



P.O.V.

Season

19

Discussion Guide

Al Otro Lado

A Film by Natalia Almada



www.pbs.org/pov



Letter from the Filmmaker

NEW YORK, JUNE 2006

Dear Viewer,

In Mexico there is a saying, "Poor Mexico, so close to the United States and so far from God." This is no truer anywhere than in the north of Mexico, where the world's most powerful, wealthiest country is just a stone's throw away. My family has lived in Sinaloa for six generations, but it was my generation that saw how free trade with our wealthy neighbor changed our economy and culture. This compelled me to make a documentary that looked at the economic crisis that was forcing so many young people to immigrate or to traffic, leaving our towns without productive young men.

Corridos, which for over 200 years have been a musical underground newspaper, are virtually the only music you hear in the streets of Sinaloa. Today *corridos* tell the news of the illegal drug traffickers and immigrants who, in the rural communities, are considered not criminals, but heroes, because they provide necessary jobs and infrastructure and have dispensable income. I decided to use *corrido* music as a thread throughout the documentary not only because it provided some culture, color and texture to an otherwise glum reality, but also because it was a way to hear the voice of the people most affected by the economic crisis and least heard in the mainstream media.

I met Magdiel while shooting at the fishing boat factory in La Reforma. I had heard that there were local composers who sang about fishermen who traffic, so I asked the owner of the boat factory if he knew of any such composers. "My nephew," he answered.

When Magdiel sang his *corridos*, "El Navegador" and "Lobo Marino," and then told us of his need to get out of La Reforma because of the economic hardships, I knew we had to follow his story. Then one day, when I was in New York City, I got a call from Magdiel saying he had met a *coyote* who had agreed to take him "to the other side" in exchange for a *corrido* that he would compose about him. I had to follow him. This opportunity not only gave the documentary a narrative climax I never imagined when I conceived of the project, it also changed and shaped my own views on the immigrant experience, discoveries I am honored to share with you in ***Al Otro Lado***.

Natalia Almada

Filmmaker, ***Al Otro Lado***



Natalia Almada, Director of "*Al Otro Lado*."

Photo Kent Rogowski



Table of Contents

Credits, Acknowledgements

4	Introduction
5	Potential Partners
5	Key Issues
5	Event Ideas
6	Using this Guide
6	Planning an Event
7	Facilitating a Discussion
7	Finding a Facilitator
7	Preparing Yourself
8	Preparing the Group
9	Background Information
9	<i>Corridos</i>
9	The History of Sinaloa's Drug Trade
10	Immigration
11	Selected People Featured in <i>Al Otro Lado</i>
13	General Discussion Questions
14	Discussion Prompts
17	Taking Action
18	Resources
20	How to Buy the Film

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Introduction



In its opening scenes, *Al Otro Lado (To the Other Side)* appears to be a documentary about an aspiring young composer of *corridos* hoping to join the luminaries of the decades long Mexican ballad tradition. But before the feature-length (60-minute) film ends, we see a complex story of interlocking relationships between street music, poverty, border-crossings, drug smuggling, and social justice.

Corridos traditionally tell the stories of the powerless and their heroes. In recent years, a distinct vein of this musical tradition – *narcocorridos* – has recounted the exploits of drug traffickers. This seems a natural cultural expression in a region like Sinaloa, where many poor farmers and fishermen see only two ways to escape economic destitution: to illegally cross into the United States or to work for drug smugglers.

As the film prompts viewers to explore the ripple effects of poverty, it treats us to performances by some of the most

Jorge Hernandez of Los Tigres Del Norte, performing at a concert in Culicán, Sinaloa, Mexico, as seen in "Al Otro Lado."

Photo courtesy of "Al Otro Lado"

popular *corridos* groups, from the iconic Chalino Sanchez to the controversial Los Tigres Del Norte. It also presents an intimate portrait of the intense emotional journeys of individual families struggling to make life better in the face of enduring economic hardship.

Audiences interested in social justice issues will find *Al Otro Lado's* portrait of musicians, families and communities a compelling springboard for discussions about key U.S. policies, including laws covering trade, immigration, illicit drugs and border patrols. In the process, viewers get a rare glimpse into a unique and important facet of Mexican-American and Mexican culture.



Potential Partners

Key Issues

Al Otro Lado is well suited for use in a variety of settings and is especially recommended for use with:

- **Your local PBS station**
- **Groups that have discussed previous PBS and P.O.V. films relating to immigration, including *American Family*, *Escuela*, *Farmingville*, *La Boda*, *Senorita Extraviada*, *Soldados* and *The Sixth Section*.**
- **Groups focused on any of the issues listed to the right**
- **Legislators / policy makers**
- **Border communities**
- **High school students**
- **Business and community leaders**
- **Faith-based organizations and institutions**
- **Youth/after-school programs**
- **Academic departments and student groups at colleges, universities, community colleges and high schools**
- **Community organizations with a mission to promote education and learning, such as P.O.V.'s national partners Elderhostel Learning in Retirement Centers, members of the Listen Up! Youth Media Network, or your local library.**

As an outreach tool, **Al Otro Lado** can help viewers use the lens of artistic expression to examine pressing social issues. The film will be of special interest to people interested in exploring or working on the topics below:

- **Border control**
- **Cultural studies**
- **Drug trafficking**
- **Economics**
- **Gender issues**
- **Immigration**
- **Labor**
- **Latinos / Latinas**
- **Mexican culture/heritage**
- **Mexican-American culture/heritage**
- **Mexican-American border region**
- **Music**
- **Politics**
- **Poverty**
- **Social justice**

Event Ideas

Use a screening of **Al Otro Lado** to:

- **Arrange for a community concert of *corridos* that address human rights or cultural topics (rather than drug trafficking). Make available information about groups that address the social justice issues in the songs.**
- **Host an intergenerational discussion including fans and opponents of *corridos*. Help participants hear one another's concerns or support for the music.**
- **Convene a panel discussion on U.S. immigration policy issues arising from the situation on the U.S.-Mexico border.**
- **Create a drug-abuse prevention event for young people in your community.**



Using this Guide

This guide is designed to help you use *Al Otro Lado* as the centerpiece of a community event. It contains suggestions for organizing an event as well as ideas for how to help participants think more deeply about the issues in the film. The discussion questions are designed for a very wide range of audiences. Rather than attempt to address them all, choose one or two that best meet the needs and interests of your group.

Planning an Event

In addition to showcasing documentary film as an art form, screenings of P.O.V. films can be used to present information, get people interested in taking action on an issue, provide opportunities for people from different groups or perspectives to exchange views, and create space for reflection. Using the questions below as a planning checklist will help ensure a high-quality, high-impact event.

- **Have you defined your goals?** Set realistic goals with your partners. Will you host a single event or engage in an ongoing project? Being clear about your goals will make it easier to structure the event, target publicity and evaluate results.
- **Does the way you are planning to structure the event fit your goals?** Do you need an outside facilitator, translator or sign language interpreter? If your goal is to share information, are there local experts on the topic who should be present? How large an audience do you want? (Large groups are appropriate for information exchanges. Small groups allow for more intensive dialogue.)
- **Have you arranged to involve all stakeholders?** It is especially important that people be allowed to speak for themselves. If your group is planning to take action that affects people other than those present, how will you give voice to those not in the room?
- **Is the event being held in a space where all participants will feel equally comfortable?** Is it wheelchair accessible? Is it in a part of town that's easy to reach by various kinds of transportation? If you are bringing together different constituencies, is it neutral territory? Does the physical configuration allow for the kind of discussion you hope to have?
- **Will the set-up of the room help you meet your goals?** Is it comfortable? If you intend to have a discussion, can people see one another? Are there spaces to use for small breakout groups? Can everyone easily see and hear the film?
- **Have you scheduled time to plan for action?** Planning next steps can help people leave the room feeling energized and optimistic, even if the discussion has been difficult. Action steps are especially important for people who already have a good deal of experience talking about the issues on the table. For those who are new to the issues, just engaging in public discussion serves as an action step.



Using this Guide

Facilitating a Discussion

Controversial topics often make for excellent discussions. By their nature, those same topics also give rise to deep emotions and strongly held beliefs. As a facilitator, you can create an atmosphere where people feel safe, encouraged and respected, making it more likely that they will be willing to share their ideas openly and honestly. Here's how:

Preparing Yourself

Identify your own hot-button issues. View the film before your event and give yourself time to reflect so you aren't dealing with raw emotions at the same time that you are trying to facilitate a discussion.

Be knowledgeable. You don't need to be an expert on Mexican or Mexican-American culture, immigration policy or the U.S. war on drugs to lead an event, but knowing the basics can help you keep a discussion on track and gently correct misstatements of fact. In addition to the Background Information section above, you may want to take a look at the suggested Web sites in the Resources section on p.18 .

Be clear about your role. You may find yourself taking on several roles for an event, such as host, organizer or even projectionist. If you are also planning to serve as facilitator, be sure that you can focus on that responsibility and avoid distractions during the discussion. Keep in mind that being a facilitator is not the same as being a teacher. A teacher's job is to convey specific information. In contrast, a facilitator remains neutral, helping move the discussion along without imposing his or her views on the dialogue.

Know your group. Issues can play out very differently for different groups of people. Is your group new to the issue or have they dealt with it before? Factors like geography, age, race, religion and socioeconomic class can all have an impact on comfort levels, speaking styles and prior knowledge. Take care not to assume that all members of a particular group share the same point of view. If you are bringing together different segments of your community, we strongly recommend hiring an experienced facilitator.

Who Should Facilitate?

You may or may not be the best person to facilitate, especially if you have multiple responsibilities for your event. If you are particularly invested in a topic, it might be wise to ask someone more neutral to guide the dialogue.

If you need to find someone else to facilitate, some university professors, human resource professionals, clergy and youth leaders may be specially trained in facilitation skills. In addition to these local resources, groups such as the National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ) and the National Association for Community Mediation (NAFCM) may be able to provide or help you locate skilled facilitators. Be sure that your facilitator receives a copy of this guide well in advance of your event.



Using this Guide

Preparing the Group

Consider how well group members know one another. If you are bringing together people who have never met, you may want to devote some time at the beginning of the event for introductions.

Agree to ground rules around language. Involve the group in establishing some basic rules to ensure respect and aid clarity. Typically such rules include prohibiting yelling and the use of slurs and asking people to speak in the first person (“I think....”) rather than generalizing for others (“Everyone knows that...”).

Ensure that everyone has an opportunity to be heard. Be clear about how people will take turns or indicate that they want to speak. Plan a strategy for preventing one or two people from dominating the discussion. If the group is large, are there plans to break into small groups or partners, or should attendance be limited?

Talk about the difference between dialogue and debate. In a debate, participants try to convince others that they are right. In a dialogue, participants try to understand one another and expand their thinking by sharing viewpoints and listening actively. Remind people that they are engaged in a dialogue. This will be especially important in preventing a discussion from dissolving into a repetitive, rhetorical, political or religious debate.

Encourage active listening. Ask the group to think of the event as being about listening as well as discussing. Participants can be encouraged to listen for things that challenge as well as reinforce their own ideas. You may also consider asking people to practice formal “active listening,” where participants listen without interrupting the speaker, then re-phrase what was said to confirm that they have heard it correctly.

Remind participants that everyone sees through the lens of his or her own experience. Who we are influences how we interpret what we see. Everyone in the group may have a different view about the content and meaning of the film they have just seen, and all of them may be accurate. It can help people to understand one another’s perspectives if people identify the evidence on which they base their opinions as well as sharing their views.

Take care of yourself and group members. If the intensity level rises, pause to let everyone take a deep breath. You might also consider providing a safe space to “vent,” perhaps with a partner or in a small group of familiar faces. If you anticipate that your topic may upset people, be prepared to refer them to local support agencies or have local professionals present. Think carefully about what you ask people to share publicly and explain things like confidentiality and whether or not press will be present.



Background Information

Corridos

As explained in the film, a *corrido* is a story told in the form of a song. The *corrido* appears to be a direct descendent of the *romance*, the Spanish ballad, which developed in the Middle Ages, became a traditional form and was brought by Spanish conquistadors to the New World, where they have been especially popular in northern Mexico and around border areas. *Corridos* are played in polka or waltz rhythms by accordion combos or full brass bands.* Lyrically, they tell stories of local and national interest, narrating heroes' lives, natural disasters, life's challenges and other events.

[*Source: Folk-blues musician and author, Elijah Wald's homepage and <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/CC/lhct1.html>]

During the Mexican Revolution (1910–1917) leaders like Pancho Villa were popular ballad subjects. Earlier *corridos* about legendary outlaw Jesus Malverde, (a Robin Hood–style thief hanged in 1909 by Sinaloa's governor) were so influential that they helped turn him into a people's "saint."

The *corridos* have served as a way to share news, comment on political struggles, reflect on the cultural conflicts inherent in life on the border and recount extraordinary events. In recent



Los Tigres Del Norte.
Photo courtesy of "Al Otro Lado"

years, a controversial form of the ballads has developed. Known as *narcocorridos*, they tell tales of drug smugglers.

Both Mexican and U.S. authorities see *narcocorridos* as encouraging the drug trade, and have tried to keep radio stations from playing them. Nevertheless, the music has developed into a multimillion-dollar-a-year industry. It is not uncommon for drug traffickers to commission a *corrido* about their latest exploits, rewarding composers with money, cars or safe passage across the border.

The History of Sinaloa's Drug Trade

Perhaps sparked by Chinese immigrants, Sinaloan farmers began growing opium at the end of the 19th century, but it didn't become a major part of the economy until the 1940s, when World War II created a demand for morphine. For the U.S., conflict with Japan restricted access to Asian sources. So they bought opium from Mexican growers.

When the war ended, so did the demand for morphine and the government's tolerance for opium production. Farmers who had become wealthy on the crop began to seek new and clandestine outlets.



Drug trafficking boat
Photo courtesy of "Al Otro Lado"



Background Information

By the 1980s, the heroin-smuggling network that had developed turned its efforts to a more lucrative product: cocaine. Crackdowns in Columbia led traffickers there to partner with Mexicans, who eventually developed their own distribution networks in the United States.

Drug trafficking in places like Sinaloa is now run by kingpins who have built organizations resembling multinational corporations. These kingpins bring hundreds of millions of dollars into the economies of cities like Culiacan (Sinaloa's capital). Along with the money and drugs have come gangs, violence and the controversial tradition of *narcocorridos*.

[Sources: Chris Summers & Dominic Bailey, "Mexico's Forbidden Songs," BBC News Online, Oct. 3, 2004; Jake Berman, "The Place Mexico's Drug Kingpins Call Home,"

www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/drugs/business/place.html]



Magdiel crossing the U.S./Mexico border as seen in "Al Otro Lado."
Photo courtesy of "Al Otro Lado"

Immigration

According to the Pew Hispanic Center:

- There are approximately 6 million undocumented immigrants from Mexico living in the U.S. (approximately 57% of the total number of undocumented immigrants).
- About 80 to 85% of all immigrants from Mexico are undocumented.
- Most undocumented immigrants are young adults, but approximately 1.7 million are under the age of 18.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau and other sources:

- In 2004, a record 460 migrants died trying to cross from Mexico into the U.S. Some attribute the increased deaths to increased enforcement by the U.S. Border Patrol, which has caused people to choose more remote and more dangerous desert routes.
- Mexican immigrants now try to cross through Arizona's deserts more than any other route.
- The constant influx of new Latino immigrants — roughly 400,000 a year, the highest flow in U.S. history

— will likely keep the foreign-born, who typically speak mostly or only Spanish, at one-third of the U.S. Hispanic population for several decades.

- The high school graduation rate of Hispanics has climbed 12% since 1980 to reach 57%, still well under the 88% rate for non-Hispanic whites.
- 90% of Mexican children whose parents are immigrants speak English. 97% also continue to speak Spanish, a native language retention rate approximately four times higher than children of Filipino, Vietnamese or Chinese immigrants. In other words, children from Mexican families seem to be acculturating rather than assimilating.
- Hispanics have made up half of all new U.S. workers in the past decade. They currently comprise 12% of the total U.S. workforce. If growth continues, they will comprise 25% of the workforce within two generations.

[Sources: Richard Marosi, "Border Crossing Deaths Set a 12-Month Record," Los Angeles Times, October 1, 2005; Brian Grow with Ronald Grover, Arlene Weintraub, Christopher Palmeri, Mara Der Hovanesian, Michael Eidam, "Hispanic Nation," Business Week, March 15, 2004.]



Background Information

Selected People Featured in *Al Otro Lado*



Magdiel is a 23-year-old aspiring *corridos* composer and native of Sinaloa.



Members of Los Tigres Del Norte, one of the most popular and oldest *corridos* groups; they pioneered the way for *narcocorridos* and *corridos* about immigrants. They have sold over 32 million records and received 12 Grammy nominations.

[Source: Altamura films]



Chalino Sanchez, one of the most famous *corridos* performers. He illegally crossed the border while fleeing Mexican authorities after he shot his sister's rapist. He was murdered in 1992.

[Source: www.nndb.com/people/899/000067698/]



Jenni Rivera, born in Long Beach, California, to immigrant parents. She became one of the few female *corridos* performers after leaving the real estate industry. [Source: Yahoo music bio]



Background Information

Selected People Featured in *Al Otro Lado*



Jessie Morales, a *corridos* performer and member of El Original de la Sierra. Born in Los Angeles, he has adopted the shaved head style of L.A. gang members; his father, Jorge, is also in the film.



Chris Simcox, founder of Civil Homeland Defense and president of The Minuteman Civil Defense Corps, groups that organize citizens to privately monitor the border for signs of illegal immigrants.

[Source: www.minutemanhq.com/hq/aboutus.php,
<http://dir.salon.com/story/news/feature/2003/5/22/vigilante/index.html>]



Robert Kiernan, U.S. Border Patrol agent.



Johnny Bernal, U.S. Border Patrol agent.



General Discussion Questions

Immediately after the film, you may want to give people a few quiet moments to reflect on what they have seen. If the mood seems tense, you may want to pose a general question and give people some time to themselves to jot down or think about their answers before opening the discussion.

Unless you think participants are so uncomfortable that they can't engage until they have had a break, don't encourage people to leave the room between the film and the discussion. If you save your break for an appropriate moment during the discussion, you won't lose the feeling of the film as you begin your dialogue.

One way to get a discussion going is to pose a general question such as:

- **If you could ask anyone in the film a single question, who would you ask and what would you ask them?**
- **What did you see as the key issues in this film and what did you learn from the film about those issues?**
- **Which scenes from the film did you find to be especially powerful? What, specifically, did you find compelling?**



Natalia Almada, Director of "Al Otro Lado," as a child, with her family in Mexico.

Photo courtesy of the Almada Family



Discussion Prompts

Corridos

- Some people draw parallels between *corridos* and rap music. What do the two styles of music have in common? Do you see any commonalities with other types of music (U.S. political folk music, underground railroad songs, traditional Irish ballads, etc.)?

- Corridos* often focus on the underdog, like Jesus Malverde. How is the underdog represented in American culture? How is this different or similar from the *corridos* portrayals?

- In your view, what is the impact of *narcocorridos* on the community? Are they an important way to share information? A reflection of reality? A glorification of drug trafficking? An endorsement of criminal activities? Should radio stations refuse to broadcast *narcocorridos*? Why or why not?

- Look carefully at the audience members who attend concerts of *corridos* groups. Who makes up the fan base? Why might they be attracted to this kind of music?

- Traditionally, *corrido* performance has been dominated by men. Why do you think this is so? What is the relationship between gender and the aspects of culture being described in the *corridos*?

- Why would a drug trafficker want his activities publicized in a *corrido*? What is the benefit?

Identity

- What typical media portrayals do you usually see of Mexican Americans, Mexicans, immigrants (both documented and undocumented), young people, and other groups shown in



Magdiel composing, as seen in "Al Otro Lado."
Photo courtesy of "Al Otro Lado"

the film? How do those portrayals compare to what you saw in the film?

- Magdiel wants to earn a living as a *corridos* musician and hopes to make it big in the United States. What kinds of economic opportunities are available for him and the people in his hometown? Do these types of work provide an opportunity for someone like Magdiel to express his identity? How much do you think what someone does reflects their identity?

- What role do national and ethnic identities play in your own sense of self? How do you think such identities function for people whose allegiances cross borders, like Jessie Morales, for example, who describes himself as "being born in L.A. but having Mexican blood"? How do multiple identities influence one's sense of where one belongs?

- Magdiel sings about "the poverty that runs in my blood." Do you think that Magdiel believes poverty is an intrinsic part of his identity or a temporary circumstance that he can change? When poverty becomes a part of family identity, how does one improve one's economic circumstances without leaving family behind or negating part of one's identity?



Discussion Prompts



Crossing the Border/Immigration Issues

- Based on what you see in the film, why do you think some Mexicans risk their lives to get across the border into the U.S.? Does current U.S. immigration or economic policy address their reasons? If so, how? If not, how might the policies be refocused to address the reasons for illegal immigration?
- In one scene, U.S. border patrol officers stop a small group of Mexicans trying to sneak into the country. Compare the points of view of each person involved. How is the event viewed by the officers? How is it viewed by the Mexicans?
- One of the Los Tigres Del Norte songs says, "I'd like to remind the Gringos I didn't cross the border, the border crossed me. America was born free, man divided it. They painted the line for me to jump over it, and now they call me an invader. It is a well known mistake; they took eight states from us. Who is

Crossing the border.
Photo courtesy of "Al Otro Lado"

the invader?" How does this version of history compare to what you learned? How do varying views of history color the debates over immigration policy?

- Magdiel's mother says he is "running away." Do you agree? If you were in Magdiel's shoes, what would you do and why?
- Do you think Magdiel has a realistic idea of what his life might be like in the United States as an undocumented migrant? Or, given what he takes for the trip, what crossing the border might be like? If you could have talked with Magdiel before he left, what would you have told him and why?



Discussion Prompts

- In the film, we see a citizen militia conducting their own border patrol. Do you think that non-government citizen militias are a good idea? Why or why not? Is it ever appropriate for people to take the law into their own hands? If so, under what kinds of circumstances?
- Chris Simcox, a citizen militia organizer featured in the film, describes border crossings as “an all-out invasion.” What is your reaction to his viewpoint?

Social Justice/The Politics of Poverty

- In the film, what risks do you see people take to get out of poverty? What would you be willing to do to seek economic opportunity or feed your family?
- What are the issues that you hear raised by the composers and singers of the *corridos*? Are any of those issues present in your community? Are you currently doing anything to address those issues? If so, what? If not, what might you do?
- Given what you saw in the film, what do you think are the links between poverty and drug trafficking? Which (if any) of the links you have identified are adequately addressed by current strategy in the United States’ “war” against drugs?



*US Border Patrol Agent, as seen in “Al Otro Lado.”
Photo courtesy of “Al Otro Lado”*

- What are the aspirations of people we meet in **Al Otro Lado**? How do those aspirations compare to your own? How do you think socioeconomic class affects people’s choices or visions for the future? How does socioeconomic class affect people’s ability to achieve their dreams?



*Magdiel saying goodbye to his father, as seen in “Al Otro Lado.”
Photo courtesy of “Al Otro Lado”*



Taking Action



Magdiel in his hometown of La Reforma, as seen in "Al Otro Lado."
Photo courtesy of "Al Otro Lado"

- Pick a social-justice issue important to your community and express your view on the issue by writing your own *corridos* (or by creating other kinds of art). Arrange to perform or display what you create.
- Make recommendations to the Federal Communications Commission about regulating or permitting the broadcast of *narcocorridos*. Share your recommendations by submitting them on the FCC's website (www.fcc.gov) and through letters to the editor in local newspapers.
- Analyze current U.S. immigration policy and trade policy with Mexico in terms of who benefits. Talk with your elected representatives about how U.S. policies might influence the decision of someone like Magdiel who is thinking about crossing the border to find economic opportunity.
- Organize a forum at which Mexican Americans from your community or region can tell their stories and share their heritage, or support heritage events that already exist.
- Convene a debate about how best to handle border crossings between Mexico and the U.S. Include representatives who have crossed legally and without documentation, government officials, advocates for citizen militias, civic and human rights groups, etc.
- Locate organizations working to combat poverty and find out how you can help.



Resources

WEBSITES

The film

P.O.V.'s *Al Otro Lado* Web site
www.pbs.org/pov/alotrolado

The *Al Otro Lado* companion Web site offers exclusive streaming video clips from the film, a podcast version of the filmmaker interview and a wealth of additional resources, including a Q&A with filmmaker Natalia Almada, ample opportunities for viewers to “talk back” and talk to each other about the film, and the following special features:

BOOK EXCERPT

Narcocorridos

Find out more about the history of *corrido* music, *narcocorridos* and the men (and women) who write them in this excerpt from Elijah Wald’s 2001 book *Narcocorrido*.

INTERVIEW

Elijah Wald talks with radio disc jockey — Ricardo “El Mandril” Sanchez, of Burbank-based “Que Buena” (KBUE-FM) about *corrido* and *narcocorrido* music in L.A. (Que Buena bills itself as the “mother of all *corridos*”), the recent immigration marches and immigration *corridos*. Sanchez also lists his “Top 10” must-have *corridos*.

What’s Your P.O.V.?

*P.O.V.’s online Talking Back Tapestry is a colorful, interactive representation of your feelings about **Al Otro Lado**.*

Listen to other P.O.V. viewers talk about the film and add your thoughts by calling 1-800-688-4768. www.pbs.org/pov/talkingback.html

ALTAMURA FILMS

www.altamurafilms.com

The Web site for filmmaker Natalia Almada’s production company includes an essay on Almada’s motivation for making the film and in-depth character descriptions.

Corridos

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE EXHIBITION

www.corridos.org

The Web site of a special Smithsonian Institute Exhibition on *corridos* features educational materials, historical background and examples of the ballads from the border region.

ELIJAH WALD

www.elijahwald.com/corrido.html

Elijah Wald is author of *Narcocorrido: A Journey into the Music of Drugs, Guns, and Guerrillas* and an advisor to *Al Otro Lado*. His Web site includes information from the book, links to articles and interviews on the topic and “*Corrido* Watch,” a collection of recent *corridos* (including English translations) based on current news stories.

AMERICAN PASSAGES

www.learner.org/amerpass/unit05/authors-5.html

This reference page from the Annenberg/CPB telecourse “American Passages: A Literary Journey” provides a short history of *corridos* music.



Resources

NARCOCORRIDOS

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/3552370.stm>

This BBC article summarizes the debate over whether *narcocorridos* promote or merely report on drug smuggling.

Border Crossings/Immigration Issues

PEW HISPANIC CENTER

www.pewhispanic.org

The Pew Hispanic Center provides non-partisan research about Latinos in the U.S., including demographic and economic statistics as well as a groundbreaking survey revealing the attitudes and aspirations of Mexican immigrants (see <http://pewhispanic.org/reports/report.php?ReportID=41>).

CENTER FOR IMMIGRATION STUDIES

www.cis.org

The Center for Immigration Studies is a nonpartisan think tank devoted to research and policy analysis concerning the economic, social, demographic and fiscal impact of immigration on the United States. The site includes analysis of proposed policies like the guest workers program.

RELIGIOUS TASK FORCE

www.rtfcam.org/report/volume_23/No_1/article_6.htm

The Religious Task Force on Central America and Mexico is a faith-based human-rights group that includes a project focused on the U.S.-Mexican border. Their newsletter includes an overview of civil border-patrol efforts, including those started by Chris Simcox, who is featured in the film.

BORDER ACTION

www.borderaction.org

Border Action Network is a group dedicated to preserving human rights for immigrants in the Arizona-Mexico border region. Their Web site includes critiques of the work of civilian militias that have formed to patrol the border, which the organization sees as vigilantes.

FEDERATION FOR AMERICAN IMMIGRATION REFORM

www.fairus.org/site/PageServer?pagename=leg_legislationmain

The Federation for American Immigration Reform is a nonpartisan organization seeking to limit immigration to the U.S. The Web site includes a useful list of current federal legislation related to immigration issues.

MINUTEMAN CIVIL DEFENSE CORPS

www.minutemanhq.com/hq

The Official Minuteman Civil Defense Corps is an umbrella advocacy site for U.S. neighborhood watch groups that recruit civilians to conduct private border patrols that seek to apprehend illegal aliens. Among those featured are Arizona's Civil Homeland Defense group, started by Chris Simcox (and featured in the film).

AMERICAN BORDER PATROL

www.americanborderpatrol.com

An alternative to Chris Simcox's group, Glenn Spencer's American Border Patrol also calls for civilians to take action to stop illegal immigration along the Mexican-American border.

Drug Trafficking

PBS' FRONTLINE: DRUG WARS

www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/drugs/business/place.html

Includes information on drug trafficking based in Sinaloa, one of the places featured in *Al Otro Lado*.

DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION

www.dea.gov

Has general information about efforts to combat drug trafficking as well as official testimony from government officials about U.S. drug policy.



How to Buy the Film

To order *Al Otro Lado*, please go to www.altamurafilms.com



Produced by American Documentary, Inc. and entering its 19th season on PBS, the award-

winning P.O.V. series is the longest-running series on television to feature the work of America's best contemporary-issue independent filmmakers. Airing Tuesdays at 10 p.m., June through October, with primetime specials during the year, P.O.V. has brought over 250 award-winning documentaries to millions nationwide, and now has a Webby Award-winning online series, *P.O.V.'s Borders*. Since 1988, P.O.V. has pioneered the art of presentation and outreach using independent nonfiction media to build new communities in conversation about today's most pressing social issues. More information about P.O.V is available online at www.pbs.org/pov.

P.O.V. Community Engagement and Education

P.O.V. provides Discussion Guides for all films as well as curriculum-based P.O.V. Lesson Plans for select films to promote the use of independent media among varied constituencies. Available free online, these originally produced materials ensure the ongoing use of P.O.V.'s documentaries with educators, community workers, opinion leaders and general audiences nationally. P.O.V. also works closely with local public-television stations to partner with local museums, libraries, schools and community-based organizations to raise awareness of the issues in P.O.V.'s films.

Front cover photo:

Corrido Musicians at the market in Culicán, Mexico, as seen in "Al Otro Lado."

Photo courtesy of "Al Otro Lado"

Corner photo:

Jorge Hernandez of Los Tigres Del Norte, performing at a concert in New Jersey, as seen in "Al Otro Lado."

Photo courtesy of "Al Otro Lado"

P.O.V. Interactive

www.pbs.org/pov

P.O.V.'s award-winning Web department produces our Web-only showcase for interactive storytelling, *P.O.V.'s Borders*. It also produces a Web site for every P.O.V. presentation, extending the life of P.O.V. films through community-based and educational applications, focusing on involving viewers in activities, information and feedback on the issues. In addition, www.pbs.org/pov houses our unique Talking Back feature, filmmaker interviews and viewer resources, and information on the P.O.V. archives as well as myriad special sites for previous P.O.V. broadcasts.

P.O.V. is a project of American Documentary, Inc. Major funding for P.O.V. is provided by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, the Ford Foundation, PBS and public television viewers. Funding for P.O.V.'s Community Engagement activities and the Diverse Voices Project is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. P.O.V. is presented by a consortium of public television stations, including KCET/Los Angeles, WGBH/Boston and WNET/New York. Cara Mertes is executive director of American Documentary | P.O.V.

American Documentary, Inc.

www.americandocumentary.org

American Documentary, Inc. (AmDoc) is a multimedia company dedicated to creating, identifying and presenting contemporary stories that express opinions and perspectives rarely featured in mainstream media outlets. AmDoc is a catalyst for public culture, developing collaborative strategic engagement activities around socially relevant content on television, on-line and in community settings. These activities are designed to trigger action, from dialogue and feedback to educational opportunities and community participation.



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