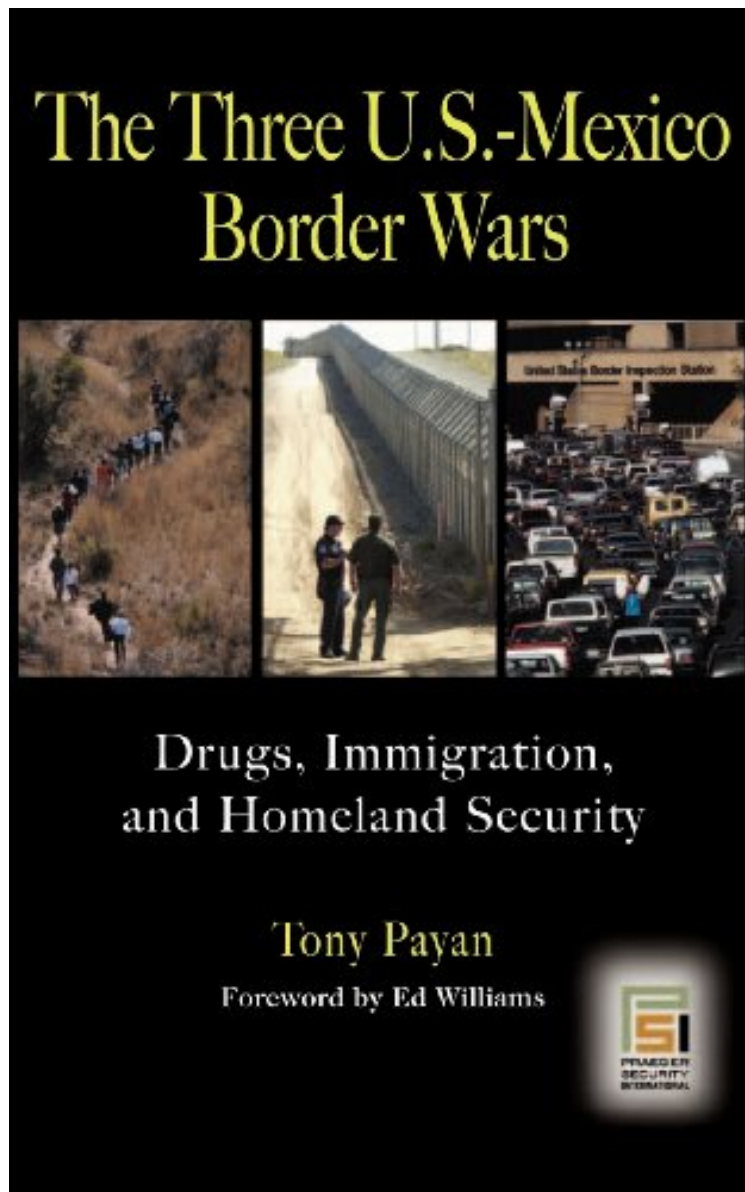


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## The Three U.S.-Mexico Border Wars: Drugs, Immigration, and Homeland Security (Praeger Security International)

*Tony Payan*

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As the United States' response to the attacks of September 11, 2001, begins to take its final shape, perhaps the most affected area of the country is the U.S. borderlands with Mexico. The optimistic talk of the 1990s regarding trade, investment, and economic integration in North America has given way to a rhetoric focused on security, particularly securing and controlling all points of entry to and exit from the United States. Cities and towns across the Southwestern border have experienced firsthand the consequences of the new, security-oriented national ethos and practices embodied in the Homeland Security Act of 2002. The comprehensive security strategy now in place permeates the three border wars examined in this insightful work: the war on drugs, the war over the enforcement of immigration laws, and the war on terror. As Payan demonstrates, the effects of these three wars have been significant. They include a loss of local autonomy and a disconnect between the priorities of Washington, D.C., and the local populations. Perhaps more important, they have created a rigid international line that represents a barrier to economic, social, and cultural integration and a source of fear and suspicion between neighbors. Payan traces the history of these policies on the border to discern and understand the evolutionary patterns and common threads that join all three policies together today. He argues that historically the border has experienced a gradual tightening and increasing militarization, culminating in today's restrictive environment. This book illuminates the ways in which border residents are coping with the stricter border security environment, and how they navigate their daily lives in the face of an increasing number of federal bureaucrats and programs designed to close the border. It examines the significant conflict between the government's efforts to close the border and the border communities' efforts to open it.

"Payan focuses on US-Mexico border policy since 9/11. Before 9/11, the US and Mexico had presidents who knew each other and who had worked together when Bush was governor of Texas. Both Vicente Fox and George W. Bush knew the economic and human costs of delays at the border. They toyed with the idea of an open border, something along the lines of what the European community established when they integrated their economies. But after 9/11, open borders fell by the wayside. The US decided that national security demanded more control of the border to stop would-be terrorists, illegal drugs, and immigrants. Payan methodically picks apart this policy and points out the folly and wasted resources of such efforts. He concludes that US policies are creating hostility with its neighbor and hurting the economies of both countries. Perhaps most importantly, the efforts are futile. The US has not, and will not, stop the flow of drugs by making war on drugs. The author concludes that the war on drugs only aggravates the situation. This is an excellent analysis. Highly recommended. General readers, upper-division undergraduates through practitioners." - Choice  
"Payan has made a compelling and timely contribution to the ongoing discussions on drugs, immigration, and national security." - Journal of American Studies  
"In this text for policy makers and concerned citizens, Payan describes how the war on drugs, the war over the enforcement of immigration laws, and the war on terror have affected relations between Mexico and the U.S. and their shared border. Particular attention is paid to the conflict between the U.S. government's efforts to close the border and the desire of residents of local communities to keep it open." - Reference Research Book News  
"Tony Payan's book is an excellent primer on the myriad policy issues facing the United States and Mexico as they grapple with the opportunity and tragedy of their common border. Payan's lucid prose illuminates past and present on a frontier that has evolved from a collection of unguarded desert outposts, to an urbanized battleground of cultural conflict." (Hector Tobar, author of Translation Nation: Defining a New American Identity in the Spanish-Speaking United States)  
About the Author  
Tony Payan is Assistant Professor of International Relations and Foreign Policy at the University of Texas, El Paso. He is the author of Cops, Soldiers, and Diplomats: Explaining Agency Behavior in the Drug War (2006).