

Take a Second to think
about what it means to be
Chicanx

In-Between Borders:



Chicanx Artists Navigating
Their Identity By: Gabe Escobar





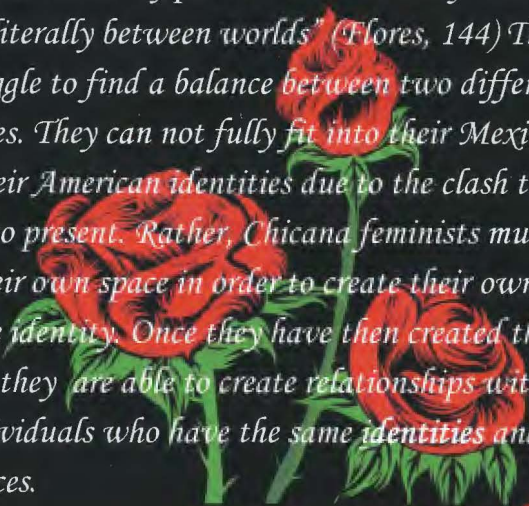
Where Do I Belong?

The struggles of being Mexican American are no doubt valid. When it comes to the topic of identity, it can be a difficult one that not many may think about. One of the reasons why identity is so complex is because it varies depending on each person. Terms such as Latinx and Chicana have recently become popular terms that individuals use to identify as. The main purpose of these terms are to be more inclusive of individuals who do not fit into the gender binary that Spanish language has long used. The terms are challenging and serve as an example of how Latinx/Chicana culture are changing.



The Concept of Borders

The idea of borders is something that many Chicana identified individuals encounter during their lives. Chicana scholar Lisa Flores details this experience in one of her scholarly pieces. "The Chicana feminist is often literally between worlds" (Flores, 144) There is a struggle to find a balance between two different cultures. They can not fully fit into their Mexican nor their American identities due to the clash that the two present. Rather, Chicana feminists must create their own space in order to create their own unique identity. Once they have then created their space, they are able to create relationships with other individuals who have the same identities and experiences.



THE VALUE

More than "Tradition"

- family, food, community,
- Important aspect of an identity
- Aesthetic, social beliefs, values, ect



¿Hablas Español?

OF CULTURE

love, celebration

individual's identity

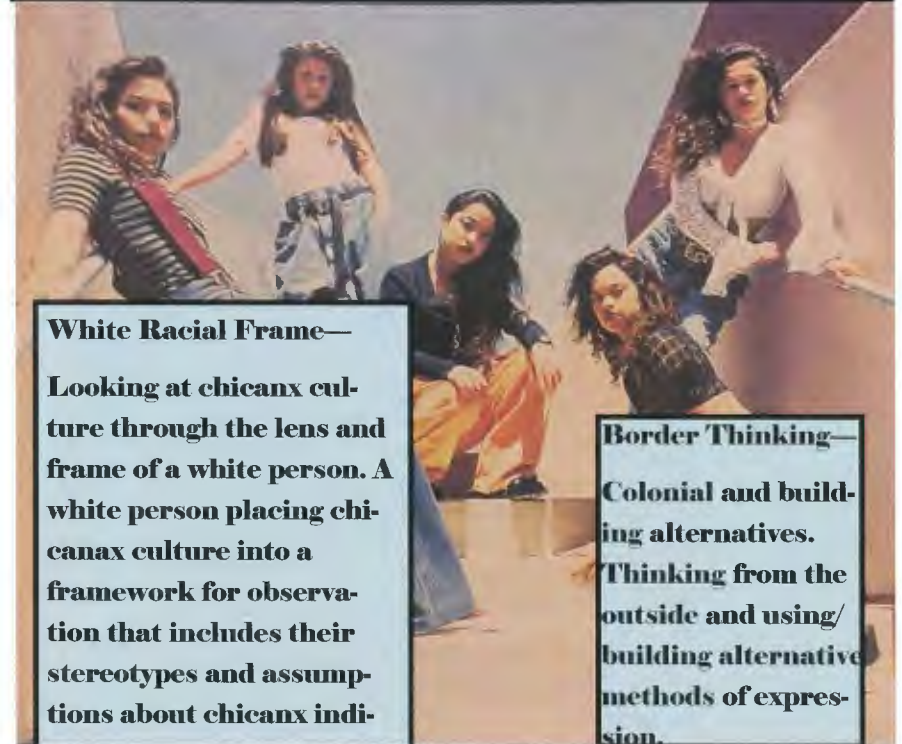


Do you speak English?

Cultural Syncretism & Pastiche

Cultural Syncretism— the idea of affirming one's own cultural expressions while also challenging/resisting the dominant culture of a society

Pastiche—the action of taking fractions of other dominant cultures in order to produce something that is new and unique.



White Racial Frame—

Looking at chicanx culture through the lens and frame of a white person. A white person placing chicanx culture into a framework for observation that includes their stereotypes and assumptions about chicanx indi-

Border Thinking—

Colonial and building alternatives. Thinking from the outside and using/building alternative methods of expression.

TAKING OUR SPACE

- *Art is a powerful method of expression that can be used to intervene and enter dominant discourse about culture*
- *Art incorporates a wide variety of expression allowing for various voices to be heard (poetry, writing, paintings, sculpture, music, etc.)*
- *Chicanx individuals creating art are already challenging dominant culture as they are creating something entirely new based from their own experiences*



My Navigation



Something that I've recently begun to think about is whether I am currently challenging dominant discourse about Latinx/Chicanx individuals. I would like to think that I am since I am going to college in a predominantly white environment but the questions comes of whether I'm really pushing myself to challenge dominant discourse.

Recently, I have had difficulty understanding my identity especially since I have been taking this class on Latinx Communication. I believe that I have come to identify as Mexican-American but also Latinx. When people ask what I am, I tend to say Mexican-American because it's what I have know. However, I also do not mind identifying as Latinx especially in group setting as I want to show my support for the use of the term and what it stands for. If someone specifically ask if I considered my self to be Latinx, I would say yes. I say this because I understand the importance of the term and what it means for Latin individuals who do not fall into the gender binary instilled in the Spanish language. I'm all for breaking boundaries and challenging ourselves.

As a Mexican-American, or Chicanx/Latinx individual, who aspires to be a musical artist, I find the idea of pastiche and cultural syncretism as something I can relate to with my work. I primarily produce beats, or instrumental music, from my laptop. A big part of producing music is being able to be able to sample music in order to create a new record that is completely new. This can be seen as the idea of pastiche. When I sample music, I take a fraction of a culture and create something new with it. A way I could relate it more to my heritage would be to sample songs that traditionally come from my culture and try to make something new mixing it with modern music, specifically Hip-Hop.

CHICANX ARTISTS

Cuco

"Meet Cuco, the 19-year old Chicano making it as a form of resistance"



Omar Banos is a young Chicano music artists out of Hawthorne, California. He goes by the artist name of "Cuco" and is knoe for his "psychedelic" love songs about the influence of machismo on romantic relationships. "I know, I'm representation, I'm representing, like, a very unrepresented group of people already. And that's in itself already a form of resistnace. We're not supposed to make it. A big part of Cuco's music is that he challenges the idea of machismo where men are not encouraged to dig into their feelings. Rather, Cuco embraces that in all aspects of his music.

Natalia Ancisco

-Chicana-Tejana visual artists and educator



Her work has been exhibited throughout the United States. She has received various forms of recognition for her work and effort. Much of her work comes from the experiences that she has had or experiences and stories that have been told to her. Her visual representation of the struggles of Chicana individuals helps bring light to the issue.





WE'RE ALL ARTISTS

IN THIS SPACE, CREATE SOMETHING THAT YOU THINK DEFINES A PART OF WHO YOU ARE. IT CAN BE ANYTHING. POETRY, PHRASES, DRAWINGS, SYMBOLS, WORDS, ECT.



Discursive Space and the Strangers

Art has the capability to create discursive space for individuals and communities. It allows individuals to enter a sphere for cultural discourse where they can be creative and leave their mark.

Art also has the ability to create relationships with other people. Whether they are fellow artists or people who are observing the art, there is the ability for a relationship to be developed based of similar experiences. This is important when it comes to the idea of the stranger. The stranger is a person who is a part of society but not actually seen as a member of that society. This is an issue for many Chicany individuals, so using art as a form of resistance and expression, can be really beneficial to create space and relationships with others.



Chicanx Art Movement



In partnership with AltaMed Health Services, a Los Angeles-based community health center, the Mexican Culture Institute presents “Before the 45th: Action/Reaction in Chicano and Latino Art,” an exhibition featuring emerging and established Chicanx and Latinx artists. Dating back as early as the 1970s, these artworks survey an ongoing dialogue shaped by Chicanx and Latinx leaders and their successors about the hopes, dreams and fears of multi-cultural communities.

Chicanx Tattoos

“Once upon a time, before he became the veritable father of mainstream Latinx tattoo art, Freddy Negrete sat in a cell at L.A.’s Central Juvenile Hall, doing what he always did: drawing. It’s a skill he picked up from his father and uncle, who were also self-taught artists.”



The popularity of tattoos that are considered to be “Chicanx” style shows the power that art has on the culture of a society. Referring to Negrete’s tattoo studio- “By the time Rihanna, Miley Cyrus, Lil Wayne and others started getting inked on a regular basis, tattoos, especially the black and gray photorealistic variety of Chicano heritage had gone global, barely recognizable (at least to the masses) as the creative heart of Chicano culture.”



Axis Mundo

Exhibit of Queer Chicax Art

A space for individuals to create and share their own space

Opportunity to build community and relationships with other individuals who have similar identities.

The power that art has in facilitating critical discussions and building social ties



The Hamilton Mixtape



Discussion of issues that immigrants face put on a large platform for the world to see. The **cyber public sphere** can be an effective space to help spark discussion and bring awareness to certain issues that are often not voiced in the normal public spheres.

