

# **We leave their hands full with labor, they leave ours empty; grasping for money: The story of Mexican women powering through environmental racism**

***Mexican women who have to live through fear, pain, and sorrow all in one, are struggling for just \$68 a week. This isn't the only problem leading to environmental racism.***

In Mexico, women are being treated like slaves by the U.S. When the U.S. buys the factories in Mexico and call it "Maquiladoras." The women working in the factories have no protection to any chemical or hazardous materials that are in their working environment.

The U.S. buys factories out of the border because in those kinds of foreign countries, the labor is really cheap and since it's women only, they never get any fair wages or a good job. There are tons of toxic lead and hazardous materials in the Maquiladoras that can lead to severe sickness and/or death.

Women are having such a terrible time trying to survive in Mexico with everything going on around them and their children. Is this really what the women who birthed us deserve? They gave us life and we are just taking theirs in return.

## **I'll take your life; for low income**

Women working the Maquiladoras are only getting paid \$68 a week. On some occasions, they don't even pay them even if it's against the law. Since the U.S. is getting money from all the products they sell, they continue to torture the women and are basically receiving money for that.

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Elyse Bolterstein reported on, "Environmental Justice Case Study: Maquiladora Workers and Border Issues," stated, "948,645 Mexicans have a terrible working environment that includes inadequate training, exposure to many potentially hazardous materials, and inadequate information and protective equipment." That proves that the U.S. doesn't even care about their workers and just uses them as slaves and money. After the U.S. gets big loads of money while torturing people, they still feel so great and accomplished at the end.

## **Sacrifices she makes**

Women who are working in Maquiladoras usually tend to sacrifice their life to the U.S. like they are just pieces of money. The U.S. is really greedy, so when the women are working, they want as much work done as possible for more sales which equals more money. The U.S. doesn't even let them use the bathroom or get water which led to kidney and bladder problems. The women are technically killing themselves for just \$68 a week.

Inside the Maquiladoras, there are tons and tons of toxic chemicals and the women working there aren't given any protection for that and are exposed to it.

They are also exposed to lead and when the lead poisoning gets inside their body, it ruins their circulatory system. The lead will most definitely affect their children in a very bad and dangerous way.

## **These are children, not test subjects**

When the children receive the lead inside their body, it can cause severe damage. Many children die from lead poisoning reaching different areas. The most dangerous parts for the lead to reach is the: Brain, Heart, the hormones, blood, stomach, kidneys, reproductive system, and bones.

From the deadly factories in Mexico, childrens pond, rivers, and lakes increased in turbidity and changed colors. Those were the places they played in and had fun but when the U.S. started to buy factories over in Mexico, it ruined their childhood.

Lead poisoning is so serious that it can led to death. A baby that was born with anencephaly died soon after his birth (Gorman, 2003). That proves that with everything going on in factories with the mothers, it can kill newborns.