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### “Where We Are” Reflection 2

In the younger generations, me included, we are almost completely ignored by society, looked down upon and often seen as powerless, but I and many others like me are doing our hardest to denounce these fallacies. We are the catalyst of the most immense changes today all over the world, in many ways, these stories capture all those moments of change in multiple communities. These stories capture what it’s like to be a young trailblazer, and I will capture a glimpse

Out of all the three stories I read, there are a few things that those 3, and others have in common. For starters, all of them feature teens that fall in to certain minority groups, those being those who are BIPOC, members of the LGBTQ+ community, in a field that is mostly dominated by people who aren’t in those communities, people are trying to bring parts of their heritage to where they are now, they all show off what those communities look like today/ doing good in their community area, teaching others of their community their own trade, and in areas of the world where their expressiveness is mostly ignored or downright shunned by a community.

These pictures carry so much love and joy within them, from what I saw, the pictures show these young people engaging with their communities, just being present with their family and friends, often spanning multiple generations. Some encapsulate other people who aren’t in

that community, still indulging in that community's culture, and embracing it, helping break some of the great divides and stigmas in those communities. To me they tell a story of love and acceptance, expanding a culture based usually in traditional ways, to a new generation, something that all generations in that community can enjoy, they can all come together in one big pot of adoration for each other.

I believe that making connections in the real world is more fulfilling as to opposed to making them online because online, people can be whoever they want to be, they could be part of that community, or a general supporter, or one of the people who despise that said community and want to break it apart, often times they don't even have to leave their own home to cause this caliber of chaos and division. In real life however, you can almost always meet people as their true selves, often if you support their community, it can generally be seen through words or even more through actions, you can cultivate true friendships with people you can interact with face-to-face, rather than a persona behind a screen.

While carefully reading the introduction of the article of "The Family Restaurant," one quote that gave off the whole theme of this restaurant was, "It's one of the reasons why we've been able to maintain ourselves in this country." This was said Adrian Martinez Chavez, a photographer whose grandparents started the restaurant. This references that this is a piece of their homeland of Mexico in their current home in Connecticut, hinting that the theme is something along the lines of, "Never forgetting where you came from," and, "Embrace your culture."

One thing that has constantly been catching my eye is seeing people of not only Latino descent, but people of other backgrounds being happy and enjoying themselves at this restaurant and this culture it had brought to this largely plain landscape where they usually can't

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come together on such a large scale, as highlighted from this quote from Adrien's cousin, Xochitl

“We could have met at a roller skating rink; we could have been at the mall — we could have met anywhere...But Sarapes is “where all of these relationships flourish from.”

One way I am learning about this community is not through the texts, although they do play a small part, but through the pictures, showing people simply being there, and enjoying their time, smiling and talking to their friends. One quote states, “It fulfills everybody's needs, just going there and socializing. Not even eating the food but it's more of connecting with other people,” this is coinciding along with what the pictures are also conveying. The words and pictures twist together and form a beautiful amalgam of a community.

One way the “craft moves,” impressed me was how there were all people of different backgrounds all just enjoying their time. The use of semi-lighting really gave off a homey feel to a place, and I imagine that's what also drew in the other people in that community, the sense of feeling like you are home. The use of putting in quotes from the locals also drew me in, like you are getting an unfiltered opinion of the place and really get a feel for it. One thing I would love to borrow is the quotes from the locals because that is an important part of the sense of community.

Younger generations have proven time and time again that we make the world go round, constantly making change wherever we are, even in the dimmest of environments, our light still shines. Its stories like this that prove this theory once more, showing off young people in a community and bringing it together based on shared experiences. That is what I think is important to American culture, and culture in general, the ability to find a sense of belonging wherever you go.

