

Final Project Transcript

Okay guys so my name is Jocelyne, I'm here with two friends. We're all going to be talking about culture, our identity and our experiences within that identity so I'm going to go ahead and let them introduce themselves. Say your name, your pronouns and how you identify.

Okay so my name is Danna, I am a she/her and I identify as a Latina.

My name is Marling, my pronouns are she/her, and I identify as a Latina.

So, like I said my name is Jocelyne, I identify as Latina and my pronouns are she/hers.

So, to start off I'm going to ask you guys kind of two basic questions and I'll go ahead and also put my input on that. But the first question is so how would you identify Mexican culture?

I think that is a tough question. I think Mexican culture embodies a lot of things. I think of like family, the importance family relationships have in Mexican culture as well as religion, like believing in god, and food.

Food, yea I feel like that's the biggest take in our culture, like we're very known for our food.

Our spicy food!

Yea having like really rich food.

But yea, I don't know for me I think of like Mexican culture as being very like...I agree in what you said Danna but I also feel like it's a lot of like Machismo and like you know very patriarchal and like the dad or the father figure or the men in the family are what decides what the family is, what the culture is.

Yea I think I both agree with what you said. I feel like a lot of the Mexican culture is very oriented on the man of the house so yea pretty much what he says goes, and that has to do with religion too.

Yea I can see that especially if you're within a religion that's already in itself pretty patriarchal and like the men are the one in the top, and then you add on the Mexican culture and that's already defiant and even more explicit in who runs and who's at the bottom.

So, going off of that what do you guys think Chicana culture is?

Okay for me Chicano culture is mainly kids that grow up in America, having Mexican parents and having those parents put on their kids the dreams that they have. You know, I feel like first generation kids are pushed to do good in school, they're pushed to just be the absolute best at anything that they put themselves in. Especially if it's something the parents themselves couldn't achieve, or that it was something that they wanted. And that's all I think of about when I think of Chicanx culture like the struggle.

Just living up to that dream.

Yea, I mean I definitely agree with what you said, I just feel like they don't struggle, I guess as much if you're just a first-generation student. Because if your grandparents and your parents are already here, they already know how the education system works. And you know so, they already have those experiences so it's easier for them to help their kids get a better education, get a better job, and you know with first generation kids it's like so much harder because they're the ones that are having that first-hand experience.

I don't know for me Chicano culture, Chicana culture is very much like the way in which we grow up. Like that's very different from Mexican, like actual Mexican life. Cause I mean I can compare my life right now to like the lives of my parents and like at the age that they were at. Right now, I mean, I'm at a university so obviously that wasn't something accessible to my parents and even if they like did come earlier in life that still isn't something that would even be imaginable. So, going back to what you said Danna about them having these dreams and them projecting them onto us, I feel like yea Chicano culture is a big part of that. And I also feel like Chicano culture is more of a diluted Mexican culture. Cause I feel like I identify more with Chicano culture because I didn't grow up in Mexico because I wasn't like introduced to things that my parents were introduced. So yea I don't know I feel like the two are very different, very distinct but obviously there is like, being Chicana and my parents being Mexican, like obviously I'm going to understand their practices or their ideas or whatever because they are Mexican. But at the same time if I were to go to Mexico and have my great-grandma or something like try to teach me something that I didn't know about I'd be like "whoa what is this?" Like I've never, ever experienced that even with my Mexican parents, that's not something we do or say or you know whatever it is.

That was something else I was also going to bring up like being Chicana, or the culture is like, feeling like you're stuck in the middle. Like you're here living in America, or the United States, and you're trying to get ahead of like- accomplish those dreams that your parents have, but at the same time you're trying to figure out- okay well people in Mexico, like my family members they don't see me as Mexican because I was born here, because I speak English, but people here don't see me you know *estadounidense porque* (as a US citizen because) I speak Spanish, because I look different, and it's, it's hard.

I don't know, I feel like you never truly fit in, in like one specific place cause like yea you said you go to Mexico and like your family already knows that you're not really- like since you weren't born there, you're not really Mexican. And then yea you're living over here in the United States and its like, you know, people from here they already know that you're not from here as well. So, it's like you never really fit in, in any place.

And I mean like, it doesn't matter what you identify with, either like you know Chicana, Mexicana, whatever, I feel like that's always going to be the struggle no matter where you go like you have this culture, the way you act, the way you think, the way you speak, like it's because of your culture, but then again you're living in a completely different place where it's like the culture you can draw back from, like it might not be prevalent everywhere that you go to and it's like where do I find the middle ground in like how I act, how I speak and how I even represent myself. So... yea its hard, it's a night nice in between.

But going off of like that, we can all agree right, that you know Chicana, Mexicana culture like it's very much dictated on patriarchal norms and like very machismo, very sexist. So, I want to go ahead and talk about that. I want to ask you guys about those norms, whether you know you want to focus on sexism, machismo, gender roles, whatever it is. How have these norms affected you guys personally, within you know sexuality, education, religion?

I feel like it has played a huge role all of my life.

Specifically, what area? Machismo or...?

Machismo has. I don't know just growing up and having my dad always telling me that like I needed to, I need to learn how to cook, how to clean, because one day you know I have to do that for my husband and it's ridiculous like I've always been against it, my mom has always backed me up on that, and I feel like, slowly, very slowly we're trying to like help my dad not see it that way but it's something that's- *esta ahí como* (there like) in all aspects of like the culture.

Yea I feel like I don't know that's also the same thing with my dad. I feel like he's so, you know he definitely wants me to have a good education so I can have a good job but it's always that mindset of like "oh well you still need to learn how to cook and clean for your man" or you know "how are you going to get married if you don't have these things" you know. So, it's like even through from the education aspect he wants me to be like independent and have my own career but it's like still those other um the gender role of me still being a woman that still has to learn how to do those things.

I feel like that's really tough. Going off of that, yea you're, you know you live in like a country where you have access to education but at the same time it's like yea you have education but what's more important is you getting married, you being able to like raise the kids, you being able to like cook and clean for them like... I feel like that's very...like yea we have the resources to go to education but what does that matter if all that they can see is like "well do you know how to cook?". It's as if that's more important, learning how to cook or even like cleaning, I feel like some people, some men, in this culture think that that's like top priority when I need to be financially independent, or I need to be you know, just independent in general. And it's like well how do you want me to do that if you're so focused on me learning how to cook for a man.

Exactly, and the way machismo has affected my dating life you could say, is that I've had a boyfriend who, we finished because he expected me to be more dedicated to children if we were to ever have kids, instead of being focused on like my school and my career, he was worried that if I didn't stay home with my kids and raise them that somehow my kids were going to end up being messed up in some sort of way and think that their mom didn't love them because their mom was trying to go out, *tener una carrera, tener esa* (to have a career, to have) independence y *tener esa plata para poder ayudarlos a ellos* (and to provide money in order to help them).

And I mean, to be honest you expect this machismo from our, you know from your dad or from your grandpa or whatever. Like you expect it from older generations, but then to have to date someone that's your age, that you know lives in your community or whatever like to have them portray that it's like wow.

It's shocking.

This is evident still, even it doesn't matter-

Like its just passed down.

Yea and it's not even like- cause I mean he goes to school right like it's like he has the education, he is aware of like you know gender roles here in America, but yet he's like "well if we were to ever get married, this is how I want you to be" and it's like "whoa dude like-" first of all you're not my dad, second of all like why- you have the way of thinking of my dad when you shouldn't. You are more, you should be more woke! And what is stopping you from going past those gender roles, what is stopping you from, from thinking that way. And I feel like it ultimately does come down to like our culture and the way we emphasize men, and the way we emphasize, the way we give them the pedestal. That's, that's what is enabling this way of thinking to other generations and it sucks, because how are we ever supposed to-

Get out of it.

Get out of it. How are we ever supposed to teach? And then like what you said, you know what you said about you and your mom how you're trying to teach your, your dad to not think that way but then it's like super hard cause they already, they already see, like he probably sees you as like a woman, like "what do you know" and then to have, to have you guys be like "oh well no, this is how it is", I feel like it's even more harder for him to grasp that understanding because its coming from you know yourself, and not like a son or anybody else.

Exactly, I feel like machismo is something that is truly taught and something that especially for men when they live in homes that are super machista and they're the ones that are benefitting"? Benefitting from that, it's a lot more difficult for them to realize that it's not okay, and it totally sucks being a woman in that type of atmosphere.

No yea, I feel like, I don't know the biggest or most impactful way that we as like women can stop this is by raising our kids differently. Cause I feel like telling your dad or even telling your brothers like "hey you know this isn't right", I feel like when they already have those expectations or they already have that way of thinking there's not that much that can change especially if it's like you know an older generation, like they're set in their ways. But if you were to like you know have your own children, and be the focus "oh I am not going to raise this man to live in this machismo, patriarchal way, that is not how I want my son to grow" like then that's our time to like stop it. That is when we decide like "hey nope, this isn't going to work, I'm not going to let you do this, I'm not going to let you think like this, so here is how I'm going to raise you, here's what I'm going to do."

We live in 2019, you know things are different and-

And much more, much more because we live in the U.S.

Yea, and like I get it it's hard because they pretty much grew up on that like that's what they were taught so it's like hard for them to like think a different way you know just in like a day or two. It's hard its somethings that you're going to have to, like it just takes time.

Mm-hmm definitely for sure, I think so. I feel like, its, machismo and growing out of that and you know not letting it affect you know whatever area of life, it's always going to be an ongoing thing, it's not going to happen in a couple years, it's not going to happen- and then especially when things down in life happen like you know certain family events or like certain traditions or whatever, we still have to be aware of like what it is we're doing and if we're enabling that machismo and if we are, put a stop to it right then and there and be like "hey like this isn't cool" like "this is what I should be doing, instead of this" that way that tradition can learn and grow as well and like you know hopefully for generations to come it doesn't keep on going.

Yea I just feel like it's pretty much up to us you know like how you were saying Danna that you and your mom were already like you know trying to tell your dad well you know this is how it should be, you know kind of like teaching him. I feel like it's pretty much up to us. Like with me I have a brother and my mom pretty much like babies him and so I'm always like telling my mom you know he needs to learn how to do these things too, not just me and my sister because were like women, but he should learn how to do this too because he shouldn't like-

He shouldn't have to depend on a wan to do it yea. Exactly yea so I feel like it ultimately is down to like you know, the more educated women who are you know aware of their surroundings and aware of like what the culture brings and how it can not only affect us but like you know families as well.

Yea, I think as well like trying to help...I'm just thinking right now of the LGBTQ community and how hard it must be, like being Latino and *como* (like) being gay or being trans and just how scary that would be especially with a parent or a dad or a mom that are super machista and having in their head that whatever they're doing or whoever they are is not okay because it doesn't fit.

Not okay, because, because it doesn't fit that mold. Yea, its, I mean I feel like its any, it's hard, I mean yea especially the LGBTQ community but I feel like it's hard for anybody that even like tries to like go around those norms or that mold of machismo I feel like if you were to ever bring this up to like someone like who, someone who, like a father figure was very much into their machismo ways like I feel like that conversation would not, would not be a good conversation, so yea, I can only imagine what it is for people how do identify as trans or people you know identify as gay and like they're open about it, like how must it be for them/ Super, super hard. But yea, thanks for talking to me about this topic. I know that it's very prevalent.

It gets one very hot.

Yea, it gets, it gets me going and like I wish I could talk to like- I mean honestly I'm super grateful that my family isn't super machismo at all, like my dad does all the cleaning and the cooking in my house, and he doesn't expect me to like live up to those standards but you know I hear about you Danna, your family being super machismo or I mean your dad and then like I

hear of like other stories on like on twitter or whatever and I'm just like, like we need to be having this conversation, we need to be having this conversation not just within like our group of friends, but within our families, within our community, within like you know people that identify as we do and that are perpetuating these, these cycles and we need to be talking about it.