

Fall 2019

The Injustice Never Leaves You: Anti-Mexican Violence in Texas By Monica Munoz Martinez (review)

Brent M. S. Campney

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, brent.campney@utrgv.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.utrgv.edu/hist_fac



Part of the [History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Brent M. S. Campney; Review: The Injustice Never Leaves You: Anti-Mexican Violence in Texas by Monica Muñoz Martinez. *Pacific Historical Review* 1 November 2019; 88 (4): 731–732. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1525/phr.2019.88.4.731>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the College of Liberal Arts at ScholarWorks @ UTRGV. It has been accepted for inclusion in History Faculty Publications and Presentations by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks @ UTRGV. For more information, please contact justin.white@utrgv.edu, william.flores01@utrgv.edu.

unionism, radicals like Nicholas Hernández and Jesús Flores also advocated Mexican patriotism and discouraged immigrants from severing ties with their homeland.

Flores uncovers a rich history of transnational social activism among Chicagoland's Mexican immigrant revolutionary generation. His in-depth study provides a nuanced interpretation of the political activities of Mexican immigrants who resided neither solely in Mexico nor the United States, a subject often elided by researchers. Moreover, Flores demonstrates that the history of assimilation in Chicagoland differed significantly from the process that occurred in southwestern ethnic Mexican communities. He highlights that the immigrants who arrived in the Midwest established new ethnic communities that maintained multi-stranded ties to their homeland. Importantly, Flores also acknowledges that the Great Depression and the Cold War era deportations, which mainly targeted liberal and radical faction members, impacted the political development of Chicagoland's Mexican communities by ensuring that traditionalists remained and emerged as a hegemonic force. In his renown book on Los Angeles, George J. Sánchez makes a similar assessment about demographic change and community.

University of Northern Colorado

DENNIS J. AGUIRRE

The Injustice Never Leaves You: Anti-Mexican Violence in Texas. By Monica Muñoz Martinez. (Cambridge: Harvard University 2018. xx + 387 pp.)

In *The Injustice Never Leaves You*, Monica Muñoz Martinez provides an outstanding analysis of the racist violence that Anglos used to control ethnic Mexicans in Texas. Building on the work of other historians, including Benjamin Johnson, Nicholas Villanueva, William Carrigan, and Clive Webb, she discusses, for instance, the burning of Antonio Rodríguez by a mob in Rocksprings in 1910 and the rampage by Anglo lynch mobs and Texas Rangers in the Lower Rio Grande Valley in 1915, a massacre that claimed the lives of hundreds, if not thousands, of ethnic Mexicans.

With her focus on “the long legacies of violence,” Martinez broadens the term “victim” from a narrow definition encompassing only the person directly targeted for violence to a broader definition encompassing those close to the murdered person. “For friends, neighbors, or family of the dead, and for allies in the struggle against injustice,” she writes, lynching was the precipitating event in “a much longer process of grieving and of

remembrance” (p. 8). For those left behind, the suffering would be transmitted across the generations among Mexican Americans through communal memory and through the generational theft that often resulted from these events. Through her use of oral history, Martinez makes a particularly important contribution on the long-term impact of the violence of a century ago on the lives of the children and grandchildren of the dead.

With her focus on the experiences of women and families, Martinez makes a second major contribution by chipping away further at older assumptions that only men suffered at the hands of racist mobs. In so doing, she offers compelling historiographic insights. She makes an interesting comparison, for example, between the work of Walter Prescott Webb, a prominent Anglo historian of the mid-twentieth century who was an apologist for racist mobs, and that of Américo Paredes, the Mexican American scholar who ultimately overturned the Webb School in his own work by championing armed Mexican American resistance. Though aligned with Paredes, Martinez offers an instructive critique: “These two competing narratives—those of Webb and Paredes—diverged in their selected heroes, but they were equally patriarchal and celebratory of armed masculinity” (p. 24). In the second half of her book, Martinez focuses extensively on the descendants of those killed by mobs and Rangers in order to show the significance of those events in their lives today. She also provides fascinating insights into the efforts of herself and a team of colleagues—as part of the Refusing to Forget project—to memorialize a number of early twentieth-century racist killings in Texas.

With *The Injustice Never Leaves You*, Martinez has produced a book that is a model of interdisciplinarity and makes important interventions in the fields of Mexican American studies, gender studies, and racist violence studies. The work is well written, well argued, and well organized. It deserves a wide readership and would be appropriate for undergraduate and graduate courses.

University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

BRENT M. S. CAMPNEY

Mining the Borderlands: Industry, Capital, and the Emergence of Engineers in the Southwest Territories, 1855–1910. By Sarah E.M. Grossman. (Reno, University of Nevada Press, 2018. viii + 175 pp.)

Sarah E.M. Grossman’s *Mining the Borderlands* thoughtfully combines transnational borderlands history with a fine-grained account of the mining industry’s