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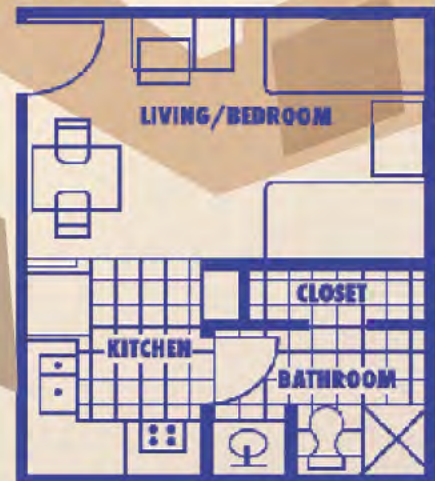


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FEATURES



WHEN THE MAJORITY BECOMES THE MINORITY

BY ANDRÉS RODRÍGUEZ

Anglos and African Americans, who together make up 16 percent of El Paso's population, experience complications with the language and cultural differences in a city comprised of 82 percent Hispanics.

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I JUST WANT TO DANCE

BY ALEJANDRO ALBA

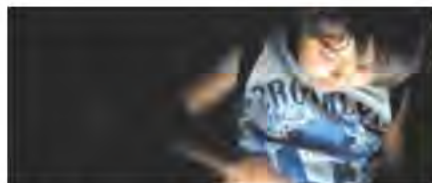
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MINERO MAGAZINE Welcomes your comments. Please send us an email at minero@utep.edu

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MINERO
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Volume XV Fall 2012

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FROM THE EDITOR

I tried to come up with a word to describe this, the 15th issue of *Minero Magazine*, and I couldn't. We didn't set out to make an issue about perseverance or overcoming adversity, we set out to produce an issue with stories that are worth telling and that reflect our community's diversity and changing growth.

This is the first time that I have worked for a magazine, and I am happy and glad that I got to do it for such a respected and award-winning one. In high school, as the little journalism kid, I remember an issue of *Minero* making its way into my hands. I liked it. I was surprised at how crisp and neat it looked. "So professional," I thought. I remember bringing it in and telling the yearbook staff that we didn't have to look far to find inspiration for designs or stories.

I was then a young high-schooler, thinking about what big city I was going to attend college at, but there I was reading an actual magazine about my hometown. It was then that I came to the realization that this region has something to say. That in this borderland, great things happen and great stories are there for the taking.

Our hope is that this issue reflects our borderland—a hub for talented performers; a community that is growing with media and technologies; and a region with an outspoken and culturally diverse population.

Included in this issue are stories that attempt to truly give the minority a voice. We write about what it is like for Anglos, the 63.7 percent majority in the United States and African Americans, at 12.6 percent, to live in a city where 82.2 percent of the population is Hispanic.

Also a minority force are the local filmmakers, who strive to continue making movies with the resources available in El Paso, which is fifth place in film production in Texas. The filmmaking scene in the city isn't very well-acknowledged, but is very much there. We include the perspectives of local student filmmakers and independent film patrons regarding the prospects of the city's filmmaking scene.

Alejandro Alba offers us a look at students who are devoted to the art of ballet. They are dedicated athletes—who sacrifice their time, bodies and lifeblood just to dance. As the foundation of dance, ballet is very much embedded into the lives of every dancer, including Megan Aizpuro and Ana Nieto whose stories he tells.

Jasmine Aguilera, Alejandro and Amber Watts write about a group of protesters who call themselves 915 Anarchy, an anarchist spinoff group of the Occupy Wall Street movement. Although more popular in cities such as Oakland and San Francisco, this anarchist group has found a following in El Paso and have taken up black bloc tactics to get their message heard.

Finally, Jose Castro writes about the iGeneration's dependence on technology. He focuses on the youngest members of the generation, who are introduced to technology at a much younger age than previous generations. He explores a local program called Toddler Tech, which caters to the growing demands for technology education for toddlers and their families. And, although the long-term implications of early-exposure to new technologies such as the iPad remains to be seen, he reports the perspectives of parents, teenagers and professionals on this subject.

These are stories that the staff worked very hard to produce, and I am thankful that on my first time around, I got to work with such talented writers, designers, photographers and advisors. I've come to learn much from putting this magazine together, about this region and about the spirit of its people, and I hope our readers will gain as much from perusing our pages.

Thank you for reading,
Andrés Rodríguez



“ *I express myself through it.* ”

I Just Want to Dance

S T O R Y

By

Alejandro Alba

By

D E S I G N

By

Edgar A. Bonilla

By

▲ Megan Aizpuro does the arabesque, a ballet movement.

Photos by Aaron Montes & Diego Burciaga



THE LIFESTYLE OF BALLET

With every step and turn of the performance, elegance, passion and delicacy must be carried through when presenting the venerable and established art of ballet. Dating back to the 15th century, ballet has allowed many dancers such as Megan Aizpuro, junior dance major at UTEP, to rise above the human condition by creating beauty within a dance routine.

"For me, ballet has a center, a calm place where you can express yourself with structure. While everything is out of place up in my mind, my body gives me the opportunity to keep it all together through ballet," Megan says.

For many dancers, skill, dedication and practice are the basic factors that can lead to the successful performance of a routine. When it comes to ballet, a higher level of passion, devotion and talent is necessary to perform the delicate dance. "Everything you do comes from ballet, it's your foundation," Megan says. "If you want to do any other dance, you must understand ballet first."

Lisa Smith, professor of dance at UTEP, believes that ballet is essential to any dancer's career, for it is through its practice that a dancer acquires what is necessary to carry out any dance routine. "People who study ballet need to have respect toward the foundations. It has always been known for dedication and hard work, it is a highly developed art form," Smith says. "With ballet it is necessary to begin studying quite early. Once the student begins studying ballet, the body begins developing correctly and kids begin learning the technique well. It instills the dedication and discipline—and that is required to do any dance."

Nonetheless, while dancers understand that ballet is the foundation of dance, it may not necessarily be for everyone. "Ballet has always been a way of disciplining myself, ever since I was 4 years old, but it isn't my focus in dance," says Ana

Nieto, junior dance major at UTEP. "It has been extremely important for me to carry out ballet throughout my dance career, yet there was a time where I realized that ballet was not for me for various reasons."

Passionate about contemporary dance, Ana drifted away from ballet because she never felt like she fit in with that discipline. With contemporary dance, Ana says she is able to defy the rules of ballet while mixing different styles with the elegance of the dance form. For her, nothing is more important than to portray emotions through her dance and she feels ballet would limit her level of body expression. Ana also became disinterested in ballet because of the body type and posture most ballerinas are expected to have at all times. Ana says she wouldn't be able to carry the slim figure most ballerinas are expected to have.

Although Ana chooses not to commit and comply with the strict standards of ballet, she understands that she must keep practicing it in order to continue to develop as a contemporary dancer. "Just like any other passionate dancer, I keep devoting time to ballet since it teaches me a lot of technique to improve my contemporary dancing skills," Ana says. "Ballet also allows me to build more strength and elasticity and that is very helpful to my body at all times."

Megan has a different philosophy regarding the practice of ballet. Although she realizes that a certain type of body is required to do ballet professionally, she believes that any person can fully carry out the dance regardless of their body type.

"Sure, it is frustrating not having the ideal body for ballet, and I think you might always be self-conscious of your body structure due to certain positions and techniques, but I believe the slim figure most ballet dancers have is just used by companies for uniformity. It would be rather odd if you have a cast of 5',6" and suddenly you see a 6',1"," Megan says. "Unfortunately, ballet does have a very small frame for body types. You also need to have a small torso and long legs, but just because you don't have the body doesn't mean you can't do ballet. The technique can be practiced and mastered, regardless of your body type; you just need to have the motivation and devotion to the art."

While striving to develop a specific body type, many dancers commit to rigorous training, rituals and diets in order to maintain stamina and healthy, performing bodies. Both Megan and Ana have certain rituals they follow in order to prepare their bodies to dance. Ana says her typical rituals involve not staying out late, eating right and not consuming any drugs or alcohol. "I have to take certain measures so my body can perform to its best. I do everything from drinking lots of water to sticking my feet in salt water so my feet, muscles and ligaments can heal," Ana says. "But more than conditioning, I think you sacrifice more. A big sacrifice is time, you are always in rehearsal, and you have to be devoted if

you are serious about dancing. It makes good college students since it disciplines you to be dedicated. You also learn how to push yourself—it helps you in other areas of your life.”

Megan’s rituals are similar, however, she struggles with smoking cigarettes. Through her work with Smith, Megan has learned to be healthy, but she has not been able to quit her smoking habit. “I think I might be a bit hypocritical since I throw myself out there as a dancer, yet I am here smoking. I have tried and I am trying to stop,” Megan says. “I really do try to treat my body like a temple in order to perform better.”

Megan does, however, condition her body by stretching, taking salt baths and consuming healthy foods as well as vitamins. After all, Megan says, ballet is not just her hobby, but her lifestyle and she must be healthy.

Dance, just like any art, is a career path with a busy agenda. Both Megan and Ana say they have no time for extra activities. Their day involves school, dance, teaching dance and sleeping. Ana says that people see her actions as sacrifices, but for her, the practice offers benefits in life and health.

Ana, who has danced for almost all of her life, says that she simply believes in doing what she likes and she has found her sanctuary of happiness in contemporary dance. Megan, however, has stayed with ballet and found her bliss. “I’ve been out of dance before and I will never do that again. I feel so cliché saying ‘I just want to dance,’ but I don’t think words can express what dance is to me—that is why I dance,” Megan says. “I express myself through it. When I move, I see impressions in other people and I think that is better than saying I just want to dance.”

En Breve

La pasión de una bailarina por la danza conlleva esfuerzo, disciplina, dedicación y sacrificio. Las bailarinas se enfrentan a diversos retos, llevando dietas rigurosas para mantener su figura y practicando varias horas diarias para perfeccionar su técnica y mejorar sus movimientos. Sin embargo, para la mayoría, el baile es algo más que un pasatiempo, es un estilo de vida y una forma de expresión.

Megan Alzpuro, estudiante de tercer año en UTEP, define el ballet clásico como la base principal de todo tipo de danza. Hoy en día, su mayor fuente de inspiración como bailarina proviene de su amor por el ballet, una forma de disciplina que le permite expresarse a través de su devoción a éste. “La técnica puede ser practicada y dominada independientemente de tu tipo de cuerpo; sólo se necesita que tengas la motivación y la entrega al arte”, dice Megan.

Sin embargo, muchas entienden que aunque el ballet clásico es la base principal del baile, éste no es necesariamente para todas. Ana Nieto, estudiante de tercer año en UTEP, admite que aunque el ballet clásico ha sido una parte importante de su formación como bailarina, ella prefiere la danza contemporánea, un estilo que reta las reglas rígidas y tradicionales del clásico. “El ballet clásico me ha ayudado a mantener mi fuerza y mi elasticidad, sin embargo, me di cuenta que no es para mí”, dice Ana.

Lisa Smith, profesora de danza en UTEP, asegura que lo importante es la dedicación y el esfuerzo que las bailarinas invierten en su práctica. “Ésta (la danza) siempre se ha conocido por la entrega y el trabajo duro que requiere; es una forma de arte bastante desarrollada”, dice Smith.



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“...la gente no debe olvidar de dónde es, sino ver más allá de eso. Pensar que no estás haciendo cine para Hollywood sino cine para tí mismo”.

Luces, Cámara...

POCA ACCIÓN

LOS RETOS DE CINEASTAS LOCALES

POR ANDRÉS RODRÍGUEZ / DISEÑO EDGAR HERNANDEZ

En su más reciente guión cinematográfico, Oscar Moreno entrelaza los sueños de dos adolescentes vecinos. Pero es todo lo que el estudiante de cuarto año de creación literaria quiere revelar sobre lo que será su próximo cortometraje. Como cineasta independiente ha aprendido a no emocionarse demasiado con proyectos que tal vez no sucedan.

Oscar quisiera ser director/escritor, aunque dice que la idea de dedicarse simplemente al guión no le molesta. “A mí, lo que me fascina es contar historias”, dice el estudiante.


Para filmar un cortometraje, Oscar tiene que invertir entre 200 a 1,000 dólares, lo que incluye el costo de cámaras, utilería, vestuarios y actores, entre otras cosas. Pero para minimizar costos, prefiere trabajar con lo que ya tiene: entre actores que utilizan su propio vestuario y utilizando cámaras ya anteriormente compradas, Oscar ha filmado cortometrajes con 20 dólares solamente para alimentar al equipo. Y es que Oscar, ex presidente del club Miner Movie Makers, dice que el

cine no es tan difícil cuando se tiene determinación, una actitud adecuada y el deseo de aprender.

“No importa de dónde vengas, siempre el cine va ser muy, muy difícil. Es un medio casi imposible al cual entrar”, dice Oscar. “Pienso que piensa(n), ‘no soy de Hollywood, no vengo de Nueva York, no vengo de un lugar donde el cine sea muy famoso entonces no puedo ser famoso’. Pienso que la gente no debe olvidar de dónde es sino ver más allá de eso. Pensar que no estás haciendo cine para Hollywood sino cine para ti mismo”.

Pero ser cineasta implica algo más que tener visión, y Oscar lamenta que El Paso ofrezca recursos limitados para hacer y distribuir el trabajo de cineastas locales, como festivales de cine independiente bien establecidos.

La ciudad de El Paso ofrece pocos incentivos económicos para cineastas y parece carecer en una escena cineasta firme con recursos disponibles en infraestructura. Además de ello,



la ciudad no tiene escuela de cine, sino un programa de producción de medios digitales que no convence a aquellos que quieren dedicarse a la industria cinematográfica.

A Carlos Corral, director de EpFilm, un tipo de centro social en Internet que conecta a cineastas locales, la manera en que UTEP maneja el programa respecto al cine no lo convence. “Lo que pasa es que nos dirigimos hacia un ámbito digital y lo están agrupando con tecnologías digitales”, dice Corral, quien se mudó de El Paso para estudiar cine en la Universidad de Texas en Austin. “Siento que hasta que UTEP defina qué tipo de programa va a tener y que realmente aplique recursos, la industria de cine (en El Paso) no va a crecer porque la juventud es lo que conduce la escena de cine”.

Frank Perez, director del Departamento de Comunicación en UTEP, dice que el programa de producción de medios digitales ofrece oportunidades más amplias en el campo laboral de video.

Perez reitera que los estudiantes graduados del programa, ya en su cuarto año, han sido contratados por ESPN y han tenido éxito en estaciones televisivas locales. En el año escolar 2010-2011 fueron 10 quienes se graduaron del programa de acuerdo a El Centro para Evaluación Institucional, Investigación y Planificación.

Perez dice que el programa está cumpliendo con lo que se propuso desde el comienzo. “No es una licenciatura en producción de cine, es una licenciatura en producción de video. Nuestro objetivo es que cuando el estudiante se gradúe, él o ella pueda trabajar en una variedad de entornos en video, no solamente cine”, dice Perez.

Perez reconoce el interés por el cine en la ciudad, pero asegura que en el futuro cercano no ve un programa dedicado únicamente a la producción fílmica en UTEP.

Anthony Salgado, estudiante de segundo año de producción de medios digitales, dice que sería un milagro si una escuela vocacional dedicada al cine y a las artes se estableciera en la ciudad. Cree que el programa de UTEP no ofrece suficiente técnica.

Anthony empezó filmando cortometrajes en la preparatoria, por lo que considera tener experiencia, pero dice que algunos compañeros de la licenciatura batallan con poca práctica.

“En lugar de teoría nos deberían enseñar más técnica. Es fácil para mí, pero veo a estudiantes y se ven abrumados”, dice Anthony. “Además de que no tenemos mucho material, lo que tenemos es anticuado”. Anthony prefiere pedir equipo prestado a sus conocidos.

EMPEZAR DESDE ABAJO

Corral ha trabajado como productor, director, escritor y sonidista en producciones locales como “Unlimited” y “Red Sands”. Tiene también una compañía de producción llamada MindWarp. Él dice que muy a menudo ve a jóvenes estudiantes sin experiencia técnica.

“No están en la producción; no están trabajando ni con luces, ni con equipo de sonido, ni en las cámaras”, dice Corral, quien recientemente le dijo a jóvenes interesados en participar en el set de “Unlimited”, que tienen que ‘ensuciarse’ las manos. “Tienes que ser técnico y creativo también. Puedes ser creativo pero si no eres técnico, estás perdiendo tu tiempo. Ponte unos guantes y si puedes cargar 50 libras te ponemos en el set. Tal vez no sea la posición que quieres ahora pero así se empieza”.

Corral trabajó en el departamento de sonido para la película “Unlimited” que fue filmada con un presupuesto de 1.5 millones de dólares en El Paso y San Elizario. Se proyecta que la producción deje en la ciudad al menos 500 mil dólares, según su productor Chad Gundersen. Pero pocas películas de bajo o alto presupuesto como “Unlimited” vienen a la ciudad últimamente.

El Paso ocupa el quinto lugar en producción en Texas detrás de Austin, Dallas, Houston y San Antonio y según Corral, organizaciones estatales de cine, como la Austin Film Society, pasan por alto a cineastas paseños. La organización otorgó el fondo,

Texas Filmmakers Production Fund a Corral como productor de "Red Sands" en el 2010 después de su cuarto intento.

Corral ha intentado organizar talleres patrocinados por la Austin Film Society, pero últimamente no ha logrado reunir suficientes asistentes o reservar un lugar para el taller. La Austin Film Society quiere al menos 25 asistentes para dar el taller. "Les dije que no creo que pueda reunir a 25 personas aquí porque nunca nos han otorgado nada. Nos han dado un proyecto o dos. Si sólo vienen cinco o 10 cineastas, no lo ven como un gasto que valga la pena y por eso no vienen. Por eso no hay tantos fondos aquí".

De acuerdo a El Paso Film Commission, en los últimos seis años las producciones de cine y televisión han traído aproximadamente 2.1 millones de dólares a la ciudad, una suma que difícilmente llega a superar el año fiscal 1995-1996 que vio 26.5 millones de dólares invertidos por las producciones de las películas, "Lolita", "Courage Under Fire" y "Committed".

Susie Gaines, directora de El Paso Film Commission, dice que aparte de que Austin es más popular por ser la capital y por ofrecer más oportunidades de entretenimiento, El Paso sufre por la falta de estudios. "Dallas es inmensa y tienen estudios, al igual que Austin. Si tienes eso naturalmente llegarán más producciones", dice Gaines. "Pero ellos son una ciudad de producción de cine. Nosotros no".

Mientras algunos estados como New Mexico o Louisiana ofrecen créditos sustantivos en impuestos por filmar en su

territorio, Texas solo ofrece reembolsos de 5 a 17.5 por ciento, algo que desalienta a productores.

Aún así, algunos cineastas de El Paso siguen filmando sus películas aquí. Como Mickey Reyes, ex profesor de UTEP, quien regresó a la ciudad en el 2010 para filmar su película "Red Sands" para el Instituto Tisch de las Artes de la Universidad de Nueva York.

Reyes dice que le llama la atención la cultura única de El Paso, la cual considera valiosa para contar historias llamativas e interesantes, pero reconoce que a la ciudad le faltan recursos para respaldar esas oportunidades. "En realidad, no hay una infraestructura para poder filmar varias películas a la vez", dice Reyes. "Cuando una película se filma en El Paso todos los recursos, desde el reparto hasta el equipo, se usan para esa película, y casi no hay casas de alquiler de equipo. Si se necesitan cámaras, luces o equipo de sonido, uno tiene que encontrar a alguien local que lo rente o comprarlo".

No obstante, aquellos que filman cortometrajes y largometrajes independientes, son apoyados por programas como el Plaza Classic Film Festival, que desde hace cinco años mantiene la sección, Local Flavor (sabor local).

"El festival solicita envíos de películas de cineastas de la región y trabajamos duro para encontrarles un lugar en nuestra serie Local Flavor", dice Charles Horak, director artístico del festival. "La intención del festival es celebrar el trabajo de



▲ Stewart Young, primer asistente del director, y Ron Gonzalez, operador de la Steadicam, en el ensayo técnico en San Elizario se preparan para filmar una escena sobre políticos mexicanos.



▲ Gary Webster, asistente de cámara, en el set de "Unlimited" prepara la cámara RED ONE. "Unlimited" fue filmada en áreas de El Paso y San Elizario.

cineastas locales y dar una oportunidad para nuestra audiencia de ver estas películas en la pantalla grande".

Horak concluye que a los cineastas paseños les falta financiamiento, pero que les sobran herramientas de aprendizaje en la red. Dice que la producción de cine en ciudades en la costa este y oeste probablemente se descentralizará con la llegada de nuevas oportunidades en medios comunicativos. Pero aún así, dice que los cineastas necesitan empezar de alguna manera, con la idea de que hacer cine implica trabajo duro, perseverancia y tenacidad.

Oscar coincide con Horak. "Creo que mucha gente se pone a sí mismo en un pedestal. 'Soy acá bien machín yo voy a hacer películas acá bien padres'. Y muchas veces como que se les olvida que esto es cuestión de aprender. Hay poquísimos cineastas que hayan logrado hacer esto a una edad muy joven", dice Oscar, quien cree que los jóvenes se desilusionan si no tienen una película a los veintitantos años como Kevin Smith o Paul Thomas Anderson. "Es importante que no se deje de hacer. Es lo maravilloso del tiempo que vivimos. Están todos estos recursos disponibles para nosotros, todos estos libros, todos estos sitios de Internet, todos estos vídeos en línea, muchísimas cosas que nos pueden ayudar a aprender más".

Corral está negociando una colaboración con UTEP para ayudar a estudiantes a obtener más práctica en el set. Anthony planea irse a Los Angeles después de haber terminado tres largometrajes en El Paso. Mientras tanto, Oscar piensa más sobre su próximo cortometraje pero dice que si tuviera que irse de El Paso, tarde o temprano regresaría porque muchos de sus guiones están basados aquí, en la frontera.

Fotografías por Carlos Corral

IN BRIEF

As one of the most competitive industries in the world, filmmaking is an art form that demands determination, creativity and a strong desire to learn, but becoming a filmmaker also implies having the means to put one's ideas into film.

Local filmmakers maintain that the city's lack of economic incentives, infrastructure and educational opportunities do not properly support the local independent film scene.

UTEP does not have a film school, but rather a digital media production program, which is inadequate, according to some. For Carlos Corral, director of EpFilm, an online social network that connects local filmmakers, this is the case. "The thing is we're moving into this digital realm where they're lumping it (filmmaking) into digital," Corral says. "I feel that until UTEP defines what kind of program they're going to have, and actually apply resources to it, I feel that the film industry will not move because the youth is what supplies the film scene (in El Paso)."

While El Paso ranks fifth in film production in Texas, behind Austin, Dallas, Houston and San Antonio, Oscar Moreno, senior creative writing major at UTEP, believes it is important that local filmmakers keep motivated. "There are very few filmmakers who have been successful at a very young age. It's important that one does not stop. There are so many resources available through the Internet, books, online videos and so many other places that can help us learn; this is what is wonderful about the time period in which we live," Oscar says.



WHEN THE MAJORITY BECOMES THE MINORITY

BY ANDRÉS RODRÍGUEZ / DESIGN BY DIEGO BURCIAGA

Editor's Note: Jacob Wendell contributed to this story.

EP'S 18% NON-HISPANIC LEARN TO ASSIMILATE

Courtney Carpenter began to wake up with an upset stomach and a knot in her throat after taking her first job, at the age of 15, as a swimming instructor at Leo Cancellare Memorial Pool in West El Paso. Courtney had always loved kids and swimming, but there was one kid who just couldn't understand her instructions.

"My very first class, I had a little boy about 3 or 4 years old who only spoke Spanish," says Courtney, who had moved from Kokomo, Indiana, two years before to El Paso with a limited knowledge of Spanish. "I tried to tell him to sit on the ledge, to get the message through to him, but every time I would turn to another student, he'd suddenly run behind me and into the deeper areas of (the) pool. He just didn't understand, or didn't respect me because he couldn't understand what I was saying. It kind of sucks when your language barrier lets a 3-year-old think he's above you."

For eight years, Courtney lived in El Paso as part of the 13.1 percent Anglo minority, among an 82.2 percent Hispanic majority. Courtney says that this phenomenon definitely made El Paso a different world. The city's Hispanic to Anglo ratio is an unusual one in the United States, whose population is 72.4 percent Anglo and only 16.3 percent

are of Hispanic or Latino origin, according to the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau. The bureau also states that between 2000 and 2010 there was a 43 percent increase in the Hispanic population, and given this increase, they project the Hispanic population will constitute 30 percent (132.8 million) of the country's population by the year 2050.

Upon arriving to El Paso, Courtney went through a major cultural shift. "It's so difficult moving from somewhere where absolutely everyone speaks English to a city where almost everybody speaks Spanish and some people speak no English at all," Courtney says. "It was always a little frustrating and made me feel sort of left out when I'd be around friends who would speak Spanish. It feels like it must be a hassle for them sometimes too, when they have to repeat entire conversations back to me."

Similarly, Eric Alls, an African-American, experienced a sort of cultural shock when he first arrived in El Paso at the age of 18. He came to El Paso after being advised by a high school coach to look for a university elsewhere than his hometown of Dallas, Texas. He attended UTEP for two years where he played football, before finishing a business degree at Southern Methodist University in Dallas.

"Oh crap, what did I get myself into," says Eric, who is now 25, about his initial reaction when he realized that for the next three years he would live in a city where the majority of the population spoke Spanish and saw him as a 6', 2" giant. At UTEP, the demographic shift in the student population over the past 30 years is even more pronounced than the



city's. In 1980, 47 percent of the student population was Anglo, while 42 percent of its students were Hispanic. In 2010, UTEP's student population more closely reflected the community with 77.5 percent of its population being Hispanic and 9.4 percent Anglo.

"It was totally different," Eric says. "The first thing I noticed when I first came out there (El Paso) was how everybody treated everybody. It was the hospitality. I had barely known people and I had them and their mothers welcome me into

African Americans make up only 3.1 percent of El Paso's population, while the country's African-American population reaches nearly 13 percent and 22.3 percent in his hometown of Dallas.

Eric says he found it easy to assimilate into Hispanic culture because, much like the African-American culture, Hispanics care about family and are proud of their heritage. Still, his lack of Spanish made it a problem to communicate, especially after he began dating a Mexican-American El Pasoan, whose mother speaks only Spanish. "You have to learn at least the basics (of Spanish)," he said. "We have to find a way to communicate."

The city's Hispanic-majority population has been in place for quite some time, but the gap between the non-Hispanic white people and Latinos has steadily increased over the last 30 years. In 1980, the Anglo population in El Paso was as high as 32 percent, while the Hispanic population was at 60 percent.



Hispanics
82%



White
13%



Black
3%



Asian
1%



Native American
<1%

Dennis Bixler-Marquez, UTEP director of Chicano Studies, says the gap has widened due to each population's economic standing.

"The reduction of the white population, which has a higher social economic status, is due to lower birth rates and greater opportunities to be educated elsewhere and subsequent employment out of El Paso," says Bixler-Marquez, whose research focuses on immigration patterns in the borderland. "Many Hispanics have left for similar reasons, but the Hispanic population in El Paso has traditionally been restocked by immigration, higher birth rates and cultural residential patterns that encourage those remaining in El Paso to maintain proximity to relatives and friends."

The city's proximity to Mexico and Ft. Bliss also factor into Bixler-Marquez's conclusion. "Mexico has always made El Paso an immigrant station. Many immigrants from Mexico end up staying because they find a linguistic and cultural environment in which they can thrive," Bixler-Marquez says. "The transformation of Ft. Bliss into a major infantry and armor base has increased the number of whites and blacks in the region. Ft. Bliss has traditionally given El Paso an international flavor with the old air defense school that trained people from NATO, SEATO and allied countries, some of whom remained in El Paso."

Tiffany Gailey, an Anglo El Paso native, also struggles to communicate with the Spanish-speaking population. As a cashier at Old Navy, Tiffany deals with customers that she says just don't understand her on a daily basis. She says that

there is always a customer who becomes upset at her limited understanding of Spanish. "I can understand a little bit of Spanish, but can't speak it at all. I always have trouble with this at work when I'm helping customers who don't speak English," Tiffany says. "In those situations, I have to find a co-worker to translate for me, but sometimes customers have a real bad attitude toward the whole thing."

Tiffany, a UTEP sophomore psychology major, says this happens too often. "Some people just expect you to know it (Spanish) and they get mad when you don't," she says.

Courtney says that, although she struggled with the language, she found the dominant Hispanic culture big on spirit. "Although we have family get-togethers up here in Indiana, it is absolutely nothing compared to the craziness that my Hispanic friends and their families usually create," she says. "It's nice though, that everyone's so close. I always like going to my friends' family parties because everyone is friendly and open. It's usually loud and fun and there's a lot of laughter."

Courtney, who now lives in Indianapolis, Indiana, says moving to El Paso has made her more tolerant and open to learning new things. "Living in a city where I'm constantly learning new things definitely made life more interesting, at the very least, and that was one of my favorite things about living there," she says. "Now, in Indiana, I get to impress all of my friends with my wicked Spanish skills, even if the most impressive thing I can do is ask if they want to apply for a (store) credit card. Though, to this day, I still haven't hit a piñata; I have to say I'm a little disappointed at that."



EN BREVE

Vivir en un lugar en donde se es la minoría no es fácil. En El Paso, ciudad en la que un 13.1 por ciento de la población es anglosajona, los hispanos son la mayoría.

Para Courtney Carpenter, originaria de Kokomo, Indiana, mudarse a El Paso fue un reto. Sin hablar español y de origen anglosajón, Courtney admite que El Paso es un mundo diferente. "Es tan difícil cambiarse de un lugar en el que absolutamente todos hablan inglés a una ciudad en la que casi todos hablan español y algunas personas ni siquiera hablan inglés en lo absoluto", dice Courtney.

Mientras que a nivel nacional los anglosajones conforman un 72.4 por ciento de la población total y los hispanos un 16.3 por ciento, en El Paso los hispanos constituyen el 72.2 por ciento. Es así que la ciudad ofrece un contexto cultural y social distinto y es, difícil de asimilar para aquellos que no son hispanos, como Eric Alls, un joven americano proveniente de Dallas, quien estudió en UTEP por dos años. Eric admite que mudarse a El Paso, sufrió impacto cultural.

La cercanía de El Paso a México es uno de los factores más importantes que atraen a la amplia presencia de hispanos en la región. Dennis Bixler-Marquez, director del Departamento de Estudios Chicanos en UTEP, asegura que México ha convertido a El Paso en una estación inmigratoria. "La población hispana en El Paso ha crecido por la inmigración y por los patrones culturales que animan a aquellos que encuentran en la ciudad a mantenerse en un lugar cercano de sus familiares y amigos", dice Bixler-Marquez.

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POR JOSÉ CASTRO / DISEÑO POR DIEGO BURCIAGA

LA VIDA INMERSA EN LA TECNOLOGÍA

Amanda Acevedo ha recibido un mensaje de texto a su celular. Ella corre a su cuarto por un juguete con la esperanza de que su hijo Matthew, de 2 años, le suelte el teléfono y ella pueda contestar el mensaje.

“¿Quién quiere jugar con Mr. Potato Head?” le pregunta a Matthew, quien prefiere jugar con su teléfono inteligente que con sonajas o muñecos. El niño toma el juguete con desinterés, lo desarma y en cuanto puede, regresa a jugar con las aplicaciones del teléfono de su mamá.

Matthew, como la gran mayoría de los niños nacidos entre los años 1990 y 2012, forma parte de lo que se conoce como la Generación I, o la Generación Internet, un término que acuñó Bill Gates, fundador de Microsoft, para describir a una generación completamente inmersa en la tecnología.

Los niños y jóvenes de esta generación han crecido en un mundo de teléfonos celulares, iPads, WiFi y tecnologías en constante avance. Diversos estudios indican que la comunicación y el entretenimiento entre estas nuevas generaciones están vinculados al uso de la tecnología.

Un estudio de Nielsen, una firma de investigación de mercado, encontró que siete de cada 10 niños menores de 12 años que crecen en un hogar en el que hay una tableta, usan ese aparato para jugar, entretenerse, aprender o ver videos.

Otro estudio de la organización no lucrativa Joan Ganz Cooney Center and Sesame Workshop encontró que cerca del 80 por ciento de los niños menores de 5 años usan el Internet al menos una vez por semana.

Conscientes del uso cada vez más extenso del Internet y de los aparatos digitales entre los niños, algunas instituciones educativas en El Paso han puesto en marcha programas para aprovechar las ventajas de estos medios en su formación.

“Es absolutamente necesario que enseñemos a los niños sobre la tecnología a una edad temprana”, dice Monica Wong, directora de la biblioteca del campus noreste de El Paso Community College, donde se ha implementado el programa Toddler Tech. “Si la tecnología se está volviendo parte del aprendizaje, nosotros tenemos que adaptarnos”.

Toddler Tech inició en el 2008 con la idea de introducir a niños de entre 2 y 5 años y a sus familias al mundo de la tecnología. Este programa, que concluye su segundo año, espera financiamiento de la Comisión para Archivos y Bibliotecas del estado de Texas.

Como parte del programa, los niños utilizan iPads, smart tablets (tabletas inteligentes) y estaciones de computadoras en sesiones de 15 a 20 minutos para explorar, dibujar, aprender y resolver problemas.

Maria Gleason, maestra de Inglés como Segunda Lengua y voluntaria de Toddler Tech, dice que el método tradicional mezclado con métodos nuevos de tecnología atrae y ofrece una alternativa al aprendizaje. “No sólo es un proceso de aprendizaje para el niño, sino también para los padres y los facilitadores”, dice Gleason. “Se necesita compasión y paciencia, porque varias de las familias son del programa de familia inmigrantes y tienen miedo de usar la tecnología y de hablar inglés”.

Amanda, estudiante de primer año de desarrollo infantil en EPCC, está en el proceso de inscribir a su hijo Matthew en el programa. Su interés surgió cuando su maestra de orientación infantil le mencionó sobre el programa y le ofreció la opción de completar sus horas de estudio y observación en una de las

sesiones de Toddler Tech. A ella le interesa la idea de que Matthew sea educado en la tecnología a una edad temprana. "Me encanta estudiar sobre el desarrollo infantil, y más porque lo veo en Matthew", dice Amanda. "Ya juega con mi teléfono inteligente, pero quiero meterlo en algunas de las sesiones de verano para que aprenda con los libros interactivos y iPads".

Sin embargo, Gleason y Wong dicen que la paciencia y la interacción humana son necesarias para no dejar que los niños pierdan interés o desarrollen un uso crónico por la tecnología. Las opiniones de los padres sobre el tiempo apropiado para exponer a sus hijos a la tecnología y los límites que tienen que establecer varían.

Dre Ortiz, quien tiene su licenciatura en inglés y literatura americana y está estudiando para obtener su maestría en administración pública en UTEP, ha decidido tomar otro enfoque cuando se trata de su hija de 4 años. "Mi hija ya está expuesta a la computadora, el teléfono inteligente y la televisión", dice Dre. "Pero yo y su padre limitamos su tiempo de televisión a 30 minutos y hacemos actividades creativas para estimular su imaginación y su lado activo".

Dre comenta que a veces se pregunta si su ideología y sus métodos limitarán las experiencias que pueda tener su hija con la tecnología. "Me preocupa porque sé que su futuro se dirige en ese camino, no quiero atrasarla", dice Dre.

Richard Pineda, profesor de comunicación en UTEP, asume una actitud neutral por la tecnología. "Los padres no están controlando cuánta tecnología consumen sus hijos y quieren culpar a los aparatos por los hábitos de sus hijos", dice Pineda. "La tecnología en sí misma es neutral, sólo depende de quien la use y lo que se encuentra en el contexto".

Sin embargo, algunos padres prefieren exponer a sus hijos a la tecnología desde una edad temprana, como Elizabeth Hernández, estudiante de segundo año de trabajo social en UTEP, quien tiene una hija de dos meses. "Le beneficiará a mi niña...porque los métodos tecnológicos cambian a diario", dice Elizabeth. "Tendrá más tiempo para acostumbrarse y aprender. Pero también voy a limitar su tiempo con la computadora y la televisión cuando crezca; y no le voy a comprar teléfono hasta que entre a la preparatoria".

Raymundo Apodaca, de 17 años, divide su atención entre dos ventanas de su navegador de Internet. En la primera ventana de su Macbook Pro, lee un estudio para su clase de química, en la otra se distrae revisando sus notificaciones en su página de Facebook mientras al lado revisa mensajes en su teléfono.

Así convive Raymundo con sus amigos y compañeros de tercer año de la escuela secundaria Hanks. Tiene un teléfono desde los 14 y utiliza Facebook desde los 15. "Sólo puedo imaginar lo que batallaba mi mamá para poder estudiar y obtener toda la información que puedo encontrar en Google

o en enciclopedias de Internet", dice Raymundo. "Se me hace más fácil encontrar información para mi tarea por Internet y mantenerme ocupado con las aplicaciones de mi iPod que vivir en la era de mi mamá".

Lourdes Cueva, maestra de comunicación en UTEP y quien espera un bebé, expresa la importancia del desarrollo intelectual y físico en los primeros años de un niño. "La tecnología no es conveniente cuando el niño es pequeño, es mejor que desarrolle su aprendizaje y sus habilidades comunicativas", dice Cueva.

Pineda coincide con Cueva y dice que la tecnología tiene ya un efecto en la comunicación humana. "La costumbre de la gente revela que será difícil separar la comunicación de la tecnología en el futuro. El cambio va a establecer una relación importante entre cómo la tecnología se adapta a los diferentes grupos y cómo se utiliza", dice Pineda.

De cualquier manera, Amanda cree que la tecnología puede beneficiar a su hijo en términos educativos. "Si la tecnología se usa de manera apropiada puede ser benéfica para el niño, pero con descuido, puede convertirse en una distracción en el ambiente de aprendizaje", dice Amanda.

Mientras tanto, Matthew parece estar listo para dejar el teléfono de su mamá y empezar a jugar con el iPad antes de que cumpla los 3 años.

in brief

As the presence of technology continues to become more prevalent among modern society, the majority of children born between 1990 and 2012, commonly referred to as the iGeneration or Internet Generation, continue to immerse themselves in a digital world.

According to a Nielsen study, seven out of 10 children younger than 12 years of age who grow up in a home with an electronic tablet use this device to play, learn or simply to watch videos.

Monica Wong, head librarian of the Northwest campus of the El Paso Community College, where a Toddler Tech program has been implemented, believes it is important for children to become exposed to technology at a young age. "If technology is becoming part of the learning process, we have to adapt," Wong says.

Amanda Acevedo, freshman child development major at EPCC, finds herself in the process of registering her son, Matthew, to the Toddler Tech program. "He (Matthew) already plays with my smart phone; I want to get him into some of the summer sessions so that he can learn interactively with books and iPads," Amanda says.

While some parents prefer to expose their children to technology at a young age, others express the importance of a child's emotional and intellectual development during his first years. Lourdes Cueva, communication professor at UTEP who is expecting her first child, does not believe that technology exposure at a young age is appropriate. "Technology is not beneficial when a child is very young. It's better for the child to develop his learning and communication skills," Cueva says.



A NARCHY

IN THE SUN CITY

Editor's note: this article was produced in collaboration with Borderzine.com.

BY JASMINE AGUILERA, ALEJANDRO ALBA &
AMBER WATTS / DESIGN BY DIEGO BURCIAGA

PROTESTORS EXPERIMENT WITH BLACK BLOC TACTICS

Early in the morning in late April, a young protestor walks up to the windows of the Bank of America building on Mesa Street, in Downtown El Paso, across from San Jacinto Plaza. The young protestor is completely covered from head to toe to protect his identity. From under his jacket, he pulls out a can of black spray paint and draws a symbol on the windows along with the word “die.”

The symbol this protestor has painted on the window of the bank is a large letter “A” with a circle around it—a symbol that has become widely known throughout the world as a representation of a social movement called anarchism.

Anarchist groups have sprung up throughout the country as an offshoot of the Occupy Wall Street movement. What sets these anarchist groups apart from the Occupy movement are the tactics of protest they use to get their message across. Their method is known as “black bloc,” which involves vandalism, marches and riots while members dress in black to promote solidarity. Their form of protest is considered violent by the police.

The largest, most active anarchist groups can be found in San Francisco, Oakland, Seattle and New York City. Surprisingly, El Paso also has its own group known as 915 Anarchy.

“(Occupy El Paso protestors) were out there for months camping at San Jacinto Plaza and they were doing a good job, but at a certain point more has to be done to change a situation,” says a 19-year-old 915 anarchist known as “Maus,” who wishes to remain anonymous to protect himself from the police. “Sitting in tents can only accomplish so much.”

The 915 Anarchists are a fairly new group, Maus says. They came together in late January and began plans to make their group more widely known. As of now, the group has 20 members.

Maus said that there are different perceptions of anarchism among the group, but argues that freedom is all they want. “We all just want to be free,” he says. “So aren’t we all anarchists?”

Vegan, 21, is another anonymous member of 915 Anarchy, who also believes that freedom is what they stand for. He believes that the government’s attempts to control are overbearing, such as not letting same-sex partners marry and trying to watch everything one does on the Internet.

“We don’t want to be someone’s property,” says Vegan. “We don’t want to have people who think that just because

they make more money than us, they should control every aspect of our life. You don’t have to be an anarchist to see the inevitable conclusion of complete government. We want everyone else to realize that they are not free.”

Seeing that Occupy EP’s Facebook page had more than 4,000 likes and their twitter feeds had over 3,000 followers, the anarchists devised a plan to hack into Occupy El Paso’s Facebook and Twitter accounts to promote awareness for their group.

At around midnight on May 2, the anarchists carried out their plan. They changed Occupy EP’s Twitter page so that it read: “We are no longer Occupy El Paso. We have nothing against them and nothing personal. This is just business.”

According to Sergeant Chris Mears, public affairs officer for the El Paso Police Department, an act of vandalism, depending on the amount of damage, may at the minimum result in a class B misdemeanor, which could lead to six months in jail along with a fine. However, there has been no formal report filed for the vandalism that occurred at Bank of America.

The EPPD also says the anarchists’ stunts could also potentially be considered organized crime and criminal activity, and that by acting together in a group, they could actually incur additional charges and stiffer penalties.

“WE ALL JUST
WANT TO BE FREE,
SO AREN’T
WE ALL ANARCHISTS?”

Maus says he is willing to take the risks involved with being part of an anarchist group. “When you’re truly dedicated to, well your country in a way, you’re okay with it,” he says. “Jail time is nothing, most of us (protesters outside of El Paso) have already been to jail for other things involving activism.”

Before Maus got involved with 915 Anarchy he was involved with Occupy EP. A fellow Occupy EP protestor, David Fernandez, does not think anarchists’ tactics are necessary in El Paso. “I do believe that at times black bloc tactics might be necessary, but in this case, in our case now, I don’t think they have a place,” Fernandez says. “I mean, if they are going to bulldoze your home or neighborhood for example, and peaceful protest isn’t working, then by all means defend yourself and use black bloc.”



➤ A member of the 915 Anarchy group spray paints the word "Die" at the Downtown Bank of America as a sign of protest. Still taken from video by Alejandro Alba.

Josiah Heyman, UTEP sociology and anthropology professor and department chair, shares Hernandez' opinion. "My philosophy is you need to think about the goal of the movement and how to reach that goal," Heyman says. "For example, the apartheid in South Africa, in a situation where there is a total lack of equality by the government, people responded with violence. Here, though our government is overtly flawed and we have to deal with economic inequalities, we are not in a situation like Africa."

Heyman, who is also an Occupy EP protestor, does not approve of the anarchists because they steal media attention away from the Occupy movement because of the violent nature of their tactics. "I have a problem with various types of activity that I consider to be taking away from the credibility of people who are hard workers, who want to protest peacefully," he says.

Maus says that although he respects the Occupy EP group, he feels things were moving too slowly. "We want to go out and do more things, or do things differently than the older generation," he says. "In the end, we are all together in the same thing, we are all against the same people and that's the way it should be."

The EPPD says they will take appropriate action against the anarchists if necessary. "People have the constitutional right to protest their government—that right is protected under the First Amendment, but obviously they don't have the constitutional right to commit crimes, to damage someone else's property, to prevent people from patronizing their businesses," Mears says. "Unfortunately, some people want to try to say that their First Amendment right does protect that when historically the courts have said it doesn't."

Maus believes the anarchists are not the true criminals. "We don't have the constitutional right to vandalize property, we know, we're not dumb, we obviously understand, but some rules are meant to be broken just to make a point," he says. "Considering the people we're against, specifically right now it's Bank of America, considering they have been stealing billions and billions of dollars from tax payers and still haven't paid any of that back, I think it's unfair that we're the

ones getting in trouble for something that should have been done a long time ago."

Bank of America representatives were contacted for this story, but refused to comment. The 915 Anarchy group is planning a march Nov. 5 in Downtown El Paso that will involve Occupy members from areas outside of the region.

EN BREVE

915 Anarchy, un grupo local anarquista de 20 personas, se ha comprometido a comunicar su mensaje de libertad a como de lugar—sea a través de marchas, revueltas o vandalismo, tácticas conocidas como "black bloc".

Grupos anarquistas han surgido en varias partes del país como Oakland, San Francisco, Seattle y New York como una escisión del movimiento Occupy Wall Street. La policía considera los métodos que utilizan violentos.

El grupo local de anarquistas se formó a finales de enero. Hasta ahora han hackeado la página de Facebook y el Twitter de Occupy El Paso para extender su mensaje, y han cometido un acto de vandalismo en el edificio de Bank of America en la calle Mesa. Planean una marcha en el centro de la ciudad el 5 de noviembre.

"Maus", un anarquista de 19 años que prefiere permanecer anónimo para protegerse de la policía, dice que tuvieron que tomar el asunto en sus propias manos al ver que Occupy El Paso no los llevo lejos. "(Miembros de Occupy El Paso) estuvieron afuera por meses acampando en la Plaza de San Jacinto e hicieron un buen trabajo, pero en un cierto punto se tiene que hacer más para cambiar la situación", dice Maus. "Estar sentado en las tiendas de campaña solo puede lograr muy poco".

Miembros de Occupy El Paso creen que los métodos que utiliza 915 Anarchy no son apropiados. Josiah Heyman, profesor de sociología y antropología en UTEP, cree que los anarquistas, por sus prácticas violentas, roban atención de los medios al movimiento Occupy. "No me gusta eso", dice Heyman, quien también es protestante de Occupy EP. "Tengo un problema con varios tipos de actividad que considero quitan la credibilidad de gente que es trabajadora, que quieren protestar pacíficamente".

Sin embargo Maus dice que empresas como Bank of America, y no los anarquistas, deberían ser vistas como criminales. "Han estado robando billones y billones de dólares de aquellos que pagan impuestos y todavía no han regresado nada. Creo que es injusto que nosotros somos los que nos metemos en problemas por algo que tenía que haber terminado hace mucho".

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