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US Moral Panics, Mexican Politics, and the Borderlands Origins of the War on Drugs, 1950–62

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Abstract
During the 1950s Californian civil society advocates and politicians developed a moral panic over youth narcotic use. One of the key elements of this moral panic was the assertion that most drugs came over the border and that the only solution to this problem was blackmailing Mexico through temporary closure of the border. The idea not only became a tenet of later drug policy, but also, in conjunction with pressure from Mexico's own moral reformers, forced regional politicians in Mexico to enact periodic clean up campaigns.

Keywords
1950s, Baja California Norte, California, drugs, Mexico, narcotics

On 6 August 1956 the US consul in Tijuana reported on the local reaction to a recent TV interview by the San Diego District Attorney. During the interview the District Attorney not only blamed Mexico for youth drug problems but also cast doubt on the Mexican authorities' willingness to control narcotics traffic. He argued that the solution was the prohibition of US youths from entering Mexico, the expansion of customs facilities at San Ysidro, and, if necessary, the temporary closure of the border. Only such a drastic measure, he claimed, would force the Mexican authorities take note. As the consul explained, national

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politicians ignored the slight. But local politicians could not. The Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) Governor of the newly-created state of Baja California Norte – Braulio Maldonado Sández – was already under pressure. On both sides of the border, newspapers and civil society organizations were accusing Maldonado of ordering the murder of the crusading Tijuana journalist, Manuel Acosta Meza, just two weeks earlier. The combination of factors had compelled the governor to act. During the first week of August, he had sacked the city police chief, announced that he was going to temporarily move the seat of government from Mexicali to Tijuana, and ordered an immediate cleanup of 'vice, official bribery and other conditions reflecting adversely on Tijuana'.[1]

This article examines California's 1950s moral panic over drug use and its consequences in the bordering Mexican state of Baja California Norte. As the consul suggested, the 1950s drug panic worked at two levels. In California both politicians and members of civil society developed a distinct set of arguments on how to stop the drug trade. These blamed US drug use on Mexican supply, targeted the problem of Mexican corruption, and suggested manipulation of the border as a means to blackmail the Mexican authorities to crack down on traffickers. By the late 1960s, these arguments had become cornerstones of US, and particularly Republican, counter-narcotics policy. In 1969 President Nixon even implemented the de facto shutting of the border in the form of Operation Intercept.

But California's moral panic not only formed the basis for Nixon's war on drugs, it also had serious contemporary effects south of the border. Here, again as the consul indicates, a complex interplay of exogenous and endogenous pressures emerged. Californian denouncements of Baja California Norte's corruption interwove with and strengthened homegrown, Mexican hostility to the ruling PRI party. Such opposition took the form of a critical public sphere, combative civil society organizations, and by the late 1950s, a powerful local branch of the opposition Partido Acción Nacional (PAN). Such groups, when combined with US pressure, often forced the local authorities to enact periodic, well-publicized crackdowns on narcotics traffickers, corrupt cops, and addicts.

By examining the dynamics and effects of California's 1950s moral panic, this article brings together, works off, and revises two distinct historical traditions. The first is the scholarship on the USA's war on drugs. Though there is still debate over the origins, aims, rhythms and geographies of the country's anti-narcotics efforts, recent works have pinpointed the 1950s as a decisive point of inflection.[2] During this

1 National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Record Group (RG)59, 1955–59, Report of Robert Hale, 6 August 1956. Baja California Norte had been made a state in 1953. L.D. Taylor Hansen, 'La transformación de Baja California en estado, 1931–1952', *Estudios Fronterizos*, 1, 1 (2000).

2 For example, P. Nicholas and A. Churchill, 'The Federal Bureau of Narcotics, the States, and the Origins of Modern Drug Enforcement in the United States, 1950–1962', *Contemporary Drugs Problems*, 39 (2012), 595–640; M. Lassiter, 'Impossible Criminals: The Suburban Imperatives of America's War on Drugs', *Journal of American History*, 102, 1 (June 2015), 126–40; K.J. Frydl, *The Drug Wars in America, 1940–1973* (Cambridge 2013); M.D. Lassiter, 'Pushers, Victims and the Lost Innocence of White Suburbia: California's War on narcotics during the 1950s', *Journal of Urban History*, 41, 5 (2015), 787–807; E. Schneider, *Smack, Heroin and the American City* (Philadelphia, PA 2008), 51–74;

decade, politicians, bureaucrats, and members of civil society not only established a new, and radically more punitive, judicial framework, but also developed a distinct underlying 'narrative' or 'cultural script' to describe the drug trade and justify these legal changes. This narrative contained two elements – the African-American or Mexican-American drug pusher and the white, often female, drug user or victim. As Matthew Lassiter argues, this 'pusher–victim' narrative emerged in the white suburbs of California and other southern states, and 'fused the categories of race, gender, class, age and space in potent ways'. It would, he argues, form the basis for the inequalities of mass incarceration of the succeeding decades.[3] This article builds on such findings, but pushes them further. Here, we argue that a third and crucial element of this narrative was the Mexican drug trafficker. This narrative underlay a series of suggested approaches to drug use, which also emerged during the 1950s. These stressed the idea that anti-narcotics efforts should squeeze supply south of the border, that Mexican authorities were often unwilling to do this, and that manipulation of border traffic and trade could coerce them into action.

The second is the research on Mexico's own drug war. Early estimations of Mexico's anti-narcotics efforts highlighted the USA's pervasive influence. Scholars focused on a handful of moments when combinations of political pressure and economic blackmail pushed Mexico towards more hardline policies. They also emphasized the USA's financial and tactical support for police and military anti-narcotics campaigns.[4] Yet recently, a handful of scholars have started to reframe and nuance this tale of diplomatic dependency. Some have stressed Mexico's home-grown counter-narcotics rhetoric, which rested on endogenous prejudices against indigenous groups, female healers and Chinese immigrants and could predate, outstrip, and shape the USA's own anti-drug propaganda. Others have argued that exterior pressures may have inspired more aggressive narcotics policies, but they were also shaped and implemented according to more pressing domestic logics

Matthew Pembleton, 'Imagining' a Global Sovereignty: U.S. Counternarcotic Operations in Istanbul during the Early Cold War and the Origins of the Foreign 'War on Drugs', *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 18, 2 (2016), 28–63.

3 Schneider, *Smack*, 50; Lassiter, 'Pushers', 788; Lassiter, 'Impossible Criminals'. For the inequalities of mass incarceration see M. Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York, NY, 2010); H.A. Thompson, 'Why Mass Incarceration Matters: Rethinking Crisis, Decline, and Transformation in Postwar American History', *Journal of American History*, 97, 3 (2010), 703–34.

4 The three key dates were 1940 (when a US narcotics embargo shut down Mexico's attempt to create a state narcotics monopoly), 1947–8 (when Federal Bureau of Narcotics head Harry Anslinger used his standing at the United Nations to push Mexico into increasing its campaign against opium poppy growers and switching anti-narcotics operations from the Department of Health to the Federal Judicial Police), and 1969 (when Operation Intercept forced Mexico into closer anti-drugs cooperation with the USA). W.O. Walker, *Drug Control in the Americas* (Albuquerque, NM 1989); L. Astorga Almanza, *Drogas sin fronteras* (Mexico City 2003); M. Flores Guevara, 'La alternativa mexicana al marco internacional de prohibición de drogas durante el Cardenismo', unpublished BA thesis, El Colegio de Mexico (2013); R. Pérez Montfort, *Tolerancia y prohibición: Aproximaciones a la historia social y cultural de las drogas en México 1840–1940* (Mexico City 2016) 162–8, 282–307; F. Enciso, 'Los fracasos del chantaje: Regimen de Prohibicion de Drogas y Narcotráfico', in A. Alvarado and M. Serrano (eds), *Los grandes problemas de México: Seguridad Nacional y Seguridad Interior* (Mexico City 2010), 61–104.

of institution-building, state-formation, and the repression of rural revolts.[5] This article acknowledges such conclusions but also extends them down to the subnational level. At the border, localized moral panics – perhaps more than federal US drug policy - could shape efforts to the south. Yet, even here domestic politics played a decisive role. In Baja California Norte, civil society organizations, newspapers, and opposition politicians fed, read, rejigged, and re-deployed US denouncements in order to press for political change. And to survive, local PRI politicians had to act, firing corrupt cops, arresting major drug traffickers, and operating periodic moralization and clean up campaigns.

During the 1950s, a series of moral panics over the use of heroin and marijuana beset California politics. Like most moral panics, they had some basis in observed reality, but were prone to hyperbole, allowed limited rational debate, and instead extended throughout a series of self-enforcing arenas.[6] No doubt, the concept of the moral panic has certain analytical limits.[7] But, for our purpose, the diachronic approach first employed by Stanley Cohen is useful.[8] As in our case, it can account

5 For those that have emphasized endogenous pressures, see P. Montfort, *Tolerancia*, 71–6; E. Carey, *Women Drug Traffickers: Mules, Bosses, and Organized Crime* (Albuquerque, NM 2015); I. Campos, *Home grown: Marijuana and the Origins of Mexico's war on Drugs* (Chapel Hill, NC 2012); B.T. Smith, 'Drug Policies in Mexico, 1900–1980' in B.C. Labate, C. Cavnar and T. Rodrigues (eds), *Drug Policies and the Politics of Drugs in Latin America* (Cham 2016), 33–53; I. Campos, 'A diplomatic failure: the Mexican role in the demise of the 1940 Reglamento Federal de Toxicomanías', *Third World Quarterly* (2017). For those that have emphasized the instrumental use of drug policy, see C. Pérez Ricart, 'U.S. pressure and Mexican anti-drugs efforts from 1940 to 1980: Importing the war on drugs?' in W. Pansters, B.T. Smith and P. Watt (eds) *Beyond the Drug War in Mexico: Human Rights, the Public Sphere and Justice* (London 2017); C. Pérez Ricart, 'Las agencias antinarcóticas de los Estados Unidos y la construcción transnacional de la guerra contra las drogas en México (1938–1978)', unpublished Ph.D dissertation, Freie Universität Berlin (2016); A. Aviña, 'Group Blood: Drugs, Death Squads and the Dirty War Origins of the Mexican Narco-State', Paper given at University of Warwick Conference on Drugs, Politics and Society: The Regional History of the Mexican Drug Trade, 19–20 June 2017; A. Cedillo, 'The Drugged Condor: The Transformation of Outlaw Peasants into Counterinsurgency Targets in Northwestern Mexico during the 1970s', Paper given at University of Warwick Conference on Drugs, Politics and Society: The Regional History of the Mexican Drug Trade, 19–20 June 2017.

6 Undoubtedly, there was drug dealing in Tijuana and some trafficking over the Mexico-California border. But Californian estimates were way in excess of the traffic's significance. The San Diego Customs Office reports from the early 1950s demonstrate a decline in cross-border traffic and a rise in the imports of Asian heroin. In fact, in 1952 the primary concern on the California–Mexico border was the smuggling of rare birds. NARA (Riverside), RG 36, Annual Reports of San Diego Customs Office, 1948–1954. Furthermore, contrary to assertions, marijuana rarely led to heroin addiction. Most addicts were from minority not suburban white populations, most addicts were in their late twenties not their teens, and California only accounted for around five per cent of US addicts. Schneider, *Smack*, 75–97.

7 C. Bennet, 'Drugs, Moral Panics and the Dispositive', *Journal of Sociology*, [in press] DOI: 10.1177/1440783317727877, 1–19 ; A. Rohloff and S. Wright, 'Moral Panic and Social Theory. Beyond the Heuristic', in *Current Sociology*, 58, 3 (2010), 403–19; D. Garland, 'On the concept of moral panic', in *Crime, Media, Culture*, 4, 1 (2008), esp. 21–5; M. David, A. Rohlhoff, J. Petley and J. Hughes, 'The idea of the moral panic – ten dimensions of dispute', in *Crime, Media, Culture*, 7, 3 (2011), 215–28.

8 S. Cohen, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* (London 1972). This diachronic approach contrasts with the attributional approach developed by E. Goode and N. Ben-Yehuda, *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance* (Oxford 1994). See C. Critcher, 'Moral Panic Analysis: Past, Present and Future', in *Sociology Compass*, 2, 4 (2008). Several studies attempt to connect Cohen's original concept

for multiple agents with diverse interests and motivations – media that search to boost profits, politicians focused on electoral gain, and civic groups intent on drawing moral boundaries. Despite their differences, they all presented themselves as 'right-thinking people' and 'socially accredited experts'; united they manned 'the moral barricades'. At the same time, it can also explain how the framing practices of these groups coalesce and mutually reinforce one another to form moral panics. Together these spokespersons became the 'primary definers' of the state drug 'problem' and suggest both the nature of the debate and viable solutions.[9] Furthermore such moral panics are not just hot air; they 'make things happen'.[10] As they 'are condensed political struggles' around wider discourses of law, order and security, they have the capacity to trigger broader legal, institutional and political shifts.[11] In the UK during the 1970s, the moral panic about mugging fed off wider discourses about crime, race, and youth and then eased the way for a conservative backlash.[12] During the 1980s, the moral panic over crack cocaine helped usher in mass incarceration.[13]

Californian alarm over Mexican drug trafficking rested on both a culturally-constructed black legend of border permissiveness and a regular rhythm of one-off panics.[14] These went back to the 1910s, when they focused on the allure of Chinese opium dens and horse-racing.[15] During the following decade, they intertwined with anti-alcohol discourses and peaked with the uproar surround the so-called 'Shame Suicides' of 1926. In the wake of the deaths, the *Los Angeles Times* called Tijuana the 'Gomorrah of Mexican cities'.[16] The end of prohibition and the Mexican decision to prohibit gambling dissipated the appeal of these border fright stories. But, they reappeared with force during the 1940s, and now focused on the mafia's

to recent theorizing, see e.g. Bennett, 'Drugs, moral panics and the dispositive', Rohloff and Wright, 'Moral Panic and Social Theory'.

9 Cohen, *Folk Devils*, 28; Hall et al., *Policing the Crisis*, 57–60. Particularly relevant for our case is the influential study by S. Hall, C. Critcher, T. Jefferson, J. Clarke and B. Roberts, *Policing the Crisis. Mugging, the State, and Law and Order* (London 1978). For Mexico, see W.G. Pansters, *Política y Poder in Puebla. Formación y ocaso del cacicazgo avilacamachista, 1937–1987* (Mexico City 1998), 248–60.

10 Garland, 'On the concept of moral panic', 15.

11 See Stanley Cohen in the introduction to the third edition, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* (London and New York, NY 2011), xliv.

12 Hall et al., *Policing the Crisis*.

13 See his *Mass Imprisonment: Social Causes and Consequences* (London 2000).

14 There is extensive literature on this black legend. H.F. Berumen, *Tijuana la Horrible: Entre la historia y el mito* (Mexicali, 2003). For good examples of cultural works, which helped create the black legend, see D. Hammett, *The Golden Horseshoe and other stories* (New York, NY 2016); O. Hall, *Corpus of Joe Bailey* (New York, NY 1953); C. Graham, *Border Town* (New York, NY 1952 edn); R. Chandler, *The Chandler Collection. 2: The High Window, The Long Good-bye, Playback* (London 1986); *The Champ* (directed by Franco Zeffirelli).

15 *Evening Tribune* (27 May 1916); *San Diego Union* (30 May 1916); *San Diego Union* (30 May 1916); R.E. Robinson, 'Vice and Tourism in the US-Mexico Border: A Comparison of Three Communities in the Era of U.S. Prohibition', unpublished. Ph.D, Arizona State University (2002), 104. In 1920 the board of Temperance, Prohibition and Public Morals of the Methodist Church declared that Tijuana was 'a mecca for prostitutes, booze sellers, gamblers and other American vermin'. J.A. Price, *Tijuana: Urbanization in a Border Culture* (Notre Dame, IN 1973), 53.

16 V. Cabeza de Vaca and J. Cabeza de Vaca, 'The "Shame Suicides" and Tijuana', *Journal of the Southwest,* 43, 4 (2001), 603–35. Robinson, 'Vice', 219–25, 219.

supposed influence and the growth of the prostitution industry. By the end of the decade, politicians and civil society organizations were highlighting the risk of venereal disease infecting US marines and pushing the authorities to make Tijuana off limits to service men.[17]

Like previous scares, the drug panic was rooted in the print media. Starting in the early 1950s, borderland newspapers, like the *San Diego Union,* the *Evening Tribune,* the *Calexico Chronicle,* and the *Coronado Eagle and Journal,* ran an increasing number of stories on drug use, drug peddling, and drug trafficking. From 1940 to 1950, the *San Diego Union* published 1645 articles on narcotics. In the following decade, the paper published nearly triple that amount. Over 30 per cent of these articles made direct reference to Mexico and over a quarter mentioned the city of Tijuana.[18] By the end of the decade, other California newspapers had started to replicate the *San Diego Union*'s emphasis. Between 1950 and 1958, just over five per cent of *Los Angeles Times* articles on drugs mentioned Mexico. Over the next two years, 13 per cent of such articles made the link. In comparison, other major US newspapers failed to highlight the connection. Only three per cent of *New York Times* and two per cent of the *Washington Post*'s drugs articles referenced Mexico.[19]

To establish the link between drug use and Mexico, newspapers used three approaches – sensationalist news stories, investigative reports, and campaigning editorials. Minor stories of drug busts or petty drug deals often stressed the source of the narcotics. On 18 June 1953, the *Coronado Eagle and Journal* reported the arrest of a high school student with a couple of marijuana cigarettes. 'Tijuana dope bust' read the rather misleading headline.[20] When the Los Angeles police arrested a gang of professional roller skaters turned marijuana peddlers, the *San Diego Union* ignored the strange backstory and instead ran the tale under '5 Indicted in LA, Tijuana Dope Ring'.[21] News reports on congressional hearings were also framed to emphasize the Mexican connection. In May 1953, the *Los Angeles Times* headed its report on the Governor's Commission on Organized Crime with 'Mexico Blamed for Flood of Heroin coming into State', neglected to mention the report's mentions of European or Asian heroin, and instead cherry-picked alarmist accusations of a

17 For moral panic over the mafia, see J.L. Albini, *The American Mafia: Genesis of a Legend* (New York, NY 1971); M. Woodiwiss and D. Hobbs, 'Organized Evil and the Atlantic Alliance: Moral Panics and the Rhetoric of Organized Crime Policing in America and Britain', *Journal of Criminology*, 49, 1 (2009), 106–28. *San Diego Union,* 12 November 1944; NARA, RG59, 1945–49, Waldo Bailey to Secretary of State, 6 October 1948. The *San Diego Journal* opined, 'Tijuana emerges not as a colourful tourist lure with striped burros, fancy souvenirs, jai alai games, dog races and languorous Latin entertainment. Instead, it is seen clearly starkly as a source of human pollution, of utter depravity'.

18 Between 1950 and 1960, there were 4722 articles in the San Diego Union that mentioned 'narcotics'. 1427 also mentioned Mexico. 1291 also mentioned Tijuana. *San Diego Union* (1 January 1950–1 January 1960).

19 Search for 'narcotics' and 'Mexico' in *Los Angeles Times* (1 January 1950–1 January 1959); *Los Angeles Times* (1 January 1959–1 January 1961. *New York Times* (1 January 1950–1 January 1960); *Washington Post* (1 January1950–1 January 1960).

20 *Coronado Eagle and Journal* (18 June 1953).

21 *San Diego Union* (12 May 1960).

'bumper crop of Mexican opium' and the unsubstantiated rumour of a 'top German scientist' processing the crop into narcotics.[22]

Newspaper editors complemented these stories with hysterical investigative reports on drug use south of the border. The *San Diego Union* started the trend in early 1950 by publishing a series of pieces on drug gang vendettas in Tijuana. The reporter followed the career and bloody demise of the minor hoodlum, Antonio Piños Oros, and concluded that the city was 'like the Chicago of Al Capone'.[23] Two years later, the paper followed up the investigations with a series of articles by Gene Fuson, who posed as a drug addict to buy narcotics in Tijuana. Here, he explained how 'hypes' (heroin addicts) and 'weedheads' taught him the street lingo ('a mixture of gangsterese and jivetalk'), the 'mannerisms of a head', and how to walk with the 'peculiar shuffle of the Pachuco'. After picking up some tips, he visited 'junky alley' where he tried to purchase some 'H (heroin)' but was only offered 'secas (marijuana)'. The next day Fuson's search for 'the action' was more successful. He went to an underground bar where teenagers drank and smoked or as they allegedly put it 'lush[ed] for a double kick', a sailor made love in a back room, and a bathroom attendant sold pornography. At first, he admitted 'business was rotten and the atmosphere matched it; a compound of stale beer, cooking onions, stale smoke'. But by 2 a.m. teenagers started to appear. Most were Mexican-Americans 'dressed in the Pachuco uniform of Levis, flying jackets with the collars turned up and "shag" haircuts'. Within an hour the place was full, a five-piece jazz band had started to play and the bar had transformed into a, 'shouting, struggling, jitterbugging mass of humanity'. The dancing was, the journalist concluded, fuelled by marijuana, which was sold by 'the Duchess', 'a cadaverous [man] with acne scars and bushy hair'.[24]

Seven years later, the *Los Angeles Times* ran a similar if even more influential series. In early 1959 the editors sent Gene Sherman to the border to investigate 'the repeated stories of drug seizures that could be traced back to Mexico'. Here, he spent three months interviewing 'dope peddlers, addicts, public officials, legislators and members of the underworld' before publishing the series in July. In one article he described how a Los Angeles teenager – 'blonde, cute as a button' – had become addicted to 'Mexican marijuana'. In another he visited Tijuana, where he was offered marijuana, 'sex movies', 'a live show... two girls. In a private house. Just for you.' In subsequent articles, he interviewed a former heroin addict and peyote consumer who had seen 'lots of amoeba and a big spider' and a 16-year-old San Diego girl who was not only 'strikingly beautiful' but also crossed the border three times a day to get her fix.[25] The combination of titillation, exploitation and xenophobia was a hit; politicians lined up to congratulate the *Times* on its series, and

22 *Los Angeles Times* (11 May 1953).
23 *San Diego Union* (28 February 1950).
24 *San Diego Union* (2 February 1952); *San Diego Union* (3 February 1952). See other articles in series by Fuson in *San Diego Union* (27 January 1952–6 February 1952.
25 *Los Angeles Times* (12–17 July 1959).

Sherman won a Pulitzer for the pieces – grouped together under the title 'A Mexican Monkey on Our Back'.[26]

Finally, newspapers undergirded news stories and investigative reports with strongly worded editorials, which pressed politicians to act on their assertions of the links between drug use and Mexico. In the wake of Sherman's articles, the *Los Angeles Times* was particularly pushy. On 12 July, the paper introduced the journalist's series with the editorial 'Where Narcotics Come From'. Though the bulk of the reporting was actually done in the USA, the editors concluded that the main 'take home' from the articles 'besides the grisliness of addiction and the depravity of the traffic' was 'that Mexico is the source of most of South California's illicit narcotics'. Less than a week later, the paper again urged politicians to take note of the articles, temporarily close the border, and 'help make the boundary of the U.S. and Mexican Californias the dividing line between respectable prosperity and squalid depravity'.[27]

Outside print journalism, the mass media's depiction of the links between drug use and Mexico was more muted. Federal control of film and TV was more developed. Harry Anslinger disapproved of onscreen portrayals of drug use and at least one TV documentary 'on the easy purchase of drugs in Tijuana' was dropped at the last minute 'because of the Good Neighbour Policy'.[28] But, gradually a range of different genres started to investigate the border drug trade. Between 1949 and 1950, studios released three noir flicks, *Borderline*, *Federal Man*, and *Johnny Stool Pigeon*, which all concerned 'real life' investigations into narcotics smuggling at the US–Mexico border. Seven years later, they put out *The Tijuana Story*, which concerned the death of a Tijuana journalist, Meza Acosta, and insinuated the responsibility of the Baja California Norte governor. The film was so incendiary, it was banned in Mexico. Finally, in the late 1950s there was a rash of films on the Mexican drug trade, ranging from trashy and xenophobic teen exploitation films like *Eighteen and Anxious* (1957) and *The Young Captives* (1959) to more subtly subversive movies like *Touch of Evil* (1958) where the hero was a Mexican drugs cop (admittedly played by Charlton Heston) married to a blonde, American woman.[29] By the late 1950s TV stations had also started to show depictions of the trade. In November 1959 KRCA showed three telecasts entitled 'Heroin' about the 'problem of narcotics in Mexico and California'. In the most explosive episode an undercover reporter purchased heroin on a Tijuana street and interviewed a former Mexican cop, who explained the ways that the authorities protected the trade.[30]

As we shall see, the media's focus on border drug trafficking resonated with groups on both sides of the border. In Mexico, journalists and citizens both fed and

26 *Los Angeles Times* (12 March 1960).
27 *Los Angeles Times* (12 July 1959); *Los Angeles Times* (19 July 1959).
28 *Desert Sun* (20 December 1958).
29 *Borderline* (1950); *Federal Man* (1950); *Johnny Stool Pigeon* (1949); *Tijuana Story* (1957); *Eighteen and Anxious* (1957); *The Young Captives* (1959); *Touch of Evil* (1958).
30 *Desert Sun* (14 November 1959); *Los Angeles Times* (15 November 1959).

fed off the accusations. In California, it attracted two groups in particular. The first were moralizing civil society organizations.[31] These included women's organizations, like the General Federation of Women's Clubs and the Women's Civic League, business organizations like the Rotary Club, the Lions, and various Chambers of Commerce, parents' groups, and veterans' organizations. Together these groups wrote complaints to politicians and newspapers, thanked papers for their alarmist coverage, held public meetings to highlight the trend, and collected vast numbers of signatures for petitions designed to force politicians to crack down on the traffic.[32] San Diego's Junior Chamber of Commerce even organized its own ad hoc investigation of the Tijuana vice scene. In May 1957 a handful of members crossed the border, purchased pornographic literature, and reported that, 'narcotics in the form of marijuana, heroin and other opium derivatives are easily available to any juvenile'.[33]

The second were low-level elected officials from border communities. These comprised law enforcement officials, like the San Diego sheriff Bert Strand, school board heads like Richard Barbour, who declared Tijuana 'probably the most sinful city in the Western world', and judicial appointees, like the San Diego District Attorney, Don Keller, and the Superior Court judge 'Hanging John Hewicker' aka 'Blood John' who laughed uproariously when his fellow judges presented him with a miniature guillotine on his retirement.[34] These figures realized that election depended on a hardline law-and-order stance and that the easiest target was Mexico. In 1952 the mayor of Tijuana wryly observed that, 'every time there are elections in San Diego, most of the candidates try to use the city of Tijuana and the charges of drug smuggling for campaign material in their favour'.[35] Two years later a former soldier and FBI agent, Hank Adams – dubbed (quite possibly by himself) 'The One Man Army of Tulagi' – proved the mayor's point. Not content with boasting that he had killed 10 Japanese soldiers in the Second World War, he tried to become San Diego County sheriff on the platform that he would 'sort out the problem of kids going to Tijuana for drugs'. These same figures also made frequent public declarations, which blamed crime and drug

31 For the rise of the suburban right and these groups, see L. McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton, NJ 2001); M. Nickerson, *Mothers of Conservatism: Women and the Postwar Right* (Princeton, NJ 2012).

32 *San Diego Union* (29 July 1958); *Los Angeles Times* (4 March 1952); *San Diego Union* (22 December 1952); Los Angeles Times (21 July 1960); San Diego Union (10 February 1950); *San Diego Union* (12 February 1952); *Juvenile Delinquency, hearings before the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency of the Committee on the Judiciary US Senate, Pursuant to S. Res 89 Investigation of Juvenile Delinquency in the United States*, 24 and 27 September and 4 and 5 October 1954 (Washington DC 1955), 70. They even wrote to the Mexican president. Archivo General de la Nación (AGN), Adolfo Ruiz Cortines (ARC), 422/1, Kenneth Beam to President Ruiz Cortines, 20 February 1953; AGN, Adolfo López Mateos (ALM), 422/2, Patricia Reveles to President López Mateos, 6 April 1960; AGN, ALM, 422/3 Marian A. Herzer to President López Mateos, 6 June 1960.

33 *San Diego Union* (9 May 1957).

34 *San Diego Union* (12 December 1956); *Noticias* (20 July 1958); *San Diego Union* (6 December 1960); *San Diego Union* (28 February 1952); *San Diego Union* (28 April 1955); *San Diego Union* (20 November 1956); *San Diego and Point Magazine*, February 1957, 33.

35 *San Diego Union* (3 February 1952).

use on the proximity to the Mexican border. (Hewicker, for example, claimed that there were only two reasons to go to Tijuana: 'to get shot or to buy narcotics').[36] And, as we shall see, they often used their very limited authority to try blackmail Mexican authorities into action.

Together, the accounts of journalists, civil society spokespersons and politicians fed into large-scale public investigations. Some were local grand jury trials. In June 1951 there was a San Diego grand jury on marijuana use among local youths; two years later a Los Angeles grand jury looked into a Tijuana-based drug ring, which exchanged stolen cars for narcotics; and in 1960 Imperial County held its own inquiry into local drug dealing and concluded that 'four big dealers in Mexicali supplied almost all the narcotics passing through Imperial Valley'.[37] Others were state-level studies, like the Special Crime Study Commission of the early 1950s, and the 1960's Special Study Commission on Narcotics.[38] Others still were federal inquiries, like the hearings on juvenile delinquency held in cities throughout the southwest in 1955 and again in 1959.[39] The federal hearings in particular were vast, public set pieces, which gave California newspapermen, politicians, civil leaders, and bureaucrats space and opportunity to stake out their assessment of the border drug problem and the possible solutions. These assessments were, in turn, refracted and amplified through a tub-thumping, local press. As the example suggests, the media, the principal spokespersons or 'primary definers', and the institutions, which fed and developed California's drug panic, were intimately related. Sheriffs pushed border stoppages at Women's Clubs meetings; district attorneys publicly praised newspaper investigations; and reporters performed star turns at senate hearings. Such a tight skein offered little space for debate or nuance.

Instead, California's anti-narcotics crusaders stressed four, relatively consistent, claims. First, they argued that the principal reason for Californian drug use was the state's proximity to the Mexican border. On the one hand, this aided smuggling. Officials repeatedly claimed that all the marijuana and 50 to 75 per cent of the

36 *Coronado Eagle and Journal* (3 June 1954); *San Diego Union* (1 December 1955).

37 *Sacramento Bee* (26 June 1951); *San Diego Union* (20 February 1952); *Los Angeles Times* (25 February 1953); RG170, Box 161, Report of James Boyd, 21 July 1960.

38 *The Special Crime Study Commission on Organized Crime* (Sacramento, CA 1953); *Final Report of the Special Study Commission on Narcotics* (Sacramento, CA 1961).

39 *Hearings before the Subcommittee on Improvements in the Federal Criminal Code of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States Senate, Eighty-Fourth Congress, First Session Pursuant to S. Res 67, Illicit Narcotics traffic, November 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 1955* (Washington, DC 1956); *Hearings before the Subcommittee on Improvements in the Federal Criminal Code of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States Senate, Eighty-Fourth Congress, First Session on Illicit Narcotics Traffic, June 2, 3, 4, 1955* (Washington, DC 1955); *Hearings before the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency of the Committee on the Judiciary, US Senate, Eighty Fourth Congress, First Session on S. 959 A Bill to Prohibit Juveniles, April 28, 29 and 30 1955* (Washington, DC 1955); *Hearings before the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency of the Committee on the Judiciary United States Senate, Eighty Sixth Congress, First Session Pursuant to S. Res. 54 (Narcotics, Crossing the Mexican Border by Juveniles, Juvenile Gangs, Juvenile Courts, and Community Programs in LA, San Diego and San Francisco , California) November 9–20 1959* (Washington, DC 1960).

heroin in California was trafficked in from Mexico.[40] As early as 1951, the San Diego Attorney General called Tijuana a 'nest of marijuana and heroin'.[41] By the end of the decade, such opinions were even more commonplace. A 1959 *Los Angeles Times* editorial on the provenance of local narcotics was even read out at the subsequent subcommittee on juvenile delinquency. 'Like the cancer it is, the illicit narcotics problem spreads with deadly insidious certainty from its origin. Nationally, the origin may be Communist China, Europe, or the Middle East. In Los Angeles, it primarily is Mexico.' Visual aids underpinned these assertions. In the same hearing one witness even produced bundles of marijuana wrapped in the *Sol de Sinaloa* to prove his point. On the other hand, if state sources were 'dry', young Californians could acquire drugs by means of a quick trip over the border. 'It is no more difficult to buy opium and heroin in Mexican border towns than it is to purchase a pair of boots'.[42] When Fuson, the *San Diego Union* journalist, posed as a 'head' to score drugs in Tijuana he found that the situation 'was literally running rampant'. In one brothel alone he had seen over 200 juveniles involved in a 'marijuana party'. The attractions of border heroin were even more insidious. Again, according to Fuson, taxi drivers offered to drive curious Americans to so-called 'shooting galleries' located in shacks on the edge of the city where 'doctors' or 'practical nurses' would help the out-of-towners hit their first vein.[43]

Second, these activists started to focus their fears on the carefully-crafted image of the border kingpin. Candidates to play the role were numerous. Contrary to Californian assertions, drug trafficking in northern Mexico was, in fact, relatively horizontal and organized by at least a dozen small, often family-run operations.[44] During the early 1950s, southern Californian newspapers put forward a variety of contenders including José Méndez García (shot in 1951), Telesforo Parra López (forced underground after the break up of the cars-for-drugs ring in 1953), and perhaps best of all governor Maldonado's nephew, Solomon Rodrigo Sández Jr. (sentenced to seven years in 1955).[45] But during the 1955 juvenile delinquency hearings, Californian politicians settled on the figure of Miguel 'Big Mike' Barragán Bautista. During the November hearings in Los Angeles, 'Big Mike' dominated proceedings. Heroin addicts testified that they often bought their personal supplies at 'Big Mike's'

40 *Los Angeles Times* (27 August 1959); *Los Angeles Times* (13 July 1959); *Hearings Before the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States Senate, Eighty Sixth Congress First Session, Part 5 (Narcotics, Crossing the Mexican Border Juveniles, Juvenile Gangs, Juvenile Courts, and Community Programs in Los Angeles, San Diego and San Francisco, Calif.) (Washington DC 1960)*, 596, 598.

41 *Madera Tribune* (12 December 1951).

42 *Hearings Before the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States Senate, Eighty Sixth Congress First Session, Part 5*, 622, 677, 768.

43 *San Diego Union* (3 February 1952); *Hearings before the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency of the Committee on the Judiciary, US Senate, Eighty Fourth Congress, First Session on S. 959 A Bill to Prohibit Juveniles, April 28, 29 and 30 1955*, 30, 31.

44 Schneider, *Smack*, 78. W. Pansters and B.T. Smith, 'The War on Baja California: Drug Traffickers and User Culture in Tijuana', Paper given at University of Warwick Conference on Drugs, Politics and Society: The Regional History of the Mexican Drug Trade, 19–20 June 2017.

45 *Noticias* (18 August 1951); *Los Angeles Times* (25 February 1953); RG170, Box 161, 14 November 1955. G.W. Cunnningham to Carlos Franco Sodi.

small four-room residence in Colonia Independencia. ('If Mike deals with you, there is no finger.') The head of San Diego customs confirmed that he had known 'Big Mike' for years and another narcotics cop claimed that 'Big Mike's' heroin network spread as far as east Texas. Such influence had bought the trafficker 'a ranch', 'racing dogs', 'the largest house of ill repute in Tijuana' (where his wife was the madam and also principal heroin dealer), and a taxi rank. Over the next decade, 'Big Mike' would reappear regularly in local newspapers and judicial hearings.[46]

Third, California's anti-narcotics moralizers concluded that the principal reason for the availability of narcotics was not U.S. demand but Mexican corruption. The newspaper reporters were particularly outspoken. Fuson suggested that the Mexican government needed to 'pay more than lip service to its narcotics laws' and Sherman wrote that Tijuana was a 'vile, vice strewn sump hole of civilization pandering to the lowest impulses of humanity riddled with graft and corruption' and called the claims that Mexicans were attempting to quash the trade 'laughable'.[47] Summarizing the thinking quite succinctly, a follow-up editorial concluded that the 'There is no reason why northern good living should not overflow the frontier, no reason except the tolerance on the southern side of the most inhuman of human indecencies'.[48] But, increasingly law enforcement officials also presented similar views. Keller, the San Diego District Attorney, repeatedly questioned the willingness of the Mexican authorities to arrest drug traffickers. And, weaving together the figure of the border kingpin and assumptions of Mexican corruption, LA Police Chief Parker claimed that the Tijuana police's inability to arrest 'Big Mike' demonstrated their 'attitude of great indulgence' towards the trade.[49]

Fourth, the California authorities viewed the solution to these problems as the manipulation of US–Mexican border traffic. Initially, the measure was preventative; officials proposed cutting youth drug use by closing the border to young American tourists. In 1951 the head of the San Diego Grand Jury suggested the move, which was quickly applauded by the San Diego District Attorney.[50] A year later, the Customs Bureau agreed to register unaccompanied youngsters crossing the border.[51] Soon after, the San Diego Sherriff took matters into his own hands

46 *Hearings before the Subcommittee on Improvements in the Federal Criminal Code of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States Senate, Eighty-Fourth Congress, First Session Pursuant to S. Res 67, Illicit Narcotics traffic, November 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 1955* (Washington, DC 1956), 3588–612, 3694–6, 3762–86. For his subsequent appearances see *Los Angeles Times* (2 April 1960); *Los Angeles Times,* 26 January 1961; *Report of the Committee on the Judiciary United States Senate, Made by its Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency pursuant to S. Res. 265...* (Washington, DC 1964), 12–14.

47 *Hearings before the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency of the Committee on the Judiciary US Senate, Pursuant to S. Res 89 Investigation of Juvenile Delinquency in the United States, September 24, 27 and October 4, 5 1954* (Washington, DC 1955), 68; *Los Angeles Times* (13 July 1959).

48 *Los Angeles Times* (12 July 1959).

49 *Los Angeles Times* (18 November 1959); *Los Angeles Times* (2 April 1960); *San Diego Union* (6 December 1960).

50 *Sacramento Bee* (26 June 1951); *San Diego Union* (25 June 1951).

51 *Hearings before the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency of the Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. Senate, Eighty Fourth Congress, First Session on S. 959 A Bill to Prohibit Juveniles, April 28, 29 and 30 1955,* 30.

and ran a series of police roadblocks to check on young tourists. On the US side, the measure was extremely popular, especially with concerned parents and over the next decade San Diego's police officials periodically enforced roadblocks or youth curfews to appeal to these voters.[52]

Yet sporadic border slowdowns also had another effect. On some days, traffic at the border backed up for over three miles. In Tijuana in early 1952, tourism declined and attendance at the Sunday horse races dropped markedly.[53] As the US consul observed, Mexicans considered the move as the 'equivalent of closing the border'.[54] These effects south of the border turned the strategy from a stopgap measure designed to protect vulnerable Californians to a means to force Mexican officials to clamp down on the border drug trade. Prevention turned to extortion.

Again, journalists pushed the move. As early as 1955, *San Diego Union* journalist, Fuson, voiced the idea, announcing at the juvenile delinquency subcommittee a 'means of blackjacking the Mexican Government into doing something about this narcotics situation'. 'If that gate were slammed tomorrow morning and somebody said that they would open it when the narcotics business was stopped you would not find a narcotics peddler within 400 miles of that border by Sunday morning.'[55] By the end of the decade, it had become a tenet of law-and-order thinking. Elected officials suggested 'closing the border' to make the Mexicans 'take narcotics seriously' and LA Police Chief Parker claimed, 'All you have to do is close the border. They [the Mexicans]'ll come round, they need the money. If that is the only way you can get anything done then maybe that's the solution'.[56]

Despite the uniform patina of the Californian claims, some patterns did emerge. As the figures for news stories indicate, the border panic started at the border in Imperial and San Diego counties. But, by the mid 1950s, it had spread northwards to the Los Angeles suburbs of Orange County and Riverside and then into Los Angeles itself. To put it another way, measures voiced by the San Diego sheriff in 1952 were being echoed by the LA police chief less than a decade later.[57] In fact, by 1962, another subcommittee on juvenile delinquency was calling in police officers from as far north as Ventura county to comment on the border drug trade.[58] As the waves of panic spread, they increased in both intensity and political importance. By the end of the decade, federal congressmen were calling on both the U.S. State Department, and the FBN to take more forceful measures against Mexico. Such

52 *San Diego Union* (24 December 1953); *San Diego Union* (9 May 1957); *San Diego Union* (20 March 1955).

53 *Madera Tribune* (3 February 1952). *San Diego Union* (10 February 1952).

54 NARA, RG170, Box 161, Consulate's Dispatch, 16 January 1952.

55 *Juvenile Delinquency, hearings before the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency of the Committee on the Judiciary US Senate, Pursuant to S. Res 89 Investigation of Juvenile Delinquency in the United States, September 24, 27 and October 4, 5 1954*, 68.

56 *Los Angeles Times* (2 April 1960).

57 *Los Angeles Times* (2 April 1960); *Madera Tribune* (3 February 1952).

58 *Hearings before the Subcommittee To Investigate Juvenile Delinquency of the Committee on the Judiciary, US Senate, Eighty Seventh Congress, Second Session, Pursuant to S. Res 265, Part II, Narcotics Traffic and Its Effects on Juvenile and Young Adult Criminality, May 9, 1,7 and 29 1962* (Washington, DC 1963), 2681.

high-profile concern shifted the focus to Washington, where the same politicians forced President Eisenhower to hold an Interdepartmental Committee on Narcotics in 1960.[59] His successor, President Kennedy, followed up the meeting with the White House Conference on Narcotics three years later. The Mexican drug trade had rarely been the subject of national debate and, contrary to the Californian claims, it still accounted for a small percentage of total U.S. narcotics imports.[60] But, by the early 1960s, the Californian panic had pushed border smuggling to the forefront of US drug policy and US pressure on the Mexican authorities to clamp down on the trade became increasingly firm, culminating in Nixon's border closure in 1969.

California's moral panic helped generate the national rollout of a more aggressive foreign anti-narcotics policy. But the panic also had more immediate effects south of the border. At the national level, reaction was muted. The federal authorities had the support of the national press and the backing of the US State Department and the FBN. At the state level, however, the effects were much more drastic. In Baja California, politics were open and combative. On one side was a weak branch of the ruling party (the PRI), which controlled the state through an elected governor – Braulio Maldonado (1953–9) – and elected councils in Tijuana, Ensenada, Mexicali and Tecate. On the other side were powerful civil society organizations, a belligerent, and popular local press, and by the end of the decade a powerful opposition party, the PAN. During the decade, these groups not only fed the California panic by passing news of scandals, poor policing, and general impunity northwards, but also used the subsequent US pressure to push the governor to sack unpopular police chiefs, clean up residential zones, and curb the most obvious examples of corruption.

Federal Mexican reaction to the constant stream of accusations was denial. Government representatives rejected the existence of a large-scale drug trade, and pointed out that the problem of youth delinquency was a US not a Mexican one. In May 1953, for example, the Mexican consul in Los Angeles publically rebuffed the 'false accusations' of the California Crime Commission, asking for any proof of the claims of mysterious German chemists, official collusion with drug traffickers, or the open street sale of heroin.[61] Such rebuttals were relatively easy. The Mexican authorities had the support of the US State Department, which viewed the country as an important barrier to communist influence and was often willing to testify to the cooperation between the two countries.[62] They were also backed by Harry Anslinger and the FBN. Anslinger like the State Department viewed the drug war through a Cold War lens, was close to Mexico's anti-narcotics officials, and was

59 *Los Angeles Times* (2 April 1960).

60 Frydl, *The Drug Wars,* 217–88; By 1960, the FBN acknowledged that around 19 per cent of Los Angeles heroin came from Mexico. *Los Angeles Times* (6 January 1960).

61 *Los Angeles Times* (22 July 1959); *Los Angeles Times* (15 May 1959). Or see *Los Angeles Times* (23 July 1959).

62 *Los Angeles Times* (20 November 1959).

more concerned with stressing (admittedly imagined) threats of heroin from communist China. As a result, FBN estimates of the Mexican contribution to the US drug problem remained extremely low throughout the 1950s.[63] Furthermore, in the national capital, where most important politicians and opinion makers were based, narcotics were simply not an issue. Drug use was relatively low and the highbrow broadsheets either ignored border smuggling or reiterated official denials. In reaction to the accusations of Californian congressmen, a 1960 *Excélsior* editorial stated that it was 'a common practice to heap infamy on Mexico as a principal market for drugs'. The paper called such claims 'a joke in bad taste'; Mexico had very few users. The problem, the paper stated, was in the USA where the authorities were unable to control their addicts.[64]

In contrast, in Baja California Norte, such denials were much tougher to make. At one level, the effects of the drug trade were more obvious. US youths did smoke marijuana in clubs, buy hits from street heroin dealers, and occasionally overdose in Tijuana hotels.[65] Yet the visibility of the drug trade only partially accounts for the local reaction. Drug production and trafficking were relatively open in other regions of Mexico, yet local reactions were as muted as those of the national government.[66] Where Baja California really differed was in the local government's inability to control the perception of the trade. On the one hand, the underlying support for the ruling party – the PRI – was weak. Baja California Norte had only been made an autonomous state in 1953.[67] The architecture of the ruling party was still under construction. Even the governor famously described his administration as 'harmoniously structured chaos'.[68] The traditional supports, like the peasant federations and workers unions, were small, underpowered, or too close to the communist party for membership. The popular sector, which was designed to

63 Frydl, *The Drug Wars,* 59–119; Pérez Ricart, 'U.S. pressure'; *Los Angeles Times* (13 February 1953); NARA, RG170, Box 160, Oscar Rebasa to Harry Anslinger, 4 September 1959; Oscar Rebasa to Harry Anslinger, 24 August 1959; In 1960, the Mexican representative on the UN's Commission on Narcotic Drugs 'rejected with indignation' Californian accusations of corruption as 'rumours', claimed that the Mexican heroin trade was 'one small aspect of the entire narcotic drug problem' and backed his statement with recent FBN figures which put the amount of Mexican drugs entering the country at five per cent. *Los Angeles Times* (19 July 1960).

64 *Excélsior* (7 January 1960).

65 Stories of US citizens overdosing in Tijuana hotels were extremely frequent in Tijuana newspapers and perhaps provided a counterweight to stories, which blamed official corruption for the drug trade. E.g. *Noticias* (6 August 1958).

66 In Sinaloa, where most Mexican opium was grown, peasants arrived at the Rafael Buelna market in Culiacán with milk churns full of opium gum and searched out bulk buyers. The Sinaloa attorney general asserted, 'Politicians, merchants, businessmen, policemen, peasants, everyone knew who sowed opium'. Yet discussion of the trade in the press and civil society was minimal. 'Entrevista con Leonides Alfaro', *Noroeste* (12 May 2008); M. Lazcano Ochoa, *Una vida en la vida sinaloense* (Culiacán 1992), 198–9. In Tamaulipas, the trafficking of narcotics was probably on the same level as in Baja California Norte. Yet again, public discussion of the issue was minimal. In fact, drug traffickers openly moved around in Tamaulipas high society. C.A. Flores Pérez, *Historias de Polvo y Sangre: Génesis y evolución del tráfico de drogas en el estado de Tamaulipas* (Mexico City 2013), 166–8, 171–7.

67 L.D. Taylor Hansen, 'La transformación de Baja California en estado, 1931–1952', *Estudios Fronterizos*, 1, 1 (2000).

68 In Carlos Ortega G. *Democracia Dirigida con Ametralladoras, Baja California, 1958–1960* (El Paso, TX: np, 1961), 8.

bring together urban voters, barely existed. As so many inhabitants to the cities of Tijuana and Mexicali were relatively new, the sector lacked the established networks, which it relied on in other cities.[69] Finally, official control of the print media was also extremely fragile. During the 1959 elections, the PRI only managed content in two newspapers. Even these were ineffective. They barely sold 500 copies; many were openly burned and those that were not were bought in bulk, defaced with the initials of the opposing party, and repurposed as anti-PRI propaganda.[70]

In contrast, opposition to the ruling party was relatively strong. Tijuana, in particular, contained a raft of independent civil society organizations from business groups like the Lions and Rotary Clubs, through cross-class single-issue organizations, like the tax pressure group, the Union of Contributors and Users of Public Services of Tijuana (Unión de Contribuyentes y Usuarios de Servicios Publicos de Tijuana) to working class groups like the mutual societies of the *barrios* of La Libertad and Zaragoza.[71] These civil society groups were kept informed by a vibrant and popular public sphere.[72] The most strident was Manuel Acosta Meza's *El Imparcial*. During the 1950s, his newspaper became increasingly critical of the state governor, Braulio Maldonado, who – he claimed – openly abetted local drug traffickers, gangsters and other criminals. In 1956, Acosta even threatened to publish a list of all the public administrators who were taking money from the owners of illegal brothels or what he termed 'the Union of Pimps'. The threat probably got Acosta killed.[73] But other combative editors and journalists quickly took his place, including the editor of *Noticias,* José Garduño Bustamante, who was consistently critical of Maldonado's government, always kept an eye on the window, 'to avoid an attack on his life', and was framed at least twice for narcotics trafficking.[74]

69 Ortega G. *Democracia Dirigida*, 127.

70 Ortega G. *Democracia Dirigida*.

71 T. Hansen, 'La transformación de Baja California'; *Noticias* (14 June 1958); *Noticias* (3 March 1957); W.D.V. D'Antonio et al., 'Institutional and Occupational representations in Eleven Community Influence Systems', *American Sociological Review,* 26, 3 (1961), 440–6; J.E. Villa Pérez, 'Prácticas Asociativas y Discursos Públicos en Tijuana, 1942–1968', Unpublished Ph.D thesis, Universidad Autónoma de Baja California (2017); Correspondence with David Tamayo, 10 March 2016 (UC, Berkeley) who is finishing a Ph.D on civil society organizations in Mexico during the period; *Noticias* (14 June 1958); Ortega G. *Democracia Dirigida*.

72 For publications in Baja California Norte see *Anuario Estadístico Compendiado de los Estado Unidos Mexicanos* (Mexico City 1954); *Anuario Estadístico Compendiado de los Estado Unidos Mexicanos* (Mexico City 1960); *Medios Publicitarios Mexicanos* (May–August 1960).

73 C. Moncada, *Del México Violento, Periodistas Asasinados*. (Mexico City 1991), 90–5, 103–14; Carlos Ortega G., *Tijuana, La Ciudad Maldita*. (Mexico City 1956), 12–32; J. Blancornelas, *En estado de alerta: Los Periodistas y el Gobierno Frente al Narcotráfico* (Mexico City 2005), 17–43; *San Diego Union* (24 November 1956); *San Diego Union* (5 January 1957); *San Diego Union* (22 February 1957); *San Diego Union* (15 November 1957).

74 See the description of Garduño in E.H. Erlandson, 'The Press of Mexico with Special Consideration of Economic Factors', unpublished Ph.D diss., Northwestern University (1963), 340–2. Apparently Garduño got off the narcotics charges as he explained to the US Customs officials that he was too fat to get under his car to place the packages of marijuana. He also regularly ran an announcement on the front page of his newspaper claiming that the police chief of Tijuana was trying to set him up. *Noticias* (4 July 1958).

Finally, these groups started to come together under the umbrella of the opposition PAN. Traditionally the PAN had been the party of fervent middle-class Catholics.[75] But, at particular junctures it was able to take advantage of the combination of PRI weakness, independent civil society organizations, and relatively open public spheres to make serious inroads in a handful of northern cities, including Tijuana and Ciudad Juárez.[76] In 1959, the newly invigorated opposition party put forward its own gubernatorial candidate, Salvador Rosas Magallón, a civic-minded lawyer who had previously worked on behalf of squatter communities. The PRI candidate won but at a cost. It was – as one journalist commented – 'democracy' but 'a democracy directed by machine guns'.[77]

Baja California Norte's opposition groups attacked the region's drug trade for two reasons. In part, they shared the moral opprobrium of US citizens groups. As early as 1951, the US consul admitted that the city had a 'very substantial element, supported and represented by the Mexican official family and civic groups' that was 'alive to the situation [of youth drug taking]' and was 'anxious to bring about corrective measures'.[78] But, in part it was local politics. What better way to attack a political opponent than to feed the criticisms of a supposedly neutral neighbour?

The groups' motivations were reflected in the two strategies used to confront the trade. On the one hand, they both nourished and amplified California's own moral panic. Here, Acosta was key. As well as running *El Imparcial*, he worked as a United Press stringer and the *San Diego Union's* Tijuana correspondent. In these roles he wrote dozens of denunciations of government complicity in both the prostitution and the drug trade.[79] He also became Fuson's principal border whistleblower. When the journalist spoke at the subcommittee hearings he admitted that an unnamed source had passed him 'a list of names and the type of operation and the racket they ran and how it works'. This same 'confidential source' explained that one of the most profitable 'rackets' was protecting drug traffickers.[80] Acosta was rather unusual and perhaps the information he passed to Fuson helped seal his own death. But other groups also abetted the California activists. Civil society organizations, like the Chamber of Commerce and the Lions club, often met their American counterparts, denounced the state of the border, and promised to

75 S. Loaeza, *El Partido Acción Nacional: la larga marcha, 1939–1994. Oposición leal y partido de protesta* (Mexico City), 224–6; D.J Mabry, *Mexico's Accion Nacional, A Catholic Alternative to Revolution* (New York, NY 1973), 26–44.

76 Loaeza, *El Partido Acción* Nacional, 211–18, 239–40. For Ciudad Juárez, see W.V. D'Antonio, and W.H Form, *Influentials in Two Border Cities: A Study in Community Decision-making* (Notre Dame, IN 1965).

77 Ortega G. *Democracia Dirigida*.

78 NARA, RG59, 1950–1954, Louis Blancard to Secretary of State, 20 June 1951.

79 *San Diego Union* (9 May 1950); *San Diego Union* (3 May 1951); *San Diego Union*, 1 Sept. 1951;

80 The chairman of the committee tried to push Fuson on his source, mentioning 'a local newspaperman down there who is none too welcome'. Fuson fudged his reply and talked of 'several sources'. Yet the information that Fuson gave, especially relating to a vast, government built out-of-town brothel complex, came directly from Acosta Meza's investigations. *Hearings before the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency of the Committee on the Judiciary US Senate, Pursuant to S. Res 89 Investigation of Juvenile Delinquency in the United States, September 24, 27 and October 4, 5 1954* (Washington, DC 1955), 65–8.

pressure their governor to clean it up.[81] Opposition groups also repeated US accusations to critique their own officials. Again, this was most obvious in the press. Garduño's *Noticias* frequently reprinted the claims of San Diego policemen, judges, and moralizing parents' boards. Furthermore, like Acosta he blamed drug trafficking on the state authorities. After reprinting the San Diego sheriff's claims that in just two hours on the Tijuana strip he had been offered 'marijuana, heroin, immoral films and pornographic literature', he ridiculed the state governor's claims to be cleaning up the city. 'Nothing changes... the fact is that the government has never worried about doing a true clean-up of Tijuana.'[82]

On the other hand, Mexicans also shaped their own narrative surrounding the trade. As the examples above suggest, this was explicitly political and focused on the local authorities thought to be protecting the racket. The drug trade became a crucial indicator of political corruption. Everyday accusations centred on the Tijuana police. In July 1958, for example, Garduño's *Noticias* ran ample coverage of the investigation into claims that the Mexican secret service (the Dirección Federal de Seguridad or DFS) and the federal narcotics police had teamed up to traffic confiscated drugs over the border into San Diego.[83] In the same year, the Union of Contributors and Users of Public Services of Tijuana gathered thousands of signatures to demand the governor to 'clean up the drug business', reorganize the city's police force, and up vigilance on the main street.[84] But, other accusations touched on higher officials.[85] In June 1956 *El Imparcial* ran a series of interviews with a local heroin addict, Juan García. García claimed that the municipal authorities ran the prison's lucrative heroin racket, forcing pushers to take a certain amount of narcotics in return for a daily payment of 500 pesos. Such was the pressure to pay the bribe, the pushers held down new prisoners, injected them with the drug, and forced them into addiction.[86]

Perhaps the most cogent statement of such systemic corruption was the 1956 exposé, *Tijuana, La Ciudad Maldita*. Carlos G. Ortega, one of Acosta's journalists on *El Imparcial*, wrote the book in response to his boss's murder. In it, he explicitly linked the prostitution racket and the drugs trade. They were, he argued, part of the same officially sanctioned business. Traffickers moved drugs and vulnerable young women from Mexico's western sierra up to the border city.[87] Women and drugs were then distributed around the city's bars, brothels and billiards halls. A section of the narcotics was also set aside for sale in the local prison. Taxi drivers advertised both products to visiting Americans for a cut of the sale. All those

81 *San Diego Union* (8 March 1957); AGN, ARC 566.23/12, Anonymous to Banco Nacional de Credito Agricola y Ganadero, 28 September 1954.
82 *Noticias* (23 May 1957).
83 *Noticias* (10 July 1958); *Noticias* (14 August 1958).
84 *Noticias* (14 June 1958).
85 See *Noticias* (8 June 1956).
86 Carlos Ortega, *Tijuana, La Ciudad Maldita* (Mexico City 1956), 102–3.
87 Such accusations have some merit. Less than a decade later, journalists in Jalisco would reveal the existence of a network of human and drug traffickers connecting the state to the border cities. E. Robledo, *Las Poquianchis!* (Mexico City 1980).

involved paid the authorities in return for impunity. Payoffs went to policemen, municipal functionaries, local politicians, and the governor and his family. In the explosive final section of the book, Ortega started to name names, claiming that Braulio Maldonado's nephews, Salomon, Loreto and Melquiades Sández as well as the local congressman, José Ricardi Tirado, owned some of the most notorious local bars-cum-brothels, and were in charge of collecting contributions from the others.[88]

From 1956 onwards, the PAN began to weaponize such denunciations, using them to attack the governor. The PAN leader, Rosas Magallón, was the first to republish Ortega's list of names in the party daily, *El Debate*.[89] By 1958, the accusations of official complicity in the trade had become a stock indictment of the ruling party. As competition for the gubernatorial election heated up, the PAN published a petition demanding Maldonado's resignation. The accusations were numerous and included suppressing the free press, running a group of armed thugs, robbing the state treasury and throwing poor urban squatters off valuable city-centre land. But, they also included running the local prostitution and drug rackets 'in conjunction with close members of his family'.[90]

The state administration could have ridden out either external denunciations or internal pressures with the support of the federal government and certain high profile figures in the United States. But the combination was too much. Governor Maldonado and his successor, Eligio Esquivel Méndez, were repeatedly forced to enact periodic public crackdowns on the drug trade. Some took the form of the mass arrest of small-time dealers during raids or *razzias* of popular drug selling spaces such as billiards, brothels and cantinas. For example, in September 1957, two days after Judge Hewicker had challenged the US ambassador in Mexico City to visit Tijuana and had followed it up with one of his periodic demands to shut the border, the Baja California Norte police made 83 arrests of 'crooks and vagrants' throughout the city.[91] The following year, there was an almost exact replay. On 15 August, Hewicker urged the 'threat of federal closing or at least tightening of the international border'. Two days later, the Tijuana government imposed a curfew on under-18 year olds and arrested 79 youths who had broken the new law.[92]

But the most regular site of these raids – and the place guaranteed to contain copious narcotics – was the local prisons. In the weeks following the Acosta Meza murder, there were repeated raids of known drug dealers houses and at least three major searches of the men's and women's prisons. Here they found 'large amounts of marijuana, heroin, droppers, needles, and spoons'.[93] These were not chance searches, they were planned swoops ordered from on high. In March 1957, the

88 Ortega, *Tijuana,* 20, 71, 130, 132.
89 *El Debate* (9 January 1957).
90 Ortega G. *Democracia Dirigida*, 70.
91 *Noticias* (22 September 1957).
92 *Noticias* (18 August 1958).
93 *Noticias* (1 September 1956); *Noticias* (21 August 1956).

chief of the Tijuana police reported to Governor Maldonado that in the six months following Acosta Meza's death, he 'had been following strict orders relative to combatting narcotics' and 'performing razzias on known drug addicts'.[94] The raids were designed to impress both local and international audiences. The detainees and their drug paraphernalia were paraded in front of the cameras; press releases on the prisoners were fed to local newspapers; and amounts of narcotics were totalled up and reported in formal conferences every few months.[95] Even these were calibrated to make an impact. On 26 March 1956 – the day President Eisenhower was meeting his Mexican counterpart, President Ruiz Cortines, at White Sulphur Springs – the Baja California Norte attorney general gave an interview with national and international pressmen on the recent counter-narcotics campaign. In the last four months (or since the embarrassing November 1955 juvenile delinquency hearings) the campaign had achieved 'magnificent results' and arrested 52 dealers and captured 273 grams of heroin, 2 kilos of opium, 146 grams of morphine, 347 kilos of marijuana, and 3827 marijuana cigarettes.[96] Finally, starting in late 1957, the Mexican authorities publicized these results with official burnings. These were major public events attended by representatives of the health department, the police and the attorney general. They were held in a large square by the Monumento a la Madre, just a few blocks from the border.[97] Concerned Californians could probably smell the smoke.

Raids had the advantage of mass arrests and bulk seizures. But, when the pressure was really on, the state authorities also went after some of the more significant traffickers. In the wake of the Acosta Meza murder, Tijuana police arrested Dominga Urias Uriate aka 'La Minga', who was a major broker between Sinaloa growers and the border sellers, raided Mike Barragán's ranch, and arrested a handful of other major traffickers in conjunction with the FBN. These included Barragán's lieutenant, Antonio Gastelum.[98] After the 1959 elections and another embarrassing juvenile delinquency hearing, apprehension rose again. In the next six months, Mexican officials arrested two of Barragán's lieutenants, Antonio Gastelum (again) and Urban Siqueiros, the 1953 cars-for-drugs mastermind, Telesforo Parra López, and two other key traffickers, Patricio Becerra Ortíz and

94 AGN, Departamento de la Salubridad, Caja 9369 Exp. 3, Ernesto Reyes Montenegro to Braulio Maldonado, 16 March 1957.

95 *Noticias* (22 June 1960); *Noticias* (13 September 1956); *Noticias* (14 September 1956); Archivo Histórico del Estado de Baja California (AHEBC), Secretaría de Gobierno, Caja 217.

96 AHEBC, Secretaría de Gobierno, Caja 184, Exp. 4, Speech of Porfirio Díaz Sibaja, 1956. In fact, the figures given by Díaz compare favorably to Customs Bureau records of capture of smuggled drugs during the 1960s. If they are correct, in just six months the Mexican police captured around 1000 pounds of marijuana (347 kilos plus around 250 pounds in marijuana cigarettes). This was around the same amount of marijuana captured by the US Customs Bureau at San Ysidro in a 12-month period (when the marijuana market in the United States was much greater) from 1962 to 1963. J. Price (ed.), *Tijuana '68: Ethnographic Notes on a Mexican Border City* (San Diego, CA 1968).

97 *Noticias* (13 August 1960); *Noticias* (5 December 1957); *Noticias* (24 March 1958).

98 *Noticias* (30 July 1956); *Noticias* (5 August 1956); NARA, RG170, Box 161, Memorandum, 13 September 1956.

Cruz Macias.[99] Barragán himself was a tougher proposition. He had top lawyers, was extremely careful to never personally touch the narcotics, and even shot a man who brought drugs to his ranch. As a result, repeated raids of his properties came up with nothing.[100]

Finally, the state authorities also enacted regular purges of the local police forces. This was not as easy as it might seem. By the 1950s, regional governments relied on numerous overlapping forces, including federal groups like the Federal Narcotics Police, the Federal Judicial Police, and the Dirección Federal de Seguridad and local units like the state judicial police, the municipal police, the state secret service, and the 'juvenile police'. At the same time, these were 'aided' by numerous informal policemen. These came from the ranks of loyal unions and received no official recognition or salary. Instead they were given a *charola* or badge and instructed to get revenue through demanding bribes in return for protection.[101] From 1956 onwards, the mass sacking of the police was a regular occurrence. In the two months following Acosta Meza's death, the state government not only fired the Tijuana police chief but also moved the state judicial police around the state's four municipalities. Within a month, the state attorney general arrived in the city, sacked the new force, and hired another group. Their names were published in the city newspapers so 'other elements do not usurp their role'.[102] Within just over a year, however, the problem had returned. Civil organizations wrote letters to the state government naming the unaccredited policemen and demanding that they were removed. Again, the state attorney general arrived in the city and performed another mass sacking.[103] Exactly the same process happened again in 1958 and in 1959.[104]

During the 1950s, California experienced a moral panic over youth drug use. Politicians, journalists and civil society representatives focused on the threat of drug trafficking over the border and drug use in Tijuana. During this moral panic, they built on and developed various narratives, including those that stressed Mexican corruption and the protection of certain frontier kingpins. They also advanced the strategy of using the temporary closure of the border to force the Mexican authorities into action. By the early 1960s, these views had reached Washington, DC. At the White House Conference on Narcotic and Drug Abuse in September 1963, the Democrat Governor of California, Edmund Brown,

99 *Noticias* (28 March 1960); *Noticias* (13 April 1960); *Noticias* (24 August 1960); *Los Angeles Times* (14 May 1960); *Los Angeles Times* (6 November 1959); *San Diego Union* (29 November 1959); NARA, RG170, Box 161, Memorandum from Benjamin White, 6 August 1960.

100 *Noticias* (5 July 1956); *San Diego Union* (24 July 1961); NARA, RG170, Box 160, Major traffickers on US–Mexican border, 1965; NARA, RG59, Consular report, 4 February 1961. Archivo del Tribunal Superior de Justicia de la Nación, Amparo Directo 252, Miguel Barragán Bautista.

101 *Noticias* (7 May 1957).

102 *Noticias* (30 September 1956); *Noticias* (23 October 1956); *Noticias* (24 October 1956); *Noticias* (25 October 1956).

103 *Noticias* (20 October 1957); *Noticias* (23 October 1957).

104 *Noticias* (7 June 1959); *Noticias* (21 March 1958); *Noticias* (14 June 1958).

urged 'immediate action' to combat the border drug trade. Mexico, he claimed, was the 'primary source for narcotics in our state'. Though such ideas crossed party lines, they were first introduced as national policy under President Nixon. As Vice-President Nixon had written to the *Los Angeles Times* to promise that the government would press for 'a concerted effort on the part of the Mexican government officials'.[105] Eight years later, he introduced the idea where he knew it would have resonance, in suburban Anaheim, California.[106] And in 1969 he fulfilled his promise by implementing Operation Intercept, a rigorous stop-and-search campaign, on the US border. Like the early slowdowns, the operation was portrayed as a preventative strategy, designed to halt drug imports into the USA. Yet, just like these early, ad hoc closures, it actually functioned as a means of extortion. Disrupting trade pushed the Mexican government into action. As one US official later expressed,

> for diplomatic reasons the true purpose of the exercise was never revealed . . . it was an exercise in international extortion, pure, simple and effective, designed to bend Mexico to our will. We figured Mexico could hold out for a month, in fact they caved in after two weeks and we got what we wanted. Operation Intercept gave way to Operation Cooperation.[107]

California's moral panic also had a profound effect over the border. The Baja California Norte government was forced to impose a series of counter-narcotics measures including periodic mass arrests, drug seizures, and the sacking of police officials. Yet these measures were not simply reactions to exogenous US pressure. They were also responses to endogenous demands from members of Mexican civil society to clean up local politics. To put it another way, Mexican drug policy was often determined by subnational politics. This occurred throughout the country where other waves of anti-drug policies were as dependent on regional political frameworks as federal mandates or US coercion. In 1947 in Tamaulipas, in 1965 in Sinaloa, and in 1976 in Sonora intra-PRI factionalism broke down agreements between traffickers and political elites, triggered accusations in the public sphere, and generated a series of counter-narcotics measures.[108] But it had the most profound effect on the border, where opposition politics interwove with and enforced US moral panics. To the east at the El Paso-Ciudad Juárez frontier a similar process emerged. During the 1950s, citizen groups, linked to an emboldened PAN, utilized Texas scare stories about the border vice trade to attack the regional governor and lever him from power.[109] Together such processes suggest that scholars of the

105 *Los Angeles Times* (17 July 1960); *Los Angeles Times* (12 May 1960).

106 P. Timmons, 'Trump's Wall at Nixon's Border', *NACLA* (27 March 2017).

107 Carey, *Women Drug Traffickers,* 163.

108 Moncada, *Del México*, 74–81; *El Mundo* (12 March 1947); *El Mundo* (21 March 1947); B.T. Smith, 'The Rise and Fall of Narcopopulism: Drugs, Politics, and Society in Sinaloa, 1930–1980', *Journal for the Study of Radicalism,* 7, 2 (2013); K.F. Johnson, *Mexican Democracy: A Critical View* (New York, NY 1978 edn), 173–90.

109 For the Texas panic over the trade see Carey, *Women Drug Traffickers*, 143–5. For the rise of the PAN, W.V. D'Antonio, and W.H. Form, *Influentials in Two Border Cities: A Study in Community*

international drug war should move beyond the study of diplomats and heads of state and towards frameworks, which view everyday drug policy as a product of the convergence of US pressure, subnational politics, and civic activism.[110]

Finally, such observations reinforce the connections between the domestic and the international aspects of the war on drugs. Rather than seeing them as separate issues (to be studied by separate disciplines), we should instead observe them as deeply intertwined. We should, in short, view the thousands of African Americans languishing in US prisons and the thousands of dead and disappeared Mexicans as two sides of the same coin, victims of the same interlinking processes. In the most basic terms, the domestic and the international drug war share a similar chronology. Both conflicts experienced a radical intensification from the 1970s onwards.[111] In the USA, politicians turned towards mass incarceration, especially of African-Americans. Outside the country, these same politicians developed a policy of extortion to coerce foreign governments, like that of Mexico, to crack down on the trade. They share a similar narrative structure, which blames 'outsiders' and 'others' for white America's problems.[112] And they share an economic rationale, which seeks to distribute surpluses in financial capital, labour, and state capacity. On the domestic front, this has generated what Ruth Wilson Gilmore terms 'the prison fix'.[113] On the border, it has led to the growth of the Border Patrol and what commentators now term the security-industrial complex.[114] And in Mexico and other South American countries, it has led to the increased funding of the police, the military, and global arms companies.[115] But, as this article argues, the domestic and the international war on drugs also share similar roots in 1950s moral panics. These shared a ground zero – the borderlands and particularly

Decision-making. (Notre Dame, XX 1965). There was a similar situation in the 1980s: M.A. Bernal, 'Ciudad Juárez, 1983 y 1985: las dificultades de la democracia', in S. Loaeza and R. Segovia (eds), *La via política mexicana en la crisis* (Mexico City 1987), 149–70; L. Venegas Aguilera, 'Political Culture and Women of the Popular Sector in Ciudad Juárez, 1983–1986', in V.E. Rodríguez and P. Ward (eds), *Opposition Government in Mexico* (Albuquerque, NM 1995), 97–111; T. Guillén López, 'Political Culture from the Northern Border of Mexico. Elements for a Debate', in W.G. Pansters (ed.), *Citizens of the Pyramid. Essays on Mexican Political Culture* (Amsterdam 1997), 337–62.

110 For a pioneering look at the intersection of local politics and 'drug policy' more broadly understood see P. Gootenberg, *Andean Cocaine: The Making of a Global Drug* (Chapel Hill, NC 2008), 105–43.

111 For the 1970s as the key point of inflection in the USA, see Thompson, 'Why Mass Incarceration Matters'. For Mexico, see C. Perez Ricart, 'Las agencias antinarcóticos de los Estados Unidos y la construcción transnacional de la guerra contra las drogas en México (1938–1978)', Unpublished. Ph.D diss., Freie Universität Berlin (2016)and D. Weimer, *Seeing Drugs: Modernization, Counterinsurgency, and US Narcotics Control in the Third World, 1969–1976* (Kent, OH 2006), 172–214.

112 For white American drug crime, see Alexander, *The New Jim Crow,* 99.

113 R. Wilson Gilmore, *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California* (Berkeley, CA 2007).

114 K. Lytle Hernández, *Migra! A History of the U.S. Border Patrol* (Berkeley, CA 2010); T. Miller, *Border Patrol Nation: Dispatches from the Front Lines of Homeland Security* (San Francisco. CA 2014).

115 Perez Ricart, *Las agencias antinarcóticas*; W. Tate, *Drugs, Thugs, and Diplomats: US Policy Making in Colombia* (Stanford, CA 2015); E. Obando, 'U.S. Policy toward Peru: At Odds for Twenty Years', in B. Loveman (ed.), *Addicted to Failure: US Security Policy in Latin America* (Lanham, MD 2006), 169–96; D. Weimer, *Seeing drugs: Modernization, Counterinsurgency, and US Narcotics Control in the Third World, 1969–1976* (Kent, OH 2006).

California.[116] These set out the moral landscape of Mexican traffickers, black and brown pushers, and white victims.[117] And these both relied on the intersection of US moralizing and Mexican politicking.

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116 Wilson Gilmore, *Golden Gulag*; K. Lytle Hernández, *City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles, 1771–1965* (Chapel Hill, CA 2017).
117 Lassiter, 'Impossible Criminals'.