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**MURALES DE MI CALLE
(Street Gallery)**

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Sociology

San Jose State University

**In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree**

Master of Art

by

Marisol Martinez Vázquez

August 2006

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ABSTRACT

MURALES DE MI CALLE: STREET GALLERY

By Marisol Martinez Vázquez

The effect of whether murals build community in a neighborhood was investigated. Although there is much pre-existing literature regarding the connection and strong relationship between community and murals, none of the written material explains exactly how it does. This is an exploratory research project which was intended to address that void through the adaptation of film that murals not only beautify a neighborhood, but additionally build and define a particular community. Using a sample of personal interviews with muralists, art historians, and members of the community, the methodology section was filmed as a documentary exploring the numerous murals which are located within the Mission District of San Francisco, California. The implications of this finding are discussed along with recommendations for future research.

DEDICATION

I grew up very fortunate in having parents that were strong advocates of the arts. I remember my very first trip to the John Paul Getty Museum, back in the early 1990s. As a child, at the young age of ten years, I walked around the entire museum with a pad and pencil documenting the types of statues and paintings that surrounded me. As an observer, I kept close watch on the art goers in the various galleries. I watched the way they interacted with the art, and I would write down those expressions. I was conducting and collecting my own ethnographies without even having the slightest idea in my own creative world that a little sociologist was in the making. Little did I know, that a mere fourteen years later, I would be doing the same exact thing, jotting down notes with a pen, but rather in an art museum in an enclosed building, now I would be out on the streets, a street gallery, if you will, but this time I had an additional tool, a GL-2 digital camera.

Where to even begin?

First to God and to *La Virgencita de Guadalupe* that have always been at my side. Without them, I would not exist, and without them I would be eternally lost. To my parents, Rodrigo and Maria Vázquez, whom I owe my entire life and have immense gratitude for all of their support, and for being great providers. They are truly an exemplary example of immigrants who came to the United States in hope for a better future for their family. My brothers, Rodrigo II, Emmanuel and Joshua, without their presence my childhood would have been very much quiet and lonely. I could not imagine life without my family.

To Christopher, and all of my wonderful and supportive friends, I thank you for lending an ear in times of panic and frustration during this process. Melinda Gandara and Patsy Hicks, my mentors, who have always believed and supported me. Curt Lasher for being so understanding for the past two years. Professor Bob Gliner, Professor Preston Rudy, and Professor Maria Ochoa, for their time, passionate interest, and encouragement in serving on my committee, and taking a chance on a Project C thesis. Last but not least, Precita Eyes, Patricia Rose, 0-0-00 (Laura Campos), Maria Ochoa, Laura Murphy, Chu, Patricia Rodriguez, and the community members interviewed, without you, this documentary thesis project would have never existed. I immensely thank you for giving this eager and ambitious *Mexican-American* the opportunity of making her dream come true.

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CHAPTER I Literature Review

Muralismo (Muralism) is the art of political and public wall painting. How often have we passed by a mural depicted on a public space? Do we stop to acknowledge and appreciate what is portrayed, or do we simply pass with no intention to stop and reflect on the art? What does it mean to have a mural in the neighborhood? Do murals build community? How does a community respond to such art?

Community is defined as “the concept concerned with a particularly constituted set of social relationships based on something which the participants have in common—usually a common sense of identity” (Oxford Sociology Dictionary 97). The concept of community concerns a particularly constituted set of social relationships based on something which the participants have in common, usually a common sense of identity. “Community” is defined as something that people create.

Timothy W. Drescher, a mural historian and photographer, has researched and documented the conservation of murals located in a community and neighborhood. In *San Francisco Bay Area Murals: Communities Create their Muses 1904-1997*, Drescher defines community “as a social, not merely a geographical definition. It refers to any group of like minded people. Including ‘community’ in ‘community murals’ makes these artworks different from any others, and that is why it helps to make a distinction between ‘community art’ and the more general term ‘public art’” (12). According to Drescher, public art is done for the general undefined population which are usually commissioned by governmental officials and corporations, whereas community art instead is produced

by individuals who will have a direct impact on what is painted and created either because they pass by the mural on a daily basis or because they live in that particular neighborhood.

The Mexican Mural Movement which began in the early 1920s produced some of the greatest public revolutionary art of the twentieth century. The initial motivation was provided by Jose Vasconcelos, Mexico's Minister for Education, who made accessible centrally located buildings for artists to produce murals (Helm 36). By painting the walls of public buildings, they upheld the socialist ideal of accessible art for all (Rochfort 33). The idea was in bringing the private out into the public for all to see. Several artists joined the movement. Three of the most recognized and famous are Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siquieros, and Jose Clemente Orozco. There were of course other artists at the time, but it was *Los Tres Grandes* (The Big Three) who were the masters. Patricia Rose, a muralist and tour coordinator at Precita Eyes, explains that:

The influence of *Los Tres Grandes* on contemporary muralism can not be overstated, because they brought such a powerful vision to this art form that continues to inspire in different ways. They made every effort to make their work honest heartfelt expressions of what was going on, not with just them as individuals, but with their people, but with their collective families, citizens of Mexico. This was an important way of expressing the concerns of people, and that has influenced us tremendously because we really practice our muralism in the same way; that it is an expression of a community (Rose, Personal Interview).

Although they did not align themselves politically, they did however agree that they were creating a new monumental form of public art. This new art form embraced political issues, spiritual beliefs, and also indigenous life. These were the three key elements to muralism, and the muralist's philosophy.

The Chicano-Movement and Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s stimulated a new generation of muralists to revive the work of *Los Tres Grandes*, all of whom had painted murals in the United States (Rose, Personal Interview). It was during this social movement that muralism pursued the impulsive uprising of the masses through a fundamental renewal and reaffirmation of Mexican culture (Rodriguez, Personal Interview). Additionally, through rediscovery of indigenous heritage, social and political issues were tackled through the tradition of monumental art.

Patricia Rodriguez, a Mission District resident and muralist, explains that it was through the development of the Chicano-Movement that allowed Latinos to discover their cultural identity, especially since they did not receive their history in school. It was not until they discovered it themselves, and through the Chicano-Movement that they had the opportunity. Furthermore, through murals such as *Pan America*, which Rodriguez was involved with in painting with the *Mujeres Muralistas* (Women Muralists), the mural reflected “the reality of the community, that is, ‘Who lives here?’ ‘Who’s the audience?’ It was Venezuelans, Peruvians, Bolivians, and Mexicans, so we spoke directly to them on the wall” (Rodriguez, Personal Interview).

The Mission District is one of the oldest and most vibrant neighborhoods in San Francisco. It dates back to the completion of Mission Dolores by the Spanish priests and soldiers in 1776. Many immigrants of Irish, Italian, German, and Latino descent settled in the area after the Gold Rush of 1849. Following World War II, many residents moved out of the neighborhood to the rapidly developing suburbs. It is this last set of

immigrants, the individuals from Latin America, that has given the Mission District its distinctive character.

The estimated 2000 Census population for the Mission District is 69,351 persons. Latinos are the majority ethnic/racial group in the inner parts of the Mission District (U.S. Census Bureau). According to the 2000 Census, Latinos accounted for 43.7 percent. The remainder is split between Asians, African Americans, Whites, American Indians, and Other. The Mission District population can be characterized as low income, and ethnically diverse when compared to the city of San Francisco.

The Mission District is the capital of murals located in the Bay Area. In the early 1970's, an exceptional mural project commenced in Balmy Alley. This one-block alley houses more than thirty vivacious and vibrant murals painted on fences, building walls, and garage doors. Muralists who lived in the Mission District collaborated on group mural projects which were led by local neighborhood artists such as Patricia Rodriguez, who emerged out of the Chicano-Movement. At the time, fourteen years ago, the *Mujeres Muralistas* were brainstorming ideas on projects which involved producing a big group collective on the streets, and as a resident of Balmy, Rodriguez offered her garage door in the alley.

The Balmy Alley mural environment is very interesting in the way that it tends to be very political. An overriding theme in the murals of Balmy Alley tends to be social justice throughout the world. However, some of the murals attribute cartoon-like illustrations that are lighthearted and youthful. Other murals serve as a memorial and remembrance to people who have died from AIDS, depictions of political strife and war

in Latin America, whereas some murals depict the displacement of people within the Mission District because of the current economy. Most of the pieces are not commissioned, which means that the artists are doing it at their own expense rather than at the request of a client who may want something specific. Therefore as artists they tend to have a lot of freedom in Balmy Alley as far as what they can express or say. For those reasons so many artists use the alley as a political forum.

As a Mission District artist and resident, Laura Campos started her own mural project in her neighborhood in Horace Alley. She was quite aware of the various problems that were occurring in her neighborhood such as drugs, prostitution, and shootings; she was inspired to begin her own project. “It’s about people feeling comfortable and at ease in their own space and environment” (Campos, Personal Interview). Her first composition on canvas entitled *Spiritual Connection*, was an art piece which symbolizes people connecting spiritually with one another. This idea is represented through a male, a female, and children. The artwork sold to an art collector, and in turn she was inspired to turn her artwork into murals for all to see because “whereas many of the residents in the neighborhood are low income, and they could never attend one of my art exhibits, or purchase one of my paintings, I decided to bring my art to the streets as a street gallery” (Campos, Personal Interview).

So why paint on a building and not on canvas for all to see in an art museum? On any given day, depending on the traffic that it may receive, thousands of people can view art when painted on the exterior of a building. Marc Simon, a San Francisco resident, mentions that “having a mural outside on the streets where every one can see it gives it to

people who wouldn't necessarily have a chance to" (Simon, Personal Interview).

Furthermore, Rodriguez's philosophy as a muralist was in bringing paintings out into the streets because:

Our people do not go to art museums, although our people pay taxes for that museum, but we sometimes can not afford to go to see an exhibition or we don't make a special effort to take the kids to see the museums. We figure if we are Chicanas and Latinas then we can do something for our community on a wall and have people see the art life-size" (Rodriguez, Personal Interview).

Murals do not have to be complex. They can be very simple to convey a message.

Murals beautify a neighborhood. With their vibrant and animated colors, they bring people outside in neighborhoods where one would not normally go or feel safe, as seen in both the Balmy and Horace Alley projects. Shu, a volunteer muralist for the Horace Alley project, believes that murals on a wall are a way for them to communicate with people.

On this side [garage door defaced with graffiti] we mainly have graffiti and that's basically the mode of communication. It is a gang tag, maybe a symbol of competition, "here I am, now I own this street," but on this side [his mural depicting a youthful, peaceful fairy] it's more like we share this street for everyone, so that everyone can enjoy it, and not fight over it" (Shu, Personal Interview).

In *Community Murals: The People's Art*, Alan Barnett defines heritage murals as "a reminder to people of their way of life and the achievements of the past" (136).

Heritage murals serve as a reminder to individuals of their homeland and where they come from. They allow the individual never to forget of their past and culture. Mission District residents, Leonardo Teochano and Maria Poblano, reiterate that the most important thing about having the murals in the neighborhood is so that they never forget their roots of where they come from, and of their history and culture. It reunites them

together in remembering who they are and of the importance of maintaining one's beliefs through their culture.

I'm happy to see first of all starting with the mural of the Virgin of Guadalupe, and other murals, such as the ones which depict our history, and culture of the past. All of that is very beautiful. Murals are important for our culture and for our current and future generations because they inform of the culture and history. We can not forget where we come from, and we have to teach that to our future generations so that it may not be lost (Teochano, Personal Interview).

Located a block away from Balmy Alley, Precita Eyes Mural Arts Center is a non-profit community arts organization which was established in 1977. This center is one of only three community mural organizations in the United States. As stated in their mission statement, "Precita Eyes firmly believes in both beautifying urban environments, and educating communities about the process and history of public community art" (Rose, Personal Interview). Their dedication guarantees that the creative work produced is accessible, both physically and conceptually, to the people whose lives it impacts. This mission statement is kept exceptionally alive through the variety of classes offered such as art classes, mural workshops, open studio, and life drawing courses for ages ranging from toddlers to adults (Rose, Personal Interview). Additionally, the Month of May is Mural Awareness Month in the Mission District. Throughout the month there are a series of events to raise both awareness of murals and artists both locally and nationally. Furthermore, in addition to school fieldtrips, every weekend, Precita Eyes offers guided murals walks along the Mission Street and 24th Street corridors of the Mission District.

Patricia Rose, who is the mural coordinator and docent at Precita Eyes, enjoys telling stories of how the murals enhance her community, and how they came into existence. She explains that the tours are more than just showing off the murals, they

additionally shows off the neighborhood as well because one can smell the food coming from the various *taquerias*, and hear the vibrant music that surrounds them on the tours. Therefore, tour goers are not only exposed to the murals but additionally to the wonderful feeling of the Mission District's vibrancy. Residents within the Mission District, such as Leonardo Teochano, are happy to see the various mural tours that occur both during the weekend on the week days because Teochano believes they serve as a means for people to become educated and aware of the various histories and cultures that are represented in the murals around the neighborhood. Additionally, Sean McKenney, a San Francisco resident, whose visit to the Mission District was specifically to look at the murals, explained that they are much about:

What they see in life and what they experience in life, and they put it on the buildings which I think is a great testament because the buildings are the city, and people are the life of the city. Therefore, they are reflecting their life upon the city and where they interact" (McKenney, Personal Interview).

Muralism is a vast and organic field which has evolved with humanity. Whereas the murals of thousands of years ago depicted a spiritual expression in sacred caves and churches; muralism today is depicted as a form of political expression, as seen in the Mission District. It is a form of celebration, celebrating community, a multi-cultural environment, in a way that murals are accessible to everyone. Additionally, it is a historical reminder of events and incidents in social change. However, some like Rodriguez would also argue that the role of muralism has shifted yet again.

Whereas the murals continue to be political and important, they are not in the same degree of what it was intended for in the early 1970s. It was the Chicano-Movement and the Civil Rights Movement that depicted the important fact that we existed and that we had the same rights as everyone else to be educated and to be part of the working force (Rodriguez, Personal Interview).

Many would agree that a mural places a strong emphasis on community building in the way that it actively engages community in design sessions, and in aiding on the mural project itself. When the community participates, their voices convey a sense of ownership of what the murals depict in their neighborhood. According to Howard Becker, one of the most significant characteristics of an aesthetic of collaboration is the collaboration between the artist and the community. The objective is not to achieve the vision of one individual but to come to a mutual consensus of synchronization and different visions. The first relationship that is formed between artist and community members is brainstorming, and reaching a consensus on what issue or theme should be produced, and the reasons on portraying that particular topic and theme.

Communally designed work broadens the ability of incorporating and accepting multiple points of view from representing the individual consciousness to the coming together and intertwining a social collective consciousness. As a muralist, Rose places a strong affirmation that it is important to involve the community in a project, not only as a courtesy, but additionally as something that is going to affect their lives. “When they participate their voice becomes part of that project and it conveys a sense of ownership, ‘this is your mural, you made it,’ you worked with us to do it” (Rose, Personal Interview).

A solo artist can also interpret the goals or aims of a community, but the artist would need to be very sensitive to the community in order to do that with the highest integrity. Oftentimes there are muralists who come across trouble because they do not solicit what sorts of depictions should be portrayed in the mural. Professor Maria Ochoa

and author of *Creative Collectives, Chicana Painters Working in Community* emphasizes that:

In the development of murals is the connection between artist and the communities in which the murals are going to reside, or where those murals will be painted. I think that is the key relationship that needs to be examined each and every time that a mural is proposed for a community. No one asks members of a community if they want to have a tobacco or alcohol billboard in their community, it is simply put up, and in the same way there are muralists who find themselves in trouble with communities because they don't ask what are the sorts of representations you would like to see here, and I think there is an implicit assumption if we come out of the traditional thinking of murals that there is a constant ongoing engagement between the artist, and between the community, in which the mural is going to reside. When that interaction is absent, then I think that there is a large disconnect, and I think that the artist then is only working to serve her or her vision (Ochoa, Personal Interview).

Additionally, if a mural is done as a community project where members of the community are all bringing their awareness to the project, it becomes an expression of that community. Community murals serve as a public demonstration for the people who live within the neighborhood. Alan Barnett reiterates that because murals are about and for the community it becomes important for them to become involved in creating various mural projects. "The empowering of ordinary people in all respects required that they be able to communicate on matters of common concern publicly and directly without the intermediary of professionals but with their help" (131). By having community members become active in mural projects, with the aid of professional artists, it allows them to develop a community-based culture which then presents them the ability to represent their existence, as well as having the ability to change it.

We can only anticipate the future of muralism continues throughout human existence. From the beginning of time, humanity has always shown a strong desire in aesthetically transforming its environment, and we can only hope that it continues in the

future through the use of artistic expression, as seen in mural art. Ochoa strongly believes that:

The murals on the wall of that particular small street have been there since 1971. The murals are always changing. There's always a different face to the murals that are on the walls, garages, and doorways of Balmy Alley. But the tradition of having murals there, and the engagement between artists and the persons who live on the street, and the persons who hold businesses in the nearby neighborhood, that engagement persists, and I think that to that extent the future of muralism is bright, hopeful and lends itself to people understanding why it's important that artists to work in a community, and why is it important that artists work in community? Because it provides them a grounding; they are no longer simply acting out of self-interest (Ochoa, Personal Interview).

Based on what I discovered, I agree with Ochoa that the future of muralism is bright, and that it will continue to beautify and serve as an important meaning both in and for a community.

Chapter II Methodology

Documentary

Today's society is very much captivated by the world of cinema. According to Professor Drew Todd of Film and Television at San Jose State University, "cinema is such a dynamic and highly dimensional format—complete with (seemingly) moving images, sound, depth, spatial and temporal qualities—that it has the power to reach and move many more people than a written text" (D. Todd, personal communication, February 1, 2006). With technology rapidly changing and influencing today's world, the application of technology within the field of sociology unlocks a new realm both to the field, and the researcher. Producing documentaries as a methodology section in qualitative studies allows the researcher to capture and preserve narratives in a new way which then allows much flexibility in reporting about a study. The field of sociology is increasingly integrating visual media in the research process. Whereas many sociologists in the past ignored visual images in the field; visual sociology uses photography and film as a research tool to facilitate the gathering of data.

Why produce a film instead of writing it in the form of a book or essay? I personally believe that through documentaries we are able to grasp a better understanding about historical, cultural, societal circumstances, perspectives, and situations through the use of a visual on screen as opposed to writing on paper because the images are right in front of the audience. It then gives them the feeling that they are present in the location with the visuals that are depicted. Documentaries typically show the audience as much as

they teach or tell, so that the audience can see people, situations, and conflicts as they more or less are, thus bringing alive through the screen important issues of the day. Additionally, it can powerfully express certain realities that may go unobserved by much of the population, such as in the murals of the Mission District which have never been documented on film.

Methodologically, the use of photography and film serves the purpose of documenting areas of social and cultural life. I believe that film documentaries are an important addition to the field of sociology as a methodology because it is a record which allowed me to get at the meaning and roles of the murals by using interviews and visuals which were caught on film. The integration of film in visual sociology according to Marcus Banks is:

An approach to mechanical visual recording media which tend to treat them as neutral technologies capable of objectively recording social behavior or visible 'givens'. Images are no more 'transparent' than written accounts and while film, video and photography do stand in an indexical relationship to that which they represent they are still representations of reality, not a direct encoding of it (10).

As representations, films are therefore subject to the influences of their social, cultural and historical frameworks of production and utilization. Alternatively, visual images may be used as data usually as part of a sociological study of culture, in which film and other objects may be examined. The use of film in the field of sociology allows more direct observation of social interaction, which makes the field work a more permanent record of what field work was done. This is good because it allows a wider array of people to observe the same data directly.

A film documentary provides different advantages as opposed to other mediums such as photography. It provides a better sense of capturing what the murals do for a community in the way that movement, activity, and noise are caught on film, whereas a photograph would miss these actions completely. Additionally, film documentaries provide the viewers an opportunity to directly experience a different way of recording the reality and the direct observation. From my own experience, this then allows them to come to their own conclusions and interpret their own meanings regarding what is occurring in communities.

Sociology and Visual Representation is concerned with still images, diagrams and the visual presentation of the written text. It focuses particularly on current texts which have altered the relationship of analysis by integrating visual representation into the analysis itself. Elizabeth Chaplin shows that visual images such as photography and film have each played a part in “blurring the distinction between art and non-art visual representations and in questioning the assumption that the verbal does the analyzing while the visual merely constitutes the object of analysis” (30) She argues that critical analyses of society are powerful when both verbal and visual dimensions are consciously made active and coordinated, and she advocates social scientists to utilize more use of visual representation in their analyses.

Procedure

Initial recruitment for interviews first began by researching through the Internet various muralists, organizations, and/or mural projects located within the Mission District of San Francisco, California. The Precita Eyes non-profit organization center website

proved to be the most valuable resource in locating participants to be interviewed for the study. Another means for seeking out participants was conducted through the use of sociology's snowball sampling, where one subject gives the researcher the name of another subject, who in turn provides the name of a third, and so on (Vogt 1999). Many of the muralists who were interviewed for the study provided contact information for other individuals whom they believed would contribute to the project. Furthermore, the technique of approaching individuals on the streets of the Mission District on a random Saturday in the middle of March was another way of gathering interviews for the project.

With the exception of those individuals who were interviewed on the streets of the Mission District, the other individuals interviewed were initially contacted through e-mail and were provided information regarding the project and documentary. Additionally, a copy of potential questions that would be asked through the interview process was attached. After receiving confirmation and permission to be interviewed, a follow-up phone call or e-mail was confirmed on setting up a time, date, and location for the interview.

Participants

Interviews were conducted in both the fall of 2005 and spring of 2006, researching whether murals build community as seen through the Mission District murals located in San Francisco, California. Altogether, five women and five men were interviewed for the study. Of these interviewed: two women and one man remain currently active producing murals throughout the Mission District; one woman has since retired from producing murals; another woman is a professor at San Jose State University

and author on Chicana muralists; and four men and one woman were interviewed on the streets of the Mission District, all of whom are current residents of San Francisco, California. Many of the interviews were conducted in the work spaces where the interviewee worked. In only one case, interviews were conducted on the field site of a mural project which was in progress. The individuals that were interviewed on the streets were randomly selected on different street corners of the Mission District.

At the beginning of all interviews each interviewee signed a consent form and was informed that the interviews would be filmed on tape for a documentary, and if requested, a copy of the documentary would be provided when the project was complete. Additionally, interviewees were able to remove themselves from the project at any point preceding the project's completion. All interviews were filmed on tape, transcribed, and edited for the documentary. During the editing process, on a couple of occasions, follow-up editorial changes and corrections were made through e-mail.

CHAPTER III RESULTS

This exploratory research project looked at seeing whether murals build community. The mural movement of Mexico specifically spoke to the Mexican culture with portrayals and depictions of their Mexican culture and history. However, the same cannot be said about the murals within the Mission District; therefore, the murals do not directly speak to only one specific audience but to an abundance of different audiences all which reside in the district. Although the majority of the population in the Mission District is Latino, a great number of murals depict non-Latino themes. In fact, many recent murals that have been painted portray obvious markers such as better rights to housing, jobs, education, struggles that are depicted by different communities and countries throughout the world, and awareness of health issues regarding the residents of the Mission. A resident of the Mission District who is of Latino descent such as Mexican, Columbian, Bolivian, Puerto Rican, etc and residents of non-Latino descent are not only constantly surrounded by color on a daily basis but additionally are surrounded by an artistic history book depicted on a wall educating and informing about the different audiences and cultures which encompass, and concern to that specific community. Murals additionally aid as a topic of conversation. Individuals may not necessarily know what location the mural depicts, however they can take their own knowledge and adapt what they know to the representations as seen through the murals.

Looking to the 2000 Census, the demographics within the Mission District are changing ever more quickly. As stated in the documentary, Latinos accounted for 43.7

percent. The remainder is split between Asians, African Americans, Whites, American Indians, and Other. Whereas ten years ago, the Latino population remained very prominent, in the last couple of years the Mission District has seen more of a diverse population of people. This can be attributed to high living costs in the Bay Area which in turn means that there is a high turnover of individuals renting housing units throughout the area. Therefore, the concept of community can be defined as “elastic” in the way that residents within that location are constantly changing and never static. Whereas much literature defines community as a group of people coming together who share a common interest, we can see that the same definition does not apply to the community of the Mission District in San Francisco. People come and go from the neighborhood, however while residing in the Mission District they are constantly surrounded with murals which for the most part remain the same. Therefore, with the dynamics of different residents moving in and out of the district, the murals take on the form of acting as a street gallery depicting both the beauty and the concerns of that particular neighborhood, thus bringing awareness to both current and new residents.

To have a mural in a neighborhood enables it to serve many different purposes. They serve as an expression of that specific community expressing concerns either in a political, educational, or in a decorative way. Murals also reflect a sense of identification to the community. Professor Maria Ochoa explains:

It requires the engagement of all interested parties. There is the artist, a group of artists, there is the owner of the building and then there's the community who lives and/or works in the surrounding area, and to that extent that interested parties are able to come to a common agreement about just an overall theme for a building. I think that represents a great deal towards helping people work in a collective spirit, and to that extent that people are able to work in a collective a spirit, I think that it influences their daily behavior. I really do believe that the development in murals in community can have a profound positive affect (Ochoa, Personal Interview).

It additionally allows members of that community to feel comfortable and at ease in their own space, and environment. Additionally as noted through the interview with Leonardo Teochano, and Maria Poblano, "heritage murals," as coined by Alan Barnett, serve as way of remembering one's own historical roots and culture. Murals serve as a reminder of historical events from the past, thus enabling individuals such as Teochano and Poblano never to forget where they came from.

Murals are an expression of a community. They add color to a neighborhood but furthermore require the attention of both the owner of the building, the artist, and from the members of the community. The owner of the building is who provides the wall, the space where a mural will be painted on, the artist provides the vision and the teachings of how to go about producing a certain theme on a wall, and the members of the community are the ones who relinquish the concerns of what is occurring in that specific neighborhood, and what theme they choose to depict, and highlight for all to see. Without any of these three main characters, mural projects would not easily occur or be carried out.

As an individual walks throughout the Mission District that person has the sense of being in a street gallery. However, whereas one can not touch the art pieces in a private museum setting, in the Mission District that is not the case. A viewer can walk up

to a mural, touch it, and get a sense of what it was like for the individuals who painted and contributed to the project. Additionally, for many of those members of the community this may be their introduction to the art world or furthermore the closest experience they've encountered to going to an art museum. Patricia Rodriguez indicates in the documentary that many times people cannot afford to go or they simply do not make the effort to take themselves or their families to an art museum. Mission District resident Maria Poblano mentions in the documentary that although her last museum visit was in Mexico, the murals in the Mission District serve as a street gallery where the exhibitions are constantly changing. Therefore, murals build community in the way that the art world is available to them on the streets in a more relaxed and available manner. Furthermore, with a street gallery whose murals are always changing either due to lack of space provided or as Patricia Rose indicated, murals are not meant to last on a wall forever, the new murals that appear on the streets quite frequently allow the exhibition on the street to change constantly like that of a regular art museum.

It is also through non-profit organizations like Precita Eyes that serve as an additional tool in showing how murals build community. The center which was established in 1977 is one of three community mural organizations in the United States. Mural tours are provided weekdays for school field trips, private and group tours, and on Saturdays and Sundays at 11:00am and 1:30pm for the public. Mural tours are another means of introducing outside community members of what life is like in the Mission District, and that of the murals that are portrayed throughout Balmy Alley, and its surrounding neighborhood. Rose mentions that this is the time where she is able to show

off how great her neighborhood is, all the meanwhile telling stories and educating the content of each mural, but additionally enlightening outside visitors of the different concerns and issues that the community is dealing with. One interesting aspect regarding the mural tours is the fact that tourists pay money to be led on the tours, and in turn the money goes into a general fund which can be used for anything such as payroll, utilities, mortgage, art supplies, or whatever may be needed. An eight dollar admission entitles a slide show presentation, which is given in the backroom as an introduction to explaining the history of murals and those in the neighborhood, as well as an hour long walking tour with a docent throughout Balmy Alley and its surroundings.

Various mural projects that are initiated by Precita Eyes allow members of the community to experience firsthand the production and application of aiding a mural project. Aiding on a mural project thus conveys a sense of ownership to the individual that helped contribute, because they helped produce it. They bring their awareness, and therefore it becomes an awareness to the project. Furthermore, the month of May in the Mission District is Mural Awareness Month where every weekend various mural projects, exhibits, and contests are constantly taking place. This is yet another gathering for all members of the community to celebrate and represent who they are, while producing visuals which draw them communally together.

For future studies, researchers could study more communities whose neighborhoods are embedded with murals as opposed to communities that are not, and study to see if there are similarities and/or differences between the two communities. Lastly, a researcher could expand this study furthermore by comparing mural

communities to those of Mexico mural communities. It would be very interesting to see if there are similarities and differences, taking into account that it was in Mexico with Jose Vasconcelos who first initiated the idea of implementing public murals in open public space. The execution of documenting the methodology section as a documentary proved to be a successful and sufficient means in this particular exploratory research. Therefore, it is worthy of further examination and implementation by other researchers.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Questions for Documentary - Muralists

1. Please state your name and your occupation title.
2. Please provide a brief background of your schooling and occupations related to Art History.
3. Who was the first muralist painter in Mexico?
4. Can you please elaborate on “Los Tres Grandes,”(Diego Rivera, Jose Clemente Orozco, and David Alfaro Siquieros) and their involvement of murals in Mexico.
5. “Los Tres Grande” are identified to be the founding fathers of muralism in Mexico, but can you name others that are left out.
6. When and where were any members of “Los Tres Grandes” commissioned in the United States to paint murals.
7. How have muralist painters from Mexico influenced muralist artist in the United States.
8. What do you believe is the role of muralism in today’s society?
9. Do you believe that muralism still serve the same purpose today as they were first intended for?
10. What do you believe is the future of muralism?
11. How did you first become involved in painting murals?
12. Who have been your influences in painting?
13. What would say is the difference between murals in Mexico and in the United States?
14. What do you believe is the importance in producing a mural on a building?
15. Do you believe that a mural can shape awareness and a collective consciousness in defining a neighborhood?
16. Who helps you in producing murals?
17. Are you approached by patrons to paint murals or do you seek patrons?
18. Why paint murals instead of painting on canvas?
19. Why paint on walls instead of having ones work displayed inside a museum?

APPENDIX B

Interview Questions for Documentary - Art Historians

1. Please state your name and your occupation title.
2. Please provide a brief background of your schooling and occupations related to Art History.
3. Who was the first muralist painter in Mexico?
4. Can you please elaborate on “Los Tres Grandes,”(Diego Rivera, Jose Clemente Orozco, and David Alfaro Siquieros) and their involvement of murals in Mexico.
5. “Los Tres Grandes” are identified to be the founding fathers of muralism in Mexico, but can you name others that are left out.
6. When and where were any members of “Los Tres Grandes” commissioned in the United States to paint murals.
7. How have muralist painters from Mexico influenced muralist artist in the United States.
8. What do you believe is the role of muralism in today’s society?
9. Do you believe that muralism still serve the same purpose today as they were first intended for?
10. What do you believe is the future of muralism?
11. What would say is the difference between murals in Mexico and in the United States?
12. What do you believe is the importance in producing a mural on a building?
13. Do you believe that a mural can shape awareness and a collective consciousness in defining a neighborhood?
14. Why paint murals instead of painting on canvas?
15. Why paint on walls instead of having ones work displayed inside a museum?

APPENDIX C

Interview Questions for Documentary - Community Members

Resident Questions

1. Please state your name and how long have you resided in the Mission District or San Francisco?
2. How often do you pass by the murals here in the Mission District?
3. What do you believe is the importance of having a mural in the neighborhood?
4. Have you ever participated in helping produce a mural?
5. What thoughts and feelings do the murals invoke in you?
6. Have you ever had an individual ask you about the murals in the Mission District?
7. Do you believe that murals provide an individual a sense of identity?
8. When was your last visit to an art museum?
9. Do you ever stop to acknowledge a mural, or do you usually just walk by?
10. How do the murals specifically speak to you?

Business Owners

1. Why did you have a mural commissioned on the wall of your business?
2. How did you go about commissioning artists to paint the mural?
3. Do you ever have people from off the street ask you about your mural or others in the Mission District?
4. Why paint a mural on your business wall?

Mural Tour Individuals

1. How did you first hear about the Mural Tours?
2. What were your first impressions of the murals in the Mission District?
3. Were you aware of the murals before you came on this tour?
4. What do you believe is the importance of having murals in a community?

APPENDIX D

Agreement to Participate in Research: English



**San José State
UNIVERSITY**

**Department of Sociology
College of Social Sciences**

One Washington Square
San José, CA 95192-0122
Voice: 408-924-4320
Fax: 408-924-3322
E-mail: socsci@mail.sjsu.edu

Agreement to Participate in Research

Responsible Investigator: Marisol Vázquez
Documentary on Community Consciousness of Mexican Murals

1. You have been asked to participate in a research study investigating community's consciousness on Muralism.
 2. You will be asked to be interviewed on camera for a documentary regarding Muralism. Where and when the interview will take place will be anytime from June 2005- May 2006 at a location that is feasible and comfortable with the interviewee.
 3. The signature of a subject on this document indicates consent verifying their authority of being filmed to appear in the documentary.
 4. Anonymity will not exist because the subject gives their consent of being filmed and his/her name and occupational title will be included in the documentary.
 5. There are no risk factors anticipated in this documentary project.
 6. No discernable benefits are expected from the participant's participation.
 7. Although there will be no compensation for participating, a complimentary copy of the documentary will be distributed to participant if interested.
 8. Questions about this research may be addressed to Marisol Vazquez, (661) 871-7381. Complaints about the research may be presented to Yoko Baba (408) 924-5320. Questions about research subject rights, or research related injury, may be presented to Pamela Stacks, Ph.D., Interim Associate Vice President, Graduate Studies and Research, at (408) 924-2480.
 9. No service of any kind to which you are otherwise entitled, will be lost or jeopardized if you choose to "not participate" in the study.
 10. Your consent is being given voluntarily. You may refuse to participate in the entire study or in any part of the study. If you decide to participate in the study, you are free to withdraw at any time without any negative effect on your relations with San Jose State University or with any other participating institutions or agencies.
 11. At the time that you sign this consent form, you will receive a copy of it for your records, signed and dated by the investigator.
- The signature of a subject on this document indicates agreements to participate in the study.
 - The signature of a researcher on this document indicates agreement to include the above named subject in the research and attention that the subject has been fully informed of his or her rights.

Signature

Date

Investigator's Signature

Date

The California State University
Chancellor's Office
Attn: Director, Office of Student Services
University of California, Santa Cruz
101 Shields Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95064
Voice: (831) 438-7300
Fax: (831) 438-7300
E-mail: chancellor@csuoc.edu

APPENDIX E

Agreement to Participate in Research: Spanish



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College of Social Sciences
One Washington Square
San Jose, CA 95192-0122
Voice: 408-924-5320
Fax: 408-924-5322
E-mail: socio@mail.sjsu.edu

Consentimiento para Participar en una Investigación

Investigador Responsable: **Marisol Vázquez**
Documental sobre La Conciencia Comunitaria de los Murales Mexicanos

1. Se ha pedido su participación en un estudio de investigación sobre la conciencia en Muralismo.
 2. Será entrevistado en cámara para un documental sobre Muralismo. En donde y cuando tomará lugar la entrevista será entre el mes de Junio del 2005 y Mayo del 2006. La entrevista se llevará a cabo en el lugar que sea apropiado y confortable para el entrevistado.
 3. La firma del sujeto en éste documento indicará su consentimiento verificando su autorización para ser filmado para aparecer en el documental.
 4. No se presentará como anónimo porque el sujeto da su autorización de ser filmado y su nombre de él/ella y el título de su ocupación aparecerán en el documental.
 5. No existen ningunos factores de riesgo en éste documental.
 6. No existe ningún beneficio discernible en la participación del participante.
 7. A pesar que no habrá ninguna recompensa por participar, se les regalará una copia del documental a los participantes que estén interesados.
 8. Preguntas sobre ésta investigación pueden ser dirigidas a Marisol Vazquez al (661) 871-7381. Quejas sobre ésta investigación deben ser presentadas a Yoko Baba (408) 924-5320. Preguntas sobre los derechos de los sujetos, o alguna lesión relacionada con ésta investigación, puede ser presentada a la Doctora Pamela Stacks, Asociada Interina Vice Presidenta, Estudios para Graduados e Investigaciones, al (408) 924-2480.
 9. Ningún servicio de ninguna índole al cual usted tenga derecho, será perdido o puesto en riesgo, si usted decide "no participar" en el estudio.
 10. Su consentimiento ha sido voluntario. Usted puede negarse a participar en el estudio entero o en alguna parte del estudio. Si usted decide participar en el estudio, sientase libre de retirarse en cualquier momento, con ninguna consecuencia negativa en sus relaciones con la Universidad del Estado en San José o con cualquier otra institución o agencias participantes.
 11. Al momento que usted firme ésta forma, recibirá una copia para sus archivos, firmada y fechada por el investigador.
- La firma del sujeto en éste documento indica estar de acuerdo en participar en el estudio.
 - La firma del investigador en éste documento indica estar de acuerdo en incluir al sujeto mencionado en la investigación, y que el sujeto ha sido totalmente informado de todos sus derechos.

Firma

Fecha

Firma del Investigador

Fecha

The California State University
Chico State
Hayward
Dominguez Hills
Fresno
Hawaii
Long Beach
Los Angeles
Maritime Academy
Northridge
Pomona
Sacramento
San Bernardino
San Diego
San Francisco
San Jose
San Luis Obispo
San Marcos
Sonoma
Stanislaus

APPENDIX F

RELEASE FOR PARTICIPATION IN MURALES DE MI TIERRA DOCUMENTARY

I, the undersigned, hereby consent to use of my name, physical image, and voice to be used in the educational documentary, MURALES DE MI TIERRA (working title) produced and directed by Marisol Vázquez, Sociology Graduate Student at San Jose State University. This documentary is intended for use in classrooms, by educational agencies and organizations. In giving this consent I hereby release Marisol Vázquez of any proprietary rights that I may have in regards to this production. I do not expect to be paid for my participation.

NAME _____ DATE _____

SIGNATURE _____

ADDRESS _____

If under the age of 18, or guardian complete the following:

NAME OF PARENT-GUARDIAN _____ DATE _____

SIGNATURE _____

ADDRESS _____

**APPENDIX G
HRB Protocol**



**San José State
UNIVERSITY**

**Office of the Academic
Vice President**
Academic Vice President
Graduate Studies and Research
One Washington Square
San Jose, CA 95192-0025
Voice: 408-924-2480
Fax: 408-924-2477
E-mail: gradstudies@sjsu.edu
http://www.sjsu.edu

To: Marisol Vazquez

From: Pam Stacks, 
AVP, Graduate Studies & Research

Date: June 23, 2005

The Human Subjects-Institutional Review Board has approved your request to use human subjects in the study entitled:

"Documentary on muralism and community consciousness muralism in Mexico v. California."

This approval is contingent upon the subjects participating in your research project being appropriately protected from risk. This includes the protection of the anonymity of the subjects' identity when they participate in your research project, and with regard to all data that may be collected from the subjects. The approval includes continued monitoring of your research by the Board to assure that the subjects are being adequately and properly protected from such risks. If at any time a subject becomes injured or complains of injury, you must notify Pam Stacks, Ph.D. immediately. Injury includes but is not limited to bodily harm, psychological trauma, and release of potentially damaging personal information. This approval for the human subjects portion of your project is in effect for one year, and data collection beyond June 23, 2006 requires an extension request.

Please also be advised that all subjects need to be fully informed and aware that their participation in your research project is voluntary, and that he or she may withdraw from the project at any time. Further, a subject's participation, refusal to participate, or withdrawal will not affect any services that the subject is receiving or will receive at the institution in which the research is being conducted.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (408) 924-2480.

Cc: Bob Gliner, Preston Rudy, Prof. Maria Ochoa

The California State University:
Chancellor's Office
Evanston, Channel Islands, Chico,
Contra Costa Hills, East Bay, Fresno,
Fullerton, Humboldt, Long Beach,
Los Angeles, Maritime Academics,
Monterey Bay, Northridge, Pomona,
Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego,
San Francisco, San Jose, San Luis Obispo,
San Marcos, Sonoma, Stanislaus