



Sin título / Untitled

Julia Silva

This door is the most significant project I have completed in my Spanish education at Sandia Prep. I created this to display South American immigrants' hardships when crossing the border into the United States and their journey from their own countries. I used several symbols to represent what is being done to innocent people. Many people in this country believe that immigrants are dirty and dangerous, but throughout this year, I have learned that those cases are not the majority of people seeking a new life. They live in constant fear due to violence that we could not even begin to imagine. In protest of the United State's unjust laws about immigration, many people have been sewing their lips shut with plastic needles and thread. Because of these recent demonstrations of opposition, I decided to depict two of my characters with mouths sewn. This is a very graphic image but ultimately adds to the pain that these women show.

In the early waves of immigration, around the start of the Bracero program, immigrants were being taken to facilities where they were bathed with chemicals and assaulted by United States officials. These officials would mutilate immigrants as well as cutting off massive chunks of hair. In my door, the woman in the top left corner is experiencing her hair being cut. Hair means something different to every culture; however, it is a big part of an individual's identity. Hair is a way people express themselves, and the involuntary cutting of it can seriously damage someone's identity. This is one of the reasons why the woman is crying. Her identity is stolen from her. She is also crying because of the blinding pain of seeing her people die.

As we travel down the door, the hair that was cut transforms into the border between the United States and México. To represent the millions of lives lost at the hands of the border, I drew hundreds of gold people who never got to cross the border. Their gold blood is also shown to remind them that they were not there for a reason. Because needles and thread are so crucial to the recent history of immigration, I transformed the hair border into thread passing through a needle. The needle has pierced through the only body able to cross over the wall. Their blood is spilled as a demonstration to the other immigrants. However, they did die when the grass is greener and flowers bloom.

If you look across the way, a more petite figure is protesting for her people and their rights. Above her, the text says "DANOS DERECHOS" or "give us rights" because the treatment of immigrants is unjust and despicable. Families are torn apart and many people die in the care of our government. The text is in the colors of the Mexican flag to show that the immigrants are demanding what should be theirs. The response is down below, across the border, in the colors of the American flag. It says "CALLÁTE NO NOS IMPORTA" or "shut up you aren't important to us," invalidating their efforts completely.

The woman in the bottom left corner has been shot three times by a firing squad for defending her family. My door came with holes bashed in it, however, I used it to my advantage to show how nothing immigrants do matters to the United States. Our government just puts blanket assumptions



that all immigrants are here to harm our country. This is why this woman was shot. An ICE officer was assaulting her child and when she stepped in to protect them, she was shot. She is covered in blood and her eyes are open and tear-stained with fear of dying. Her lips are sewn shut by the border-torn thread. They are also pinned closed by a safety pin which signifies that the wearer is a supporter of immigration and they are safe to talk to. This is ironic because her lips are closed, but even in her death, she supports her fellow immigrants.

The final and most important symbol is the butterflies. Butterflies, specifically Monarchs, are a big representation of the beauty of immigration. Every year, monarch butterflies migrate from Canada to México. It is a beautiful and powerful experience to see them fly in massive clouds above your head. Butterflies symbolize immigration because of their natural and beautiful move across the continent. Immigration is natural, powerful, challenging, and rewarding. Many obstacles blind U.S. citizens from realizing that immigrants are just as human as they are, but the goal of my door is to help them see that we are all just people in the end.