

Summary of ny times article



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Summary of Article In the article “ In the return home to Mexico grave, an industry rises,” Eduardo Porter chronicles the journey of the deceased Hector Acevedo back to his home town and grieving parents in Mexico. The story of immigrants from Mexico, mostly illegal, being reunited with their parents in Mexico following their death is repeated more than 10, 000 times every year. This has necessitated a systematic means by which their bodies can be transported back across the border. Porter cites the sense of urgency of the family and friends of the deceased to reunite them with their family and home in Mexico. This includes the local immigrant community and government officials

Mexican families are exceptionally closely associated with each other according to the article. It is a cultural reality which is well demonstrated by this network of people and agencies that ensure the bodies of immigrants are buried in their Mexican homeland. It seems that any family in any country would want the remains of a family member to be returned home from a foreign country, that this is not unique to Mexican families. The government of Mexico, through agencies located in the U. S., assists with paperwork and some or all expenses in the transport of the deceased but most countries do the same. In addition, it seems that the Mexican community, family and friends in the U. S. help out less because of the traditionally strong family bonds present in Mexican society but more so as a result of the new bonds that were generated as a result of being part of a small group of immigrants. They speak the same language thus are drawn tightly together in the unfamiliar new culture.

The article suggests that most Mexican immigrants do not intend to stay in the U. S. permanently which is evidenced by the fact that they are sent

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home to be buried after they die. This may be true but the reasoning given lacks credibility. The tradition of being sent home when one dies does in no way indicate that this was their intention when alive. Many would argue that most immigrants have no intention of crossing back over the border as evidenced by the 12 to 20 million people who are living in the U. S. illegally at present. Measuring intent is difficult at best but the latter argument is more substantive.

The ' industry rising' Porter refers to in the headline of the article suggests that a new economic opportunity has arisen from transporting the bodies of deceased immigrants back to Mexico yet nowhere in the article is this inference substantiated. The Mexican government sends taxpayer pesos to subsidize donations from friends, family and co-workers to pay for the transport but this is not an investment in an ' industry' and few, if any, new businesses have blossomed. Possibly, Hispanic funeral homes located in the U. S. are profiting somewhat by the deaths of immigrants but this can hardly be characterized as the rise of an industry.

Several aspects of the article fail the reader. First, the headline is not just buried in the article, it is non-existent. Second, it implies that Mexican families bring their dead home because they are closer than, say, American families. This may or may not be true on the whole but this assumption was not proven in the article. The third problem with the article is that it does not answer the question why should I care? If it included examples of exploitation within this ' rising industry,' this would have sufficed. Of course, illegal immigrants are horribly exploited and this should be of concern to all as a human rights issue but that is not the subject this article addresses. This is too bad. If this information had been included, it would have been

substantive and possibly a worthwhile read. As written, however, it was a waste a time of both writer and reader.

Works Cited

Porter, Eduardo. “ In Return Home to Mexico Grave, an Industry Rises.” New York Times. June 11, 2007.