. The fact that Riquis alters her name and calls her a witch is symbolic given that Tonantzin is an Aztec goddess, which means "'Nuestra madre [our mother], según el mismo fraile [Bernardino de Sahagún] lo notó, era el nombre con que los nahuas llamaban a la Madre de los dioses. Ella, Tonantzin había sido adorada precisamente en el Tepeyac, adonde desde mediados del siglo XVI muchos seguían yendo en busca de la que comenzó a llamarse Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe"[72] (León-Portilla 3). This technique of inspiring fear of individuals through false accusations are a reminder of practices such as those by the Spanish Inquisition that ended the lives of many women falsely accused of being witches, similar to the Salem witch trials in the US. However, Guerrero through Tonantzin highlights the presence of original people and

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72. "La lectura y el análisis del Nican mopohua muestran que fue escrito por un buen conocedor del antiguo pensamiento náhuatl con el propósito de dar cuenta de por qué y cómo surgió en el Tepeyac la cada vez más grande atracción ejercida por la Señora de Guadalupe, allí donde por tanto tiempo se adoró a Tonantzin. Y anticiparé aquí algo a lo que luego atenderemos. Esa nueva atracción que a muchos llevaba al Tepeyac escandalizó al provincial de los franciscanos que predicó contra ella en la temprana fecha de 1556 y al mismo fray Bernardino de Sahagún que, veinte años después, se opuso a la misma al escribir su *Historia general de las cosas de la Nueva España*" (León-Portilla 3).

the colonization of the land given that her actions go beyond the impositions of militarization in geopolitical boundaries set by treaties and politics. Rather than inspiring fear by calling her a witch or making fun of her name, Flaco sees in Tonantzin a powerful and fearless young girl.

One day Flaco sees Tonantzin coming out of her apartment and "facing the chain-link fence that cuts down the middle of Frontera Street" (Guerrero 32). She noticed "[a] knot of people on the Mexican side push up against the fence, call out something to [her]." Flaco could not hear what they said, but he did not have to give that "[t]hey're holding up jugs and buckets. They do this every year during the drought season…He's not sure why they run out of water across the line when there's still some on this side, even if they do have to ration it; that's just the way it is every year" (32). The plea from the people to Tonantzin echoes the indigenous request to the Aztec goddess for rain for a good harvest. Guerrero reference addresses one of the major problems border communities face in regions with semi-desert and desert ecological systems such as water shortage,[73] a natural resource that is entwined in binational treaties and political agreements.[74] Although Mesquite is a fictitious town on the Arizona-Sonora border its

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73. The transnational coordination of such resource is difficult due to the fact that each country manages the resources differently, for instance, in the United States the states are responsible for the water management while in Mexico the Comisión Nacional de Agua (National Water Commission), a federal agency, overlooks these issues. According to Sprouse, in regards to Nogales, Sonora and Nogales, Arizona "roughly 50 percent of each city's potable water is supplied by the Santa Cruz River aquifer. Well fields that supply water to Nogales, Sonora are upstream of Nogales, Arizona wells fields. Water management policies of Nogales, Sonora have a direct impact on the volume of water entering Arizona, as pumping along the Santa Cruz River in Sonora reduces both surface and sub-surface flows into Arizona. The remaining 50 percent of water that supplies Nogales, Sonora comes from Los Alisos Basin, 11 miles south of the city, and from wells within the city of Nogales, Sonora. Nogales, Arizona receives the remainder of its water from an aquifer located northeast of the city" (4).
74. The construction of border fences—and soon border wall—has caused flood disaster between "[t]he sister cities of Nogales, which were built along a floodplain, had been battered by heavy rains before. They also wondered why it had been so much more devastating on the Mexican side…Underground, near the massive sinkhole, Mexican engineers discovered that a storm-runoff channel had been blocked by a five-foot-tall concrete barrier that had been constructed a few months earlier by U.S. Customs and Border

similarities with sister cities Nogales, Sonora and Nogales, Arizona are no coincidence:

> During periods of drought, the Sonoran section of the Santa Cruz River aquifer often dries up, leaving Nogales, Sonora with shortage of available drinking water. During emergencies, drinking water supplies are augmented by water from Nogales, Arizona…Temporary pipes are often strung across the border to allow Mexican tanker trucks destined for on-water-serviced *colonias,* to fill up with water from Nogales, Arizona. (Sprouse 4)

Contrary to the collaboration between sister cities, at Mesquite, Frontera Street locals are encourage to ignore their Mexican neighbors plea as Flaco comments,

> nobody over here's allowed to give them water...like the radio disk jockey always says, 'Hey, folks, our water level is low, too, so nobody can expect us to share with the Mexicans.' Doesn't he have something there? Somebody's got to be left standing, Flaco figures, and it's better to be on the side of those who do have the water. (Guerrero 31-32)

At a young age children like Flaco, learn survival modes in a border town like Mesquite. Water shortages become a tool to control the border division and inspire fear in locals as a form of surveillance. To survive it is best to obey the rules set by those with the power, the ones who control the water, the arrogant perceiver.

Unlike Flaco, Tonantzin decides to help and goes back inside her apartment just to come out pulling a hose, ''Gracias, niña, gracias. May God bless you,' the people say over and over again in Spanish. Tonantzin moves the hose from one container to another" (33). Guerrero once more plays with the symbolism of the Aztec goddess and the young

Protection. As a result, the storm runoff in Mexico was unable to pass through the channel to a shared water treatment plant in Arizona. As pressure mounted, water burst up into the street like a geyser" (Del Bosque).

girl answering to their pleas in a border town of Mesquite located in a desert where she is a new member of the community unaware of the consequences her actions can have for transgressing. This humanitarian act alerts Flaco who stands at a distance watching this, "Guess she doesn't know about the Border Patrol, he thinks, and starts scuffing down the dusty road, slow and casual, like he's not in a hurry to get down there where she is…'You're going to get in trouble with the patrulla'…'It's against the law, or something'" (33). Flaco's body language and remarks denote the presence of militarization in the region given that humanitarian acts,[75]—such as sharing water with the Mexican community,—have legal consequences to which the Border Patrol is in charge of upholding the law. Although there is no law that prevents sharing of water along border communities the consequences make Flaco uneasy since he does not understand why helping others is a criminal act. Laws become questionable since it is not clear why such act is against the law. What prevents fronterizas/os from helping is fear of the Border Patrol.

Guerrero brings attention to the complexity of border dynamics by focusing on the importance of natural resources in places like Arizona and Sonora and its connections with militarization since she also highlights another issue, prevention through deterrence, a militarized practice that emerged during the 1990s as a result of various operations throughout the U.S.-Mexico border:

> Of course, throwing up blockades in El Paso and San Diego did not really stop undocumented migrants from entering the United States; it simply channeled

75. See Marc Lacey, "Water Drops for Migrants: Kindness, or Offense?," Edward Helmore, "'Death map' of deserts aims to save lives of desperate Mexican migrants," Timothy J. Dunn, *Blockading the Border and Human Rights: The El Paso Operation that Remade Immigration Enforcement (Inter-America Series),* Isaac Stanley-Becker, "An activist faced 20 years in prison for helping migrants. But jurors wouldn't convict him."

> them to other, less visible locations along the two thousand-mile border. Passage through remote mountains, high-deserts, and raging rivers had been too costly and risky to undertake as long as San Diego and El Paso remained relatively open, but once Operation Hold-the Line and Operation Gatekeeper made these sectors difficult to traverse, the prospect of crossing in more distant and dangerous areas did not look so bad. (*Blockading the Border* 95)

In other words, operations during the 1990s discouraged immigrants from crossing through cities or towns by forcing them to remote territories where they become vulnerable and easier to apprehend. Thus, the Border Patrol surveillance of locals, such as those in Mesquite, is also designed to prevent any act of humanitarian aid that can entice unwanted immigrants to enter the town, to control fronterizas/os is to control immigration.

Despite Flaco's warnings Tonantzin "shrugs her shoulders" and continues filling out jugs. He then tries to convince her by revealing a secret to her:

> 'Sometimes my mother and the other women give them water,' he says, 'but you got to wait until it's real dark. Even then, these days it's like the patrulla's got as many eyes as a centipede's got legs. I bet you they're going to be down here in that jeep in a few minutes. No joke. Next thing you know, they'll start saying you ain't got no papers to be here and drag you away and make all kinds of problems for everybody.' (Guerrero 33)

The metaphor of the Border Patrol as a centipede manifests the constant monitoring of them, not only by the patrol agents but also by those who support them, like Cookie McDonald who spies from the top of the hill. The level of surveillance is such that even

children like Flaco know that they are under constant watch and any actions outside the norm will have consequences such as deportation or detainment even for citizens and lawful permanent residents, apparently a common technique of intimidation which indicates the vulnerability of border communities in a militarized region.[76]

The fear inflicted by the Border Patrol keeps alert the residents of Mesquite, however, even under such surveillance fronterizas at Frontera Street challenge the arrogant perceiver by providing aid to their Mexicans neighbors in secret and soon Tonantzin learns to navigate their ways as she listens to the plea of a mother:

> [her] cheeks glow red, but she just nudges the hose over to a gallon jug that a woman has in one hand while she holds a baby on her hip with the other hand. The baby stares at them with too-big eyes that move from Tonantzin to Flaco. 'You see,' the woman says when she sees him looking at her baby. 'Before when he cried, I would catch his tears with my finger and wet his little tongue with them, but now they're all dried up. We don't even have tears to drink.' He forces his eyes away from the baby, moves in closer now [to Tonantzin]. (Guerrero 34)

This brings attention to another common problem at the Arizona-Sonora border, humanitarian acts. The extreme drought and desperation is such that they were unable to produce tears. Unlike Flaco who grew up in Mesquite she is yet to understand the consequences of her transgression at the border to which Flaco tries to warn her once again, but her determination to help the people is such that he noticed after a moment that she is barefoot:

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76. "A stunning militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border was accomplished during the 1990s. Congress authorized a doubling of the Border Patrol's force, the erection of fences and walls, and the deployment of all manner of high-tech surveillance on land and by air. Enforcement at the southwest border…costs taxpayers $2 billion a year [in the early 2000s]. The militarization of the border has not stopped illegal entry, but it has made it more difficult and dangerous" (Ngai 266).

> and it's high noon. *Whew.* The ground's cooking right through the soles of his shoes, but there she is, enduring…When he glances up, he sees she watches him…but she stares him right in the eye, daring him to say something about her bare feet. 'You better stop,' he says…'I'm telling you, if the patrulla catches you doing this, it'll be the end of giving water.'…Now she's listening. 'I can come around and get you tonight, if you want,'…It isn't easy to get the people at the fence to accept the plan. But he can see they understand…so they keep their voices humble and say that they'll come back later. (Guerrero 34-35)

Tonantzin agrees with Flaco's suggestion, a sign that she is beginning to understand the strategies of resistance as a young and new member of the community. Despite his fear of the Border Patrol at night Flaco helps Tonantzin distribute water, marking the beginning of their friendship. Ultimately, Flaco overcomes his fear and finds in Tonantzin a source of inspiration to the point of helping those in need despite the consequences that it could bring to him and others.

These collection of narratives by fronteriza authors like Norma Cantú, Rosario Sanmiguel, and Lucrecia Guerrero document multiple voices and a fronteriza experience that contests monolithic perspectives of the border/la frontera. Cantú, Sanmiguel, and Guerrero place fronteriza women at the center and their stories which document surveillance, an arrogant perceiver, and techniques of oppression unveiling the presence of a border militarization that emerged in the mid twentieth century. Their narratives challenge a rhetoric that criminalizes fronterizas/os, immigrants, and people of color through the recording of their experience at the border/la frontera, which reveals the resilience against operations and draconian laws set out to regulate, oppress and

marginalize border communities. Together, the works by fronteriza authors reflect a collective history of both sides that highlight the fluidity of the border and the connections between the region creating a common history of resilience against border militarization.

Chapter Three:

A Record of Defiance:

Challenging a Militarization System

I am compelled to write…Because I have no choice…

Because the world I create in the writing compensates

for what the real world does not give me…

I write to record what others erase when I speak,

to rewrite the stories others have miswritten about me, about you…[77]

—Gloria E. Anzaldúa

As the previous chapters demonstrated, a mechanism of militarization along the region has been present since its foundation and has transformed the border into the militarized border as we see it now. With the current border militarization set in place the dividing line became more dangerous as it feeds the rhetoric of criminalization supported by draconian laws. It was not established to protect fronterizas/os, but rather to control the dividing line, immigration flows and the supply and demand binational dynamics of capitalism. With this in mind, the narratives analyzed in this chapter defy social norms, prejudice and violence that are supported and dismissed by the US and Mexico due to border militarization. The narratives of Fronteriza authors Arminé Arjona and Regina Swain document fronterizas who transgress boundaries as they participate in the public space as a journalist and drug traffickers challenging gender norms and systematic

77. "Speaking in Tongues: A Letter to 3rd World Women Writers" (169).

oppression.

Arminé Arjona and Regina Swain: War on Drugs (1981 - 1992)

Delincuentos: historias del narcotráfico (2009) by Arminé Arjona is a collection of short stories that take place in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua - El Paso, Texas border. Its narratives highlight how networks of drug trafficking are woven into society at all social levels making everyone complicit given that drug dealers are also part of the society (Arjona 15). Its characters record a militarized border whose system operates and surveil both regions to support a war on drugs campaign that attempts to protect the nation against cartels and criminals from entering the US territory. However, as various narratives document, these are not the stories of the major capos, but "una mirada local e intimista de un problema global y deshumanizado" (16) focusing mostly on the smuggling of marijuana by local dealers and the participation of the US in a supply and demand dynamic. According to the Al Límite editorial team, these narratives are the stories that end in the "páginas de las secciones policiacas de los diarios y soterrado en expedientes de ministerios públicos locales, el tema, según es nuestra apuesta, espera llegar con este libro a las manos de un público amplio y heterogéneo…" (Arjona 10). In other words, these are narratives that governments and society dismiss since it is a reality that reveals a country dominated by "un regimen injusto y excluyente" (10). For the purpose of this research the stories analyzed are "Los galanes," "Pilar," and "Amor elástico" since they highlight aspects of the war on drugs campaign that contributed to the development of a U.S.-Mexico militarize border division.

The short story "Pilar" is a first-person narrative that focuses on the struggles of Pilar, an independent working class fronteriza from El Paso who lives in Ciudad Juárez,

has no education and is the sole provider for her preschooler nephew Manuel and 86 year-old diabetic grandmother Cayetana. The text is divided in five sections that trace Pilar's journey into the world of drug trafficking. The first section of the story begins with Pilar smoking marijuana and listing various names for it while continuing to enjoy its effects to which she declares after a while, "[f]umar 'mota' es como abrir la ventana en la cajita de recuerdos…" (Arjona 56) followed by a recount of crucial moments of her life that led her to the drug smuggling. She narrates how her non-traditional family is the result of the abandonment of her father who left her with the responsibility not only of her mother and sister, but also of his mother. His departure also caused the death of his wife who could not overcome the grief. Later, her sister, like her father, abandoned her son Manuel to leave Ciudad Juárez with her boyfriend, which Pilar did not mind since both "se la pasaban bien 'pedos' todo el santo día; luego se prendieron con la fumada de base y fue peor: se volvieron más estúpidos y 'valemadre'. Hubo veces en que mi sobrino comía palomitas, chicharrones, papas y refrescos como único alimento…Además de hambreado, a veces lo encontraba bien sucio" (56), although taking her nephew would complicate their economical situation she believed the child would be in better care with her and her grandmother Cayetana.

Arjona through Pilar documents women who often are marginalized, objectified, and victimized in literary production and history given that she is a working class fronteriza who enjoys smoking marijuana. Arjona sees in Pilar a multidimensional character that rises despite adversities, builds and prioritizes family above everything else, and is determine and courageous, challenges the stigma against marijuana and individuals who consume it. She thus addresses two major issues often linked to the

border: drug trafficking and maquiladoras. In light of this, it is crucial to review briefly the political manipulation that helped to build the stigma against marijuana in the US and internationally as well as its connection with the border militarization.

In 1930 Harry Jacob Anslinger was appointed first commissioner of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics (FBN) a department that came to existence under President Herbert Hoover's administration (1929-1933). Anslinger set out to demonize[78] marijuana and those connected with it, mostly people of color, "almost at any cost and often with blunt disregard for the truth of any facts that were contrary to his argument" (Booth 146) in order to maintain the FBN from shutting down after two years of its establishment. The government spending had diminished due to the Depression that cut funding for the FBN considerably that pushed Anslinger to find a "new drug menace – upon to peg a budget increase…[by] circulating pamphlets and planting stories in the press about murders committed while intoxicated by marijuana. He also started pushing for marijuana to be included as a dangerous drug alongside opiates and cocaine in the Uniform State Narcotic Acts (USNA)" in order to be considered under state legislature and by doing so it would "relieve the FBN of some responsibility for it and therefore free up part of the budget" (Booth 149). In 1936, thirty-eight states added marijuana as a dangerous drug under the USNA and in 1937, under President Roosevelt, Congress approved the Marihuana Tax Act that set the control of marijuana under federal legislation.[79] Anslinger campaigns

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78. He attempted to link marijuana to the Aztecs, "according to his argument, cannabis was called *malihua* or *mallihuan* in Nahuatl, the Aztec language. This was, Anslinger claimed, constructed of the noun *mallin* (a prisoner), the preposition *hua* (of or suggesting a property) and the verb *ana* (to capture, take or grab). Therefore, *mallihuan* (someone spelt *milan-a-huan*) meant the prisoner taken captive by the plant. In other words, an addict" (Boot 148-149).
79. "During the hearing for the bill Dr. William C. Woodward of the American Medical Association (AMA) was a lawyer as well as a physician…stated openly that the whole hearing process was biased, there was a lack of scientific proof for the claims being promulgated, witness testament was vague, the

"determined public attitudes towards marijuana and other drugs for over three decades" becoming an influencer of anti-narcotics law enforcement and legislation nationally and internationally[80] (Booth 144).

The stigma against marijuana that nowadays prevails began in 1930 as a tactic for federal funding and as a form to control minority groups, which still continues today. Since the 1940s scientists have not found evidence to support the notion that that marijuana caused insanity or violence, and in 1973 a bipartisan government commission recommended President Richard Nixon[81] (1969-1974) to decriminalize it, which he rejected and instead declared a "war on drugs."[82] On a 1994 interview with John Ehrlichman,[83] President Nixon counsel and Assistant for Domestic Affairs, when asked about the politics of drug prohibition he declared:

> The Nixon campaign in 1968, and the Nixon White House after that, had two enemies: the antiwar left and black people. You understand what I'm saying? We knew we couldn't make it illegal to be either against the war or black, but by getting the public to associate the hippies with marijuana and blacks with heroin, and then criminalizing both heavily, we could disrupt those communities. We could arrest their leaders, raid their homes, break up their meetings, and vilify them night after night on the evening news. Did we know we were lying about the

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assumption that the medical use of cannabis was responsible for the 'marijuana menace' was unfounded and it was all being rushed through with undue haste" (Booth 155).

80. For more information see Chapter 13 of Marin Booth *Cannabis.*

81. For more information see, "The Report of the National Commission on Marihuana and Drug Abuse: Marihuana: A Signal of Misunderstanding," http://www.druglibrary.org/schaffer/library/studies/nc/ncmenu.htm

82. The racist anti-drug laws that Nixon and Anslinger created continue to punish minorities, "black Americans were nearly four times as likely as whites to be arrested on charges of marijuana possession in 2010, even though the two groups used the drug at similar rates, according to new federal data" (Urbina).

83. For more information see Dan Baum "Legalize It All: How to win the war on drugs," http://www.antoniocasella.eu/archila/DanBaum_2016.pdf

drugs? Of course we did. (Baum 22)

In other words, the "war on drugs" was to target minorities and political enemies. Since Nixon's administration Republicans and Democrats alike have found its "war on drugs" useful as a political tool. In 1982 President Ronald Regan (1981-1989) initiated the White House Drug Abuse Policy Office reintroducing mandatory minimum sentences,[84] "first time marijuana offenders could receive a sentence ranging from probation to life imprisonment and the sequestration of their entire property. It also became an offence to own a roach holder or even packet of rolling papers…In 1970, 16 percent of those held in federal penitentiaries were in for drug-related crimes. By 1994, the figure would be 62 percent…" (Booth 254), this latter number was also product of the "war on drugs" campaign by President George W. H. Bush (1989-1993) and the 1994 law Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act signed by President Bill Clinton (1993-2001). However, the War on Drugs campaign that consolidated the border militarization system through federal funding was under the Regan administration in 1986, which is explained later in the chapter.

It is under this political environment that *Delincuentos* characters navigate in order to make ends meet. While politicians create and manipulate policies for power others struggle to survive the day to day such as Pilar. After introducing her non-traditional family she narrates her working experience as a maquiladora worker in El Paso that helped her to provide for her nephew and grandmother, "trabajaba en una fábrica de pantalones en 'El Chuco'. Una chinga la maquila, más la cosida, es re'te pesada, te acaba machín. Ganaba dólares que aquí en Juárez rinden más y de vez en

84. "Someone arrested for owing an ounce of marijuana for personal use was metaphorically in the same cell – and certainly in the same prison – as major heroin dealers, smugglers and other organized-crime felons. What was more, the new laws did little to reduce marijuana use" (Booth 254).

cuando jalaba horas extras…Conseguí una chavalilla para que cuidara a Manolito y a mi abuela...trabajaba en...el turno de la mañana, de esa manera podía dedicarle más tiempo a mi familia" (Arjona 57). Arjona records the complexity of border communities since in this instance despite being a US citizen Pilar lived in Ciudad Juárez with her family and worked at El Paso because the maquiladora paid better in the US. This highlights the mobility caused by the economy along the border and the strategies some fronterizas performed in order to survive addressing the issue of maquiladoras.

This binational economy between Mexico and the US consolidated with the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), an agreement signed by Canada, Mexico, and the United States in 1994 under the President Bill Clinton administration that began under the George H. W. Bush administration in 1988 with Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1988-1994). Those like Pilar who made ends meet with the maquiladora salary soon faced an economical crisis, "hasta que llegó el día atroz en que cerraron la fábrica. No sé si se acuerdan, en ese tiempo cerraron muchas maquilas de El Paso para traérselas a Juárez. No vi un sólo quinto de compensación, a pesar de tres años de trabajo como esclava. De pronto me vi sin empleo, con una abuela enferma y un niño con muchas necesidades…" (Arjona 57). Pilar directs the reader to an attempt to confirm the information, an indication of the importance of the record of such an event given because it affected many fronterizas like her who were exploited and treated as slaves for a less than a minimum salary in the US and forced to find other ways to sustain their families. She was desperate because, "[s]i las maquilas de El Paso estaban mal pagadas, ahora imagínense en Juárez los pinches tres pesos para vivir…Pasaron tres meses hasta que se me acabó el ahorrito que tenía guardado. No

tengo estudios, las únicas chambas que podía conseguir ofrecían unos sueldos miserables" (Arjona 57). Arjona documents the struggle of many fronterizas who due to their gender, lack of education, and social status are unable to find a decently paid job, which unveils the exploitation of women's labor along the region in both sides of the border, particularly in maquiladoras that are often owned by Fortune 500 companies.[85]

Since the 1960s[86] maquiladoras have been part of the US-Mexico economy. In the case of El Paso, Texas was the blue jeans capital of the world and "a major manufacturing center…[that] produced two million pairs of jeans a week at its peak in the early 1980s" closing its last factories in 1999 (Gereffi 182). According to research in-bond sewing plants along the border two characteristics were associated with maquilas: "a young, predominantly female workforce with low education and skill levels; and a highly routinized, low-value-added manufacturing process that involved simple assembly of imported inputs," such plants outnumbered other maquila establishments and employment of workers than any other maquila sector except electronics (183). While research presents statistics, numbers and data of the economic impact and production, Arjona documents the hardship and effects of the demand of such work that in addition to offering low wage jobs exploit female workers. There is no compensation or benefits in these positions due to their gender, lack of education, and social status.

With the 1994 Mexican currency devaluation an acute crisis was triggered in the country that led to inflation, decrease in wages and increase of unemployment as well as a reduction of gross domestic products (Coubès 3) that immediately impacted the US-

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85. For more information see https://fortune.com/fortune500/

86. "A partir de los años sesenta, con la instalación de la industria maquiladora de exportación y el efecto de proximidad (la adyacencia con ciudades estadounidenses), los mercados laborales de la frontera norte de México se han convertido en grandes receptores de inversión extranjera directa" (Coubès 6).

Mexico border. As Pilar noted, many women lost their source of income and struggled financially since they lived on a day by day paycheck and at times, like her, were the sole providers of their families. In regards to border employment at maquiladoras is "sensible a las devaluaciones, porque la diferencia salarial es la principal razón por la cual las personas que viven del lado mexicano van a trabajar del lado estadounidense. En el momento de una devaluación, con el mismo salario ganado del lado estadounidense se incrementa el poder adquisitivo en pesos del lado mexicano" (Coubès 10) In situations where hundreds of fronteriza workers become unemployed one of the alternatives of employment is an even lower pay job in Juárez in an unstable economy or in the case of Pilar a higher paying job with greater risks.

In the second section of the story, through a memory, Pilar recounts her encounter with her childhood friend Beatriz to whom she confessed her economic struggles. She was surprised to see her friend driving a new truck and wearing expensive clothing the day they met. She was equally surprised when her friend offered her a way to solve her problems assuring her a well paid job, "—Yo puedo alivianarte, nomás tienes que brincar…—¿Brincar?...—Sí, *güey,* 'brincar mota' a El Paso…—¿Cómo crees, pendeja? —Respondí. —¿Pues de dónde crees que salió esto, mi reina? —Dijo con una maliciosa sonrisa" (Arjona 58). Beatriz reassures Pilar that the risk of being caught are slim since her husband, a drug dealer from Durango, Mexico comes from a family "de la más pura estirpe 'motera' de la región…Esta gente trabaja en serio. Tienen armada su buena clica y están arreglados con los *gringos…*Siempre tienen a alguien apalabrado en la pasada. Saben cuándo y a qué hora cruzar la 'merca'" (59) contradicting the mission of the Customs and Border Protection agency, "To safeguard America's borders thereby

protecting the public from dangerous people and materials" ("About CBP"). As Guadalupe Anda and scholar Melissa W. Wright state, *Delicuentos'* protagonist, "encuentran las aperturas creadas por la ceguera que acompaña al racismo y la arrogancia de las autoridades migratorias de los EUA—la 'migra'— para poder cruzar su 'mercancía' inventando todo tipo de argucias: que si es *American…*" (Arjona 15). The problem of drug trafficking is complex since the drug dealer emerges in the intersections of both local and global processes located "en un lugar ubicado estratégicamente para el mercado insaciable en los EUA. La 'migra' aparece aquí como un mero trámite burocrático que hay que cumplir entre dos países y que arroja una red que atrapa nada más a los peces pequeños" (15), challenging the "war on drugs" campaigns that target people of color, benefit the US federal and political system, and justifies border militarization.

The third section of the story begins with Pilar smoking marijuana and recounting her adventures to the reader, "[d]éjenme les cuento…cómo me metí en esta macoñesca aventura. Beatriz fue mi instructora, nos íbamos bien arregladas…Traíamos una bolsa con 'garras' de tienda cara. Cuando nos preguntaban: ¿A qué van a El Paso? Decíamos que a cambiar ropa." (Arjona 60). Pilar then continues to explain the operation once in the US side of the border, "[e]l *bisnes* estaba así: dejábamos el carro cargado en un centro comercial de El Paso. Beatriz picaba un número en el teléfono público, la clave para avisar que el 'jale' estaba hecho" (61). Although she soon became familiar with the process and less nervous she would only work when necessary since "[t]enía mucho qué arriesgar en cada viajecito" (61) such as the wellbeing of her family that depended on her. Arjona documents how gender becomes a tactic for drug smuggling since as Beatriz

noted, “hay que tener sangre fría y sacar partido de tus encantos. Pasar como si fueras una cándida angelita incapaz de matar una mosca…” (59). In other words, the objectification of the female body and gender characteristics associated with women, as fragile, innocent and delicate, becomes the tool that allows women to distract customs agents. Arjona, through Beatriz and Pilar friendship portrays the participation of women in the world of drug trafficking as agentic subjects whose stories are relegated to police files buried in local records of public ministries since they are not the stories of the capos that are often romanticized by the media but are in fact the reality of a society.

After several jobs Beatriz’s political family accepted Pilar given that she did well her job; however, her relationship with Gabriel, Beatriz’s younger brother in law, was problematic since he behaved as if he was the leader and envied Pilar. Her problems with Gabriel began when he kept a Christmas bonus directed to her by Beatriz’s political family for the work she had done. According to Gabriel the gift was stolen from the trunk of his car which his brother believed since it was the word of his younger brother against Beatriz’s friend. This and other behavior from Gabriel made Beatriz and Pilar suspect of him stealing a car that was loaded with drugs and ready to be driven to the US. It disappeared without a trace, “[e]stábamos seguras de que él lo había chingado. Era una lacra, déspota y mamón…[que] por ir haciéndonos punta de lanza cuando cruzábamos la merca, se llevaba la tercera parte del pago” (61), which unveils the disparities of the payments even when the higher risk are taken by women who are in the possession of the drug.

In section four Pilar mentions an occasion where she faced the risks of drug trafficking. With an empty refrigerator she was forced to accept Gabriel’s job offer

despite her sense of foreboding:

> Su carro iba frente a mi en la fila y él se encargaba de darle la clave al agente de *customs*.
>
> Cuando faltaban cinco coches delante de nosotros, Gabriel se bajó del carro para pasarse a pie. Su esposa se puso al volante. Lo veo y no lo creo, me dije. Ya no puede regresarme…Sólo imaginaba a mi sobrino y abuelita sin mí. La esposa de Gabriel pasó sin broncas. Llegó mi turno…
>
> —*Citizenship?*
>
> —*American…*
>
> —¿Qué traes?
>
> —Nada, señor. *Nothing at all.*
>
> —Abre la cajuela…
>
> —¡Que abras la cajuela! *Open your trunk…*
>
> —¡Ni madres, güey! —Contesté.
>
> 'Metí el acelerador a fondo. En el vuelo de mi desesperación me pasé el alto de la Calle 9 y El Paso. Di vuelta a la derecha por la Calle 8, me volé el alto de la calle Oregon y con velocidad giré hacia la derecha por la calle Stanton sin hacer alto en el semáforo; por fortuna era de noche y no había gente en el centro, tampoco patrullas. Frené al llegar a la caseta de pago. Aventé el dinero del peaje y regresé a gorro a Juárez por el Puente Lerdo. No podía dar crédito: ¡No me torcieron! … Lo único que deseaba era ver a mi familia…" (Arjona 63-64)

Gabriel was determined to eliminate Pilar from the group by getting out of the car before and not alerting the customs agent so she could be caught and sent to prison for

smuggling a car with marijuana. As mentioned previously, Arjona connects two social issues with fronterizas struggles, maquiladoras and drug trafficking, both sources of income to uneducated women and demanding jobs that place them at a high risk of violence compared to men in a militarized border division with the supply and demand dynamics of drug trafficking.

In the final section Pilar narrates to Beatriz what happened and she alerts Pilar of Gabriel's accusation against her of stealing the missing car, "Gabrielito se encargó de ponerte en la cruz, por los pinches celos que te tiene" almost convincing Beatriz's husband. However, after finding out Pilar had returned the car Gabriel's began to doubt his brother stating that, "ningún 'bato' hubiera hecho lo que ella, les faltan güevos y les sobra cobardía" (Arjona 65). Beatriz also informed him that "mucha gente se ha quejado del Gabriel: se chinga los cambios y los regalos, jinetea la lana de los pagos y gasta más de lo que gana" (65), which resulted in a payment to Pilar of one thousand dollars that she accepted happily. In accordance with Anda and Wright these stories are about real people, "[e]s un asunto de familia de vecindario donde mujeres, tanto como hombres, ejercen papeles fundamentales en la estructura local de lo que es el comercio global del narcotráfico" (Arjona 14) The narratives of *Delincuentos* highlight women as active participants who play a major role "aunque sus posiciones sigan siendo bajas respecto a sus colegas hombres" (14). "Pilar," is a short story that records transgressions of the private to the public space and contests gender roles, social norms and social stigma against drugs that enables multiple voices to emerge and become part of a collective archive of fronteriza experiences.

The second short story analyzed is "Los galanes," a story that documents an

international drug operation carried on by Jaime and Javier, two Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) agents undercover in an attempt to capture a marijuana drug dealer. The narrative is told through a nameless female narrator in the first-person, a US citizen living in Ciudad Juárez. She begins to recount how her friend Laura, who also lived in Juárez, and she crossed to El Paso to attend a Pink Floyd concert at the UTEP stadium. Since no alcohol and a lot of police surveillance was expected they bought the best quality of marijuana for the occasion, "Llegó el ansiado día. Mi amiga Laura y yo estábamos afuera del estadio de UTEP disponiéndonos a darnos un buen "gallo". Ver a Pink Floyd sin darse un toque era como volar sin alas. La pisteada empezó desde temprano, desde que cruzamos el puente" (Arjona 51). While they got drunk and high at the stadium parking lot, Jaime and Javier approached them and asked them for a smoke, "—Móchate –me dijo con una sonrisa perfecta y maliciosa. Le pasé el toque. Los invitamos a subir al carro y ellos de volada se instalaron despreocupados…nos dimos otro 'gallo' y ellos sacaron un material bastante arreglador. Compartimos los pistos y nos fuimos juntos para entrar al concierto… [después del concierto] intercambiamos teléfonos" (51-52). Jaime and Javier's behavior did not raise suspicion since they also enjoyed the marijuana and alcohol. She and Laura were unaware that the day of the concert, they were targeted as part of the operative.

Neither friend expected to hear from Jaime and Javier since both lived and worked in El Paso, however, "y pese a ello, se daban tiempo para venir a Juárez a visitarnos. Laura y yo nos sentíamos realizadas. Nos llevaban a cenar, a bailar, al cine…e invariablemente nos mochaban [con mota]…Las salidas se hicieron más frecuentes…Mi mamá estaba encantada con el galán paseño…Jaime llegó con un ramo de flores, y mi

mamá se sintió como una reina a punto de conquistar otro país" (Arjona 52-53). Arjona once again documents how drug trafficking is embedded in the society and affects everyone, especially families. For instance, the reference of the mother conquering another country is with regard to culture since it implies there is a formal relationship between her daughter and Jaime that may end in marriage. However, the conquest is a reference of the US and Mexico agreements that in this instance are linked to the War on Drugs and border militarization, which could have repercussions on her daughter's life since she is being connected with drug trafficking without realizing it.

The War on Drugs was initiated during the Ronald W. Regan Administration (1981-1988) with 1986 as a pivotal moment when drug-trafficking was formally declared a national security issue by the signing of a secret directive that authorized the Pentagon to engage in antidrug activities. This support continued through the George H. W. Bush (1989-1992) administration in order to limit the flow of illegal drugs mainly through the U.S.-Mexico border region. Dunn indicates that Bush's involvement on drug-interdiction[87] efforts was the 1982 South Florida Task Force on Organized Crime [which became] a model for antidrug efforts along the border and under the National Narcotics Border Interdiction System (NNBIS) in 1983 (*The Militarization* 108). During its first year the NNBIS established communication between civilian law enforcement, 16 border Army bases and 33 National Guard commanders (109). Antidrug operations are by definition part of the Low Intensity Conflict doctrine, "[c]onsequently, antidrug efforts in the border region qualify…as a form of militarization. More importantly, civilian police

87. "interdiction has several phases, including detection, identification of possible drug traffickers, interception, tracking and monitoring, apprehension, search, seizure, and arrest. In practice, these phases overlap" (*The Militarization* 108).

and military agencies share this mission and actively worked together in carrying it out, increasing their collaboration over time. Thus, the War on Drugs evokes the issue of border militarization" (*The Militarization* 103).

President Regan was so determined to make the campaign a success that he bent the rules to create legal changes for the Posse Comitatus statue originally established in 1879. This made the use of the Army or Air Force a felony unless authorized by an act of Congress or Constitution, which exempts the National Guard since it is under the control of state governors. In other words, civilian law enforcement officials were in charge of civil disorder or carrying out the law (*The Militarization* 106). The changes included in the Defense Authorization of 1982 loosened these restrictions by adding a new chapter, Military Cooperation with Civilian Law Enforcement Officials that allowed "military personnel…to assist civilian law enforcement agencies in newly specified ways–by operating and maintaining military equipment loaned to federal law enforcement agencies" (106), that is, the government now used federal troops to enforce civilian law by training police, Border Patrol agents and other agencies to adopt military characteristics.

The conquest mentioned by the mother was underway and as time passed their relationships flourished and trust was gained. Jaime, in order to get information about the drug dealer, commented one day about the great quality of the marijuana they always had and asked Laura and Arjona if they could get some from their provider, "Oye, ¿dónde consigues esa 'mota tan efectiva? —Con un primo que a su vez surte con sus 'compas'. Me dio pena decirle que él era el *dealer.* —¿Y tu primo vive aquí? —No, vive en El Paso" (Arjona 53). Feeling ashamed, she lied about her cousin being a dealer since she

did not want Javier to connect her to a drug dealer since there was a difference between consuming and trafficking, though enforcement of the laws made little distinction between them during the Reagan administration as mandatory sentences[88] considered it an offense to own a roach holder or even a packet of rolling papers. According to the United States Sentencing Commission *2017 Overview of Mandatory Minimum Penalties in the Federal Criminal Justice* report, mandatory sentences can range from 2 to 10 years or more depending on the crime.[89] Hispanics[90] continue to represent the largest group followed by African American and Whites being the smallest group of offenders carrying a mandatory minimum penalty.[91]

Jaime continued to carry the operation as he tried to find out if her cousin lived in El Paso or Ciudad Juárez by pretending to buy some, "—Pues es que el Javier y yo queremos comprar unos kilos. Tenemos una lana ahorrada desde hace tiempo, estamos planeando un viaje a Chicago y queremos llevar una buena 'mota' para allá…" (Arjona 53). After talking to her cousin and reassuring him they were trustworthy, an agreement was made. He would provide twenty kilos, the most thirty, for them (53). Arjona records

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88. "In conjunction with the Comprehensive Crime Control Act of 1984, the new law raised federal penalties for marijuana possession and dealing, basing the penalties on the amount of the drug involved. Possession of 100 marijuana plants received the same penalty as possession of 100 grams of heroin. A later amendment to the Anti-Drug Abuse Act established a 'three strikes and you're out' policy, requiring life sentences for repeat drug offenders, and providing for the death penalty for 'drug kingpins'" (Frontline). For more information on Marijuana Timeline see https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/dope/etc/cron.html
89. "More than one-fifth of federal offenders sentenced in fiscal year 2016 (21.9%) were convicted of an offense carrying a mandatory minimum penalty. Their average sentence was 110 months of imprisonment, nearly four times the average sentence for offenders whose offense did not carry a mandatory minimum" (*Federal Mandatory Minimum*).
90. "While Hispanic offenders continued to represent the largest group of federal offenders convicted of an offense carrying a mandatory minimum penalty (40.4%), White offenders received the longest average sentence (127 months) among those offenders. This represents a change from fiscal year 2010 when Black offenders convicted of an offense carrying a mandatory minimum penalty had the longest average sentence (127 months)" (*Federal Mandatory Minimum*).
91. "Mandatory minimum penalties continue to significantly impact the size and composition of the federal prison population. Slightly more that half (55.7%; N=92,870) of federal inmates in custody were convicted of an offense carrying a mandatory minimum penalty" (*Federal Mandatory Minimum*).

how DEA agents operated on both sides of the border as part of the US "national security" rhetoric where the "contemporary era of undocumented immigration and illegal drug trafficking have often been portrayed in the media and by key government officials as potential or actual threats—concentrated in the U.S.-Mexico border region…The implication of these portrayals is that vigorous law enforcement and even military measures are necessary policy responses to such security threats" (*The Militarization* 31). Arjona addresses the drug trafficking issue to document the reality of local society, underscoring how operations are often related to small drug dealers and not the drug kingpins. Additionally, compared to the data, statistics, national rhetoric and historical records that dehumanize[92] people involved in this system, Arjona reports the motives and realities of several individuals that are in various instances, as the stories in *Delincuentos* recount, forced to participate in drug trafficking. It is the stories of local societies along the border, but also the reality of a global issue that is manipulated for political gains and where gender, race and social status is a major factor that dictates who is a criminal and who is not.

The day of the exchange arrived and Jaime picked up Laura and her friend in Juárez. Once they crossed the border they got in Javier's car, which was waiting for them at a 7-Eleven with the money. Afterward they drove to her cousins' house for the exchange and as soon as everyone arrived spotlights went on and people began to emerge from nowhere:

> Los policías tenían rodeada toda la cuadra. Apañaron a mi primo y a dos amigos más que estaban con él en el cantón. A Laura y a mí también nos torcieron, a

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92. For more information see, Marin Harrison, *Large numbers are dehumanising, so should big data worry us?*

pesar de que la lana pertenecía a Javier y Jaime.

Laura declaró en mi contra y se salvó. Por ser americana me dieron la ciudad por cárcel durante un año, después de que mi familia pagara un dineral a un tiburonesco y sagaz abogado.

Tan guapos. Tan simpáticos. Tan galanes. Los gandallas de la DEA. (54)

Arjona's short story documents the complexity of the binational relationship between the U.S. and Mexico since undercover DEA officers were able to operate on the Mexican side of the border in order to capture a marijuana dealer that lived in El Paso. Just as the DEA agents tracked the movement of dealers, Arjona follows their movement and records the strategies utilized by the agency to highlight their power, training and international reach.

The financial support from the federal government on the War on Drugs increased[93] rapidly.[94] More importantly, domestic funds were devoted on the U.S.-Mexico border region to drug enforcement activities. It is crucial to mention that the funding was aimed at punitive law enforcement measures and not demand-reduction programs, which could aid to tackle the supply and demand problem. Antidrug efforts in the border region merit careful examination due to the fact that at times show discrepancy. Dunn indicates that drug flow patterns from antidrug efforts between 1981 and 1992 were largely focused on areas between official border ports of entry. Yet the

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93. In the 1980s out of a $21 billion budget for counter-narcotics $16 billion (76%) was for drug law enforcement, including $7 billion (33%) for the interdiction smuggled drugs. A similar budget was requested for the next two years (Dunn 104). The majority of the funds were for domestic antidrug activities while only 6% of the funding was utilized for international initiatives (Dunn 104).
94. "The fully developed venture between the military and civilian law enforcement agencies in the border drug enforcement during this period was the dubiously named Operation Alliance. The project was set up by Vice President George Bush and Attorney General Edwin Meese in August of 1986…it was an ongoing effort to interdict drugs along the border, based on the coordination of local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, with the military playing a support role" (Dunn 113).

Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) “reportedly estimated during the same period that 85% of illegal drugs entering…[were] through official ports of entry” (*The Militarization* 105). Moreover, in 1990 the DEA “estimated that the bulk of the cocaine, virtually all the heroine, and half of the marijuana smuggled into the US came through official land ports of entry in vehicles and their cargo or in people’s personal possession,” which contradicts the results of antidrug efforts since they focused on areas between official ports of entry (105).

DEA reports during the late 1980s and 1990s stated that the majority of the illegal drugs entered through the official border ports of entry—half of that being marijuana—while the antidrug efforts reports concluded that the flow of drugs were largely on non-official ports of entries raising questions about the spending of billions of dollars for the war on drugs. Though the militarization on the border is justified for the prevention and capture of drug dealers, since the early 1980s, in various instances it apprehends dealers that operate small amounts of marijuana through the official ports of entry such as the one documented by Arjona in “Los galanes” by Arminé Arjona. Overall, the lack of consistency of the reports by the DEA raises questions about how federal funding is being used, how much is used and if it is worth spending it on such operations for marijuana dealers.

The third and final story analyzed from *Delincuentos* is “Amor elástico,” a narrative that is in a format of a letter written in Spanish to a judge in the United States, which documents a criticism about the US federal system with regard to drug trafficking face-to-face visitation process, mandatory sentence and punitive laws that mainly affect Latino communities. The letter begins in medias res indicated by a ellipses at the start,

"Su señoría: …Como cada domingo, ayer fui a visitarlo. Créame, no es fácil cuando sólo se dispone de quince minutos; una los quisiera extender como chicle pa'que rindan," (Arjona 49) gives the impression of a continuation of a previous conversation of previous letters written by Mariela Montenegro, the spouse of Joaquín an inmate at the Lordsburg, Nuevo México prison.[95] In the opening line she highlights how prisoners are allowed a fifteen minute and weekly visit from their families making an observation of the severity of such regulations given that many of the visitors, like her, travel long distances to spend a few minutes with their loved ones: "Pero no hablo sólo por mí, señor juez, sino por todas las otras con mucho sacrificio vienen desde México a ver a los suyos" (49). "Amor elástico," similarly to testimonies, offers less of a reconstruction of an individual self and more of a collection of fronteriza experiences that forms a collective identity representing the voices of families and marginalized women's lives that challenge a dehumanized federal system.

Mariela's letter continues to document and describe the visiting process families and prisoners are faced with: "Semana tras semana la historia se repite cuando los presos 'disfrutan' de la visita familiar y dos pulgadas de vidrio me mantienen ajena a las caricias de mi compañero…Sólo hay dos ventanillas, detrás de él otros más hace 'cola' en la antesala del amor esperando un beso a través de un grueso cristal," (Arjona 49) emphasizing the lack of privacy and access of the face-to-face visitation process that reduces the time and frequency of visits as well as a lack of consideration to their human rights. She also highlights the impact of the sentence to imprisonment due to drug trafficking since "[c]asi todos [están] casados y con familia esperando a que los hijos

95. For information on Lordsburg prison see https://www.jailexchange.com/city-and-county-jails/new-mexico/hidalgo-county/hidalgo-county-jail-detention-center.

crezcan hasta cumplir 18 años, según las leyes, para poder visitar a sus padres. '¡Ya pa' qué!…' para entonces las criaturas son adultos que han mamado la ausencia paterna con todas sus consecuencias," (49) indicating the excessive mandatory sentences[96] given to individuals for drug trafficking. Furthermore, at times the consequences of such sentences resulted in other issues such as Joaquín's case, who after four years in prison "lo violaron hace tiempo entre varios presos; ahora tiene Sida. No creo que viva para cumplir su sentencia" (50), stressing once more the excessive mandatory sentences and poor health services to inmates.

These observations by Mariela are a criticism of the federal system given that "La mayoría son latinos pudriéndose por delitos contra la salud en la pequeña cárcel de Lordsburg, Nuevo México" (Arjona 49), indicating a racial problem that is embedded in the drug campaigns since the 1930s targeted people of color as criminal and later evolved into the "war on drugs" political tool. It also states the risks many are willing to take in order to provide for their families, "si bien el pertenecer a una organización criminal brinda oportunidades al que no las tiene, protección a unos cuantos, seguridad a la gente que vive con la incertidumbre económica, también es cierto que esta actividad confina a la lógica de la ley dura" (Arjona 16), meaning that those who participate in drug trafficking in search of opportunities could result in protection and financial security but always at a risk of facing punitive laws.

At the end Mariela calls attention to those in charge of creating and executing the law, "[p]or eso le escribo esta carta, para que le pregunte usted a esos señores que

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96. For more information on the mandatory minimum for drug trafficking, especially marijuana, from 1990-2017 see, https://www.ussc.gov/research/research-reports/mandatory-minimum-penalties-drug-offenses-federal-system

manejan la ley, cómo se puede vivir sin tocarse. Ellos qué van a saber de besos con sabor a vidrio, de mugrientos quince minutos que se tienen que estirar cada semana" (50), unveiling the presence of an arrogant perceiver—criticized as well in by Norma Cantú's vignette "Políticos". The letter is addressed to a judge who is bound by law, who is responsible to interpret and apply the law, to ask those in the legislature, those who create the law, how to live with the absence of their loved one, criticizing the disconnection of politicians with the reality of human beings and whose policies are in various instances embedded in political disputes rather than the interest of the population they serve.

Arjona documents the racial disparity that pervades the US criminal justice system and that during the past five decades has been imprisoning en masse people of color to a degree where it has become the largest in the world, "at year end 2011, approximately 7 million individuals were under some form of correctional control in the United States, including 2.2 million incarcerated in federal, state, or local prisons and jails. The U.S. has the highest incarceration rate in the world, dwarfing the rate of nearly every other nation" (*Regarding Racial Disparities* 3). The breaking down of such statistics reveals that "[i]f current trends continue, one of every three black American males born today can expect to go to prison in his lifetime, as can one of every six Latino males, compared to one of every seventeen white males…" (3) unveiling systematic racial discrimination. The US "operates two distinct criminal justice systems: one for the wealthy people and another for poor people and minorities" (3). Mariela's letter is an act of resistance against such injustice by the arrogant perceiver that governs the nation.

The "war on drugs" approach to being tough on crime during the 1980s led to an increase of inmates at state and federal prisons and the government agreed to the creation

of Corrections Corporation of America (CCA), a company that owns and operates public and private prisons and detention centers across the nation. In an attempt to solve the problem it created a mechanism of profits from mass incarceration of minority communities. According to its founder Thomas W. Beasley it was an easy pitch, "you just sell [prisons] like you were selling cars or real estate or hamburgers" (Larson), making earnings of billions of dollars while people of color spend their lives in prison and away from their families. Ultimately, the only beneficiary is the CCA given that "privately operated prisons can cost more to operate that state-run prisons—even though they often steer clear of the sickest, costliest inmates" (Oppel). In Joaquín's case, is serving his mandatory minimum penalty at the private prison of Lordsburg, New Mexico run by the CCA— he will die before finishing his sentence. Arjona allows a fictional letter to become a documentation of the reality of various men and women who are navigating a systematic criminal justice system inextricably embedded in racial discrimination—a system that is part of the most powerful country in the world.

Delincuentos: historias del narcotráfico by Arminé Arjona documents through testimony, memory and personal accounts a history of marijuana policies embedded in the United States War on Drugs campaign, mass incarceration, and the beginning of major federal funding on the U.S.-Mexico border militarization.

Conclusion:

The Future of the Fronteriza Literary Archive

To write from the border…it is to suggest a politics of location by which partiality and fragmentation rather than universality or coherence delimit the conditions of possibility for claims to knowledge, whether dominant culture-based or border-inflicted.[97]

—María Socorro Tabuenca Córdoba and Debra A. Castillo

As this research demonstrates, fronteriza authors weave in their narratives the histories of border communities and regions that lived and continue to live under a militarization. Their narratives interconnect and complement each other with a common purpose: denounce two centuries of a border history of militarization. It is through the voices of fronterizas, at times with the use of primary sources, that stories begin to emerge as memories, testimonies, and personal and collective accounts. Grandmothers, mothers and daughters reinscribe themselves, their communities, and regions to record the resilience of generations against marginalization and border militarization. Their fronteriza knowledge, "a politic born out of necessity,"[98] traces a historical record that reveals the development of militarization which I categorize in three stages: 1) mechanism of militarization, 2) emergence of militarization, 3) militarization system that

97. pp. 232-233
98. Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa, p. 19

contributed to the U.S.-Mexican War, state-sanctioned violence against ethnic Mexicans between 1910-1920, riots, repatriation, operations, war on drugs, and other events excluded from the US education system.

Mexico and border militarization

The work explored in this dissertation traced the presence of a militarization created by the United States. However, in order to have a broader view of the symbiotic binational relationship that continues to modify border militarization, I plan to investigate events documented in this project from the Mexican point of view as opposed to the US perspective. For instance, one recurrent historical event that fronteriza authors' literary productions record through quotidian details, especially through the memories of mothers and grandmothers, is the Mexican Revolution and the mobility of the individual from one side of the border to the other. Further research on Mexican public policies during 1910-1920 along the northern border could reveal a mechanism of militarization established by Mexico, which is distinct from the US.

Similarly, I intend to do further research on the Mexican Repatriation, Bracero Program, and Operation Wetback and the role Mexico played in these historical events and on the emergence of militarization. This could contribute to a better understanding of multiple characters in the fronteriza literary works whose identities could be furthered analyzed, such as Martín, a *pasamojado*. A crucial resource for this investigation is El Colegio de la Frontera Norte that for four decades has produced scientific knowledge about the border region of Mexico from a comprehensive and multidisciplinary perspective.[99]

99. https://www.colef.mx/el-colef/

Furthermore, as a continuation on the documentation on the War on Drugs campaign, I will examine the escalation of militarization in the Mexican side of the border and its role in the US border militarization as US funding continues to increase towards this issue. This is crucial as the current instability along the border soared during the Mexican War Drug campaign (2006) under President Felipe Calderón (2006-2012), whose goal was to dismantle drug-cartels and reduce drug-related violence but instead resulted in the deaths of thousands of innocent civilians. This research could help to examine the participation of fronterizas in drug trafficking furthermore that might allow the integration of other stories as part of the archive.

Incorporating new fronteriza authors

This project began with collections of short stories whose succinctness facilitated the record of historical references that confirmed the presence and evolution of a border militarization. As part of the development of this fronteriza literary archive, other fronteriza authors, and literary productions of the current ones, are to be incorporated, such as novels that record similar histories as well as new ones. For example, as a continuation of the young adult historical romance novel *Shame the Stars,* Guadalupe García McCall's publication *All the Stars Denied* (2018) recounts the struggles of the next generations of fronterizas/os from Las Moras and Monteseco who now face the Mexican Repatriation. The main character, Estrella, as a repatriate, must find a way to reunite with her family in the US and prove her US citizenship—a glimpse into Mexico's participation in repatriation.

Another author to incorporate would be María Amparo Ruiz de Burton and her novel, *The Squatter and the Don* (1885), a historical romance that questions US

expansionism under the Manifest Destiny from the lens of Californios who witness the loss of territory and rights of citizenship granted under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Also *Who Would Have Thought It?* (1872), a historical romance novel with a national and international view of the United States on the verge of the Civil War, relates the story of Lola, a Mexican girl, who challenges white supremacy with her presence as she embodies the Mexican culture, history, and identity that is now part of the US. These two novels, published by a woman who belonged to the first generation of Mexican-American Californios, are essential to the project since Ruiz de Burton's work records the emergence of new identities, the Anglo sentiment of the acquired territory, the struggle of Mexicans in the US, and the development of the Southwest border region. In a way, Ruiz de Burton is a protofronteriza as she navigated between Baja and Alta California before and after it became part of two countries and her novels are a record of it.

DH project: Fronteriza Literary Archive

Digital humanities, a field that brings together technology and the disciplines of humanities into dialogue, allows the democratization of knowledge and also calls attention to its inequalities in respect to race, gender, sexuality as well as local and global research focus from the Global North.[100] Digital projects such as: Mapping Violence, Forgotten Histories of the U.S.-Mexico Border, Borderlands Archives Cartography, Border Studies Archive, Ellas tienen nombre, Juaritos Literario, Torn Apart/Separados, among others, create an alternative digital cultural record about border related issues. This form of research enables researchers to view, question and contest monolithic perspectives, in this case, of the U.S.-Mexico border/la frontera through projects that

100. See *New Digital Worlds: Postcolonial Digital Humanities in Theory, Praxis, and Pedagogy* by Roopika Risam for a closer examination on knowledge production in the digital age.

emerge as forms of social justice interventions, and initiatives to highlight local communities or issues.

With three years collaborating and creating non-institutional digital humanities projects focused on the U.S.-Mexico border, I intend to transfer my research into a digital cultural record. While searching for literary production from the U.S.-Mexico border, I realized that various fronteriza authors were being published by local or small publishers or funded by national or state councils for arts and culture institutions. This ultimately affects distribution, production and publicity for authors and their work. With this in mind, I plan to visualize the Fronteriza Literary Archive for multiple publics to engage with the border region through fiction. The objective is to facilitate information about the literary production by fronteriza authors and their knowledge on border communities and region reflected in their work. The project consists of a digital map that traces: 1) the literary production by fronteriza authors from both sides of the border, 2) the mapping of locations found in narratives along with literary references and descriptions, 3) an interactive historical timeline of events found through the texts, 4) and brief biographies of the authors. My intention to use a digital map is to familiarize the public with the region that is being analyzed, problematize the development of border militarization, challenge colonialists practices of marginalization such as historiography, archive and cartography models, and visualize the border region from a fronteriza lens.

As a child, the border was a place I did not understood. I was identified as a *pocha* by my relatives in Mexico for mixing the two languages and as a *mojada* by my community in Laredo, especially at school—even when most of my classmates where immigrants or of Hispanic heritage as well. Back then I did not know what either word

meant, but I do remember the feeling of rejection and disapproval. As time passed I disliked the idea of living between two cultures because I felt I did not belong in either. It took me years to realize that all this time I was a fronteriza. Now I know that the beauty of the border is a way of life distinct to the rest of Mexico or the United States. I learned this through the literary production of fronteriza authors where I saw myself reflected for the first time. They have contested and re-signified the U.S.-Mexico border that allowed me to create a literary archive in which their narratives are a record of resistance and defiance against militarization.

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