



By Carter Raymond
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Reading Reflection: *Dear America*

In a story of incredible courage, determination, and adversity, Jose Antonio Vargas captures the reader with his charming and unmatched personality. For Jose to be able to tell his story and share it with the world like he has never before is important for him, the reader, and others who may be experiencing the same struggles as he is. While his story is wildly entertaining, it is clear that Jose is trying to send another message to the audience. Many will infer that the message is along the lines of how mean, inconsiderate, or racist Americans may be, but I believe otherwise. Jose's message to the readers is simply that the community is not educated enough to make the right decisions.

As expected in a book based on immigration and its challenges, there is a fair share of not-so-pleasant encounters Jose has with others who don't share the same political viewpoint as he does. This is a common occurrence to many around the country regardless of race, gender, and political party. What I didn't expect is the sheer number of people who were not properly informed with the correct facts. It amazed me that it could be an issue in modern America with all the media available in this day and age.

Jose recalls multiple instances where he encountered others who were wrongly informed. Such as the television reporter who didn't realize that there was no "line" for him to stand in to become legal. A man who voted for President Obama insulted Vargas and was unaware about how many immigrants Obama's administration deported. Or the immigration lawyer who ironically did not know the legal boundaries of a certain law. Or one of the many people who asked him if or when he was going to become legal because they did not understand that Jose had no way to do so.

I believe these instances show the true problem within the community. Regardless of political views, the least Americans can do is make informed decisions. Whether the issue starts with biased news outlets, inaccurate reporting, or just lack of care from the American public, that issue was the most important takeaway I had from this book.

Jose is an exquisite writer with an amazing story to tell. He uses his background to gain interest and sympathy from the reader, as it is deserved. I don't see this as just a "good story," but as something to learn from. It is not just a book to rant and pout on the many Americans who may not be as welcoming to different cultures as they should be. The misinformed American public seems to be the biggest issue when it comes to immigration, and I believe that is what Jose hopes his book can help change. With that, the whole nature of the American community should change for the better.

(Carter is an undeclared business major from Midlothian, Virginia.)