

The Law of the Land: Local-National Dialectic and the Making of the United States-Mexico Boundary in Southern California

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If one were to visit the United States-Mexico boundary in present-day San Diego, California, one would see a vastly different situation as it relates to “illegal” or unauthorized immigration than one would have witnessed less than a decade ago. As The San Diego Union-Tribune editorialized in July 1998:

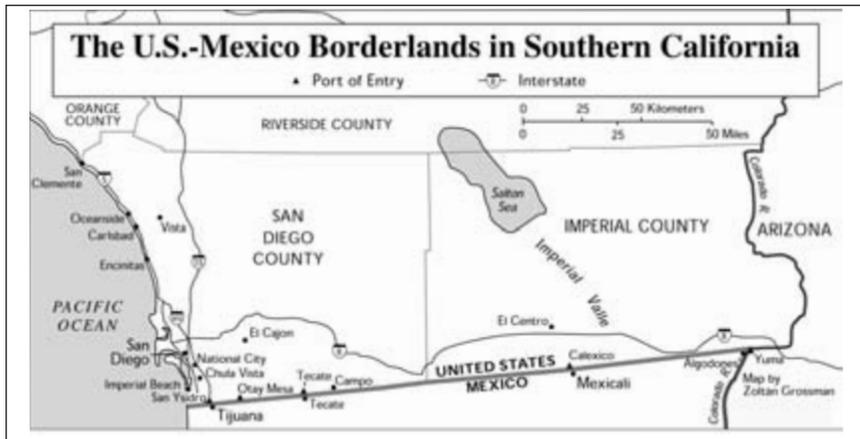
Think back less than 10 years ago. The Tijuana River Valley was like a war zone, with ill-equipped, outnumbered Border Patrol agents chasing wave after wave of illegal immigrants.

Otay Mesa was also overwhelmed. And the San Ysidro crossing was even worse. Illegal immigrants would simply run through the checkpoints in packs.

Today, all that chaos is history. And Operation Gatekeeper is the reason for the success.¹

Although the Union-Tribune’s description is arguably hyperbolic, there is little question that U.S. authorities exercised little control over the boundary in the San Diego area in the late 1980s and early 1990s and, as a result, an appearance of disorder prevailed. Today, however, it is far more difficult to cross the San Diego boundary without authorization and a far more orderly scene predominates along the U.S.-Mexico boundary in the area.² As one journalist opined, “the entire border along San Diego is now eerily quiet and peaceful. It’s the quiet that comes from control.”³

Many observers share the editorial’s analysis that these changes are due to the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service’s “Operation Gatekeeper,” a strategic plan implemented on October 1, 1994, to reduce unauthorized migrant crossings of the U.S.-Mexico boundary into the San Diego area “by providing law enforcement with the tools needed to do the job.” The broader goals of the operation are, in the words of the Attorney General’s Special Representative for Southwest Border Issues, “to



while the present-day local cultural landscape as it relates to boundary enforcement is certainly due in large part to Operation Gatekeeper, it is also very much the outgrowth of processes that long predate the start of the operation. Indeed, the perceived need and the accompanying calls for the creation of a border landscape based on “the rule of law” is, in large part, a reflection of the gradually increasing physicality and ideological strength of the U.S. boundary enforcement apparatus in San Diego over the last 150 years, a process of nation-state building that began in southern California in the aftermath of the U.S. annexation of California in 1848.

As such, the construction of the U.S.-Mexico boundary in southern California has been, since its inception, part and parcel of a national-scale project, as well as an outgrowth of a variety of international (especially in terms of the U.S. and Mexico) processes and practices. But numerous local factors and agents have also helped to produce the territorial and social distinctions associated with the boundary and the legal territorial ideology that has culminated in the unprecedented levels of boundary enforcement that we see today.

Geographers, and social scientists more generally, have tended to ignore law enforcement as it relates to the construction of international boundaries.¹⁶ This article seeks to help fill this gaping hole. Furthermore, scholars have not paid much attention to local context in analyzing territorial boundary construction.¹⁷ This piece contends, however, that it has been the dynamic interrelationship between local and national phenomena that explains the emergence of a “law and order” landscape along the U.S.-Mexico boundary in the San Diego/Tijuana area. In making this argument, the analysis focuses on immigration enforcement. While other factors, such as efforts to interdict contraband and the activities of the Mexican state, have also played significant roles in producing the southern California border landscape, they are beyond the paper’s scope.

restore the rule of law to the California/Baja-California border."⁴ As part of a larger, comprehensive INS national strategy, Operation Gatekeeper aims at significantly increasing the ability of the U.S. authorities to control the flow of unauthorized people and goods across the U.S.-Mexico boundary.

Operation Gatekeeper has certainly played a pivotal role in creating the appearance of law and order in the San Diego border region as the operation has resulted in a dramatic infusion of resources for the U.S. Border Patrol's San Diego Sector. Prior to the implementation of Operation Gatekeeper, the sector had 980 Border Patrol agents; by June 1998, it had 2,264 agents. Meanwhile, the amount of fencing and/or walls⁵ along the border in the sector increased from nineteen to more than forty-five miles in length, the number of underground sensors rose from 448 to 1,214, and the number of infrared scopes grew from twelve to fifty-nine. Concomitantly, the number of INS Inspectors,⁶ those responsible for working the official ports of entry in the sector, increased from 202 to 504.⁷ And underlying this growth in resources is arguably an unprecedented level of public sentiment in favor of such operations.⁸

The great increase in boundary enforcement has taken place in spite of, as well as because of, rapidly intensifying transboundary integration between the U.S. and Mexico. And nowhere along the boundary is this integration, and boundary policing, as pronounced as in the San Diego-Tijuana region. The stretch of boundary between the two cities is perhaps the world's most policed international divide between two non-belligerent countries. It's principle transit point (at San Ysidro, see Figure 1) is also the world's busiest land crossing. In addition, it is the location of the most intense economic and demographic growth of the U.S.-Mexico border region—the fastest developing border zone in the Americas, and perhaps in the world.⁹

By 1995, one study calculated the combined population of San Diego County and the municipio of Tijuana to be more than 3.2 million, more than twice the size of the second largest cross-U.S.-Mexico boundary pair of counties.¹⁰ At the same time, the two cities have become increasingly interdependent. About sixty million people and twenty million cars a year now enter San Diego from Mexico through the San Ysidro port of entry—making it the busiest land crossing in the world.¹¹ And an estimated 40,000 people cross the border each day to work, including several thousand who manage and work in maquiladoras in Tijuana, but live in the San Diego area.¹² But while the two cities are becoming increasingly interdependent, they are doing so in an unequal fashion. Tijuana relies far more on San Diego for its economic well-being than vice-versa.¹³ Indeed, annual per capita income in Tijuana is \$3,200 while it is \$25,000 in San Diego.¹⁴

This simultaneous existence of intense transboundary integration and wide socio-economic disparities have helped to give rise to strong public demand and official efforts in the San Diego area to fortify enforcement along the U.S.-Mexico boundary, and thus to Operation Gatekeeper.¹⁵ But

who engaged in insurrectionist activity in Mexico, often with the goal of gaining territory for the U.S.).²⁶

While U.S. and Mexican authorities surveyed and marked the boundary soon after the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, the establishment of a boundary-policing infrastructure did not begin until decades later.²⁷ The U.S. government first appointed two Customs House Inspectors in 1871 to patrol the California border region on horseback to guard against the smuggling of tobacco, sugar, and cattle into the area of San Diego.²⁸ A few years later customs officials established a presence at the boundary itself, operating out of a general store just north of the line and, later, out of the home of a customs official.²⁹ Immigration control along the boundary, during this time, was not a concern. But the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882 changed all that as many would-be Chinese immigrants began to use the overland route from Mexico to enter the U.S. clandestinely.³⁰

Passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act was one in a series of laws passed by Congress, beginning in 1875, to regulate immigration through qualitative controls (immigration controls based on social, political, economic, and racial/ethnic criteria).³¹ The anti-Chinese Act marked the beginning of a process by which the federal government "codified in immigration law the elision of racist and nationalist discourse."³² A combination of rising racist ideologies, growing domestic unemployment, and general economic uncertainty worked together to restrict immigration and put an end to the so-called "open door." Congress excluded a number of other groups on the basis of "race" over the next few decades, culminating in the passage of the Immigration Act of 1917.³³ These national-scale developments gave rise to an immigration enforcement apparatus along the U.S.-Mexico boundary.

Until 1882, the U.S. Bureau of Immigration, established during the Civil War, functioned merely as a gatherer of statistics. The Chinese Exclusion Act, however, resulted in the Bureau receiving field operatives who worked out of ports of entry along the international boundary under the jurisdiction of the Collectors of Customs. The so-called "Chinese inspectors" in San Diego were responsible for patrolling 180 miles of boundary.³⁴ But the fact that the smuggling of Chinese migrants into the U.S. was a highly lucrative and well-organized business, combined with the porosity of the boundary, ensured that most Chinese migrants who wanted to enter California from Mexico without authorization surely did so.³⁵ As a U.S. Customs official described in an undated report probably from 1902 or 1903, there were only three U.S. authorities on the entire California boundary: two at "Tia Juana" (today known as San Ysidro) and one at Campo (thirty miles east of San Ysidro, see Figure 1). The writer went on to complain that:

Except in the vicinity of Tia Juana and Campo ... the entire bound-

Making the Boundary Real

The policing—and making—of international boundaries is arguably one of the most obvious manifestations of the geographical practice that Sack calls territoriality, “the attempt by an individual or group to affect, influence, or control people, phenomena, and relationships, by delimiting and asserting control over a geographic area.”¹⁸ Social actors can employ territoriality both to establish and to obfuscate social relations between controller and controlled and displace the focus to the territory “as when we say ‘it is the law of the land’ or ‘you may not do this here.’”¹⁹ Such a practice facilitates the reification of territory and the power it embodies. In the case of the U.S.-Mexico boundary, the emphasis on “restoring” law and order by many of Operation Gatekeeper’s advocates has had a tendency to erase a historical geography marked by sustained efforts by state and, to a lesser extent, non-state actors to distinguish between “citizens” and “aliens” as well as between Mexico and the U.S. in the borderlands.²⁰ A necessary part of this process has been the making of a border landscape and an accompanying boundary-enforcement apparatus.

Nation-state-building and the production of boundaries are inextricably intertwined.²¹ One sees national boundaries both in terms of social identities, as embodied by categories such as “citizen” and “alien,” and in terms of the nationalist landscape. As Wilbur Zelinsky points out, “[i]n every sovereign country of the modern world, the workings of the state have set their mark upon the land.”²² Landscapes reflect nationalism and state practice in a variety of forms including monuments, government buildings, place names, theme parks, and historic sites. But probably the most obvious manner in which one sees the embodiment of nationalism as state practice is the construction and reproduction of national territorial boundaries.

Since the establishment of the U.S.-Mexico boundary by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848,²³ the boundary has shifted from being a mere Cartesian ideal with only modest bearing on people’s lives to becoming a real, powerful material presence.²⁴ But the construction of the boundary, as a physical line of surveillance and control with broad-based social acceptance within the U.S., was a slow process.

In the mid- to late-1800s, U.S. authorities concentrated their enforcement efforts in the area of the boundary on pacifying the subject populations (largely Native Americans and Mexicanos) gained through the U.S. annexation of the territory.²⁵ By trying to construct “order,” the U.S. laid the basis for a regime of law in the region, albeit one based on the dictates of a conquering power. The principal concerns of U.S. law enforcement authorities (largely the U.S. Army) during this period were smuggling and cattle rustling, Indian raiding, and all sorts of transboundary criminal activity by assorted gangs, vigilantes, and filibusters (American adventurers

percent that of the previous year.

Such factors led to the passage of the Quota Act of 1921, the first quantitative immigration restriction in U.S. history. Three years later, the Immigration Act of 1924 biased U.S. immigration law in favor of northern and western Europeans even further. The 1924 Act also required immigrants for the first time to obtain visas from U.S. consular officials abroad before traveling to the U.S. It was two days after the passage of the Immigration Act of 1924 that the Department of Labor appropriations legislation granted \$1 million for "additional land-border patrol," thus creating the U.S. Border Patrol out of the previous boundary-policing unit and greatly strengthening boundary policing in the process. Through the decade of the 1920s, the Border Patrol grew steadily.⁴⁰

In terms of the San Diego/Tijuana area, the 1930s marked a time of significantly increased boundary enforcement, presumably because of the Depression, a time during which U.S. and local authorities deported hundreds of thousands of Mexican immigrants (along with tens of thousands of U.S. citizens of Mexican origin).⁴¹ But, as of February 1934, the two Border Patrol subdistricts in southern California each only had a total of forty "patrol inspectors" or Border Patrol agents.⁴² As of 1940, the number of Border Patrol agents in southern California remained unchanged.⁴³ Thus, it is not surprising that there were still gaping holes in boundary policing. A report by a U.S. Naval Intelligence officer argued that the section of the boundary in the vicinity of Tecate, for example, was "absolutely unguarded."⁴⁴

National security concerns related to the outbreak of World War II led to even more growth in the Border Patrol on the national scale and in southern California, with the San Diego area receiving the lion's share of the increase.⁴⁵ Between June 1940 and December 1943, the number of San Diego's patrol inspectors increased by 50 percent, reaching a total of sixty.⁴⁶ Given the unavailability at this time of official documentation on the size of the Border Patrol in the San Diego area during the 1950s and 1960s, it is not possible to know to what extent the agency's staffing increased (assuming it did) over the next two decades.⁴⁷ But it is likely that, whatever its size, the Border Patrol was unable to meet the challenge of the growing flow of unauthorized immigrants through the San Diego portion of the international boundary.

In one sense, the boundary enforcement capacity of U.S. authorities in the area of San Diego was formidable as the 1970s approached, at least in relation to what had existed in the early part of the twentieth century. But it is also clear that the enforcement capacity was very much inadequate given the geographical expanse for which U.S. boundary authorities were responsible. The rapidly intensifying links between Tijuana and San Diego, and, more generally, the U.S. and Mexico, only served to undermine further the enforcement capacity of the INS. As a result of these links, and the strength of the migratory highway from Mexico to the U.S., San

ary line is unguarded and open, presenting no barrier to free and unrestricted trade between the two countries Along the whole line between the coast and Jacumba [about 60 miles], stock of all kinds roam at will on either side of the line, a constant source of irritation and damage to the United States citizens along the line, most of whom are engaged in farming.³⁶

The number of Customs and Immigration officials increased thereafter, but boundary policing remained quite lax for the next few decades. According to people who lived in the border region at the time, one could cross from Tijuana into San Ysidro before 1930 "as if a border did not exist."³⁷

The outbreak of World War I had a serious impact on the San Diego area and on the border region more generally. During this time, in late 1917, the Immigration Service began requiring passports of all who wanted to cross from the U.S. into Mexico to limit the ability of individuals who were in the service of enemy governments to communicate with those governments. Such war-related hysteria, combined with the growing movement in southern California against the corrupting influence of the "vices" of Tijuana³⁸ and the instability brought about by the Mexican Revolution, led to the closing of the official ports of entry along the boundary by U.S. authorities in December 1917, a closing that remained in effect for two years. That said, even during the war, the ability of U.S. authorities to patrol the southern California boundary was very limited. As of February 1918, for example, there were five immigrant inspectors stationed in Calexico, one in Campo, and four in "Tia Juana." As the supervising inspector of the Mexican Border District wrote at the time, the inspectors, given the myriad demands on their time, "are able to give but little attention to patrol duty." And despite the stationing of some U.S. troops along the boundary at the time, it appears that their numbers were very insufficient: "[S]o long as the border is not adequately guarded," observed the supervising inspector about enforcement measures along the U.S.-Mexico boundary in general, "the restrictive measures employed at ports of entry simply tend to divert the illegal traffic to unguarded points, of which there are literally thousands."³⁹

Unauthorized entries picked up quickly following the end of the war and intensified as Congress placed additional restrictions on immigration. As a result, pressures grew for the Bureau of Immigration to increase its efforts to fight illegal boundary activity. The bureau's commissioner general stressed in 1919 that such efforts were needed in the face of large numbers of apprehensions (seeming to suggest that many more were entering successfully) of unauthorized European and Chinese immigrants smuggled in from Canada, Mexico, and Cuba. In the aftermath of the destruction of World War I, there was also widespread fear that huge numbers of immigrants from Europe might try to enter the U.S. extralegally. Indeed, the number of entries into the U.S. in 1920 was 300

D.C. in terms of the beginning of significant efforts in favor of increasing boundary enforcement. This is not to suggest that southern California merely reacted to national-scale political developments.⁵⁴ But concerns about unauthorized immigration and boundary enforcement-related issues were limited to a small number of local politicians and Mexican-American and Chicano groups and not deeply rooted in mainstream, popular political culture.⁵⁵ Overall, it seems that at the time San Diego was reactive to national-scale events. Unlike the case of many national publications, San Diego newspapers, for example, did not noticeably increase their coverage of boundary-enforcement-related issues in the early to mid-1970s.⁵⁶ To the extent that coverage occurred, it was usually in response to national-scale initiatives or in response to initiatives by local federal authorities (such as Border Patrol officials).⁵⁷

Local disinterest in boundary enforcement issues as related to unauthorized immigration is reflected in a 1975 report on efforts to repair the boundary fence. The report attributed the source of the effort to the San Diego Cattlemen's Association, which was worried about cattle wandering into Mexico.⁵⁸ In that same year, however, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors commissioned a study on "the impact of undocumented workers" on the county.⁵⁹ As such local efforts grew over time, San Diego increasingly helped to heighten national-level concerns toward unauthorized immigration and the U.S.-Mexico boundary, and thus very much became a territorial agent—nationally as well as locally. That San Diego was able to do so was also a manifestation of its growing economic and demographic (and thus, political) importance.⁶⁰

The Carter administration's arrival in office in 1977 coincided with a noticeable increase in San Diego newspaper coverage of boundary-enforcement-related issues, and with a growth in official activism around these matters. While much of the initiative for these activities came from Washington, D.C., local officials played a significant role in raising the boundary's profile, most notably in relation to unauthorized immigration, drug smuggling, and crime. In this regard, the relationship between the local and national scales was becoming increasingly dialectical or recursive in nature: there was a dynamic relationship between political happenings in border localities, especially San Diego, and national initiatives relating to immigration and boundary enforcement, most significantly those emanating from the federal government. This local-national interplay produced heightened consciousness of the boundary and its putative relationship to issues of law and order.

Around the time of a White House visit by Mexican President Lopez Portillo in early 1977, for example, then-San Diego Mayor Pete Wilson wrote an appeal to Carter asking for "federal help in dealing with the economic and crime problems caused by the flood of illegal aliens," as The San Diego Union explained. Wilson also requested a meeting in San Diego between local law enforcement and federal officials to examine

Diego became an increasingly important destination and transit point for unauthorized migrants from Mexico. This became especially true following the termination of the Bracero Program⁴⁸ in 1964 that led to the previously legal flow of migratory labor simply going “underground,” thus contributing significantly to the putative problem of “illegal” immigration.⁴⁹ We can thus assume that the scale of unauthorized immigration across the boundary in the San Diego area increased at a far greater rate than did the capacity of U.S. authorities (in the form, for example, of the number of Border Patrol agents) to police the boundary. In this regard, the relative strength of U.S. boundary policing efforts in the San Diego area declined significantly over time vis-à-vis the amount of extralegal boundary-related activity. But this is not to suggest that such efforts were insignificant; indeed, they laid the basis for an increasing acceptance by U.S. society of the boundary and its concomitant enforcement apparatus.

Locally, in southern California, these developments helped to engender activism in favor of increased boundary enforcement. Whereas national-scale actors and phenomena (most notably, federal immigration legislation) had been almost totally responsible for the creation of the California-Mexico boundary through the first half of the twentieth century, beginning in the 1970s, the local scale—in the form of greater San Diego—increasingly played an important role in constructing the boundary and its associated practices and identities, and thus the national scale as well. In this regard, the relationship between the local and national became increasingly dialectical in nature, rather than one-way.

The Intensification of a Local Boundary Consciousness and Boundary Restriction Activism

Prior to the 1970s, the U.S.-Mexico boundary rarely received significant national attention. That is not to say that boundary and immigration enforcement—especially in relation to people of Mexican origin—was not of any concern until that time. There were a number of points in twentieth-century U.S. history prior to the 1970s when unauthorized immigration and boundary enforcement did raise state and public concern, such as during World War II and in 1954 with the INS’ infamous “Operation Wetback.”⁵⁰ But what is striking is how shallow and ephemeral that concern has been on a popular level, until relatively recently.⁵¹ Beginning in the late 1960s and early 1970s, however, a growing public and official perception arose of the international boundary with Mexico as “out of control,” as a dangerously porous line of defense against unprecedented numbers of “illegal” immigrants entering the U.S. from Mexico.⁵² The decade of the 1970s thus saw a noticeable increase in immigration- and boundary-restrictionist sentiment on the national level.⁵³

San Diego, however, seemed to lag noticeably behind Washington,

Mexico relations.⁷² Within the Mexican-American community in particular, the opposition was very strong.⁷³

Despite such opposition, the proposed fence enjoyed widespread support with the general San Diego populace. But support for the fence was apparently not well-organized, nor mobilized.⁷⁴ And thus it was the opposition to an enhanced boundary fence that eventually won out.⁷⁵ When a new fence was finally built, it was neither sturdier nor more difficult to scale or cut than the one it had replaced.⁷⁶ Within one year, there were at least twenty large holes—some large enough for a truck to pass through—in the four miles of already-completed new fencing.⁷⁷

The fence controversy, however, was a manifestation of a much larger phenomenon: namely, the inability of U.S. authorities to control the boundary in a manner sufficiently effective to reduce unauthorized crossings from Mexico into the U.S. and to satisfy local demands.⁷⁸ Thus, as the scale of unauthorized immigration continued unabated in the San Diego area, many local elites became increasingly critical of the federal government's seeming impotence. As *The San Diego Union* warned in a May 25, 1979, editorial, "The inability of the administration to deal with massive illegal immigration is fast leading to chaos on our border with Mexico." The Union pronounced U.S. border policy "at a dead end" in a situation where the country was being "[i]nundated by [a] torrent of humanity." Such sentiments led to the emergence of a crisis mentality among many policymakers. Michael Walsh, the U.S. attorney for southern California in 1979, for one, described the situation in the border region as "potentially explosive" and warned that "as the number of [Border Patrol] apprehensions [of unauthorized immigrants] increases, the potential for violence or misunderstanding goes up."⁷⁹

San Diego media coverage of boundary-related issues both reflected and resulted in heightened official and popular concerns about unauthorized immigration and its putatively detrimental effects on the San Diego region. In January 1980, for example, the Union published a five-part series entitled "The Border Country." Four out of the five emphasized the lawlessness and the out-of-control nature of the region, thus presenting the boundary and its concomitant phenomena as potential threats to San Diego, with one exploring the possibility of "Hispanic secession" by the year 2000.⁸⁰

The increasing association in the San Diego public's mind of unauthorized immigrants with crime during this period played an important role in fortifying pro-boundary enforcement sentiment. While unauthorized immigrants were guilty of a number of crimes during this period, they were mostly "public disorder misdemeanors" such as urinating in public, and nonviolent "survival crimes," such as thefts of bedding, food, and cash.⁸¹ So-called "border bandits" and the "rob and return bunch" were guilty of almost all violent crimes committed by Mexicans without authorization to be in the U.S. Such individuals were not immigrants,

boundary-related crime.⁶¹ Even local liberals helped to fan the flames of anti-unauthorized-immigrant sentiment. San Diego Congressman Lionel Van Deerlin, for example, partially blamed “illegal aliens” for San Diego’s high unemployment rate and overburdened social safety net.⁶²

Rising violent crimes against unauthorized boundary crossers (including robbery, rape, and murder) committed by so-called border bandits became a subject of increasing concern in San Diego in the late 1970s and helped to strengthen the perception of the boundary as a line of defense in need of fortification.⁶³ The increase in attacks led to the establishment of a special task force by the San Diego Police Department to patrol “hot spots” along the eight miles of boundary within the city limits. The San Diego Union compared the perils of the task to “guerrilla warfare in Vietnam.” Among other things, the newspaper called for an increase in Border Patrol agents, more boundary fencing and lighting, and access roads to make the SDPD’s efforts “less of an exercise in jungle warfare.”⁶⁴ Los Angeles Police Chief Ed Davis, a potential Republican candidate for governor at the time, joined the growing chorus in favor of enhanced boundary control, calling for a strong boundary fence and an increase in the Border Patrol.⁶⁵ George Deukmejian, the California Senate Minority Leader, went even further by proposing the establishment of a fourteen-mile long “military reservation” along the westernmost section of the boundary to make it easier to prevent unauthorized entries into the U.S.⁶⁶ As The San Diego Union reported in an article entitled “Illegal Alien Tide Continues to Rise,” 1977 marked a record year for apprehensions in the Chula Vista Sector, with Border Patrol officials predicting even more apprehensions for 1978.⁶⁷

It was during this time that the federal government announced that it was considering the installation of a ten-foot high chainlink security fence along the seven westernmost miles of the boundary, backed by floodlights and increased helicopter patrols. Although unauthorized immigration was an important factor informing the announcement, drug smuggling from Mexico was paramount.⁶⁸ Soon thereafter, the U.S. government began building a dirt road along the boundary from the Pacific Ocean to the Otay Mountains, about fourteen miles inland, to improve the Border Patrol’s ability to police the boundary.⁶⁹ A few months later, the federal government added 100 Border Patrol agents to the Chula Vista Sector, reaching a total force of about 450.⁷⁰

The proposed new fence proved to be highly controversial. But the proposal and surrounding controversy inadvertently helped raise the profile of the boundary in the minds of San Diegans. From the perspective of U.S. authorities, there was little question of the need for a new fence. Indeed, in many areas, the boundary was hardly demarcated.⁷¹ But some in San Diego, including members of its U.S. Congressional delegation and the San Diego City Council, opposed the new fence on the grounds that it was unnecessary, would prove to be ineffective, and would hurt U.S.-

The increasing number of extralegal Mexican migrants in the San Diego area was not simply a figment of the imagination. In the 1980s and early 1990s, the Border Patrol's San Diego Sector was responsible for a significantly increasing number of apprehensions of unauthorized immigrants, especially following Mexico's severe recession in the mid-1980s. In an article ominously entitled "Cross-border Flow of Aliens Becomes Flood," The San Diego Union reported that the first four months of fiscal year 1986 saw a 43 percent increase in Border Patrol apprehensions over the same period the previous year.⁸⁹ Such information led Howard Ezell, the outspoken Western Regional Commissioner for the INS, to label the influx of unauthorized immigrants in the San Diego area "an invasion." "Our borders are, indeed, out of control," Ezell explained.⁹⁰ Out of this context emerged increasingly severe proposals from California politicians regarding boundary policing. Republican U.S. Senate candidate Mike Antonovich, Senator Pete Wilson, and San Diego Congressman Duncan Hunter⁹¹ all called for the deployment of troops along the boundary at various times in 1986 to stymie drug smuggling, unauthorized immigration, and potential terrorist attacks.⁹²

Advocacy for building up the boundary continued to intensify over the next few years. The then-U.S. attorney for southern California, Peter Nunez, for example, voiced his support in June 1988 for the deployment of the military along the boundary.⁹³ And, as in the 1970s, there were increasing calls to improve upon the boundary fence. Some even called for concrete barriers and a fourteen-foot wide trench along the boundary to prevent "drive-throughs" by smugglers. National immigration restriction groups, most notably the Federation of American Immigration Reform, helped fan the flames in San Diego by issuing highly-publicized calls for a variety of types of barriers along the boundary. But, as before, such proposals generated a great deal of controversy and local officials were far from unanimous in their support.⁹⁴

As a result of hardening political positions locally and nationally, and of increasing congressional support, boundary enforcement began intensifying noticeably in the San Diego Sector starting in the late 1980s. Beginning in September 1989, the Border Patrol began experimenting with high-intensity floodlights along the Tijuana River portion of the boundary in San Ysidro.⁹⁵ By May 1990, there were sixteen forty-foot high permanent lights in that same location.⁹⁶ In 1990, the sector's contingent of Border Patrol agents grew from 740 to 830. Road construction in the boundary area also increased significantly. Most newsworthy, however, was the construction by U.S. military and National Guard personnel of a steel wall, made from Vietnam War-era corrugated steel landing mats, along the westernmost portion of the boundary in San Diego.⁹⁷

While such developments did not have a significant impact on the number of unauthorized immigrants crossing the boundary, they helped to lay the ideological basis for the significant increase in immigration-

however, at least as one normally understands the term “immigrant,” but instead residents of Tijuana who would cross into the San Diego area simply to commit crimes and then return to Mexico.⁸² But such distinctions were largely invisible in the public debate on border-related crime. Local officials often implicitly conflated unauthorized migrant workers with such individuals from Mexico who took advantage of the international boundary to commit crimes. Susan Golding, a member of the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (and currently the mayor of the City of San Diego), for example, blamed unauthorized immigrants for the county’s fiscal problems due to court, jail, and healthcare costs and called for the county to sue the federal government for the related expenses.⁸³ Lost in the public debate was the fact that U.S. nationals and residents committed a good share of the border zone crimes during this period.⁸⁴

Images of the migrant as a criminal dovetailed with a reality of increasing drug trafficking from Mexico through the San Diego area in the mid-1980s. The success of U.S. and Mexican authorities in reducing drug production in and trafficking from Mexico in the early 1970s provided opportunities for traffickers in Colombia who began shipping through south Florida. But U.S. anti-drug trafficking efforts curtailed the success of the Colombia-based cartels. Thus, beginning in the early and mid-1980s, the cartels began cooperating with associates in Mexico and shifted their trafficking routes to, among other places, San Diego.⁸⁵ As a result, U.S. drug seizures in the San Diego area skyrocketed. Media efforts to highlight the trend only added to the image of a border “out of control” and to anti-immigrant sentiment as migrant workers from Mexico became increasingly associated with drug trafficking. As the headline of the September 16, 1986, issue of *The Tribune*—at the time one of San Diego’s two major daily newspapers—exclaimed, “Border emerges as a war zone.” Such hyperbole led to increased calls for a stationing of U.S. Marines and enhancement of boundary policing.⁸⁶

At the same time, local officials often blamed a perceived decline in the local quality of life on the growing number of unauthorized immigrants. In proposing the stationing of U.S. Marines every fifteen or twenty feet along the U.S.-Mexico boundary, for example, the sheriff of San Diego County stated the following:

Illegal aliens are gradually affecting the quality of life as we know it. For example, now we have to admit illegal aliens into our colleges, which means my grandchildren may not be granted entry because of an illegal alien and they’ll probably require her [sic] to be bilingual.⁸⁷

Such statements undoubtedly helped to aggravate tensions between “native” San Diegans and the area’s growing community of unauthorized immigrants, leading to a number of conflicts between the two groups—especially in northern San Diego County—during the 1980s.⁸⁸

thus, those outside the nation). The shift in thought and practice helped lay the basis for the emergence of Operation Gatekeeper in 1994, and for increasing efforts to “restore the rule of law” or, more accurately, to construct a legal landscape as it relates to boundary enforcement in the San Diego region.

On a more general level, the case of the evolution of boundary enforcement in southern California demonstrates the power of the national to shape the local and, in turn, how the local scale can then shape the national scale. In addition, the case study shows how growing trans-boundary integration (in the form of strengthening socio-economic ties), rather than leading to the disappearance of territorial boundaries, can actually result in efforts to enhance political geographical boundaries. Thus, the construction of territorial boundaries and a concomitant law enforcement apparatus serve to create a legal geographical way of seeing and living on both the national and local scales, especially in relation to border regions as they relate to immigration. In a context in which socioeconomic disparities and migratory links across the boundary are very pronounced, the resulting legal geographical thought and practice can facilitate the emergence of efforts in favor of enhanced boundary and immigration enforcement on both the national and local scales.

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Notes

1. Editorial, “Gatekeeper Works: Despite Charges, Border Has Been Secured,” *The San Diego Union-Tribune* (17 July 1998): B6. The Tijuana River Valley is near Imperial Beach and straddles the westernmost portion of the boundary. For its location and that of Otay Mesa and San Ysidro, see Figure 1.
2. Nevertheless, it is far from clear that Operation Gatekeeper has had a significant impact in terms of reducing the overall unauthorized crossings of the southern California boundary as most would-be migrants seem to have shifted eastward. In this regard, Operation Gatekeeper’s greatest achievement is perhaps simply to have made unauthorized immigration less visible to the public. See Joseph Nevins, “California Dreaming: Operation Gatekeeper and the Social Geographical Construction of the ‘Illegal Alien’ along the U.S.-Mexico Boundary” Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, Department of Geography, 1998, chapter 7.
3. Robert A. Jones, “It’s Quiet—Too Quiet,” *Los Angeles Times* (22 March 1998): B7.
4. Alan D. Bersin, “Statement of Alan D. Bersin, United States Attorney, Southern District of California, Concerning Operation Gatekeeper,” Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, Subcommittee on Government Management, Information and Technology, U.S. House of Representatives, Imperial Beach City Hall (9 August 1996): 1-2.
5. The INS does not use the term “wall” to describe the barricades it constructs along the boundary. For public relations purposes (to avoid images of the Berlin Wall), the agency always employs the term “fence,” despite the fact that many of the barriers along the boundary appear wall-like.

restriction sentiment and activism that took place in California and spread to the national body politic in the early 1990s.⁹⁸ They also provided the infrastructural foundation for the resulting massive growth of the boundary enforcement apparatus that culminated with the implementation of Operation Gatekeeper on October 1, 1994.

Conclusion: The Boundary as a Legal Line of Defense

Underlying the growth of the boundary enforcement apparatus and its concomitant ideology is the increasing social acceptance of the putative need for a boundary of law and order. Paradoxically, as the U.S.-Mexico boundary became more institutionalized, boundary-related transgressions became more apparent. The growing presence of the boundary increased illegality to the extent that acts that previously were not illegal and/or not of concern to authorities became targets of law enforcement by the state and of public scrutiny. The outcome, in this particular case, has been one of increasing efforts to enhance the boundary. Obviously, if the boundary were not to exist as a line of control in terms of people and goods, there would be no need to “restore” the rule of law to the border region.

The tremendous demographic and economic growth of San Diego and Tijuana, and their intensifying integration over the last few decades, have also helped to intensify calls for bringing law and order to the border or, in other words, to enhance the social distance (at least in terms of immigration) between the U.S. and Mexico.⁹⁹ These increasing transboundary ties have served to lessen the social distance between Mexico and the U.S. and, thus, given the pronounced socioeconomic inequality between the two countries, have served to facilitate further immigration, much of which is unauthorized. In this regard, efforts to create a border landscape of law and order are aimed at strengthening or, at least, maintaining the distinction between the U.S. (constructed as the territorial embodiment of law) and Mexico (the putative territorial embodiment or source of lawlessness).¹⁰⁰

These distinctions, and the accompanying legal geography, are an outgrowth of a process initiated more than 150 years ago in the aftermath of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo. While national-scale agents arguably played the most significant role in producing the social and territorial boundaries between the U.S. and Mexico in the San Diego/Tijuana region, southern California-based agents increasingly became producers of the U.S.-Mexico boundary and, thus, the national territorial state. In this sense, the rise in pro-boundary enforcement activism in San Diego was an outgrowth of the increasingly dialectical relationship between the local and the national scales in constructing and reproducing the social and territorial boundaries that define “the American nation” (and,

- of Notre Dame Press, 1973): 46; and Kenneth C. Martis, "United States International Land Border Crossings, San Ysidro, California," Master's thesis, Department of Geography, San Diego State College, 1970: 29.
30. At that time, the Customs Service was responsible for the "apprehension of aliens." See Clifford A. Perkins, *Border Patrol, With the U.S. Immigration Service on the Mexican Boundary 1910-1954* (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1978). For information and analysis about the anti-Chinese movement and the resulting policies, see Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1971).
 31. See Nevins, "California Dreaming," Appendix 3D. One should not make the mistake of thinking that the boundaries of the United States were legally open up until the enactment of federal immigration legislation in the 1870s and 1880s. Although neither Congress nor the states established quantitative limits on immigration, a wide variety of qualitative regulations, primarily at the level of the states, applied to the transboundary movement of persons in the nineteenth century. State legislation on immigration policy focused on five major categories of movement restriction of citizens and non-citizens: criminals; public health risks; the poor and disabled; slaves; and people of marginalized racial and/or ethnic groups. See Gerald L. Neuman, "The Lost Century of American Immigration Law (1776-1875)," *Columbia Law Review* 93:8 (December 1993): 1833-1901.
 32. Bob Carter, Marci Green, and Rick Halpern, "Immigration Policy and the Racialization of Migrant Labour: The Construction of National Identities in the USA and Britain," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 19:1 (January 1996): 139. California played a highly significant role in fomenting anti-Chinese sentiment on the national scale. See Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy*, and Tomás Almaguer, *Racial Fault Lines: The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994).
 33. See Carter et al., "Immigration Policy and the Racialization of Migrant Labour."
 34. Jim Brown, *Riding the Line: The United States Customs Service in San Diego, 1885-1930* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Treasury, United States Customs Service, 1991): 17-19.
 35. Taylor H., Lawrence Douglas, "El contrabando de chinos a lo largo de la frontera entre México y Estados Unidos, 1882-1931," *Frontera Norte* 6:11 (1994): 41-57, 46-7. For a discussion of U.S. immigration law during this period as it related to Chinese immigrants, see Lucy E. Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers: Chinese Immigrants and the Shaping of Modern Immigration Law* (Chapel Hill, N.C. and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1995).
 36. Brown, *Riding the Line*, 66. In June 1907, there were only eight immigrant inspectors for the entire California boundary. This led the Immigration Inspector in Charge to decry the impossibility of enforcing the Chinese Exclusion Laws, especially in light of the new duties brought about by the Immigration Act of 20 February 1907 that required all boundary crossers to enter the United States through an official port of entry. "Request for additional immigration inspectors," 5 June 1907, File number 55921/971, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.
 37. Michael H. Logan, "Immigration and Relative Deprivation: The Tijuana-San Ysidro Border Station" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Department of Anthropology, San Diego State College, 1969): 72.
 38. Tijuana's development in the early decades of the twentieth century was, among other things, a manifestation of its function as a center of recreation for southern Californians. Horse races, casinos, thermal baths, alcohol, and prostitution were the city's principal tourist attractions, gaining it the nickname of "sin city." See Herzog, *Where North Meets South*, 97-98; Proffitt, "The Symbiotic Frontier;" and Price, *Tijuana: Urbanization in a Border Culture*, 49-53.
 39. Martis, "United States International Land Border Crossings, San Ysidro, California," 32; and "Enforcement along the Mexican border," 5 February 1918, File number 54261/276, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.
 40. See Donald R. Coppock (INS Deputy Associate Commissioner, Domestic Control), "History: Border Patrol" (unpublished manuscript, on file with author), circa 1968; and U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, *An Immigrant Nation: United States Regulation of Immigration, 1798-1991* (Washington, D.C.: Immigration and Naturalization Service, U.S. Department of Justice, 18 June 1991). Also see Nevins, "California Dreaming," chapter 3.
 41. See Francisco E. Balderrama and Raymond Rodríguez, *Decade of Betrayal: Mexican Repatriation in the 1930s* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995).
 42. Logan, "Immigration and Relative Deprivation: The Tijuana-San Ysidro Border Station," 72; and "Border Patrol Employees by Class and Sub-district," 16 March 1934, File number 55853/300, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

6. The Border Patrol is only responsible for the boundary in between ports of entry. INS Inspectors work the ports and decide who is eligible to enter the United States. There are three ports of entry in the San Diego Sector: one at San Ysidro, one at Otay Mesa, and one at Tecate (see Figure 1).
7. U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. "Operation Gatekeeper: New Resources, Enhanced Results" (Fact Sheet), Washington, D.C.: The Office of Public Affairs, U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, 14 July 1998.
8. See Nevins, "California Dreaming," chapters 6 and 7.
9. Lawrence A. Herzog, "Changing Boundaries in the Americas: An Overview," in Lawrence A. Herzog, ed., *Changing Boundaries in the Americas: New Perspectives on the U.S.-Mexican, Central American, and South American Borders* (San Diego: Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, University of California, San Diego, 1992): 9.
10. San Diego Dialogue, *Demographic Atlas San Diego/Tijuana Atlas Demográfico* (San Diego: The San Diego/Tijuana Planning for Prosperity Fund, 1995): 6. Municipios are the Mexican equivalent of counties in the United States.
11. Alan D. Bersin and Judith S. Feigin, "The Rule of Law at the Margin: Reinventing Prosecution Policy in the Southern District of California," *Georgetown Immigration Law Journal* 12:2 (1998): 286.
12. Migration News (online version), various issues, current and back issues available via Internet on the Migration News Home Page at <http://migration.ucdavis.edu> (February 1997).
13. Lawrence A. Herzog, *Where North Meets South: Cities, Space, and Politics on the U.S.-Mexico Border* (Austin: Center for Mexican American Studies, University of Texas at Austin, 1990): 145.
14. Geri Smith and Elisabeth Malkin, "The Border," *Business Week* (12 May 1997): 67.
15. See Nevins, "California Dreaming."
16. Notable exceptions include Timothy J. Dunn, *The Militarization of the U.S.-Mexico Border, 1978-1992: Low-Intensity Conflict Doctrine Comes Home* (Austin: The Center for Mexican American Studies, the University of Texas at Austin, 1996); and Peter Andreas, "The Escalation of U.S. Immigration Control in the Post-NAFTA Era," *Political Science Quarterly* 113:4 (1998-99): 591-615.
17. An outstanding exception is Peter Sahlins, *Boundaries: The Making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1989).
18. Robert D. Sack, *Human Territoriality: Its Theory and History* (Cambridge, New York, and Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1986): 19.
19. *Ibid.*, 33.
20. See Nevins, "California Dreaming," chapters 3-6.
21. See Daniele Conversi, "Reassessing Current Theories of Nationalism: Nationalism as Boundary Maintenance and Creation," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 1:1 (1995): 73-85; Michael Kearney, "Borders and Boundaries of State and Self at the End of Empire," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 4:1 (1991): 52-74; Kathryn A. Manzo, *Creating Boundaries: The Politics of Race and Nation* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996); and Anssi Paasi, *Territories, Boundaries and Consciousness: The Changing Geographies of the Finnish-Russian Border* (Chichester, U.K. and New York: John Wiley and Sons, Ltd. 1996).
22. Wilbur Zelinsky, *Nation into State: The Shifting Symbolic Foundation of American Nationalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988): 175.
23. The treaty formally ended the U.S.-Mexico war, through which the U.S. forcibly annexed almost half of what had been Mexican territory. See Oscar J. Martínez, *Troublesome Border* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1995); John Ross, *The Annexation of Mexico: From the Aztecs to the I.M.F.* (Monroe, Maine: Common Courage Press, 1998); and T. Harry Williams, *The History of American Wars: From 1745 to 1918* (New York: Knopf, distributed by Random House, 1981).
24. Of course, this development is not unique to the U.S.-Mexico boundary. It is part of a larger trend that manifests the growing power of the modern territorial state, the expression of which is often most visible at its geographical boundaries.
25. See Dunn, *The Militarization of the U.S.-Mexico Border, 1978-1992*, chapter 1; and Martínez, *Troublesome Border*.
26. Ethan A. Nadelmann, *Cops Across Borders: The Internationalization of U.S. Criminal Law Enforcement* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993): 64.
27. See Lewis B. Lesley, "The International Boundary Survey from San Diego to the Gila River, 1849-1850," *Quarterly of the California Historical Society* 9:1 (1930): 3-15.
28. "Smuggling from Lower California," *The San Diego Union* (26 January 1871): 3.
29. John A. Price, *Tijuana: Urbanization in a Border Culture* (Notre Dame, Ind. and London: University

- well. His sponsorship of Proposition 187 turned a previously lagging political initiative (and his own candidacy for governor) into a winning issue at the polls. See Peter Schrag, *Paradise Lost: California's Experience, America's Future* (New York: The New Press, 1998); Daniel Weintraub, "Crime, Immigration Issues Helped Wilson, Poll Finds," *Los Angeles Times* (9 November 1994): A1+; and Pete Wilson, "Why Does the U.S. Government Continue to Reward Illegal Immigration ... At Such Cost to the American People?" (paid advertisement) *The New York Times* (10 August 1993): A11.
62. Vi Murphy, "Van Deerlin Hits at Illegal Aliens," *The San Diego Union* (17 February 1977a): A4.
 63. So-called border bandits were usually from Mexico and would attack unauthorized immigrants on the U.S. side of the boundary and then flee back into Tijuana.
 64. Editorial, "Border Peril Escalating," *The San Diego Union* (11 February 1977): B10.
 65. Jennifer Williamson, "Davis Urges Tight Fence, Patrols All Along Border," *The San Diego Union* (4 March 1977): A1.
 66. Donald H. Harrison, "Military Area Urged At Border," *The San Diego Union* (29 April 1977).
 67. George Ramos, "Illegal Alien Tide Continues to Rise," *The San Diego Union* (1 January 1978): B3.
 68. Vi Murphy, "New Fence May Rise On Border," *The San Diego Union* (26 March 1977): A1+.
 69. Vi Murphy, "U.S. Erects New Line of Defense," *The San Diego Union* (29 May 1977): A1+.
 70. George Ramos, "Border Patrol Swears In 100 Agents," *The San Diego Union* (4 October 1977): B1+.
 71. See, for example, Gene Cubbison, "Park With Flimsy Fence Leads Border Patrol's Trouble List," *The San Diego Union* (24 July 1978): B1+.
 72. Congressman Lionel Van Deerlin of San Diego, for example, opposed the Carter administration's proposal for a new fence (interview with Van Deerlin 1998). Regarding the San Diego City Council, see "Border Fence Plan Stirs Killea Protest," *The San Diego Union* (3 November 1978).
 73. John Donner, "1,300 Protest 'Tortilla Curtain,'" *The San Diego Union* (12 February 1979): A3.
 74. See Nevins, "California Dreaming," chapter 5.
 75. Michael D. Lopez, "Border Fence Plans Appear Doomed," *The San Diego Union* (17 March 1979): A1+.
 76. See "Border Fence Work, Debate Continue," *The San Diego Union*, (14 August 1979).
 77. Arthur Golden, "Gaping Holes Ripped In New Fence At Border," *The San Diego Union* (26 June 1980): A1+.
 78. This inability was, in large part, a manifestation of insufficient political will in Washington, D.C. to control the boundary. See H.B. Moehring, "Symbol versus Substance in Legislative Activity: The Case of Illegal Immigration," *Public Choice* 57 (1988): 287-294; and Kitty Calavita, "U.S. Immigration and Policy Responses: The Limits of Legislation," in Wayne Cornelius et al., eds., *Controlling Immigration: A Global Perspective* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1994): 55-82.
 79. Eston McMahon, "Border Tension Called 'Potentially Explosive,'" *The San Diego Union* (11 June 1979): B3.
 80. The dates of the series by Jon Standefer and Alex Drehsler are 6-10 January 1980.
 81. Daniel Wolf, *Undocumented Aliens and Crime: The Case of San Diego County* (San Diego: The Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, University of California, San Diego, 1988): 23.
 82. *Ibid.*, 23-24. Also see Tom Gorman, "Rising Illegal Alien Crime a Touchy Issue," *The San Diego Union* (17 February 1986): A1+.
 83. H.G. Reza, "Golding Wants U.S. to Pick Up Alien Tab," *Los Angeles Times* (San Diego County edition), (13 May 1986): 1+.
 84. See Wolf, *Undocumented Aliens and Crime*. For a discussion about attacks by U.S. nationals against Mexican immigrants in the San Diego area, see Leo Chavez, *Shadowed Lives: Undocumented Immigrants in American Society*, 2nd edition (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers, 1998); and Michael Novick, *White Lies, White Power: The Fight Against White Supremacy and Reactionary Violence* (Monroe, Maine: Common Courage Press, 1995).
 85. Bill Ott, "Smuggler Tells of Plan to Shift Drug Traffic to San Diego," *The San Diego Union* (23 October 1986): B5; and author interview with Peter Nunez, 1982-88 U.S. Attorney for Southern California and January 1990-January 1992 Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Enforcement, (24 September 1997, San Diego).
 86. See the editorial, "Drug War Must Be Won ... Starting at the Border," *The San Diego Union* (17 September 1986): B6.
 87. J.S. Meyer, "Sheriff Urges Posting Marines Along Border," *The San Diego Union* (6 April 1986): A3.

43. "Authorized Border Patrol force," 5 June 1940, File number 55853/320, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.
44. "Memorandum on Border Patrol in Tecate," 2 December 1940, File number 55853/320, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.
45. See Coppock, "History: Border Patrol," and Dunn, *The Militarization of the U.S.-Mexico Border, 1978-1992*, chapter 1. At the time, the Chula Vista sub-district was the Border Patrol's administrative geographical entity for greater San Diego. Today the entity is known as the San Diego Sector. The eastern boundary of the San Diego Sector is the same as that of San Diego County. See Figure 1.
46. Authorized Border Patrol force, 2 December 1943, File number 55853/320b, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.
47. It is probably safe to assume, at the very least, that, similar to the trend on the national scale, the level of staffing reached by the early 1940s in the San Diego area was roughly the level maintained through the 1960s, with a slight decline during the period of the mid-1940s until the mid-1950s. See Nevins, "California Dreaming," chapter 3.
48. The Bracero Program was a contract labor program. During its twenty-two years (1942-64), U.S. authorities contracted out five million braceros to growers and ranchers in twenty-four states. See Kitty Calavita, *Inside the State: The Bracero Program, Immigration, and the I.N.S.* (New York and London: Routledge, 1992).
49. Wayne A. Cornelius, *Mexican Migration to the United States: Causes, Consequences, and U.S. Responses* (Cambridge, Mass.: Center for International Studies, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1978): 18. The publication provides a good historical overview of Mexican migration to the United States. Also see Juan Gómez-Quiñones and David R. Maciel, "What Goes Around, Comes Around: Political Practice and Cultural Response in the Internationalization of Mexican Labor, 1890-1997," in David R. Maciel and María Herrera-Sobek, eds., *Culture Across Borders: Mexican Immigration and Popular Culture* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1998): 27-65.
50. For a discussion of "Operation Wetback," see Kitty Calavita, *Inside the State*.
51. Media coverage is an important indicator of this phenomenon. For an analysis of media coverage related to unauthorized immigration and the U.S.-Mexico boundary since the 1920s, see Nevins, "California Dreaming," chapter 6.
52. *Ibid.*
53. Barry Edmonston, Jeffrey S. Passel, and Frank D. Bean, "Perceptions and Estimates of Undocumented Migration to the United States," in Frank D. Bean et al., eds., *Undocumented Migration to the United States: IRCA and the Experience of the 1980s* (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute Press, 1990): 11-31; and Thomas J. Espenshade and Charles A. Calhoun, "An Analysis of Public Opinion toward Undocumented Immigration," *Population Research and Policy Review* 12 (1993): 189-224. For a general historical overview of immigration restrictionist sentiment in the United States, see Joe R. Feagin, "Old Poison in New Bottles: The Deep Roots of Modern Nativism," in Juan F. Perea, ed., *Immigrants Out!: The New Nativism and the Anti-Immigrant Impulse in the United States* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1997): 13-43.
54. The California State Assembly passed legislation in 1971 that established fines against employers with unauthorized workers. This legislation was the forerunner of the federal employer sanctions legislation that Congress passed in 1986. Jim McVicar, "Law Bans Hiring of Illegal Aliens," *The San Diego Union* (November 15, 1971): B1+. Also see Kitty Calavita, *California's "Employer Sanctions": The Case of the Disappearing Law*, Research Report Series, 39 (San Diego: Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, University of California, San Diego, 1982).
55. Author interview with Herman Baca, president of the Coalition for Chicano Rights (San Diego), 1970-present, (2 June 1998, National City, Calif., via phone).
56. See Nevins, "California Dreaming," chapter 6.
57. See, for example, Patrick Dillon, "Border Area Emerges As Heroin Hub," *The San Diego Union* (10 April 1975): B1; and Bill Parry, "Patrol Force Cuts Hurt Effectiveness," *The San Diego Union* (24 March 1975): A6.
58. "Mexico Aid Sought For Border Fence," *The San Diego Union* (23 November 1975): B9.
59. The county published the report in January 1977. San Diego County Border Task Force. "San Diego County Border Task Force Final Report," (San Diego: San Diego County Board of Supervisors, May 1980).
60. See Herzog, *Where North Meets South*.
61. James Cary, "Carter Discusses Border Problems," *The San Diego Union* (10 February 1977): A1+. Pete Wilson emerged in the early 1990s as the most significant immigration restrictionist and advocate for enhanced boundary enforcement in California, and perhaps in the United States as

88. See Wolf, *Undocumented Aliens and Crime*; and Chavez, *Shadowed Lives*. At the same time, several groups began protesting in the border area to pressure U.S. authorities to construct a stronger boundary-control infrastructure. U.S. authorities, at times, were involved in some of the anti-immigrant groups. Howard Ezell, for example, was the founder of Americans for Border Control, a group that he set up while INS Western Regional Commissioner to help further anti-unauthorized immigrant sentiment. *Ibid.*, 21 and 74-75; Katherine Webster, "Marchers Demand Strong Measures to Control Border," *The San Diego Union* (7 October 1990): B3; Ernesto Portillo, "Protests at Border Turn 1 Year Old," *The San Diego Union* (16 November 1990): B3; Novick, *White Lies, White Power*, 175-81; and Ricardo Chavira, "Hatred, Fear and Violence," *Time* (19 November 1990): 12+. Such local pro-restrictionist groups did not exist in a national vacuum, but rather in a sea of sympathy (at least in terms of anti-immigration sentiment). A 1990 Roper poll found 77 percent opposition among Americans to expanding the numbers of legal immigrants (among Hispanics or Latinos, the figure was 74 percent), 80 percent support for the deployment of troops along the U.S.-Mexico boundary to stymie the entrance of

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