UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Santa Barbara

Bordering Faith: spiritual transformation, cultural change, and Chicana/o youth at the border

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in Chicana and Chicano Studies

by

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Francisco Javier Fuentes Jr.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A work like this is no small feat and there are many people I would like to thank for walking with me on this journey. I owe my first thanks to my Dissertation Committee and all the faculty associated with the Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies, Sociology, and Religious Studies. I cannot express enough thanks to Dr. Ralph Armbruster-Sandoval who served as the chairman of my committee and was the first to provide me unyielding support in a cutting-edge program. I am also truly grateful for Dr. Inés Casillas and Dr. Rudy Busto who continued to make themselves available for feedback, conversations, and encouragement throughout the years. I could not have finished had it not been for their guidance and keen observations. I am also appreciative of Dr. Mario T. Garcia, Dr. Gerardo Aldana, and Dr. Peter J. Garcia who first taught me the power of scholarship as a Chicano. I have the work and instruction of Dr. Inés Talamantez, Dr. George Lipsitz, Dr. Victor Rios, Dr. Laura Perez, and Dr. William I. Robinson to thank for adding to my personal and intellectual development. I am incredibly in debt to all these University of California faculty members who gave their time to listen and teach me.

Dr. Margaret Cerullo from Hampshire College and Debra L. Martin at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas were the first professors to take an interest in me. They were the first to show me how to conduct multi-disciplinary research and believe I had it in me to pursue and complete a doctoral program. It took me almost two years to believe them and ten more to receive my degree. For them, and the research colleagues I had in 2004, I am grateful for the inspiration and friendship.

I would like to give a special thanks to the Chicano Studies Institute (CSI) and University of California Institute for Mexico and the United States (UC MEXUS) for funding critical parts of the dissertation research. The type of research included in this dissertation would not have been possible if not for the support of these two institutions. In particular, I would like to give a special thanks to Dr. Carl Gutiérrez-Jones, Dr. Andrea Kaus, David Kropf, Theresa Peña, Jazmin Gomez, and Martha Ponce for facilitating research funding for this dissertation.

There are many colleagues and fellow graduate students that made the trek easier when it felt impossible for me. Members of my cohort, especially Dr. Eddy F. Alvarez and Dr. William A. Calvo, provided me with the energy I needed to keep going. I especially could not have arrived here without the friendship and relentless encouragement from Dr. Diana T. Dyste, Dr. Mario Galacia, Dr. Christina Jackson, Dr. Nicole Merino, Dr. Cesar Rodriguez, Dr. Xuan Santos, Eusebio Ahumada, Oscar Alcantar, Lynn Becerra, Rodrigo Del Cid, Celia Del Cid, Katherine Douglas, Simo Elaouad, Sal Güereña, Gustavo Gutierrez, Kosar Jahani, Kamrin Klauschie, Marcos Lazaro, Monique Limón, Tony Montoya, Emil Margolis, Liz Ortiz, Khoabane Phoofolo, and Tess Posner. I know I'm forgetting at least one more person so please excuse the omission.

A special thank you to my friend and colleague Dr. Thomas Carrasco for showing me what it means to be a true Chicano. I could not have finished this stage without a friend like you. Thank you for always being positive and making me laugh.

Finally, I thank my mother who has been the brightest light in my life and my father who taught me the meaning of sacrifice and hard work. No words are sufficient to express what my two sisters have done for me. Le doy gracias a Dios por todos mis tíos, tías, primos y primas por creyendo en mí. None of this would be possible without my family and faith. From the bottom of my heart I give thanks.

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ABSTRACT

Bordering Faith: spiritual transformation, cultural change, and Chicana/o youth at the border

by

Francisco Javier Fuentes Jr.

For several decades now, ethnographers, historians, and religious scholars alike have explored charismatic forms of Christianity among Mexican American or Chicana/o youth, chiefly in southern California, because this social group now represents the fastest growing segment of U.S. Pentecostalism (Lugo et al. 2007; Hackett 2015). In this relatively short period of time, researchers have almost exclusively concentrated their studies on congregational experiences, paying little attention to the religious expressions of these youth between Sundays. Furthermore, no study has examined the cultural practices of religious youth in predominantly Chicana/o communities or how such youth are exposed to and even draw from other cultures to pump life into the global charismatic and Pentecostal movement.

In order to shed light on the untold experiences of such youth beyond church walls, this study ventures into a Chicana/o majority community alongside the U.S. border with Mexico to find out more about the implications of religious assimilation, or how these youths internalize Pentecostalism, and how socio-economic elements influence this process. The study utilizes field research, cultural archives, participant-observation, a survey instrument, and interviews to document and explore the cultural implications that stem from this popular form of assimilation presented in three case studies. In doing so, the study describes how religious assimilation happens in aggrieved communities of color and suggests Pentecostal assimilation is an increasingly popular life path by which individuals and groups in a Chicana/o majority community are transforming the long history of mestizo/indigenous

independence through innovations and disruptions in dominant culture in order to create new spaces of belonging that disrupt cultural representations of the brown body and brown soul. In the end, this dissertation gives impetus to an ongoing exercise in Chicana/o Studies for understanding and interpreting the development of an expanding evangelical Chicana/o experience that is challenging traditional religious practices and related paradigms used to interpret the Chicana/o experience in the twenty-first century.

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I. A New Dawn in Chicana and Chicano Religion

> Identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past.
>
> —Stuart Hall (1990: 224)

> The great tragedy of mestizo existence is that the parent cultures see their child as a mixture of "good and bad," a misfit, a non-equal.
>
> —Virgilio Elizondo (1983: 99)

Cristina was born in Cananea, Sonora and attended Catholic mass regularly as a child during the 1940s. Her friends called her Tina. Her name is nearly a millennia old and literally means a feminine instance of Christ. All her life she identified as Catholic.[1] She performed various rituals and rites of passage rooted in the Catholic tradition. For most of Mexico's history, religious Catholicism and secular state power went hand in hand. Since its inception, the Roman Catholic Church has asserted itself as the head of all Christians. Furthermore, the Church has historically resisted outside cultural influences. For example, it took almost five hundred years for the Roman Catholic Church to officially recognize the Virgen de Guadalupe, an indigenous apparition of Mary, as the *Patroness of the Americas* in 1999. Even so, Tina paid no mind to the Vatican's position on the Virgen de Guadalupe

[1] Catholic means universal and all-embracing, referring to the religious body commonly known by the name Christians.

before 1999. She admired and showed great devotion to *La Virgen* while growing up in a copper mining town alongside the U.S./Mexico border during World War II. Tina's devotion illustrates the ongoing formation of a national culture[2] tied to social sources in Christendom.

In 1950, Tina married Rafael under the Catholic Church in Cananea before moving to Tijuana. Rafael and Tina would return to their home state once or twice a year. They would stop in small towns for a hot meal or admire parish decors and artisan shops. One of Tina's favorite stops was Santa Maria, the Catholic church of the four-hundred-year old town of Santa Maria Magdalena de Kino. Magdalena is in the northwest part of the state, only forty-five minutes south of the Arizona border. The town is most known as the hometown of deceased Mexican politician Luis Donaldo Colosio.[3] It was founded by Padre Kino, a Jesuit priest, in 1687.

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[2] The basis for national culture under a liberal democracy typically describes an overlap between two secular myths. The first myth is "the Enlightenment myth of politics as a discourse of public reason whose bond with *knowledge* enables the elite to direct the education of mankind" (Asad 2003: 61). The second one is "the revolutionary myth of universal suffrage, a politics of large numbers in which the representation of 'collective will' is sought by quantifying the *opinion* and *fantasy* of individual citizen-electors" (ibid). The fusion of these two myths create a paradox where the world needs to be universally redeemed by liberal politics or face domination by those who believe in the supremacy of them. This project of redemption should not be confused for "simple restatements" of the Christian idea of redemption. Liberal democracies embrace a distinctive politics, explains Asad, "they presuppose a different kind of morality (based on the sacredness of individual conscience and individual right), and they regard suffering as entirely subjective and accidental (as bodily damage to be medically treated, or as corrective punishment for crime, or simply as the unfinished business of universal empowerment)" (ibid).

[3] In 1994, Colosio was selected as the PRI candidate destined to succeed then Carlos Salinas as the President of Mexico. By orders of the President, Colosio was assassinated in Tijuana during his 1994 presidential bid by a poor uneducated civilian paid by the Mexican government. Falo became an early PAN organizer in Tijuana after that, before the party was popular.

Tina and Falo often stopped at Magdalena on their way back from their annual tour of Sonora. There was always parking in front of the church. Tina would go inside and ask for time to pray. In the meantime, Falo would go see the corpse of Padre Kino. Townspeople discovered his grave in 1966 and built a crypt and monument around his remains. Through a clear glass, Falo would sit and watch what was left of Kino's decaying bones which were surprisingly well preserved for their age (see Figure 1). He would stand there, admiring the preservation of time through Kino's remains. Before leaving Magdalena, Tina always made sure she left some money behind in an envelope for the Catholic Church.

Figure 1. Remains of Padre Kino (d. 1711), preserved in a crypt in the center of Magdalena, Sonora (MX).



By the early 1980s, all of Tina and Falo's six children came of age. Each married under the Catholic Church before starting a family of their own. By the start of 1990s, Tina's six

children and their many cousins, and most friends, were members of "new paradigm churches" located in the centers of Tijuana to the sprawling suburbs of Los Angeles and Riverside (Miller 1997). New paradigm churches are far from the quintessential Catholic parishes in Mexico or the U.S. These churches are usually converted warehouses, a rented school auditorium, or a leased commercial store front. What these places may lack in sacred architecture they make up for with the "physical warmth" in the space, describes Sociologist Donald E. Miller (23). New Paradigm churches generally lie in a spectrum of traditional "evangelical" congregations to "Pentecostal" non-denominational organizations.

New paradigm churches first sprout throughout Southern California before spreading elsewhere. Miller delineates twelve social characteristics to what he terms "new paradigm" churches (1997: 20). First, all these churches were founded after the mid-1960s. Second, there are likely very few congregational members who were born before 1945. Pastors of new paradigm churches tend to be understated, humble, and self-revealing. Women can serve as church pastors who typically do not require seminary training. Lay leadership is also highly valued and encouraged by pastors and members alike. Unlike traditional congregations, both pastors and lay leadership usually dress informally in new paradigm churches. Seventh, new paradigm churches have extensive small group ministries. Different personal styles are at the very least tolerated and tolerance as a value is prized by members. Bible-centered teaching over topical sermonizing is the norm in new paradigm churches. Contemporary worship music is central to the individual and congregational experience. Bodily, as well as cognitive, participation in worship is normal. Finally, the

"gifts of the Holy Spirit" are affirmed which may or may not include supernatural signs, healings, and miracles.[4]

New paradigm churches are thriving in Mexican America. Mexican Americans and other brown people are expanding the characteristics of these churches in two significant ways. What makes the new paradigm churches in Tina and Falo's social network distinct from Miller's observations of the same region is the *bicultural* and *bilingual* dimensions of participants and congregational life. On one end of the polarity, I refer to these two characteristics as the "browning" of new paradigm churches in the U.S. Many Mexican Americans and immigrants find these two dimensions important given dominant religious spaces are often disengaged with or exclude the cultural and historical experience central to Chicana/o history and the brown body. On the other end, and understood through the lens of internal colonialism, I find the term "religious assimilation" useful to describe the desire of the dominant group to suppress distinct cultures by socially, politically, and even religiously rewarding or encouraging individuals who adopt the social and ideological characteristics of a dominant group. The tension behind this polarity expresses a sense of mixture and hybridity that is impacted by and extends well pass the white/Black color line. Mestizaje, discussed in length later in the chapter, is foundational as a process that best captures the brilliance and pain in this tension between power and culture mediated by a growing sum through religious assimilation. In a word, mestizaje is method for *belonging* in spite of social control.

Since the end of the last century, the growing presence of evangelical, Pentecostal, charismatic strains of Christianity has been felt throughout Latin America, the borderlands,

[4] The gifts of the Holy Spirit are available to believer's today in order to guide and empower every believer in the "great commission" (Matthew 28: 16-20; Mark 16: 14-18).

and in Chicana/o communities (Martin 1990; Stoll 1990; Sanchez-Walsh 2003; Espinosa 2005). Though still a religious minority, evangelical, Pentecostal, charismatic, and third wave strains of Christianity (henceforth "Pentecostalism") represents the fastest growing indigenous and global-local religious revival movement in all the western hemisphere (Martin 2002). They are a small yet publicly influential religious minority in culture and politics in both the U.S. and Latin America (Diamond 1990; Stoll 1990). Pentecostalism also represents the fastest-expanding religious movement among Chicanas/os (Lugo et al. 2007).

In her old age, Tina continued to light candles, pray the rosary, and always made sure she had her new copy of the prayer book published by the Church. She prayed to the *Virgen* daily and also prayed to saints. Through her cultural practices, Tina was as much a secular Mexican as she was a religious Catholic. As a devout Catholic, Tina in many ways constituted a modern, secular subject in twentieth century Mexico. Two generations later, the foci of this study, her family would embrace a new state-sanctioned "secular project" influenced by the legacy of U.S. Protestantism.[5]

Tina's grandchildren are all adults now. Most, however, are not Catholics in any traditional sense. The majority are a part of a new paradigm church or extended community, even the few who reported to be agnostic, atheist, or spiritual at the start of this study. Tina's greatgrandchildren are intentionally being raised the same way their parents' were raised, in a new paradigm Christian church. Religious assimilation happens in aggrieved communities of color because people make it happen. Tina's immigrant children started what their native-born children now continue and what many of their children will

[5] As the leader of Judeo-Christian civilization, describes by Talal Asad, the U.S. acts as the protagonist charged with the secular project "to free belief as it frees property, that is, as an object that can be negotiated and exchanged without any legal obstacles" (147). For Asad, this political project of secular*ism* is not a break from Western religious culture but a

pass on to future generations: a process of religious assimilation that enables Chicanas/os to somehow feel like we are already full members of American society though structurally we have yet to be all-embraced.

Chicanas/os now represent the fastest growing segment in U.S. Pentecostalism (Lugo et al. 2007; Hackett 2015). One in three Chicanas/os belong to this worldwide movement, which is not rooted in any one denomination or religious organization (Espinoza 2005; Lugo et al. 2007 ; Anderson 2013).[6] In contrast, Americans in general are becoming less religious and over half a million white Americans are leaving Christianity each year (Smith 2015). This means that Chicanas/os now represent the fastest growing ethnic group in U.S. Christianity with fertility rates as the most significant factor (Dye 2010). What kind of observable benefits and consequences are taking place as a result of the religious changes occurring in Chicana/o communities?

A. Purpose of Study

Chicano/a culture is complex and multi-racial. Indigenous, European, Asian, and African historical sources mark the five-hundred-year legacy of the Chicana and Chicano experience; an experience encapsulated in and expressed through brown bodies. The experience is ripe with multiple identities. For the purposes of this study, the terms "Chicana" and "Chicano" are used interchangeably here in a traditional sense to distinguish Mexicans as brown, indigenous people who are multi-racial and multi-ethnic, living north of the border from those residing in Mexico and the first of American citizens to live under an internal colonial context (Acuña 1972: 3). "Chicanas/os" describes the multi-racial

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continuation of a cultural, moral project now under the control of the American nation-state with a mission to humanize the world (ibid).

experiences, embodied in material and symbolic forms, of Mexicans and Latinas/os in the United States (Baca 2008: 3). Similarly, Chicana/o communities describe geographic areas where Chicanas/os are a demographic majority but still subject to the legacy of colonialism from within (Acuña 1972: 4). Finally, Chicana/o culture can include any cultural forms created and exported from U.S. communities where Chicanas/os are a majority and where other people of color are likely to reside as well.

The foci of this project are Chicanas/os who identify or once identified as Christians from new paradigm churches (henceforth "NeoMestizos"). As Chicanas/os, NeoMestizos continue a trans-Atlantic legacy of spirituality and religion first initiated by European and later American colonialism among the indigenous. NeoMestizas/os describes individuals and groups undergoing secularization in the U.S context. They are a significant segment of the U.S. population, a nation which still holds the largest Christian population in the world (Hacket and Grim 2011). NeoMestizos are also growing up just north of Latin America, now home to a third of Christians in the world (Hacket and Grim 2011). The NeoMestizo population continues to grow all the while nearly one in four Chicanas/os now report being former Catholics (Funk and Martinez 2014).[7] These religious trends are not new and are expected to persist, indefinitely. This means each year more and more Chicanas/os are becoming or growing up NeoMestizos, rather than staying or raised as Roman Catholic (henceforth "Catholic"). In short, the twenty-first century signals a turning point within Christianity among Chicanas/os and within Chicana/o communities.

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[6] In varying degrees, this also includes Roman Catholics and evangelical Protestants who often act independent of their respective institutions or denominations.

[7] Sanchez-Walsh goes as far as to suggest that the change is so radical that the Catholic ethos does not apply to NeoMestizos (2003: 23).

Chicana/o communities are under the global current of a pentecostalization underway in Global Christianity. The widespread growth of non-denominational, new paradigm churches throughout the U.S. is undoubtedly changing religious culture of Chicana/o communities. It is no coincidence then that the last quarter century has seen a proliferation of studies documenting and critiquing churches, leadership, culture, archives and figures in the cultural milieu of this movement abroad and domestically (e.g. De Leon 1979; Stoll 1990; Martin 1990; Cox 1995; Green, Rozell, Wilcox 1996; Harding; 2001; Busto 2005; Espinoza 2005; Leon 2005; Harrison 2005; Sanchez-Walsh 2003; Luhr 2009; Anderson 2013). Yet few studies have documented one of the more significant NeoMestizo populations in the United States: religious Chicanas and Chicanos of new paradigm churches.

This dissertation seeks to identify the social and religious characteristics of San Diego Chicanas/os in order to shed light on the influence of NeoMestizos at the border community of South San Diego (henceforth "SSD"). Through interviews, cultural archives, participant-observation, and surveys, this study examines the especially large presence of NeoMestizos in SSD, one of twenty largest Chicano/a communities in the nation. Many are evangelical and others Pentecostal or charismatic. Some are all three and others not. Most are far from being Catholic in the strict orthodox sense. NeoMestizos will more than likely attend an evangelical church though most do not regularly attend church. Still, practically all of them believe in the *Bible*, or most stories/portions of it, to be true. NeoMestizos reflect the long history of mestizo/indigenous independence and resistance to religious establishments through innovations and disruptions in dominant religious culture.

This dissertation documents, describes, and analyzes the causes and effects of these new undocumented cultural practices situated between the U.S.-Mexico border and American

culture (see Figure 2). As part of this analysis I utilize field research, cultural archives, participant-observation, surveys, and interviews in order to document the ways religious assimilation is producing new cultural forms and identities integral to American life and identity in Chicana/o majority communities.

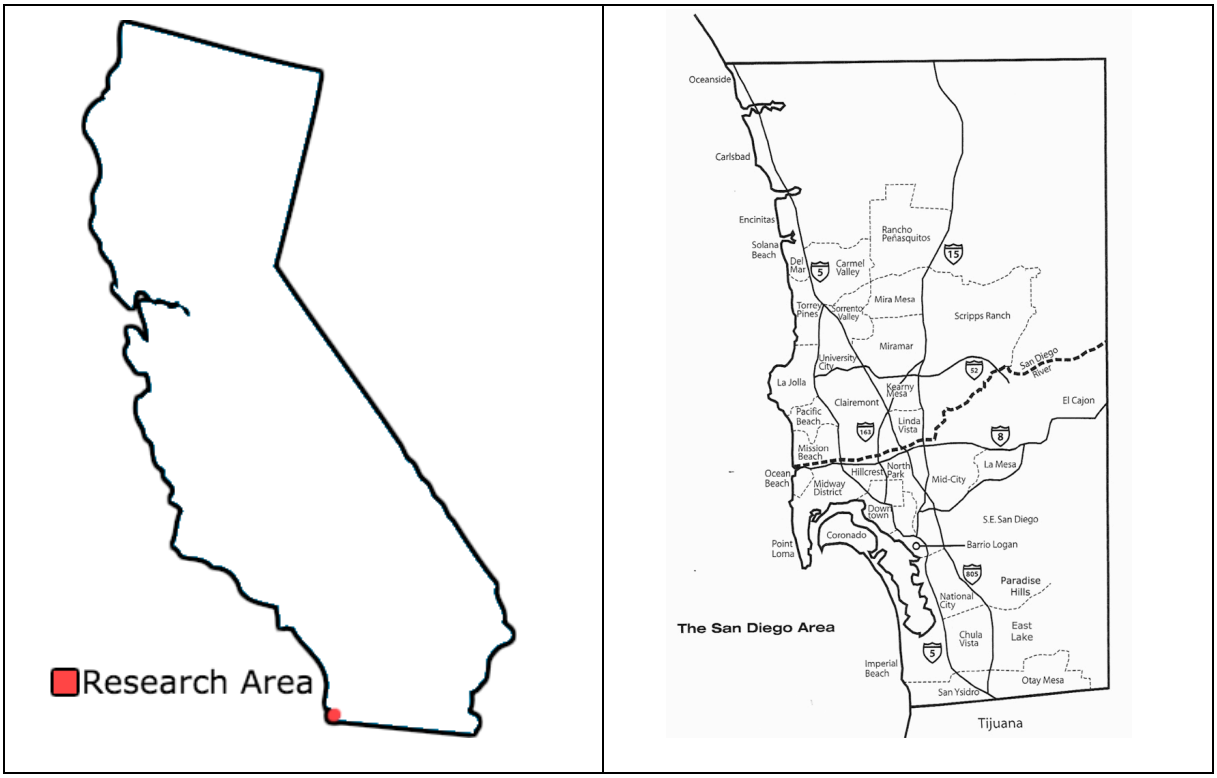
Assimilation, as it has been conceptualized for the purposes of this study, has involved cultural and structural integration which can simultaneously exist in the midst of differentiation (Kruszewski et al 1982: xvi).[8] The process affects different people at different points in time, and occurs at different speeds and levels of social interaction. It is not an either/or phenomena, nor has it been an unalterable progression toward amalgamation of Chicana/o and white identity or culture. Instead, its definition stresses intergroup interactions for the purpose of developing "some predictive hypotheses concerning the probable future course of those interactions" even when distinct identities persist (Kruszewski et al 1982: xvi, xviii). In other words, it helps draw together and interpret fragments of cultural memory and research data in order to understand the conditions and cultural status of people living within a particular community or society. Considering demographic trends, if assimilation had a contemporary destination it would be one that is multi-racial and multi-cultural still situated under the context of power by a dominant group.

There are several social indicators that are used to confirm assimilation and those that tell us non-assimilation is present. Preserving one's own language, religion, and communal values are strong indicators that assimilation is being resisted or not taking place. When people are not participating in the dominant economic, educational, occupational, and political structures of society, it likely suggests that *structural* assimilation is being prevented by the dominant group. The closer one identifies to being an immigrant, for

example, plays a role in differentiating the dominant group from communities whose roots lie elsewhere but choose to tightly preserve them in their new country. On the other hand, the identification of Chicana/o with the dominant group confirms that assimilation is in fact taking place even if such identification is incomplete or partial because identification across social groups increases social contact which in turn is reflected in their contemporary culture and how they relate to other members of this culture as well as the dominant culture.

Accepting basic values, such as individualism, is an indicator of assimilation at the psychological level. Finally, accepting the host language is the strongest indicator or aid of assimilation. There is potential for increased intergroup interaction when an individual learns English or when English becomes their primary spoken language in a bilingual environment.

Figure 2. San Diego County, California



[8] Z. Anthony and Kruszewski and Richard L Hough's thoughts on assimilation were deeply informative and influential in this work.

Developing the notion of NeoMestizos, as both Pentecostals and Chicanas/os, through culture and society is central to this study. The study frames Chicana/o culture as fully reflecting mestizaje which continues to influence what is modern-day Chicana/Chicano forms of popular and religious culture. This lens helps explain how "Mesoamericans and Western culture intersect and interact to produce new possibilities, through a dynamic strategy of Mestiz@ invention" (Baca 2008: 1). This framework is used to document, describe, and analyze a small yet impactful sliver of NeoMestizo religious culture in the contemporary U.S./Mexico border. Based on research, I argue that the dominant NeoMestizo religious culture (evangelical, non-denominational, Pentecostal) is a phase in the ongoing secularization of Chicano diaspora into the American mainstream. Thus, this work analyzes the religious assimilation process in a Chicana/o community in order to gain insight about the following research questions:

> *Who are the NeoMestizos/as in the U.S. that have internalized Pentecostalism and what are the social, political, and economic elements that have lead to this religious assimilation, and what will be the cultural implications that stem from this new religious culture?*

Through these questions I will also explore issue of class, race, and gender in relation to religious phenomenon in contemporary Chicana/o California. A measurable approach to this question equips me to consider the similarities and differences of NeoMestizos from the classic trope of Chicanas/os as Catholic. It complicates claims made about religion in Chicana/o communities and uncovers some of the social sources for the rapid growth of NeoMestizos at the local and regional level. Ultimately, it provides a means to document cultural memories during a period of religious outreach in Chicana/o San Diego that gave rise to a growing number of NeoMestizos.

The question calls for an investigation of memory and perceptions by NeoMestizos in order to understand how they socially identify and how their religious identity shapes or influences their lifestyles or life politics as individuals or as a group. It provides the opportunity to add texture and nuance from one community to the macro patterns of Pentecostalism and national demographic change currently underway. Ultimately, it provides a means to document cultural memories during a period of religious activity in Chicana/o San Diego while also shedding light on the role of culture and society in the formation of collective identity in a new era.

If Chicanas/os will represent one in four Americans well before 2050, then addressing this question is particularly important given the major demographic shift currently underway. Answers to this question will shed light on what Gaston Espinosa refers to as the re-Christianization and Latinization of American religions, a growing concern among a variety of scholars because of the growing cultural influences had by the Latino population on the nation (Espinosa 2004; Leon 2004; Funk and Martinez 2014). The question provides the opportunity to elaborate on the significance behind the increased popularity of non-Catholic Christianity within a Chicano community.

B. Studying Chicano/a Religion

Through twentieth century immigration, Mexicans and other Latin Americans have contributed to the revival of religion in America. Not only have these immigrants helped slow down declining membership in the U.S. Catholic Church with their sheer numbers, they have also added fuel to the popularity of Protestant and Pentecostal identity among Chicanas/os. According to Gaston Espinosa (2014), these trends among others represent a post-Reformation that is "contributing to the re-Christianization, de-Europanization,

Catholicization, Pentecostalization, heterodoxization, and Latinization of American religions." In other words, they are renewing the flame of institutional Christianity despite the national trends toward secularism. Given "post-Reformation" is too broad a category, it is much more helpful to think of this new stage in global Christianity as post-denominational to reflect the growing trend toward new paradigm churches over orthodox institutions.

While immigration drove the last fifty years of Chicana/o population boom, domestic birth rates are now the main factor for the group's ongoing growth (U.S. Census 2010). Now more than ever, the majority of Chicana/o children are growing up with life experiences solely based in the U.S. This trend will have a major impact on religious and cultural change in America. It is still unclear if these future adults will remain religious or become increasingly secular. Even so, projections indicate that there will be more, not less, Chicana/o culture in the future of America (U.S. Census 2012). This means the religious future of America will be increasingly influenced domestically by Chicana/o religions and, arguably, Chicanas/os will play an ever widening role in defining Christianity and culture in America.

i. Approaches to study race and religion

For half a century now, the study of Chicana/o religion by Mexican Americans has been examined using several approaches; among the most common are theology, poetic literary language, and Religious Studies. Its early influences stem from the long history of theological studies, a field of practice now marginalized or excluded by American secular institutions. In other words, the topic has been studied most by scholars with religious aims. Formerly, Chicana/o historians in secular institutions paid little attention to the religious dimensions of the contemporary Chicana/o experience. More recently, social and cultural studies have been published in stark contrast to traditionally religious and theological works

concerning Chicana/o religion. These studies provide an agnostic or pluralist description of Chicana/o religion without depending on religious truths and narratives to explain social phenomena. Works like *Gallilean Journey* (1973) by Virgil Elizondo, David Carrasco's analysis of Rudolfo Anaya's novel *Bless Me, Ultima* (1982), and Gloria Anzaldua's *La Frontera/Borderlands* (1987) are among the earliest works on the subject. Each thinker's approach stresses how fundamentally different their theoretical method is from one another.

Any discussion about theory and methodology requires context. The history of Chicana/o religion is a long and dramatic story of human survival and regeneration. Its history starts in 1524, with the arrival of the first Franciscans who join the Spanish military in the colonization of Meso-America. Many more from Europe would follow over the next four centuries. Within 150 years, the indigenous population would fall from 40 million to 10 million as a result of colonialism (de las Casas 1974: 31, 72). Soldiers from the Spanish infantry began to have children with indigenous women, often as an act of sexual violence. The Spaniards interpreted this birth act as *mestizaje*. Its most basic definition means a mixture of culture and blood (biology and kinship). The children of these colonial entanglements were known as a "mestizas/os." These children would grow up in a world where the most powerful institutions enforced the ideology of Western culture and religion as superior to indigenous ancestry. This resulted in an uneven process of mestizaje that divided colonized populations into social classes. Many times through deadly force, mestizos/as incorporated aspects and elements of Catholicism within their own particular faith or belief system. This type of religious assimilation in colonial Mexico was well documented by priests and soldiers. Those that did not assimilate were killed or dispossessed by Spanish soldiers, or managed to survive under great duress.

Despite best efforts to kill or convert natives, over a thousand Amerindian cultures and dialects survived North American colonialism. These cultures survived because people continued to practice them long after 1524, when the first fleet of Franciscan priests arrived. The religiously oppressed found clandestine ways to pass their visions on to their children. Many indigenous spiritual meanings had to be hidden within Spanish artifacts, beliefs, and practices in order to persist. Their active or passive resistance to religious assimilation under national colonialism resulted in new cultural possibilities and social identities sprung from the intersection of Western and indigenous materials (e.g. Mexicanos). Mestiza/o identity became ever more robust and nuance, a process that far outlasted Spanish colonialism and still persists today.

The study of Chicana/o religion is in arguably its cradle stage and Catholic Priest Virgil Elizondo is probably one of the first scholars in the still nascent field of Chicana/o religious studies (Espinosa and Garcia 2009: 28). His writing and service became popular within the structures of the U.S. Catholic Church. In many ways, Elizondo represents the first Chicana/o theologian to develop a *Mestizo theology* that addressed race and religion on behalf of Catholic Chicanas/os. In *Gallilean Journey* (1973), Elizondo argues that Christianity essentially saw itself as European. According to Elizondo, this misperception prevented U.S. Catholics from inserting racial and cultural discourse in their Eurocentric theology. This work is arguably the first concentrated effort in Chicana/o religious studies (Espinosa and Garcia 2009: 28).[9]

[9] Traditional religion has been the subject of investigation and critique by Chicana/o scholars since the 1980s (i.e. Carrasco 1982; Anzaldúa 1987; Guerrero 1987). Literary analyses, poetics, theology, archival research, and interviews were some of the first methods used to study traditional religion among Chicanas/os. Religious beliefs and practices serve multiple purposes that are psychological or social in nature. They provide a glimpse of how a person may view the past, the meaning or purpose of life, and ways this individual might be motivated to influence others. Literature on Chicana/o religion is overwhelmingly

The most noteworthy accomplishment by Elizondo is his development of *mestizaje* as an imperative Christian concept useful for modern Catholic theologians as a way to talk about race and culture. He described it as a mixture of biology and culture with a positive potential that "can be appreciated only against the background of the European mentality prevalent at the time of the European conquest and colonization of the Americas" (9). He demonstrated deep appreciation for the Chicano/a background by writing extensively on it. Ultimately, *Gallilean Journey* followed the nearly five-hundred year old tradition of framing *mestizaje* in Christian terms and for the purposes of progressing Roman Catholic theology.

A narrow interpretation of mestizaje as a mere mixture of culture and blood through offspring can obfuscate the dynamic syncretic transculturation experienced by Chicanas/os. In an essay noting the religious significance of Rudolfo Anaya's (1972) *Bless Me Ultima,* anthropologist David Carrasco argues that Christian theology is a limited discipline when it comes to measuring the racial experience of Mexicans and Chicanas/os (1982). Convinced, Carrasco asserted that Christian theology intellectually discriminated against the indigenous dimensions of Chicana/o spirituality. It did so by evaluating indigenous spirituality "against the beliefs, doctrines, teachings, and values of the Christian religion, usually judging them as inferior or degraded religious elements" (Carrasco1982: 196). For the Spanish, mestizos/as represented inferior racial groups. From the mestiza/o perspective, mestizaje spoke life to their "cultural and psychological location" between being Western and also indigenous (Perez 1998: 51). In other words, mestizas/os share many of the experiences with the dominant or majority group while having a secondary, simultaneous experience that

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focused on Catholicism or some variant, and understandably so (i.e. Isasi-Díaz and Tarango 1992; Matovina 2002; Garcia 2010; Gaspar de Alba 2011). For much of history, Chicanas/os have identified as Catholic given the Church's overlaps with Spanish colonialism and the development of a national Mexican identity. However, times have changed. Now, more than ever, Chicanas/os are not identifying with the Catholic faith or even growing up Catholic.

validated their indigeneity. It reinforces the generational persistence of indigenous spirituality while reinforcing religious assimilation. Carrasco's work illustrates the need to study Chicana/o religions without the interference of theology and doctrinal judgment.

Gloria Anzaldúa (1987: 78) sees mestizas/os as "a product of the transfer of the cultural & spiritual values of one group to another." Her writings, specifically *Borderlands/La Frontera; The New Mestiza*, are canonical text within Chicana/o Studies and many other fields. She writes, "we have never been allowed to be fully ourselves" (Anzaldúa 1987: 86). The new *mestiza* "learns to be an Indian in Mexican culture, to be Mexican from an Anglo point of view. She learns to juggle cultures [...] she operates in a pluralistic mode" (Anzaldúa 1987: 79). Anzaldúa was critical of history and society:

> Like many Indians and Mexicans, I did not deem my psychic experiences real. I denied their occurrences and let my inner sense atrophy. I allowed white rationality to tell me that the existence of the 'other world"' was mere pagan superstition. I accepted their reality, the 'official' reality of the rational, reasoning mode which is connected with external reality, the upper world, and is considered the most developed consciousness—the consciousness of duality (1987: 37).

Anzaldúa was also critical of institutional religion, both Catholic and Protestant. "In my own life," she writes, "the Catholic Church fails to give meaning to my daily acts, to my continuing encounters with the 'other world.' It and other institutionalized religions impoverish all life, beauty, pleasure" (1987: 37). Much like Anzaldúa, theologian Andrés G. Guerrero describes the Catholic Church as contributing to the domination of indigenous populations through what he terms "spiritual colonization" (1987: 25). Unlike Guerrero's work which goes largely overlooked, Anzaldúa's writings are often cited to address and conceptualize issues of race, gender, sexuality, and space; yet her use of divine agency and

poetic language make this a definitive work on employing her own brand of Chicana/o Theology in lieu of religious scholarship. "I believe in an ordered, structured universe where all phenomena are interrelated and imbued with spirit" (Anzaldúa 1987: 66). According to Carrasco, she stresses "shamantic space" and "loca-centrism" (2007). Anzaldúa's mixture of social history and theological discourse on the borderlands experience makes labeling her religious scholarship distinct. Even so, Anzaldúa's work opened up a new popular way of "doing" new age theology that has, since then, received much attention, praise, and imitation.

Anzaldúa stresses the importance of individual religious experience with the divine. "The struggle has always been inner, and is played out in the outer terrains" she writes (1987: 87). Her perspective has had overlapping themes with other Chicano/a religions, including Pentecostalism (Busto 2005; Flores 2009; Leon 2004, Wolseth 2008). Her work contrasts Elizondo in so far as she relies on race to define religion while at the same time engaging in non-Christian and mestiza myth-making. Noting the social context of the 1970s and 1980s, including the rising trend of New Age movements among urban youth, and her prominent citation of several New Age works, Anzaldúa's religion of study is best described as a "Mestiza New Age." Mestiza New Age, as an informal religious outlook, serves to remind Chicanas/os of their sacred indigenous origins and highlights the distinct cultural, psychological, and spiritual processes involved in contemporary *mestizaje* (99).

Today, *mestizaje* creates a distinctly Chicano/a form of religion (Busto 2005: 128; Espinosa and Garcia 2009).[10] The sheer act of indigenous spirituality involved in Chicano/a

[10] Given Chicana/o religions exist in a distinct religious phenomena apart from the dominant religious perspective, disrupting the expectation of what Christianity ought to be from a Western perspective. Even so, the historical dominance of Christianity and its role in colonizing and decolonizing the Americas should not be ignored (Guerrero 1987). Assuming colonization continues today in alternative forms (e.g. Acuña 1972; Maldonado-Torres

experiences complicates notions of "religion" and "race" in society. Understandably so, Father Elizondo writes within a Christian framework and explicates on mestizaje to make a religious appeal to a U.S. Catholic audience that is foreign to the idea of Chicanos/as as Americans. Anzaldúa's work takes a strikingly different approach by translating contemporary identities through a post-modern indigenous lens of space, time, and creative myth-making.

To be certain, the literary community owes a great deal to brave writers like Elizondo and Anzaldúa who have successfully captured an authentic side to the Chicano/a religious experience. Elizondo's ground-breaking work on mestizaje schooled Christian leaders and scholars on the complexity that drives Mexican and Chicano/a identity. In a similar vein, Anzaldúa's work has sparked the minds of young readers and lifelong fans who otherwise may have never become aware or come to terms with the surrealist effects of being mestizo/a in America. Her literary work on the *new mestiza consciousness* reminds the children of conquest to continue to thrive spiritually even when the outer terrains, or borderlands, recognize one by other names (e.g. Mexicano/a, Chicano/a, American, Queer, Pocho/a, Criminal, Illegal, Gringo).

Much of the mestiza/o experience, arguably has to do with the process of social identification under conditions of domination. In his 1982 essay, Carrasco develops a rich secular discussion on the spirituality driving the young protagonist's self-concept in Rudolfo Anaya's *Bless Me Ultima* (1972). He does this without ever imposing religious categories or values to construct a meaningful and accurate analysis. This approach is in line with

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2007), the realities and notions of "religion" in the United States are deeply tied to imperial relations and constructed under imperial duress (Maduro 2004: 221). Thus, considering how religion is now lived and organized under a changing global empire is key for a critical study on religion, in particular the new forms of Christianity that influence the double movement of colonization and decolonization of world religions.

Western academic values that privilege scientific writing and reason over hearsay or myths. Similar to Anzaldúa, Carrasco's work challenged religious scholars in public institutions to interpret Primal Christianity at par with Western Christianity. Unlike Elizondo or Anzaldúa, Carrasco's first contribution to the field exemplifies a humanist approach required for the study of religion. For this reason, Carrasco's interpretive analysis approach on the subject of *mestizaje* is utilized for the purposes of this study to make sense of social identification in Chicano/a communities. In sum, mestizaje is a key concept to the study as it is used to shed light on the contemporary subject of religious assimilation within Chicana/o Studies.

ii. Naming Chicana/o Pentecostalism(s)

Empirical work on Pentecostalism (evangelical, Pentecostal, charismatic, and third wave strains of Christianity) is incredibly vast and wide (Gerlach 1970; De Leon 1979; Stoll 1990; Martin 1990; Diamond 1990; Cox 1995; Maldonado 1999; Harding 2001; Martinez 2006; Sanchez-Walsh 2003; Busto 2005; Leon 2005; Lugo 2007; Espinosa and Garcia 2009; Rah 2009; Flores 2009; Wacker 2009; Wacker 2014; Newton 2005; Luhr 2009; AlSayyad and Massoumi 2010; Anderson 2013; Harrison 2005; Alexander 2011; Espinosa 2014; Martinez and Scott 2009; Garrard-Burnett 2010; Aponte and De La Torre 2006).[11]

[11] This discussion excludes all Roman Catholics who are identified with the renewalist movement. In addition, it is not attempting to discuss the renewalist movement, as defined by Donald Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori (2007), but rather a distinct and intersecting movement referred in this study as "Pentecostalism" for short. Its Spanish-speaking adherents read from *La Biblia Reina-Valera* first published in 1602. English-speakers read from most translations based on the King James Bible (1611). In short, they believe in the Reformed (Protestant) Church and not in the Catholic Church. In contrast, most Chicano/a scholarship on religion is devoted to Catholicism and its incorporation of indigenous practices and beliefs. In *Loving in the War Years* (1983), Cheri Moraga, for example, shares her experience rooted in a Mexican Catholic heritage and gives her gendered and sexual analysis of the Catholic Church in borderlands history. Like Anzaldúa and Morraga, Ana Castillo (1994) expressed a discontent with Roman Catholicism and criticized the Church for the feelings of "guilt" and use of "fear" among its practitioners. Ada María Isasi-Díaz and Yolanda Tarango (1992), following these other writers, developed a Hispanic Women's

Religious assimilation by Chicana/o communities began in the nineteenth century (Guerrero 1987; Maldonado 1999; Martinez 2006).[12] Only after the U.S. war against Mexico in 1846 did Protestants venture West (Simmons 1993).[13] Methodists and Presbyterians were among the first Protestant denominations to engage in missionary efforts in Chicana/o communities in the U.S. Southwest (Martinez 2006). The conquest of Mexico by the U.S. created new spaces in the borderlands whereby former religious understandings and allegiances were destabilized and contested, and new ones were given space to develop and proliferate.[14] Under this context, efforts to religiously assimilate Chicanas/os were

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liberation theology that challenged theologians to develop more inclusive theologies that placed orthopraxis (right practice) over orthodoxy (right belief). In addition, they called for the share of leadership, between men and women, within the Catholic Church. The overwhelming focus on Catholic history reflects how deeply Catholicism continues to impact the lives of the Chicano/a majority.

[12] According to historian Juan Francisco Martinez, Chicano/a Protestants as a distinct ethno-religious group were born in 1848 with the incorporation of conquered Mexican subjects as American citizens (2006). Now living under a new flag and nation, Chicanas/os were internally colonized (Acuña 1972). This generation (1848 to 1900) is referred to as the "Conquered Generation," a term first developed by historian Mario T. Garcia. After the conquest of Mexico, Chicano/a landowners were forced to sell their vast lands and move into segregated housing (Camarillo 1979: 119, 147, 199). It is during this time period that the barrio emerges as the ruling Chicana/o community, particularly in the U.S. Southwest. Through conquest and colonialism, Chicanas/os were forced into enclaves and had to contend with an imposed legal system based not on their representation (McWilliams 1939; Navarro 1998). In addition, they were at a political, legal, racial, and religious disadvantage (McWilliams 1939; Camarillo 1979; Gomez 2008).

[13] For Protestant leadership and congregations, western expansion was a clear sign that God had a divine mission favoring U.S. expansion (Martinez 2006: 2).

[14] During this time, Chicanas/os were too economically weak, politically marginal or compromised, geographically isolated, and not sufficiently acquainted with U.S. traditions, ideology, and language to launch a civil rights offensive or compete on economic terms alone (Garcia 1989: 14). Most Protestant denominations were uninterested in proselytizing among Mexican Americans. Methodists and Presbyterians were among the first Protestant denominations to engage in missionary efforts in Mexican American communities in the U.S. Southwest. Efforts to evangelize Mexican Catholics were small during the Conquered Generation. Continuous European settlement westward, spurred on by the Gold Rush and transcontinental railroad system, guaranteed a growing presence of Protestantism in Mexican American daily life. Methodists and Presbyterians were among the first Protestant

minimal and Chicanos/as continued to overwhelmingly identify as Catholic.[15] However, the mass migration of White evangelical settlers in the next century would eventually saturate Chicana/o daily life and identity(ies).

American evangelical culture assimilated into Chicana/o communities through Pentecostalism. At the start of the twentieth century, Mexican (Catholic) refugees migrated north in the millions to escape Dictator Porfirio Diaz and revolution. Religious revivalist movements east of the Mississippi, the Holiness movement being the most prominent, began to spread west into church teachings (Simmons 1993; Creech 1996).[16] By 1906, new immigrants were exposed to holiness teachings through the Azusa Mission in Los Angeles. At Azusa they encountered people having ecstatic experiences premised on the belief in the supernatural (Cox 1995).[17] This was a pivotal moment in the continuing saga of religious

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denominations to engage in missionary efforts in Mexican American communities in the U.S. Southwest. However, Protestant missionizing in the Southwest after 1848 would first prove ineffective in drawing Chicano predecessors, or mestizos, away from folk or Roman Catholicism. Efforts were ineffective because those "converted" from Catholicism to Protestantism through a particular denomination were a few thousand, and those that stayed Protestant for the remainder of their lives even less.

[15] Despite the potential social benefits religious conversion may have represented for the Conquered Generation, Protestant conversion in California by Chicanas/os was largely insignificant when compared to neighboring states. Those that did convert had little control over the structures and symbols of faith, and would live out their religious convictions at the margins of both broader ethnic and religious communities (Martinez 2006: 5). In all, less than one percent of the Conquered Generation was Protestant, with 5,632 adult members in 150 Spanish-language congregations (Martinez 2006: 3). Half of these Mexican American Protestant churches were in New Mexico and southern Colorado, with very few conversions by Chicanas/os in California, Arizona, and Texas. These churches were met with a drastic decline during the first years of the twentieth century, yet these converts represent the beginning of a Mexican American Protestant identity (Martinez 2006: 3). Ultimately, early Chicana/o Catholics overwhelmingly rejected the efforts by Protestants.

[16] One of the major teachings that came out of the Holiness movement was the "third work" of the Holy Spirit as evidenced through the speaking of tongues, healings, and miracles.

[17] The third work of the Holy Spirit, or the baptism of the Spirit, was made public at Azusa and it was reported that many in attendance began to speak in unknown tongues. Over a span of several weeks and months, the Azusa Mission drew in hundreds at a time from

upheavals and innovations described by religious studies scholar Rudy Busto as "fronteras quemadas," when religious revival and proselytizing activity first proliferated in the U.S./Mexico borderlands (Busto 2005).[18] Hundreds of thousands of Mexicans and Chicanas/os have converted to Pentecostalism ever since.

Writers and Religious Studies scholars have offered numerous ways of referring to this social group. Many Pentecostal ministers and laypeople in the Spanish-speaking world identify or describe themselves in a variety of ways, including *apastolico/a, aleluyas, petecostal, cristiano/a evangélico/a*. In American literature, renowned writer Richard Rodriguez popularized the term e*vangélicos* to describe "those who evangelize; Christians who preach the gospel" (1992: 176). They express in part a resistance to the secular world and a romance with popular culture (Kyle 2011). Rodriguez (1992: 176) writes, "Those I call evangelical would wish to distinguish themselves from mainline Protestantism, most certainly from Roman Catholicism." The modern usage of e*vangélico/a* suggests roots in Pentecostalism and evangelicalism (Martin 2002; Wacker 2009; Wacker 2014). Rodriguez (1992: 176) goes on to say "Evangelicals are the most protestant of Protestants" in that they interpret the bible literally. They are traditional like fundamentalists yet, at the same time,

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different racial and ethnic groups, and many of who would come to receive the evidence of the baptism of the Spirit. On a doctrinal level, the experiential element of glossolalia ("speaking in tongues") and divine healings (biological and beyond) were considered primary evidence of this manifested work from Heaven. Tongues, as a spiritual gift, had not been a part of church doctrine or practice since biblical times. This return of the spiritual gift of tongues at Azusa was followed by "signs and miracles," people claiming divine personal healing over sickness and disease. Irish, German, and Mexican immigrants witnessed and experienced these "signs and miracles" alongside African-, Anglo-, and Chicanos/as in attendance.

[18] Rudy Busto (2005: 87) refers to the "frontera quemada" as "the vigorous proselytization by Protestants and sectarians and the eruption of vernacular Mexican Catholicism refreshed by the massive arrival of northwardbound immigrants."

engage culture for the purposes of evangelism -- the Evangelical Paradox (Marty 1991; Sanchez-Walsh 2003: 5; Kyle 2011).

Rodriguez (1992: 176) and others use the term e*vangélico* to emphasize the group's roots in Protestant evangelical theology even though they stress their independence from mainline denominations or religious institutions (Leon 2005: 4). Rodriguez (1992: 176) loosely refers to them more as an unaffiliated group of evangelical congregations that together "convey a spirit abroad" instead of a specific denomination, institution, or movement.[19] For social theologian David Traverzo Galarza, e*vangélicos/as* represent an "insistent plurality and hybridity" that describes an on-going combination of traditions and visions expressed in and through Chicana/o lives (Aponte and De La Torre 2006: 195). Numerous religious scholars have used e*vangélico/a* or "aleluyas" similarly, as broad designations to describe local groups and organizations in the Spanish-speaking world expressing the Pentecostal *charisma* (Busto 2005; Leon 2005; Martinez and Scott 2009; Garrard-Burnett 2010).

Church historian Arlene Sanchez-Walsh wrote the first prominent work discussing this same group but did so using the trope of "Latino Pentecostals/charismatics" (2003). She

[19] Leon (2005: 205) applies the term to Victory Outreach (VO), a non-denominational international organization with churches and rehabilitation facilities. Leon finds these churches to be a source of empowerment. At the same time, he sees this organization "sometimes facilitates tragedy and suffering, enabling people to passively (or prayerfully) accept, or even become agents of their own oppression and more." (Leon 2005: 206). Even so, the evangelico perspective enables a fresh understanding and expression of body and city: in worship, bodies are surrendered to the collective spirit and to each other—the city" (206). In contrast, Sanchez-Walsh (2003: xviii) observed VO's "narrow view of its mission, couched in prophetic rhetoric of loyalty, causes members to become intensely protective of their narrative, just as they are protective of their members." She observed youth pastors and church leaders who are tattooed, body-pierced, and wearing clothing usually associated with urban youth. She was disappointed with the "lack of historical accuracy" in several sermons and felt evangelical subculture as jargon, music, and cultural appropriations (Sanchez-Walsh 2003: xx). Even so, VO is recognized by these scholars and others as an important site in Chicana/o communities.

uses this term to convey an ethnic cultural experience in the broader U.S. religious landscape. In her study of para-church ministries in southern California, and as evidenced by the mass global appeal, Sanchez-Walsh (2003: 1-2) argues that "ethnic identity has little to do with the experiential nature of Pentecostalism" yet is still reinforced through cultural practices that make up their church culture.[20] Even though most Latino Pentecostals do not feel the need to stress their ethnic identity, the term "Latino Pentecostals/charismatics" has proven beneficial for scholars like Sanchez-Walsh who wish to highlight the intersections of ethnicity and religion among church groups and related ministries tied to global Pentecostalism.

The works of Arlene Sanchez-Walsh (2003), Luis Leon (2005), Gáston Espinosa (2014), among others, have been critical to the recent study of Chicano/a Pentecostals within the congregational context. Their work has served to highlight distinct, local iterations in the form of congregations and larger ministries. These congregations are often bilingual and bicultural, primarily reinforcing Spanish through church practices. It is no wonder why Rodriguez, Maldonado, Leon and others have previously found the term e*vangélico/a* a useful one. The term is a literal Spanish translation of a classic American religious tradition. Meanwhile, scholars such as Sanchez-Walsh and Espinosa employ the term "Latino Pentecostals" as a contemporary rendition of the same ethno-religious group within a broader national movement. It is interesting to note that none of these authors use the term "Hispanic Protestants," most commonly used by notable religious church scholars as

[20] For the most part, churches do not overtly promote ethnic pride over faith or ask believers to renounce their ethnic heritage (Leon 2005: 240). However, Sanchez-Walsh stresses Latino Pentecostals reinforce their ethnic identity through cultural practices as "retaining their language, founding churches that cater to their constituencies, and teaching their children about their history" (2003: 2). In addition, she found Latino Pentecostals often use their ethnic identity as one of many evangelism tools to reach their community" (Sanchez-Walsh 2003: 1).

Maldonado (1999), Mejido (2001), Martinez (2006), and De La Torre (2015).[21] "Hispanic" is an ineffective term to describe race, class, or gender. All the while, "Protestant" is an inefficient way to describe the majority of members belonging to this group who are not just evangelical but are also non-denominational and likely Pentecostal or charismatic.

Rodriguez's use of e*vangélico/a* privileges a religious category while scholars like Sanchez-Walsh attempt to convey both ethnicity and religion in their typology. However, there are three limitations to both approaches as they relate to Chicana/o history. First, the nature of Pentecostalism. There has never been one social source or form of Pentecostalism (Creech 1996; Leon 2005: 211). Since the beginning Pentecostal evangelists and lay people began to preach and demonstrate a variety of religious experiences offered by Pentecostalism.[22] They planted independent churches or influenced holiness denominations in Mexico and U.S. (Creech 1996; Espinoza 2005; Busto 2005).[23] At the local level today,

[21] The term "Protestant Hispanics" fails to effectively capture the nuances that intersect race, class, national belonging, evangelicalism, and Pentecostalism among the majority of NeoMestizos.

[22] Industrialization was revolutionizing production and labor relations in the start of the twentieth century for the U.S. At the same time, the dictatorship of Porfirio Diaz in Mexico was drawing large American capital investments in property holdings (e.g. precious mineral mines, haciendas, railroads, etc.) south of the border. A millennialist spirit accompanied these changes and was present as a "frontera quemada" among European settlements, mestizo, native and indigenous communities along the border (Busto 2005: 87).

[23] Their influence is unevenly spread throughout every continent and their claim for religious freedom has opened doors for political dialogue (Miller and Yamamori 2007). They had a wide sweeping influence in conformist and reformist politics that brought communism in Latin America to a near halt in the late twentieth century (Stoll 1990: 33-35, 135-179). Pentecostal preachers draw new crowds through large crusades, indigenous celebrations, and multimedia dramatizations, offering a global audience a variety of religious experiences (Stoll 1990; Cox 1995; Newton 2005; Luhr 2009). In the U.S., they shaped discourses surrounding popular culture and youth, and commercialized Christianity as cultural goods intended for global consumption (Thompson 2000; Sanchez-Walsh 2003: 131; Leon 2005: 260; Luhr 2009: 5). Their spirituality and their experience of God are derived primarily through scripture (Busto 2005: 128). Pentecostals believe this is the last century, or "Last Days," for modern societies and are motivated to evangelize (preach or

the variety of Pentecostal or charismatic churches or organizations represent fragmented and localized versions of the global movement (Martin 2002). Furthermore, Pentecostalism exists outside formal groups and organizations as well. Yet very little research has been done to understand this movement outside the context of congregational studies (e.g. Newton 2005; Smith 2008; Luhr 2009). In short, Pentecostalism is heterogeneous and exists at all levels of society even though its proponents are theologically assimilated to colloquial iterations of evangelical Protestantism.[24]

The second limitation to e*vangélico/a* and *Latino Pentecostals* as sociological terms is their inability to effectively convey power, specifically expressed through class and race in Chicano/a history. Relying on religious signifiers as Pentecostal, evangelical, or protestant obscure social power relations. These religious signifiers do not bring any attention to the legacy of imposed social hierarchies in Chicana/o history as an explanation for the variations of and American cultural influences in Pentecostalism (e.g. Rah 2009). Furthermore, it is important to keep in mind that shared religion is not mutual religion over matters of race and ethnicity (Tweed 1997; Busto 2005: 7). Race and class continue to make a difference in global Pentecostalism. Subsuming either difference as ethnic pluralism or multiculturalism only diminishes or dilutes social analysis. In other words, there is an economic dimension to religious assimilation that, if not reflected in scholarship, needs to be made more explicit in how we name the group.

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teach Christology) to the "ends of the earth" (Anderson 2013). Other social and political systems and social movements come into direct conflict or cooperation with their growing influence (Diamond 2000; Wilcox 1996; Kaplan 2004; Leon 2005; Newton 2005).

[24] Even though ethnicity and race played a limited role in shaping Pentecostal theology and the experiential nature of Pentecostalism, these social categories were central to the organizational opportunities and discursive practices of denominations predominated by Euro Americans.

Finally, Pentecostals are widely non-denominational (Miller 1997). This means they typically have no strong or explicit affiliation to an organization or movement beyond the scope of their home church. This characteristic, underscored by most scholars of Chicana/o religion, exemplifies not only a new religious marketplace for Chicanas/os but also stresses the role of agency in religious identification. In *La Llorona's Children* (2004), Leon instrumentalizes agency largely as an aesthetic technique expressed through the religious practices of struggling Chicanas/os. He frames this type of agency as *religious poetics*, what he defines as a "strategy of performed and narrated religious discourse, tactics, and strategies, where social agents change culturally derived meanings and, indeed, the order of the phenomenal world by rearranging the relationships among symbols" (4). For Leon (2005: 240), this religious agency is effectively expressed in Victory Outreach, an international organization of ministries he regards as respecting and affirming "Mexicano roots" and that celebrate Chicanas/os as "another mestizaje."

According to theologian Manuel Mejido, an emphasis on the aesthetic or poetic downplays the relationship of religious agency with the Chicana/o struggle (2001). Leon's work overemphasizes e*vangélico/a* agency as an alternative *mode of knowing* that gives public expression to personal pain in order to redefine themselves in a new cognitive situation (2005: 51, 248, 254). Privileging the unobservable through "over-intellectualized" aestheticism, for Mejido, reduces religion "to the end-in-itself of an idealized (aesthetic) celebration bereft of all social awareness, and thus bereft of its socially empowering and liberating dimension" (33). For Mejido, scholarship concerning religious people needs to draw attention to the economic dimension behind religious agency in order to avoid reducing the religious of everyday totality in Chicana/o reality to an a priori aesthetics of celebration (19, 37). While Leon's e*vangélico/a* study reflects the religious practices of a

struggling Chicana/o community, Mejido stress the need for a different type of project that reflects the daily struggle of Chicanas/os by emphasizing the economic dimensions and social context of religious practices. In sum, Chicana/o Pentecostals and their organizations vary, are *sine die* in power relations, and a hallmark of twenty-first century Chicana/o agency.

Social struggles of inequality are not only reflected in social structures but in cultural representations as well (Omi and Winant 1994: 56). I can think of no better term that strongly reflect both the social and cultural dimensions embedded in agency via religious assimilation, as well as the historical continuities in Chicano/a history, than *mestizaje*. It serves as a reminder of the colonial origins of struggle for Chicanas/os and highlights the distinct cultural, psychological, and spiritual processes involved in contemporary processes of religious assimilation, or new syncretic transculturation. The concept conveys a tolerance for ambiguity, expression of hope and freedom, and sense of situated power. Mestizaje is a product of history passed on through social processes rooted in Spanish colonialism, American imperialism, and global militarized capitalism. It is not only the transfer of the cultural and spiritual values of one generation to another, but also an expression of power marked by the social stratification of a conquered and colonized people.

The struggle to overcome systemic domination continues and so does popular resistance expressed through religious forms. Like Catholics, Pentecostal Chicanas/os "continue practical, spiritual, religious, and ecstatic modes of being and becoming that existed in Mesoamerica prior to Spanish colonization" articulated completely within Christianity (Leon 2005: 204). However, Pentecostals signal a recent break, a new convergence of historical origins, from the five-hundred-year Chicano/a narrative. That is, Pentecostals mark an unprecedented time in Chicana/o history when economic domination and, therefore,

competing cultural resistance have developed to global magnitude. They belong to a phase in the process of modernization where they are developing new possibilities through traditional culture alongside American modernity (Martin 2002: 5). In other words, they are not assuming "false consciousness," but are instead exercising religious liberties that act as democratic gateways to acculturation or assimilation to a globalizing world. In this way, Chicana/o Pentecostals represent a *new* mestizaje on their own terms.

NeoMestizas/os describes individuals and groups undergoing secularization in the U.S context. It observes religious assimilation as an indicator of this social change. Pentecostal Chicanas/os are much more than a Protestant subgroup. This phenomenon exhibits a high degree of plurality and hybridity, drawing on both MesoAmerican and American religious history. NeoMestizas/os express economic agency through religion as an effective medium (Harrison 2005). Furthermore, the term centers the process of racialization as it relates to Chicanas/os by emphasizing the social origins that distinguish it from White/Black Protestantism. It denotes the imposed social hierarchies in Chicano/a history while simultaneously acknowledging another mestizaje is currently underway. The term NeoMestizo is an attempt to call to attention the unintended consequence of cultural preservation through religious assimilation in the U.S. context.

To be clear, NeoMestizas/os are not abandoning their culture. Instead, they continue "the essence of *lo mexicano* (food, language, calendar, song, place)" while still performing their religious assimilation or secularization (Leon 2005: 240). Their lives and religious engagements emphasize the fluidity, tensions, and heterogeneity that characterize Chicana/o Pentecostalism as racial and religious movement toward secularization. Ultimately, embodying this form of religiosity means a new method for the oppressed to navigate their precarious circumstances for the purpose of personal betterment in a modern age (Martin

2002: 10, 50; Miller and Yamamori 2007: 169). Both inside and outside church walls, NeoMestizas/os express new combinative religious through media that resonates with popular Catholicism, metaphysical traditions, and mainline Protestantism (Espinosa et al. 2005: 124 – 125). For the purposes of this study, NeoMestiza/o is limited to describing individuals, not formal religious organizations, undergoing religious assimilation loosely associated with non-denominationalism, evangelicalism, and Pentecostalism in a U.S. context.

iii. Religious change as secular assimilation

Culture is a difficult term to define. There are a variety of ways one might describe or historicize culture. Likewise, there are a number of sociological theories and methods that might explain cultural change and identify the social impact of culture. Culture can be a difficult word to describe because it involves our individual experiences but it is not them. The term has been used in singular form (culture) and as a plural (cultures). Ultimately, there is no single, universally accepted definition of culture.[25]

There is an abundance of historical and sociological literature on the study of immigrant groups and culture in the United States, most of which apply the assimilation perspective. This perspective highlights the efforts and obstacles of minority immigrant groups to successfully enter American "mainstream" society while at the same time downplaying the

[25] For the purposes of this study, Raymond Williams'(1958) dual sense of the word culture applies. On the one hand, culture is a distinct "whole way of life" presiding within a "signifying system" that is involved in all forms of social activity. From this perspective, culture happens when we add shared meaning to our social interactions and everyday life experiences. In the modern context, these experiences occur within a political-economic system. On the other hand, culture can be understood as all the "signifying practices" that constitute the complex and expansive field of "artistic and intellectual activities," whether formal or otherwise. I make use of the word "subcultures" to describe this latter definition of culture.

particular experiences across these immigrant groups (Handlin 1941, 1951; Wittke 1952; Child 1943; Vecoli 1977).[26] The classic assimilation model assumes a clear, delineated pattern of adaptation whereby immigrant groups that begin as "outsiders" – experiencing economic hardship and possible discrimination – eventually reach socioeconomic mobility and acceptance by American society (Gordon 1964; Sowell 1981). From this perspective, the failure of immigrants or entire ethnic groups to assimilate is linked to their reluctance to abandon traditional values or resistance by native U.S. society to accept them because of racial, religious, or other assumed shortcomings. Throughout the process of classical assimilation, the emphasis is placed on the social psychological processes of motivation, learning, and interaction and on the cultural values and perceptions of the immigrants themselves and those who surround them," according to Portes and Manning (1985: 48). In other words, this perspective places fault or blame on immigrants for their failure to be accepted by the "host" society, or dominant group.[27]

The *segmented assimilation* model, developed by Portes and Zhou (1993), is an alternative view used to explain diverse paths of assimilation among new waves of immigrants and their children. From this perspective, individual immigrants or groups may follow one of three paths: assimilation through social mobility; selective adaptation that produces a form of biculturalism; or, segmented assimilation to the underclass culture. This

[26] There are other perspectives not discussed here that have derived from this point of view, all of which express assimilation as their central concern or objective.

[27] The "host" society has been traditionally modeled as "Anglo-conformity." According to Kruszewski (1982: xiv) et al., "This model assumed that English institutions, English language, and English-oriented cultural patterns, as interpreted during the American Revolutionary period, form the dominant standard for what American life ought to be, and that immigrants into American society or subcultures within it will be assimilated into the dominant structure." For the purposes of this study, the term "host society," when used, signifies the notion of Anglo-conformity.

model theorizes that structural barriers, such as inferior schooling or segregated neighborhoods, cut off access to employment and other opportunities to new immigrant groups and can lead to stagnant or downward mobility even when they are willing to assimilate into "mainstream" society. Thus, Portes and Zhou (1993) argue that new immigrants have access to different "mainstream" groups in society depending where they live and work, which helps explain why some experience upward assimilation, others downward assimilation, and still others "selective acculturation" characterized by biculturalism or transculturalism. Portes and Rumbaut (1996, 2001) base this theoretical framework on their study of immigrant children/students in Miami and San Diego.

U.S. culture and society has an impact on every immigrant and, in turn, immigration has had an impact on what we know as American culture. Immigrants throughout U.S. history have diversified American culture by resisting or partially or completely abandoning their native traditions, values, and practices. At the same time, there is an overwhelming amount of empirical evidence that highlights the way immigrant groups are prevented from "assimilating" even when they wish to do so and struggle to belong in the face of exclusion from broader society. In other words, immigrants not only preserve their cultures in the U.S., they also influence the production of new cultures and identities as well.

Much of the Chicana/o experience has been framed in terms of immigration and post-immigrant culture. However, this framework no longer, if ever, applies in the same way as it once did in the last century. Native birth rates are up while immigration has decreased among the Chicana/o population.[28] For example, native births accounted for 63 percent of the 11.2 million increase of Chicanas/os from 2000 to 2010 (Livingston and Taylor 2011).

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[28] Certainly, the historical impact of immigration from Mexico will last past this century and, in the process, the emergence of new cultures should be of no surprise.

This new reality should caution anyone who wishes to make generalizations of Chicana/o culture as an immigrant culture. It is very much a native culture and may well in fact represent an emerging minority-majority dominant *cultural* group. Moving forward into the near future, immigration will play a more limited role in the future population boom in Chicana/o communities and previous assimilation models are losing their relevance and applicability in regards to cultural change, specifically as it relates to religion.

Now more than ever, the majority of Chicanas/os are growing up with experiences solely based in the U.S. This will have a major impact in the shaping of culture in the U.S. In a generation from now, Chicanas/os will no longer be a minority. The overwhelming majority of Chicanas/os will be at least one or two generations removed from the immigrant experience, or much more. Now try to imagine Chicana/o culture in 2043, when Chicanas/os are projected to become the second largest racial group in the United States. Take a moment to imagine the type of communities that Chicanas/os will live during this time. Ask yourself, what will be left of their immigrant traditions and what new national customs will emerge? They will exist as a major social group but will they see themselves as a collective? How will culture change them and what kind of impact will they have on the nature of belonging in America?

Cultural Studies is an interdisciplinary approach that reflects a range of theories and methods for the study of popular culture in order to understand who benefits from it (Storey 2003: 1). Cultural Studies does not view cultures as innately harmonious or organic wholes but instead takes into account the conflicts and struggles involved in the production of culture(s). In this spirit, Fiske (1989) recognizes popular culture not as "mass culture" but instead as a "site of struggle" that expresses both "the forces of dominance" and "the popular tactics by which these forces are coped with, are evaded or are resisted" (18).

Subcultures are critical interventions in popular culture. Subcultural styles are the signifying practices that have cumulated from a "process of *selection* and *transformation* through which available objects, symbols, and activities are removed from their social context" (Hall 1993: 170). In this way, subcultures disrupt the stagnant forces of dominance in popular culture. For Fiske, Storey, Hall, and others, popular culture largely resides in the domain of semiotic power, or hierarchies of meaning. It is deeply involved in local, national, and global struggles between consensus and conflict over homogenization and difference (Fiske 1989: 316). In short, popular culture is the preeminent domain whereby the dominant class's intellectual and moral leadership is challenged by subcultures or, as Herbert Marcuse called them, "dissenting classes" (Bauman 1973: 15). These marginal or ascending classes are important because "they give life to the validity of democratic values such as freedom, equality, and justice. According to [Marcuse], these values have authenticity only in resistance to established conformities or constraints" (Gomez-Quiñonez 2000: 81). In many ways, NeoMestizos represent a new subculture that is not only American, Mexican, and mostly Christian, but is also global and secular.

Theoretical models designed to explain contemporary cultural manifestations of native-born Chicanas/os are needed if we are to understand just how American culture might change from a growing Chicana/o presence. We must recall that the problem of categorizing individual immigrants or ethnic groups into any one particular cultural pattern is not an objective activity but depends heavily on specific social contexts (Maciel and Herrera-Sobek 1998). This is why the distinction between (traditional) mestizas/os and NeoMestizos is so important. While both create a distinctly Chicana/o form of religion and express (internal) historical continuity, the latter stresses the same process of social

identification under new, global conditions of domination. It sheds light on the contemporary subject of religious assimilation within Chicana/o Studies.

Secularization, segmented assimilation, and selective acculturation are important concepts to keep in mind. Secularization as a social process traditionally is assumed to have a "modernizing" effect on individuals, where science and reason supersede religion as the basis for an organized society (Sowell 1981). Selective acculturation involves no major change in parent culture all the while selectively adapting to dominant culture (Portes and Rumbaut 1996, 2001). Segmented assimilation highlights the social conditions that arrest the actualization of economic equity and thereby constrain the benefits of assimilation for most working Americans who are disenfranchised from social mobility (Portes and Zhou 1993). For anthropologist Talal Asad, "secular" culture exists prior to and above secular*ism* as a political doctrine, and "over time a variety of concepts, practices, and sensibilities have come together to form 'the secular'" (Asad 2003: 16). In other words, there seems to exist an alternative form of assimilation, distinct from the other three forms of assimilation identified by previous scholars, whereby people relate through secular culture without having to abandon religion as part of culture. Responding to Asad's critique of secularism, *religious assimilation* describes a radical break or fundamental paradigm shift away from a parent religion and then committing to religion found in the mainstream. Religious assimilation is another pathway or stage in assimilation whereby religion altogether is not forgone by individuals in a society organized independently from prevailing religious institutions.

Religious assimilation, as used in this study, signals secularization and acculturation of immigrant groups and the communities they belong to. Similarly, sociologist David Martin argues Pentecostals belong to a phase in the process of modernization (1990; 2002). As

such, an increase or decline in the popularity of this form of Christianity may serve as means to measure the propensity of historical religious traditions and secularization in a given social context. Thus, accounting for religious differences (beliefs, practices, and commitments) in a given community allows for a differentiation between those social characteristics that remain largely unchanged ("traditional") and those that signal a change in the community toward secularization and acculturation. In other words, the growth of Pentecostalism in a Chicano/a community not only signals a growing differentiation of religiosity but also the conflict between an ancient community and the secular society beholden to it.[29]

The role of traditional religion and religious practices has declined significantly across the nation. From a sociological perspective, additional approaches to the study of religion is required in order to account for a changing secular landscape that continues to modify religious practices beyond the control of religious institutions. In other words, a new approach to the study of Chicana/o religion in society is needed to expand what we already know about religion inside church walls. More studies that investigate the relation between

[29] Messianic and millennarian religious movements were no strangers to the indigenous or formerly colonized of the world (Lanternari 1963). In the current context, religious assimilation in Chicana/o communities did not start until 1848 (Martinez 2006). However, it was Pentecostalism that quickly spread through the borderlands, in Latin America and Europe before the second half of the twentieth century (Anderson 2014). Africa and Asia were deeply influenced soon after (Martin 2002; Anderson 2014). Since, Pentecostals have had influence over national politics at home and abroad and conservative evangelical leaders have exploited their influence (Diamond 2000; Stoll 1990; Graham 1998; Kaplan 2005). Stated differently, the historically white evangelical movement holds congregations and theology in America, and more or less abroad, culturally captive in non-white communities (Rah 2009). Given that Pentecostalism is based on networks and movements over institutions (Stoll 1990; Castells 1996; Smith 1998), the Global South is now having a tremendous effect shaping global Christianity and on the conservative white Americans who express their racial-national identity through evangelicalism (Alunkal 2004). Together, Pentecostals represent a cultural revolution sweeping the world today (Martin 2002). As NeoMestizos, they represent a new global citizen that has underwent a transition from immigrant culture to native/domestic/national culture.

Chicanas/os and religion in a secularized, or non-congregational, context are needed. Hence, this project attempts to be an interdisciplinary project that develops a framework for understanding race, religion, and the nation-state in in contested U.S.-Mexico border, by aligning key concepts and frames from Sociology, Cultural Studies, Religious Studies, and Chicana/o Studies.

C. Research Methods

The church congregation represents the classic organizing unit to study religious groups, including NeoMestizos. In *Latino Pentecostal Identity* (2003), Sanchez-Walsh utilizes fieldwork, oral histories, and surveys to document and analyze three Pentecostal denominations (Assemblies of God, Victory Outreach, and Vineyard) and the Chicanas/os who attend them. In *La Llorona's Children* (2004), cultural theorist Luis Leon offers a series of "spiritual surveys," or reflections, on religious phenomena in the borderlands (2004: 15). In the case of Pentecostals, Leon examines them inside Victory Outreach (V/O) and through their weekly, half-hour television program for youth. Similarly, Flores highlights how V/O Chicanos use an American-origin religious worship experience to acculturate to mainstream society (2009). The Pentecostal congregation continues to play a key role in the religious assimilation of Chicanas/os but it is not the only space where NeoMestizos engage religion or the broader community.

The present study differs from the studies above in two ways. First, this is a community-based study that focuses on places and spaces outside the congregation (e.g. public schools, music venues, leisure activities, etc.). Second, a significant portion of the study spotlights youth culture and religious assimilation during adolescence in SSD in order to provide a broader understanding of Chicana/o life in "non-gang" subcultures and spaces. This multi-

site study demonstrates how Neomestizo youth negotiate their under-representation outside of church walls while simultaneously undergoing religious assimilation.

i. Participant observation

I employed participant observation because little was known about the nature and character of the Chicana/o community at the border in SSD. Participant observation, according to Blea (1995: 40), "is recommended to those who like and work well with people and who are interested in the details of how a behavior is arrived at." Given my interest in secular practices as religious expressions, this method served useful. Recruitment for this research was initially obtained through personal or professional networks. Throughout this process I also attended numerous church services in different SSD churches in order to observe and understand congregational culture. I took field notes and wrote an analysis on the religious experiences of Chicanas/os inside these churches. I also took field notes based on observations and conversations. All notes were logged and scanned, with primary sources, while others were archived. Primary sources include but are not limited to recorded sermons, speeches, interviews, letters, church newsletters, newspapers, diaries, memoirs, yearbooks, and music albums that originate from SSD. I obtained these primary sources through site visits or personal donations from participants themselves.

ii. Interviews

I conducted voice-recorded in-depth interviews with fifteen participants and informally interviewed fifteen more.[30] Each interview last between ten minutes to an hour. I was able

[30] Though I worked to interview an equal number of men and women, an even representation across the gender spectrum was not possible. This was largely due to three reasons. First, the youth subculture under study is primarily represented by male youth. Second, I was unable to locate all the women tied to this study from Baja High but was able to locate two from Middletown High. Third, most of the female participants I did interview

to secure a high-level of participation and a degree of trust by community members given my personal connections to parents, educators, and church leaders in the community. All participants in this study are identified with a pseudonym. All interviews were voluntary. [31] Not all interviews were voice-recorded, given privacy concerns expressed by most

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did not attend either school or the churches within the scope of this study. As a result, the voice of women in this study is largely limited. However, it is my hope to take the data I do have in order to represent the experiences, observations, and perspectives of male youth of color in a more intentional way given studies that focus on young men of color are remain limited.

Latino male youth encounter a wide variety of challenges not easily explained or understood (Noguera, Hurtado, and Fergus 2013). Two studies regarding young men of color are worth noting in brief. "While it may be true that adolescent boys, for example, are less likely than girls to have intimate friendships, it is not clear how boys experience the quality of their friendships" (Way, Santos, Cordero 2013: 258). Given the absence of research on this subject, especially among Latino youth, researchers conducted interviews with high school students to better understand male friendships. Way, Santos, Cordero (2013: 272) showed that Latino male youth have and seek close friendships as a core component of their mental health, but also the current limits by school officials to support these close bonds "in the midst of an American culture that believes that such relationships are only for girls and gay boys." In some ways, not understanding young Latino males further elongates their disenfranchisement as a feature of contemporary society.

In *Punished*, Victor Rios (2011) studies how the mechanisms and institutions of criminalization—the youth control complex—affect the daily lives and perspectives of male youth of color. "The youth control complex was fueled," Rios (2011: xiv) writes, "by the micro-power of repeated negative judgments and interactions in which the boys were defined as criminal for almost any form of transgression or disrespect of authority." In other words, male youth of color have a unique racial and gendered relationship to the state and its agents (the police, school personnel, and others) given their hyper-criminalization within dominant culture. As documented by Rios (2011: xv), "This cycle began before their first arrest—it began as they were harassed, profiled, watched, and disciplined at young ages, before they had committed any crimes." Rios' book demonstrates how male youth of color experience a unique relationship to state institutions that has tremendous results on identity formation and social consciousness. Given that Latino male youth are poorly understood by society and understudied in the context of religion and schools, this study primarily focuses on male youth identity in order to shed further light on the everyday experiences of youth of color in the United States.

[31] Those who wished to be interviewed were required to sign an interview consent form explaining their rights as participants and the purpose of the study. All participants were 18 years old or older and were provided with interview consent forms prior to any interview or focus group. I obtained Human Subjects approval to conduct these interviews through the University of California, Santa Barbara.

participants. In such cases where interviews or portions of interviews were not recorded, I took notes after I receiving consent.[32] In a few instances, follow-up interviews were requested in order to clarify responses or add details to stories shared during the interview. Most interviews were semi-formal, combining both closed and open-ended questions.[33] All interviews were conducted in English. Some interviews were conducted over the phone, but most were done in person. Interview locations include coffee shops, private homes, and inside automobiles.

I conducted one two-hour focus group for this study at my home. Attendees of the focus group heard of my study by word of mouth, but were not part of my personal network prior to conducting research for this study. The focus group provided me a space to introduce myself and explain my research in greater detail. The focus group was semi-formal and served as an opportunity to discuss themes and issues relevant to community members. Both closed and open-ended questions were used throughout this process. After this focus group I decided not to continue with focus groups for the purpose of this study for two reasons. First, the focus group was difficult to organize given people's schedules. I decided to focus on individual interviews instead because they were much more manageable for the time frame. Second, the sound quality of the focus group's voice recording did not capture the voices of everyone in the room. As a result, the voice recording was impossible to transcribe in full. Fortunately, most participants who attended the focus group agreed for a personal interview thereafter.

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[32] Most non-recorded interviews are not included in this study because the overwhelming majority of interview excerpts used in this study are transcripts from voice-recorded interviews.

[33] I used my own discretion when selecting the most appropriate format for interviewing participants outside the target population, given their age and social background.

Digital transcriptions were made of nearly all voice-recorded interviews presented as part of this research. In cases where there is no voice recording of an interview, written notes were used in lieu of a transcript. All transcripts were thoroughly reviewed to ensure the accuracy of the recorded interview. I made every effort and exercised great care to maintain the original meaning and context of every interview presented in this study. In addition, I did my best to preserve the style of conversation of the interviewees.[34]

iii. Limitations

Due to the qualitative focus of my study, and unlike many statistical studies, the details of my findings cannot be generalized to a broader population. The current study analyzes multiple cases of local-level experiences by NeoMestizos over an extended period of time. It does not attempt to analyze the entire Chicana/o community or all race relations in San

[34] Given that doing qualitative analysis in a proficient manner requires coding and that the "excellence of the research rests in large part on the excellence of the coding" (Strauss 1987: 27), the data obtained from the interviews was analyzed using first and second cycles of analysis (Saldaña 2013). The first cycle describes those processes that occurs during the initial coding of data and the data is divided into subcategories at this time (Saldaña: 58). In first cycle coding, the data set was inductively coded using In Vivo coding. Using In Vivo coding means that the codes were taken directly from what the participants said in the interview (Saldaña 2013: ix, 63). In Vivo coding was used in order to preserve that actual language that was found in the data during the coding process in order to honor the participants' form of speech. The second cycle methods are "a bit more challenging because they require such analytic skills as classifying, prioritizing, integrating, synthesizing, abstracting, conceptualizing, and theory building" (Saldaña 2013: 58). This process took several months in order to identify broad themes and issues related to this study. Organizing the data by themes and issues provides an ideal form for comparing and contrasting findings obtained through interviews. Code mapping was then completed, which led to a reorganization and reanalysis of the data categories constructed through first cycle coding. The codes were then organized into smaller categories and themes representing perspectives on religious experiences tied to beliefs and practices (second cycle coding). This was followed by a cross analysis of themes. Although there were many interesting themes and issues that arose out of this process, the coding process allowed me to identify and define specific themes and issues presented in this study. Space considerations were made as well given that most transcriptions are quite lengthy.

Diego or Tijuana. NeoMestizo culture at the border represents one example of a local-level experience shaped by political-economic forces. Though not included in this study, other cases may exist. Los Angeles and Atlanta, and elsewhere in Latin America may also offer examples of NeoMestiza/o religious assimilation. For example, my own research on Pentecostal youth culture has taken me to San Jose, Costa Rica and San Salvador, El Salvador where Pentecostals are creating their own cultural production and consuming parts of Christian youth culture from the U.S. Other communities in the United States-Mexico borderlands may offer additional information on life at the border, and studies similar to this one are encouraged.

D. "Southtown" or South (Chicano/a) San Diego

San Diego attracts millions of tourists and visitors each year, making it one of the top U.S. travel destinations.[35] It is mostly known for its stunning beaches, land animal and sea creature parks, proliferation of micro-breweries, and ever-pleasant weather. It also draws hundreds of thousands of military men and women each year in order to train or occupy one of the many military bases in the county. In fact, San Diego is home to the most number of concentrated military bases and personnel, especially Marine Corps and U.S. Navy, west of the Mississippi river. Considering its long military history and appealing climate, it is no wonder then that the city is affectionately regarded as "America's finest city."

i. The Chicano Boomburb

[35] According to the San Diego Tourism Authority, San Diego drew 16.4 million overnight visitors in 2013.

This study was conducted ten miles south of the nearest tourist hot spot, in an area of San Diego warmly referred to by locals as the "South Bay" or "South San Diego" (see Figure 3). There are six city neighborhoods in SSD that are incorporated into this research: Chula Vista, Imperial Beach, National City, Otay Mesa, San Ysidro, and Palomar City. The last three cities mentioned are now incorporated into the City of San Diego ten miles north.[36] Between them and their city government lie the City of Chula Vista and National City. The population in this extreme southwest part of San Diego County is approximately 500,000, with over half claiming Mexican descent.[37]

There is an overlapping of urban and suburban spaces in each city, best described as a "Boomburb" (Lang, Nelson, Sohmer 2008). Boomburbs are a new type of city largely considered "a subset of and a new variation of American suburbanization" (Lang et al. 2008: 78). Cities are classified as boomburbs only if they are near a core U.S. city and their independent population exceed 100,000 and are less than half a million. Unlike suburban sprawls which spread horizontally "as in conventional greenfield subdivisions," much of the contemporary growth of boomburb's is compact, or vertical, in that these type of neighborhoods are densely built (Lang et al. 2008: 77). Even so, "boomburbs still remain mostly suburban in look and feel" (ibid). Their importance is critical because much of projected future growth will be unlike the sprawling past and largely take place in boomburbs over cities (ibid). Considering the fact that "Boomburbs constitute a new city type that the US Census Bureau struggles to understand," the extreme southwest part of San Diego County might well be classified as a third city between San Diego and Tijauna (79).

[36] Logan Heights, Barrio Logan, San Ysidro, Palomar City, and Otay Mesa represent the largest Spanish-speaking populations of the City of San Diego. Barrio Logan and Logan Heights are the only neighborhood adjacent to downtown.

[37] Based on tabulated data from U.S. Census Bureau for all six city neighborhoods in 2010.

Together, the city neighborhoods included in this research, form the southern half of what Richard Griswold del Castillo refers to as "Chicano San Diego" (2008).

Figure 3. San Diego Research Area



Chicano San Diego is home to the largest Spanish-speaking population in the county, yet there has been little attention to the historic and contemporary importance of this area by tourists, scholars, and policy makers alike (Griswold del Castillo 2008: 1). It is clear to Griswold del Castillo that residents of Chicano San Diego "have been rendered invisible by long-term political and historical forces" (ibid). This work, much like the work of Griswold del Castillo, is a response to the rampant neglect of Chicano San Diego by politicians, scholars, and educators who have tended to ignore, generalize, and even discount the experiences of Chicanas/os in California and U.S.

ii. Suburban sprawl before the boomburb

During WWII, Southtown was considered the lemon capital of the world (Roseman 2008: 198). In the 1940s, Southtown was known for its lemon, cherry, and orange orchards. There were also farms that grew celery, tomatoes, lettuce, and cucumbers. The lemon orchards and celery farms produced more than one million dollars in revenue during this time period. The largest of the lemon packinghouses was located only three blocks from where Middletown High School now stands.

During WWII, Rohr Aircraft Corporation moved to Southtown and employed about 9,8000 people to manufacture parts for B-24 bombers and PBY flying boats to send to war.[38] Managers and workers moved and purchased new track homes and began a bustling manufacturing industry in Southtown Southtown's population more than doubled in size. For example, one city population tripled during the 1940s from only about 5,000 to 16,000 residents and by 1960 it grew to 44,000 (Roseman 2008: 94). According to one historian, "The tens of thousands of servicemen who passed through San Diego in World War II (navy and marines) remembered the nice area, and so […] more and more people moved to [Southtown]" after the war (Roseman 2008: 95). By the 1950s, it was common for retired military who wanted to settle in San Diego to do so in Southtown. In less than two decades, the fields and orchards were replaced by suburban homes, schools, and businesses., closed down the last of its packing plants, and "became a bedroom community for the San Diego area" (Roseman 2008: 95).

Since World War II, the county has welcomed military recruits from all over the U.S. and around the world, including the Philippines, Pacific Islands, and Latin America. In fact,

[38] Rohr specialized in the nacelle. The nacelle is a housing, separate from the fuselage, that holds engines, fuel, or equipment on an aircraft.

San Diego County is home to largest concentration of military in the world.[39] A large military presence during and after World War II first encouraged the suburbanization of Southtown and suburban sprawl in general throughout the county. Since the days of the "greatest generation any society has produced," Southtown has been a politically conservative all-American town (Brokaw 1998: xxx, 11).

The suburban sprawl of San Diego in the second half of last century explains the spread of conservative-oriented liberal culture in Southtown. Suburbs in San Diego were first a result of military personnel who returned to area with their families after World War II (e.g. Roseman 2008). Suburbs emerged along racial lines and typically promote consumer identities commonly found in affluent America.[40] During the 1990s, Mayor Golding supported expansion of border industries (Davis 2003: 132). In conjunction with NAFTA and Operation Gatekeeper, the politics of the local government helped establish the neoliberal base for a border industrial-complex to emerge between San Diego and Tijuana.[41]

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[39] Most military personnel are not originally from San Diego and a significant portion originates from the U.S. South, the region with largest pool of conservatives. Most new recruits are born and raised in the continental U.S. New military recruits and new officers predominantly come from the U.S. South, according to the Defense Management Data Center (DMDC). New military recruits from the U.S. South make up about four out of ten new recruits in every branch of the military. In comparison, the U.S. West and Midwest each make up about one out of five new recruits. Figures are similar for new officers in all branches of the military, although slightly less for all three regions mentioned above due to a higher representation of officer recruits from the U.S. Northeast. Overall, there are twice as many new military recruits and officers from the U.S. South than any other region in the nation. Many of these new recruits will find themselves in San Diego reproducing conservative political discourse.

[40] The neoliberal bloc has control over local politics while Latino political representation in San Diego remains marginal.

[41] This reflects a liberalization in the thinking behind security policy in the United States toward a construction of "human security." This liberalization has taken place in three discursive ways according to Grayson's "Human security, neoliberalism and corporate social responsibility" (2011). First, by placing human rights as a security issue, paradoxically human rights violations can becomes a central – and in some circles accepted as a legitimate – aspect of addressing human rights violations. Second, Neoliberal

Operation Gatekeeper served to protect the interests behind the expanding role of neoliberalism in the United States and the San Diego government aided its local implementation during the last decade of the twentieth century.

According to sociologist Richard Hogan (2003: xxviii), San Diego is "peculiar" for its "large and largely undeveloped hinterland" and a "sizable number of big suburbs." "San Diego is the ideal location for an analysis of big-picture, comprehensive regional planning," argues Hogan (2003: xxv), "because it is an excellent example of a conservative yet progressive city with a long history of conflict." Even though for Hogan (2003: xxviii, xxv) "the San Diego County suburbs constitute ideal cases for analysis of big-picture plans for affordable housing, growth control, environmentalism, and natural and planned community development," it "is decidedly under analyzed as a Sunbelt or informational city."

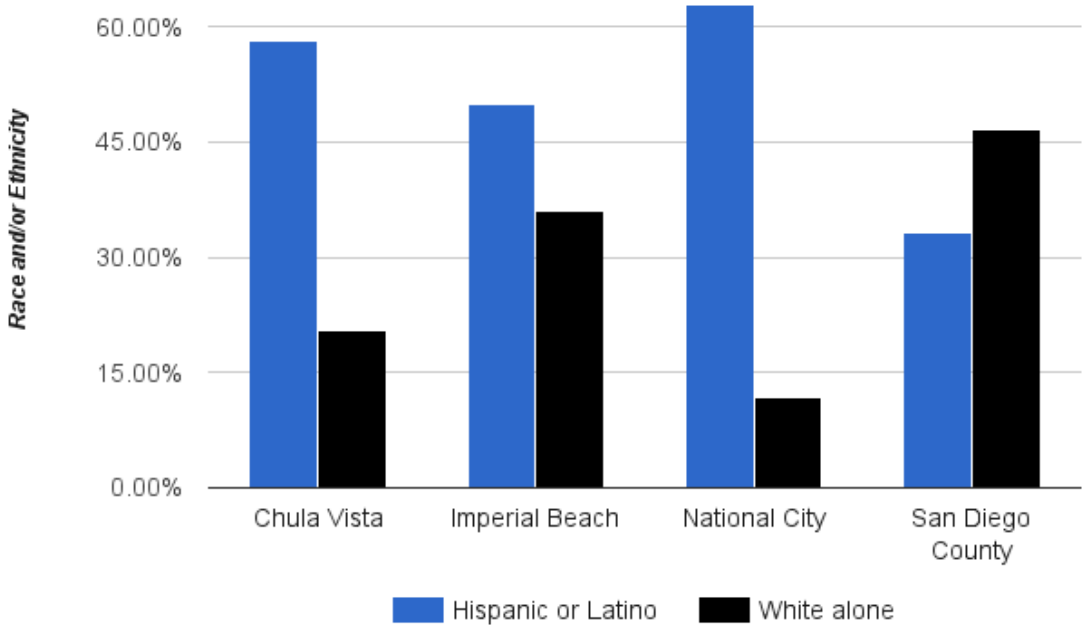
While previously there was much agriculture activity in the extreme southwest part of San Diego, much of it has been repurposed for housing and commerce. The last agricultural space in the area, a sweet strawberry field, was sold in 2014 to housing developers. In all of these neighborhoods, Chicanas/os represent what the U.S. Census Bureau refers to as the "majority minority" (see Figure 4). For the purposes of this study, the six city bordering-neighborhoods at the center of this research will be referred to as "Southtown" or SDD.[42]

Figure 4. San Diego Latino population compared to White alone

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economics has become an integral part of the design and implementation of human security policies. And finally, Human security offers an opening up of security, both in terms of broadening of concept (that is, what security can mean) but also with respect to who is allowed to make claims about security provision and security deficits.

[42] SSD is short for South San Diego while "Southtown" is a name made transnationally popular by local music group Payable On Death.



iii. The local economy and inequalities

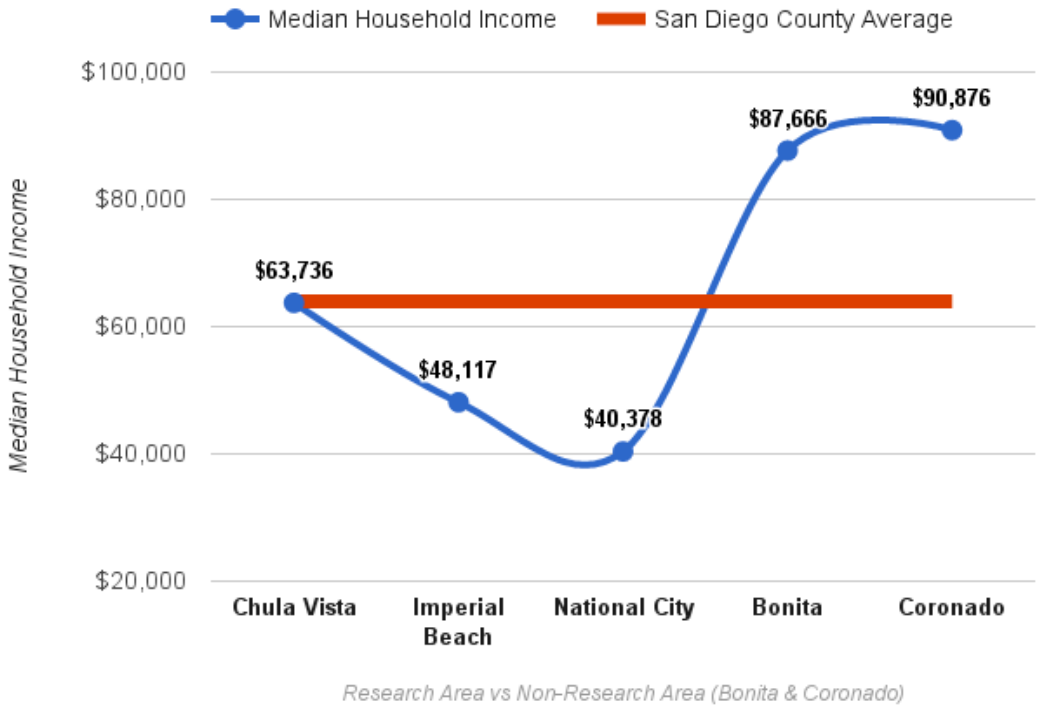
As a gateway for billions of federal capital in the midst of an economic recession, the military's activities serve as a critical life support for San Diego's struggling economy. The SDMEIS report, however, notes that the average real wage rate in San Diego was higher in 1972 than in 2011 and San Diego County is falling behind the state and the nation in per capita income (2011: 32). The report refers to San Diego as an "hour-glass" economy. This term refers to an economy where there are workers and jobs at the bottom and top of the income, but the middle is minimal and stagnant, minimizing workers' ability to migrate upward.[43]

In most of neighborhoods of SSD, Chicanos/as represent what the U.S. Census Bureau refers to as the "majority minority" (Colby 2015: 9). However, based on observations and

[43] The lack of middle-income earners in this type of economy, in part, explains why some at the "bottom" enlist in the military as a way to improve their class status and climb the socio-economic ladder while others remain "stuck" at the bottom.

real estate markets, there are stark economic-class differences across and within all neighborhoods. While most upper class and social mobile middle class of SSD primarily live in eastern areas as Bonita and Eastlake or on the "island" of Coronado just north of Imperial beach (see Figure 5), there are a small number of streets and housing pockets with these same classes in all other neighborhoods.

Figure 5. Annual Income of Research Area compared to Neighboring Cities



The working class and declining middle class live in all the neighborhoods included in this research but they are not equally represented across economic classes. On the contrary, the majority of residents in this Chicano/a community are working class and even poor despite full-time employment. Locals consider many streets and housing complexes in San Ysidro and National City to be the "ghetto" of SSD. These two city neighborhoods are

home to the highest representation of the working poor in SSD.[44] For instance, National City has a 1.67 times higher poverty (24.5%) than the county average of 14.7%. Finally, most jobs or career opportunities are in downtown San Diego or North County, thirty miles north. As a result, there is little economic opportunity in SSD and many residents travel south, across the border, to purchase household goods and services at a fraction of the cost.

iii. Youth and their primary social environment

About one out of four residents are under 18 years of age, with an approximate population between 110,000 to 140,000.[45] Across cultural and color lines, the majority of the population identify under some form of Christianity. However, the majority are Roman Catholics. Nonetheless, Pentecostal churches proliferate in SSD. There is a level of Christian heterogeneity represented in the area, though it is specific to the historical and social development of the region. In other words, the majority of youth in SSD identify with some form of Christianity though not all practice or engage with their beliefs.[46]

Since the public school continues to be an important research site for studies on youth, an entire chapter is dedicated to documenting the cultural memories of Chicanas/os who are former students of a public high school in Sweetwater Union High School District (SUSH).[47] Only participants who attended a public school within the research area are included as part of the study. In order to best understand the student experiences, what

[44] The poor and working poor live in most neighborhoods, with Section 8 government-subsidies providing some working families access to live in affluent neighborhoods like Bonita or Eastlake where rental housing is considerably higher than average wage earnings.

[45] Based on analyses of data from U.S. Census Bureau's 2014 estimates.

[46] The differences of religious engagement by locals is discussed in the following chapter.

[47] Research was not conducted at these schools. Instead, participants included in this study were graduates of these schools and interviews occurred elsewhere.

follows is a brief profile of each participant[48] included in the study and a general description of their schools in relation to other SUSH high schools in bordering neighborhoods with higher household incomes and, therefore, greater spending budgets. What follows are short vignettes of NeoMestizas/os who participated and were highlighted in this study.

Lazaro was brought to SSD from Mexico undocumented before the age of five, at the start of the 1980s. He grew up most of his childhood speaking Spanish and was placed on a bilingual track in elementary school. His mother died before he attended high school, at the height of the cultural renaissance of SSD in the mid 1990s. He would go to house parties and listen to local rap groups in people's garages or back yards. He did not grow up religious and his parents never taught him about any faith. Even so, Lazaro believed in a supreme being yet could not explain how or why. His story of conversion is discussed in later in the study.

Joshua is a tall and stocky guy, raised in a Spanish-speaking household. His mother is from Tijuana and converted to Pentecostalism from Catholicism when he was three years old. His father was from the interior of Mexico and suffered from alcoholism. He converted when Joshua was around five years old and that is when his father discovered a new identity that entirely replaced his former identity as an alcoholic. After that, Joshua grew up in a Pentecostal church for the rest of his upbringing. His family first attended a Spanish-speaking church in SSD with a Pastor from Mexico. Five years later, the Pastor moved to another state in the Southwest to start a new church. Devout, the family sought a new church and found themselves in an English-speaking church that Joshua attended until he left to Australia to attend Hillsong College, a religious school where adults learn about

[48] Unless stated otherwise, participants should be presumed to be native-born Mexican Americans who were raised from birth in SSD and children of immigrant parents who speak

ministry and music from what might be considered the most famous worship ministry in the world.

Pedro's mother converted before he was five and his father has always been indifferent about church and faith. Along with his older sister, they attended a Spanish-speaking church while children. Right before middle school, his mother heard of a new English-speaking charismatic church in town that was beginning to offer Spanish services with a very effective ministry for children. Pedro enjoyed the new church but considered himself shy and introverted. His older sister, who plays a major influence in his life, encouraged him to attend the youth programs during the week and so he did, throughout his teenage years. Pedro became more social and, during high school, even became the rhythm guitarist for the youth group at his church.

Manuel's father was raised Catholic but never cared for his Catholic faith. On the other hand, his mother was raised by her mother to believe that in order to be a good person one had to be a devout Catholic. Catholicism was perhaps too constraining for her and she converted to Pentecostalism while Manuel was still a child. His mother was from Mexico but attended high school in SSD while his father was from Texas. This possibly explains why his parents preferred to speak to Manuel in English and why he was taken to an English-speaking church for all of his non-adult life. He eventually learned how to play drums at his church and even played on occasion during services. Robert is Manuel's younger brother. Unlike his brother who was drawn to hip hop and rap, Robert was drawn to heavy metal and hardcore music. He learned to play guitar at school and loved collecting distortion pedals. At church, he introduced other youth to hard Christian music and even introduced all sorts of distortion to his guitar when he played praise and worship music

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Spanish in the household. In addition, participants have been given pseudonyms in order to

during youth services on weekdays. The singers and youth pastor were not pleased but he laughed it off.

Mateo grew up as an only-child in a single-parent household. His mother never spoke to him in Spanish yet later on in his life he learned enough to get by. He discovered church and faith in his mid teens, around the age of 16. He never had a relationship with his biological father which might explain why he was drawn so much to the idea of a Heavenly Father whom he could establish a long and permanent relationship with. He quickly became a youth leader and served many roles at his church. He was dearly loved by church leadership and was given many opportunities to develop the evangelist/preacher in him while at church.

Martha grew up in SSD but her father was the pastor of a strict Apostolic church in Tijuana. Every time she and her sisters attended church services they would have to wear skirts to cover their legs and head scarves to cover their faces. At this church her father taught that women had their place at the side of men. A family friend became a youth pastor at an English-speaking church and invited all the siblings to attend. Martha asked her father for permission to attend the new Pentecostal church and he agreed so long as she attended his church on Sundays. There she could dress like she did at school and feel normal, yet she was usually made to wear a skirt by her parents wherever she went. Martha eventually convinced her father to let her attend the new church on Sundays and in high school became a singer during services. After high school she attended Teen Mania's Honor Academy, a one-year bible school program in a remote part of Texas.

Johnny's parents were raised as nominal Catholics. When he was two, his aunt invited his mother to attend a Spanish-speaking Pentecostal church. There she was immediately

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protect their identity.

convinced of the Pentecostal message. Unlike his father who remained indifferent to religion and church, Johnny loved attending church since he was a child. When Johnny turned eight, they started attending a new English-speaking charismatic church in SSD with a white pastor from the South.[49] There, Johnny took part of the children's ministry where he first learned English songs and was exposed to pre-recorded Christian music. His attendance only increased as he got older because gang members in his neighborhood began to target him as a potential recruit or enemy. After high school, he attended a school of evangelism north of downtown.

Rosa grew up in an English-speaking home in San Francisco. Although she grew up in a non-religious home, somehow it felt natural for her to pray and talk to God. She grew up in a troubled home riddled with domestic violence. At school she also faced violence when other girls would pick fights with her. She moved out of the house and as a teenager declared emancipation from her parents. That is when she ended up in SSD, where she completed her last three years of high school. After, she attended community college for a short time before dropped out and got married.

David grew up in a Spanish-speaking church but it was just something he did. When he was twelve his parents went through a difficult divorce. It is during this time that he began to rely more heavily on his faith. He would spend every chance he had at church. At church he fell in love with music and learned to play the guitar. His church is affiliated with the Assemblies of God, one of the first Pentecostal denominations to come into existence, and David is the only one of the participants to attend a denominational church. However, in SSD there is little loyalty or understanding behind the significance of denominations and

[49] Johnny's mom loved the pastor's sermons but required a translator to whisper it in her ear every Sunday morning because she only spoke Spanish.

most Pentecostals identify as non-denominational. After high school David left SSD to attend Bethel School of Supernatural Ministry in Redding, California.

Nearly all the participants, like the majority of students at their respective high schools, are "socioeconomically disadvantaged." According to the California Department of Education, a "socioeconomically disadvantaged" student is defined as either a student neither of whose parents have received a high school diploma or a student who is eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch program, also known as the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Given that both their historical developments are deeply tied to military history in San Diego, school culture and tradition is highly patriotic (Roseman 2008: 974). Like every school in the district, the majority of students who attend these schools are Chicano/a.

The graduation rate of the schools in the area is an average of 82%, meanwhile more affluent SUSH high schools have an average graduation rate of 93.3%. College preparedness is also lower in the schools in question compared to SUSH high schools in more affluent neighborhoods. For example, one out of five less students can take an Advanced Placement course in schools within the research area schools compared to district schools in more affluent neighborhoods.[50] Arguably then, participants in the study hail from underperforming, underfunded, and underachieving public schools when compared to neighboring schools that are part of the same district.

Each participant provides their own experiences that allow for a rich and more complete discussion on how NeoMestiza/o religious assimilation is expressed and, ultimately, mobilized on behalf of evangelicalism. I relied on what my informants told me about their respective school experience and the religious activities they performed while attending high

[50] Based on aggregated Advanced Placement test participation data from 2015 by The College Board as presented by RTI International for *U.S. News & World Report*.

school. In chapter four there is mention of two local high schools, Baja High and Middletown High. The names of these two schools have been changed to further protect the identity of research participants. Middletown High was built in 1947. The school opened a year after with an administration building, nineteen permanent classrooms, 6 portable classrooms, and a gym. Before then, high school students living in Chula Vista had to go to school in National City (Roseman 2008: 454). Then, Chula Vista was known for its lemon, cherry, and orange orchards. There were also farms that grew celery, tomatoes, lettuce, and cucumbers. The lemon orchards and celery farms produced more than $1 million in revenue during this time period. During WWII, Chula Vista was considered the lemon capital of the world (Roseman 2008: 198). The largest of the lemon packinghouses was located only three blocks from where Middletown High now stands. During WWII, Rohr Aircraft Corporation moved to Chula Vista and employed about 9,8000 people making parts for the B-24 bombers and PBY flying boats.[51] The city population tripled during the 1940s from only about 5,000 to 16,000 residents.[52]

Middletown High School was built after World War II. According to one historian, "The tens of thousands of servicemen who passed through San Diego in World War II (navy and marines) remembered the nice area, and so […] more and more people moved to Chula Vista" after the war (Roseman 2008: 95). In less than two decades, the fields and orchards were replaced by suburban homes, schools, and businesses. By 1960, Chula Vista grew to 44,000, closed down the last of its packing plants, and "became a bedroom community for

[51] Rohr specialized in the nacelle. The nacelle is a housing, separate from the fuselage, that holds engines, fuel, or equipment on an aircraft.

[52] Interesting to note, Chula Vista had the largest number of Japanese immigrants in San Diego County. I can only assume that the children of these immigrants attended Middletown High.

the San Diego area" (95). Middletown High is not the most affluent public school in the district, but it is one of the better-funded schools given the city's booming commercial and industrial sector.

Baja High was built in the second wave of public school construction in San Diego, shortly after World War II. The school opened in 1952 with an administration building, 28 classrooms, a gym and a library.[53] It was built the same year the government re-commissioned the local Naval Outlying Landing Field (NOLF), situated one mile from Baja High and less than two miles north of the U.S./Mexico Border. Baja High is located in Imperial Beach.

Imperial Beach was founded in 1887 and was incorporated in 1956. During WWII, Imperial Beach was a temporary home to thousands of military personal. After the war, it became a favorite beach town destination for active or former military personnel and their families who settled and became homeowners. Since then, the city has maintained a high military population. The city is south of Silver Strand beach. Silver Strand is a narrow 7-mile stretch of beach property that connects Coronado Island to San Diego proper. The north and south parts of the strand are military property. Before the emergence of the BIC, Baja High was a suburban public school primarily serving white children of middle class homeowners – most of whom were active or retired military personnel stationed in the various neighboring Air Force and Navy bases. The children of farmworkers and cattle ranchers in the area attended a nearby high school not included in this study. Inevitably, Baja High has changed since then as a result of demographic changes in the area and county.

[53] California Department of Education. "School Accountability Report Card." <goo.gl/3dhpg8>

The school has a distinguished Honor NJROTC Program that has been active for several decades.[54] Although I could not find any census data on Imperial Beach prior to the year 2000, it is clear to me as a local observer that demographic changes have taken place in Imperial Beach since the 1980s. More recently, the U.S. Census reports that there are approximately 26,324 residents in Imperial Beach with 49 percent identifying as Hispanic or Latino (2010). In addition, nearly nineteen percent of residents live below the poverty line.[55] Presently, one out of three residents of Imperial Beach is under the age of eighteen (Census 2010).

In addition to schools, this study examines a local NeoMestizo/a subculture which is largely male and spans across and beyond congregations. Latino male youth encounter a wide variety of challenges not easily explained or understood (Noguera, Hurtado, and Fergus 2013). It is interesting to note that women generally tend to have higher rates of religious participation in congregational settings, regardless of the denomination or religious tradition. As for the Pentecostal context, the faith preaches a message in which one has immediate access to God without the need for a mediator. In addition, there is a level of intimacy within church settings that are similar to kinship or family ties. Furthermore, there is a sense of empowerment in which believers are told have control of their spiritual destiny, not the church. As for Latina women, Sanchez-Walsh (2003: 117) argues that the congregation provides them auxiliary forms of empowerment that enable them to preach, teach, and live their lives relatively clear from the interference of other people in a society where they may have less power in public spaces or non-religious places.[56] As for men and

[54] Navy Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps.

[55] From 2009 to 2013, California reported 15.9 percent living below the poverty line.
[56] An excellent review of research on Pentecostal women is provided by Sanchez Walsh in her chapter, "Normal Church Can't Take Us," pages 120 – 124 (2003).

youth, the church can also be a particularly empowering place. However, considering the pervasiveness of male privilege in public spaces, it is no surprise to see religious males dominate aggressive youth subcultures (i.e. hardcore punk or hip hop) with a religious intent. As for the religious subculture examined in chapter three, it was embodied by NeoMestizo/a youth and practiced in schools, backyard parties, churches and warehouses, local music shows, and through a local record label.

During the 1990s, the religious subculture outside churches was largely led by and for youth. This subculture stood in opposition to the mainstream and provided an alternative, nurturing space for youth in a state where mechanisms and institutions of criminalization--"youth control complex"--affects the daily lives and perspectives of male youth of color (Rios 2011).[57] Given that Chicano male youth are poorly understood by society and understudied in the context of religion and schools, this study primarily focuses on male youth identity in order to shed further light on the everyday experiences of young NeoMestizos.

Much work is needed to best understand the culture of the border. This study is only a single contribution to the research required to make life at the border genuinely comprehendible. This research does reveal something much deeper than the "outer terrain" we now know as the U.S./Mexico border. Through research methods, findings reveal what

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[57] According to Rios, "The youth control complex was fueled by the micro-power of repeated negative judgments and interactions in which the boys were defined as criminal for almost any form of transgression or disrespect of authority" (2011: xiv). In other words, male youth of color have a unique racial and gendered relationship to the state and its agents (the police, school personnel, and others) given their hyper-criminalization within dominant culture. Rios (2011: xv) continues, "This cycle began before their first arrest—it began as they were harassed, profiled, watched, and disciplined at young ages, before they had committed any crimes." Rios' study demonstrates how male youth of color experience a unique relationship to state institutions that has tremendous results on identity formation and social consciousness.

Anzaldúa refers to as the "inner struggle"—the "methodology of the oppressed" (in Chela Sandoval's words)—located within the Chicano/a community in question. This methodology may not help me to explain the popularity of Pentecostalism and charismatic Christianity among all Chicana/o communities but it does help document the way Chicanas/os employ agency through religious assimilation to construct meaningful experiences and shared identities in America.

E. Organization of Study

I begin the next chapter, "A New Religious Mestizaje," by presenting and discussing findings based on surveys collected for this research. The survey, like the study, was conducted in SSD. Half of survey respondents grew up in either San Ysidro or Chula Vista between the ages of 13 and 17. One in five respondents grew up in Tijuana or somewhere else in Baja California, Mexico. The rest grew up in SSD and one respondent grew up in Puerto Rico. Currently, three of these respondents live in Tijuana and the rest in SSD. The area is both binational and bicultural. Findings show that SSD has an abnormally high percentage of NeoMestizas/os and are *extraordinarily* religious when compared to the general Catholic population. This chapter affirms the importance of conducting a study on the growing trend toward religious assimilation. It also demonstrates the value of conducting this research in SSD where NeoMestiza/o culture is rampant.

"Rescue Those Led to the Slaughter" documents more recent examples of a mestizaje taking on new cultural forms and identities at the border. I describe the history of the local music scene and how NeoMestizo youth infused it with religious discourse. I highlight the negotiation of power and describe the early music and performance of local music sensation Payable On Death (P.O.D.) and local record company Rescue Records. I document

P.O.D.'s original start in SSD and describe their ascension into popular culture. I analyze the lyrics and style of their early work (1992 - 1998) in order to highlight the new meanings and cultural expressions exported from this Chicana/o community on to the global stage. Through their participation in American Hardcore, I argue that youth of color from this Chicano community changed the subculture and transformed notions of Pentecostal identity by incorporating racial and religious discourses into their cultural production. Through a succession of differential responses to the presence of suburban Hardcore Punk and urban music, youth of color were able to successfully change the racial and social image of religious assimilation so that one could be independent ("punk") and religious ("Christian") as well.

The chapter after, "Smells Like a New Teen Spirit," documents how NeoMestiza/o students create new cultural spaces in their public schools. Historically, Chicano/a students are a racialized and socioeconomically marginalized segment of society, but it is unclear how religious practices influence or shape their experiences while at school. In this chapter I describe how NeoMestizas/os in their youth were able to practice an imagined alternative to Western or immigrant cultures, and how this lead them to form positive and nurturing experiences. I analyze these spaces and the way meaning was constructed, negotiated, and deployed in order to understand how youth in Chicano communities take part in religious assimilation.

I conclude this study with a summation of findings and provide my own thoughts on what I observed and documented. I also describe the way this project shapes the way I see the study of Chicana/o religions and suggests future research in this ripe and fruitful field of study.

The great Mexican anthropologist Manuel Gamio was one of the first in academia to study Mexican immigration into the U.S. Although he did not study religion, Gamio first made religious observations of U.S. Mexican communities in the 1920s and published findings in *The Mexican Immigrant* (1931). He noted the dominance of Catholicism and also the minority influence of "Aleluyas" (Pentecostals) whose pastors preached healing through prayer. He concluded Pentecostalism would remain a minute sect dominated by mainline Protestantism. During the 1930s, Gamio could not yet grasp the allure of Pentecostalism and its prospects as a transcultural religious movement/process that now influences the Catholic faith. As a major Chicana/o community, SSD is historically significant as a counterpoint to Gamio's presumptions made almost a hundred years ago. In short, this study is an empirical contribution to the broader literature on the interpretation of religion and culture in Chicana and Chicano Studies.

II. A New Religious Mestizaje

> What kind of Christian am I? … I don't abide by people's traditions and prefer to hear from the word of God and be led by God's Holy Spirit.
>
> —Interview, South San Diego (2010)

> I wasn't raised Catholic. I didn't identify myself as any kind of religion … So I told God, "What am I to believe? Christian? Catholic? Or what? One day some guys came to talk to be about Jesus Christ and I started crying. It was weird. I just felt love … A week later my brother calls me … and tells me 'I've been praying for you for somebody to come talk to you about Jesus'…. I tell him, 'Somebody just did talk to me about Jesus.' … And ever since then I believed I was supposed to be a Christian."
>
> —Interview, South San Diego (2015)

Social constructionist theory poses collective identity as an extension of personal identity in a collective setting (Buechler 2000: 44). The word "Christian" is not enough to accurately describe the collective identities emerging from mestizaje in Chicana/o communities today, yet it is the same word in Spanish or English that most NeoMestizas/os use to describe their new, most intimate name. A "Christian" is the English word for

"disciples of Christ" (Acts 11:26) and is often stigmatized today for its links to retrograde politics (e.g. anti-queer, anti-science, etc.). This chapter focuses on beliefs and practices of NeoMestizas/os in SSD in order to understand how their faith is integral to their distinct religious assimilation. In other words, this chapter identifies the social and religious characteristics of San Diego Chicanas/os in order to shed light on globalization and its effects felt through religion, race, class, gender, and sexual orientation at the border. In short, this chapter refers to a continued institutional decline of Catholicism at the border and interprets Pentecostalism as the principal trope for rapid religious assimilation.

The findings presented below are based on survey results collected in 2016 and are discussed at length to evaluate three critical claims introduced in the prior chapter. First, NeoMestizas/os are a heterogeneous group, existing at all levels of society, and are, to a greater degree, theologically assimilated to evangelical Protestantism. Second, personal agency and collective experiences are increasingly preserved and reasserted through NeoMestiza/o identification. Considering the facts of social dispersion and ongoing religious assimilation in this community, the third and final claim argues that the future of religion in SSD will be increasingly influenced by people with a NeoMestizo experience and, arguably, the sheer growth of Chicanas/os means an ever widening role in defining Christianity at even the national level.

Global Pentecostals overwhelmingly believe humans are "living in the last days" and can be highly motivated to proselytize to the "ends of the earth" (Anderson 2013). The growing influence of Pentecostalism is based on networks, movements, and media over institutions or the state (Stoll 1990; Castells 1996; Smith 1998). Most leaders are local/native, often untrained or uneducated (Stoll 1990: 77; Martin 2002: 5-6; Anderson 2013: 250; Harrison 2005: 11-13). Pentecostal movements are often successful because

they preserve the ethnic or national culture while simultaneously identifying apart from traditional ethno-religious institutions (Busto 2005; Leon 2005: 240). In addition, the influence of Pentecostalism is unevenly spread throughout every continent and their claim for religious freedom has opened doors for political dialogue (Miller and Yamamori 2007). Worldwide, social and political systems and social movements come into direct conflict or cooperation with their growing influence (Diamond 2000; Wilcox 1996; Kaplan 2004; Leon 2005; Newton 2005).

In Southern California, Pentecostals helped shape discourses surrounding popular culture and youth, and commercialized Christianity as cultural goods intended for global consumption (Thompson 2000; Sanchez-Walsh 2003: 131; Leon 2005: 260; Luhr 2009: 5). Pentecostalism is the most dramatic development of Christianity in the last century (Miller 1997; Martin 2002). All signs point to the growth of Pentecostalism or related evangelical strains. During fieldwork, I observed a high concentration of Pentecostals in South San Diego and this phenomenon is likely occurring in other Chicano/a communities undergoing secularization through religious assimilation.

Exclusively through survey responses of SSD community members, this chapter examines the unordinary large presence of NeoMestizas/os in one of the largest Chicano/a communities. Survey findings show that many respondents are evangelical and others Pentecostal or charismatic. Some are all three while others are not. Most are far from Catholic in the traditional sense of the word. These NeoMestizas/os do not at all attend mass held by the Catholic Church and will only attend contemporary Pentecostal churches though most do not even attend church regularly. Even so, practically all of them believe in the Bible to an extent. Ultimately, they reflect the long history of mestizo/indigenous agency opposing religious establishments through innovations and disruptions in religious

culture under economic domination. Furthermore, findings show NeoMestizas/os are "religious" in the sense that they are more likely to attend religious services, engage in personal and group religious practices, and regard their religion as more important than the general Catholic population surveyed. Hence, this chapter draws connections between a declining Catholic orthodox culture in SSD, and the U.S. in general, and shows how widespread the preference for Pentecostalism has become in one of the largest Chicana/o communities to ever exist.

The chapter reviews and analyzes results of forty-three respondents to a 68-question survey in order to shed light on this contemporary religious phenomenon on the ground in one of America's most unique communities. National survey studies and scholarship on this strand of Christianity are presented in order to explain cultural variations within this Chicana/o community. Findings for SSD show that traditional religious membership is likely lower than national averages in both Mexico and U.S. Nonetheless, results show that Christianity in general has a major influence in this community and Pentecostals are generally more religious than the general population. In their social context, these NeoMestizas/os represent a distinct ethno-religious group and their implications are discussed after all relevant findings are presented.

A. A gateway to secularism

Measuring traditional religion is one of the most obvious ways to give meaning to social change. In particular, the study of Pentecostal religion may signal secularization and acculturation of immigrant groups and the communities they belong to, argues sociologist David Martin (1992; 2002). For Martin, Pentecostals belong to a phase in the process of global modernization. Instead of retreating from modernity, as is the case of early 20th

century Christian Fundamentalism, Pentecostals develop a culture of their own alongside American modernization (2002: 5). In other words, Pentecostals are instead exercising religious liberties that act as assimilating gateways to a globalizing world.

At the micro level, Pentecostal beliefs and practices help adherents navigate their precarious circumstances for the purpose of personal betterment in a modern age (Martin 2002: 10, 50; Miller and Yamamori 2007: 169). Given its effects at an individual level, an incline or decline in the popularity of this form of Christianity at the aggregate level may serve as means to measure the strength of historical religious traditions under a given secular, social context. Thus, accounting for religious differences (beliefs, practices, and life politics) in a given community allows for a differentiation between those social characteristics that remain largely unchanged and those that signal a change in the community toward secularization through religious assimilation. In other words, the growth of Pentecostalism in any given community may not just signal growing religiosity but also the conflict between an ancient community and the secular society beholden to it.

Literary analyses, poetics, theology, archival research, and interviews were some of the first methods used to study traditional religion among Chicanas/os (i.e. Carrasco 1982; Anzaldua 1987; Guerrero 1987). Religious beliefs and practices serve multiple purposes that are psychological or social in nature. They provide a glimpse of how a person may view the past, the meaning or purpose of life, and ways an individual might be motivated to influence others. Literature on Chicano/a religion is overwhelmingly focused on Catholicism or some variant, and understandably so (Isasi-Díaz and Tarango 1992; Matovina 2002; Garcia 2010; Gaspar de Alba 2011). For much of history, Chicanas/os have identified as Catholic given the how the Church has overlapped with Spanish colonialism the development of a national Mexican identity (although anti-Catholic movements have

existed within Mexico for quite some time). However, the role of traditional religion and religious practices has declined significantly. Times have changed. Now, more than ever, Chicanas/os are not identifying with the Catholic institution or raising children to believe or identify as Catholic.

More recently, scholarship has also begun to focus on new or undocumented forms of contemporary religiosity among Chicanas/os and Latinas/os, including among Pentecostals (Espinosa and Garcia: 2009). Scholars as Arlene Sanchez-Walsh (2003), Luis Leon (2005), Gaston Espinosa (2014) have done tremendous work documenting the history of non-Catholic Chicana/o and Latina/o religious communities. However, the relation between religion and ethnicity remains complex. From a sociological perspective, additional approaches to the study of religion are required in order to account for a changing secular landscape that continues to modify religious practices beyond the control of religious institutions or congregations. In other words, a new approach to the study of Chicana/o religion in society is needed to expand what we already know about religion inside church walls and across congregations by gaining participation from the greater public without regard to church spaces and sacred places. Thus, this chapter investigates the relation between Chicanas/os and religion in a secularized context using original survey data.

B. Design and distribution

The current data is derived from a survey on socio-cultural developments in South San Diego, conducted in 2016. This social survey consists of different questions regarding various social and cultural themes in South San Diego. This study does not at all focus on values and therefore is not a public opinion poll. Instead, its focus is on the social experience, religious beliefs, cultural views, and social practices of respondents. It is the

first of its kind, as no similar survey has been done on this or any other Chicana/o community.

The survey contains four general areas: socio-economic status (SES), personal experiences, religious beliefs and practices, and views on child rearing. The first section, SES, measures variables as gender, race, ethnicity, educational attainment, employment status, and household income in order to measure social class and determine what variables, if any, influence religious identification. The second, local experiences, captures people's educational background, border crossing practices, and time lived in the area which helps measure the impact of place over time on local social identities and cultural practices. A wide variety of religious beliefs and practices are used, along with religious group affiliation, to assess local religious phenomenon for comparative purposes. Given the fact that birth rates continue to be the dominant method by which to project religious change in the future, a series of questions on child rearing were asked to identify plausible patterns down the road in lieu of a longitudinal study. In general, the survey was designed to identify the social and religious characteristics of San Diego Chicanas/os living next to the U.S. border.

Information from the U.S. Census was reviewed and filtered for the purpose of providing context to survey responses. In addition, written recommendations from a panel of experts commissioned by the National Center for Education Statistics per request from the National Assessment Governing Board were reviewed in order to better understand the relevance of Census data to the study at hand. Given the central role of the Pew Research Center (PRC) in survey and interview studies on religion, studies published by the center were reviewed in order to identify all the questions on religion related to the research topic. To ensure the survey was inclusive of world religions not documented or observable in the community

with the public eye, the Faith and Belief Scotland, a national study conducted by the University of Edinburgh and commissioned by the Scottish Government (2014), was reviewed as a template design. Surveys available through the Association of Religious Data Archives were also reviewed. Overall, rigorous research was involved in the development and design of the survey at hand (see Appendix A for the full questionnaire).

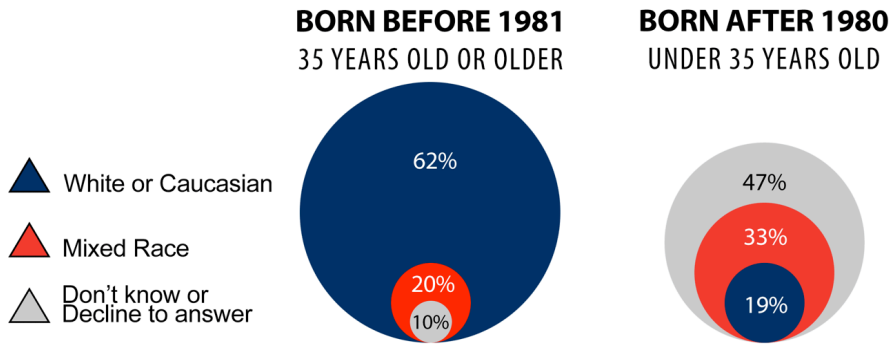
Only responses from SSD residents were recorded, analyzed, and presented. Their eligibility was determined by their postal zip code to ensure they live or lived in SSD. Over fifty surveys with 68 questions were distributed within the course of three weeks. Considering the digital divide, paper surveys were used to ensure respondents without internet access would not be excluded from participating. None of the surveys were distributed to churches or collected on church grounds. Most surveys were completed in people's homes, place of work, or local businesses. At the end of the three-week period, 43 community members completed the survey. These paper entries were later inputted with non-identifiable information into a password-protected spreadsheet for analysis.

A five-point rating scale was used for roughly a third of the survey questions. The rating scale measured importance starting at "Not at all important" (0), "Slightly important" (1), "Moderately important" (2), "Very important" (3), and ending with "Extremely important" (4). Considering the sampled community and the purpose of the study, results are well distributed along variables such as age, language, race, religion, and others. The sample consisted of 55% (24) female and 44% (19) male. The mean age is 39 and median age is 34, with a range of 23 to 62 years of age. The majority (86%) identified as heterosexual and 14% identified as gay or lesbian. Two out of three (67%) are registered to vote in U.S. elections. Overall, 79% selected Spanish as their native language while 21% (9) said English. The majority said they spoke Spanish "very well" or "pretty well" while 10% said

they spoke it "just a little" or "not at all." Nearly two out of three (65%) respondents said one or both parents were born in Mexico.

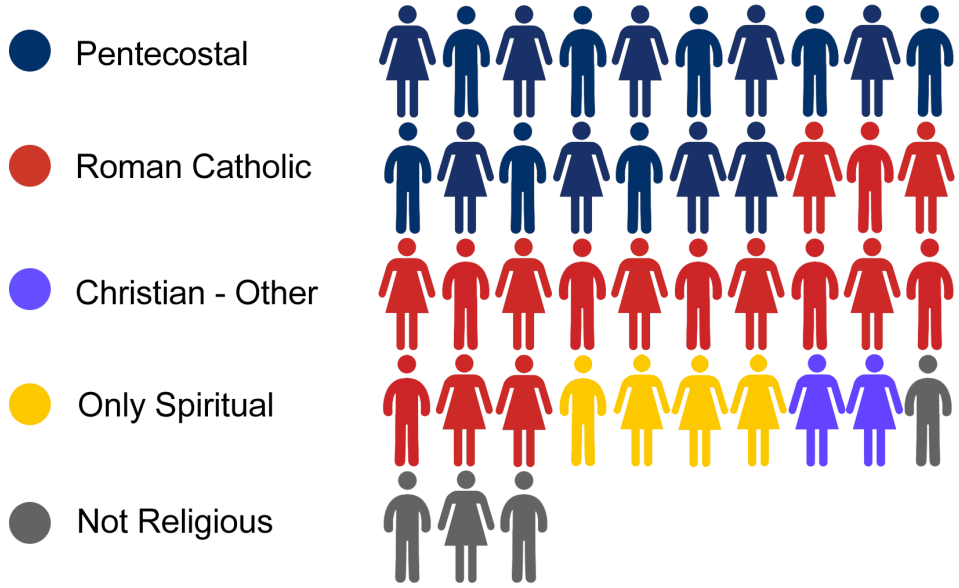
The survey also included a question on racial identification. The two dominant racial categories, "White" and "Black" were included in the survey in addition to the option of "Mixed Race" and "Other." When asked to select their race, 40% chose White while nearly half (49%) chose "Mixed Race" or "Other." Those that selected "Mixed Race" were by and large younger than those who identified as only White. In the self-identified White group, 52% (9) identified as "Hispanic," 52% (9) identified as "Mexicano or Mexicana," (7) identified as "Latino or Latina," and 29% (5) ethnically identified as "Chicana/o (Mexican American)." Only three respondents who identified as White ethnically identified as all four categories above. Of those who identified as mixed race, 73% (8) ethnically identified as "Chicana/o (Mexican American)." Five (45%) identified as Mexican, seven as Hispanic, and seven as Latina/o. Three of them identified as all four categories. Interestingly, five of the seven who identified as Hispanic also identified as Chicana/o (please refer to Figure 6 for racial identification split between the median age of 35). Results show that younger respondents are more likely to view themselves as mixed race or unsure about their racial identity while those above the age of thirty-four overwhelmingly identify was white.

Figure 6. Racial Identification in South San Diego (Median Age Split)



In regards to religious identification, only 18% (8) of the participants did not consider themselves a part of a religion while 38% (16) identified as Roman Catholic, 41% (17) Christian (non-denominational), and 5% (2) as "Other - Christian" (See Figure 7). No respondent identified as Mainline Protestant, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, or Hindu. Given their proximity to the border and Mexican heritage, we can assume respondents are relatively bicultural and binational. In other words, they likely see the world in two ways, from two sides, with two different languages and distinct legal systems. Even so, how does religion and faith fit into this bicultural context?

Figure 7. Religious Faiths in South San Diego (Gender)



C. Findings on religion and secularism

The mean age of Pentecostal ("Christian") respondents is 38, the Catholic mean age is 35, and overall mean age is 39. The majority of Chicanas/os (58%) identified with their religious group before the mean age of 13. On average, there is no statistical difference in

the age respondents began to identify as Roman Catholic (8.1 years old) or Pentecostal (7.3 years old). However, nearly half (41%) of respondents who identified as Pentecostal did so at the age of 18 or older. Meanwhile, all Catholics identified with their religious group before turning 18 years old. This age difference suggests today's Catholics are likely a product of childrearing while most Pentecostal respondents make a personal choice to convert to the faith during or after their youth.

Nationally, millennials (b. 1980 - 2000) are the most racially diverse generation (: 6). Millennials are considered *digital natives*, having grown up assimilated to micro-chip technology and the internet (Taylor, Doherty, and Parker: 2014: 5). For example, SSD millennials are more likely to own a personal computer and have internet access at home than those born before 1980.[58] In general, millennials are marrying in smaller numbers and show low social trust (Taylor, Doherty and Parker 2014: 7). In addition, millennials are less likely to identify with a religious group compared to prior generations (Taylor, Doherty, and Parker 2014: 13). SSD is no exception. SSD millennials are less likely to be married when compared to other age groups. Unlike every respondent born before 1980 identified with a religious group. Meanwhile, only 73% of millennials did so. Overall, a total of 77% of respondents identify as either Pentecostal or Catholic. Meanwhile, 26% of millennials identify with no religion whatsoever while 67% identify as either Pentecostal or Catholic. Survey results are grouped into four discussion sections: importance of religion, religious beliefs and practices, new major religious differences, and the ongoing transformation of American religiosity.

[58] One out of three (33%) of older generations do not own a personal computer compared to only one Millennial in the survey. Millennials are twice as likely to have home internet.

i. Importance of religion

Women in SSD are more likely to be religious or engage in religious activities than their male counterparts. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of religion in their own lives by using a five-point scale from "not at all important" to "extremely important." Half of female respondents viewed religion as "extremely important" or "very important" in their life compared to only 26 % of males. Nearly half of all men surveyed (47%) rated religion in their lives as "slightly important" or "not at all important." Three out of four women (75%) reported to have prayed or meditated in the last month compared to 57% of men. These results are consistent with other studies where women are more likely than men to describe themselves as religious (Trzebiatowska and Bruce 2012: 5). After World War II, for example, "The Gallup polling organization has consistently found that, on every index used, American women are more religious than men and not by small margins" (Trzebiatowska and Bruce 2012: 6). In general, survey results are strikingly similar to national studies linking gender to the importance of religion, prayer, and church attendance.

While religious affiliation is high in SSD, church attendance is surprisingly low which suggests a weakening of institutional religion in the area. Less than half of both female and male respondents regularly attend church or a worship service. Only 28% of all respondents, half male and half female, said they attended a worship service in the last month. This finding is considered low compared to national averages. However, 46% of women reported attending church at least once a month compared to 21% of men. This too is comparable to national trends in both the U.S. and Mexico. For example, Catholics were more likely than Protestants (47% vs. 29%) to report attending religious services at least once a week in 1974 (Smith 2015). Four decades later in 2012, Protestants were more likely to say they attend church weekly or more often (38% vs. 24%) than Catholics.

Similarly, Pentecostals in SSD were much more likely to say they attend church every month than self-identified Catholics in South San Diego (68% vs. 19%). Even as church attendance declines between both countries, church attendance among Pentecostals at the border is significantly higher compared to their Catholic counterparts.

Though church attendance is highest among Pentecostals in SSD, not all Pentecostals are regulars at church. There may be a variety of personal or social reasons to explain differences but results from the sample group suggest that the racial/ethnic difference between pastor and layperson is possibly correlated to frequency of church attendance by Pentecostals. Over half (56%) of Pentecostal respondents said their pastor was white and did not share their ethnicity. For example, 72% of those whose pastor shares their ethnicity attend church once a month or less. Meanwhile, one out of three Pentecostals with a white pastor attend church two to three times a month and another 44% attend four or more times a month. Most striking is the fact that Pentecostals with a white pastor are willing to drive twice as far to attend church than Pentecostals with a pastor who shares their ethnicity.[59] In short, those that reported attending a church with a pastor of the same ethnicity were less likely to attend church on a weekly basis than those who reported attending a church with a white pastor.

The profound growth of a strong Protestant identification is present in this Chicana/o community in focus while explicit Catholic self-identification appears to be weak. For example, 13% of Catholics said religion was "not at all important" in their lives while no Pentecostals reported similar sentiments. Three out of four Catholics reported religion as "moderately important" or "slightly important" in their lives. Meanwhile, three out of four (76%) Pentecostals viewed religion in their lives as "extremely important" or "very

important." Only 13% of self-identified Catholics felt the same way as the majority of Pentecostals. These findings are comparable to data in the General Social Survey (GSS) which reveals that Catholic identity is the weakest it has been in four decades (2013). In other words, the strength of religious identification is weakening among U.S. Catholics (Smith 2015). Inversely, strong Protestant identification in the U.S. has continued to grow since the 1990s. Chicana/o Pentecostals appear to be following the same trajectory as suggested by national data but in a much more extreme manner.

Marriage in Mexico and U.S. is widely viewed as an institution given its social sources in Christianity and capitalism. Only 28% of respondents said they were married, 7% separated or divorced, 7% living with their partner, and 58% single. Two out of three married respondents said they were Pentecostal and no Pentecostal reported living with an unwed partner. Religion is at least twice as important to Pentecostals than Catholics when choosing a romantic partner. Findings show that 76% of Pentecostals said it was "extremely important" or "very important" that their spouse or partner share their religion or belief system. In contrast, 25% of Catholics reported similarly. The same number of Catholics said it was "not at all important" that their spouse or partner share their religion or belief system. This is consistent with a low importance of religion in the lives of participating Chicana/o Catholics.

ii. Religious beliefs and tradition

Despite low rates of church attendance in SSD even among the "religious," survey results confirm the dominance of Christianity in the community's cosmovision, or shared, unobservable beliefs that involve a supernatural world (Carrasco 1982). A cosmovision is

[59] The distance between Pentecostals and their churches is also an indication of whether or not their churches are inside SSD or north of it in white-majority areas.

described by David Carrasco as "a worldview that integrates the structure of space and the rhythms of time into a unified whole" (Carrasco 1982: 166). Examples in Chicana/o history include the Codex Ferjérváry Mayer and Mayan/Aztec Sun Stone. Unlike the circular/dialectical order in Aztec philosophy, an American, evangelical-based cosmovision typically means a linear narrative where people (souls) go to places (Heaven or Hell) based on the things (sin, evil, good, repentance) they did or did not do, meanwhile supernatural beings (angels and demons) are there to destroy or save humankind. Overwhelmingly, results show that Pentecostals more than any other group are much more committed to a Christian-based cosmovision.

The 2014 Religious Landscape Study by the PRC shows that the vast majority of Americans still believe in God (Cooperman et al. 2014). In SSD, nearly two out of three (65%) believe in God while, surprisingly, 14% believe in Gods or Goddesses.[60] Meanwhile 18% do not believe in any kind of God and only one respondent said he believed in "a higher spirit but not God." Overall, 79% of respondents believe in God or some other type of deities or higher spirit. Compare this to the 2014 PRC study which found 89% of U.S. adults believe in "God or a universal spirit" (Cooperman et al. 2014). Like most of the nation, SSD continues to exhibit high signs of belief in a higher, personified power.[61]

Heaven and Hell tend to be the touchstones of the Christian faith. The "saved" enter Heaven while the rest are forever damned in Hell. Not surprisingly, respondents were more

[60] The belief in Gods and Goddesses is likely an indicator of psychological adoption of liberalism than individuals actually ascribing to a polytheist religion as Hinduism.

[61] As for those who do not believe in any type of god or spirit, 45% of them identified as "No Religion" (religious "nones"). Interestingly, it is not uncommon for religious Americans to not believe in God or a universal spirit. The same 2014 PRC study shows 8% of Catholics and 4% of Protestants do not believe in God or are not at all certain that God exist. Of those not believing in God, 55% still self-identified as either Pentecostal or Catholic. Even so, those who believe in one God are the majority in SSD.

likely to believe in Heaven than in Hell. Over half (56%) believe in Heaven while 40% believe in Hell. These figures appear to be low, even for the religious, but Pentecostals and Catholics account for 92% of those who believe in Heaven and 94% of those who believe in Hell, demonstrating that these two afterlife concepts persist beyond religion but are most socially integral to Pentecostal/Catholic identity. Interestingly, all who believe in Hell also believe in Heaven although the reverse is not always true. Not even one Pentecostal believes in reincarnation while a small minority of Catholics do (13%). Overall, 64% of Pentecostal and 19% of Catholics surveyed believe in both Heaven and Hell. In other words, these Pentecostals are more likely than surveyed Catholics to also believe in Hell if they believe in Heaven.

The spiritual world is alive and active in Christian mythology. In particular, angels, demons, and the Devil are still commonly held beliefs in SSD. For example, almost half (49%) of all respondents believe in angels. Interestingly, Pentecostals (71%) are more likely to believe in angels than Catholics (44%). Similarly, the majority of Pentecostals (61%) believe in demons while only a small portion (19%) of Catholics still do. Nearly half (49%) of all respondents also believe in the devil. Again, not surprisingly perhaps, the majority of those who believe in the devil identify as Pentecostals (57%). In fact, 71% of Pentecostal respondents believe in the devil while only 19% of Catholics believe the same. In addition, two "No Religion (Spiritual)" respondents said they believe in the devil. Only 37% of total respondents do not believe in angels, demons, or the devil. Meanwhile, 35% believe in all three. A spiritual world beyond the one we all observe continues to be integral, at least in part, to the popular religious imagination in SSD. The fact Pentecostals showed higher signs of belief in a spiritual realm to earthly existence demonstrates the integral role they now play as a collective identity in the social reproduction of a Christian-based cosmovision in SSD.

This also means Catholics may view themselves as part of a religious group even though they may not share in the same cosmovision.

iii. New major religious differences

Little over a third (37%) of respondents self-identified as Roman Catholic when asked to select a religious group. All Catholic respondents said they had at least one parent born in Mexico and the majority (81%) claimed both parents were born in Mexico. A majority (81%) identified with the Catholic faith by the age of 10, with the remaining 19% first identifying as Catholic by 16 years of age. Arguably, nearly all Catholic respondents were raised under or influenced by Mexican Catholicism during their childhood or adolescence.

Figure 8. Artisan portrait of Juan Diego after Marian apparition.



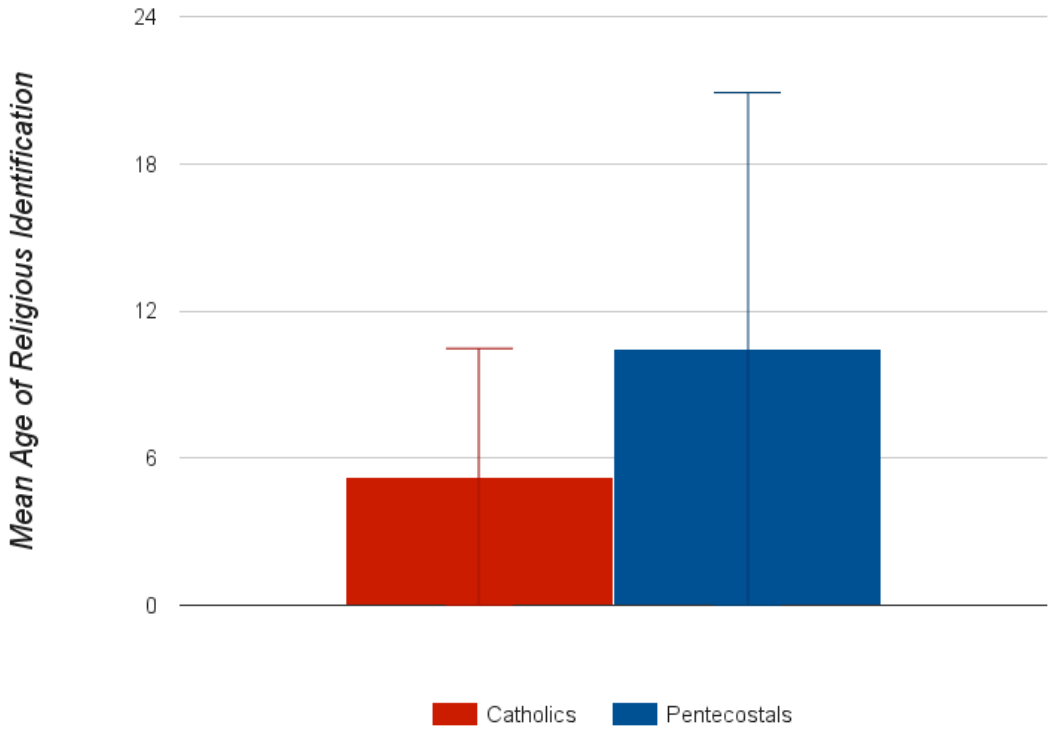
Our Lady of Guadalupe (Virgin Mary) is arguably the most popular belief among most Catholics (see Figure 8). She was not the only Marian apparition claimed in colonial territory but she became the Meso-American Madonna, a symbol of divine love for the indigenous. Stated differently, Elizondo describes her as the "Mother of the New Creation" referring to the iconic mestizaje she represents to so many (1997). This icon is arguably the pinnacle symbol for the first major movement of religious assimilation by the indigenous and mestizos of "New Spain." Since, she has been referred to as 'Mother of the Americas' and 'The Great Humanizer' (Elizondo 1997). Tragically, surveyed Chicanas/os are less invested in *La Virgen* as a religious deity even though she remains is a popular cultural symbol for racially diverse Millennials. For example, two out of three Catholics in SSD believe in *La Virgen*. Far less (13%) believe in the power of saints. Two respondents identifying as "No Religion (Spiritual)" also said to believe in the Virgin. Most notably, there is no Pentecostal who reported believing in *La Virgen*. This highlights Pentecostal commitment to religious assimilation in the form of biblical literacy that disavows Catholic tradition (Busto 2005: 128). The sum results give weight to the idea that *La Virgen*'s permanence in the Chicana/o imagination is likely to be in the form of a cultural pop icon instead of a real event between a human and deity.

The majority of Pentecostals first identify as such in their teens and well before reaching their twenties. Two out of every five respondents self-identified as "Christian (non-denominational)," or Pentecostal.[62] Out the total, 29% first identified as Pentecostals by the age of six. Additionally, 24% did so in their teenage years. Another 29% began to identify as Pentecostals between 26 to 33 years of age. The mean (average) age of Pentecostal identification for this sample is 14.9 years of age while the standard deviation is 10.4 years

[62] No respondent self-identified as Mainline Protestant.

(see Figure 2.4). There is a high conversion rate by young adults, second to upbringing, as a key indicator of religious assimilation. In other words, if participants have a religious conversion before reaching adulthood, it is more than likely the conversion will in Pentecostalism or some evangelical variant.

Figure 9. Comparison of mean age of religious identification between Catholics and Pentecostals



Eight Pentecostals are male and nine are female. For Pentecostals, 71% have at least one parent born in Mexico and 53% are registered to vote in the U.S. Roughly two of every five Pentecostals (41%) racially identify as White. The same number racially identified as Mixed Race or Other. The majority said race was "slightly important" or "not at all important" when dating or marriage while about a quarter (24%) think it is "extremely important" or "very important" that their romantic partner or spouse be the same race. In contrast, a majority (76%) said it was "extremely important" or "very important" that their

romantic partner or spouse be the same religion. Furthermore, Pentecostals were six times more likely than Catholics to report religion as "extremely important" or "very important" in their lives. Overall, results suggest that religion is most important to Pentecostals compared every other respondent.

When asked about their religious practices, Pentecostals reported a higher commitment to religious activities than Catholics. For example, 59% of Pentecostals said they read their Bible in the last month while only one Catholic reported having done so. In addition, 41% of Pentecostal reported attending a religious study group in the last month. No other respondent, including all Catholics, reported attending a religious study group. About one-third (35%) of Pentecostals reported having gone to a study group and also read their bible in the last month. Of those who listened to religious or spiritual music in the last month, 90% were Pentecostals. Only Pentecostals reported tithing or donating to their local church in the last month. Finally, over one-third (35%) of Pentecostals reported having prayed, attended a study group, read their bible, attended a worship service, listened to religious music, and also tithed to their church in the last month. No other group or individual reported nearly as much engagement with their religious identity. In short, surveyed Pentecostals express a greater commitment to religious activities than traditional Catholics in SSD.

What makes these Pentecostals unique over other religious groups, primarily Catholics, is their emphasis in the second return of Christ, belief in speaking in tongues, miracles and healings, and, like all evangelicals, sharing their faith with others. Results show that these four characteristics are in fact unique to these Pentecostal and are not commonly held beliefs among the rest of SSD. On the subject of Jesus Christ, there were many questions that could have been asked. However, the survey intentionally asked if respondents believed "Jesus

Christ will return." Underlying this question, and not others that could have been asked, is the assumption that Jesus Christ resurrected and ascended into Heaven. Furthermore, it is safe to assume that those who said "Jesus Christ will return" also believe in the "end of days," or Armageddon, as described in the book of Revelation. Interestingly, only one Catholic out of sixteen believes "Jesus Christ will return" while 76% of Pentecostal believe the same. None of these Pentecostal believe in "Human evolution," "Reincarnation," or devotion to the Virgen de Guadalupe. Again, this is most likely due to the fact that none of these beliefs are literal references in the Bible nor reinforced in church sermons.

Charismatic gifts and supernatural work of the Holy Spirit are required beliefs for one to be sociologically classified as Pentecostal. The most distinct gift is the ability to speak in tongues (glossolalia). Of the 17 respondents who self-identified within this religious group, 65% said they believed in glossolalia. The same number said they had prayed in the last month, suggesting that glossolalia may be an active part of their prayer life. Only one Catholic reported believing in glossolalia. More than half of Pentecostals (56%) said they believed in miracles and healings which is far more than Catholic respondents (13%). On the question of evangelism, no Catholics reported sharing their faith with a non-believer in the last month while 35% of Pentecostals reported that it was part of their religious practices last month. Similarly, 47% of Pentecostals reported that it was "extremely important" or "very important" "that the wider community improve the understanding of their religious group compared to only 13% of Catholics. For these Pentecostals, the work of the Holy Spirit and evangelism are key features they share with the global Pentecostal movement.

Although theological questions as the existence of Heaven or Hell may not divide Catholics from Pentecostals, it appears that the biggest differentiating factors are those commonly attributed to the latter group. In particular, the belief in Christ's return, scripture

reading, glossolalia, and miracles and healings set Pentecostals apart from the rest of SSD. When asked what makes him different than a Catholic, a Pentecostal respondent said, "the traditions." When asked to elaborate, he continued,

> *For example, I know this guy. He's a Catholic. He believes in Christ and all that. He believes in God. He's a believer. Awesome. We believe in the same Bible. But, this guy doesn't know the Word of God. And every time I try to bring the Word of God up, he says it's all about interpretation and his interpretation is that his connection with God is purely and strictly the traditional rules you have to abide by. Like persinando se uno; putting the sign of the cross on yourself. If he was next to the Pope, he would kiss his ring. Something like that. Jesus spoke against manly traditions like that. For the most part, knowledgeable Christians want a true relationship with Christ and to know his word. His word is where it's at, not giving yourself the sign of the cross or none of that.*

Differences in theology and tradition matter little in future competition between the two major religious groups represented in this study if their beliefs and practices do not persist over time and through the generations. Children are critical to the transmission of religious beliefs and practices across generations (e.g. Johnstone 2015). For example, 16% of respondents said they have children over the age of 12. Five respondents identify as Pentecostal and only two identify as Catholic. All of them reported that their children over the age of 12 do in fact share their parent's religious beliefs.

iv. The ongoing transformation of American religiosity

The enduring growth of some religious groups over others in the U.S. is attributable to three sources (Johnstone 2015: 391). First, differences in fertility rates. Second, immigration of religious group members and, third, conversions. With the exception the global Pentecostal movement which exhibits high conversion rates in almost every country (e.g. Martin 2002, 2002; Miller and Yamamori 2007; Anderson 2013), fertility rates alone can account for much of the decline and growth of most religious groups (Johnstone 2015: 391; Roof and McKinney 1987: 7, 15-16). In general, future religious growth is almost

exclusively attributed to fertility rates (Hacket 2015). Arguably then, and in light of declining birth rates in the U.S., Chicana and Latina fertility rates and religiosity are favorable to Christianity continuing to religiously characterize the nation.

Over half (56%) of self-identified Pentecostals have children compared to only 38% of Catholics. In total, fifteen children under the age of 13 are represented by their religious parents in this study. Two-thirds are Pentecostal and the others are Catholic. All the children of Pentecostals were reportedly being raised as Pentecostal. Compare this to only two Catholic parents who say it is either "extremely important" or "very important" for their children to share their beliefs. Two other Catholic parents said it was "slightly important." One Catholic parent was not raising her child according her Catholic beliefs and another is not sure. In contrast, five of the six Pentecostal parents said it was either "extremely important" or "very important" for their children to share their beliefs. The sixth parent said it was "moderately important." Results show that it is more important for Pentecostal parents to raise their children according to their belief system when compared to Catholic households. To stress the matter further, half of Pentecostal parents said it was "not at all important" that their children be another religion if it was not "Christian." All the while, most Catholic parents (75%) said it was "very important" their children be religious no matter what religion. In short, Pentecostals more so than Catholics appear to be much more committed to the idea of having children who will continue their parent's religious tradition as adults *and* deny all other religious traditions.

When asked if they were raising their children (12 years and under) according to their belief system, every single Pentecostal parent confirmed this was the case. In contrast, one out of three (33%) Catholics said they were not sure or did not plan to raise their children according to their belief system. When asked about their plan, one Pentecostal parent said,

"So they can be a light to a broken world." Another said, "To share Jesus with the world through actions." Still another said, "I believe in Jesus Christ and the holy trinity. There is only one God and my daughters believe the same." Pentecostal parents stress the importance in the belief in Jesus and living out his spiritual message. In contrast, of the 66% of Catholic parents who plan to raise their children Catholic, none mentioned Jesus. One Catholic did say she takes her 7-year-old daughter "to bible (Catholic) study and classes for first communion." This parent stresses the importance of tradition in the form of religious rituals performed by or in the Church. Another said, "It's very important for me for my daughter to share the same faith." Interestingly enough, two-thirds of Pentecostal parents report having prayed, attended a study group, read their bible, attended a worship service, listened to religious music, and tithed to their church in the last month. No Catholic parent came close to exhibiting similar levels of religious commitment. Overall, religious Chicanas/os surveyed felt strongly about raising their children according their belief system.

One out of three Catholics said they were not sure or did not plan to raise their children according to their belief system. When asked why, one Catholic parent said, "They are free to choose their religion when they are old enough to decide." A Pentecostal parent had a similar point of view but was still raising her children as Pentecostal when she said, "I want them to choose for themselves." A Catholic who was not sure if she would raise her child according to her religion said, "my daughter can attend Christian school and it's ok. I believe that my daughter can practice a different religion and have her decide what religion she wishes to practice when she gets older." One parent that is part of the religious "nones" said, "I allow my children to believe what feels good to them. I allow my children to analyze and decide their beliefs. I don't want them to feel all the guilt that my Catholic

upbringing gave me." Overall, Catholic parents want their children to choose their own faith and wish to tame their own involvement in the child's socialization.

Over half (60%) of religious respondents do not have children but plan to someday. Of these, 35% identify as Pentecostal and the other 25% identify as Catholic. All of the religious "nones" without children (17%) said they also plan to have children someday as well. Pentecostals were the only ones to view raising their future children according to their religion as "extremely important." Catholics (40%) and the religious "nones" (100%) were more likely to report that it was "slightly important" or "not at all important." Of this group, one third of Pentecostals and 40% of Catholics said it was "moderately important." When asked why she planned to raise her future children according to her religion, one Catholic said, "At least to understand my religious views and look for answers in his/her own religion and if doesn't like it then she/he can pick a religion she/he likes the most." Another Catholic said, "I believe everyone has the right to believe in whatever they live or have their own religious views." Another Catholic shared a similar sentiment when he said, "They can believe whatever they want." A fourth Catholic said that it was important to guide them while young so that "they can pick when they are older," while the final Catholic respondent planned to take his children to church after they are born. Pentecostals, on the other hand, emphasize the importance of beliefs when considering the question, "Do you plan to raise your children between the ages of 0-12 years old according to your belief system?" One respondent simply stated, "Jesus is the only true God." Another said, "Para que conozca nuestro Señor. Que se sienta bendecido y aprenda a respetar a las demás personas con otras religiones" (So that they can know our Lord and feel blessed and learn to respect others with different religions). One respondent highlighted the social aspect of religion when she said, "I want my children to grow up the way I did and have friends that also go to church." Of

all respondents without children, Pentecostals seemed to carry the more conservative view concerning child rearing and a religious upbringing.

One Pentecostal, who also identified as gay, said he did not have children and did not plan to ever have children. Five (31%) Catholics, of which three identified as gay or lesbian, said they did not have children and did not plan to ever have children. Overall, Catholics above all other religious group represented in the sampled group are less likely to plan to have children in their lifetime. However, the sample size is not large enough to assume this is the case for the broader Catholic community in SSD. Still, it's arguable that Catholicism among Chicanas/os is likely to decrease in SSD due to declining birth rates of Chicana Catholics and a low interest in raising their children Catholic. Inversely, one can also make the case that the children of Pentecostals are more likely to stay Pentecostals if birth rates and childrearing are the only factors under consideration. For example, of the 53% of Pentecostal who reported to have children 13 years of age or older, 89% confirmed that their "child or children 13 years old or older share [the respondent's] religious beliefs." Compare this to only half of Catholics who reported similarly to the question. Overall, Pentecostals more so than Catholics have or plan to have children raised according to their own belief system and are more committed in doing so.

D. The Rise of Chicana/o Pentecostals

For much of the last five hundred years, Chicanas/os have identified as Catholic. The Catholic Church has overlapped with the development of a national Mexican identity since the Cry of Dolores in 1810. At the start of the twenty-first century, social and religious demographics still show that Catholicism in Chicana/o communities persists as the dominant form of religiosity. However, findings in SSD strongly suggest that the role of institutionalized religion is declining north of the border. For example, an alarmingly low

number of SSD Catholics in the sample group believe in the Virgen de Guadalupe while none believe in the power of saints. The Church's influence is weakening and so are the religious practices associated with Mexican Catholicism north of the border.

Generally speaking, Catholics believe in the existence of a supernatural world that includes Heaven and angels, Hell and demons, and a devil and God. Despite being raised around Catholicism, two-thirds of SSD Catholics respondents no longer, or never believed in, the Virgen de Guadalupe. She is not the only sacred cultural symbol distinguishing SSD from its Mexican neighbors in the south. The power of Catholic saints is also denied by every Catholic respondent. These findings imply that orthodox beliefs instituted by the Catholic Church or folk culture in Mexico no longer appeal to many Chicanas/os, indicating an acculturation process toward a more secular, less Catholic, Chicana/o America. Even so, it is hard to imagine that the Catholic Church will cease to play an important role in Chicana/o communities.

Certainly, now more than ever, findings show that a significant number of Chicanas/os are not identifying with the Catholic Church or even growing up Catholic. Undoubtedly, times have changed. Future research of Mexican Catholicism in Chicana/o communities needs to consider the growing influence of secular culture and Pentecostalism in order to explain the current shift in cultural practices and a transformation of ethno-religious representation in Chicana/o communities.

While Catholic identification is weak in SSD, there is substantial evidence to argue a strong Protestant identification in the area. For example, only 13% of Catholics viewed religion in their lives as "extremely important" or "very important" compared to 76% of Pentecostals who reported similarly. Moreover, religion is at least twice as important to Pentecostals than Catholics when choosing a romantic partner. Furthermore,

NeoMestizas/os are more likely to attend religious services, engage in personal and group religious practices, and regard their religion as more important than their Catholic counterparts. A significant number pray and read their Bible, attend Bible studies, listen to Christian music, tithe, donate, and even volunteer. Most believe in the charismatic gifts and supernatural work of the Holy Spirit. No other group or individual reported nearly as much engagement with their personal religious identity. In short, NeoMestizas/os are far from Catholic orthodoxy, but still display deep cultural commitments to the Christian faith.

NeoMestizas/os are a heterogeneous group, exist at all levels of society, and are to a greater degree theologically assimilated to evangelical Protestantism. Pentecostal respondents emphasize the second return of of Christ and, like all other evangelicals, share their faith with others at a significant scale. They have no faith in human evolution and are skeptics of science that interferes with their beliefs. Like surveyed Catholics, Pentecostals also have high rates of voter registration. Based solely on responses, they are half as likely as Catholics to cross the border for any reason and live a life almost exclusively north of the border. Even so, they generally are less likely to identify as Hispanics than sampled Catholics.

While much of the strength behind Pentecostalism abroad has been credited with a native evangelical leadership, this is not necessarily the case in SSD where NeoMestizas/os are less likely to attend church if their pastor is of the same ethnicity. Moreover, findings emphasize personal religious identification (individualism) over ethno-religious association (collectivism) as the primary motivation behind their internalization of Pentecostalism. It is important to note that this does not mean Pentecostals are denying their ethnic culture or seeking to disassociate themselves from traditional ethno-religious institutions. In other words, Pentecostals experience their belief in heaven and hell, or "living in the last days," as

voluntary, individual choices rather than beliefs forced upon them by a particular institution. In turn, this individualistic view of faith reinforces the idea that personal agency is preserved and reasserted through NeoMestiza/o identification. Hence, Pentecostals are likely to view their motivation to proselytize to the "ends of the earth" as a voluntary choice and not an institutionalized mandate.

As already shown, today's Southtown Pentecostals are just as likely as Catholics be a product of childrearing (see Figure 9). Based solely on survey results, Catholics and Pentecostals are "born" at similar rates. Most strikingly, there is a higher number of respondents who reported converting to Pentecostalism before the age of twenty. Thus, the number of Pentecostals are growing not just as a product of "birth" but also conversion as well. Given the theology influencing Pentecostals to declare their faith to others and the low to no emphasis of conversion by Catholic institutions, individuals are most likely to make a conscious choice to identify as Pentecostal than Catholic while coming of age.

The rising religious identification of Pentecostals in SSD is clearly not a part of Catholicism in the traditional sense, but it does not mean they are associating themselves directly with the classic American denominationalism developed through Anglo-Germanic traditions prior to the twentieth century. Instead, their identification is rooted in experiences in both Christian colonial traditions expressed through independent, local churches or through individual Pentecostal experiences outside church walls. Many now have left the immigrant churches of their childhood and joined Americanized churches that are similar in style and creed, but where the pastor is white (55%). However, many of them are still tied to the immigrant experience through their parents and claim a binational identity as both Mexican and American.

All signs point to the growth of Pentecostalism or some evangelical strain in Chicana/o majority communities. Women are still the majority in this religious category and the growing number of leadership opportunities available to them in Pentecostal churches as volunteers, teachers, preachers, singers, and even pastors is likely to appeal to new converts. Furthermore, their religious fervor influences their childrearing much more strongly than other Catholics and the religious nones. Drawing from survey data, children of Pentecostals are more likely to stay Pentecostals then children of Catholics. If this pattern persists, future generations may witness a dominance of Pentecostals in SSD. In short, findings demonstrate the vast presence of Pentecostals in SSD and suggests that they represent to a lesser or greater degree the future majority of religious people in Chicano/a San Diego.

Given that most Pentecostals identify as part of this religious group before their twenties, a special focus on youth and culture is needed to begin to understand how Pentecostals is strengthened and reproduced beyond the congregation or church context. The next two chapters document and analyze intersecting historical moments in SSD where Pentecostal cultural production and cultural memory were generated for and by youth outside church walls. Their individual intentions may have differed but their collective efforts as Pentecostals had a broad religious influence in the culture and communities of San Diego and even beyond.

According to data from the PRC, strong Protestant identification in the U.S. has continued to grow since the 1990s (Lugo et al 2007). The next chapter documents the local music scene in SSD during the 1990s in order to highlight the new cultures and identities produced through a new mestizaje expressed as a subculture that is not only American, Mexican, and mostly Christian, but also exhibits global and secular characteristics as well. It discusses and analyzes the religious interventions and influences first generated by the live

shows and music of Payable on Death, the first and most popular Christian rock band to come out of the streets and not churches of SSD. The chapter after next documents the experiences of Pentecostals or former Pentecostals who participated in religious groups or events while attending local public high schools. It represents a recording of cultural memory and social bonds created during their social formation as youth. With the next two chapters, this study hopes to illustrate a more complex framing of contemporary Pentecostalism outside church models and, more importantly, documents indefinite religious change within Chicana/o history.

III. Rescue Those Led to the Slaughter

Blinded by ignorance, use some common sense
It's too close to the end to be walking on the fence
Rough so tough, God challenged my bluff "G"
I thank the Lord the day he snuffed a punk like me
— P.O.D., *Snuff the Punk*

Rescue those being led away to death;
hold back those staggering toward slaughter.
If you say, "But we knew nothing about this,"
does not he who weighs the heart perceive it?
Does not he who guards your life know it?
— Proverbs 24:11-12, New International Version

A cultural renaissance driven by youth, not free from religious influences, and centered on music and a multi-racial regional identity took root in South San Diego during the early 1990s. There has been no research discussing this social moment in "Southtown" history despite the volumes of research on the California border with Mexico.[63] Late 20th century innovations in music recording, like hi-fi magnetic tapes and Sony's Walkman, and new creative practices in sound recording, as sampling and scratching, inspired countless of

[63] This chapter is a culmination of research based on field work and cultural memory recorded through interviews between 2010 to 2016.

youth to create their own music by drawing on their resources and creativity. Youth began playing their own composed musical performances on their driveways, garages and backyards, and later at schools, churches, and coffee shops. These performances were usually free. Many times members would first meet at school or at church before becoming a band. Several ended up recording their own demos, EPs, and or full-length albums and very few got signed a deal with a recording label. Wearing t-shirts from local bands became popular and bands eventually offered a variety of merchandise, including pins, stickers, patches, shirts, tank tops, sweaters, hats, and beanies. By the end of the 1990s, numerous Christian music groups started up in the area and momentarily overshadowed the rest of the music scene in SSD. They made it a point to identify as "Christian" at their shows, in their music, and/or merchandise. Coincidently, megachurches and independent evangelical groups created spaces for the bands and their message, offering local youth with the biggest free shows of the year. Youth turned out in the hundreds and even thousands in some occasions. Many had never been inside a church before the music and, in large part because of it, experienced religion in an unconventional way.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a cultural narrative of religious assimilation by working class SSD youth during the 1990s. The chapter documents how local youth borrowed from society and produced new cultural practices and identities in order to enable a sense of belonging in a multi-racial environment. The chapter describes examples of music at the U.S.-Mexico border during the 1990s in order to shed light on the social sources of NeoMestizas/os youth, their cultural practices outside the congregational setting, and the musical impact of youth culture on NeoMestizas/os. I argue NeoMestizas/os are transforming the long history of mestizo/indigenous independence and resistance through innovations and disruptions in dominant culture and dominant religious formations in order

to expand notions of belonging across racial lines. The chapter sheds light on the influence of NeoMestizos at the border community of SSD and uncovers some of the social sources behind the cultural influences of NeoMestizos at the border and outside the congregational setting.

A. Framing Southtown youth

Most youth from Southtown are Mexican descent or have been influenced by Mexican culture by proxy. The youth at the center of this story combine personal interests, subcultures, and religion in their lives. As described in Chapter 1, they are a combination of evangelical, non-denominational, and Pentecostal. For the purposes of this chapter, "religious" youth are those who attend church regularly and *public* about their faith.

Unlike many Black evangelicals and most Rastafarians who give close attention to the Exodus story of Old Testament liturgy, the new possibilities for alternative expressions of faith and religious practices by NeoMestizas/os reflect a modern evangelical interpretation of the New Testament: an emphasis on Christology and the Holy Spirit (Smith 1998: 15; Graham 1978). On the one hand, Southtown's religious youth are Christian Smith's (1998: 123) version of *ordinary evangelicals* who "socially construct reality using the cultural tools of the very same tradition." They see or saw themselves as "born-again" Christians during their youth transition into adulthood. Not only did they regularly attend church but were also likely to be involved in church in some way at one point in their transition from youth to adulthood. On the other hand, these NeoMestizos are unlike Smith's "ordinary" evangelicals who he frames as "perhaps less intellectualized or entrepreneurial" when compared to evangelical elites (*ibid*). Instead, these youth should be viewed more like Smith's evangelical elites in the sense that they expressed an entrepreneurial spirit through cultural innovations. "Cultural innovations," according to MacLeod (1987: 150), "can be at

once both functional and dysfunctional for social reproduction." The religious youth of the 1990s grew up in an age where playing electric guitar, bass, and drums was normalized in church and showed no interest in religious traditions as catechism or Catholic mass. Technological advances in music aided their cultural innovations in order to speak to the new social relations formed by creative changes in cultural practices and identities. Their church services often included loud contemporary music, a live band, a drama or comedy skit, and relevant message that made them feel like they belonged. These Chicanas/os not only inhabited a modern religious identity but also transformed it in the process.

As mentioned in the first chapter, subcultures refer to youth cultures intended to distinguish individuals from their parents. Based on Hebdige's (1979) work, subcultures are interventions made in and opposition to dominant culture.[64] In the case of Chicana/o subcultures or identity(ies), they may not only be oppositional to dominant adult cultures but also reinterpretations of dominant (youth) cultures. The latter characteristic, "reinterpretation," signals a negotiation of terms for assimilation or acculturation to secularism as the driving basis for shared meaning in society and by youth regardless of religion or race.

A "religious" youth can simultaneously be in a subculture and belong to a movement(s) but, for the purposes of this study, the two concepts are analytically distinct. While social movements in this chapter describe adult/parent political identity, subcultures define a

[64] In discussing identity in general, there is no separation from personal growth and communal change nor can there be a separation of identity crisis in young individuals and contemporary crises in historical development because the two have, according to psychologist Erik Erikson (1968: 23), *psychosocial relativity* or define each other and are relative to one another. Subcultures are important psychologically as part of a youth's identity formation and provide spaces where youth can resolve their individual role crisis through cultural participation (Erikson 1968: 22). A role crisis occurs when individuals do not know where they fit in in the world around them and undergo a process of identity formation involving reflection and observation (Erickson 1968: 22).

subversion or alteration to parental culture(s) by youth while a movement describes a lifestyle choice reinforced by the prevailing system (identity politics) and is not necessarily oppositional (anti-systemic). While participation in both can happen simultaneously, segmented assimilation is helpful to explain the diverse paths within each and the impact each path may have on social class.[65] In other words, these youth have access to different "mainstream" groups in society depending where they live and work, which helps explain why some experience upward assimilation, others downward assimilation, and still others "selective acculturation" characterized by biculturalism.

Classic assimilation in the U.S. is no longer suited to interpret the reality of a multi-racial, multi-religious society where, as of now, secular market ideology is the ruling culture, *engaged religious consumerism*[66] is a real thing, and there ceases to be an end-state society characterized by Anglo-conformity. As for religious assimilation in the context of this research, it has a double meaning. First, I document ways in which NeoMestizos have assumed and produced their own popular culture productions/artifacts (as forms of meaningfully communication with a multi-racial urban audience). Second, I document how local youth culture changed with the involvement of Pentecostals who created new culture products for broader consumption. I argue the documentation sheds light on interpreting the

[65] From the segmented assimilation perspective, individual immigrants or groups may follow one of three paths: assimilation through social mobility; selective adaptation that produces a form of biculturalism; or, segmented assimilation to the underclass culture (Portes and Zhou 1993).

[66] According to Christian Smith (2005: 176), people are independent "spiritual consumers" with the free choice to "pick and choose in the religious market whatever products they may find satisfying or fulfilling at the moment." Eileen Luhr (2009: 200) describes "engaged Christian consumerism" as "devout Protestant believers' desire to witness God's message to suburbia in its own idiom."

intensifying complex process of mestizaje and an assimilation to a broader multi-racial context by means of religion and culture.

The lives and religious engagements by SSD youth emphasize the fluidity, tensions, and heterogeneity that characterize Chicana/o communities as increasingly racial and religious intersecting secularization. This chapter begins with a historical context that is both about the political economy and dominant culture leading up to the last decade of last century. Attention is then placed on documenting the local history of youth culture with an emphasis on leisure practices, religious identity, and globalization in the backyard of America's border. Brief histories of local music groups are recorded for the first time anywhere in order to archive the last decade of analog history of south San Diego's music scene by youth. Afterward, the early history and music lyrics by one key local music group is analyzed to gain insight on how religious youth innovated their faith by crossing new borders.

B. White Rebellion in a Post-Civil Rights Era

Mainstream evangelicals are more or less most commonly regarded by the public as socially or politically conservative. Much of this association has to do with the popularization of the neoconservative movement between the 1970s and 1980s, which included tens of millions of evangelicals.[67] A neoliberal agenda was adopted by the government, which had popular approval by the neoconservative movement, during the same time period and its effects still loom heavy over our insipid global economy. Neoliberalism is designed to protect the economic privileges and "cultural heritage" underpinned by a pre-civil rights political system (Omi and Winant 1994: 120). Its

[67] This movement is neoconservative in a religious or cultural sense all the while it is best described as neoliberal in terms of its economic philosophy.

associations to the neoconservative movement is to a lesser or greater degree a reaction to the social struggles and legal gains made by women and people of color during the 1950s and 1960s (Omi and Winant 1994: 114-115). Initially, the evangelical movement's elites were drawn from a religious context and much of the early popular rhetoric appealed to a Puritan-sense of morality (Diamond 1990, 1998). Political conservatives resist or dismiss the equitable institutionalization of identity politics for racialized "others" while simultaneously upholding the market interests founded on white identity politics (Lipsitz 1998).

By the late 1970s, the neoconservative movement achieved a popular status endorsing "color-blind" policies in a political system designed to privilege individual rights within white racial groupings (Omi and Winant 1994: 128-129; Lipsitz 1998, 2011).[68] Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority, a Christian Right organization from the south, was critical to the election of Ronald Reagan to the presidency. Through President Reagan's charismatic leadership during the 1980s, the economic interest of a minority group (neoliberals) were rapidly legitimated as part of movement identity and framed as the ideological solution to ongoing economic crisis (Omi and Winant 1994: 135). Reagan was also extremely popular with what was called the Christian "New Right" (Diamond 1990). Pat Robertson capitalized on the growing influence of evangelicals in politics when he founded the Christian Coalition of America in 1989 soon after losing the Republican nomination for president. The New Right's popular base were mostly white middle and working-class people who were ironically negatively impacted by neoliberalism and globalization in the 1980s and 1990s

[68] These political conservatives, in the words of Antony W. Alumkal (2004: 197), "affirmed the principle of racial equality, but reinterpreted (or 'rearticulated') it to mean the establishment of 'color-blind' policies by government and [...] an emphasis on individual rights."

(Bluestone and Harrison 1982, 1988, 1994). By the mid-1990s, neoliberalism became an everyday reality for nearly the entire planet, as the hegemonic project migrated from the "third world" (Chile, where it was first imposed under authoritarian means based on Pinochet's repressive methods) to the first world (Harvey 2005; Klein 2007). Even still, evangelical organizations and networks continued to be integral to the rise of white neoliberal leadership in the nation's highest elected and non-elected positions through their participation in the neoconservative movement (Kaplan 2004; Smith 2001).

i. Racial-Religious Social sources of the baby boomer rebellion[69]

In *Roads to Dominion* (1995), Sara Diamond traces the religious sources of the modern neoconservative movement to the period between the 1940s and 1960s when evangelicals began to culturally engage secular society. Evangelicals, during this period, were actively denouncing what they saw as a liberal apostasy coming from mainline denominations. Diamond (1995: 58) writes, "When Senator Joseph McCarthy and his allies went on their witch hunts for secret communist agents inside the United States, the National Association of Evangelicals encouraged government agents to snag liberal clergy in their net."

During the 1940s to 1960s, white evangelicals managed to secure a national audience through purchasing of and transmitting on radio airwaves. They established the National Religious Broadcasters Association, "which successfully lobbied Congress for a change in the regulations governing TV and radio" (Diamond 1998: 58). Among U.S. Pentecostals, Pat Robertson is especially worth noting. Robertson founded the Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) in 1961, which aired his television program *700 Club* to hundreds of thousands of American homes. The *700 Club* gained massive popularity with the American

[69] Born between the mid 1940s and mid 1960s, the Baby boomers are the offspring of a post-World War II America.

television audience and the network expanded internationally over the next decades. This period marked the new evangelical break away from earlier Fundamentalists who discouraged their brethren from getting involved in worldly affairs. Furthermore, it defined a historical moment when evangelicals became part of the American mainstream while continuing to strongly identify as religious conservatives.

By the 1970s, evangelicals were operating under a new social context: the so-called *Secular City* had now become mainstream (Cox 1965).[70] Historically disenfranchised groups--particularly women, youth, queer people, and people of color--were operating with greater individual freedoms that tested the limits of conventional social identities. For instance, the Chicana/o Movement focused on advancing rights for workers and students alike, among other institutional issues, in the face of police brutality and systemic repression. School prayers were now outlawed, women and queer people gained new civil rights protections, abortion was made legal, public institutions underwent racial desegregation, and immigration reform opened the nation to Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Liberalism was at an all time high and it was reflected in a national youth culture normalizing drug use, premarital sex, and rock and roll music. American democracy had given birth to a new nation and California Governor Ronald Reagan (1967-1974) epitomized the conservative attack on social movements, like the freedom of speech movement aimed at fighting political censorship, at the time. Through television, radio, and newspapers,

[70] Harvey Cox's main argument in *The Secular City* is that the decline of institutional religion should not be viewed as a catastrophe because the "church" is not rooted institutions but in people. In short, "God is just as present in the secular as in the religious realms of life [...] not an original idea but one that needs to be restated time and again." (1965: xliii). the church is primarily a people of faith and action, rather than an institution. He argued that "God is just as present in the secular as the religious realms of life".

religious conservatives (who were mostly white) were constantly reminded of their new status as a religious "minority" in the context of popular culture.

ii. Generation X reinvents popular rebellion[71]

Under increasing pressures to conform to increasingly growing conservative mainstream, youth angst and suburban discontent spawned a punk subculture in southern California.[72] Los Angeles was the first epicenter of punk bands and many Chicana/o youth gravitated toward the punk subculture for it's do-it-yourself (DIY) sensibilities that overlapped with the practice of *rasquache*, or "making do" with limited resources (Hernandez et al. 2004: 164). "Chicano punk rock emerged from the mestizaje consciousness in its community of origin" (Lipsitz 1994: 86). Some of the earliest Chicano punk groups from Southern California included The Brat, Los Illegals, The Undertakers, The Plugs, and The Bags. These bands have been largely overlooked compared to white punk bands from Los Angeles as well as San Francisco and New York City (Habell-Pallan 2005).

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[71] Born between the mid 1960s and late 1970s, Generation X is sometimes referred to as America's neglected "middle child" because it is "the demographic bridge between the predominantly white Baby Boomers and more racially and ethnically diverse millennials" (Taylor and Gao 2014). Xers also stand between the baby boomers and millennials in terms of technological access and fluency.

[72] Punk, musically derived from Black culture, was first part of the bohemian art movement and its reaction "against the perceived blandness of 1970s music and the relative dearth of a live music scene in Los Angeles" (Waksman 2004: 680). Psychedelic and experimental rock influenced the sound of the American punk scene (Grossman 1997: 30). Rock and Roll became popular in the 1950s, having origins in gospel, blues, country, folk, and the electric guitar (Frith 1981). At first it was considered dangerous by conservatives and Christian fundamentalists and a genuine expression by liberal individuals. Rock and Roll was initially quite transgressive, but then it became over-commercialized and co-opted as a result of record companies and artist groups who treated rock culture as a capitalist business. In the 1970s, rock became commodified and lampooned in some circles, opening up space for alternative musical genres such as disco, ska, hip-hop, and punk.

Punk represented the democratization of rock without the glam and commercialization. Punks rebelled against white-collar institutions by wearing ripped jeans, black leather, and assembling cultural icons (safety pins) as wearable decor (Grossman 1997: 20; Hebdige, 1979). As subculture, punk offered a variety of social and political critiques as a negotiation with cultural hegemony.[73] "The punk rock espousal of anarchy, contradiction, and rebellion as a cry for social, political, and cultural revolutions was not entirely alien to some [...] influenced directly by the Chicano movement" (Tatum 2001: 40). The punk subculture gave Chicana/o youth a window into white suburban angst and a sound that tied them more intimately to their white counterparts.

Undoubtedly, baby boomer worries about the future generation intensified. Evangelicals perceived this as the threat to conservative values and, for them, threatened the fate of the nation. Given the new decline of mainline Protestant denominationalism post-1960s, evangelicals were now more willing to invest in their own cultural activism in response to the "threat" of American liberalism among youth and rampant in the dominant culture.

In the 1980s, conservative evangelicals became a mainstream group and powerful voting bloc. They vigorously opposed liberal politics and backed candidates who strongly identified with a "Christian" worldview. Former California Republican Governor Ronald Reagan is credited with increasing the political capital of evangelicals during his successful bid for president. At the National Affairs Briefing in Dallas, Reagan stood before 15,000 evangelicals and said, "I know you can't endorse me. But I endorse you, and what you are doing." His televised speech received an overwhelming positive response by the white

[73] However, it still reflected a cultural consensus on the use of drugs and alcohol. "While punks critiqued the macho culture of misogyny and violence, they sometimes repeated these tendencies" (Grossman 1997: 25). Within the "punk movement," some also expressed racist attitudes and other exclusionary practices. As with all "movements," this one was quite diverse and included numerous strains (e.g. radical, progressive, liberal, conservative).

evangelical community, who were extremely concerned that the country had changed too much since the 1960s (Harding 2000: 77). Many evangelicals, including Pat Robertson and Jerry Farwell, who were former Democrats or politically unengaged, forged a stronger political alliance with the Republican Party after Reagan's speech.

Under Reagan, the United States became increasingly neo-liberalized. Neo-liberalism stresses government deregulation of markets and capital, privatization, attacks on unions, and "free" trade policies that have the effect of perpetuating and multiplying various forms of interlocking oppression (Robinson 2004; Harvey 2005; Day 2005;).[74] In his 1983 speech to the National Association of Evangelicals, Reagan rallied support for his pro-capitalist policies by emphasizing the threat of an "evil empire" seeking to undermine the strength of the American economy. He conflated religious conservatism with his neoliberal doctrine and asked evangelicals "to resist the attempts of those [read "communists"] who would have you withhold your support for our efforts, this administration's efforts, to keep America strong and free." Reagan and his allies framed the neoliberal economic order as both a preventative and reactive solution to "freedom from fear" and "freedom from want" issues (Grayson 2010: 507). Moving forward, neoliberal policies were framed as progress in America and mainstream Christianity began to more aggressively engage cultural markets at the consumer level (e.g. Luhr 2009).[75]

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[74] Reagan pushed for U.S. intervention in Latin America and elsewhere in order to allegedly undermine the Soviet Union (Robinson 1996). Ironically, his policies increased migration from Central America in the 1980s. While seen as the only solution for the world's economic crisis in the early 1980s, neoliberalism exacerbated economic inequality, misery, and injustice. But it did benefit the very wealthy—the veritable 1% (Harvey 2005).

[75] Globalization was extended under Bush Sr. and Clinton presidencies. This project includes "the ongoing globalization of capital, as well as the intensification of the societies of control; it also relies upon and perpetuates shifts in the organization of the system of states, through regional agreements such as the North American Free Trade Agreement

iii. The Descrambling of Racial and Religious Rebellion

Meanwhile, the popularity of punk music spread into suburban life and became a commercial sound on radio and television as "new wave" punk. Punk quickly started becoming popular as record companies began to commodify its sound and fashion. Even Christians in Texas and the South began ascribing to the punk DIY ethos and started their own punk rock bands (Luhr 2009). Rock bands like the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, and Led Zeppelin were mainstream by this point, and punks despised fame even more (Grossman 1997: 21). Unlike evangelical crusaders like Billy Graham, punk bands avoided large stadium concerts and preferred playing in small venues. Through the punk scene (which could be quite radical and hostile to organized religion), Christians ironically found a new stage to advance a conservative platform (Luhr 2009). However, many youth in the scene desired to maintain a distinct style from mass society as the mainstream absorption of punk music and fashion intensified. "Many punks argued that punk was losing its distinctive set of values as other cultures were incorporated" (Grossman 1997: 25). Punk youth were at a crossroads between abandoning the subculture altogether or transforming what it means to be "punk."

For youth in southern California, commercial punk signaled the power of a capitalist economy and conservative politics under the Reagan Revolution of the 1980s. This decade "saw the realization of a conservative populism that reflected values of disaffected working-class and lower-middle-class whites, who […] trumpeted a return to traditional values such as patriarchy, patriotism, law and order, hard work, and self-help" (Avila 2004: 49). Youth

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(NAFTA), and the construction of superstates such as the European Union" (Day 2005: 6). Neoliberalism is "linked with many other forms of oppression that affect women, ethnic minorities (sometimes majorities), indigenous peoples, peasants, the unemployed, workers in the informal sector, legal and illegal immigrants, ghetto subclasses, gays and lesbians, children and the young" (Robinson and Santos 2014: 37).

needed a more intense sound to effectively express their raging discontent and observable urban decay under Reagan's presidency. In response, the hardcore-punk movement emerged as the most significant subcultural development among white youth during the 1980s (Grossman 1997: 19). "American Hardcore" (HC) was a response to the insulation of early punk identity (music and fashion) in the mainstream just as much as it was political protest. HC became the anthem of white suburban and middle-class youth who had grown bored and tired with the monotony of suburban lifestyles and wanted to stir up trouble and rage. By absorbing certain elements of punk while insulating others, cultural and entertainment industries maintained relevance among mass youth populations in America's suburbs where punk gained most of its original popularity. In response, HC "became coarser, faster, and in many ways more uniform than the styles favored by the earlier bands" (Waksman: 682).

HC represented a reaction to the commodification behind the meaning of punk. "Some of them were alienated or abused, and found escape in the hard-edged music. Some sought a better world or a tearing down of the status quo, and were angry" (Blush: 9). "Straight-edge" (no alcohol or drugs) and social change became two driving mantras. Coping with anger became more important than simply expressing it. Personal interaction and affective emotional ties on the ground became important as a means to preserve the authenticity of their social network (Grossman 1997: 32). HC made it a point to clash with mainstream society and generated a national youth culture that resisted a homogenous society.[76]

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[76] It is important to note that the emergence of punk and HC would not have been possible without the mass consumption of magnet tapes ("cassette") and compact players. Compact Cassettes TM did not gain the mass appeal of vinyl records until the late 1970s and quickly replaced the eight-track cartridge as the preferred music deck for automobiles. In 1979, Sony changed the way people listened to music when they released the Walkman in U.S. consumer markets. The hi-fidelity sound in compact cassettes improved over time, going

Concurrently, Reagan epitomized the resurgence of conservative politics in the mainstream and a hope for evangelicals of a forthcoming or return of Christian America. "However, once in office Reagan gave only *pro forma* support to specific conservative Christian initiatives, and by the end of his second term it became clear that the [evangelical conservatives] represented a junior partner in the Reagan coalition" (Clarke 2006: 406). In response, Pentecostal televangelist Pat Robertson ran for president in 1988, but he lost to Vice-President George H.W. Bush. It is striking to note that evangelical Christians backed Robertson over Bush, an Episcopalian (mainline Protestant) who was seen as "weak" on social and foreign policy issues.

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through multiple enhancements. By the mid-1980s, cassettes had gained mass appeal. The demand for compact cassettes of popular music had grown dramatically over the course of a decade, and major record labels like Columbia and Atlantic were not the only one's cashing on the tens of millions of cassettes being sold every year. Retail chains like Tower Records and the Warehouse were making major profits through tape sales. Blank cassette tapes, the bread-and-butter of TDK and Maxwell, made up fifteen percent of total tape sales in 1981 (Billboard 1981).

Tape recorders made music production and reproduction incredibly easy for a society that never before had the means to do so mass produce copies of music recordings. By the late 1970s, garage bands began to thrive all over the United States and they were recording themselves at home or during a live show. All of a sudden, blank tapes and tape recorders allowed upper-middle-class music enthusiasts to start-up independent "cassette" record labels without the high-cost associated with or need for vinyl production. As a result, fans could now listen to their favorite local outfits anytime on tape. With the age of consumer culture getting younger, the era of "cassette subcultures" was inevitably born. The consumer music culture had indeed changed: the cassette had reached mass consumer appeal.

The mass distribution of cassettes and mass ownership of tape players made it easier for subcultures to thrive beyond their original locale. Take, for example, Bad Brains, an all-black, iconic HC band formed in Washington D.C. in the late 1970s. At this point, HC was strictly a suburban subculture strung up by white punk rockers. In 1981, Bad Brains recorded their first album with ROIR, a punk label based in New York City dealing only in cassettes. The band and their ROIR cassette began to generate plenty of interest in the New England HC scene. The raw sound of the ROIR cassette generated much attention and Ric Ocasek from The Cars soon after produced Bad Brain's first LP, Rock for Light, in 1982 under Jem – Ocasek's startup record company. Even though Band Brains was one of the first HC bands to record an album outside the cassette subculture, it was cassettes that helped make them and the HC subculture a national and international sensation.

Recognizing the limits of their influence in national affairs, many conservatives began to stress a need to intervene more aggressively in state and local politics, and in culture more generally. The increased integration of conservative evangelicals in the political process at the time continued to parallel the increased integration of Christian consumerism in suburbs and boomburbs alike (Luhr 2009: 195). Suburban and middle-class whites benefited most from Reagan's new economy and white evangelicals now had more disposable income they could use for cultural activism and as consumers. By placing less emphasis on changing national policy, evangelicals achieved significant ground promoting their views and values nationwide through local school boards and city councils (Clarke 2006: 407). At the same time, Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) became increasingly important for evangelicals as a cultural product reflecting conservative values and cultural activism through the music industry.

iv. Introducing Hip Hop and Gatekeeper

While punk rock emerged as an cultural revolt against the conservative political culture of America's white suburbs, hip hop culture emerged as resistance to a historically racialized economy and modern culture industry affected by white flight and urban poverty.[77] Hip hop culture first appeared in South Bronx as part of a popular movement in Black communities in the late 1970s (Chang 2007). Breakdance, graffiti art, electronic beats, turntables, and Masters of Ceremonies (MCs) became the hallmarks of hip hop culture. While hip hop revived urban youth culture in a time of economic impoverishment, conservative whites were busy blaming a "culture of poverty" among people of color as the

[77] "White flight" refers to major trend by middle-class whites who left major cities and relocated to new or developing suburbs (Wacquant and Wilson 1989).

reason for gross urban poverty.[78] Even so, the subculture quickly became popular among urban youth of all color in California at the same time whites began to trade urban life for a suburban lifestyle (Avila 2004: 49). California inner-city youth expressed cultural innovation in their own way, particularly by emphasizing vocal delivery on top of dance and electronic beats.[79] The Electrobeat Crew, L.A. Dream Team, Knights of the Turntable, Uncle Jamms Army, and RC & Synerster Rhyme were among the first recorded rap groups in Southern California.

During this time the hip hop music scene in Chicano San Diego almost exclusively revolved around local DJs and freestyle dancers. In the midst of gangs and police brutality, hip hop quickly became a cultural common ground for many Black and Brown youth in Southern California. Youth organized multi-racial dance crews like The Diego Girls, Forever Ever Fresh Girls.[80] Chicano/a youth would freestyle dance at quinceñeras, schools, house parties, and public fundraisers.[81] The Street Strutters, from SSD, were the first

[78] The "culture of poverty" theory presumes that Mexican and African-American cultural values are incompatible with Protestant culture and a capitalist economy. In order to obtain social mobility, brown and black people would have to forfeit their parent's culture and become more like white Protestants – "Americanized." Tragically, there are many contemporary pundits and defenders of the culture of poverty thesis who reify the bogus yet powerful idea of an essential cultural hierarchy whereby Chicana/o and black culture are considered foreign *and*, ultimately, inferior to white European culture in the U.S. The effect of this theory is a rhetorical justification of racial and ethnic discrimination based on the superiority of white culture.

[79] California youth were still heavily influenced by early hip hop pioneers and it was evidenced in their electronic beats, dancing, and fashion.

[80] Graffiti was also associated with the mid-1980s scene, with the Aerosolphychotics crew being among the most remembered.

[81] "Breakdance crews old school 1983 – Wildstyle, S.D. Floor Masters Breakers" <https://youtu.be/ReI-V3xughA>

televised B Boy crew in San Diego in 1984 when they appeared on public charity telethon.[82] All these live performances, clothes and fashion, rap crews and even punk bands undoubtedly inspired the next generation of youth to respond similarly.

By the 1990s, neoliberal economics became an integral part of the design and implementation of national security policies and punitive policing at ports of entry and Mexican border.[83] Under neoliberalism, militarizing borders to prevent or regulate the flow humans became a necessary logical next step for the government to ensure free trade and free flows of transnational capital. It is no coincidence then soon after the U.S. Congress barely approved NAFTA, the Clinton administration enacted Operation Gatekeeper in San Diego in 1994, the very same year that the Zapatista National Liberation Front (EZLN), which opposed neo-liberal policies, emerged in Southern Mexico. The federal government poured tens of millions of dollars in adding thousands of personnel, hundreds of patrol units, stadium lighting, military-grade weapons and equipment, and three layers of fencing between Tijuana and SSD. In essence, Operation Gatekeeper was the first militarized attempt by neoliberal political leadership to regulate immigration at the border at the same time leadership pushed a deregulated transnational economy. It had profound effects on

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[82] "Breakdance crews – Street Strutters – San Diego Breakers" <https://youtu.be/bUm2V_fUT_A>

[83] Under a neoliberal project, post-industrial economies need a state with national border enforcement strategy to stabilize trade with geographic neighbors by adopting fiscal and monetary policies that can provide the necessary infrastructure, through direct coercion and an ideological apparatus, to unnaturally augment the value of transnational capital between borders. The success of a national policy and industrial-complex of this magnitude depends on the effective suppression of human migration induced by NAFTA. A similar argument concerning the northern border with Canada is made by Kyle Grayson's "Human security, neoliberalism and corporate social responsibility" (2010). Tragically for neoliberal proponents, there has not been one neoliberal policy put forth on border security that has been capable of addressing the "problem" of human migration.

everyday life in San Diego and communities in the borderlands (Nevins 2002).[84] Now, more than ever, a line was drawn that created a sharp imaginary distinction between those in Mexico and SSD. It reinforced a new regional Chicana/o identity that was neither Mexican or fully integrated into the host society of San Diego proper. People without proper documentation had to choose which side to live on without the option to move back and forth. Thus, policy-making in the small elite realm of macroeconomics shaped the understanding and expected functions of the imagined boundary with Mexico under the guise of national (in)security which, in turn, had real-life effects on the daily life and imagined community at the border.[85]

Though national neoliberal policies were creating dramatic global change, many conservatives overplayed moral issues to frame collective action against cultural liberalism. In 1996, GOP Presidential contender Pat Buchanan got on the Republican Convention stage in San Diego and issued a challenge to the party.[86] Throughout his campaign he stressed the economy and dealing with corporate greed related to declining wages of the mostly white working-class. Trailing behind Republican frontrunner Senator (Kansas) Bob Dole and in desperate need to rally last-minute support by delegates, Buchanan stressed the need to

[84] In less than a decade, neoliberalism had overcome structural constraints and had an impact on the cultural logic in so far as it internalized itself within the conduct of individual border agents and civilians alike as a type of "common sense" behind the new militarized order (Hoogvelt 1997: 124; Gill 2002; Grayson 2012: 506).

[85] The dominant understanding of border (in)security was shaped by economic principles, most notably neoliberalism's assault on human movement, and undemocratically imposed on border communities.

[86] Buchanan challenged Bush Sr. for the Republican presidential nomination in 1992. His most ardent supporters were Christian evangelical conservatives. Buchanan was President Nixon's speech-writer in the early 1970s and is well known for his extreme anti-immigrant views, articulated in the *The Death of the West* (2001).

make anti-abortion a top characteristic of presidential nominees. Undoubtedly, the conservative, evangelical crowd applauded Buchanan.[87]

About the same time local band Payable on Death (P.O.D.) traveled to perform at TOMfest, a music festival promoting underground Christian rock, indie, punk, ska, hardcore, and metal bands in Stevenson, Washington. Near the end of their set, guitarist Marcos Curiel said, "This is for Rock for Life"[88] and began to slowly play his rifts for the song "Murder."[89] Singer Paul "Sonny" Sandoval grabbed his mic and said, "Always back up and support what is right. I encourage you fellow believers … as believers you must fight. Stand up." With drums beating, bass and guitar at full volume, band members start chanting "Abortion is murder" over and over and over again.[90] The young crowd chants along while others continue on in the mosh pit as the music rages on.[91]

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[87] While conservative voters might have been influenced by the "Buchanan Challenge" in 1996, their candidate did not win the nomination. In 1996, nearly ten candidates ran for president on the Republican ticket and Buchanan, along with Steve Forbes, won some early primary contests. However, Dole, who had ran for president in 1980 and 1988, had a powerful financial base which enabled him to successfully fend off all challengers. President Clinton handily defeated Dole in November 1996, earning a second term.

[88] Rock for Life is a culturally active evangelical organization that, according to their website, promotes "Human rights for all people, born and preborn, by engaging the culture through music, education and action. We believe that each and every human being is a person from his or her biological beginning."

[89] According to Luhr (2009: 137), "When it came to addressing social issues in songs, Christian metal bands most often focused on abortion […] During the 1980s and 1990s, several bands wrote at least one song that addressed abortion."

[90] The song "Murder" is the last track from "Snuff the Punk" (1994), their first debut album with Rescue Records. Rescue re-released the album in 1999 and turned the last track into a "hidden" track. The song has only one other line that is also repeated multiple times throughout the length of the song, "There's nothing you can say or do to justify the fact that there's a living creature inside of you."

[91] An energetic full-body contact dance done near the music stage typically done during hard rock, punk, hardcore, and metal shows.

Pat Buchanan and P.O.D. could not be anymore different when it comes to their backgrounds. Buchanan is a Washington D.C. native and admirer of Confederate history. Members of P.O.D. are native sons to SSD who come from immigrant parents. Buchanan's family had a century-long history in conservative, southern politics before he became White House Communications Director under Reagan. P.O.D. comes from working families in construction, landscaping, and administration. Buchanan was from an affluent community with politicians, lawyers, and doctors as relatives. P.O.D. grew up working class and attended public school. The differences are stark. However, what is most striking about both is not just their shared view on abortion but they're inspired will, through stage performances, to compel others to adopt this position and advocate against abortion. This is the cultural power of new evangelical identity in the 1990s. Like the punk subculture, evangelicals used a language of rebellion to describe the fight against the prevailing cultural mood (Luhr 2009: 23). Both, over the course of a few decades, consistently turned the idea of "rebellion" on its head and, in the 1990s, a powerful cultural intersection between both evangelicals and rebellious youth took place in SSD that, as a result of globalization, influences transcultural and transnational religious identity through P.O.D.'s later music.

C. Music from America's Most Wanted Corner

Banding together in the mid 1980s, *Vicious Beat Posse* (VBP) was the first rap group in San Diego to get signed by a major record label. VBP, made up of African American young men, was signed by MCA in 1988. Previously, MCA had signed white classic rock artists as Lynyrd Skynard, Neil Diamond, and Tom Petty and Black artists as Jimi Hendrix, B.B. King, and Bobby Brown. Their first and only album, *Legalized Dope,* was released in 1989 by MCA. Song track titles include "Party Trooper," "I'm 'Bout Fed Up To Here," "Money

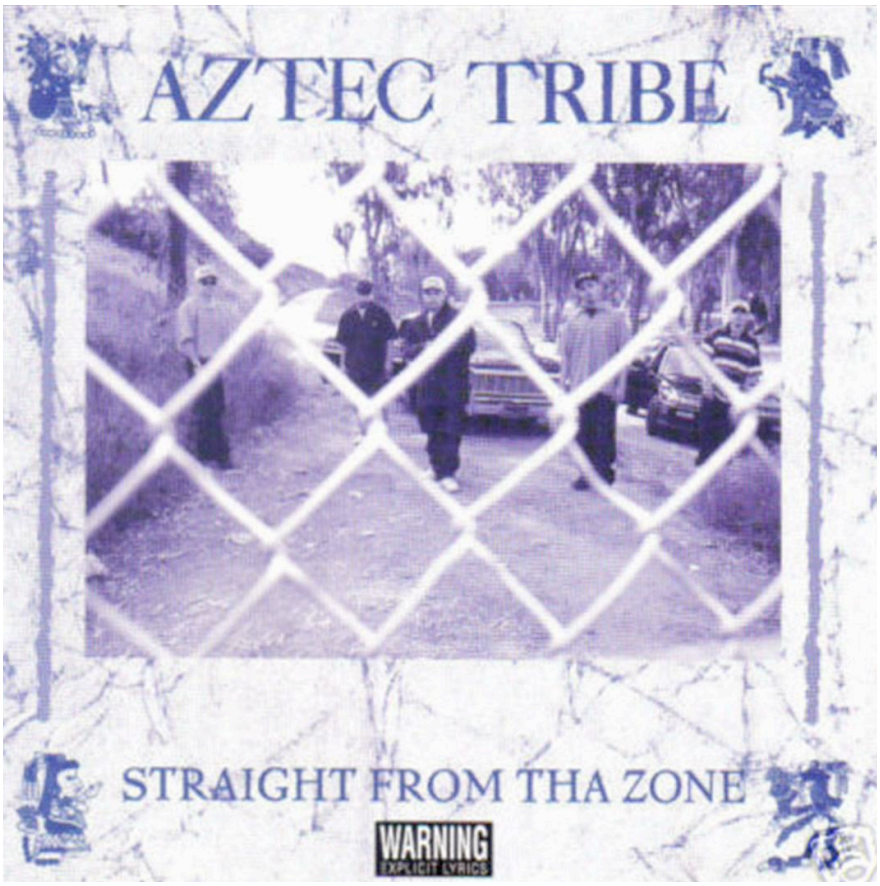
'90," "Mass Confusion," and "WOP (Women Of Power)." Their songs reflected a culture affected by urban poverty and mass incarceration. For example, VBP's "Legalized Dope" was an implicit response to Reagan's 1986 "War on Drugs," which expanded and scaled the prison-industrial complex nationwide. Their rap lyrics, like those of California rap groups at the time, reflected a fight for self-dignity in the wake of growing violence, mass incarceration, and the dismantling of the welfare state in America's inner-cities. Although VBP is not from SSD, they were the first national rap sensation that originated from the urban streets of San Diego but surely not the last group to rise to fame.

i. Chicano rap, Diego style

A year after VBP's MCA release, five friends form Logan Heights (Shade, Clown, Rude Dog, Spanish Fly, and Sendo) banded together and formed Aztec Tribe. The following year, in 1991, they independently recorded *Straight From Tha Zone*.[92] Several tracks on the album include, "Diego Town," "Everybody Bounce," "Rollin'In My Ride," "Something For The Homies," and "Commin' In Stalkin'." According to lyrics in "Diego Town," Aztec Tribes proudly rap "From San Ysidro to San Clemente, we wrote this song for all the gente." They were the first group of color to introduce San Diego city pride in recorded music and set the trend for music groups to come, especially in the Chicano rap genre. As the first recorded rap group in Chicano San Diego, Aztec Tribe influenced youth with the early sound and themes of Chicano rap and hip hop. Soon after, more homegrown rap music would take off in South San Diego.

[92] The Compton-based hip hop band, N.W.A., released their similarly titled album, *Straight Outta Compton*, in 1988.

Figure 10. Aztec Tribe's Straight From Tha Zone (1991) was the first recorded rap album from Chicano San Diego.



Formed by twin brothers, Shocker and Freestyle, and friend E Roc in the early 1990s, Without a Warning (WAW) was the first Chicano gangster rap group from SSD.[93] They only recorded an EP, *The House Is Smoking* (1993). Songs included "No Escape" and "So. San Diego 619." Their funky homemade beats and rap tunes made them a local favorite at house parties, which in those days represented the main stage for local music performances given local youth were in a historically disenfranchised community with very limited means

[93] Schocker is now locked up in the penitentiary. At the age of 40, Freestyle is now a dedicated Christian and started 3 Tha Hardway, a new rap group from SSD.

to relate to mainstream society through consumer identities and disposable incomes.[94] Even so, groups like Aztec Tribe and WAW socially constructed a shared identity based on their hometown, San Diego ("619" or "Diego"), as a symbol of brown pride and youth belonging. Early rap music from Chicano San Diego signaled the emergence of a new kind of local or regional-based multi-racial Chicano/a identity.

A few years after WAW, three Filipino relatives and an African American friend banded together as *The Legion of Doom* (LOD). Considered the first rap group from San Ysidro, LOD's raps were sung over homemade rap beats and samples taken from Black music. Their first live sets included songs like "This Is Diego," "Masterpiece," and "'N the Casa." LOD were one first of SSD to emphasize solidarity through difference as a cultural product in the 1990s. For example, in "Nobodies Identical," LOD highlights California as the state that "knows how to party" while simultaneously emphasizing that no two youth are identical and each person is different in their own way. LOD independently recorded and released their self-titled cassette album in 1998.[95] The album includes house party favorites "Let It Play" and "This is Diego."

LOD sampled the beats from Grand Master Flash's "The Message" and a sound bite from Eddie Murphy's "Raw" stand-up show for their song "N The Casa." Sampling is when someone takes an existing recorded sound or noise, usually from others, and slices it into a new music track. Unfortunately, sampling unintentionally created the new problem of

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[94] Given that the most important value behind youth cultural consumption is the ability to relate to others, youth thrived off of relationships beyond the family and school. Hence, SSD youth depended on private homes to access leisure opportunities to relate to one another at a cultural level.

[95] LOD thank "The Lord God" in their album insert but they did not preach in their performances. Above all, locals remember hearing LOD's fun music and positive vibes at live shows at house parties.

copyright infringements. For example, N.W.A. allegedly sued LOD in the 1990s. LOD did not sample NWA but they had a rap lyric, "Coming straight from Sydro," which was a local favorite. The verse was too similar to N.W.A.'s "Coming straight outta Compton" and the controversial band threatened LOD with legal action.[96] LOD made a slight adjustment to the verse in their recorded album and avoided the lawsuit.

For most of popular recorded music history, sampling was reserved for major recording studios and artists given the technology was expensive and rare. However, magnetic tapes changed the industry and sampling practices by the 1980s. Magnetic tapes, or cassettes, have relatively high audio quality and, unlike a vinyl press, can be manipulated.

By the mid 1980s, sampling technology like the "6 Bit Sampler S-1000" became increasingly common due to its growing affordability. Music producers, disc jockeys (DJs), and music artists turned sampling into a popular practice because now they could sample "loops" from other people's music to play on their tracks with greater ease.

Sampling allowed local groups to do what hip hop pioneers were already doing a decade prior. The creative practice of sampling enabled working class youth in SDD to incorporate technology and consume popular sound bites in order create new forms of music and sounds off of what was already familiar or popular by their peers. LOD, Aztec Tribe, and other rap groups incorporated the art of sampling in order to produce popular music.

[96] Interview, Anonymous. 2016.

Figure 11. Legion of Doom's self-titled cassette album was one of the first rap groups in South San Diego, from San Ysidro circa 1998.



ii. Border punk rebellion ensues

Gangster rap was popular in the 1990s but it was not the only music that motivated and influenced local youth. This was a time when punk, metal, and grunge albums were beginning to be circulated and consumed by SSD youth. Electronic instruments (guitars, bass, etc.) and PA systems made overseas also made it more affordable for youth and their parents to purchase on limited incomes. This social context inspired four friends from Chula Vista to form Chicken Farm, the first Chicano punk band from SSD in 1989.[97] Their name

[97] Chicken Farm had four members: Joaquin Hernandez on the drums, Tizoc Hernandez and Ubaldo Salvador on guitar, Jason Weedon on bass, and Frontman Alberto Jurado.

drew off of contradictions rooted in their experience between neighbors who raised their own chickens against the backdrop of a nearby chicken farm industry. Chicken Farm would open for Green Day in San Diego and released a four song 12" vinyl record in 1991. They were the first youth band from SSD to perform outside of Southern California, including shows in Oakland, Oregon, Washington, and Tijuana.[98]

Since the 1980s, San Diego had been home to one of the best punk and hardcore scenes around as far as locals are concerned. Unlike the rest of the nation, punk and rap groups would often perform at house parties or public school events. For instance, Chicano punk band Liberated Youth played often at backyard parties in SSD with local rap groups.

Liberated Youth was the first punk band at the border from San Ysidro. The band's name reflected a form of "oppositional consciousness," described by cultural theorist Chela Sandoval (1991: 88-89), "as a method of analysis and liberatory *praxis*." They were against President George H.W. Bush's extension of Reagan drug and prison policies. For them, forming a band and creating music represented a source for liberation from a political system that largely excluded dissenting young voices. Their performances not only signified resistance to oppressive systems but also animated emancipatory *praxis* under conditions of oppression (Sandoval 2001: 82-83). Although they never recorded an album, the historical memory of Liberated Youth is in-itself a cultural product of archetypal punk at the grassroots level. They reflect the oppositional culture that so many Chicano/a youth gravitate to in the age of limited rights in America. Liberated Youth is still remembered as a local favorite.

During the early 1990s, hardcore punk and hip hop were still very marginal subcultures rarely consumed by mainstream America. In addition, both subcultures rarely overlapped

[98] After disbanding before the new century, some members of Chicken Farm started other

on and off stage in most of the country. However, it was not rare for punk bands and rap groups in SSD to share networks, friends, and venues. Even so, the two subcultures remained distinct from one another up until 1991 when three high school friends from SSD decided to start a garage band. Marcos Curiel, a son of immigrant parents from Mexico and fan of Carlos Santana, played guitar. Gabriel Portillo, a Chicano, played the bass while Noah "Wuv" Bernardo Jr., a son of Filipino-Samoan parents, was on drums. Their musical sound had an eclectic set of influences that included reggae, hip hop, punk rock, and hardcore punk, and artists as Bob Marley, Carlos Santana, N.W.A., The Police, Bad Brains, and AC/DC. Hardcore had been crossed with the sounds and lyrical themes of reggae a decade prior by D.C.-based Bad Brains, but no one had ever blended the sounds of hip hop with punk rock. This would be a first and it made sense that it would happen at a time and place like a Chicana/o majority boomburb like SSD where both hip hop and punk rock were popular among the youth at the time. However, the band of friends still needed a singer.

The band invited Paul "Sonny" Sandoval, Wuv's cousin, to be the singer/screamer of the band. Sonny's mother had recently lost a battle with cancer and he was coping with his mother's death. As he coped, he was drawn to his mother's incredible faith in Christ as a source for healing and comfort. He was made to feel better believing that his mother was in Heaven and, by receiving Christ in his life, he would see her again.[99] Sonny accepted the band's invitation. As a fan of rap, Sonny began to write lyrics over the band's hardcore

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music groups not necessarily playing punk.

[99] Sonny wrote "Full Color," a song about his mother's death and new faith in Christ. Sonny starts the songs with a powerful scream, asking "I cry why O' why did my mommy have to die?" In the middle of the song he raps, "If I could take your place, I would, I would take your pain. Just to see you smile and say my name, Just to hear you laugh and hear you cry." Expressing his deep desire to see his mother again, he says "If Jesus saved your life, could he do it for me? I'll lay down my life for you and for Him. Believe God's promise, I'm gonna see you again." This song expresses in depth through song the driver of Sonny's new faith: seeing his mother again.

sound. He could not help but have his new faith influence his writing and thinking. Portillo left the band soon after and was replaced by Traa Daniels, an African-American guitarist, who had just moved to SSD from the Midwest. The band innovated a new sound that has been referred to as "rapcore," a generic name for a style of music that crosses hardcore punk sounds and screams with the rap and turntable elements of hip hop. The band quickly found their sound in 1992 and named themselves Payable On Death (P.O.D.) to signify the world's salvation through Christ's sacrifice on the cross.

Chicano San Diego is home to a long roster of talented music groups, musicians, and music artists. Just north of the border and south of America's finest downtown, a new cultural renaissance revolving around music was happening between the 1980s and 1990s. Aztec Tribe, Chicken Farm, Liberated Youth, Legion of Doom, Payable On Death, and Without A Warning started a few months or years apart from each other. There were many more who would follow after these first groups but among them P.O.D. were the only to became a transnational sensation post-1990s.[100]

iii. Rescue the youth

P.O.D. was considered both punk and hip hop. At a local punk rock show in 1992, P.O.D. and Chicken Farm were opening acts for the popular punk band Green Day.[101] In the beginning, P.O.D. mostly played home shows, garage shows, and backyard shows. Then they started playing at local high schools during lunch and after school events with Chicken Farm and Liberated Youth. They also began to play at evangelical events or music concerts

[100] P.O.D. released their highest grossing album, *Satellite*, on September 11, 2001 with Atlantic Records. Over a million copies were sold in the first three weeks. The popular messages embodied by this album are discussed at the end of this chapter.

[101] Green Day is the highest grossing "punk" band in the world. While some classify the group as "punk," others do not based on their commercial success and other factors.

organized by church groups throughout San Diego County. Naturally, their musical influences extended beyond the music of Chicano San Diego. Lead singer Sonny Sandoval, in an interview at the Aftershock Festival, explains these early influences:

> I like bands I relate to […] when I started getting into hardcore and punk there were bands like Suicidal Tendencies and Bad Brains. I was more into hip hop and reggae music when I was a young teen. And once I saw that guys of color can do what I thought was white music, it opened up a whole new world. You know what I mean? I thought punk and all that stuff was Sex Pistols from the UK and Mohawks. You know. And once you saw that these guys from the hood were singing and had this angst, I could relate. And that opened up to other bands I could check out. And the straight-edge movement. Dude, there's this whole other scene out there. And then again, none of those guys were rock stars. None of those guys were considered successful as far as selling millions of records. They just did it because that was their life.[102]

P.O.D.'s first sounds were definitely hardcore punk with a bit of hip hop and reggae. Their lyrical content was shaped by more than the style of the music they listened to as youth. Reggae and their evangelical, charismatic faith deeply influenced their lyrical message. Every now and then at live shows Sonny would say something about his faith but, for the most part, P.O.D. focused on playing high-energetic music for disaffected youth. In the beginning, there were no religious overtones in their shows beyond their public identity as Christians and lyrical content. Eventually, P.O.D. became known for much more than their distinct mix of rap and hardcore punk and were later recognized for the religious themes in their music.

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[102] Interview by Cayem at the Aftershock Festival (September 14, 2013)

Unlike Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) bands, P.O.D. did not see themselves as a Christian band playing for church-going youth. Instead, they claimed to be "Christians," or new Charismatic evangelicals, who so happen to play in a band together. For all intents and purposes, P.O.D. was a non-traditional Christian band in the secular music scene. As a result, it was difficult for them to be taken seriously. No matter how hard they tried the first three years, P.O.D. was rejected by the industry. This included major Contemporary Christian, punk, hardcore, and mainstream record labels.

By 1994, P.O.D. had a multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-religious fan base known as the "warriors." P.O.D. called their fans "warriors," short for *jah warriors*. *Jah* means "God" in Rastafarian. It is the most popular word in reggae music and for P.O.D. "*Jah* is everything and without *Jah* nothing."[103] The "mighty warriors" of biblical times who battled against those who opposed the people of God (1 Samuel; 1 Chronicles) inspired P.O.D. to call their fans the "warriors." The warriors largely reflected an inclusive, multi-racial identity supporting P.O.D.'s musical and spiritual message. They were later credited for much of P.O.D.'s fame at the turn of the century.

With the warriors on their side, P.O.D. took the next step and sought a record deal. Unfortunately, major labels were unimpressed. Christian labels questioned the sincerity of their faith or did not think P.O.D.'s music would sell.[104] Even major record labels were not interested. P.O.D. was "too hard" or not Christian "enough" for Christian labels while simultaneously seen as "too Christian" by mainstream corporate labels. They were also denied by punk labels, perhaps for being too Christian which, according to critics, is not at

[103] Payable on Death and H.R. from Bad Brains (2001), "Without Jah, Nothin'," *Satellite* (Atlantic Records).

[104] A number of fundamentalists and even evangelicals saw P.O.D. as a symbol of blasphemy or playing the "Devil's music."

all punk and less alone hardcore. Record companies rejected P.O.D. and ignored their growing warrior fan base.

Upset by the lack of recognition of the band's talent, Wuv's father Noah Bernardo started his own record label. After being "strung out" on drugs and "tired of life," Bernardo gave his life to Christ in his early twenties.[105] Now, he was inspired to tell others about Jesus Christ. Bernardo wanted youth to "come to a personal knowledge of Jesus Christ," but he also had a social message for young people.[106] He was interested in rescuing youth from self-destruction, neglect, or abuse. Now a husband and father, Bernardo wanted to save others from the trauma, violence, and addiction he experienced as a youth. He could relate to youth and Bernardo saw an opportunity with P.O.D.'s rejection by major industry labels. "I wanted to protect them from getting ripped off," said Bernardo. In 1994, Bernardo founded Rescue Records in Chula Vista (SSD).

Rescue Records was built on the belief that it was the duty of true Christians to rescue youth from false beliefs, near mental illness or suicide. Bernardo was adamant about the labels tagline and mission statement, a biblical proverb: Rescue those being led away to death; hold back those staggering toward slaughter (24:11). This scripture was printed on every album and press release distributed by Rescue. Bernardo even partnered with his home church, who ran a 24-hour telephone hotline to help youth in crisis. Rescue printed the hotline (1-800-HIT-HOME) inside every album insert as part of their mission to rescue anyone who would listen to the music from suffering, turmoil, or suicidal thoughts inflicting their lives. P.O.D. felt the same way as Rescue, naturally, and were the first band signed by

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[105] Bernardo shares his story, available to the public, on the last track ("Invitation") of *Exodus Tour* (2000), a compilation CD by Rescue Records now available online.

[106] Ibid.

Bernardo's Rescue Records. Local punk, hardcore, hip hop, and rap groups would soon sign thereafter. With nearly four dozen albums with over sixty artists and three sub-record labels, Rescue Records defied industry odds during the 1990s. After the decade was over, sales fell as their distributor began to experience poor distribution and advertisement of Rescue's music. Rescue officially closed its doors in 2003, but not before selling over a million copies of P.O.D.'s first three albums and helping the band reach MTV fame and top Billboard charts.

D. Punk's Rap Birth of the NeoMestizo

Over television, CNN was the first to televise live wars during the 1991 Gulf War (Klein 2010: 420).[107] Wars in Bosnia and Kosovo occurred several couple years later. San Diego County became involved in these conflicts because it is home to millions of military personnel and bases. Increased militarized activities along the border and in San Diego grew overall in the 1990s, even in the wake of Clinton's defunding and shutting down of dozens of domestic military bases. Growing up in the 1990s it was normal to be at school in SSD during lunch or recess and see, just past school fences, zigging military helicopters, cruising police cars, and border patrol agents drive by in ATVs while students played soccer or ate their lunch.[108] Thus, while the nation was at war overseas, another war was going on in the streets; for SSD youth, violence was ubiquitous and unrelenting. Scriptures foretold a time when there would be "signs" of an impending judgment of everyone, including wars

[107] Youth all over the country watched the "shock and awe," or spectacles of war, being broadcasted over their home television sets (Klein 2010: 416-17).

[108] Witnessing arrests by Border Patrol agents who targeted Mexican immigrants and/or Chicanas/os running away from them in search of freedom were frequent spectacles on the streets and backyards while growing up in San Ysidro in the 1990s.

and rumors of war, and, for P.O.D. and many SSD youth, the 1990s fit the bill. Under this situation, it is not difficult to imagine how some youth at the U.S.-Mexico border might have rationalized that what was taking place around them signaled the unfolding of biblical prophecy concerning the "last days." The end felt as if it was near.

For Pentecostals, the "Last Days" is not a time to hide or be quiet. Rather, Pentecostals believe that in the last days God, the Creator, will pour his Spirit "upon on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophecy. Your young will see visions" as a final rally behind God's will for the world (Acts 2:17). In the "last days," Pentecostals believe they have an active role to play in this biblical drama and have a responsibility to evangelize to "the ends of the earth" (Anderson 2013: 62). Believing they do not know or understand the political system entirely, cultural interventions felt like the most effective strategy against the hidden enemy of working-class Pentecostal youth. P.O.D. sincerely believed that they were making a difference in people's lives with their music and message. The stakes were high and there was no time to lose.

P.O.D. released *Snuff the Punk* with Rescue in 1994.[109] The original album cover art showed a supernatural armored figure holding a gun to the devil's head. Rescue advertised the album in press as "Hardcore with a hip-hop appeal to it." Inspired by the sounds of hip hop, rap, and reggae in the tune of hardcore punk, *Snuff the Punk* unleashed a new sound that crossed cultural boundaries, both racial and religious, not crossed prior. They combined the subversive music of punk with hip hop themes and a Christian message and turned it into a distributable and reproducible cultural product in the form of compact disc (CD) and cassette. Now with an album ready for distribution, P.O.D. was able to envision themselves

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[109] "Punk" is used in the title to indicate a chump, or "Talkin' 'bout the devil and his crew." ("Snuff the Punk," music track)

in people's homes, ears, and social circles without having to rely exclusively on their performances or merchandise to get the word (of God) out about P.O.D. to new and diverse audiences.

Figure 12. P.O.D.'s *Snuff the Punk* (1994), Front CD cover art.

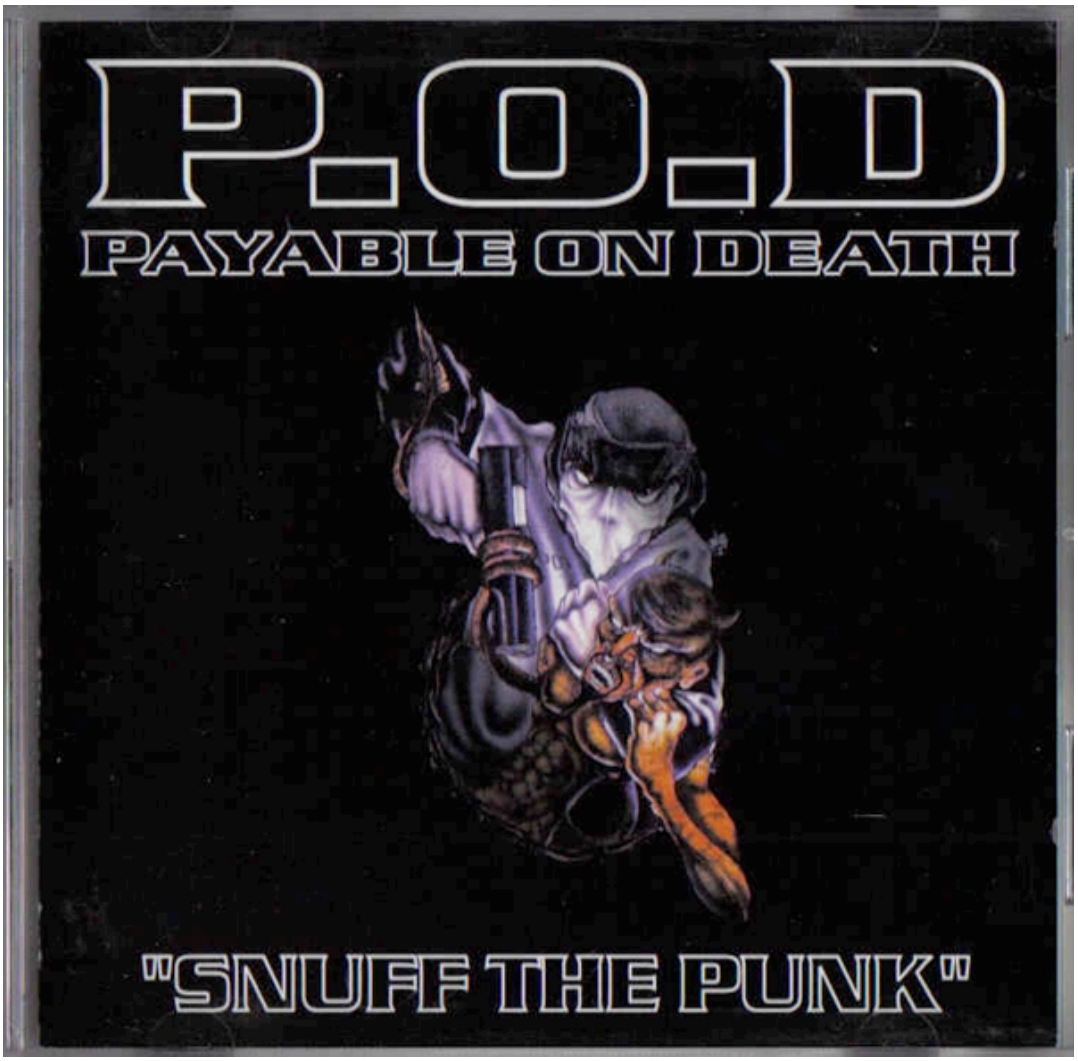


Figure 13. P.O.D.'s *Snuff the Punk* (1994), Back CD cover art.



Every song on the album is ripe for lyrical analysis related to faith, conflict, and growing up in SSD. Given space considerations, it is most meaningful to highlight two songs from *Snuff the Punk*. The first highlights P.O.D.'s Pentecostal roots while the second song emphasizes their racial project as a band of brown friends.[110] The first song is "He's coming back," which P.O.D. selected as their first track on the album. The track begins with a deep

[110] *A racial project is simultaneously an interpretation, representation, or explanation of racial dynamics, and an effort to reorganize and redistribute resources along particular racial lines*. Racial projects connect what race *means* in a particular discursive practice and the ways in which both social structures and everyday experiences are racially *organized* (Omi and Winant 1994: 56).

bass line as Sonny begins to scream, “He's coming back! He's coming back for me. And you!” Sonny is clearly referring to Jesus Christ and with these words P.O.D. quickly position themselves as Pentecostal Christians playing HC music.[111] The second song begins with these lines:

I'm just a loc'd out brother
Com'n straight from S.D.
Just another islander, beaner, wop, minority
Taught to love one another, all races
All types of colors, different skin, different faces
Can you answer my question, when I ask you who is right?
Racists come in all forms of colors black or white
So take that when I say your hatred sucks!
Coming from the H-I-T man, so what's up?
If you ain't down with my white brother we ain't down with you
And if you ain't down with my clack brother then we ain't down with you

One must notice race in order to oppose racism (Omi and Winant 1994: 156). These lyrics are from “Who is right?” It is a punk song with anti-racist lyrics promoting multi-racial friendships as the micro-racial project advanced by P.O.D. in the 1990s. It was their response to “race” riots and police intimidation in Los Angeles specifically. In the song they lyrically imagined an inclusive society where race was acknowledged without being the basis for exclusion. Contrary to the neoliberal ideological project, ignoring the problem of race does nothing to combat racism and P.O.D. wanted “all races” to enjoy their music.

Punk, punk talking that trash
White trash, black trash, you get a back to back slap
You think I'm soft, the you don't know me
Cause no I don't play that and we're definitely not your homie
He'll take your pride for a long ride, try and hide
You hate my outside, how bout my inside
It's just me and my boys and we'll hit 'em up
Yeah, come on ya'll, get 'em up
One for peace, two for love and three for my G-O-D

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[111] The song is about Jesus Christ’s second coming, emphasizing the idea to listeners that the 1990s represent the “last days” before the “end of times.”

In an era of a dominant neoliberal project that forces us to think of individuals as the basic unit of society, popular culture, theology, and public curriculum propagates images and narratives to youth/students as full members of a post-racial society living in racial harmony (Omi and Winant 1994: 148; Garner 2015: 48). The neoliberal project frames access and opportunities to education, work, and technology as equitable to all races in a society based on individual rights and free markets (Harvey 2005). During this period, many white conservatives conflated a common American identity with Christianity.[112] Mainstream evangelical leaders communicated a faith in American democratic ideals, national identity, and free enterprise as subtlety part of Christ's solution to the nation's racial problem (Alumkal 2004: 202).[113] P.O.D. contested this idea in their song. "Racists come in all forms of colors black or white." They recognized racism as an ideology instead of a racialized body. In this way they were able to contest exclusions at their shows based on

[112] Racial reconciliation by evangelical groups emerged in tandem with neoconservative racial projects where discursive "coding" was used to conceal "white resentment of blacks and other minorities" (Alumkal 2004: 200).[112] The early advocates of racial reconciliation theology in the 1960s and 1970s, according to Alumkal (2004: 199), "were clearly critical of those who had declared victory in the war against racial discrimination, arguing instead that there was much work to be done to improve the lives of black."

Evangelical racial reconciliation theology first emerged in the late 1960s (e.g. Skinner 1970; Salley and Behm 1970; Perkins 1982). "Man's reconciliation to God through Jesus Christ is clearly at the heart of the gospel. But we must also be reconciled to each other. Reconciliation across racial, cultural, and economic barriers is not an optional aspect of the gospel" (Perkins 1982: 54). The early version of evangelical racial reconciliation movement represented a "distinct radical democratic project" that "believed the civil rights movement had accomplished its aims and those black nationalists that advocated racial separatism" (Alumkal 2004: 200). "The mainstream evangelical racial project," Alumkal (2004: 202) writes, "like the neoconservative project, affirms the early goals of the civil rights movement."

[113] For Alumkal (2004: 203-204), this new racial "reconciliation" project was the result of a complex process of rearticulating neoconservative and related center-right projects into an evangelical form. Alumkal (2004) credits Black and white evangelical leaders, more so than rank-and-file members, with the successful absorption of racial reconciliation as a culturally hegemonic discourse. Theological discourse on race, then, is clearly dominated by a cultural hegemony that privileges the neoliberal project.

race, including racism against people from the dominant culture (white) from sharing equally in the space created by P.O.D.[114]

> If you ain't down with my Black brothers then we ain't down with you
> Punk, punk talking that trash
> White trash, black trash, you get a back to back slap[115]

In "Who Is Right?" P.O.D. protest racism with culturally relevant rhythm and rhyme. For P.O.D. and so many Neomestizas/os, to be Christian is to be anti-racist even though dominant evangelical Christianity is not anti-racist (Alumkal 2004). P.O.D. believes a better way of social living—life politics—exists and hatred against whites for unconsciously exercising supremacist ideology is not the answer.[116] As expressed in the song "Who Is Right?" racism must not only be acknowledged but also fought against. For P.O.D., cultivating affinity across racial and cultural lines is critically important in their artistic form of activism. In the end of the song, the band promotes peace founded on a belief in a God who sees everyone the same and loves them equally.

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[114] In the context of anti-racism, P.O.D. scream out over ten different types of racial identities in the song and encourage listeners to be open minded about multi-racial spaces and people of color in groups. In short, NeoMestizos like P.O.D. want individual's to see each other in the same way we desire to be seen. According to Chela Sandoval (2001: 133), "the location of simultaneous 'understanding' and 'complicity' represents a necessary standpoint for ensuring survival and social evolution as enacted through the technologies of the methodology (2001: 133). It is difficult for P.O.D. to abide by narrow definitions of color-blind ideology based in the everyday world they live in, including the hardcore and religious spaces they participate in. While a spiritual life guided by religious hegemony may appear necessary or celebrated by the band, a color-blind outlook does not make sense to them in terms of believing everything is fair or just in this world. In such a context, P.O.D. are simultaneously anti-hegemonic and evangelical in their anti-racism.

[115] P.O.D. suggest they are willing to defend themselves through violence against those individuals who would act on their racism against someone, like the band, who is anti-racist. Let it be clear, the band does not promote violence against other people but they do assert self-defense as a strategy of survival in many of their songs.

[116] Members of P.O.D. have witnessed racism in their own lives and treated differently due to their heritage and racialized background.

One for peace, two for love and three for my G-O-D
Yeah, come on ya'll, get 'em up
Get your hands up

Snuff the Punk helped spread the word about P.O.D. in the hardcore punk and Christian underground subcultures. They began to tour the country promoting their album. They played in small venues, in churches and bars, and slowly developed a following of warriors nationwide. In the first few years they sold over 25,000 copies, mostly at shows. They tried to leverage their growing following to secure a major record deal but still no one in the industry was interested.

E. The Evangelical heat wave hits home

In the mid-1990s, Southern California had a great deal of evangelical organizations attempting to stir up a revival like the one in Azusa earlier in the century. There were multiple mass crusades held at stadiums, sports arenas, and civic centers throughout the region. Churches from SSD worked together, many for the first time, to bring friends and family to the events. Some of these events had youth night or were solely focused on youth. In Southern California, more artists and musicians were banding together to form Christian music groups for evangelical purposes. At the same time, Billboard began recognizing CCM as an independent genre, which quickly became the fastest growing segment of the music industry during the decade. It was during this religious heat wave that P.O.D. released their second album with Rescue all the while hard rock began to become normalized by evangelical culture.

As previously mentioned, the evangelical movement was already shifting from national politics to cultural engagement at the local and regional level. Harvest Crusade (OCHC), a large-scale evangelistic outreach started in Orange County by Greg Laurie of Calvary

Chapel, first came to San Diego in 1991. Like Orange County's suburban consumerism, OCHC's cultural message emphasized its roots in the 1960s counterculture, buttressed conservative values by producing its own consumer culture, and temporarily reclaimed public spaces for Christ (Luhr 2009: 177). In 1992, OCHC returned to San Diego and held its evangelical event at the Convention Center.[117] There were 25,000 people in attendance and, according to OCHC, one thousand people made decisions that night to become evangelicals. The following year OCHC held its event in Jack Murphy Stadium, later renamed Qualcomm Stadium by its new owners (the San Diego Chargers and Padres both played at the Murph for years). After, OCHC put a call out to all churches in the county to evangelize San Diego more aggressively. OCHC began to offer resources and staff to organize churches and denominations throughout the county to increase attendance at their events. Between 1994 and 1996, OCHC had over 200,000 San Diegans attend their annual event at Jack Murphy Stadium and inspired over 18,000 individuals to make a decision to become Christians. OCHC continued to organize events throughout the U.S. but did not return to San Diego until 1999 where 4,514 new decisions were made.[118]

In the mid 1990s, former San Diego Charger Miles McPherson began organizing youth crusades in the U.S. and Canada. After leaving the football field, McPherson joined the pastoral staff at Horizon Christian Fellowship in San Diego in 1986. From there he assimilated to evangelical culture and began to evangelize at youth events throughout the country. He then founded the Miles Ahead Crusade (MAC) with the mission to evangelize youth through a contemporary message and large-scale crusades held in non-religious venues. He was the first African-American evangelist to receive the support of local white

[117] Harvest Crusade Archives <http://www.harvest.org/crusades/events/archives.html>.

[118] OCHC has not returned to San Diego since.

conservatives in his efforts to evangelize youth through cutting edge music, humorous stories, and dynamic events.[119]

McPherson held his first MAC event, "Destination...Miles Ahead," at the San Diego Sports Arena in May of 1996. Admissions was free. Then Chargers place-kicker John Carney also spoke at the event. In an interview before the event, Carney said, "If I can help a teenager make the right decision by an experience I had in my life, I'm willing to help" (Kernan 1996: D-2). Like OCHC, MAC avoided aspects of organized religion that alienated young people (Luhr 2009: 178). Mainstream Christian rock and rap groups, including The Kry, Christian MC, Kenny Smith, Dynamic Twins, and Katina Boys, performed at the two-night event. Their music appealed to middle class and working class youth alike.

McPherson's conservative message cautioned youth about risky behaviors like drug-use and premarital sex while simultaneously emphasizing the joy and hope found in Jesus. He called on youth to rebel against mainstream, liberal culture. At the end of his talk, McPherson invited the youth-filled sports arena to dedicate themselves to Christ-like life. A free devotional book written by McPherson was distributed to every youth who made a decision to follow Christ at the event. Tens of thousands of youth were in attendance. Over a thousand youth throughout San Diego made a decision to become Christian at the event. MAC continued for two more years in San Diego before venturing into other parts of the country and overseas.

In October 1997, Noah Bernardo and Rescue Records organized the Exodus Tour at Qualcomm Stadium. Like MAC, the Exodus Tour was a large-scale evangelical outreach

[119] Local and national (white) evangelical leaders spoke highly of McPherson to the media during the 1990s. For example, Rev. Mickey Stonier, an assistant pastor at Horizon, said McPherson is "a man of integrity and a man of his word" while Matt Hammett, the high-school pastor at College Avenue Baptist Church in San Diego, said "Through the music that

geared toward youth. However, Bernardo's approach was entirely different. The event felt like a music festival, featuring over a dozen "Christian-oriented" bands that included P.O.D. and other artists signed with Rescue. The event was held during the day and also featured an extreme sports exhibition, including professional BMX and skateboarders, that lasted for hours. There were numerous Christian clothing brands at the event as well, promoting evangelicalism through fashion. There was also a graffiti exhibition where local artists worked on large murals while attendees looked on. More than 16,000 people attended the event.

The Exodus Tour, Harvest Crusade, and Miles Ahead Crusade were three pivotal large-scale evangelical events that helped spur on a religious revival in SSD among youth the same decade SSD become a majority-minority boomburb. It was during this time that P.O.D. began to make headway in local venues and outside Southtown.

P.O.D. released *Brown*, their sophomore album through Rescue in October of 1996. The album sold out almost immediately. B.R.O.W.N. is an acronym for Believe, Receive, Obtain, Withstand, and Never die. It is the epitome of their "mestizo consciousness" because it connotes racial signification that mobilizes religious ways of knowing in order to produce a new way of being, or belonging, in the world. These six words are the only words in "B.R.O.W.N.," a four-minute song with raging guitar distortions, beating drums, and electrified bass. For P.O.D., *brown* as a word and acronym describing a process of religious assimilation and coming of age in a racialized America. First, an individual must "believe" in the name of Jesus Christ. Then "receive" the power of the Holy Spirit. After this, one

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will be there, through Miles' message, I think the kids are going to see that God is very much relevant in the 1990s" (Dolbee 1996: E-1).

"obtains" the gift of salvation and the power of grace to "withstand" the evils of the world for a lifetime. Doing so, the individual is promised to "never die."[120]

Figure 14. P.O.D.'s Brown (1996), Front CD cover art



[120] Jesus promises to give his disciples power though the Holy Spirit: "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you (John 14:16-17)." Members of P.O.D. and all of their Christian fans believe in the Holy Spirit, the Advocate of their lives and identity as Christians. Despite the changes in theological discourse and cultural practices over the last century, the Pentecostal Message still retains some foundational ideas that will likely never disappear from the epistemological worldview of the movement.

Having been converted in Pentecostal settings, band members recognize the Holy Spirit as an integral part of their faith, identity, and music. In addition, P.O.D. cannot help but recognize the inescapable impact of being "brown" in America. Instead of retreating to a prominent color-blind ideology within American evangelical culture, they label and advertise their multi-racial experience in Chicano San Diego under the heterogeneity described by "brown" and turn it into a consumer product.[121]

Brown was released at the moment Christian-oriented music was becoming part of popular consumption by American youth. The Christian Music Trade Association (CMTA) was established three years prior in 1993 by high-level executives from four major record companies. According to their website, their association had the purpose "to maximize Christian/Gospel music's impact on culture."[122] The next year the Christian and gospel music industry made $390 million in sales and $481 million in 1995 (McCollum 1996). Consumption of Christian music was growing and several Christian radio stations began to replace their talk radio programs with music shows. By 1996, the Christian music industry broke $500 million in annual sales. Meanwhile Christian bookstores accounted for 64 percent of gross sales, while mainstream retailers increased their share of sales to 21 percent (Billboard 1996). Four years later, by 2000, 47% of Christian consumer products were sold

[121] According to Chela Sandoval, "the location of simultaneous 'understanding' and 'complicity' represents a necessary standpoint for ensuring survival and social evolution as enacted through the technologies of the methodology (2001: 133). It is difficult for P.O.D. to abide by narrow definitions of color-blind ideology because of the everyday world they live in at the border. While a spiritual life guided by religious hegemony may appear necessary or celebrated by the band, a color-blind outlook does not make sense to them in terms of believing everything is fair or just. In such a context, P.O.D. is both anti-hegemonic *and* evangelical by being anti-racist. As a collective, they are deploying a "differential consciousness" when they act against racism by being anti-racist and religious.

[122] The four major record companies included Universal (Capitol Christian Music Group), Warner Music Group (Word Entertainment), Sony Music (Provident Music Group), and Day

in non-religious retail stores (Luhr 2009: 193). That year, the Christian culture industry "produced $4 billion in sales of books, videos, music, and other items" and music made up nearly one-fifth of all sales (ibid). It appears that the CMTA proved to be a success, at least in terms of revenue, and Christian culture was now a readily available consumer identity at national scale.

Figure 15. P.O.D.'s Brown (1996), CD insert panel



Christian Distribution. Critics of CMTA suggest that the organization and industry "exists ultimately to serve profit motive, not religious faith" (Marini 2003:318).

Given the growing popularity of *Brown* in both the underground music scene and by Christian consumers, Atlantic Records approached P.O.D. in 1997 with talks of a possible record deal. P.O.D. was interested but Atlantic was hesitant to engage in the Christian music industry. To convince Atlantic of their fan base and popularity, P.O.D. released a five-song E.P. with Tooth & Nail Records. The album was a major underground hit and, after months of negotiations, Atlantic signed P.O.D. in 1998. Released in August of 1999, *The Fundamental Elements of Southtown* became P.O.D.'s first major album with Atlantic. In less than six months the album went gold after 500,000 copies were sold. The record went platinum the following year after selling over a million copies and pacing in 51st place on the Billboard 200 charts in 2000. P.O.D. was featured on MTV, the Howard Stern show, and began touring as part of the Ozzfest. P.O.D. had gone from an obscure band playing backyard shows in SSD to, seven years later, featured on cable television shows and sharing the national stage with major metal bands like Black Sabbath, System of a Down, and Godsmack. All the while P.O.D. continued to see their music as evangelism and newfound fame as a God-given opportunity to share the message of Christ, which they saw as a "love story." P.O.D. toured around the world, performing in hundreds of secular stages for tens of thousands of of youth in every city they traveled to. They not only made an impression on the international rock scene, but also influenced the next generation of global Pentecostal youth culture.

Back in SSD, NeoMestizo youth began to form new music groups and became culturally engaged with their peers. Many in town had already known or seen P.O.D. perform but even more, especially the younger ones, became aware of Christian hard rock for the first time through P.O.D.'s newfound fame. Some of these youth are profiled in the next chapter. For example, Joshua was first introduced to CCM while at home as a young boy but later,

around the age of twelve, was introduced to Christian rock through bands like MXPX and P.O.D. In an interview, Joshua described the music as new and "cutting-edge." He said, "It was different than what we were use to as Christian music. It opened my eyes more to see that Christian music doesn't all have to be the same." The music and sound by P.O.D. was culturally relevant for Southtown youth and, according to Joshua, this style of Christian music had a part to play on how his views on faith and cultural diversity slowly started changing.

In the late 1990s and inspired by local bands as P.O.D., church or high school friends began play together in garages and perform in backyard shows, church events, schools, and coffee shops. Other youth began designing gear and apparel with a Christian message. Still others began to organize themselves into social groups or clubs at school. They were all inspired by the music and their faith. One youth during this time period said, "In San Diego we were spoiled. We had some of the best Christian alternative music. And it helped that we knew some of the people, got close to some of the people, so it influenced me, in a way, to see them as cool, as normal. They're not these big shots. They're not these bad people. You know what I mean? We knew what churches they were going to. It made Christianity normal in different ways." The cultural renaissance of the early 1990s had turned into a religious revival among youth who began to rearticulate subcultures through a religious lens. Local Christian bands and artists like Third Root, Dirt of the Shadow of the Locust, Noise Ratchet, and Fortified Youth emerged as local favorites. Meanwhile, P.O.D. was busy touring and working on their next major release with Atlantic Records.

F. Southtown's favorite color is brown

Southtown youth borrowed from society and produced new cultural practices and identities now integral to American life. As documented in this chapter, religious youth participated in subcultures and innovated their faith incredibly. They then recorded cultural artifacts as testimonies of their creativity and entrepreneurial spirit within subcultures and social movement. Among them, P.O.D. was the first and most popular.

The punk subculture gave Chicana/o youth a window into white suburban angst and a sound that tied them more intimately to their white counterparts. Unlike evangelical desires to reach the masses, punk venues were small and not fragmented by religious schisms. This created a greater level of intimacy and contact between youth from culturally diverse backgrounds. While evangelical movement sought to be part of the mainstream, the punk subculture believed it best thrived underground. When aspects of punk culture became mainstream, white youth during the 1980s responded with HC punk. At first, HC became the anthem of white suburban and middle-class youth of boomtowns. The fast, coarse sounds in the music provided youth with a distinct style and identity apart from the masses of music consumers. Though they made it a point to clash with mainstream society, HC participants sought authenticity through personal interaction and affective emotional ties on the ground. Overseas manufacturing of electronic guitars and bass, and PA systems made it more affordable for youth and their parents to purchase on limited incomes. For Liberated Youth and Chicken Farm, forming a band and creating music amplified their dissenting voices and protest against exclusionary social practices all the while embracing aspects of social exclusion in typical punk fashion during the 1990s. They accomplished this by making the "outsider" status their own as a collective and not just as a set of individuals.

A decade before, youth emphasized vocal delivery over dance and electronic beats in what had emerged as hip hop culture. As demonstrated by the Street Strutters dance crew, hip hop quickly proved to become a cultural common ground for many Black and Brown youth in Southern California. Given that technology was expensive and rare, or most of popular recorded music history, sampling was reserved for major recording studios and artists. However, magnetic tapes and sampling practices changed the music industry by the 1980s. The creative practice of sampling enabled working class youth in SDD to incorporate technology and consume popular sound bites in order create new forms of music and sounds off of what was already familiar or popular by their peers. Albums were recorded and distributed locally at an accelerated speed without much involvement from record labels. Chicano San Diego soon after became home to a long roster of talented music groups, musicians, and music artists. Aztec Tribe, Chicken Farm, Liberated Youth, Legion of Doom, Payable On Death, and Without A Warning were among the first.

Just north of the border and south of San Diego, a new cultural renaissance revolving around music was happening between the 1980s and 1990s. Through the need for self-validation and existence, youth in Chicano San Diego constructed a social identity based on their "zone" or region adjacent to the border. It came to be known by multiple names, including Diego Town, South San Diego, and the 619. Local music groups reinforced this social construct as a symbol of Brown existence and belonging. It reflected a regional-based multi-racial identity deeply impacted and shaped by the overwhelmingly large presence of Chicanas/os in SSD. Homegrown music expressed their solidarity through difference in Brown, which was further culturally consolidated through P.O.D.'s sophomore album with Rescue Records.

The punk and hip hop subcultures rarely overlapped on and off stage in most of the country, SSD youth did not discriminate or divide themselves neatly across subcultural lines. But no band had yet to fuse the two sounds together. P.O.D. is unique in this way. Much of the early popular rhetoric of evangelicals appealed to a Puritan-sense of morality. However, P.O.D. appealed to the broader youth on cultural grounds instead. More so than abortion or other moral issues, P.O.D. opposed street violence and racial divisions that inflicted youth around them. They did not actively denounce liberal apostasy as early conservatives did but instead their religious message was focused on the power of faith to restore and deliver youth from their troubles in real and tangible ways. Like CCM in general, P.O.D. reflected the cultural activism of the evangelical movement, but their values did not always align with the conservative values of white evangelicals who interpreted dreads, tattoos, and piercings as indicators of a moral crisis among youth. Even so, evangelicals used a language of rebellion, like the punk subculture, to describe the fight against the prevailing cultural mood. However, P.O.D. culturally syncretized religious and youth rebellion into one performance and band identity.

Like their religious brethren who believed that the "last days" were among us, P.O.D. believed they were on a mission and were chosen to play active role in the biblical drama unfolding in the 1990s. They saw their cultural interventions in part as necessary and effective, as fans would remind them constantly that their music was making a difference in their lives. For them, to be Christian is to be anti-racist all the while dominant evangelical Christianity promoted notions of racial harmony based on blind belief. Like the mass crusades and religious outreach happening in the city, P.O.D. avoided aspects of organized religion that alienated young people. For P.O.D., *brown* as a word and acronym describing a process of religious assimilation that did not invalidate the racialized experiences of youth

in America. Being "brown" was how P.O.D. interpreted their collaboration and faith as a culturally diverse group of young men participating in male-dominated non-religious subcultures. They could cannot help but relate and recognize the inescapable impact they shared as "brown" men in America. Instead of retreating to a prominent color-blind ideology within American evangelical culture, they labeled and advertised their multi-racial experience in Chicano San Diego under *Brown* and turned it into a consumer product. Through their music, Brown identity exposed itself in raw form to the evangelical movement and hard rock began to become normalized by evangelical culture.

Expressions of faith and religious practices by NeoMestizas/os in the 1990s reflected a modern evangelical interpretation. Chicanas/os not only inhabited a modern religious identity but also transformed it in the process. There were many more who would follow after these first groups but among them P.O.D. were the only to became a transnational sensation post-1990s. This was all done exclusively in English and, in effect, suburban whites through evangelical discourse and youth of color through music and culture had a space to relate to one another and share in experiences.

By the end of the 1990s, Southtown religious youth were cooperating with and befriending culturally diverse people all because their faith inspired them to do so and the technology was there to actually do it. Schools played an important role in the intersections of subculture and public life that encouraged the spread of NeoMestiza/o beliefs and practices among youth. Next chapter explores the life of students profiled in chapter one during their attendance in Southtown schools in order to consider the impact of a growing NeoMestiza/o population on public life and culture. In doing so, the chapter provides detailed examples of NeoMestizo influence on school grounds and sheds further light on the degree of religious assimilation by Chicana/o youth.

IV. Smells Like A New Teen Spirit

Load up on guns

Bring your friends

It's fun to lose and to pretend

– Nirvana, "Smells Like Teen Spirit"

It's not who you are

It's who you're living for

– P.O.D., "One Day"

The school continues to be the principal site for exploring how social groups reproduce in capitalist society. Schools exist because they serve the important task of training the next generation of classes necessary for economic reproduction and expansion (Willis 1977).[123] During the twentieth century, government began to play a central role in public education which eventually led to the desegregation of public school systems. Muñoz (1989) describes the start of the start of the Cold War as an ideological transition for whites from supporting segregation as a good and necessary racial project to an ideology of a "melting pot"

[123] Protestants played a critical role in the early stages of European capitalism, mostly as the first self-organized working class (Weber 2005). Protestants almost exclusively played key roles as moral leaders, military personnel, or members of the working class outside their nations borders – this was especially true during the imperial expansion of European capitalism throughout the world.

democracy. The Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court ruling in 1954 desegregated public schools, prompting widespread social change in the educational system and society at large. A new progressive ideology behind schools emerged in the 1960s and was further reinforced through legislation, in particular Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974.[124] The United States underwent tremendous economic, political, and cultural transformation in the decades to follow.

As a result of school desegregation, among other societal transformations after World War II, the influence of American culture and its effects intensified among working-class Mexican Americans and other people of color. Family life, gender roles, sexuality, and educational aspirations were impacted by the growing influence of American culture and media among Chicanas/os, in particular those in urban environments (Saragoza 1990). The cultural innovation[125] between and across racial groups, as a result of increased social interaction, "brought radically new social formations that encouraged the development of alternative forms of cultural expression" (Lipsitz 1989: 269). This historical moment of cultural innovation led to the emergence of a distinct Chicana/o culture. For example, Chicana/o youth invented the lowrider instead of adopting "muscle cars" and started producing their own rock and roll, influenced by both white and Black musicians, over traditional Mexican music. After the 1940s, Chicana/o culture had emerged as a distinct

[124] The Act holds that the U.S. offers a superior educational system that is in the interest of everyone. This ideology is largely a reaction to the Cold War and fight against Communism. This ideology frames education as democratic and public. In other words, it holds that education is available to all and that it provides a means of achieving wealth and status for anyone. Education under communism did not offer wealth or status. The myth of school as the Great Equalizer – it is available to all and that it is a means of achieving wealth and status for anyone – is the hallmark tenet of the new progressive ideological hegemony of the U.S. educational system. For similar observations, see Stanley Aronowitz, *How Class Works: Power and Social Movement* (Yale University Press 2003: 16-17, 50).

culture that was neither "authentically" Mexican nor American but a reinvention of both. As empirically described in Chapter 3, Southtown was not immune from this transculturation.

While the experience of segregated schools in the first half of the twentieth century encouraged Chicana/o youth to collectively identify in ways that were distinct from other social groups in society thereafter, the post-Civil Rights Era – along with the Vietnam War – expanded the myth of progress across racial lines and provided a new sense of nationalism that encouraged integration and emphasized similarities across racial groups. No longer did Mexican Americans have to withstand racial discrimination in schools without legal protections and student rights. As a result, Chicana/o youth culture changed once again and many felt free to further appropriate other aspects of American culture. By this point the Chicana/o experience became a spectrum defined by multicultural and multiracial experiences. The post-civil rights era inaugurated a discourse of a colorblind society no longer divided by race. As a result, the collective consciousness of Mexican Americans as Chicanas/os was fragmented and the conditions were ripe for the emergence of NeoMestizas/os as cultural agents at schools. Religious assimilation, or how these youths internalize Pentecostalism, is not only an ongoing process in many personal lives for NeoMestiza/o students but also highly active in their practices and expressions at school.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a cultural narrative of religious assimilation by working class Chicana/o public school students during the 1990s. This chapter documents examples of NeoMestizo influence and assimilation—at the intersection between Mesoamericans, Western languages, and cultural hegemony--in Southtown's public school system. It considers the interactions and encounters of 1990s youth, first profiled in chapter one, that produced and reinforced Pentecostal re-interpretations at the cultural level in order

[125] "Cultural innovations," according to MacLeod (1987: 150), "can be at once both

to accomplish three historical imperatives. First, to document religious assimilation in local history and cultural memory. Second, to describe how the 1990s inspired NeoMestiza/o new cultural practices at the public level. Third, analyze the effects of religious assimilation as a process affecting Chicana/o youth during high school. In doing so, the chapter uncovers some of the sources for the growth of young NeoMestizos at the border during in the 1990s and provides insight into youth activities and cultural practices linked to religious assimilation. Based on individual interviews that draw from cultural memories and cultural work, the chapter demonstrates how NeoMestiza/o students from working class backgrounds in Southtown fostered collaborative spaces and a new collective identity through this form of assimilation.

A. Chicano in Southtown schools

Mexican Americans have a distinct racial experience in the educational system of the United States. This system is not organized around equal opportunity. Instead, it acts to perpetuate and reinforce existing social inequality. According to Martha Menchaca and Richard R. Valencia (1990: 222), "A great deal of the current school segregation of Chicano students in public elementary and secondary schools in California has its origins in racial ideologies of Anglo-Saxon superiority and their subsequent impact on government policies." In the last century, the creation of segregated schools for Mexican American children and youth proliferated. Through the passage of time, these schools were transformed through economic, political, and cultural change.

The first forms of "public" schools in the United States were of a religious nature. In the nineteenth century, Mexican American children received their schooling at home or through

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functional and dysfunctional for social reproduction."

the Catholic Church. After the Mexican Cession, Presbyterians and Methodists were the most active in starting schools intended to educate Mexican American children. Americanization was equated with Anglo Christianity and in many ways still is. Then, it was not uncommon for children and youth to be convinced, if not outright pressured, to convert to Protestant Christianity. For Mexican Americans, this meant casting aside culture and language to become Americanized.[126]

Public school education at the secular level emerged soon after during the Industrial Revolution. The contemporary educational system was first created by the state in order to provide the educational component needed to construct an industrious national working class. In essence, schools were where schoolchildren were taught what to know and they received curricula corresponding to their racial economic class. For much of the last century schools for Mexican American children, and children of color or low class standing in general, functioned as vocational training grounds intended to "help" these students enter the workforce as laborers. This left much to be desired for Chicana and Chicano students interested in learning yet lacking the opportunities, exposure, or encouragement to do so.[127]

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[126] The dominant ideology for much of the twentieth century held that it was Mexican (and Catholic) values that best explained if a Mexican American child did not do well in school or go on to receive a college degree, not the inferior schools and curriculum provided to the children. This is attributable to the "culture of poverty" theory, as explained in the previous chapter.

[127] There were simply not enough "good jobs" to go around and, if people of color were the last to be hired or even considered for such jobs, there was no real need to provide all Mexican Americans with a quality education equal to that of a white students who were favored for professional or managerial occupations post-high school. In 1900, three out of four Mexican Americans worked as laborers, service workers, or operators. Less than seven percent (6.67%) of Mexican Americans at the time held professional or managerial positions. In contrast, about a quarter (25.89%) of White Americans constituted the vast majority of the professional or managerial class. In 1910 to 1920, Mexicans experienced some mobility in semi-skilled work, yet numbers declined in skilled blue-collar labor (Garcia 1981). Overall, public schooling for Mexican Americans did not improve their

The problem of access to educational opportunities, exposure to challenging curriculum, and lackluster by teachers and staff remains a large problem in Southtown. For example, Robert never aspired to attend college or a four-year university. No teacher or staff member ever encouraged him to go to college or to develop a plan after graduation. He was unfamiliar with the opportunities and advantages that college represented, and no teacher ever bothered to educate him about it. He never identified with the college type nor was he ever offered to take college-preparatory classes at any one of his schools. Robert is highly intelligent and has never lacked aspiration in his life. He was not hesitant to enter the "real world" of work. Vocational classes, particularly woodshop, were among his favorite classes while in high school. He attended K-8 schools in the San Ysidro School District, a district that is notoriously known for lacking a college-bound education for its schoolchildren. He was never made to feel like college was for him or that he needed college. Instead, Robert oriented his achievement toward getting a job while in school and helping his peers instead of going to college, what psychology researchers Carola and Marcelo Saurez-Orozco (1995: 97) describe as "affiliative achievement." Robert understood his identity as a "student" to be over and done with once he graduated high school.

Sadly, it is not uncommon for teachers and counselors in public schools to reinforce high school graduation as the highest aspiration achievable by working-class Chicana/o schoolchildren in the area. As described in Chapter 1, there are limited opportunities for Advanced Placement (AP) curriculum and dropout rates for local high schools are 2.5 times higher than the national average.[128] For example, a quarter of sampled respondents who

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opportunities to enter into the professional or managerial classes for much of the twentieth century.

[128] To be more precise, the national dropout rate is at at 7% while Southtown high schools are 2.5 times higher at 18%. The national rate is based on U.S. Department of Education,

reported attending high school in the area were never encouraged by teachers or staff to attend college and an additional 36% were never encouraged by primary or secondary teachers or staff to attend college. This means that over half (56%) of students received little to no encouragement to attend college while attending public school in Southtown, and even less more than likely received the preparatory coursework to actually be successful in higher education. It should be no surprise then that nearly one out of four (24%) respondents obtained a bachelor's degree, which is nearly half as good as the national college graduation rate of 59%.[129] Clearly, the youth of Southtown have and continue to experience inferior schooling when compared to national averages. From the perspective of NeoMestizas/os, Steven Rene Jacobo of local reggae band Tribal Seeds described his experience as "Born in Babylon, but raised by Jah. Modern school system inferior." Robert's experience is a case in point. His experience, along with the others described in Chapter 1, highlights the significance of religious beliefs in the context of underperforming schools and unengaged curriculum in Southtown.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the participant stories described in this chapter are concentrated within two high schools in Southtown: Middletown High and Baja High.[130] Middletown High is located about five miles north of the U.S./Mexico Border. Historically, Middletown High primarily served white middle-class students during its first four decades of existence. The demographics in the area changed by the early 1990s and the student population has become much more culturally diverse since then, albeit staffing has been

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National Center for Education Statistics. (2015). *The Condition of Education 2015* (NCES 2015-144), Status Dropout Rates.

[129] Based on U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2015). *The Condition of Education 2015* (NCES 2015-144), Institutional Retention and Graduation Rates for Undergraduate Students.

slower to change. Middletown High receives special funding due to its program promoting visual, creative, and performing arts, which is recognized by the state of California. The school received a new state-of-the-art multi-purpose performing arts center in 2007. In addition, older buildings have been recently remodeled, and new buildings have been built to accommodate the growing student population. However, new buildings have not done much to improve student performance.

Similarly, demographic shifts in the late twentieth century lead to increased urbanization near Baja High. The white population was emigrating north to new suburban communities or growing older while the local Chicana/o population was rapidly growing younger and came to represent the local majority by the turn of the century. There was also an increase of new homes and neighborhoods springing up all along the border on farming land, and ultimately changing the suburban feel of the area. The students highlighted in this chapter were part of the boomburb of SSD and were part of the major demographic shift sweeping the area, ultimately impacting the culture of schools.

Most Chicanas/os at Baja High and many at Middletown High did not live near the school for most of the twentieth century. Historically, local public high schools in the area were built last in Chicanas/os neighborhoods. The first public schools were built in what at the time were white, middle-class, suburban neighborhoods. For many Chicanas/os attending a public high school in the area, walking to school was simply too far or not an option. Hence, an overwhelmingly large number of students of color took the school bus or public transportation in order to get to school. Many lived too far from their respective schools to be in a position to be more involved with after-school programs or extracurricular activities. The state finally built a high school for San Ysidro and Otay residents in 2003.

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[130] Refer to Chapter 1 for historical details of the schools and demographics.

Before this, four generations of Chicanas/os youth living adjacent to the border had to leave their neighborhoods in order to attend a high school in nearby Chula Vista, Palomar City, or Imperial Beach. What makes the school experiences that follow unique is how students' Pentecostal identity influenced their time and memories during high school.

B. Transformed by the spirit of belief

i. An unorthodox conversion story

Lazaro was certain there was a God because one day he says he "automatically started talking to God for no reason." Lazaro asked, "God, what am I?" He wanted to know from God what religion he should be. "I had an experience where I kinda saw a vision and thought it was my mom." He then said aloud, "I'm not scared of you" and it went away. "I guess I was depressed. You know, teenagers go through that stuff sometimes. So I told God, 'what am I to believe? Christian? Catholic? Or what?'"

One day Lazaro was outside his house hanging out on the street when "some guys came to talk" to him about Jesus Christ. He was only seventeen. He then started to cry. "It was weird. I just felt love. That's when I was a believer. In front of my street."

Paul, Lazaro's brother calls him a week later. Paul had been imprisoned for drug possession and was now living in a recovery home. He tells Lazaro, "I've been praying for you. For somebody to come talk to you about Jesus. I'm in this recovery program because I don't do heroin no more. I'm done going to prison. I'm doing good now.'" Lazaro lets his brother know that somebody just talked to him about Jesus. "You see," his brother says, "I've been praying for you for a while for someone to talk to you about Jesus." Paul encouraged him to find a church to attend and opens Lazaro's mind to the idea. After the phone call, Lazaro was certain he "was meant to be a Christian."

A month later a classmate tells Lazaro he is a Christian. "No way. I'm a Christian too," Lazaro tells him. The classmate invited him to join the bible club at Baja High School and he did. Like every campus club, the Bible club had a teacher who was the club advisor. As a group, they would meet in the teacher's classroom during lunch. They at lunch while someone read the Bible, shared scripture, and prayed.

It was not inside a church but there, inside a classroom at a public school, where Lazaro was first exposed to prayer, the Bible, and his new faith. After graduating, Lazaro sought out a church he could belong to. That is when we first met, at church. I had not kept in touch with him since. It had been since 1999 since I had heard or seen of him.

ii. Gym shorts and Bible lessons

Conversion, especially for those coming out of destructive lifestyles, can have lasting cognitive effects and personal life benefits (Martinez 2009: 99). At the individual level, a *conversion* describes a change in religious identification and typically affects personal identities and cultural practices. Simply recall Paul, Lazaro's brother, who sought a way out of his heroin addiction through conversion and recovery. As a discursive practice, the *conversion narrative* stresses the evidence of individual salvation rooted in a lifestyle of devotion to faith (Hindmarsh 2007). This public practice was first introduced in the mid-seventeenth century by Puritans to moderate membership in local churches (Caldwell 1985). The practice has changed but continues today, even outside of religious institutions or oversight as reflected in Lazaro's conversion story, in the form of a testimony or "testimonio."[131] Evangelism and conversion form the basis or starting point for many youth undergoing religious assimilation independent of traditional religious spaces.[132]

Joshua remembers one "vivid" moment in particular as a freshman student when he prayed with Nicolas, a classmate, while in the ninth grade. Joshua, Nicolas, and Pedro hung out together during physical education (P.E.). Pedro and Joshua are cousins and both grew

[131] The modern version of the conversion narrative is usually referred to by Pentecostals as a testimony ("testimonio") used to encourage other Christians and meant to share with non-adherents.

[132] Prayer, and a sincere belief in what or who you the prayer is praying to, is commonly performed in conjunction with any Pentecostal conversion.

up attending the same Pentecostal church. As mentioned in Chapter 1, their parents had converted to Pentecostalism when Joshua and Pedro were still children.

During P.E. Nicolas asked Joshua and Pedro, "So what's up with you guys? What's different about you?" Joshua responded, "What do you mean? What's different about me?" Nicolas answered, "Well, you don't cuss too much and you're like down-to-earth with me? Like most people don't even have respect towards girls. That's not you, like why do you do it?" Nicolas' question led to a two-week discussion during P.E. about faith. At the time Joshua and Pedro were attending Wednesday church services with their parents. They were part of a discipleship program that taught youth about their faith through scripture memorization in English, games, and group prayer in English. At school with Nicolas, "We would just hang out and talk deep and deeper about what I believed and what he believed," said Joshua.

One day in P.E. all three were sitting around the side of the building because all outdoor activities were cancelled due to rain. "I'll never forget," Joshua tells me. The last two weeks of conversations about faith had profoundly impacted Nicolas. That rainy day Nicolas asked for prayer so that he could be saved. "We ended up leading him into a prayer of salvation," remembers Joshua. Right there, in the open, all three formed a prayer circle. Joshua began to pray. Pedro, the introvert of the group, excitedly said, "Dude! We're praying, we're praying!" Almost immediately, upon realizing they were being watched by peers, Pedro then looked at Joshua and said, "People are gonna watch, people are gonna see us. You better chill out. People are walking by." Joshua responded, "What's the problem? This guy is about to meet God because we are being open to lead him through it. Why be ashamed of it?" In his partially wet P.E. clothes, Nicolas was eager to keep on praying. Convinced, Pedro once more joined in prayer. Afterward, they ended their prayer with, "In

Jesus name, Amen." Immediately, Nicolas saw himself as a Christian without ever being aware of a broader evangelical movement or its historical sources. The following Sunday he walked inside a church for the first time and returned for Sundays after.

Before the prayer with Nicolas, Joshua and Pedro would individually pray silently to themselves over their lunch at school in front of other, even when next to each other.[133] Joshua says he was too embarrassed to speak his prayer because, like any other youth, he wanted to still belong in some way and not made to feel totally different from his peers.

Praying with Nicolas a "prayer of salvation" was a religious ritual neither Pedro and Joshua ever had to pray for themselves. Both were raised as Pentecostal since early childhood and never experienced a radical or immediate conversion. Nonetheless they had heard the prayer many times at church but had never been in a situation where they had to personally guide someone in prayer for salvation. It was everyone's first time. They were all changed in someway, albeit Nicolas was most immediately impacted.

Pentecostal conversion[134] has been described as a radical process involving a sense of indescribable euphoria, possibly involving emotional breakdowns (Gerlach 1970: 141) or "ecstatic utterances" (Cox 1995: 91, 96). It is not nor can be explained by psychological maladjustment (Gerlach 1970: 131). Instead, Pentecostal conversion represents a conscious preference for revolution, or paradigm shift, at the cognitive level (Griffith and Savage 2006: 90). For example, when Lazaro decides to be "Christian" when two strangers

[133] Most of the time when Joshua tried to pray for his lunch in a way where he did not call attention to himself. For example, one time Joshua grabbed a ketchup packet in his hand, looked down toward the French fries and closed his eyes. While he prayed in his mind he also slowly ripped open the ketchup packet and proceeded to squeeze the ketchup where he last saw his fries. This way others watching would think nothing of it.

[134] Pentecostal conversion involves a set of beliefs and practices almost exclusively based on Methodism or evangelical Protestant theology (Martin 1991).

approach him on his street or when Nicolas tells his two classmates during P.E. that he wants to be saved. From the perspective of Christian youth culture taken by historian Eileen Luhr, this cultural adaptation of a Christian practice at a public school represents a singular instance when the evangelical movement achieves its ultimate goal to reproduce their worldview in others by turning their religious youth into active "speakers" in cultural debates (2009: 72-73). It is no surprise then to see Pentecostals undergoing religious assimilation through public performances of conversion or group prayer.

Though these experiences of public conversion had different effects on different people, their influence almost always extends beyond an individual conversion. Neither Joshua or Pedro know where Nicolas is now but they both recall the experience having a lasting impression on them. Both then recognized the importance of salvation and evangelism as part of their Pentecostal identity. The event shaped their cultural practices surrounding the sacredness of conversion differently. For Pedro, he never prayed or offered prayer to anyone after that. He preferred to be quiet and watch, yet he believed culturally relevant evangelism was an important quality to exude. He first used fashion as his communication tool. He wore Christian tees from time to time as his way of expressing his commitment to a religious identity. He then turned to music and later joined the church's youth band as a guitarist.

For Joshua, it made it easier for him to be public about his faith despite the odd stares or who might be listening in public spaces. "It showed me and challenged me to get out of my shell and to not be ashamed. I could have been scared and ashamed like my cousin, but now I wasn't. So it made it easier for me in the future." As a cultural memory of being seen and identified in public as a Pentecostal, conversion narratives like this emphasize the influential role of Pentecostalism in observable interactions by youth. By attending church, Nicolas

consciously began to explore assimilating to society by adopting a religious identity after a two-week conversation with friends. Pedro pursued the role of a musician in Christian settings as an assimilated youth. Meanwhile, Joshua wanted to spur more of these conversion events. This led him to volunteer more at church and motivated him to join the bible club at Middletown high school.

Along the lines described, "public" conversion is a conscious group choice where prayer is performed as an act of salvation. Individuals may feel euphoric as people pray. When Lazaro converted, it began with a tearful prayer with strangers. Prayer moves people in profoundly powerful ways.[135] It led Paul down a path of recovery from drug addiction. Prayer provided an outlet for the emotionally-charged Lazaro who was growing up in a troubled home without a mother and in search of a spiritual identity. It is no wonder why the conversion/prayer experience may affect Pentecostals like Joshua to steer their agency toward religious cultural practices in secular spaces. It elucidates the significance of Pentecostal conversion in social spaces foreign to the interaction and how, albeit a profoundly personal experience, public conversion can also be a lasting cultural memory of public spaces and religious assimilation.

iii. Trying to fit in but not get drunk

"In high school I was in-between two worlds. I was trying to figure out what I was doing," says Manuel. Manuel had many friends growing up. "As the years went by […] some people turned to other things. Drugs and alcohol. Ditching class. Ditching school completely. Going to Rosarito to party. Going to [Tijuana] all the time. During high school

[135] Performing public conversions can also have surprising effects on those observing others pray from a distance. For example, on several occasions I witnessed bystanders fall on their knees crying in public and then raise their hands to the heavens after observing strangers pray for each other and raise their hands in public.

I never did any of that," he explains. Manuel attributes his choice to decline offers by friends to go party south of the border or ditch class because of his Pentecostal faith, listening to Christian music, "growing up at the church, believing in God, having some faith, and all that, that kept me grounded." It distinguished him from the choices made by non-Pentecostal peers, he says. "It separated me from the world. Like I said earlier, a lot my friends were doing other things that I didn't think was right and I wouldn't do those things."

For Manuel, "Listening to Christian music kinda brings another message than the worldly songs do. It's a part of the message that keeps you positive. It's not talking about drinking and partying, sex and drugs." Manuel believes the music he listened to had much to do with navigating the cultural spaces he encountered while at school because it reinforced messages and views he first learned at church. "I think growing up with the church and being religious helped my decisions now as an adult - knowing what is right from wrong." In contrast, Manuel remembers a couple of friends growing up who did not "believe in God, they don't know anything or heard of anything, and they don't want to hear anything because they think its all bogus." Still friends with them now, after high school, Manuel says their lives are "a mess." They tell him "they're okay" but he does not believe this is in fact the case. "Just hearing of things that happen. One day they're doing this and the other day they're doing something else. Drugs. Sex. Girls here. Girls there. Like a never ending story, it never ends." Manuel believes growing up in church and being religious helped his decision making then and even now as an adult because he's able to identify the "wrong" kind of lifestyle.

Manuel's faith separated him from many of his friends growing up in SSD. "I always saw a lot of people that were Catholic, back [in high school]." He did not understand the Catholic faith nor ever attended mass while growing up. "I thought it was weird that people

would be so religious in their Catholic ways that when they see a picture they have to do all these gestures, whatever they do." Mateo is referring to the ritual of *persignar*, or making the sign of the holy cross. No Catholic friend ever took the time to explain it to him and he still does not understand why Catholics do it. He goes on to say about his Catholic friends growing up, "And then, you know, they have this strong faith but then again they can talk about being with this girl and that girl, they can talk about how drunk they got at a party they went to, they passed out, people divorcing left and right, all kinds of bad stuff." While he chose not to do such things because of his faith, he did not understand how others who claimed to be religious could commit to such a hedonistic lifestyle. "All of a sudden they see a picture [of the Virgin Mary] again and turn religious all of a sudden," he exclaims.

For Manuel, and the other youth documented in this chapter, their Pentecostal faith separated them from their peers in very distinct ways that shaped their lifestyle and life choices while at school. Manuel remembers praying in a group for people while at school and being part of informal bible studies led by his friend Mateo. He does not recall any particular story where he talked about Christ, or evangelized, to peers, but he is certain he did. "A lot of people knew how I was and sometimes I would run into friends from school at the church and go back to them later [at school] and talk to them. Stuff like that, you know." He tried to welcome others to his faith because he interpreted it as a positive force. Reflecting back on his high school years, Manuel believes, "Its good that I was religious during high school and even before that. Who knows what I would've been like because sometimes its what holds me straight." Like other NeoMestizas/os growing up at the turn of the century, Manuel's faith informed his life politics and shaped his agency in ways that distinctly signal religious assimilation during his coming of age.

C. The spirit of white evangelical culture comes to town

i. Responding to the white spiritual challenge

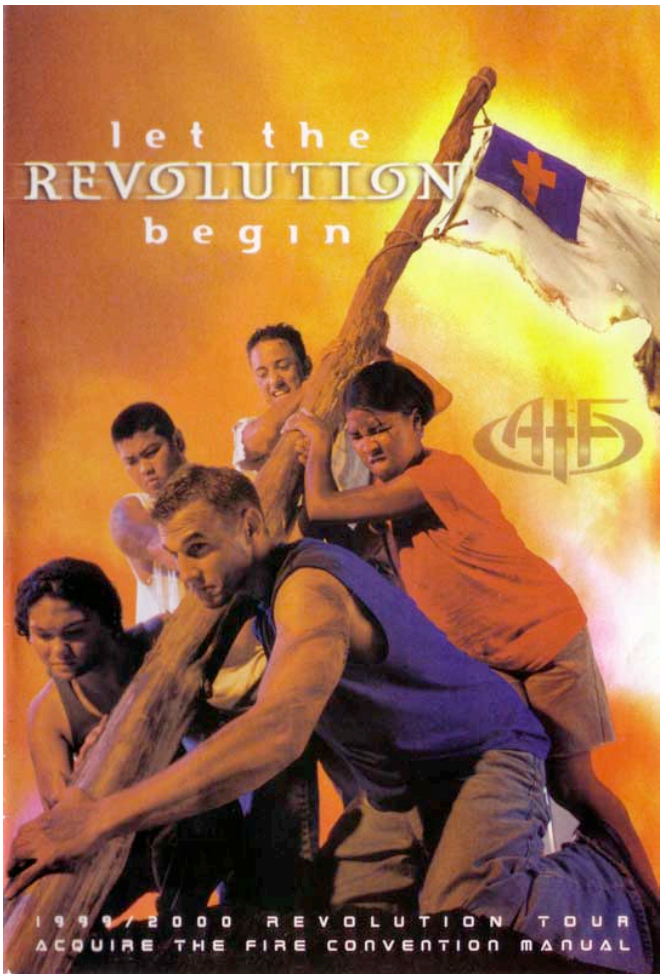
Robert and Mateo saw themselves as ordinary nobodies at school. Both of Robert's parents worked all day and he always came home to an empty house. Mateo lived with his mother and never knew his father, who passed away shortly after high school. They struggled in their classes and no teacher ever encouraged them to aspire for college. As students, they were far from what would be considered academically successful. Even more, Robert and Mateo were not popular and relatively unknown at school. They both attended the same church as Joshua and Pedro.

In 1998 their church arranged for fifty youth from Southtown to attend the *Acquire the Fire* (ATF) conference in the Long Beach organized by Teen Mania, a Texas-based conservative evangelical organization. It was not a typical Christian event. According to *Christianity Today*, "Teen Mania employees studied and shadowed Promise Keepers and the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association" (Lee 2015). From 1991 to 2014, more than 500 *Acquire the Fire* events were held in 33 U.S. cities and drew more than 3 million attendees. ATF was engaged youth through "MTV culture," or culturally relevant media, fashion, music, and theatrical stage performances. Ron Luce, the founder and keynote at Teen Mania conferences, told the thousands of youth in attendance that they were part of a "lost generation" that needed Christ more than ever. Musicians on stage and dramatized videos produced by Teen Mania reinforced the message.

As a national speaker, Luce went on annual circuits with ATF speaking with youth and pastors alike about the moral degradation taking place in America's schools. In fact, many elite white evangelicals shared Luce's sentiments on videotape shown at ATF events during their 1999 national tour. These evangelicals were introduced as "fathers and mothers of the

faith" and included televangelists Joyce Meyer and James Robinson, President of CBN and host of the *700 Club* Pat Roberson, and even former President George H.W. Bush and First Lady Barbara Bush. At ATF, Luce's message was simple: Christians need to "stand up" and "keep the fire" burning for Christ.

Figure 16. ATF manual (circa 1999), cover art



On the last night at the Long Beach conference in 1998, Luce called on all youth to "commit to Christ" which he framed as something synonymous with the forfeiture of all "worldly pleasures." A coffin was then rolled on stage. With a soft melody playing in the

background, Luce called on all attendees to live a more radical life and trash everything that opposed the rule of Christ in their lives. He asked youth to come to the stage and "throw away anything that does not please God." Youth, one by one, began to leave their seats and make their way toward the stage.

Robert remembers seeing nearly all his youth group walk up to the stage and leave something behind in that coffin. Joshua remembers people throwing their secular music in the coffin. Pedro saw a few others throw cigarette packets inside. Mateo threw a private note inside with a list of all the things he was now renouncing. Teenagers were moved to tears while others fell on their knees praying aloud with hands lifted high. After half hour, a stage crew comes to the coffin and pours a clear liquid inside while Luce excitedly commends attendees for their choice to live with fire for God. Without a warning, the coffin goes up in flames and so does everything inside it. After that, many youth from SSD in attendance were bent on exploring a new lifestyle that was distinguishable from all other youth in their schools.[136]

Mateo and Robert returned to school feeling even more as outsiders, but this time they felt empowered by their "outsider" status. Over the weekend their ordinary life in Southtown somehow became extraordinary in their minds. Though nothing in the material world had changed for them, Robert and Mateo now saw themselves differently. They were eager to learn what the Bible had to say about their new lives as radical Christians. Sunday morning services and youth group reunions on Wednesdays were not enough to quench their thirst for biblical literacy. Mateo wanted to read the Bible and pray with others at school.

[136] Church leadership encouraged Mateo and Robert to be unashamed about their faith at school. The youth pastor explained that a "spirit-filled" life sometimes compels a believer to pray for others without explanation. When this happens, the youth pastor said, do not hamper the work of the Holy Spirit but instead be a vessel so that the Spirit can work through you to do the will of God.

He talked to Robert who supported the idea and remembers it as the "one big thing […] we started" at school.

At first it was only Mateo and Robert who met at the football during lunch, who from now on are referred to as "The Bleachers." Mateo recalls, "We started getting a round of people and we used to meet at the bleachers." There was nothing glamorous about the location. There were "rodent holes" and crab grass everywhere. It was one of the few spaces not yet claimed by the large crowds in an overcrowded school. "We weren't a club or anything. We would just hang out during lunch hours," says Robert. The Bleachers did not have a name for themselves nor were they a registered club on campus. They just saw themselves as a group of friends who also happen to be active Pentecostals during lunch.

The Bleachers was a group of new Christians who read the Bible and exercised charismatic gifts of the Spirit, including prayer for healing and speaking in tongues (glossolalia). Mateo was usually the one to lead the prayer sessions and some would pray quietly in "tongues" while praying in a circle, never in Spanish. When asked what they did, Robert said, "Just prayer. It was really hanging out with the fellowship. Like a communion, you know. It was great!"

In the school setting, symbolic or cultural practices play an important part in constructing and maintaining collective identities among social groups. The prayer sessions at the bleachers were dynamic and at times drew attention by outside observers. Though they mainly kept to themselves and did not engage others as a collective group, peers began to informally find out about the group as well. "A handful of people started coming up to us and asking questions and from there we got a lot of [new friends who] started to go to church."

For The Bleachers and other religious youth, their evangelical identity alone does not differentiate them from all other social groups and cliques on campus. However, the *way* they practice their religious identity in public sets them apart. Take for example public prayer, which exposed students as Pentecostals. "We prayed, and I would preach a little bit here and there," says Mateo. "It was not about being 'churchy.'" Mateo uses the term "churchy" to describe an institutionalized religious experience based on rituals, strict rules or orthodox interpretations of the Bible. For The Bleachers, prayer or speaking in tongues represented an important aspect of their collective identity and spiritual practice as Pentecostals. Unlike traditional Protestant churches, this group was non-sectarian, or non-denominational. For example, even though it was important to core students of the Bleachers, no new "member" was ever coerced to believe in the gift of tongues or forced to practice it. Students from all backgrounds were welcome to dialogue regardless of their church background or race. The space allowed anyone to openly share their experiences with other youth and discuss their life experiences without adults telling the group what to believe or how to interpret the meaning of the Bible. "It was mainly about hanging out together and encouraging each other."

Student-led sermons were another differentiating characteristic of the Bleachers at Baja High. Compared to traditional Catholic mass services in the area, sermons in charismatic churches are perceived as dynamic, interactive, and theatrical.[137] This type of religious style helps keep attendees engaged with the knowledge or information being communicated by the orator. The Pastor traditionally occupies this space at church. In school, youth are the ones who deliver religious sermons to other youth. They become willing agents and active

[137] For a wonderful and enlightening read about the architectural history of the Protestant church turning into a theater with stage, see *When Church Became Theater: The*

listeners of a social message described in religious terms. They imitate what they have seen in church services and reproduce it in terms they understand while on school grounds. However, "God talk" at school usually does not happen in the form of sermons. The Bleachers usually stood in a circle or sat on the bleachers. The group was not "churchy" in the sense that they engaged in group discussions as opposed to having one person talk or preach at others. Given that "God talk" for evangelicals is a familiar discourse for expressing one's own ideas or desires, religious youth often brought up "God" or Jesus when describing their viewpoints, social identity, or when processing experiences in their lives with others. In this way, NeoMestizas/os create a linguistic distinction between themselves and peers by reproducing the language of Protestants as a device to interpret personal experience, thoughts, and actions.

According to Christian Smith, the U.S. evangelical movement "maintains its religious strength in modern America precisely because of the pluralism and diversity it confronts" (1998: 89). Rather than undermining evangelical vigor and participation, argues Smith, "cultural pluralism and structural differentiation work to strengthen the evangelical movement." Evangelical culture in the new millennium, Smith claims, "thrives on distinction, engagement, tension, conflict and threat. Without these, evangelicalism would lose its identity and purpose and grow languid and aimless." Contrary to the view that cultural pluralism and structural differentiation would ultimately undermine religious worldviews, Smith claims that evangelical movements benefit and have become more diverse as a result of modern pluralism. Stated differently, the movement's vitality comes not from its protected isolation from the outside world akin to Christian fundamentalists, but instead derives from the dynamic engagement with a growing pluralistic society.

Smith is correct by claiming evangelical culture persists because the movement is multifaceted and dynamic in both private and public spaces. For Smith, the evangelical movement has persisted past the twentieth century and into the new millennium because of the complex way it creates and confronts political and cultural conflicts and mirrors perpetual threat by the rise of a secular public. While this may in fact be the case for white evangelicals, Smith's framing may not apply in a multi-racial, multi-lingual, multi-ethnic society. Contrary to Smith, I contend that the evangelical movement persists not because of the rise of pluralism in the public sphere but instead due to the robust cultural permutations this social movement has taken on the ground through the agency of individuals and local groups. The movement has proven to be highly flexible and accommodating to secularizing cultures, like youth cultures, and an uncontrollable economy enforcing a greater dependency on cultural consumerism as a means of social reproduction. In other words, the rise of a secular public is not solely responsible for the persistence of the evangelical movement; and social differences *within* the movement continue to matter and define how the movement takes shape on the ground as a collective identity.

"We had a round of people trying to talk to us. At the time it felt great, like we were doing something right," says Robert. As a group, The Bleachers were uninterested in doing "churchy" things at school that went beyond the scope of personal experience (i.e. inner-worldly). For them, evangelism was a personal thing an individual did and they did not see it as the purpose of the group. They were there for fellowship, not evangelism, and to enjoy their company. Robert says, "We had a lot of fun. I remember it being the best time in high school while it lasted." Perhaps it was the group's casual attitude about faith and culture that drew peers to The Bleachers.

Jeanne Halgren Kilde (Oxford University Press: 2002).

Even so, “Some would talk crap about it though.” There was one noteworthy student in particular. Robert describes him as a “white guy” who always wore black. “He would come around and poke fun of us from time to time. I don’t think he had friends and probably had nothing better to do. He was a satanic worshiper. He said that he would burn himself, and cut himself.” According to Smith (1998: 89), “modern pluralism promotes the formation of strong subcultures and potentially ‘deviant' identities,’ including religious subcultures and identities.” For the Satanist at their school, there was no “satanic” subculture in the school district. He was a loner in regards to his beliefs and the subculture he identified with. According to Robert, The Bleachers rejected his ideas but they never rejected him. It is worth quoting Robert at length to describe what happened next.

> After hanging around us we began to talk more. He actually accepted Christ into his heart, which is kind of weird, but he never did nothing after that. But at least he took the first step. He was light skin, bald, looked like the typical skinhead. His jeans cut, wore boots, typical satanical [sic] guy. But great guy after that. He used to make fun of us everyday until finally he just gave up. He was involved in the Christian club, just to hang out because we used to like to have fun, joke around, and have a good time.

The Bleachers made him feel safe and allowed him to be himself. Eventually this student conformed to the rationalization of Protestantism and joined the Bleachers.

Even though outsiders may have their own version of what they observe, the collective religious identity of the Bleachers reinforces the social group as personally meaningful and of great importance in the present context. This group of youth pays little attention to how other groups or outsiders perceive them, and any negative stereotypes or ridicule they may experience as a result of their religious identity only helps to reinforce the knowledge they are transmitted within their evangelical church culture – that the modern day church is embattled with forces that seem to oppose or threaten its existence and its evangelical mission. Moreover, Robert nor Mateo felt it important to discuss or elaborate on any of the

animosities they might have encountered while on campus. Instead, they all reinforced the positive experiences they had with outsiders and, unlike the churches they might have belonged to, did not act sectarian while at school.

The Christian identity was important for Robert, Mateo, and the other members of the Bleachers. The group served as an on-campus or public extension or satellite of their religious community. Interestingly enough, they maintained and reinforced their religious identity and practices at school without the intervention or direct involvement of adults. More importantly, their group membership was voluntary and everyone interviewed felt they had agency while being a part of the Bleachers. They formed organically and everyone felt as if they shared equally in its existence. While on school grounds they recreated the community they belong to outside of school and exercised their agency in ways not permitted or guaranteed inside their church walls. In some respect, they reimagined their schools as an extension of their home churches and evangelical subculture. Moreover, they fostered an exploratory space independent of church leadership. But, more importantly, belonging to the Bleachers had an overwhelming positive impact on participants. To put it in the words of Robert, "I remember it being the best time in high school while it lasted."

ii. Holding hands around the school's flag pole

Given the contemporary legal structure, religion in public schools would practically be non-existent if it were not for the students who bring it with them on a daily basis. In 1990, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Equal Access Act providing student groups, including those that are religious, equal or fair access to facilities in federally-funded secondary schools (Board of Education of Westside Community Schools v. Mergens). Bridget Mergens and other students wanted to start an official Christian Club at their public school in Nebraska but officials denied their application because of the religious nature of their

speech in a public institution. When the school board upheld the school's decision, Mergen sued and the case made its way before the U.S. Supreme Court in January 1990.

Mergen argued the school's decision restricted her student right under the Equal Access Act to start a "noncurricular" club regardless of the religious content of the speech in their meetings.[138] Three months after closing arguments, an evangelical youth group from a Fort Worth suburban white church got on a van late night and drove to one of their schools in Burelson, Texas. Every school has a flagpole and so they began to pray at the pole. They then drove to another school and prayed again around the flagpole. The Burelson youth did it a third time. News of their exploit inspired key evangelical leaders and youth pastors to organize youth elsewhere to do the same. A month later, in June 1990, the Supreme Court ruled in Mergen's favor. It was now clear more than ever that students had a right to organize religious groups on campus so long as meetings did not interfere or overlap with curricular classes.

The news of Mergen's case help build momentum for young evangelicals interested in starting Christian clubs in their public schools and by September 1990 evangelical youth pastors organized youth in four states to pray on the same day under their school's U.S. flag at 7:00 a.m. By 1995, more than 2 million students in the U.S. and thousands across four continents were imitating the suburban evangelical youth of Burelson, Texas. Organizers publicized the event as "See You At The Pole" (SYATP).

Fast forward to September 15, 1999 and one-thousand miles west, when Joshua, Pedro, and about fifty other students at their high school met at 7:00 a.m. in front of their school

[138] In chapter 20 of the Equal Access Act, it states that all schools funded even partly by the federal funds cannot discriminate access to facilities for meetings based on a student group's "religious, political, philosophical, or other content of the speech at such meetings" (U.S. Code § 4071).

flagpole to participate in SYATP. This year's theme was "We Bow Down," a phrase to signify a surrender to Jesus Christ and God's will, and the organization even published a music and prayer CD to accompany the event. This is when Greg first met the others. There he discovered he shared his religious identity with the others, proving that before there can be collective action outside conventional religious locations, there must first be an awareness of a collective identity that extends beyond the realm of church. In other words, movement participants must be able to distinguish themselves from the crowd and SYATP provided this very opportunity for students to recognize one another as "insiders" of a local evangelical youth movement.

Students at this school had participated in SYATP since the early 1990s, but this prayer gathering in 1999 was particularly significant for students across the country. It had only been five months since the tragic school shooting at Columbine High School which left fifteen dead. The idea of a spiritual war ragging in America was heightened by evangelical youth when victims of Columbine were turned into martyrs, sparking a religious revival among students across the country (Beima 1999: 58). The media turned the horrific event into a spectacle while evangelical groups stressed a "moral panic" was inflicting the nation's youth.[139] Evangelical leaders framed these events in terms of a spiritual war battled at the cultural level against a rampant godless culture. Now, more than ever, evangelical youth believed Columbine was evidence of a spiritual war taking place in their schools.

[139] According to *Time* magazine, national evangelical discourse framed Columbine and proceeding massacres committed by youth as "acts of Satan, and as part of a persecution that stretches back to the earliest days of Christianity, during which countless believers suffered and died for professing their faith" (Beima 1999). Evangelical leaders framed these events in terms of the history of their faith and as a product of a godless culture.

According to early news reports from Columbine High, Cassie Bernall, a senior at Columbine, was asked by the shooters if she believed in God.[140] When she answered "yes," she was shot in the head (Bernall 2000). Her local pastor, Rev. George Kirsten, and evangelical leaders nationwide saw Cassie's loss as an opportunity to save more souls. Rachel and Cassie immediately became martyrs within the evangelical movement and inspired countless of students to be intentional about sharing their faith with classmates. Columbine and, later, in Santee (eastern San Diego County) thereafter provoked P.O.D. to write a song, "Youth of the Nation," about school violence. The song quickly became a Billboard and MTV music hit in 2001.[141]

Perhaps Cassie's answer would not have changed the outcome of her death but it provoked evangelical youth at the time to ask themselves, "If that was me, would I say yes?" Now, students like Joshua and Pedro felt they were symbolically saying "Yes, I would die for what I believe" early on a September morning attending SYATP.

If religious assimilation acts in part as a form of socialization to dominant culture, then SYATP is a key event reflecting this process whereby students are exposed to or reaffirm evangelical movement values and interests as cultural norms at the local level.

Martha, the President of the Bible Club on campus, welcomed the growing crowd. Most students did not know each other or were unaware classmates in attendance were Pentecostal as well. In English, Martha explained to everyone what the next twenty or so minutes of prayer would look like. She said, "We're here today to pray. To pray for our school, our classmates, teachers, and school administrators. We're here to pray for our country's

[140] Rachel Scott was the first to be shot and killed at Columbine. A year earlier she wrote in her journal that she had lost all her friends and was ridiculed at school for her new commitment to her faith (Nimmo and Scott 2000). Cassie Bernall, a senior, was also killed at Columbine.

leaders and for the world. We're here to pray for our school year and to welcome God into our lives here at school." Martha asked everyone to circle around the flagpole, hold hands, and pray aloud one at a time.

Figure 17. See You At The Pole (2013), digital advertisement



The Pentecostal performance of prayer is an important cultural representation of the shared religious discourse among NeoMestizas/os. Group public prayer, where participants likely hold hands and pray aloud when and if compelled to do so, is an important cultural site where religious discourse is developed outside the context of church. However, in minority-majority communities where most contact with dominant culture is through media and entertainment, or military activity by proxy as is also the case in SSD, the cultural products of the evangelical movement can be a powerful portal through which youth of color are first exposed to and participate in national cultural discourses. Though conversion initiates the new adherent into a "speaker" of religious discourse, no single event at public

[141] Two people were killed and thirteen more were wounded in this shooting. In 1983, 19 people were killed in San Ysidro. This massacre was one of the worst in U.S. history.

schools most radically represents the shared cultural adaptation to evangelical discourse by NeoMestiza/o youth than SYATP.

Joshua found SYATP to be significant for him because of its symbolism. After participating for the first time at SYATP in 1999, Joshua thought to himself, "Oh my gosh, we prayed for the school and we changed lives. We stood around a pole and held hands and it was the best thing ever." Joshua had an jubilant response to the experience which was culturally shared by others in attendance. If religious assimilation acts as a form of socialization to dominant culture, then SYATP is a key event reflecting this process whereby students are exposed to or reaffirm evangelical movement values and interests as cultural norms at the local level.[142]

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[142] SYATP is essentially a by-product of social interaction. Through social interaction individuals learn about others and what their surroundings mean on a social level which, then, consequently, has an internalization effect whereby an individual appropriates social norms as his or her own norms. By doing so, individuals self-consciously (and perhaps at some level unconsciously) guide their own actions to align themselves with the expectations of others, likely those that they wish to identify with at a social level. While socialization may first take place through familial interactions as a child (Parsons and Bales 1955), socialization as youth is most immediately influenced by a broader social landscape that includes more or less a greater degree of independent interactions with peers and culture outside the network of family or kin (Erikson 1968). This process of socialization for youth has a profound effect on their identity and they way they come to understand their role in society. This is not to suggest that one's childhood no longer plays a role, as argued by Freudian thinkers, but rather to stress the role of new forces currently at play in the shaping of an individual youth as a social being.

In this period of life youth begin to develop an identity-consciousness, which is both an observable process of individualization and a subjective sense identified by the individual that reflects a "quality of personal sameness and continuity" (Erikson 1968). This stage of development does not occur in isolation but instead in the context of society, according to Erikson. In addition, this quality of a continuous self exhibited in your youth is not possible if not paired with some belief in the sameness and continuity of a shared world image by people that surround and interact with the youth (Erikson 1968: 73, 82). William James alluded to a similar conclusion concerning self-consciousness in a letter to his wife, as noted by Erikson (1968: 19):

> A man's character is discernible in the mental and moral attitude in which, when it came upon him, he felt himself most deeply and intensely active and alive. At such moments there is a voice inside which speaks and says: "This is the real me!"

By engaging youth culture with religiously-inspired activism, the evangelical movement plays a significant role in the socialization of youth by normalizing prayer in the public sphere. In U.S. public schools, SYATP is initiated and led by students. While school bible clubs may play a role in organizing their local campus for the event, most students learn about it from their home church and now online. The national prayer event was meaningful for national organizers. They sought to motivate the religious youth of the movement to exercise their religious freedom as a group by praying for society. For them, it was a cultural form of Christian activism against the banning of prayer in public schools three decades earlier. Students were instructed to gather around the school's flagpole, a symbol of nationalism, and begin to pray for their country's leaders and politicians. Organizers used the event to highlight how movement beliefs have "lost" their place within the institutions of society and emphasize the cultural battle to reinstitute religious influence in political and cultural debates.

That September morning, Greg and the others recognized each other as Pentecostal or evangelical because of SYATP. Together, groups of students in public schools collectively

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Identity is a product of social consciousness and is crafted by the individual through self-consciousness. Before there can be self-consciousness, there must exist a doubt which concerns "the trustworthiness of the parents and of the child himself—only in adolescence, such self-consciousness doubt concerns the reliability of the whole span of childhood which is now to be left behind and the trustworthiness of the whole social universe now envisaged" (Erikson 1968: 183). The youth, at this point of arriving at a new height of self-awareness, is now likely to seek out a sense of free will that signifies one's autonomous identity. However, this is not always taken as a positive thing and may result in shame and rage because the youth's visibility by all-knowing adults may be experienced as overwhelming. In turn, this shame is translated as a public personality exposed to peers and to be judged by leaders, thus making it difficult if not entirely impossible to resist the temptation to conform or react to the social norms placed on them. All of this is outbalanced by self-certainty "now characterized by a definite sense of independence from the family as the matrix of self-images, and a sureness of anticipation" (Erikson 1968: 183). In this way, a youth develops a self-consciousness by experiencing a crisis of role confusion in which they discover that they are more as a person than what they previously thought and, therefore, seek out to craft

express their "Christian" identity through this one annual public event that rests in sharp contrast to the unprecedented secularization of public schools. In other words, this symbolic event acts as an important *signifier* for the Christian community in local contexts. Given religious assimilation involves participating in shared religious discourse which draws heavily from Protestant interpretations of the Bible using an evangelical framing, SYATP represents an important site for the social reproduction of the evangelical movement among youth who establish a new collective identity through these activities.[143]

As discussed in the next sections, SYATP motivated some students to begin attending the Bible club and others to share their faith with others with greater urgency. It also encouraged students to interpret their deeply personal religious identity as part of a larger, global movement of faith. In essence, popular religious interpretations of recent school violence and the spiritual significance of SYATP intensified religious assimilation at the local level by aiding the reproduction of evangelical discourse and identity in Southtown's public institutions.

By committing to the act of public prayer, students impacted local school culture by influencing discourse around social identities in public spaces. Students realized they were not alone and there were others in their school who shared the same faith. For many, this was the very first time they prayed in public and the first time they met other Pentecostals from other churches. There, students like Greg and Johnny built rapport, which resulted in a conversation about joining the Bible Club on campus.

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a personal identity that makes sense for the individual given their social position and perceived context.

[143] Social movement scholars have long identified collective identify formation as critical to the development of social movements (McAdam et al. 1996)

iii. Expressive individualism through faith

Greg never officially joined the Bible Club at his school though he did show up every year at SYATP and returned to that very flagpole on several occasions to "preach." Greg would stand next to the pole with a megaphone. After the last bell, Johnny retells how Greg "would yell about how everyone was guilty and we were all going to hell." Greg would talk about Christ's second coming and urged student onlookers to repent, in that very moment, of their sins. Greg frequently used the words "hell" and "demons" while on his soapbox. Johnny and others suspect Greg had good intentions but Greg's style of evangelism was too confrontational, even for Bible Club members. Johnny goes on to say, "None of us ever felt to express ourselves in that way. We didn't believe in that kind of God. The kind divorced from love." While bystanders may have found Greg's megaphone sermons of damnation to be funny, shocking, or even perhaps annoying, there were a few that were affected by his message. Johnny remembers Greg "praying for someone once. It wasn't weird or awkward. It was casual and quick. He then returned to speak over the megaphone about damnation." Suffice it to say, Greg's expressive evangelism was not popular nor was it the way others at his school intended to express their faith. In fact, this form of evangelism may cripple people from experiencing religious assimilation in the context of community given an overemphasis on a type of self-absorbed individualism ripe with worry over the soul (Rah 2009: 38). In other words, Greg stressed that people were born with a spiritual deficit that could only be revived through "inward" actions. In doing so, Greg encouraged people to pay attention to who they were, or were not, inside the soul instead of looking to the world around them for a change in their lives.

"I wasn't really a pushy pushy Christian, with a microphone on the street saying, 'you're going to go to hell,'" says David. "That for me didn't really make sense, I couldn't do it.

Not because I didn't feel to do it but because I didn't think it needed to be done." For David "it was all about connection. Connecting with music, connecting with something, and eventually my lifestyle could impact them, you know." For people like Greg, David thinks, "it was a higher agenda of salvation and saving people. That was obviously important, I wanted them saved but I wasn't pressuring or pushy. I really cared about the community and the relationship that I built with people … I wanted that friendship and connection." David was uninterested in drawing public attention to his faith like Greg.[144] In other words, David interpreted verbal evangelism as secondary to demonstrating an authentic concern and care for others. This means that inviting others to church or offering others prayer was part of expressing a genuine interest in peers only if other's brought it up to David first. Stated differently, David was uninterested in participating in public expressions of evangelicalism at school though he was very much into having everyday individually-based religious experiences that may or may not involve others.

Joshua was similar to David. For him, evangelism "was really just leading by example." Joshua responds, "I was just being myself and really trying to be a good friend for people. I went to the Christian club. People knew me as a Christian. People knew I was involved in church and stuff like that." Joshua, unlike Greg, was never looked at as "the guy who was always trying to preach at everyone." As a result, Joshua was able to focus on his friendships instead of trying to fulfill some divine mission to save lost souls. "Honestly, I don't mind that because of that I have friends that I have today. I know the people that I know today because I was able to be relational with all of them." For Joshua, evangelism was expressing a personal life of discipleship that expressed an individual commitment to

[144] Manuel was similar to David while in high school. Manuel is Robert's older brother and he says he was never really into being "outward facing" with his faith. He hung out with Mateo but graduated before the Bleachers ever got started.

his religious faith without compromising the sincerity behind his desire to connect with others.

Like Joshua who describes his faith as "being myself and really trying to be a good friend for people," Johnny saw friendships as a genuine expression of his faith and, consequently, more effective when it came to ministering to others. Johnny was passionate about his beliefs during high school but he says he "wasn't a Bible-thumper or anything." "I just wanted to learn more about myself and the plan God had for my life." As mentioned before, Johnny described himself as a "Jesus Freak" but did not see that as being the same thing as a "Bible-thumper." When asked about the difference, Johnny replies, "I guess a Bible thumper is about pushing the Bible on others while a Jesus Freak is someone who is into his own relationship with Jesus Christ. Two different things I guess." In other words, Johnny was not interested in pushing ideas from the Bible on others even though he was very excited about what the bible said about his own identity in Christ. Even so, Johnny from time to time said he invited friends from school to visit his church but described it more as part of a casual conversation rather than some hidden agenda. Church made a difference in his life and he felt others could benefit as well.

Mateo one day went up to Rosa, a new friend at school, and invited her to church. He had never preached at her or offered prayer. In fact, he did not know if she was religious or if she had a certain kind of belief system. Mateo simply extended an invitation to attend church. "I accepted the invitation," Rosa exclaimed. "The people I met felt genuine, very warm, and caring." From the moment she entered the church, she "believed right away […] It was fate for me." She explains that she had a troubled background, divorced parents, and a victim of domestic violence. "I had already been looking for something more in my spiritual life. I had been praying but without any sort of structure, just speaking from my

heart. I would also read the bible." When she was invited to church by Mateo, it felt for her as if "it was all connected to the journey of life I was on. It was meant to be."[145]

By accepting an invitation at school to attend a church service, Rosa explains how she found "the depth that I had been looking for reading the Bible alone, praying on my own." Afterward, "I was very touched to the point where I wanted to share my faith with people. Even till this day when I feel like I want to talk to someone I open up and let people know […] that I can pray for them and that God can intervene."

At school, Rosa did not disrupt teachers' lessons in order to share her faith with others because she remembers "respecting [the classroom] as a learning environment." However, she does "remember on the main campus of the school, there were times, when I asked people if I could pray for them. They were open and would receive prayer from me." Prayer had helped her cope and heal from her troubled past and wanted to share the power of prayer with others. It was her form of evangelism with friends. "I do remember that there was a student […] a girl in the class. She had a really difficult life. Grew up with her father and didn't have a mother. She was very open to me talking to her about my faith. Her father never let her out of the house, he was very protective. So she was never able to go to church." Rosa would talk to her about God's love and recalls offering her prayer. "I probably prayed for her on a handful of occasions. I remember on one occasion she gave me a gift. It was a porcelain angel. I still have it." Though her classmate never attended church during her youth given parental restrictions, Rosa believes that those moments

[145] After the service, Rosa was approached by two youth leaders and asked if she would be open to receiving prayer. She agreed. "Before I knew it, there was about ten people around me in a circle. I did not find this intimidating at all. I found it to be 'wow.' It felt like there was something greater: God touching me." Rosa stood there, surrounded by almost a dozen youth praying over her, for about ten minutes. She was impacted by the number of people interested in praying for her, "with that kind of faith where people can experience God in a

together were just as meaningful to her friend as going to church. Even so, Rosa's practice of evangelism like that of the others was largely expressed in individual forms.

According to Soong-Chan Rah (2009: 37), "individualism guides the American way of life" (Rah 2009: 37). Frances S. Adeney (2011: 11) similarly describes individualism as an expression which "has become a first language of sorts in American society." The practice of proselytization by Pentecostals is not exempt from such expressive individualism but forms the basis for the dominant form of modern evangelicalism. In other words, the dominant form of modern evangelism is not just the preaching of the gospel in order to save souls by persuading individuals to confess a personal commitment to Christ, but also a historical precursor to the expression of American individualism. The dominant interpretation of biblical salvation in America is individual-based and, according to Adeney, cultural individualism "influences evangelistic content and messages in our society" (ibid). In other words, the emphasis of the evangelical message is on the individual and not on the community from which they belong. Thus, incorporating evangelism as a cultural practice is perhaps the strongest indicator of religious assimilation in a secular context.

D. Organizing around spirit-driven faith in school

i. The conversion of extracurricular activities

Like most youth, Martha and Johnny become conscious of evangelism through their churches. However, their churches or adult evangelists were not permitted on public school grounds. This means that it was up to youth to independently engage in religious identity formation while at school. While most Pentecostal youth may seek cultural or symbolic

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way they don't for themselves." "That was what catapulted me to wanting to be a part of a church that believed in that kind of depth."

ways to individually differentiate themselves from dominant cultural groups, a significant number of students prefer a rationalized form of religious identification. A Bible Club or "Christian Club" is perhaps the most common rationalized form of religious freedom on public school grounds. Unlike traditional religious institutions whose priestly objective is to systematize the sacred doctrines against the backdrop of a globalizing world, these campus organizations typically function as social clubs for participants who wish to associate publicly with a collective religious identity.

Nurturing institutions, particularly within the educational system, are intended to have a positive effect on youth. However, the severe underfunding and underserving of low-income students through poor public schooling can have disastrous effect on entire families, social groups, and communities. While critical measures to restore the nurturing effect of schools on young people of color are limited under neoliberal reform, students have taken it upon themselves to create social or academic clubs that can nurture their interests, curiosities, and imaginations. In a way, "official" groups like a bible club represent an opposition to the lack of resources and creative spaces guaranteed by the state for the social development of youth.

Martha and Johnny were elected as President and Vice President, respectively, of their school's Bible Club in 1998. Martha was a junior while Johnny was a sophomore. Pedro and Joshua were freshman at the time. A previous club president, Hannah, changed the club's name to "Youth Alive" a couple years prior.[146] Leaders at the time wanted the club to be more appealing to other youth and wanted to connote excitement for their faith. The

[146] I was unable to reach the President and Vice President of the club at the time for an interview. Given that they were not only Mexican American and socioeconomic disadvantaged but also women, this research could have been further enriched if interviews were possible.

specific name was largely a reflection of their "alive with Christ" theology as born-again Christians.[147]

Martha first heard about the club from older youth at school, before she attended high school. "I remember hearing about the Christian club from someone at church […] The president and vice president of the club attended my church and were excited for me to start school on their campus. I didn't know many people at the school […] so I guess joining the Christian club made sense to me then," she recalls. Her freshman year, Martha was "quiet in class" and began to hang out with "some friends from church" during lunch." They were the ones to invite her to check out the club. "I liked it," says Martha after recalling her first club meeting. "I eventually joined them and we became school friends, not just church friends."

Martha, along with Johnny, Joshua, and Pedro became aware of the Bible Club through members who attended the same church. Martha already felt an affinity with the group given it felt in many ways like an extension of her church network and included many of the same people she normally hung out with at school. "Instead of hanging out by the tree, we would all meet up in the physics classroom." For Martha, identifying and then associating with Youth Alive made almost immediate sense. She was new to the school and her only friendships at the start of her freshman year were church friends. She was originally "intrigued" by the existence of a Club and her curiosity, along with her peer network, motivated her to attend the meetings.

[147] "As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved" (Ephesians 2:1-5).

"The physics teacher was our [club] advisor," comments Martha. Youth Alive "was all of us from the tree and about ten or fifteen more. We were a pretty big group at the beginning of the year. Like a lot of people, I was very intrigued about the idea of a Christian club on campus. I had never been to one, you know. It was my first time. We didn't have one in middle school. I was pretty excited, you know."

While The Bleachers were an informal group at another school that mostly socialized and, on occasion, did religious things, Youth Alive was a formal campus club organized around weekly meetings and even had by-laws which outlined the purpose and structure of the group. According to their by-laws, members elected fellow students to be next year's club officials at the end of each school year. There were four positions in the group: President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. The officials, like in most other campus organizations, were in charge of setting the agenda for every meeting and usually led much of what took place inside the physics classroom. The club advisor, Mr. Smith, from time to time would participate in discussions but, for the most part, left the students alone while he helped his physics students with homework or assignments during lunch.

Clubs are a formally recognized campus organization. There are political or cultural clubs like MeCHA, which is a common club in public high schools throughout the Southwest. There are other cultural clubs in some San Diego schools, like a Pan-Asian or Asian Pacific Islander club. Cultural or ethnic clubs tend to promote some types of academic resources.[148] As mentioned earlier, federal law protect the right of students to start

[148] There are hobby and special interest clubs, like Anime, photography, Rubik's cube, Magic, surf, and book clubs. There are also scholastic or science clubs, like the Chemistry Club and AP Scholars. Students Helping Other Students (SHOP), Helping Other People Elsewhere (HOPE), and SHARE who helps raise money on one campus for children in Africa are all versions of service clubs that organically form on high school campuses. One campus has the Gay-Straight Alliance registered as an official club on campus, a rarity in conservative San Diego.

a club without the fear of social discrimination. When a club is recognized, they have equal access to facilities and resources. This may include the ability to make public announcements through official channels and reserve space on campus without a monetary cost. A bible club is one of many types of social clubs one might find in a contemporary public high school in the United States, although most who identify as Christian are likely not active participants of these campus organizations.

Martha found the experience at Youth Alive to be overwhelmingly positive. Her interactions at the Club reinforced what she was being taught at church. These initial interactions allowed her to see if she could or would identify with the symbolic representations, discourses, and practices of the group; and, sure enough, she felt the Youth Alive offered her a familiar space in a new school environment. In some sense, Youth Alive provided Martha with a sense of comfort and normalcy in a new environment full of change and competing social identities. It did not take her long before she saw herself as a member and not just a visitor at Youth Alive. A year later she ran for Vice President and won. The following year, in 1998, she was elected President for the 1998 – 1999 school year.

Johnny remembers joining the club his freshman year. "The officers of the club pretty much ran the show." Attendees "would play games" and icebreakers to start each meeting. After, they prayed. "There were guest speakers sometimes but the officers […] prayed and gave a small talk about God that related to our lives." Johnny found it similar to church. "It was kinda like church, but without adults," he explained. "It was a good time. I usually went every week." Unlike racial privilege, Youth Alive did not have rewards, resources, and academic opportunities to offer its members beyond spiritual and emotional well-being. Motivation to participate is rooted elsewhere, inside the individual. When asked what motivated him to be so consistent with his attendance, Johnny started by saying,

"I was Christian and sorta became a 'Jesus Freak.'" He chuckles a bit and says, "There was a popular Christian song with that name while I was in high school." The song "Jesus Freak" was by a famous Christian trio known as DC Talk. It was their fourth studio release with Forefront Records and peaked at sixteenth place in Billboard's 200 chart in 1996. The following year DC Talk received a Grammy for "Best Rock Gospel Album" and, according to CCM Magazine, "paved the way for many Christian artists to come, and also upped the game for making great art without compromising a deep message of faith" (Sarachik 2015). Johnny admitted he would "listen to it all the time" while a freshman. The song influenced him and others deeply while undergoing identity formation in a new school. "I remember I began to take my relationship with Christ really seriously and began to read my Bible almost everyday." The song, along with other Christian albums, fueled his faith. "I would memorize verses and try my best to live a life worth calling Christ-like. I even wanted to die a martyr." Johnny describes his motivation to participate as a personal one. His participation in Youth Alive was voluntary and the collective identity of the group paralleled his personal identity as a Christian.

The following year, Joshua and Pedro started high school and joined Youth Alive. Joshua points out, "They were my friends. Chill people. They let us do what we wanted but also knew how to lead." While classroom culture reinforced a secular education, Youth Alive acted as a venue for religious education and cultural transmission in a non-dogmatic way. Club officers stressed the need to be relatable with peers while at the same time encouraged members to be more active with their faith.

Greg was fond of the idea of a Bible Club but only attended a few times early that school year. The majority of officials during years leading up to the turn of the century were women. Martha recounts, "There were some people who didn't like that very much." Greg

was one of them. Now a pastor in Orange County, Martha explains that there are churches who teach their congregation "that women can't be leaders and so they couldn't grasp the disconnect between the Christian club and their own church or religious rules, I guess. We tried to avoid all that legalism and just be ourselves." Johnny recalled talking to Greg after one of his visits to the club. "He asked me why women were in charge and that it felt strange to him given it was a religious club. I remember his skepticism about the whole thing but also could tell he was trying to be open minded, hence why he asked me about it." They talked but Johnny could tell Greg was still trying to wrap his head around the idea and reconcile it with the religious teachings of his church.

Greg was not the only one who had issues with women as religious leaders at school. According to Johnny, "There was this white girl, too, that had some issues with it." He remembers Becky as a nice person but her race stood out to Johnny as a primary descriptor most likely because Youth Alive members, toward the end of the 1990s, were by and large students of color. Early in the school year Johnny ran into Becky on one occasion during lunch. They began to talk. "I remember her getting all critical once about how women shouldn't be doing those kinds of things […] I told her I disagreed with her […] She came from one of those old-school denominational churches – that's probably why she felt that way." Johnny tries to rationalize the experience when he says, "It's pretty stupid if you ask me. But hey, we were all just kids; she didn't know any better." Given the various church backgrounds of youth at school, differences in religious practices stemming from theology are unavoidable and likely to be exposed.

In the end, Becky kept coming to the club and eventually became the club historian her senior year. She also left her childhood church that year, according to Johnny, and began to explore alternatives more compatible with the new ideas she was exposed to at Youth Alive.

However, Greg chose to hang out with his skater friends every day during lunch instead of developing friendships with some of the club members who also skated. He was not the only one. It is common for youth to entertain the idea of being a part of a school group that shares their religious identity and, eventually, decide not to commit. Thus, Greg is one of countless of examples of movement participants who do not join or identify with any group beyond his or her church or leisure groups.

The formation of social groups on campus is unavoidable and they function as a mode of social order, structure, and predictability (Hogg and Abrams 1998: 108). All clubs on campus not only serve a social function but are also in some way or another cultural, whether an expression of a subculture or niche interest or cultural phenomenon. A Bible Club is not usually seen as a subculture, but in many ways it acts as a space where culture takes place. In fact, each Bible Club is in some way a collective expression of what is already happening on campus and within the discourse of the broader evangelical community. Although Youth Alive had formal meetings, officers ensured a casual space for members and visitors, avoiding an imitation of antiquated church culture that more often than not was unappealing to a generation coming of age during the 1990s. The bible club served as a space were Evangelical youth culture was not only accepted but could be reproduced on public grounds as part of popular student culture. Members would share Christian music, devotional books, comics, and movies with each other and talk about the latest Christian alternative rock band in town. In this way, bible clubs in SSD like Youth Alive are student-driven social groups that provide a dynamic space for the promotion of religious assimilation at school that can expand evangelical notions of belonging and identity in public institutions.

ii. Missionaries trying to rock the school

In 2000, P.O.D. were flown out New York by MTV on several occasions. Two of their music videos from their Atlantic debut, "Boom" and "Rock the Party," reached the number one slot for Total Request Live (TRL), MTV's biggest daytime series at the time.[149] Votes by P.O.D.'s warriors and new fans were made by phones in the thousands. In addition to other network appearances, P.O.D. was invited to appear and also perform live on TRL on several occasions. Youth everywhere, including in Southtown, stared at their television screens as they watched TRL host Carson Daly interview P.O.D. on live television. Daly had immense influence on popular culture and what music was considered "cool" at the time. In one of their first appearances on the show, members of P.O.D. spoke about the love of God and how their faith inspires them to love and be real with the people they meet on tour regardless of differences, even race or religion. Carson Daly responded, on air, before hundreds of thousands of viewers that P.O.D.'s message was "about the dopest [sic] thing I've ever heard on this set" (Joseph 2010: 48). At that moment P.O.D. became the alternative to pop music and youth everywhere were buying their albums, downloading their music, and exploring other Christian artists in the hard rock, hip hop, or alternative scene in the millions.

Though P.O.D. had performed at local high schools before their fame, no one had ever organized an actual concert solely featuring Christian artists at a public school. Inspired by the music and the growing influence of P.O.D. at the time, Youth Alive officers considered organizing a concert as a form of religious outreach. Johnny recalls his junior year (1999 – 2000) as the year when "things started changing." He says, "The club didn't want to be just

[149] TRL host Carson Daly was a DJ on KROQ 106.7 FM in Southern California before landing the TRL slot. KROQ is one of the most popular radio stations in the region. Its "sister station" 91X FM plays similar music in San Diego and Tijuana.

about meeting on a weekly basis. [Club officers] would say we needed to stop treating our meetings like a Christian huddle or retreat from campus culture, but told us we needed to engage it on a whole new level." For nearly a decade, Martha and Joshua's church had been conducting outreach events in the community and, more recently, partnered with Rescue Records to provide music tapes and compact discs to youth in the church. In addition, hip-hop and hardcore punk artists signed by the label would come to the church and perform in efforts to evangelize to "lost" youth. Martha and Joshua, who were actively involved at the church, were now officials at Youth Alive and they wanted to see the group do something different than they had done previously in the past.

Over a series of weeks, Martha and club officers persuaded members that it was crucial that they activate their faith in a whole new way – as a group – and really make an effort to make the gospel known across the campus in a much more effective way than personal evangelism. The club decided to organize a concert that could substitute as an outreach event. When asked if their church pressured or convinced club officers to organize the concert, Joshua said, "Not at all! We wanted to. I had come from a church where youth outreach events were common. We would have music, graffiti, break dancing, and other youth stuff at these events. Youth loved attending them. I guess we just took what we saw and made our own version on our own soil, you know." Johnny describes the event a bit more. "The club organized a big concert at the gym. A bunch of local Christian rock bands came to perform. I forget the name of the event, but this was at the time *Matrix* [the movie] came out in theaters. The event was kind of a spin off of the movie in terms of the theme," says Johnny. It was hard work, he says, "We were all dedicated. And the officers had a point. As Christians it wasn't our duty to hide and retreat like we were doing. We needed to be out there and help bring people to Christ. At least that's how I saw it back then."

Over two hundred students from different high schools attended the afterschool event. "It was a big deal. There was even people from other campuses who attended. About three bands performed." The last band was "ultra passionate" about evangelism and did an "altar call" at the end of their set. Johnny said altar calls are more common in church than in schools. He describes it as the final moment in a church service when people in the audience are invited "to come forward to the stage and accept Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior […] a call for people to make a change in their lives. But its their choice to come forward. No one can make you accept Jesus, you make the choice yourself." Evangelist Billy Graham was the first to popularize calls to the "altar" in public spaces like arenas and stadiums in major cities. Today, altar calls are commonplace in churches and, in many of them, happen at the end of every Sunday service. After their last song, the last band invited people to come forward to the stage if they wanted to accept Jesus Christ into their lives.[150]

The altar call was part of the band's performance and was not organized by any member of Youth Alive. Members expected the concert to be space where people can be exposed to the evangelical message and Christian youth culture, not necessarily a replica of church practices. Yet the final band took it upon themselves to do an altar call at school. By his junior year, altar calls had become a normal experience for Johnny. He did not think much of them. "Some people went up and gave their lives to Christ," remembers Johnny. It was not an odd cultural practice for any of the club members though an altar call might have been an entirely new idea for many in the audience. "Maybe it was weird to do it at school and make an event out of it, but that's just because no one else had tried it before," Martha explains. "I've seen people do it all the time at church. And many of us had prayed the

[150] A public high school is not a church but a state school. I wondered if this was even legal. School administrators were not present at the time and were likely never made aware of what took place, according to Johnny.

prayer of salvation with classmates while at school," asserts Joshua. The event felt like a success and the "club did it again the year after and the year after that. We were a club on campus. We were entitled to reserve spaces on campus like any other club and do events after school," explains Johnny.

"I guess what makes this different was that it was a group effort and it was an outreach event," explains Johnny. If identity is a product of social consciousness, then actions based on identities committed by individuals are also a social product. Joshua makes it clear that the Youth Alive concert was not necessarily an original idea in terms of the cultural packaging of group evangelism. Rather, the concert was an imitator of church outreach events that religious youth had been exposed to within their church and broader movement. Having a cultural religious event like this at a public school does make it unique from those organized by local religious institutions or national movement organizations. However, the role of collective agency by youth is what truly makes this event significant.[151]

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[151] Youth ("adolescence"), as an unavoidable stage of human development, is marked by a new height of self-awareness that is sought out apart from the family and kin networks. The need for youth to feel they have agency and can craft an identity that is autonomous from their parents is critical at this stage. From the perspective of Erikson (1968: 183), youth avoid a sense of shame or doubt that comes with their awareness of self in a larger social universe by conforming to or resisting social norms and familial expectations. Under healthy development, *self-certainty* is achieved in this process of identity formation that prepares them for the challenges of adulthood.

Distinct from self-consciousness and its ties to self-doubt in early childhood development, self-certainty demonstrates one's ability to use past experiences to gain self-confidence that shapes future success (Erikson 1968). A youth must undergo a period of self-awareness & self-consciousness as an adolescent, typically defined by a focus on self-image, before accomplishing a status of self-certainty. She achieves this through constructive experimentation with different social roles instead of adopting a socially deviant identity. The anticipation of achievement is the primary impulse behind her experimentation, which permits her to overcome any feelings of inadequacy or inferiority that might arise in the process. During this process the youth gradually develops a set of ideals that establish boundaries for their experimentation and may seek out leaders (or role models) whose role she may try to imitate or aspire to in adulthood.

The religious activities by Bible Clubs are usually performed in the private sphere, usually meeting during the lunch hour, inside a classroom and behind closed doors. It is reasonable to assume that there is no other time during school hours where Christians would legally be allowed to exercise their religious devotion among peers without interrupting classroom learning. In this respect, these types of culture clubs embody the classic Protestant attitude of compliance where a believer is only responsible to resist worldly temptations and not act to change the world – the world will remain as it is until the "Second Coming of Christ." Until then, a young person is personally required to abide in his or her position and current calling as a "student" and, therefore, subordinate to ruling authority (Weber 1964: 274). However, this is not always the case after leadership changes or graduates within the club. Given the tremendous importance of charismatic gifts of the spirit in authenticating a religious identity (and the primacy of the preacher over the priest) in Protestantism (Weber 1964: 75), such groups may be persuaded to exercise their faith more publicly – perform religious group activities in public settings – when Charismatic student leadership is involved in the Club or any other Christian high school group.

As Johnny described it, "we just took what we saw and made our own version on our own soil." Joshua recalls the event as a "good experience" where he "learned a lot during the process and picked up a lot of skills trying to do things most teenagers didn't bother trying to do […] Like organize events. Build a basic website. Make flyers. Talk to people

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Self-certainty is useful for understanding individual human development but offers little insight to the way group-certainty is formed in the case of Youth Alive. In other words, members of the club not only had to feel an adequate sense of self-certainty in order to take public action as a collective but the group *as a whole* to a lesser or greater degree had to envision themselves as a legitimate collective identity independent from the church as their spiritual family. If self-certainty is the result of independence from the family, then *spiritual-certainty* can be characterized by a sense of independence from the church as a family. The concert as collective action is a symbolic representation of the spiritual-certainty these youths were able to accomplish.

and befriend strangers. A lot of social skills, you know. Also a lot of knowledge about putting on events like these. Like sound equipment and lighting." They exercised a spiritual agency that displaced or renegotiated their dependency on local movement organizations; thereby preparing them as adults that need not rely on religious authorities or institutions to set the grounds and conditions for a spiritual life of religious freedom. In short, the disruptive nature of Youth Alive's concert between the secular public and religious private was an exhibition of collective agency by youth that countered a normative approach to evangelicalism.

Every member of Youth Alive was at the concert. Students who had not been involved with Youth Alive for much of the year even came out to the concert to show support or to volunteer. This collective action was rooted in a collective understanding of group interests. In other words, the group had an interest in popularizing evangelical youth culture in their school because it presented some potential benefits, including the normalization of religious discourse and practices within student interactions in Middletown High. The production of meaning that took place that day changed the dynamic of future expected action of the group. It is no wonder that, in the following years, club leaders were expected to organize concerts that represented the collective identity of the group.

An individualistic vision of the world, and of what evangelism means for someone who identifies with the collective identity of the movement, has become the dominant view of moral politics in practice since the 1980s (Morone 2012). If personal evangelism is the dominant form of movement recruitment, it suggests that organizing an event like this fell outside the norm for most in the young group. As collective actors, this group of youth was not destined to organize such an event nor was their collective action inevitable given their close association with movement values, activities, and local networks. However, the

underlying structural condition was ripe for their activity and it was a matter of time perhaps that the rotation of leadership would inevitably introduce charismatic leaders, in this case NeoMestizas/os, who could broker a deal between individual lines of action and the need for consciousness raising of "outsiders" in order to express a solidarity that extended beyond their group and, in a more public way, with others who stand to benefit from the collective myths and identity of the group. Given the contemporary legal structure, evangelism in public schools would practically be non-existent if it were not for such students who incorporate religious practices as evangelism on campus.

E. Many teens, one Pentecostal spirit

For the majority of the twentieth century, segregated schools encouraged Chicana/o youth to collectively identify in ways that were distinct from other social groups. In a post-Civil Rights Era, the myth of progress provided a broader sense of shared nationalism and encouraged cultural integration across racial lines. In Chicana/o majority SSD schools, racial integration with the dominant group and popular culture was prominently expressed through hip hop and the Chicano punk scene at the same time it was also being expressed through Pentecostalism. According to scholar Arlene Sanchez Walsh, classic Pentecostal denominations as the Assemblies of God and Four Square have, for the most part, "abandoned the interracial harmony" celebrated by Pentecostals of the "host" society during the Azusa Revival (Tippet 2011).[152] However, Southtown NeoMestizas/os appear to have revived the cause for interracial belonging through the adoption of the evangelical subculture vis-à-vis Pentecostalism. Moreover, they reinterpreted the subculture to fit the

[152] Tippet, Krista. "[Unedited] Arlene Sanchez-Walsh (Spiritual Tidal Wave)." On Being, December 20, 2011. Web. June 17, 2016.

cultural milieu in a way that provides not only a meaningful interracial identity but an imagined space of belonging that heavily relies on religious belief and practices.

Lazaro, though undocumented, was not trying to fit in or feel more American by becoming Pentecostal. Rather, his new faith provided him with a peace of mind during a period of confusion. Through an unexpected route, he came to learn and believe in the story of Jesus Christ. In turn, he began to read the Bible in English. Though self-described as quiet at school, his English fluency increased by incorporating daily prayer into his lifestyle. He accepted the basic values and theological premise of American evangelicalism, all the while living in a Chicano-majority neighborhood. By internalizing Pentecostalism, Lazaro underwent a syncretic transculturation that provided him with a new language – exclusively in English – and a set of distinct practices that set him apart from most his peers yet enabled him to feel normal, legal, accepted.

Since Joshua grew up in church, he never underwent a dramatic conversion like, often, new believers like Lazaro do. It was typical for him to see people go up on stage during church altar calls and receive Christ and the Holy Spirit. Church and faith to him felt normal and ordinary. However, things changed for him when his classmate Nicolas began to ask him questions about his faith and how it informed his lifestyle. Fortunately for them all, Nicolas and Pedro had recently memorized numerous verses and began to share them with Nicolas and explain to him their meaning. Joshua explained to him why he identified with Christ but it was only through praying a confession of faith with Nicolas that Joshua's faith become evermore real to him. He was hooked by the experience and for the rest of his high school years he sought out more religious experiences while at school. Pedro, on the other hand, was much more introverted in high school and avoided religious conversations with peers though he did wear Christian t-shirts, a W.W.J.D. bracelet, and patches of

Christian bands on his backpack. Though not discussed here, in an interview, Joshua even claimed that God answered his prayer and performed a miracle that allowed him to pass his science class and graduate high school. With that answered prayer he ended his time at Alta High.

Manuel's religious identity was largely defined by behaviors. Living in a neighborhood with gangs, his faith framed his life choices in behavioral terms sharply defined as good or bad. His Abrahamic faith taught him that there was a difference between right and wrong. Drinking was wrong, swearing was wrong, being part of gangs was wrong, but being nice to people and avoid trouble was a good thing. Manuel still wanted to fit in. He dressed like other boys and would even listen to some of the same music as them. Even so, he refused to do the things most of his high school friends did after school or during the weekend, like party south of the border where underage drinking was illegal but largely ignored. He said no to drugs because he believed it was wrong. For Manuel, like classic Protestants, a sober life was a life to aspire for and his religious identity provided him with an alternative to underage drinking in Mexico and other self-destructive influences.

Robert was into Tejano music, particularly Selena, largely because his father was from Texas. However, all that changed after he attended an ATF conference at the start of high school. At the conference, led exclusively by white evangelicals, he was encouraged to forsake all secular music and instead only listen to Christian music. Believing that was the only way to please God, Robert traded his Selena albums for Christian ones. In the 1990s, the only Christian music around was exclusively in English and, as a result, he stopped listening to Spanish music altogether. Robert welcomed these changes because his faith, which he had in common with others at school like Mateo and Rosa, provided him with a new path by which to experience school. Before, he would play card games by default

during lunch because that is what his best friend did. Now, Robert had purpose in school and was part of the Bleachers, new space where he felt like he was expressing his most influential identity at the time.

As a teenager growing up in a single-parent household without a father figure, Mateo embraced Christianity vigorously. In particular, Mateo describes the Heavenly Father as constantly there for him whenever he needed guidance about life happenings. The Heavenly Father may not have a race or nationality, yet it is through the confines of language and a specific cultural context that one learns and interprets this version of God. Mateo learned all about his Father in Heaven through white evangelical mentors at church, books by white religious authors, and English versions of biblical scripture reading. It had such a tremendous impact on his life that it radically changed who he was and how he saw himself. He had no reason to seek to identify or preserve his Mexican identity, if he ever had one to begin with. He was solely focused on his identity as a Pentecostal and mobilizing his agency at school to spread the good news. His inclusive attitude and warm demeanor attracted others as well, including Rosa.

Rosa had a troubled upbringing and her only solace was through prayer. She never confessed a specific religious faith but somehow prayer to God felt natural to her. It was not until one day at school, when Mateo invited her to church, that she considered the idea of being a part of a religious group. At church, she felt welcomed and safe. This was a sharp contrast to the home she left behind in San Francisco. Though prayer was an important method to cope with her trauma, Pentecostalism and evangelical theology provided Rosa with a structure and language to pray that, according to her, brought healing and restoration into her life. As a result, she believed others could use prayer in their lives as well. Instead of preaching about prayer, Rosa would simply ask others if she could pray for them. In

doing so she shared her faith with others and became well-versed in American evangelical theology in the process.

Johnny grew up in church his entire life and was never pushed to be public about his faith. After a profound religious experience during a weekend church retreat, he desired to be more vocal and be intentional about sharing his faith with others. SYATP presented Johnny with the opportunity he longed for, to express his Pentecostal self in the fullest manner at school without inhibitions. Having others around him at the flag pole must have helped. After that, he became heavily involved with the Christian club at Middletown High. Though the majority of students were Chicana/o and bilingual, prayers at the flag pole and in the club were in English. There were people from all races and ethnicities represented at the club and English was their common language. It also happened that all the Christian music Johnny listened to was also in English, so he burned Christian CDs for all types of people to listen to. On one occasion he even organized a big CD giveaway on behalf of the club during lunch. He made a morning announcement over the school's intercom that the club was giving away CDs donated by Rescue Records. Over a hundred students showed up. He had them all wait outside, and in groups of twenty, they would sit in on a ten-minute sermon by a club officer before getting a free CD. No one told him to do it. Johnny was simply being innovative with the way he publicly expressed his Pentecostal faith.

Martha was glad she no longer had to attend her father's church and over time began to wear jeans instead of skirts to school. However, this did not diminish her faith but simply reflected her interpretation of the Pentecostal faith independent of her parent's Apostolic beliefs and practices. She believed that God could work the same miracles without the need for strict rules or guidelines based on legalistic interpretations of the Bible. With her new sense of empowerment, Martha sought to be a club officer and was elected to be the

President of her Bible club for two years. Her faith was far from the exclusionary or ritualistic practices of her parents' church and, thus, introduced an inclusive culture to the group where curious youth were welcomed regardless of their level of commitment to the evangelical message. She never associated aspects of Pentecostalism she adopted from the evangelical subculture, which stood in sharp contrast to her parents' form of Pentecostalism, as oppressive. Instead, it became a source of power where Martha could exercise her faith in public in very much the same way as her male counterparts.

Religious assimilation, or how these youths internalize Pentecostalism, inevitably translated into a new racial-religious hybrid culture expressed in their schools in the form of practices and expressed beliefs that engaged both dominant and popular culture at the same time. Instead of having an effect where NeoMestizas/os felt as outsiders or outcast from the general school population, Pentecostalism enabled them to somehow feel even more as if they belonged through a shared purpose and role in shaping and influencing campus culture. Though the social function of schools is to train the next generation of classes necessary for economic reproduction, the stories in this chapter demonstrate that religion played a significant role in the life of Pentecostal students during the 1990s. The social interactions and popular religious encounters of the 1990s produced and reinforced a Pentecostal worldview at the cultural and individual level for a significant number of youth in Southtown.

V. The Sixth Sun Still Shines

Who am I, I am you. I'm just like you.

I know you love me.

— P.O.D., *Know Me*

In Lak'Ech

(You Are My Other Me)

— Mayan precept

Not only do Chicanas/os represent the fastest growing ethnic/racial minority group in the country, they also represent the fastest growing segment in U.S. Pentecostalism. In a word, U.S. religion and demographics are becoming ever more, as P.O.D. might put it, "brown." While the dominant racial group grows smaller, national culture is becoming darker and brown-skinned devotees are complicating longstanding black-and-white notions of race that fundamentally defined belonging and incorporation into U.S. society. These adherents are introducing mestizaje as both a cultural strategy to belong and pan-ethnic identification that articulates multiple and relational identity positions (Pérez-Torres 2006: 51).

In a generation from now, Chicanas/os will no longer be a demographic minority. Now more than ever, the majority of Chicanas/os are growing up with experiences solely based in the U.S. This is having a major impact on culture in the U.S. Ten years from now, the overwhelming majority of Chicanas/os will be at least one or two generations removed from the immigrant experience. Their experiences are already changing the nature of belonging

and culture in America. Curiously, religion is playing a role in this process even as its significance declines across the country.[153]

Chicana/o religious practices and beliefs are changing. Identification with Catholicism steadily declines year over year as the Chicana/o population continues to shift from immigrant status to native-born. Why are these changes happening? What are the causes or reasons for these changes? Does it mean Chicanas/os are becoming less religious or changing religion altogether? How will such changes impact Chicano communities and identity in the years to come? The answers to such questions are varied and debatable, yet it has been the purpose of this study to explore these questions at the local level and in light of a booming Chicana/o population by taking a closer look at the role of Pentecostalism.

The purpose of this dissertation has been to identify the social and religious characteristics of San Diego Chicanas/os in order to shed light on the influence of NeoMestizos at the border community of South San Diego. This study has documented, described, and analyzed some of the causes and effects of the new yet undocumented cultural practices situated between the U.S.-Mexico border and American culture in order to highlight the ways religious assimilation is producing new cultural forms and identities integral to American life and identity in Chicano majority communities.

Considering the evidence collected and presented in this dissertation study, I argue that NeoMestizas/os are transforming the long history of mestizaje and indigeneity under dominant culture by creating new spaces of belonging and cultural representations that lead to an expanding evangelical Chicana/o experience, consequently challenging traditional

[153] According to Pew Forum's Landscape Survey, only 56% of all U.S. adults say religion is very important in their lives (2008).

cultural and religious practices, and complicating binary notions of race and belonging in the United States.

A. Revisiting religious assimilation

The study of Pentecostalism among Chicana/o populations has largely been over determined by congregational studies and church culture. Although churches continue to play an important role in the construction of the NeoMestiza/o experience, it is not the only site where expanding notions of evangelical Chicana/o experience are occurring. This dissertation study has been premised on the fact that additional approaches to the study of religion is required in order to account for a changing secular landscape that continues to modify religious practices beyond the control of religious institutions. In other words, a new approach to the study of Chicana/o religion in the context of a broader society is required to expand what we already know about Pentecostalism inside churches. This study aimed at investigating the relation between Chicanas/os and religion in a secularized, or non-congregational, context. In doing so, it found secular culture, public schools, and working-class youth to be the primary drivers of religious change for a new generation.

Religious assimilation, as a working concept, is critical to understanding and interpreting the findings presented thus far. The concept signals secularization and acculturation by NeoMestiza/o youth and the communities they belong to. Consequently, it describes a process without an end-state, or at least no end-state attributed to twentieth century notions of assimilation. Half a century ago, sociologist Milton Gordon (1964: 62) believed that complete assimilation meant incorporation into the dominant group, or host society, as the "final perfect product" of social contact. Demographics, culture, and society have dramatically changed since then, and although there is no way of predicting the course of

future interactions based on grand ideals of the white imagination of the last century, religious assimilation is a useful tool to interpret contemporary interactions that involve religious practices by non-whites in the context of a dominant white culture.

Religious assimilation, in this study, involves the longstanding process of *mestizaje* whereby subordinated or disenfranchised groups borrow from and interact with the dominant group's culture as a form of empowerment and self-dignity. In the U.S., religious assimilation enables Chicana/o and other peripheral groups to be integrated as full members of American society through the innovation of culture and forms of belonging. In effect, it is producing new cultural forms and identities that are becoming integral to American life and culture in and beyond Chicana/o communities. In essence, it is producing new cultural possibilities through interactions that blend and generate new culturally accepted behaviors that then propagate through the population.

This process is loosely associated with non-denominationalism, evangelicalism, and Pentecostalism in a U.S. context. It is an indicator of social change and describes a cultural interruption or paradigm shift away from the orthodoxy of the parent religion. As previously stated, it signals the secularization and acculturation of individuals and the communities they belong to. Instead of retreating from dominant culture, religious assimilation engages it by developing distinctly American cultures from the ground up. As such, the intensity of this form of assimilation can serve as a means to measure the propensity of religious traditions and secular culture at a given point in time. Thus, accounting for religious differences in a Chicana/o community allows for a differentiation between those social characteristics that remain unchanged since immigration and those that signal "modernizing" movements in the community where institutional forms of religion have less influence over social interaction and organizing.

B. Traveling back to the nineties

This dissertation sought to shed light on the NeoMestiza/o population that has internalized Pentecostalism and take into account some, though possible not all, of the social, political, and economic elements that have led to religious assimilation in South San Diego. The research of interest required an investigation of memory and perceptions by NeoMestizos in order to understand how NeoMestizos socially identify and how their religious identity shapes or influences their lifestyles or life politics as individuals or as a group. In addition, pursuing this research provided the opportunity to elaborate on the significance behind the increased popularity of non-Catholic Christianity within a Chicana/o community in the context of a major demographic shift currently underway across the nation.

By focusing on the 1990s, the study provided a means to document cultural memories during a period of religious revival in Chicano San Diego that gave rise to a growing number of NeoMestizos in the twenty-first century. The 1990s were a time of great political and social change for Chicanas/os. The country was recovering from economic crisis and neo-liberal trade agreements as the threat of domestic terrorism intensified, especially after the September 11, 2001 attacks in New York City and Washington D.C. In California, there were attacks against bilingual education and social services to immigrant children. In San Diego, the federal government militarized the border while Mexico underwent a currency crisis. None of these things and all of these things may have renewed an interest in congregational life in South San Diego, yet the history of this Chicano boomburb has received little documentation by social or religious scholars. It has been the attempt of this dissertation to document unknown and untold stories behind the vibrant culture of South San

Diego during the 1990s in hopes of inspiring others to begin to look more closely at the people who live there when contemplating and studying the most extreme southwest military border with Mexico.

Through field research, interviews, cultural archives, participant-observation, and surveys, this study examined the especially large presence of NeoMestizos in SSD in order to document the ways religious assimilation is producing new cultural forms and identities integral to American life and identity in Chicana/o majority communities. Field research provided an opportunity to explore the space and how people build their day-to-day lives under such unique social conditions. Cultural archives, including music albums and old newspapers, provided the contours and textures for the social environment studied. Participant-observations at local churches provided context for the culture and people under study. It also established empathy so that my thoughts and findings about the everyday lives of locals and their experiences were not unconsciously discounted or easily dismissed by observation or subjectivity alone. In an effort to empathize with the people I interviewed and groups I observed, I also listened to recorded sermons, read church newsletters, looked up yearbooks, and sampled some of their recorded religious music. Given this study's principal focus was religious life outside church walls however, many primary sources stemming from inside churches were only considered in so far as they proved useful for what I was studying outside the congregational environment. Above all, interviews with locals grounded my fieldwork, archival research, and observations. It provided an opportunity to get to know how participants think and what they think about. In retrospect, all these methods proved highly useful for understanding the many faces and human experiences behind the data my research topic.

In the end, this project had to be interdisciplinary in scope and process in order to accomplish its intellectual goal. This dissertation was originally conceived as a means to develop a framework for understanding race, religion, and the nation-state in in contested U.S.-Mexico border. By aligning key concepts and frames from Sociology, Cultural Studies Religious Studies. and Chicana/o Studies, the dissertation was an attempt to effectively expound on how the long history of mestizo identity is undergoing another transformation that not only accounts for expanding evangelical Chicana/o experience beyond religious institutions but also complicates notions of belonging in the U.S. through culture instead of conventional politics.

C. The expanding evangelical Chicana/o experience

i. Belonging where you belong

Joshua prayed in silence over his lunch at school, mostly because he wanted to fit in, avoid ridicule, and not be marked as different from peers. His desires were like most students in school who are not necessarily trying to stand out because of their faith. However, things changed the day he prayed with Nicolas during P.E. He was still embarrassed to pray over his food aloud but he was a little less embarrassed to do so and had learned to have no shame. He knew he was not alone. There were other students in his school praying for their lunch food as well. They were from all different backgrounds and a part of different scenes and subcultures. Aware of them and even friends with many, Joshua was comforted by the fact that he would still find a place to belong amongst the student population even if bystanders looked at him odd for praying for his food. The social conditions for Joshua's situation were not rooted solely in his freshman class or the school

culture, but belonged to a deeper, longer story tied to the accomplishments of the Civil Rights Era.

The post-Civil Rights Era expanded the myth of progress across racial lines and provided a new sense of nationalism that encouraged integration and emphasized similarities across racial groups in spite of structural inequalities. In Chicano San Diego, a multi-racial post-Civil Rights identity first emerged through the local production of hip hop music and culture. Like the fine men and women of the U.S. military, youth of color began to develop pride for San Diego, said to be "America's finest city." "Diego became a term of endearment and early rap groups like Aztec Tribes, WAW, LOD, and P.O.D. encouraged a racialized identity "from San Ysidro to San Clemente … for all the gente." There was some Spanish or calo incorporated into the music, which first shaped this regional identity, but by the end of the 1990s it was largely expressed in English. The cultural innovation of "Diego" or the "619" defined the collective experience of multiple races and ethnicities living in Chicano San Diego. It was the first new, imagined space of belonging that youth would draw on to build solidarity and collective agency.

At the same time youth were building a collective, secular identity revolving around the Chicano San Diego experience, residents began to attend religious revivals and Pentecostal churches with greater frequency. As previously discussed, OCHC held some of their largest evangelical crusades in San Diego during the early 1990s. Tens of thousands of people converted and who knows how many more did so by proxy. MAC then started up and evangelized Chicano San Diego youth in non-religious venues. Rescue Records organized the Exodus Tour, a similar event that featured an extreme sports exhibition, including professional BMX and skateboarders, numerous Christian clothing brands, and underground bands. Small churches imitated their approach but at a much smaller scale aimed at local

neighborhoods through lowrider shows, graffiti exhibitions, and dramatized productions. Pentecostal churches adopted modern instruments and often included loud contemporary music, a live band, a drama or comedy skit during their services. All in all, religious organizations and churches made the effort to be culturally relevant to local youth and not alienate their experiences. Youth from low-income backgrounds were welcomed to listen to live music, uplifting messages, and socialize all for free at local Pentecostal churches.

Attending a Pentecostal church increased youth's exposure to various other social groups, races or ethnicities, and cultures. Consider the findings in chapter two, where most regular church attendees in SSD go to a church which has a white pastor yet the congregation is likely a bit more diverse. Also consider that the first years of religious conversion are also correlated with higher church attendance and most Pentecostal conversions take place before the age of twenty. Finally, consider the idea that Pentecostals are more likely to attend religious study groups in private homes over all other religious groups. These considerations require further study not explored here. However, these factors combined suggest youth were some of the most active at their churches and, therefore, most likely to be exposed to the various ethnic cultures found in churches and private homes. It should be no surprise then to recognize that these religious spaces were some of the first spaces of belonging accessible to youth in SSD.

From such religious spaces of belonging came groups like P.O.D. At first, they mostly played home shows, garage shows, and backyard shows. Then they started playing at local high schools during lunch. P.O.D. opposed street violence and racial divisions that were socially-inherited to their community and utilized cultural activism to establish a new sense of belonging where cooperation over conflict could be established. They used a language of rebellion to create a space where one could be a punk or an outsider and also religious.

Eventually, they began to play at evangelical events or music concerts organized by church groups throughout San Diego County. They essentially redefined what it meant to be punk, hardcore, a part of hip hop culture, and sold out for Christ, creating new terms of belonging under subcultures and church groups. In the end, they normalized religious discourse in the local punk scene and helped normalized dreads, tattoos, and piercings among Pentecostals. In essence, P.O.D. were trailblazers who encouraged other Pentecostal youth to engage and not retreat from the culture around them.

Pentecostal youth began to take to the streets and schools in greater numbers after P.O.D. Recall, it was two youth who first spoke to Lazaro outside his home on the street about Jesus Christ. There, Lazaro cried and prayed to God out of a deep love he felt inside him after years of neglect and a deceased parent. Inside a classroom, not at a church, was where Lazaro first learned to pray, read and interpret the Bible, and further explore his newfound faith. It was only after graduating that Lazaro sought out a church to belong to. Surely he was not the only one, yet his story alone demonstrates how public schools, providing religious liberties to its students, unintentionally support religious spaces where youth interactions establish a place to belong.

The Bleachers and Youth Alive are two other cases that also document the creation of new spaces of belonging in public schools. The Bleachers served as an informal extension of youth's broader religious community. The group was formed organically in ways not permitted or guaranteed inside their church walls. Youth Alive provided youth with a sense of comfort and normalcy in a new environment full of change and competing social identities. Youth Alive and The Bleachers did not have rewards, resources, or academic opportunities to offer its members beyond spiritual and emotional well-being. The groups paid little attention to how other groups or outsiders perceive them, and any negative

stereotypes or ridicule they may have experienced as a result of their religious identity were largely ignored. For them, a sense of belonging was a higher priority. In other words, the these bible clubs served as spaces where Evangelical youth culture were not only accepted but could be reproduced on public grounds as part of popular student culture because they existed as student-driven and dynamic spaces for the promotion of religious assimilation at school. There were no social benefits provided by the groups themselves. It was individual motivation alone that drove members to join The Bleachers and Youth Alive. The groups made participants feel safe and normal. As such, they contributed to expanded notions of evangelical belonging and identity in public institutions.

ii. The cultural way to represent the new S.D. spirit

Given that Chicanas/os have relied on Catholicism for a sense of ethnic identity and considering the fact that the strength of religious identification is weakening among U.S. Catholics, it should come as no surprise that new cultural representations are emerging within Chicano communities. Considering findings in chapter two imply that orthodox practices and Catholic theology no longer appeals to many Chicanas/os, the fact that religion is still an important organizing principle in many Chicano communities, and Protestant identification in general have grown stronger in the 1990s, it should also come as no surprise that Chicanas/os are innovating new cultural representations through religion but not necessarily Catholicism.

Public prayer is one way to represent culture and how you pray may suggest new forms of cultural representation. Prayer is a common religious practice by both Catholics and Pentecostals, yet this study showed that SSD Pentecostals were more likely to engage in prayer than the majority of Catholics. By committing to the act of public prayer through

SYATP, Pentecostal students at Middletown High and Baja High demonstrated a once private social identity at a public school. As a result, students realized they were not alone and there were others in their school who shared the same faith. In turn, this encouraged many to explore new ways to publicly impact their school culture with their Pentecostal faith.

Through the act of public prayer, Pentecostal youth performed their faith in ways that drew attention by outside observers. Some criticized them while many ignored them. However, a few decided to join as a result. For example, recall The Bleachers who mainly kept to themselves and did not engage others as a collective group. They were Pentecostal and so speaking in tongues represented an important aspect of their collective identity and spiritual practice. They unintentionally drew the attention of outside observers. Their prayer sessions were often dynamic, loud, always encouraging and motivational. Peers began to informally find out about the group and became curious. Robert, one of the first to be a part of The Bleachers, recalls when "a handful of people started coming up to us and asking questions and from there we got a lot of [new friends who] started to go to church." They were working outside and independent of institutions, yet their churches grew as a result of the religious labor of youth. In many ways, these youth innovated what it meant to attend public school and what it meant to "hang out" during lunch. They introduced existential purpose that was well beyond school curriculum or scholastic programming.

Unlike Catholics working within the confines of a global institution, Pentecostals can broker deals along individual lines of action to act on their faith in robust ways that require no institutional sanction or support. This allows Pentecostals to engage the public in much more creative ways that exhibit a solidarity that extends well beyond their group and with others who stand to benefit from the collective myths and identity of the group.

Pentecostalism enabled them to somehow feel even more as if they belonged through a shared purpose and role in shaping and influencing campus culture.

Surprisingly, racial difference played an insignificant role in determining who would participate in bible clubs as Youth Alive or informal groups like The Bleachers and SYATP. Although most were Chicana/o given they were the local majority, many non-Chicanas/os participated as well. Filipinos and whites joined The Bleachers, proving race alone was an unreasonable cause to divide people or to prevent them from being part of the same group. Simply recall the former Satanist youth who once ridiculed the group and eventually renounced his faith to join The Bleachers. Youth Alive was first started by white students at Middletown High and no Chicanas/os participated the first year. Over a number of years, Chicanas/os became principal leaders and the club began to draw more diverse crowds. Elected officials became more diverse afterward, which included African Americans and Asians in addition to whites and Chicanas/os. Interestingly, whites became a minority in the club and at the school. Becky, for example, had a difficult time with this and considered leaving the club because of cultural differences she interpreted as religious differences. After having conversations with members, she decided to keep coming to the club and eventually became the club historian her senior year. She also left her all-white church that year and began to explore alternatives that reflected her experiences at Youth Alive. These groups were often more diverse than their local churches because they exercised a spiritual agency that displaced or renegotiated their dependency on local movement organizations. One might be tempted to attribute this form of racial "harmony" to Pentecostalism and the original vision of the Azusa revival. However, the social and cultural environment in SSD was conducive to the formation of this type of inclusive culture among these religious groups.

As previously mentioned, youth in Chicano San Diego had developed a sense of regional belonging through music production and consumption prior to the Pentecostal revivals of the 1990s. Tape recorders made music production and reproduction incredibly easy for a society that never before had the means to mass produce copies of music recordings so easily. The creative practice of sampling enabled working class youth in SDD to incorporate technology and consume popular sound bites in order to create new forms of music and sounds off of what was already familiar/popular by their peers and most expressive of local experiences. Through local production and consumption of music, youth identified under the banner of "S.D." and "619." The identity was a product of social consciousness. Though it did not solve for or end differences or even street violence, it worked as a cultural product from which people could draw on to build new cultural representations based on regionalism and not race or class differences.

It was out of the regional identity rooted in Chicano San Diego that Rescue Records built its brand and original following. The label was created to cater to youth and the musical influences and Christian punk and rap groups in the area established it as cutting-edge. Rescue's appeal quickly grew and youth across the nation were consuming their music through independent retailers and Christian bookstores. P.O.D. was their best selling artists. P.O.D. rallied fans as "warriors" to signify the spiritual battle they were all confronting on the streets of south San Diego. The "warriors" identity drew from Punk's DIY sensibilities with the practice of *rasquache*, which highlighted and celebrated P.O.D. as an underground sensation. The warriors became a new culture representation, mirroring P.O.D.'s multi-racial and spiritually oriented engagement with culture. As P.O.D.'s popularity extended well beyond SSD, so did those that identified as warriors. By the turn of the century, there were youth across Latin America, Europe, and Asia who identified as warriors.

iii. When things are not as they use to be

According to the General Social Survey (GSS), Catholic identification is the weakest it has been in four decades (2013). As mentioned in chapter two, the PRC found the strength of religious identification is weakening among U.S. Catholics. In SSD, the sample group surveyed alludes to a continued decline of Catholicism at the border. Although a high percentage continue to self-identify as Catholics, they are less invested in *La Virgen* as a religious deity even though she remains is a popular cultural symbol for racially diverse millennials. Only two out of three Catholics in SSD believe in *La Virgen* and a mere one out of six believe in the power of saints. As one participant put it, "No Catholic friend can explain to me why they believe in this stuff. They just do it because it's what they're supposed to do." Catholic cultural practices, as interpreted by contemporary Pentecostals, no longer appeal to many Chicanas/os. The role of traditional religion and religious practices has declined significantly. Now, more than ever, Chicanas/os are abandoning an identity that involves the Catholic faith or even growing up Catholic. Perhaps we can further conclude from this that Catholics are identifying with their religion out of tradition or convention and are not actually emotionally engaged with their religion in their lives because their only engagement with it is in church, while Pentecostal engagement with their religion is in a great many areas of their lives outside of church. This then helps explain how local practices have actually led to the rise of Protestantism and NeoMestizo cultures, and the dwindling involvement and retention of Catholicism.

This research shows that an acculturation process toward a more secular, less Catholic, Chicana/o America is currently underway. While Catholic beliefs and practices are on a decline, Pentecostal beliefs and practices represent the most vigorous religious activity in

SSD. As thoroughly documented in chapter two, Pentecostals were most likely to have prayed, attended a study group, read their bible, attended a worship service, listened to religious music, and/or tithed to their church in the last month. No other group or individual reported nearly as much engagement with their religious identity as did Pentecostals. In essence, Pentecostal commitment in the form of biblical literacy disavows Catholic tradition and their tithing practices, and donations to their location churches is funding the spread of their beliefs. All the while, no Catholics included in the survey sample are financially contributing to the Catholic Church. In essence, there appears to be a crisis of reproduction of faith for the Catholic Church in SSD in the form of beliefs and practices by those who still self-identify as Catholic, while at the same time Pentecostal churches, beliefs, and practices are experience tremendous upsurge of support by adherents.

Considering the growing appeal of Pentecostalism as well as the tendency for Pentecostals to evangelize others, it is no surprise that singer Sonny Sandoval of P.O.D. incorporated his religious beliefs in his rap lyrics to the band's hardcore sound. He could not help but have his new faith influence his writing and thinking. It should also not be shocking to view the founding of Rescue Records as not only music record label but also an evangelical organization intended to spread religious belief among youth outside the mainstream. Neither P.O.D. or Rescue Records, however, are without an awareness of the social problems affecting society at large. Rescue was founded on the belief that it was just as important to help youth deal with their social and emotional problems as it was to evangelize them. Similarly, P.O.D. incorporated social messages into all their albums, as discussed in some detail in chapter three. One participant said of Rescue Record's roster of artists, "It was different than what we were use to as Christian music. It opened my eyes more to see that Christian music doesn't all have to be the same." The music and sound by

Rescue Records artists like P.O.D. was culturally relevant for Southtown youth and their music shaped youth views on faith and cross-cultural engagement.

It is clear that there is presently a profound growth of strong Protestant identification in SSD while Catholic identification appears to be weak. For example, no Pentecostals reported saying religion was "not at all important" in their lives even if they did not attend church whatsoever. However, 13% of Catholics did say their religion was "not at all important" to them. Meanwhile, three out of four (76%) Pentecostals viewed religion in their lives as "extremely important" or "very important." Only 13% of Catholics felt the same way as the majority of Pentecostals. In other words, the strength of religious identification is weakening among U.S. Catholics while strong Protestant identification in the U.S. has continued to grow since the 1990s.

iv. Brown is the new religious white

The cultural practices of Pentecostals are not just disrupting the religious dominance of Catholic institutions but also transforming and reinterpreting white iterations of evangelical culture. As discussed in chapter three, youth were creating musically engineered discourses around interracial solidarity through ideas as "nobodies identical" and "taught to love one another, all races, all types of colors, different skin, difference faces." In addition, local bands were having increasing contact and interaction with people from different races and backgrounds outside of SSD. For example, Chicken Farm was the first youth band from SSD to perform outside of Southern California, including shows in Oakland, Oregon, Washington, and Tijuana.

In Pentecostal churches, Chicanas/os in larger numbers were having contact with white evangelicals and people from other backgrounds. Chapter two highlighted how church

attendance was highest among Pentecostals who attended a church with a white pastor than one that had a pastor who shared their ethnicity. Stated differently, 72% of those Chicanos whose pastor shares their ethnicity attend church once a month or less while three-quarters of Chicano Pentecostals with a white pastor attended church three or more times a month. In addition, Chicano Pentecostals with a white pastor stated they drove twice as far to attend church than Pentecostals with a pastor who shares their ethnicity.

It is unclear why NeoMestizas/os prefer or how they came to attend a church with a white pastor apart from religious assimilation. Future studies should explore this further and, in particular, explore the role of race in religious leadership as a way to study religious assimilation and racial integration at the congregational level. However, what is clear is that Chicanas/os surveyed are unclear about their racial background the younger they are in age. As discussed in chapter two, 62% of those thirty-five years of age or older who were of Chicano ancestry identified as white while only 20% selected mixed race and 10% did not know how to best identify. In contrast, 47% of those Chicanos under the age of thirty-five did not know how to identify while 33% identified as mixed race and the other 20% selected "white" as their race. In short, those that selected "Mixed Race" were by and large younger than those who identified as only White. As for Pentecostals, they were just as likely to identify as white as they were likely to identify as mixed race. In addition, they were slightly more likely to identify as Chicana/o, Latina/o, or Mexican than they were to identify as Hispanic. In contrast, Catholics were more likely to identify as Hispanics than Pentecostals. These findings strongly suggest that there are plural notions of race operating in and defining Chicana/o identity in SSD.

NeoMestizas/os are increasingly understanding themselves as a mixed race and the multi-racial groups they have come to form independent of churches is evidence of this. For

example, Youth Alive members, toward the end of the 1990s, were by and large students of color, yet whites felt welcomed through sharing a religious identity. Club officers stressed the need to be relatable with peers without discriminating them because of their sin or social background. This is, for them, what it meant to be more active with their faith. In other words, people's inner well-being matters most than what they look like or the clothes they wear. P.O.D. was one of the first in SSD to popularize this type of racial discourse.

As was previously stated, P.O.D. is a multi-racial rock group despite the fact they formed in a Chicano-majority community. Since the beginning, their music stressed the urgency to combat all forms of racism. In their first album, *Snuff the Punk*, they addressed racism and proclaimed "Racists come in all forms of colors black or white." In this way they were able to contest exclusions at their shows based on race, including racism against people from the dominant culture (white) from sharing equally in the space created by P.O.D. Their second album encapsulated not only their faith but also the inescapable impact of being "brown" in America. *Brown*, the title of their sophomore album, is an acronym for Believe, Receive, Obtain, Withstand, and Never die. It is the epitome of their mestizo consciousness because it connotes racial signification that mobilizes religious ways of knowing in order to produce a new way of being, or belonging, that can be understood by the dominant group. It describes a process of religious assimilation and coming of age in a racialized America that not only marks their faith but their brown bodies as well.

Instead of retreating to a prominent color-blind ideology within American evangelical culture, P.O.D. labeled and advertised their multi-racial experience in Chicano San Diego under the multi-racial identifier of "brown" and turned it into a consumer product. As discussed in chapter three, the message of Brown was encapsulated with the religious language of love. It was this message that shined the limelight early on P.O.D in their career

when Carson Daly, the host of TRL, on live television told a national audience that the band's message about loving people regardless of where they come from or what they look like was "about the dopest [sic] thing I've ever heard on this set" (Joseph 2010: 48). In the end, personal betterment for Pentecostals like P.O.D. is not only a spiritual journey but also a racial one where, despite how one is treated by the dominant group, a higher way exists and hatred against whites for unconsciously exercising supremacist ideology is not the answer. In many ways, P.O.D. and NeoMestizas/os from SSD revived the cause for interracial belonging lost by the Azusa revival and proceeding Pentecostal denominations. Moreover, they reinterpreted the evangelical subculture to fit the cultural milieu in a way that provided a meaningful interracial identity. In the end, the 1990s represented a powerful cultural intersection between both evangelicals and rebellious youth that sparked new cultural representations, created new spaces of belonging, disrupted traditional religious practices, and challenged dominant racial binaries that segregated forms of belonging. Much of this assimilation was accomplished through an expanded evangelical Chicana/o experience in South San Diego.

C. Preparing for the change to come

Today, religious assimilation has become increasingly popular to the "brown soul" as a path that enriches the revolution of the human self under global economic domination. But what does religious assimilation look like in brown communities? From an agency angle, how does it enable Chicanas/os and other peripheral groups to be integrated into American society through the innovation of culture? At a structural level, is this form of assimilation anything more than a compensation for economic poverty and forfeiture to capitalist culture? As of now, empirical evidence is insufficient to answer any one of these questions in full but it has been the aim of this dissertation to shed additional light by utilizing

religious assimilation as a concept for interpreting and understanding belonging for a subjugated segment of U.S. society.

The results of this dissertation must be considered in light of its limitations. First, there is not any literature exclusively focused on collective Chicana/o Pentecostalism in the public sphere that explores its impact and reinterpretation of culture. Although there are previous studies that have examined multiple churches or congregations to assess the relationship of Chicana/o culture and religious change, none of the studies considered how religion interacted at the public level through collective organizing by youth. Second, there is a need to examine in more specific ways how the relationship between religious assimilation and cultural engagement differs by people socially located along the immigrant-to-native spectrum that collectively shapes the Chicana/o experience. Unfortunately, few studies provided sufficient information to draw any meaningful conclusions. Developing an index for measuring and assessing acculturation and religious history appears to be a fruitful venture for quantitative approaches to future studies that desire to collect information about religious assimilation across multiple sites and cities. Finally, not all Latina/o subgroups are represented in the study given it was located in an area of San Diego that is densely populated by Chicanas/os and Mexican nationals. Studies in other cities as Chicago, Miami, and the Bronx might provide fruitful conversations about the role of Pentecostalism and evangelicalism as it relates to popular culture and public identification.

The strength of this dissertation is that it is more comprehensive and focused on public institutions and public spaces than previous studies given the study's inclusion and exclusion criteria. Little research has been done to understand this Chicana/o Pentecostalism outside the context of congregational studies. For example, Arlene Sanchez-Walsh has conducted one of the most extensive studies on the denominational history of

Assemblies of God and Four Square as it relates to race relations with Chicanas/os along with a documentation of two contemporary church networks, Victory Outreach and Vineyard churches (2003). Similar to Luis Leon's chapter on Victory Outreach youth culture (2004), Sanchez-Walsh even dedicated a chapter on examining the role of the evangelical subculture and its influences in a Spanish-speaking congregation. However, her work and that of Leon's exclude much of the social life of Pentecostals that exists well beyond church life. Though both scholars included some observations on the adolescent population in conventional evangelical settings, neither provided a focused a comprehensive approach to studying youth and culture in the context of an expanding evangelical Chicana/o experience.

A major contribution provided by this dissertation is the awareness of and initial documentation of the one *and* only Chicano boomburb in the country, referred to in this study as South San Diego. An overwhelming amount of Chicana/o scholarship has revolved around Los Angeles, more specifically East L.A. The historical focus on L.A. is understandable considering its twentieth century integration with the rest of the country through railroads, entertainment, and key events in the Chicana/o movement. However, a broader focus on other urban/suburban Chicana/o communities are needed if we truly wish to comprehend the unprecedented growth of Chicanas/os in the twenty-first century. We need to retire the idea that L.A. remains the epicenter of Chicana/o culture and look to other cities to shed light on the tremendous cultural changes that are transforming the long history of mestiza/o identity under a dominant culture. South San Diego presents a ripe opportunity for future research as the only Chicano boomburb to date.

The U.S. border with Mexico profoundly defines national identities, yet it only receives attention when conflicts arise or during election years. Furthermore, in immigration debates

and conflicts about national borders, there is an over tendency to define what is really at stake in terms of policies and laws. This type of framing does not take into account what is really at stake, the well-being and integration of immigrants with the communities they serve through labor and cultural innovation. Researchers must do a better job at understanding the effects of border policies and the "border-industrial complex" on historically disenfranchised communities as Southtown. By doing so, we may find ourselves in a better situation to understand how economic policies and political practices at the border influence religious phenomena in border towns and Chicana/o communities alike.

Culture is not static and Chicana/o culture should be expected to change, perhaps radically. There is much to consider about Chicana/o culture and its contemporary dynamics in light of the popularity driving Pentecostal adherence and national Latina/o population boom. Future research on American Christianity and national identity should seriously consider the implications of religious change in Chicano/a communities considering the fact Chicanas/os now represent the fastest growing ethnic group in U.S. Christianity. The implications on religious practices and national identity are tremendous.

The widespread growth of non-denominational churches throughout the U.S. has and will continue to change the culture of Chicano communities, and there are racial implications that still remain largely unknown. As this dissertation shows, there is indeed an acculturation process toward a more secular, charismatic, less Catholic, Chicana/o America currently underway and more studies similar to this one are needed to enlighten us all about the dramatic religious, cultural, and racial change that has been happening for the last two decades. Future research of Chicana/o religions needs to not only consider the relative influence of Mexican forms of folk Catholicism in the U.S., but also the growing influence

of secular culture and Pentecostalism in order to explain the current shift in cultural practices and a transformation of ethno-religious representation in Chicana/o communities.

In summation, this dissertation focused on beliefs and practices of NeoMestizas/os in SSD in order to understand how their faith is integral to their distinct religious assimilation and how it impacted broader society. The study identified social and religious characteristics of San Diego Chicanas/os and shed light on the effects of religious change felt through race, culture, and belonging at the border. Findings demonstrated that Pentecostalism is aiding the "browning" of America by creating multi-racial cultural representations and a new sense of racial belonging that challenges conventional religious practices and is transforming the long historical struggle of mestiza/o existence in North America.

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Appendix A

The Future of Religion Project

A Social Scientific Study of San Diego Society

GEOGRAPHY

1. **What city and country were you born in?** _____

2. **What is the zip code of your current residence?**

☐ 92154	☐ 92173	☐ 91932
☐ 91911	☐ 91910	☐ 91913
☐ 91915	☐ 91902	☐ 91950
☐ Mexico (city) _____		☐ Other (write zip) _____

3. **What is your primary zip code between 13 – 17 years old?**

_____

If you don't know your zip code, please enter the name of your neighborhood and city.

6. OPTIONAL SUBSECTION

A. In general, how do you identify?

☐ Heterosexual	☐ Gay	☐ Lesbian
☐ Bisexual	☐ Transgender	☐ Other (describe) _____

B. Are you married or live with your partner?

☐ Married	☐ Living with partner	☐ Single
☐ Separated/Divorced		

C. How important is it that your spouse or partner share your religion or belief system?

☐ Not at all important	☐ Slightly important	☐ Moderately important
☐ Very important	☐ Extremely important	☐ Decline to answer

D. How many years have you lived in the San Diego area (not Mexico)?

☐ Less than a year	☐ 1 – 2 years	☐ 3 – 4 years
☐ 5 – 9 years	☐ 10 – 19 years	☐ 20 or more years
☐ I no longer live in SD	☐ I never lived in SD	☐ Other _____

LANGUAGE AND ETHNICITY

Language, Race, and Ethnicity is arguably some of the strongest links to religious affiliation in U.S. history. The difference between English or Spanish or Hindi or Arab may mean the difference in religious affiliation, personal beliefs, and ethnicity. But recently the link between them and religion may be in fact weakening. The relationship between religion and social factors is growing more complicated and the next 6 questions provide crucial information to study the ongoing relationship between Ethnicity, Language, and Religion in Society.

1. **What is your native language?**

☐ English ☐ Spanish ☐ Other (describe) _____

2. **How important is your ethnic identity?**

☐ Not at all important ☐ Slightly important ☐ Moderately important
☐ Very important ☐ Extremely important

3. **What race do you consider yourself to be?**

☐ White or Caucasian ☐ Black or African-American
☐ Native or Indigenous ☐ Asian / Pacific Islander
☐ Mixed Race ☐ Some other race _____
☐ Don't know ☐ Decline to answer

4. **Did you immigrate to the U.S.?**

☐ Yes, before I was 5 years old ☐ Yes, between 5 – 12 years old
☐ Yes, before I was 13 – 18 years old ☐ Yes, between 18 - 22 years old
☐ Yes, when I was 23 or older ☐ No, I was born in the U.S.
☐ No, I have never lived in the U.S. I live in _____.

5. **Where either of your parents born in Mexico?**

☐ Yes, both my parents ☐ Yes, only my mother ☐ Yes, only my father
☐ No, neither parent ☐ Don't know ☐ No, decline to answer

6. **Are you Chicano, Hispanic or Latino?**
Such as Mexican-American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Mexican, Dominican, Central or South American, Caribbean or some other Latin American background.

☐ Yes ☐ No

7. OPTIONAL SUBSECTION

A. Do you prefer any of these terms to describe your cultural background?
Choose all that apply.

☐ Chicano (Mexican-American) ☐ Latino / Latina ☐ Hispanic
☐ Mexican ☐ No preference ☐ None

B. In general, do you think discrimination against Mexicans, Chicanos, and Latinos is a major problem, minor problem, or not a problem in preventing Hispanics/Latinos in general from succeeding in America?

☐ Major problem ☐ Minor problem ☐ Not a problem
☐ Don't know ☐ Decline to answer

C. In general, do you think discrimination against African-Americans and Blacks is a major problem, minor problem, or not a problem in preventing Hispanics/Latinos in general from succeeding in America?

☐ Major problem ☐ Minor problem ☐ Not a problem
☐ Don't know ☐ Decline to answer

D. In general, do you think discrimination against Christians is a major problem, minor problem, or not a problem in preventing Hispanics/Latinos in general from succeeding in America?

☐ Major problem ☐ Minor problem ☐ Not a problem
☐ Don't know ☐ Decline to answer

E. In general, do you think discrimination against Muslims is a major problem, minor problem, or not a problem in preventing Hispanics/Latinos in general from succeeding in America?

☐ Major problem ☐ Minor problem ☐ Not a problem
☐ Don't know ☐ Decline to answer

F. Would you say you can carry on a conversation in Spanish, both understanding and speaking?

☐ Very well ☐ Pretty well ☐ Just a little ☐ Not at all

G. How frequently do you read books or magazines in Spanish?

☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always

H. How frequently do you watch TV or videos in Spanish?

☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always

I. How satisfied are you with your ability to read and speak English?

☐ Not at all ☐ Slightly ☐ Moderately ☐ Very ☐ Completely

RELIGION AND INDIVIDUALS

PERSONAL BELIEF SYSTEM

Increasingly, Americans are making up their own minds and the role of religion in strictly defining personal beliefs continues to diminish. These 6 questions represent the first third of the religious dimension of this survey and provide insight on: *Religious teachings in today's society.*

1. **Generally speaking, how important is religion in your life?**

☐ Not at all important ☐ Slightly important ☐ Moderately important
☐ Very important ☐ Extremely important

2. **Which of the following do you believe in?** Choose as many as you like.

☐ Spirits ☐ A higher spirit but not God ☐ God
☐ Gods ☐ Goddesses ☐ *Virgen de Guadalupe*
☐ The Devil ☐ God as universal life force ☐ Angels
☐ Demons ☐ God as a personal being ☐ Jesus Christ as Savior
☐ Don't know ☐ None of the above

3. **Which of the following do you believe in?** Choose as many as you like.

☐ The soul ☐ Reincarnation ☐ Human evolution
☐ Hell ☐ Karma ☐ Power of deceased ancestors
☐ Power of saints ☐ Life after death ☐ Humans are simply material
☐ Heaven ☐ Divine healing ☐ Prophets and prophecies
☐ Western medicine ☐ Don't know ☐ None of the above

4. **In the last month, in what ways did you practice your beliefs?** Choose as many as you like.

☐ Daily prayer ☐ Prayer groups ☐ Scripture reading
☐ Worship service ☐ Fasting ☐ Religious or spiritual music
☐ Public events ☐ Rituals & Ceremonies ☐ Sharing with non-believer
☐ Other (describe) _____ ☐ None of the above

5. **Of your three closest friends today, how many share your religious views?**

☐ None ☐ One ☐ Two ☐ All Three

6. **How old is the planet?** If you don't know, give your best guess.

_____

RELIGIOUS ATTENDANCE

Churches, temples, and synagogues have played a central role for the first two hundred years of U.S. history. Over the last century their role in the public space has dramatically declined. These 9 questions represent a third of the religious dimension of this survey and provide insight on: *Religion attendance in today's society.*

1. **Of your three closest friends today, how many regularly attend a place of worship?**

☐ None ☐ One ☐ Two ☐ All Three

2. **Do you attend religious services in any of the following places?**
Please select the best word that describes your place of worship.

☐ Church ☐ Temple ☐ Synagogue
☐ Mosque ☐ Congregation ☐ Parish
☐ I don't attend any ☐ Other _____

2.x **Please write below the main reason you attend or don't attend a particular place of worship:** ☐ Decline to answer

write below this line.

Now take one of the two options below.

☐ If you attend a place of worship, continue to answer Questions #3 – 9.

☐ If you answered Question #2 as "I don't attend any," go to the next section: Religious Attendance.

3. **What is the name of your place of worship?**

☐ Decline to answer ☐ Name of place:
_____

4. **In a typical month, how frequently do you attend this place?**

☐ 1 time ☐ 2 – 3 times ☐ 4 – 5 times
☐ More than 5 ☐ Less than 1 (rarely) ☐ Not at all

5. **Does your pastor share the same ethnicity as you?**

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't have a pastor

6. **Generally speaking, how far is this place of worship from your home?**

☐ Less than a mile ☐ 1 – 4 miles ☐ 5 – 9 miles
☐ 10 – 19 miles ☐ 20 – 29 miles ☐ 30 or more miles

7. **When you attend this place, how many attendees are Mexican, Hispanic or Latino?**

☐ All ☐ Most ☐ Some ☐ A few
☐ None ☐ Don't know

8. **Would you prefer to attend church/temple/etc. in Spanish, or doesn't it matter?**

☐ Prefer to attend service in Spanish ☐ Prefer to attend service in English
☐ Doesn't matter if service is in Spanish or not ☐ Decline to answer

9. **Does your church/temple/etc. have close ties to Baja California, Mexico?**

This includes sending money or missionaries or by receiving clergy who visit from there. It can also include providing food or clothing, or some kind of volunteer work.

☐ Yes, it maintains close ties to Tijuana ☐ No, it does not
☐ Other (describe) _____ ☐ Don't know. ☐ Decline to answer

9.x **If so, briefly describe the ties your church/temple/etc. has to Baja California, Mexico?**

write below this line.

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

Religion is not something most can easily escape nor would want to escape. About 3 out of 4 Americans report to be affiliated with religious group. Some studies project the nation will be less religious in the future, but not all sectors of the population. These 9 questions represent a third of the religious dimension of this survey and provide insight on: *Religion affiliation in today's society.*

1. **How important is it that your close friends understand your religion or beliefs?**

☐ Not at all important ☐ Slightly important ☐ Moderately important
☐ Very important ☐ Extremely important

2. **Which, if any, of the following terms best describe your religious identity?**
Chose as many as you like.

☐ Bible-believing ☐ Charismatic ☐ Theologically conservative
☐ Evangelical ☐ Mainline/Denominational ☐ Religious Right
☐ Born-Again ☐ Fundamentalist ☐ Religious Left
☐ Other _____ ☐ None of the above ☐ Decline to answer

3. **What is your preferred religious group?**
Only pick one.

☐ Roman Catholic ☐ Cultural Catholic ☐ Christian (non-denominational)
☐ Mainline Protestant ☐ Orthodox Christian ☐ No Religion (Faith in Christ)
☐ No Religion (Agnostic) ☐ No Religion (Spiritual) ☐ No Religion (Atheist)

☐ Jehovah Witness ☐ Mormon ☐ Humanist or Secularist
☐ Jewish ☐ Muslim ☐ Buddhist
☐ Hindu ☐ Other - Christian ☐ Other _____
☐ Don't know ☐ Decline to answer

4. **How old were you when you began to identify with the social group above?** _____

5. **To what extent would you describe the wider community's understanding of your religious group?**

☐ Excellent ☐ Adequate ☐ Good ☐ Poor ☐ None at all
☐ Don't know

6. **How important is it to you that the wider community improve the understanding of your religious group?**

☐ Not at all important ☐ Slightly important ☐ Moderately important
☐ Very important ☐ Extremely important

7. **Do you wear or display religious symbols as jewelry, accessories, prints, or clothing?**

☐ Yes I do ☐ Yes, only in the past ☐ No, never!

8. **Generally speaking, does your religious group influence your views on government and elections?**

☐ Not at all true of me ☐ Slightly true of me ☐ Moderately true of me
☐ Very true of me ☐ Completely true of me

9. **Are you registered to vote?**

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know
☐ Decline to answer

RELIGIOUS PAST

Your religious affiliation is liked to your social upbringing, including ethnicity and language. These 8 questions represent a record of your upbringing as it relates to America's religious history.

1. **Between the ages of 5 – 17 years old, how frequently did your parents or family encourage you to attend church or be religious?**

☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always

2. **On a typical month between the ages of 13 – 17 years old, how frequently did you attend a place of worship?**

☐ 1 time ☐ 2 – 3 times ☐ 4 – 5 times
☐ More than 5 ☐ Less than 1 (rarely) ☐ Not at all

3. **Of your three closest friends between 13 – 17 years old, how many regularly attended a place of worship?**

☐ None ☐ One ☐ Two ☐ All Three

4. **Were you religious or spiritual between any of the following age groups?**
Choose all that apply.

☐ 5-12 years old ☐ 13-17 years old ☐ 18-22 years old ☐ Not at all

If you answered "Not at all" above, please go to Questions #8.
Everyone else please answer Questions #5 - #7.

5. **During these ages, in what ways did you practice your beliefs?** Choose as many as you like.

☐ Daily prayer ☐ Prayer groups ☐ Scripture reading
☐ Worship service ☐ Fasting ☐ Religious or spiritual music
☐ Public events ☐ Rituals & Ceremonies ☐ Sharing with non-believer
☐ Other (describe) _____ ☐ None of the above

6. **What was your religious identity during the age group you selected above?** Only pick one.

☐ Roman Catholic ☐ Cultural Catholic ☐ Christian (non-denominational)
☐ Mainline Protestant ☐ Orthodox Christian ☐ Other - Christian
☐ Jehovah Witness ☐ Mormon ☐ Humanist or Secularist
☐ Jewish ☐ Muslim ☐ Buddhist
☐ Hindu ☐ Other _____ ☐ Decline to answer

7. **How old were you when you stopped identifying with the religious group above?**

☐ I stopped practicing this religion at the age of _____. ☐ I am still religious

7.x If you answered "I am still religious" above, please skip the next question.
What is the primary reason you stopped attending church or being religious?

| write below this line.
|
|

8. **What is most important to you today?**
Select only one.

☐ Religion ☐ Spirituality ☐ Faith
☐ None ☐ Alternative _____

8.x **Would you care to explain your answer?**

| write below this line.
|
|

EDUCATION HISTORY

The link between religious affiliation and educational attainment continues to be debated. The following 10 questions allow this study to compare religious differences and similarities based on educational history. There is a chance the data may show a link between the two.

1. **Between the ages of 5 – 17 years old, how frequently did your parents or family encourage you to attend college?**

☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always

2. **Did you attend school in Mexico during any of the following age groups?**

☐ 5-12 years old ☐ 13-17 years old ☐ 18-22 years old
☐ Not at all

3. **Did you attend school in California during any of the following age groups?**

☐ 5-12 years old ☐ 13-17 years old ☐ 18-22 years old ☐ Not at all

4. **Did you attend any of the following schools between 13 – 17 years old?**
Refer to the map on the cover of this survey for exact zip codes considered as part of South Bay.

☐ Primary school ☐ Secondary school ☐ Sunday school
☐ Public high school ☐ Karate school or similar ☐ Detention at school
☐ Private high school ☐ Christian high school ☐ Catholic high school
☐ Public charter school ☐ Private charter school ☐ Homeschool
☐ College or University ☐ School for college preparation
☐ Online school (explain):
_____

5. **Generally speaking, how far was your school from your home?**

☐ Less than a mile ☐ 1 – 4 miles ☐ 5 – 9 miles
☐ 10 – 19 miles ☐ 20 – 29 miles ☐ 30 or more miles

6. **Was your culture taught by school teachers?**
If so, select the schools that apply:

☐ Primary school ☐ Secondary school ☐ Sunday school
☐ High school ☐ Not sure ☐ Not at all
☐ Other _____

7. **Did school textbooks contain information about your ancestor's history?**
If so, select the schools that apply:

☐ Primary school ☐ Secondary school ☐ Sunday school
☐ High school ☐ Not sure ☐ Not at all
☐ Other _____

8. **Did school teachers and staff personally encourage you to attend college?**
If so, select the schools that apply:

☐ Primary school ☐ Secondary school ☐ Sunday school
☐ High school ☐ Not sure ☐ Not at all
☐ Other _____

9. **How important is it that your children attend college?**

☐ Not at all important ☐ Slightly important ☐ Moderately important
☐ Very important ☐ Extremely important ☐ Don't plan to have children

10. **What is your highest level of education?**

☐ Less than high school grad ☐ High school graduate ☐ GED
☐ Some college ☐ Vocational or trade certificate ☐ A.A. degree
☐ B.A. degree ☐ Post-B.A. degree

CHILD REARING

Birth rates are the highest source or growth in major world religions like Christianity and Islam. The following questions help us measure the relationship of religion and child rearing at a social level.

1. **Do you have any children?**

☐ Yes, they live with me ☐ Yes, they don't live with me
☐ No, but my hope is I will some day ☐ No, I don't plan to have children at all

1.x **Based on your response above, take one of the following actions:**

☐ If you answered "No, I don't plan to have children at all," skip this section and go to the next section: Socio Economic Status.

☐ If you have or plan to have children, please continue to answer all the questions in this section.

2. **How important is it that your children know how to speak English?**

☐ Not at all important ☐ Slightly important ☐ Moderately important
☐ Very important ☐ Extremely important

3. **How important is it that your children know how to speak Spanish?**

☐ Not at all important ☐ Slightly important ☐ Moderately important
☐ Very important ☐ Extremely important

4. **How important is it to you that your children share your religious views?**

☐ Not at all important ☐ Slightly important ☐ Moderately important
☐ Very important ☐ Extremely important

5. **How important is it to you that your children believe in God?**

☐ Not at all important ☐ Slightly important ☐ Moderately important
☐ Very important ☐ Extremely important

6. **Right now, do you have children 0 – 12 years old?**

☐ No ☐ 1 child ☐ 2 children ☐ 3 or more children

7. **Did you or do you plan to raise your children between the ages of 0 – 12 years old according to your belief system?**

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure ☐ Decline to answer

7x. **Please explain your answer for Question #7?**

write below this line.

8. **Does your child or children 13 years old or older share your religious beliefs?**

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure ☐ Other _____
☐ Don't have children 13 years or older ☐ Decline to answer

9. **In general, how important is it to you that your children be religious but not necessarily your religion?**

☐ Not at all important ☐ Slightly important ☐ Moderately important
☐ Very important ☐ Extremely important

10. OPTIONAL SUBSECTION

Our parents are our first contact with the world. They are often the first to explain things to us as children. These 7 questions measure outcomes of child rearing by establishing a parent-to-child religious transmission record. By filling in questions below, you add a new dimension to the study: *The religious affiliation of future adults.*

A. Do you have children less than 5 years old living in your household?

☐ No ☐ 1 child ☐ 2 children ☐ 3 or more children

B. Do you have children between 5 – 12 years old living in your household?

☐ No ☐ 1 child ☐ 2 children ☐ 3 or more children

C. How frequently do you teach your child or children your religious beliefs?

☐ Never ☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often ☐ Always

D. Do you have children between 13 – 17 years old living in your household?

☐ No ☐ 1 child ☐ 2 children ☐ 3 or more children

E. Do you have any of your children between 18 – 22 years old living in your household?

☐ No ☐ 1 child ☐ 2 children ☐ 3 or more children

F. Do you have any of your children between 23 or older living in your household?

☐ No ☐ 1 child ☐ 2 children ☐ 3 or more children

G. Does your child or children 13 years or older share your religious beliefs?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure ☐ Decline to answer
☐ Other _____

Congrats! You just completed a parental-to-child transmission record.

SOCIO ECONOMIC STATUS

The following questions are this study's implementation of the Socio-Economic Status (SES) measurement in social sciences. SES questions have been proven to be the most effective correlate with predicting your personal educational achievement since 1916.

1. **What best describes your employment status?**

☐ Employment Full-Time ☐ Employment Part-Time ☐ Homemaker
☐ Self-employed Full-Time ☐ Self-employed Part-Time ☐ Stay at home parent
☐ Business owner ☐ Retired ☐ Business owner
☐ Registered Student ☐ Unemployed ☐ Disabled
☐ Don't know ☐ Decline to answer

2. **Generally speaking, how far is work from your home?**

☐ Less than a mile ☐ 1 – 4 miles ☐ 5 – 9 miles
☐ 10 – 19 miles ☐ 20 – 29 miles ☐ 30 or more miles

3. **What is your current occupation?**

_____

If you are retired or unemployed, write in your last occupation.

4. **What industry did you primarily work in?** Select only one.

☐ Agriculture ☐ Construction ☐ Utilities
☐ Manufacturing ☐ Wholesale Trade ☐ Transportation & Warehousing
☐ Information ☐ Finance & insurances ☐ Real Estate, rental & leasing
☐ Education services ☐ Health Care ☐ Professional or Scientific
☐ Food services ☐ Government ☐ Technical or Administrative
☐ Arts and entertainment ☐ Mining ☐ Other Services_____
☐ Have never worked

6. **What is the longest you've gone without an income?**

☐ Less than 1 month ☐ 1 – 2 months ☐ 3 – 6 months
☐ 6 – 12 months ☐ More than 1 year ☐ Never

7. **In the past year, how many times have you moved?**

☐ One time ☐ 2 times ☐ 3 times or more ☐ None

8. **Does your family own or rent the home you live in?**

☐ Own ☐ Own (with mortgage) ☐ Rent ☐ Don't know

9. **How many rooms are in your home?** Do not count your kitchen or baths.

☐ 1 - 2 ☐ 3 - 4 ☐ 5 – 6 ☐ 7 – 8 ☐ 9 or more

10. **Do you own a personal computer or laptop?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

11. **Do you have broadband internet access at home?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

12. **Do you have a Facebook or Snapchat account?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

In a month, how frequently do you cross the border into Mexico or USA?

☐ Never ☐ 1 – 2 times a month ☐ 3 – 6 times a month
☐ 6 – 12 times a month ☐ 15 or more times a month ☐ Other: _____

What are the main reasons you cross the border into Mexico or USA?
Select up to three reasons you cross the border.

☐ Family visits ☐ Shopping ☐ Health ☐ Business
☐ Work ☐ Tourism ☐ Vacation ☐ Home
☐ Social ☐ Nature ☐ Night life ☐ Gambling
☐ Other: _____

13. **What is your total household income from all sources before taxes in 2015?**

☐ Less than $20,000 ☐ $20,000-$39,999 ☐ $40,000-$59,999
☐ $60,000-$79,999 ☐ $80,000-$99,999 ☐ $100,000-$119,999
☐ $120,000-$139,999 ☐ $140,000-$159,999 ☐ $160,000-$179,999
☐ $180,000-$199,999 ☐ $200,000 or more ☐ Decline to answer

14. **How true is the claim that God is responsible for your current economic status?**

☐ Not at all true ☐ Slightly true ☐ Moderately true ☐ Very true
☐ Completely true

14.x **Please, explain your answer for Question #14.**

write below this line.

15. **How true is the claim that your faith has nothing to do with your economic status?**

☐ Not at all true ☐ Slightly true ☐ Moderately true ☐ Very true
☐ Completely true

15.x **Please, explain your answer for Question #15.**

write below this line.

16. **In general, others identify you as what gender?**

☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Not sure

17. OPTIONAL SUBSECTION

Want to share basic information about your parents?

We all grew up in ways we could not control. These 12 questions measure the impact of our social upbringing in a diverse society.They help understand your socio-economic origins. By filling them out, you add a new dimension to the study: *Social classes and religion in the future.*

A. Were you raised in a single-parent household?

☐ Yes ☐ No

B. Did your parents immigrate to the United States? Select all true answers.

☐ Father ☐ Mother ☐ You ☐ I don't know

C. Who in your family is a U.S. citizen? Select all true answers.

☐ Father ☐ Mother ☐ You ☐ I don't know

D. What is your father's highest level of education?

☐ Primary education only
☐ Some High school
☐ High school graduate
☐ Some college
☐ A.A. degree
☐ Post-B.A. degree
☐ Don't know
☐ Secondary school graduate
☐ High school graduate
☐ GED
☐ Vocational or trade certificate
☐ B.A. degree
☐ No formal education

C. What is your father's current occupation?

_____

If he is retired or deceased, write in his last occupation.

D. What industry does your father primarily work in? Select only one.

☐ Agriculture ☐ Mining ☐ Utilities
☐ Construction ☐ Manufacturing ☐ Wholesale Trade
☐ Real Estate, rental & leasing ☐ Transportation & Warehousing
☐ Information ☐ Finance and insurances ☐ Arts & entertainment
☐ Education services ☐ Health Care ☐ Professional or Scientific
☐ Food services ☐ Government ☐ Technical or Administrative

☐ Other Services_____ ☐ Did not work

E. What is your mother's highest level of education?

☐ Primary education only
☐ Some High school
☐ High school graduate
☐ Some college
☐ A.A. degree
☐ Post-B.A. degree
☐ Don't know
☐ Secondary school graduate
☐ High school graduate
☐ GED
☐ Vocational or trade certificate
☐ B.A. degree
☐ No formal education

F. What is your mother's current occupation?

_____

If she is retired or deceased, write in her last occupation.

G. What industry did your mother primarily work in? Select only one.

☐ Agriculture ☐ Mining ☐ Utilities
☐ Construction ☐ Manufacturing ☐ Wholesale Trade
☐ Real Estate and rental and leasing ☐ Transportation & Warehousing
☐ Information ☐ Finance & insurances ☐ Arts & entertainment
☐ Education services ☐ Health Care ☐ Professional or Scientific
☐ Food services ☐ Government ☐ Technical or Administrative
☐ Other Services_____ ☐ Did not work

H. Would you consider your parents to be Americanized?
If you are unfamiliar with *Americanized*, you are not alone. It describes a person who acquires or conforms to American characteristics, is under the influence of American politics, language, culture, or commerce.

☐ Father ☐ Mother ☐ You ☐ I don't know
☐ None

I. Do your parents have a foreign accent? Select all true answers.

☐ Father ☐ Mother ☐ You ☐ I don't know
☐ None

J. As a child, what was the total number of books in your home?

_____