

CHAPTER 2

“NO DOGS, NO NEGROES, NO MEXICANS”

THE SOUTHERN BORDER MENACE

When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best. . . . They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems with [*sic*] us. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people.

—Donald J. Trump, campaign speech, June 16, 2015

The signs in front of businesses enforced the prevailing attitude: No Dogs, No Negroes, No Mexicans.

—Francisco Natera, *Coyame: A History of the American Settler*, 2012

When in 2016 presidential candidate Donald Trump warned of Mexican immigrants being a threat to American society as rapists, drug dealers, and gang members, he evoked painful memories of ill treatment that were still vivid for many older citizens of Mexican ancestry. Animosity was once so great that until 1890, a person of Mexican heritage had the same chance of being lynched as an African American did.¹ Old, young, rich, poor, male, female—no one was spared from the brutality of the era. On a warm summer's evening in June 1911, a Mexican American citizen named Antonio Gómez was minding his own business, whittling a

AMERICAN INTOLERANCE

shingle of wood outside a saloon in Thorndale, Texas. After being repeatedly harassed by several men for dropping his shavings on the sidewalk, he was beaten, sworn at, and called a “skunk.” Humiliated and enraged, he fought back, lunging at one of his tormentors with his knife and stabbing him in the chest. Gómez was quickly tracked down by a group of vigilantes, attached to a chain, and dragged behind a horse through the center of town as upward of two hundred residents looked on with approval. He was then lynched from a ladder. Antonio Gómez was just fourteen years old. The four men charged with his murder were all found not guilty.² During this period, Mexicans were loathed as an inferior race who were a threat to American’s economic growth and social progress.

Throughout our history, hostilities have often come to the fore over the misguided belief that citizens of Mexican ancestry were taking “American” jobs. To stop the corruption of the Northern European racial lineage, laws were passed to prevent them from marrying “whites.” Harassment and violence were mainstays of everyday life in the early years of America’s colonial presence in the Southwest.³ Starting in the mid-nineteenth century and persisting to the present day, Mexican Americans have been the subject of several waves of panic, which waxed and waned with popular sentiment and political expediency. In 1929, Americans of Mexican descent were classified as white. With the onset of the Great Depression and the rising tide of jobless, in the 1930 census the government tried to limit immigration by categorizing them as nonwhite. A decade later, when there was a shortage of factory labor and soldiers to cope with the demands of the Second World War, they were conveniently reclassified as white again.

Until the early 1950s, Mexican Americans living in the Southwest were treated like second-class citizens. Signs proclaiming “No Dogs, No Negroes, No Mexicans” were proudly on display in the windows of many bars and restaurants across the region. A widespread fear and aversion to Americans of Mexican ancestry has permeated society in these conquered lands ever since the annexation of northern Mexico in the 1840s,

“NO DOGS, NO NEGROES, NO MEXICANS”

when the inhabitants could become citizens. As Anglo Americans began pouring into the region to work as ranchers, farmers, and miners, conflicts arose because the local residents were not accepted as equals. By mid-1850, anti-Mexican violence had spread to California and across the entire Southwest, as the result of competition for jobs, racist attitudes, and the growing belief in manifest destiny. White American settlers believed that it was their destiny to expand to the West Coast, spreading their superior European civilization and Christian values, while enlightening the “primitive” peoples of the region. Hispanics and Native Americans were in the latter category. Manifest destiny became a convenient rationale to justify the annexing of the territories of the Southwest and the subjugation of their people.

From the time Texas became an independent country in 1836, until its full annexation a decade later, its citizens of Mexican heritage were widely viewed by their Anglo conquerors as members of a lower race. They were seen as a strange mixture of “Negroid,” “Mongoloid,” and “American” racial types who were dirty, lazy, untrustworthy, and prone to thievery and gang activity. These traits were seen as the predictable outcome of poor breeding between the African, Spanish, and Native American races. Rufus Sage lived through this period. He describes Mexican Americans as “mongrels” with despicable morals, people who were incapable of self-government, and who needed to be “kept in their place by force, if necessary.”⁴ He wrote that, “As servants, they are excellent . . . but are worse than useless if left to themselves.” Historian Reginald Horsman observed that a major rationale for America having invaded northern Mexico was that “Mexicans, like Indians, were unable to make proper use of the land. The Mexicans had failed because they were a mixed, inferior race with considerable Indian and some black blood. The world would benefit if a superior race shaped the future of the Southwest.”⁵ Many Americans steadfastly opposed annexing parts of Mexico—not on moral grounds, but over the fear of race mixing and contamination by inferior people.⁶ During the 1840s, newspaper editors and politicians debated the benefits

AMERICAN INTOLERANCE

of annexation. Many urged President James Polk to avoid taking tracts of land with large numbers of Mexicans.⁷ Polk wanted to claim all of Mexico but compromised on the amount of land that was eventually seized, over the dilemma of Mexicans becoming citizens. Polk annexed only Mexico's sparsely populated northern regions, obtaining the most land with the fewest Mexicans—about 100,000.⁸

THE BLACK LEGEND

While Spain was part of Europe, many of America's early settlers looked down upon the Spanish as an inferior race that was prone to cruelty and sadism on the basis of the atrocities they committed in their colonial conquest of Central America and Mexico. Spanish historians would later refer to this negative perception and hostility as the Black Legend. The Spanish conquest of these regions had a devastating impact on the native peoples. The spread of diseases such as smallpox, for which there was no natural immunity, killed large swaths of indigenous inhabitants. Enslavement and the use of natives for hard labor led to more deaths, while priests outlawed religious and cultural traditions that had developed over millennia, supplanting them with Christianity. Ironically, Americans of Northern European ancestry had short memories, as they had taken part in similar acts of cruelty and barbarity to Native Americans, denigrating their culture, displacing their people, and deliberately spreading smallpox to exterminate entire tribes. Despite these inconvenient facts of history, by the mid-1800s, a number of Anglo American writers began exaggerating the exploits of the Spanish and demonizing them as an evil race. According to historian David Weber, "Englishmen and Anglo Americans who wrote about the Spanish past in North America uniformly condemned Spanish rule. . . . Anglo Americans had inherited the view that Spaniards were unusually cruel . . . treacherous, fanatical, superstitious, cowardly, corrupt, decadent, indolent, and authoritarian."⁹ This demoni-

“NO DOGS, NO NEGROES, NO MEXICANS”

zation of the Spanish helped to justify American's expansion into the Southwest and further stigmatized the inhabitants as the product of inferior cultures and breeding.¹⁰ Lothrop Stoddard's popular books on racial types reinforced these views; he warned of the perils of race-mixing along the Southwest border, which he concluded would lead to the inevitable contamination of the “pure” Nordic stock. He believed that poverty and political instability in Mexico and the Caribbean were the result of their having been “largely hybrid mixtures of whites, Indians, and negroes.”¹¹ Stoddard's view of the mixed-breed Mexican peasant was far from complementary, describing them as “a poverty-stricken, ignorant, primitive creature, with strong muscles and just enough brains to obey orders and produce profits under competent direction.”¹²

Stoddard believed that Mexican ancestry made people prime targets for manipulation by unscrupulous leaders, especially Communists. As such, they posed a threat to the nation as potential followers of revolutionary movements and rebellions. He saw Mexican peasants as “about the most ‘alien,’ unassimilable creature that could be imagined.”¹³ He continued, “His temperament and outlook on life are absolutely opposed to those of the typical American. Low in intelligence and almost devoid of individual initiative, the Mexican Indian is likewise splendid revolutionary material, because he is *a born communist*.” Another popular nineteenth-century stereotype was that of the Mexican bandit, which reinforced the belief in that Mexicans were natural followers. Historian James Evans writes: “The Mexican bandit, like the typical Mexican, would rather steal than work, but he differed from the masses in that he possessed the ambition and physical stamina necessary for bandit activities.”¹⁴ Given their diminished mental capacity as an inferior race, Anglo Americans of the period held that the bandit leader could easily acquire “a following of admirers and thieves and cutthroats who became members of his band and participated in his raids.” The modern-day equivalent is the Mexican as a natural gang member, ready to carry out the orders of his leaders without question. In the years following the Immigration Act of 1924,

AMERICAN INTOLERANCE

which significantly restricted the number of incoming immigrants from all parts of the world, the porous southern border was viewed as America's Achilles' heel. As a result of this demographic shift, and with no scientific backing, many of the leading proponents of immigration restriction suddenly viewed Mexicans as among the worst offenders for racial contamination. In 1927, Stoddard wrote that in all likelihood, the non-Nordic races from outside northern Europe "can eventually be absorbed into the nation's blood without such alteration of America's racial make-up as would endanger the stability and continuity of our national life. But what is thus true of European immigrants, most of whom belong to some branch of the white racial group, most emphatically does not apply to non-white immigrants, like the Chinese, Japanese, or Mexicans."¹⁵ Stoddard worried about a possible immigration invasion from the hordes of inferior races in Central and South America.¹⁶

AN INFERIOR PEOPLE

The widespread notion that Mexican Americans are of lower intelligence than "whites," has continued in recent times. They are commonly portrayed on American TV as unsophisticated, subservient, dimwitted and born followers.¹⁷ This bias was evident in 1982, when controversy erupted in California after a set of test scores were invalidated due solely to their high results, and the ethnic background of those taking them. When the Princeton Educational Testing Service reviewed scores for the state, they found that the highest pass rates for the advanced calculus exam were from Garfield High School in Los Angeles. The school had a poor track record of exam success and a high proportion of Mexican American students. Fourteen of the eighteen who passed were suspected of cheating and were made to re-sit a different exam. While two of the students refused because they did not need the credits to pass, the remaining twelve took the new test. They all passed. School officials angrily asserted

“NO DOGS, NO NEGROES, NO MEXICANS”

that the students would never have been singled out if it had not been for their Spanish surnames or had they not come from low-income neighborhoods. The episode was turned into the 1988 film *Stand and Deliver*.¹⁸ In 2016, the US Postal Service issued a stamp honoring their teacher, Jaime Escalante. After serving seventeen years at the school, Escalante left in 1991. Calculus scores immediately plummeted. The events at Garfield High highlight the importance of school environment and nurturing by exceptional teachers in getting good grades. Genetics had nothing to do with it.¹⁹ As one journalist wrote, the key to his success was how he “cajoles, inspires and truly teaches them the difficult subject of calculus, and in so doing creates in them an enduring feeling of self-worth.”²⁰

In recent decades, several researchers have claimed that race itself can predict intelligence. In 1987, a pioneer in the field of intelligence testing, Lloyd Dunn, made the stunning claim that differences in measured intelligence between Latinos and whites were partly due to heredity. He wrote that “while many people are willing to blame the low scores of Puerto Ricans and Mexican-Americans on their poor environmental conditions, *few are prepared to face the probability that inherited genetic material is a contributing factor*. Yet, in making a scholarly, comprehensive examination of this issue, this factor must be included.”²¹ Dunn said that it would be naïve and irresponsible to claim that a ten- to twelve-point difference in IQ scores was solely caused by social and cultural factors.²² However, an array of influences can account for the differences in test scores, including teacher attitudes and expectations, and disparities in resources and funding between schools.²³ Other researchers note that in culturally diverse, bilingual children, scores will reflect their degree of familiarity with Standard American English and the level of cultural assimilation.²⁴

Dunn’s conclusions fall into the realm of pseudoscience and quackery since he fails to accept the consensus within the scientific community that race is a biological myth. Race is also a social reality. Thus, if a student believes she is part of an inferior race, her belief may act as a self-fulfilling prophecy. She may lack self-confidence, stop trying, or give up altogether.

AMERICAN INTOLERANCE

Many factors influence standardized test scores, not the least of which is culture. Law scholar Steven Bender observes that Latino families emphasize the importance of respecting authority and the collective good, while downplaying individual assertiveness. This outlook can influence student achievement. He writes: “In the classroom, this submissive tendency may be regarded by teachers as apathy to be contrasted with the aggressive, ‘engaged’ participation of Anglo students. Because teachers tend to reward the most active class participants with positive feedback, superior grades, and recommendations, this culture of the American classroom contributes to the negative channeling of Latina/o students away from college and academic pursuits.”²⁵ Dunn’s biased interpretation of the data hides his deeper political agenda. His findings that most Mexican American children lack sufficient scholastic aptitude or linguistic competency to master two languages led him to conclude that English should be the *sole* language of instruction in American schools.²⁶

Given what we now know about the powerful role of social environment and self-belief in achievement, it is no wonder that Mexican American students have a poor history of achievement on exams and standardized tests. During the first half of the twentieth century, those of Mexican heritage living in the American Southwest were the subject of government campaigns to Americanize them in the hope that these children would begin to assimilate into society and start to lose their “peasant culture,” which was seen as an impediment to modernization. Sociologist Carina Bandhauer writes that this new policy created a war on Hispanic culture and customs. As a result, “Mexican American children were taught that they were dirty, [were] unacceptable, spoke a forbidden language,” and that their community, family, and culture were obstacles to successful schooling.²⁷ In teaching students about their inferior culture, it would have undoubtedly damaged their self-confidence and dampened any ambitions they may have had, other than aspirations of being house cleaners and low-level laborers.

EUGENICS—THE SCIENCE OF RACE

By the early 1910s, the eugenics movement had become part of mainstream science, and was being used to control “inferior” races, including Mexicans, to ensure that they did not spread disease and vermin. Medical researchers and public-health officials used statistics to justify claims that certain races were disease carriers and were over-represented in mental asylums. Such figures conveniently failed to count private mental institutions, which were more likely to be occupied by well-off whites.²⁸ By 1917, quarantines were established along the Southwest border with Texas in an effort to “protect” Americans from lower-class, disease-carrying Mexicans. Wealthier Mexicans and Europeans traveling by first-class rail were not subject to any restrictions. It was thought that those who had accumulated wealth were the products of better breeding and were more clever and sophisticated than their inbred compatriots. Meanwhile, Mexicans in the second-class cars were treated like animals and subjected to the indignity and humiliation of delousing. They were forced to strip naked, inspected for lice, doused in kerosene, and sprayed with an assortment of chemicals—including Zyklon B, a cyanide-based pesticide that would later be used by the Nazis in the mass murder of Jews. Those with lice were forced to shave their body hair with clippers and bathe in a mixture of vinegar and kerosene. In January 1917, the Bathhouse Riots broke out at a disinfection station on the Santa Fe Bridge linking El Paso, Texas, with Juárez, Mexico. Led by two hundred exasperated women, the unrest lasted several days after rumors that rail inspectors had taken nude photos of Mexican women and were selling them in the shops of El Paso.²⁹ The notion of Mexicans as a dirty, disease-carrying race were pure stereotype and were not borne out by the statistics. For instance, during a four-month period in early 1917, there were three fatalities from typhus along the US–Mexican border. This number is miniscule when considering that during this same period, inspectors examined over three-quarters of a million people.³⁰

AMERICAN INTOLERANCE

During the first half of the twentieth century, American eugenicists tried to weed out inferior gene pools by placing “defective” members of certain races in institutions for either mental or behavioral problems. Some facilities in California had up to a quarter of their population as Mexican Americans.³¹ These behaviors were viewed as medical conditions that needed to be addressed by separating the afflicted from the rest of society in institutions for delinquents. Many were forced to undergo sterilizations in the misguided notion that doing so would prevent them from having defective or inferior children. Hispanic women who had children out of wedlock were branded as suffering from a hyperactive sex drive and were classified as delinquents. Mexican American males who committed petty crimes or were truant from school were also placed in institutions for the delinquent.³² Between 1909 and 1979, the state of California oversaw about twenty thousand sterilizations, many without consent or under duress or coercion. Most occurred during the first half of the century.³³ Some facilities refused to release the patients until they agreed to the procedure, essentially rendering them prisoners of the state. Many only learned of their sterilizations after the event. Historian Natalie Lira studied the California eugenics archives and found that a disproportionate number of Mexican Americans were sterilized. Fortunately, the procedure rapidly declined in usage by the early 1950s.³⁴

There was great enthusiasm when the first eugenics law was passed in Indiana in 1907. Scientists and social reformers were excited about the prospect of applying this new “science” to solve long-standing social problems. In California, eugenicists defined the genetically “unfit” as those who had disabilities and were of low income and education. The notion of social Darwinism was popular at this time, so a person’s level of wealth and education were seen as a reflection of his or her inherited intelligence. Conversely, middle- and upper-class “whites” were encouraged to procreate and strengthen the Nordic racial stock for the benefit of the country. The state of California viewed Mexicans and Indians as the foremost racial problems facing the state.³⁵ There was a major concern

“NO DOGS, NO NEGROES, NO MEXICANS”

over what was believed to be their prolific breeding ability and the potential strain on welfare services. Charles Goethe, the cofounder of a San Francisco-based eugenics club, warned that the surge in Mexican peasants crossing the border posed a menace to society because they “multiply like rabbits.”³⁶ This attitude appears in a 1920 California school report, which claimed that Mexican living standards “do not accord with ours, but it is more likely that intellectual differences account for most of their unsocial conduct.”³⁷ The report asserts that Hispanic students were inherently deficient in intellectual ability. “Mexican children do not learn readily at school, and few of them ever pass above the third grade. Recent studies have indicated that this failure to learn is not because of language difficulties, but is more likely due to low intelligence.” The author went on to claim that “the average intelligence of Mexican children in Southern California is not greater than three-fourths that of American children.” As a result, the report concluded that “nearly one-half of the Mexican children in our schools are feeble-minded.”

In one instance, state officials targeted a “half Spanish, half Indian” woman who had given birth to eleven children from two different fathers. Despite normal IQ scores, she was classified as a “high moron” and sent to a home for the mentally defective and eventually marked for sterilization, against her parents’ wishes. Her misfortune was to have been of Mexican origin, to desire a large family, and to be poor.³⁸ The IQ ranking placed “idiots” as those with a score of twenty-five or lower; “imbeciles” as those with a score of twenty-five to fifty; and “morons”—those with a score of fifty to seventy-nine—who were seen as especially dangerous because they could pass as normal and spread their genes, thus diluting the purity of the population.³⁹ In most instances, “morons” appear to have been “normal” members of the Mexican American community who fared poorly on the IQ test. In 1975, several Mexican American women filed suit in court against non-consensual or coerced sterilizations. At the trial, it became evident that long-held stereotypes of Mexican Americans were alive and well in California. A medical student testified that she

AMERICAN INTOLERANCE

had heard one of the sterilizing physicians remark that “poor minority women in L. A. County were having too many babies; that it was a strain on society; and that it was good that they be sterilized.”⁴⁰ She further testified that he stated it was his intention to see “how low we can cut the birth rate of the Negro and Mexican populations in Los Angeles County.”

SECOND-CLASS CITIZENS

More recently, Donald Trump has threatened to round up and send non-resident Mexicans back over the border. His remarks have generated anxiety for Americans of Mexican heritage, stirring up memories of the Repatriation from 1929 to 1936. During the Great Depression, the administration of Herbert Hoover launched a campaign of mass deportations to purge the country of Mexican American citizens, legal residents, and illegal aliens, who were blamed for taking jobs from “real” Americans. This episode occurred amid a wave of anti-immigration hysteria. Upward of two million were sent back to Mexico, 60 percent of whom were American citizens.⁴¹ Those of Mexican heritage were the logical targets, as they were the most recent major group of immigrants.⁴² In many cases, government officials knocked on the doors of families and tried to persuade them to leave—going so far as to give them free tickets back “home” to be with their “own kind.” Many county governments cut welfare payments to Mexican families in an effort to discourage them. While the program was called the Mexican Repatriation, a more apt description would be the Great Deportation. The word *repatriation* evokes connotations of voluntary participation. In this instance, they were pressured, and sometimes forced, to cross the border, usually on trains or buses. County agents would knock on doors and say, “You would be better off in Mexico, and here are your train tickets. You should be ready to go in two weeks.”⁴³ One appalling example involved Ignacio Pena of Idaho. Historian Francisco Balderrama recounts that as his family was about to eat breakfast,

“NO DOGS, NO NEGROES, NO MEXICANS”

sheriff's deputies entered the house. “They took everybody in custody, and they were told that they could only leave with the clothes that were on their back. They could not bring any of their personal belongings, and they were placed in a jail. His father was working out in the fields, and he was also placed in a jail.”⁴⁴ After a week, they were shipped by train across the border to Mexico. “They never were able to recover their personal belongings, even though they were told that those belongings . . . would be shipped to them. And among those belongings was a documentation of his father having worked in the United States for over 25 years. Among those belongings was his and his sisters’ and his brothers’ birth certificates, having been born in the United States.”

Mexican American citizens faced continuing discrimination throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, with efforts to block them from exercising their basic democratic rights to vote in state and national elections. In 1870, the Fifteenth Amendment to the US Constitution gave every citizen the right to vote regardless of race, color, or creed. The practical reality was very different. White lawmakers in many states found ways to keep new immigrants and unwelcome minorities from making their voices heard at the ballot box. This was especially true in the Southwest, where many communities had a majority of Mexican American residents. State leaders realized that if they voted as a block, they could exercise considerable political clout. Many state legislatures circumvented federal law by requiring residents to pay a poll tax or pass a literacy test to be eligible to vote. In 1894, California required voters to be literate in English, thus eliminating many residents who were uneducated or fluent in Spanish as their first language. They also required a fee to be eligible to vote. Hispanics were among the state's poorest residents and could not afford to pay. Texas followed suit in 1902, requiring a poll tax of between \$1.50 and \$1.75—a hefty sum at the time, especially for the poor. Some states stipulated that poll taxes be collected annually. These laws endured for several decades until they were challenged by the courts and deemed illegal. It was not until 1964 that the Twenty-Fourth Amendment abolished poll taxes in

AMERICAN INTOLERANCE

national elections. Two years later, the US Supreme Court abolished them in state elections.⁴⁵ Some people believe that new voter identification laws in several key states during the 2016 presidential election may have contributed to the loss of Hillary Clinton. Trump narrowly won the state of Wisconsin by 22,728 votes. Conspicuously, the state had its lowest voter turnout in two decades, about 41,000 fewer than in the previous presidential election. Milwaukee County Clerk Joe Czarnecki is convinced that the voter ID laws handed the election to Trump. “I believe it was voter suppression laws from the state government that crushed turnout,” he said, noting that those most affected were poor minorities who did not own a motor vehicle or a driver’s license.⁴⁶

The rights of Hispanic Americans were continually trotted upon during the first half of the nineteenth century. The heartbreaking case of New York orphans epitomizes their social position. In 1904, forty Anglo American orphans were sent to live with Hispanic families in Arizona Territory, outraging local whites who held fierce protests over allowing Nordic children to be raised by “half-breeds.” Vigilante groups seized the children and placed them with white families. It is a testament to the deeply held racist sentiments of the time that the Arizona Supreme Court sided with the white parents, who were essentially kidnappers and child abductors. The court referred to the vigilantes as “committees.” The New York orphanage was legally powerless to get the children back, and the children spent the rest of their lives with their new, white families.⁴⁷

In 2018, the Trump administration exhibited a similar callousness in its treatment of refugees and asylum seekers from Latin America who were trying to enter the country at the Mexican border. The administration’s policy of separating infants and children from their families as part of a deliberate strategy to discourage them from seeking safe haven in the United States was widely condemned, both domestically and internationally. As part of the zero-tolerance policy, persons who were not processed at one of the officially designated ports of entry were labeled as having attempted to enter the country illegally. However, many people were

“NO DOGS, NO NEGROES, NO MEXICANS”

turned away at the ports of entry, or, after waiting days or weeks without being processed, they eventually crossed elsewhere in frustration. Many did not have the means to reach a port of entry, and they crossed the border somewhere else without obtaining a visa, only to be branded as criminals. In many of these cases, upon entering the United States, the asylum seekers immediately sought out Border Patrol agents to request safe haven, only to find themselves under arrest and separated from their children.⁴⁸

Present-day fears over the perceived threat posed by Mexicans, and the reluctance to fully accept Mexican Americans as equal citizens, continue to pose a challenge for our reputation as a tolerant and welcoming country. In June 2016, Donald Trump evoked race when he claimed that the judge presiding over a lawsuit against Trump University should recuse himself from the case because his parents were of Mexican ancestry. To insinuate that US District Judge Gonzalo Curiel could not rule fairly because of his Mexican heritage, since Trump proposed to build a wall between the two countries, has alarming racial overtones. While the United States promotes itself as a melting pot of ethnic and religious diversity, it has a checkered history when it comes to putting these ideals into practice. People of Mexican ancestry are but one of a long list of culturally diverse groups and nationalities that have been vilified as leeches on the American welfare system and a threat to our national security. Immigrants are some of the most vulnerable people on Earth, and make easy scapegoats for complex problems of the day. The efforts by President Trump to build a wall along our Southwest border, physically separating Mexico and the United States, is the most visible attempt to further underscore our differences, instead of focusing on our common humanity.