

**University of Texas at El Paso**

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**From the Selected Works of Anne M. Giangiulio**

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2011

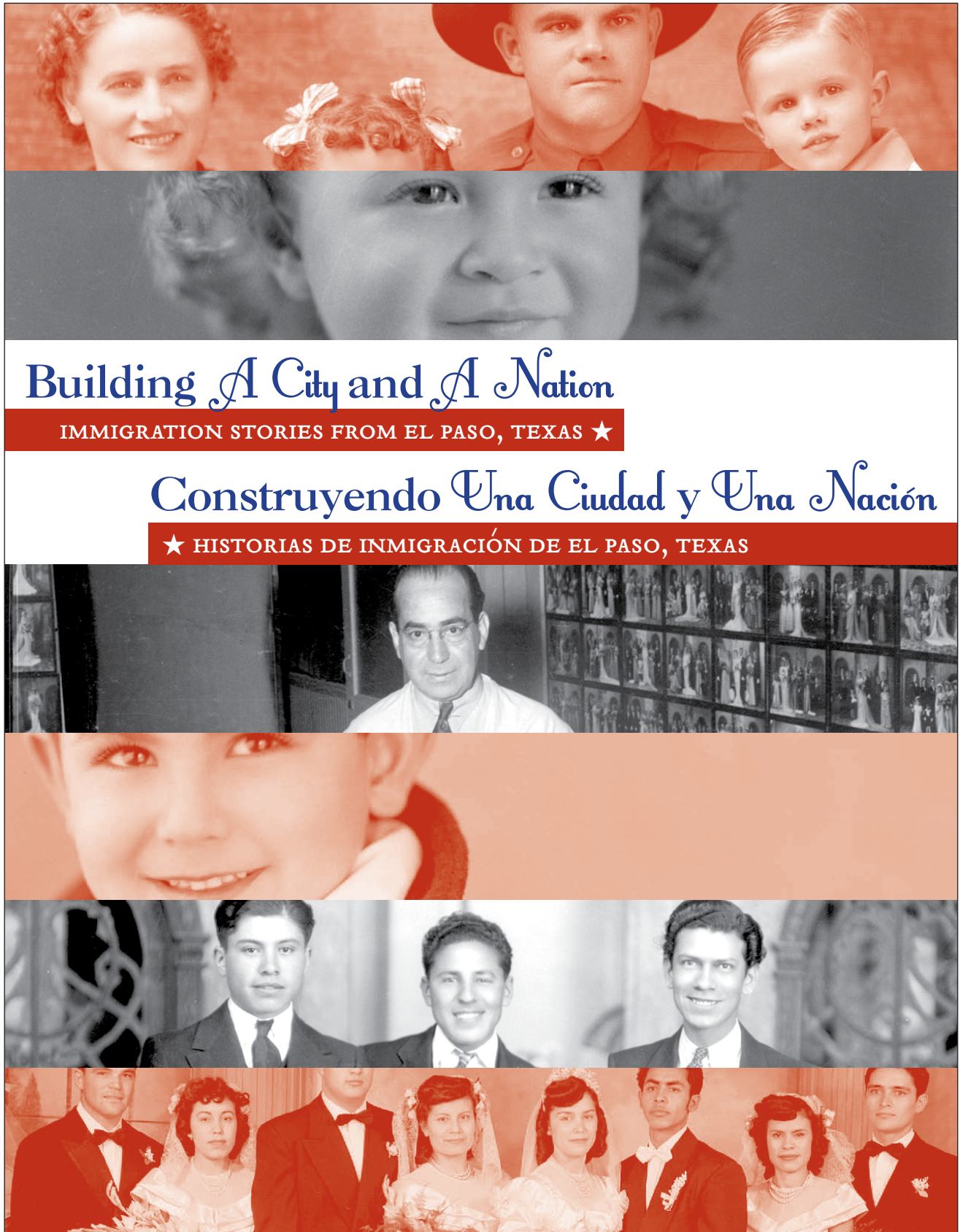
## Building a City and a Nation: Immigration Stories from El Paso, Texas

Anne M Giangiulio, *University of Texas at El Paso*



Available at: [https://works.bepress.com/anne\\_giangiulio/43/](https://works.bepress.com/anne_giangiulio/43/)

*Building a City and a Nation: Immigration Stories from El Paso, Texas.*  
Logo I designed for the exhibit at the Main Branch of the El Paso Public Library

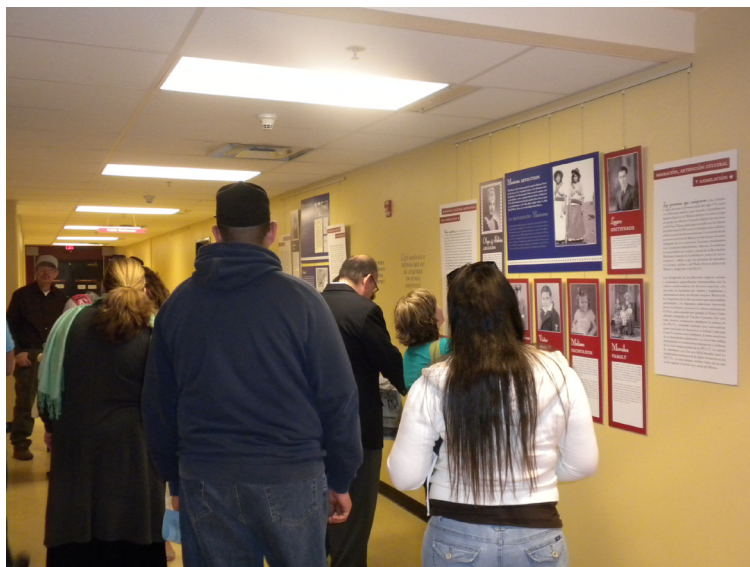


*Building a City and a Nation: Immigration Stories from El Paso, Texas*  
as installed at the Main Branch of the El Paso Public Library

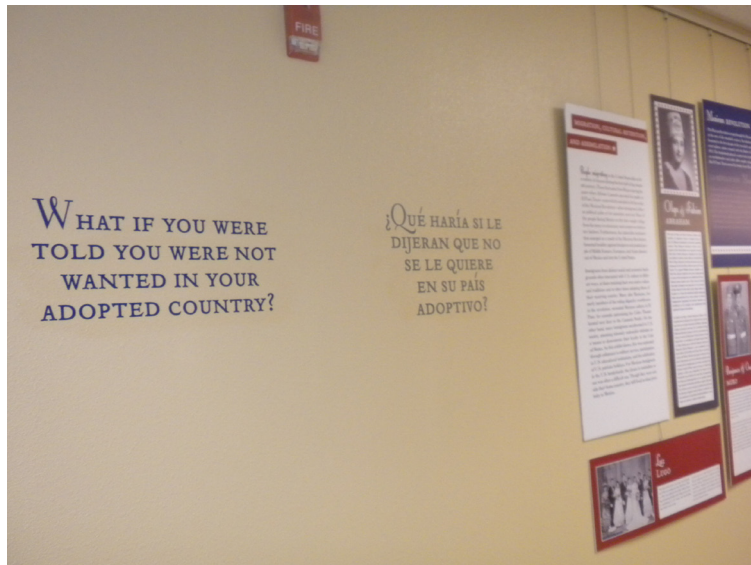
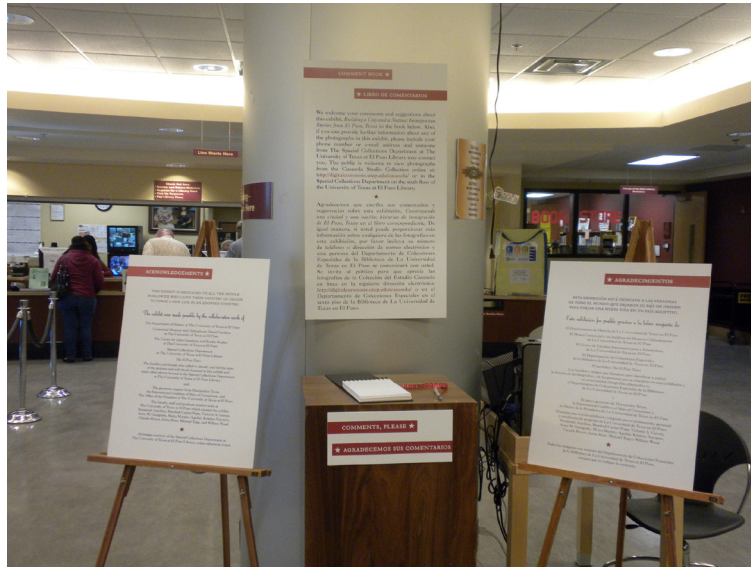




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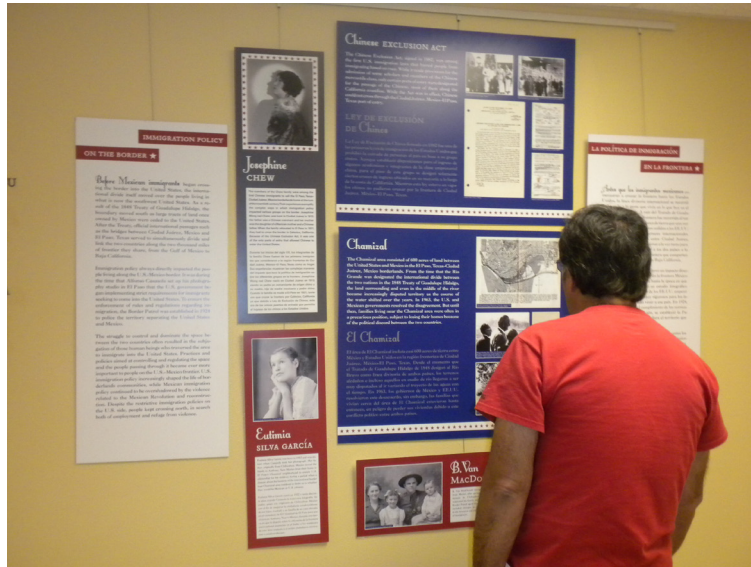




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*Building a City and a Nation: Immigration Stories from El Paso, Texas*  
Bilingual trifold designed for the exhibition

★

¿Qué haría si tuviera que  
dejar todo y  
huir de su patria?

★

¿Qué se siente dividir  
su vida entre dos países?

★

¿Qué se siente ser  
rociado(a) con pesticidas  
para poder así ir a trabajar?

★

¿Qué haría si le dijeran  
que no se le quiere  
en su país adoptivo?

★

¿Qué haría para demostrar  
su cariño a su nuevo país?

★

¿De qué manera iniciaría  
una nueva vida  
y sus seres queridos?

★

¿Cómo se construye  
una ciudad  
el esfuerzo de cada uno?

★

Estas son sólo algunas de las preguntas que se analizan en la exhibición *Construyendo una ciudad y una nación: historias de inmigración de El Paso, Texas*, en donde se presentan las fotografías históricas tomadas en el Estudio Fotográfico Casasola en El Paso, Texas y documenta las experiencias, esfuerzos y logros de las personas que cruzan de México a Estados Unidos. Con las imágenes de inmigrantes procedentes de México, Libano, China y más allá, las fotografías le contarán su historia. Posteriormente, a través del "Programa de Sobremesa", una serie de diálogos durante la hora de comida, usted puede comentar sobre las historias de los inmigrantes y contarnos la suya.

★ **ENTRADA GRATUITA** ★

**LUGAR**  
BIBLIOTECA PÚBLICA DE EL PASO  
ATRIO DE LA BIBLIOTECA CENTRAL (CENTRO DE LA CIUDAD)  
501 NORTH OREGON, EL PASO, TEXAS 79901

**HORARIO DE LA BIBLIOTECA**  
VIERNES - JUEVES: 9:00 AM - 8:00 PM  
SÁBADO: 11:00 AM - 6:00 PM  
DOMINGO: 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

**Construyendo una ciudad y una nación**  
★ HISTORIAS DE INMIGRACIÓN DE EL PASO, TEXAS ★  
BIBLIOTECA PÚBLICA DE EL PASO  
★ ATRIO DE LA BIBLIOTECA CENTRAL ★  
1 DE MARZO AL 15 DE MAYO DE 2011  
RECEPCIÓN: JUEVES 3 DE MARZO DE 5:30 - 7:30 PM

★

What would you do if you had  
to leave everything behind  
and flee your native land?

★

What is it like to divide your life  
between two countries?

★

What does it feel like  
to be sprayed with pesticides  
just so you can get to work?

★

What if you were told  
you were not wanted  
in your adopted country?

★

What would you do to show  
you love your new nation?

★

How would you create  
a new life for yourself  
and your loved ones?

★

How do you build a city,  
one person at a time?

★

These are just some of the questions explored in the exhibit *Building a City and a Nation: Immigration Stories from El Paso, Texas*. It features historic portraits taken at the Casasola Photographic Studio in El Paso, Texas and documents the experiences, struggles and triumphs of people crossing into the United States from Mexico. With images of immigrants hailing from Mexico, Lebanon, China and beyond, the photos will tell you their story. Then, through the "Sobremesa Program," a series of dialogues over lunch, you can discuss the immigrants' stories and tell your own.

★ **ADMISSION FREE** ★

**LOCATION**  
EL PASO PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MAIN (DOWNTOWN) LIBRARY ATRIUM  
501 NORTH OREGON, EL PASO, TEXAS 79901

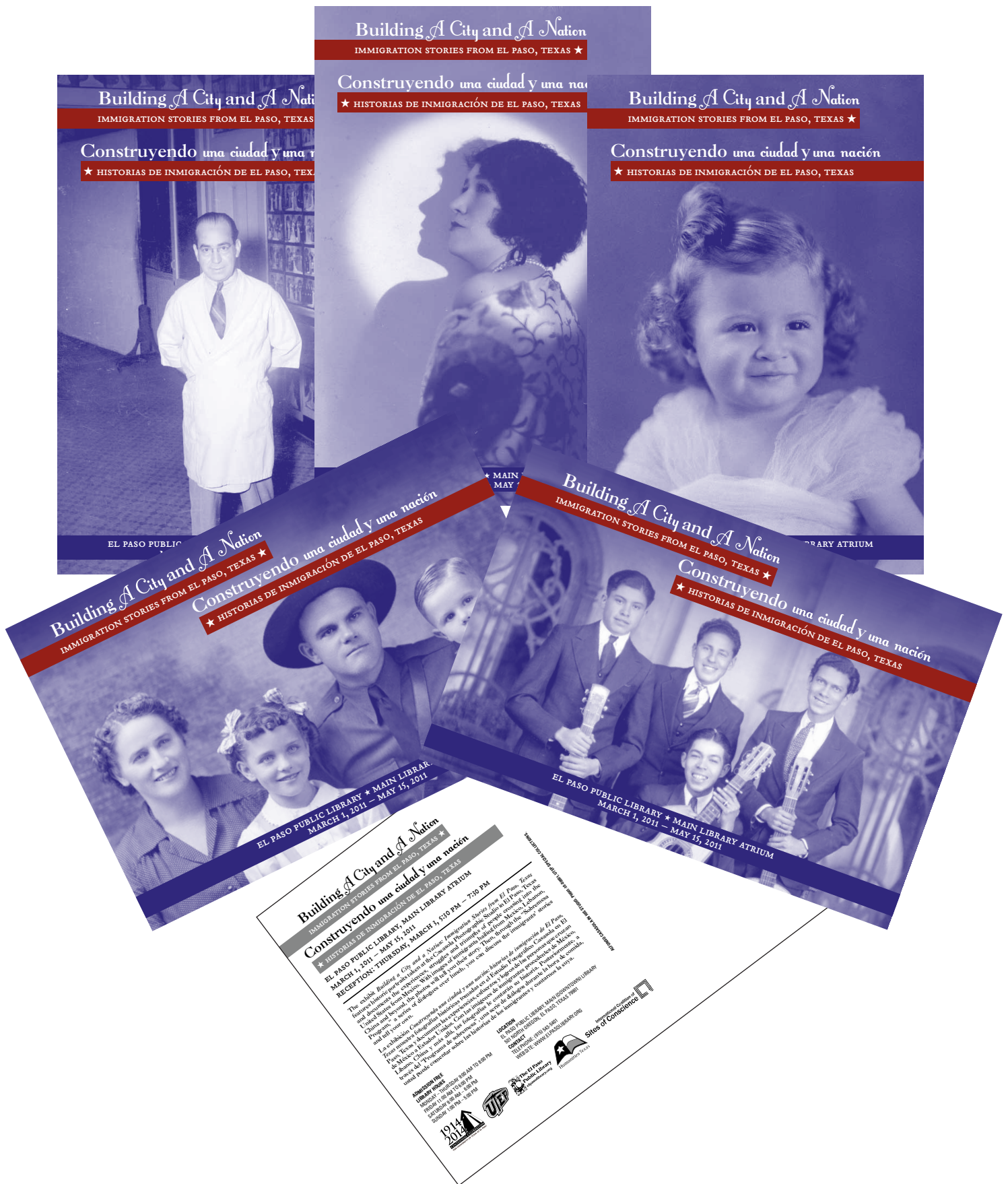
**LIBRARY HOURS**  
MONDAY - THURSDAY: 9:00 AM TO 8:00 PM  
FRIDAY: 11:00 AM TO 6:00 PM  
SATURDAY: 9:00 AM - 6:00 PM  
SUNDAY: 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

**CONTACT**  
TELEPHONE: (915) 543-5401  
WEBSITE: WWW.ELPASOLIBRARY.ORG

**Building A City and A Nation**  
IMMIGRATION STORIES FROM EL PASO, TEXAS ★  
EL PASO PUBLIC LIBRARY ★ MAIN LIBRARY ATRIUM  
MARCH 1, 2011 - MAY 15, 2011  
RECEPTION: THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 5:30 - 7:30 PM



*Building a City and a Nation: Immigration Stories from El Paso, Texas*  
Five different publicity postcards I designed for the exhibit

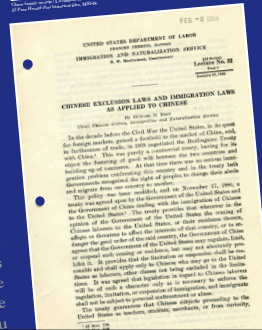


## El Paso: The Other Side of the Mexican Revolution

A few of the over 64 informational panels I designed for the exhibit.

### Chinese EXCLUSION ACT

The Chinese Exclusion Act, signed in 1882, was among the first U.S. immigration laws that barred people from immigrating based on race. While it made provisions for the admission of some scholars and members of the Chinese mercantile class, only certain ports of entry were designated for the passage of the Chinese, most of them along the California coastline. While the Act was in effect, Chinese could not cross through the Ciudad Juárez, Mexico-El Paso, Texas port of entry.



### Olga & Fahim ABRAHAM

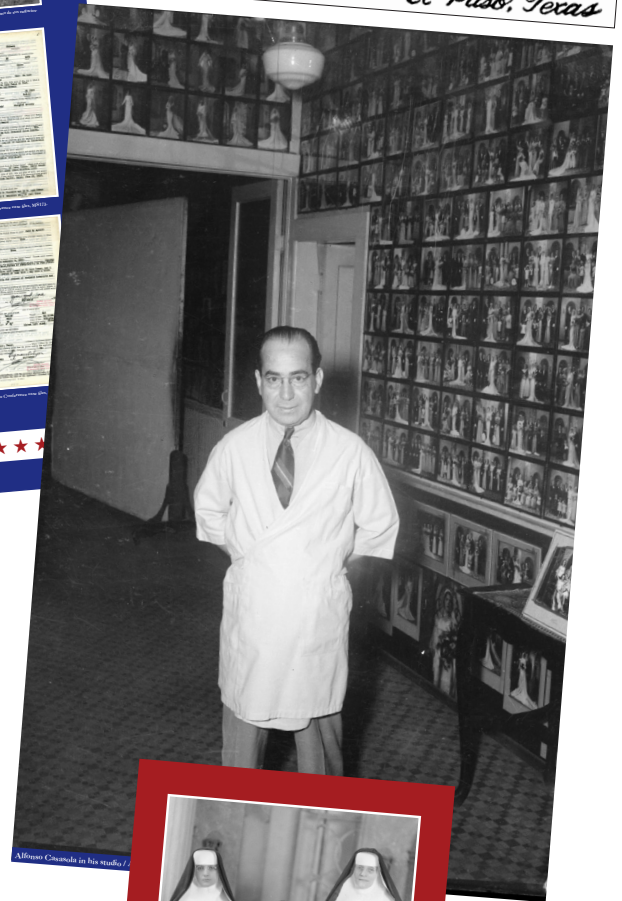
The story of Olga and Fahim Abraham reflects the diversity of migration stories of people living in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands in the early twentieth century. Olga Mickwee Abraham's family immigrated to the United States from Lebanon through Ellis Island. Fahim Abraham travelled from Syria and settled in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. During World War II, Olga worked for the Secret Service and was employed at the Fort Bliss military base in El Paso, Texas. The couple's Middle Eastern traditions reflect the cultural retention that was fundamental to many of the immigrants who called the El Paso-Ciudad Juárez region home. Their shared cultural and ethnic heritage was important in the creation of their family. On the other hand, Olga's ability to function in a state job requiring English language skills demonstrates how many people of various backgrounds negotiated the tension between assimilating to U.S. society and maintaining their traditional values and cultures.

La historia de Olga y Fahim Abraham refleja la diversidad de las historias de la migración de la gente que vivía en la región fronteriza de México-Estados Unidos a principios del siglo XX. La familia de Olga Mickwee Abraham emigró a EE.UU. proveniente de Líbano a través de Ellis Island. Fahim Abraham viajó desde Siria y se estableció en Ciudad Juárez, México. Olga trabajó para el Servicio Secreto durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial y como empleada en la base militar de Fort Bliss en El Paso, Texas. Las tradiciones del Medio Oriente que tenía la pareja, reflejan lo importante que fue la retención cultural para muchos de los inmigrantes que veían a la región de Ciudad Juárez-El Paso como su hogar. La herencia cultural y étnica que compartían fue básica en la formación de su familia. Por otro lado, la capacidad de Olga para desempeñarse en un empleo federal que requería el dominio del idioma inglés, demuestra la forma en que una gran cantidad de personas de diversos orígenes hacían frente a la presión entre asimilarse a la sociedad estadounidense y mantener sus valores y cultura tradicionales.

### CASASOLA STUDIO OF EL PASO ★

This photographic exhibit highlights the cultural richness and diversity that characterized the U.S.-Mexico border city of El Paso, Texas during the first half of the twentieth century. It consists of pictures taken by Alfonso Casasola, a member of a family of Mexican photographers. He set up his studio in El Paso in the 1920s after working in the Mexican consular service in Sonora. The studio was located in the heart of the city at 511 S. El Paso St., just a short walk from the international bridge between Ciudad Juárez, Mexico and El Paso. The clientele captured in his portraits reflect the racial, cultural, national and socioeconomic diversity of the people who called El Paso home during these years and beyond. Casasola's career in El Paso spanned the three decades following the Mexican Revolution. He was an active member of the community and participated in numerous civic organizations.

The pictures that appear here were digitally scanned after workers remodeling the studio discovered 50,000 negatives in a closet around 1996. The Special Collections department of The University of Texas at El Paso Library entered into partnerships with the *El Paso Times* and *El Diario de Juárez* to publish the portraits and recover the histories of those photographed. The subjects, as well as their families and friends, identified over half of the people in the pictures that were published as a result of this outreach, uncovering part of the region's history and engaging the community in the project. Alfonso Casasola worked in both Mexico and the United States and his photographs present El Paso as a significant hub of immigration with a dynamic border culture formed by the individuals in the photographs and others like them.



### Gertrudis MALDONADO

Gertrudis Maldonado was the mother of Sister Rita, pictured here on her right, who would visit El Paso, Texas from her convent in San Antonio. The other woman pictured is Sister Rita's travel chaperone, Sister Evangelist. Gertrudis would cross weekly from Ciudad Juárez, Mexico into El Paso to bring her grandchildren treats.

Gertrudis Maldonado fue la madre de Sor Rita, a su izquierda en la fotografía, quien visitaba El Paso, Texas desde su convento en San Antonio. La otra mujer que se encuentra en esta fotografía es Sor Evangelista, la chaperona de viaje de la religiosa. Gertrudis cruzaba cada semana de Ciudad Juárez, México a El Paso para llevarles obsequios.