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Book Review

Monica Munoz Martinez. *The Injustice Never Leaves You: Anti-Mexican Violence in Texas*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2018.

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With the strong and gripping title of the book, it is only fitting that Martinez starts off her work with a strong introduction. As she introduces the main themes of the book, she first starts off by describing a normal day in Cameron County in 1918. Miguel Garcia, a cattle rancher in South Texas, has not heard or seen his son, Florencio, and begins to worry for his safety. Martinez writes about the search Garcia carried on for his son and how he ended up finding his son's remains in the Texas brush; he suspected that his son was killed by the Texas Rangers (p. 1-3). This gripping introduction makes the following themes of the book easy to introduce. In this book, Martinez argues that the border region of Texas was founded violently by state policing with the use of strong beliefs of nation building and racial superiority. Violent intimidation, racial profiling, and murders were ways that the Texas Rangers, local law enforcement, Anglo citizens, and the State of Texas used to settle south and west Texas. Considering these facts, this book is a social history as it explores the social relations between Anglos, ethnic Mexicans, Mexican Americans, and African Americans. Martinez's purpose is not only to provide a history of the anti-Mexican violence and the state's role in it, but also to highlight the resistance that families took after violence struck their families in the form of vernacular histories and non-traditional historical publications like blogs, personal archives, oral histories, and personal research. Martinez acknowledges that without these non-traditional histories, her own book would not have been written. Additionally, the reason that the State of Texas now acknowledges these crimes, is because

families did not let the memories of family members die with the Texas Rangers and continued to pass their stories on to the next generation.

As Martinez begins her book, she does not hesitate to establish what heavy topics are going to be discussed and her argument is very clear: south and west Texas were founded by violent policing methods executed by the Texas Rangers and the Texas government through sanctioned abuse and state coverups. Through a clear and well-articulated narrative, Martinez explains how and why the state of Texas went through so much trouble intimidating and committing so much violence against Mexicans and Mexican Americans in the border region. She claims that the ulterior motive of the Texas government and the Texas Rangers was to use racial superiority and violence in order to drive Mexicans out to allow Anglo Americans in to establish agricultural and ranching empires.

Martinez organizes the book in very specific chapters that cover different topics and perspectives related to anti-Mexican violence. The first three chapters describe the histories of well-known lynching cases and their victims and the main contributors to this violence, such as the Mexican American war, bandit raids, and Anglo immigration from southern states. The following three chapters focus on institutionalized violence and its embracement by like-minded historians. Martinez supports her argument with primary source testimonies from descendants of Porvenir, Texas Massacre victims Jesus Bazan and Antonio Longoria, and personal archives like that of Kirby Warnock. Martinez also uses government documents like transcripts from the hearing in the Texas State legislature in which state representative Jose T. Canales attempted to bring the Texas Rangers to justice, Texas Ranger reports, letters and speeches from Texas governors, Oscar B. Colquitt and William P. Hobby, and even the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Secondary sources range from Walter Prescott Webb's book *The Texas Rangers*, exhibits from the Texas Ranger museum, to Americo Paredes' ballad "*With a Pistol in His Hand*."

All of Martinez's sources bring something important to the history of anti-Mexican violence in Texas. Her reliance on primary sources increases the quality of her work. As she explains in the book, most of the history that counters the well recited and popular one in Texas, is barely being recorded therefore not many secondary sources exist to counter the Anglicized history in Texas. Martinez, like those before her, is mostly relying on substantial, history-rich vernacular histories that have been passed down for many generations. She finds that many of these vernacular histories are corroborated by other survivors, social, and physical evidence. Because of this, the sources that Martinez uses are credible, valuable, and qualitative.

The Injustice Never Leaves You, is a gripping title with a gripping introduction and easy to read chapters makes for an interesting and insightful read for anyone interested in Texas history. With thorough background information and explanations, Martinez has written an accessible piece of literature that has the possibility to contribute to the field of history and to the general public. The book introduces little known instances of violent policing and the effects that it has afterwards. The common reader can observe those affects today and the legacies they left behind in social movements, school curriculums, museum exhibits, and historical landmarks across Texas. For historians, this book is useful as it is one of the first complete and well-rounded histories that compiles many testimonies, primary government documents, and opposing views on state sanctioned violence.

With the extensive use of primary and secondary sources, Martinez thoroughly reaches a strong conclusion to her equally strong argument. Supporting evidence was strong throughout the entire book and just when a reader may think more evidence did not exist, Martinez found more and supported her argument with it. Martinez did not omit important facts that may have collided with her argument, like when she mentions that bandit raids did take place in the border region by ethnic Mexicans with intent to rob, kill, and scare Anglo citizens. With this said, Martinez's tone throughout the book remains objective and balanced, a main aspect as to why this book is a refreshing read for historians. Personal bias is minimal, except for the instance where Martinez describes her experience in a Sabinal, Texas Dairy Queen where she observed an eerie picture of a man being hung from a house frame accompanied by pictures of Texas Rangers sprinkled around the restaurant.

Martinez has written a piece of text that will prove vital to many historians and people around Texas. Martinez mentions in her epilogue that there is much more work to be done in this field of history as the recording of countering histories is still taking place. It is a refreshing, eye opening, moving, and emotional read that every historian needs on their bookshelves. Rather than the common, watered down history that Texas history textbooks provide us, Martinez mentions racism, nationalism, and violence that made Texas what it is today. Martinez finishes her book with an open note. She acknowledges the past and how it has shaped Texas, but she also mentions the negative legacies it has allowed. By mentioning the ineffective policing methods of the United States Customs and Border Control and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, she is essentially claiming that ineffective policing of the border is still occurring, and it is still violent (p. 296-297). Martinez concludes her book with a comparison of events happened generations ago with the events we observe today and helps her reader to connect past and current events. This book allows us to ask: does Texas really have a problem with violent policing, and does it stem from this? Are there other factors? Have people of color always been the target because of these events? This strong conclusion can make a reader ask for more information, and more questions. It might be emotional at times, but the quality of the research and the elegance of the writing will allow anyone to enjoy this incredible book.