

**Topic:** Change of generations

**Abstract:** when I was young our family would follow Mexican traditions closely. What I realized as I started to get older is that we slowly began to drift away from our traditions. A good example is that the current generation no longer attends midnight mass or even having meals as a family together. Although we may have drifted off course of our traditions I intend on keeping them alive as best I can.

**Key Words** traditional Mexican family, language, food, things have changed, holidays, authority, strong bond, standards and morals, carry out traditions,

**Ethnic Designation:** *Mexican american*

**Cultural Category:** Social Practice:

### A Change of Generation

Growing in an extremely traditional Mexican family was just one of the things that made me who I am today. The traditions, the language, the music, the food the well rooted morals and of course the unity of the family; Or as my family would say “la familia primero” and never to forget the root of our origin, our people in Mexico.

Now I don't know about other families or cultures but when it came down to celebrating birthday parties whether it be for old 40 year uncle or for little 8 year old cousin the theme and atmosphere of the party would have no difference. It consisted of the typical Mexican music being played by the stereo or best electronical device at hand. To be more specific, my family

doesn't come from a region of Mexico where people listen to *banda*, where my family come from they listen to *cumbias, salsa and merengue*. I really can't tell the difference between all these genres of music but as a child I still enjoyed them and went along with it. Another thing that was never missing at one of our parties, and how could one forget is beer and alcohol. I guess this was the way of spicing up the party, as if the family drunk and his shenanigans were no enough. We also had *piñatas* and *alguinandos* for the kids to have fun. The *piñata* of course consisted of the birthday persons favorite cartoon character stuffed with candy, and the *alguinandos* were simply small bags filled with candy. Only the children were able to participate in these activities. Things have changed though, the celebration of birthdays is not the same anymore. Now the kids are off doing their own thing, no longer do they participate in things such as the breaking of the *piñata*, they rather sit in front of the TV and watch their cartoons and play their video games. The atmosphere and music is no longer the same, time has passed and generations have aged, people don't drink and party as hard as they used, thus the "spice" and liveliness of the party that used to be is no longer there.

Holidays resembled our birthday parties only instead there was no birthday boy or girl and of course the traditional *tres leches* cake was missing as well. Holidays though were the time when someone's home became the designated house to host the entire family, of course with the help of the other families. Take for instance Christmas, during this holiday all family households would unite in one of uncles if not our own house to celebrate the day. During the celebration we would vast amounts of food to eat seconds as much you wanted. Even though all the kids including myself would receive gifts as part of the common Christmas celebration we as the children would also be thought "the real reason" why we celebrate Christmas. For one our parents would practically drag as to the midnight mass they have at our local church in

celebration of baby *Jesus* birthday as many of our parents would put it. Not only this but back at home before anyone could even touch the food we all, as one big family, had to unit in prayer to thank the lord for all that we had and was forth to come. To me this seemed like an eternity even though at most it took thirty minutes; but this was part of who we were and so we had to endure through it. Kids now a day don't have to endure through a lot of the things we went through. They no longer have to attend mass like we used to, it seems as though my uncles and aunts have loosened the grip on their authority over their children. The "true meaning" of Christmas is no longer enforced over the younger generations of our family and slowly but surely are drifting away into a more Americanize way of celebrating Christ and its "true meaning"; to them now it's all about Santa Claus and the gifts he brings for them to open.

Aside from all the parties, when no one else was around but my parents and my brothers we had a pretty tight relationship. The way my parents handled things back at home I think is also one of the things that made me grow up with such high standards and morals about families today. For one when I was kid the only working TV was the one in the living room, this brought us closer together because what they wanted to watch, we had to watch and vice versa. One thing that brought me and my brothers together is the fact that we never had a room to ourselves, from what I remember I've always shared a room with one of them. This, although was not a choice made by the family but rather due to a lack of economic status, became one of the factors leading to the strong bond between me and my brothers. Also when I came down to eating we would always have asset time to have dinner and it would always be with every one present at the table. This was the time when we sat and talked about everyone's day. It was our way of communicating and it worked just fine. It's this type of things that make me proud of being a part of my culture but more than that the family I come from and what they stand for. Things

have changed though even within my immediate family. As of now me and my older brother no longer live with our parents but even before we moved out things had changed. For one we had multiples TV in the house, something that had never happened, of course everyone got to watch what they pleased to but this also drifted the family apart. One less thing that helped unite the family is now gone. When it came down to eating as a family, we no longer had that either, with everyone working and going to school that was not happening. Now that I have completely moved out, things did changed from my childhood to where I'm at now but I intend try and carry our traditions as best of my abilities wherever I find myself in life.

