

¡ASK A MEXICAN!

By Gustavo Arellano



(Illustration by Mark Dancey)

Dear Mexican: I know you've been asked variations of this before but I'm going to ask you again anyway. I'm a gay white guy and I've had three relationships with Mexican men in the last seven years. Each lasted from three to six months. This past relationship actually lasted a year and culminated with us moving in together for a month before it ended badly. Mexican: I've never been treated worse than by the Mexicans I've dated—and yet I've also never been happier. When it's just the two of us, everything is great. But when I'm involved in anything to do with his family, I suddenly don't exist. Or when we're out in public, he might cast me aside slightly and others are surprised to find the two of us are dating. "He's your boyfriend?" folks exclaim. "He totally ignored you!" Then I answer, "Oh that! Yeah, it's just a little game we play. Ha."

My family and friends have never failed to embrace with open arms anyone I've dated. But my Mexican boyfriends never seem to know what to do with me. Could they be ashamed of me or themselves? Maybe they have some internalized homophobia going on? Maybe I'm the threat to their family's structure? This hasn't resulted in any prejudice on my side. I love and relish Mexican culture and wish my

Spanish were better. The thing is, I had a Mexican guy ask me out recently and I'm wary. Should I run off and find a nice blond white guy with Pottery Barn decor? (ick!). Maybe the candy I'm most attracted to is not good for me? Have I just given myself my own best advice? Should I stick to being friends with Mexican and leave the dating of them to my sister?

Becoming Wary of the Brown Man

Dear Gaybachos: It's not the *mexicanidad* in the *mariposas* you went out with that caused them to treat you badly; it was them. Sure, homophobia remains one of the pathologies Mexicans must work through (more on that in a bit), but I know many queer Mexican men who treat their partners with love and care and don't hide their relationships from friends and family. The more serious issue *es usted*: you say, "I've never been treated worse than by the Mexicans I've dated—and yet I've also never been happier." ¿*Qué qué?* (English translation: WTF???) Don't enter abusive relationships, Becoming Wary: the only person to blame for them *es tú*.

Now, back to Mexican homophobia. Gentle readers: most of you know Mexicans who live in California. Please, *por favor*, please tell them to vote no on Proposition 8, a resolution on California's ballot that seeks to ban gay marriage. Latinos will finally assert their

demographic influence in Golden State elections this year, and it would be a horrible legacy if the first action of the Reconquista is to deny a minority their civil rights—currently, polls show Latinos supporting the initiative. The Mexican only endorses candidates named Alfred E. Neuman, but he does support *gente* fighting any kind of Know Nothings. Again: vote no on Proposition 8—and if you know any homo-hating Mexicans in Califas, tell them to stop acting like sexual Lou Dobbs.

¡ASK A MEXICAN CONTEST! Want a free copy of my latest book, *Orange County: A Personal History*, the finest book published in *los Estados Unidos* since last year's surprise smash, *¡Ask a Mexican!*? First person from each paper I appear in (and the first five *fregonos* from ignorant backwaters that don't carry the Mexican) to send me a picture of themselves standing next to a stop sign with a bag of fruit gets a copy. Make sure to sell those oranges while you're posing! Send pictures to the addresses below!

Ask the Mexican at themexican@askamexican.net or myspace.com/ocwab, or write to him via snail mail at: Gustavo Arellano, P.O. Box 1443, Anaheim, CA 92805!

Frontera

(con't de página 2)

Frontera millonaria

Pero nada de eso. El famoso proyecto de la "frontera inteligente" es una iniciativa más comercial que nada, para dejar de perder dólares por lo tardado del cruce, unos 8 mil 580 millones de dólares al año, según reportan los organizadores.

Esa es la lana que la actual frontera (frontera "tarada" la llamaría yo, para contraponerla con la "frontera inteligente"), cuesta en tiempo de espera. Más tiempo esperando en la línea es, automáticamente, menos tiempo para hacer "shopping" y negocios de los dos lados de la raya. Como dice el dicho, "el tiempo vale oro".

Dicen que nomás en el cruce de Tijuana-San Diego, la pérdida anual es de 5 mil 100 millones de dólares, y en Mexicali-Condado Imperial es de 3 mil 300 millones.

La triste realidad es que la "frontera inteligente" es un puro proyecto comercial. Para ser "socio" de la futura frontera abusada, cada quien le tiene que entrar con 50 mil dólares o más, y ya hay varios estados, condados y municipios que le entraron. Otro tipo de socios, tal vez menos adinerados pero más inteligentes, son compañías y personas que evalúan programas para acortar los tiempos de espera, y cada uno tiene que ponerse con 25 mil dólares por año para opinar.

Los últimos socios son compañías con intereses financieros o inmobiliarios en los dos lados de la frontera que cabildan y gestionan ante los gobiernos federales de los dos lados. En realidad, estos son los de los pesos (y dólares!) pesados. Ya tienen programada una inversión anual de 6 mil dólares, que recuperarán desarrollando e implementando medidas para reducir los tiempos de espera en la frontera.

Parte de la lana recaudada entre los socios será finalmente usada para ingeniería y diseño de una triple caseta de inspección en cada puerta de entrada, carriles de pago en efectivo para cruce rápido, y para "programas para concientizar a la comunidad sobre la crisis que viven los cruces fronterizos" y para "educar y enseñar a la comunidad las ventajas económicas de tener un cruce rápido y un intercambio comercial expedito entre ambos estados".

Ahí la puerca volvió a

torcer el rabo. La comunidad, obviamente, ya sabe la bronca de cruzar la frontera y lo idiota que es el sistema. Ojalá que el proyecto, repito, fuera para cambiar el sistema que considera la frontera como un "punto débil para la seguridad" de Estados Unidos, en vez de simplemente una rayita imaginaria con una comunidad que vive a los lados de la rayita y que necesita cruzarla todos los días simplemente para vivir con normalidad.

Contacto Jorge Mújica Murias at mexicodelnorte@yahoo.com.mx

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Having a Healthy Halloween

By Tracy Hoos
GRADUATE STUDENT AT SDSU
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH.

safe on Halloween.
Healthy Treats

Fall is in full swing and Halloween is here. For most of us Halloween marks a time of ghosts, goblins, tricks, and of course treats. While tempting Halloween goodies loom in every store, office and home during this time of year, celebrating Halloween can actually be a healthy and active time. Following a few simple tips can ensure that you and your family have a happy, healthy, and safe Halloween.

Get Active as a Family
Halloween is a great time to embark on fun creative projects with your family. Spending time together making costumes, decorating your house, school, or community center is a great way to spend time with your family and increase your physical activity. Visiting your local Haunted House, pumpkin patch, or just taking a walk around your neighborhood to look at all the Halloween decorations are all great ways to celebrate the holiday and get in some exercise. Trick or treating as a family is also a great way to keep active and

trick or-treating activities. Providing party games for kids is a great way to help kids get their daily recommended 60 minutes of physical activity. Serve a buffet of fruits and veggies to party goers and let kids make their own pizzas (and providing them with plenty of healthy toppings) is another way to keep Halloween healthy. Want to keep within the Halloween spirit? Turn your Halloween pumpkin into a healthy and nutritious pumpkin pie; pumpkins are full of beta-carotene, vitamin C, and potassium.

Trick-or-Treating
Trick-or-treating with your family? To avoid mid-trick-or-treating munching make sure you and your family don't leave with empty stomachs and have a hearty dinner before you head out. After you return make sure to inspect all treats, avoiding any non-commercially wrapped treats. Limit your and your kids' candy intake, picking out a few treats and storing the rest. Candy has a long shelf life and can be used for occasional treats even after Halloween.

Host a Halloween Party
Having your own Halloween party is another way to celebrate and can be an even healthier option instead of the normal

Halloween is a fun occasion to be creative and spend time with you family and friends; following these tips helps ensure that it is a healthy occasion as well. For other fun ways to get more active with your family check out the San Diego Prevention Research Center website (sdprc.org) for fun community events that might be in your area.

This message is brought to you by SDPRC/Familias Sanas y Activas. For more info on our free physical activity programs in South Bay, please contact Sara Solaimani at 619-594-2965 or Liz Mejia at 619-594-2292.

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