

Bernadette Murphy

English Reflection

SPAN320 Spring '20

### Final Reflection

In the Spring semester of 2020, I took Spanish Civilization and Culture as a means of fulfilling my Spanish minor requirements. As I do not normally have a strong interest in history focused courses, I did not expect much from this class. However, as I now reflect on the past semester, much of my perspective has shifted because of this class and I now have a very strong foundation of knowledge of Hispanic culture that will benefit me in the future.

Prior to this class, I had a really limited view of Hispanic culture. I thought that the majority of the culture was centered around only the old and well-known traditions like Dia de los Muertos. In terms of specific cultures, I only really knew about the Mayans, Aztecs, and Incas, and this is majorly in part because of my education system. This is what we were taught, and prior to my college experience, these groups were my entire understanding of what Hispanic culture was. Before this class, I thought that these cultures were the most important and that they were the only representation of Hispanic culture. After this class, I learned about the Chavin, another very important culture in America. I also learned about the development of the Iberian peninsula of Romans, Greeks, Visigoths and Muslims. I recognize the importance of understanding that that culture comes in many aspects of life, including family history, physical region, food, traditions, clothing and language

In a moment of reflection for the semester as a whole, I took three culture classes this semester and was really fortunate to have them connect in so many ways. I took this course, Spanish Civilization and Culture, as well as Spanish Food in Culture, and Communication Across Cultures. All three of these classes explain that communication between cultures consists of learning about the other culture and trying to expand our worldview. It is so important to learn about other cultures and how to interact with them because we live in a world now where it is very common to interact with people from other cultures. When these cultures have good relationships, there is an exchange of good and ideas with medicine, science and education. The material in all of these courses provided me with a really well-rounded experience as each course supported the next.

In terms of transference outside of the classroom, there is direct and practical application of my course material into my postgraduate life through future job opportunities as well as potential travel experiences. For example, I have a new job in June at a preschool in Richmond. I know that many children have parents from different cultures and these connections will help me because there are many children from different cultures in this school. I can spend time with them and work to add appreciation of their culture at school. For example, we can teach children to count in different languages and we can learn about the holiday traditions of other cultures. I love seeing this appreciation of other cultures in young children because it breeds an interest in worldview as opposed to a child growing up introduced to only one culture. Additionally, there is always the opportunity for future jobs as well. As a student with

experience in culture and a foreign language, I have an advantage amongst other graduates as many employers look for students that have these qualifications. I have experience that allows me to work with people all across the world and employers can trust me to be sent on any trip that might involve intercultural interaction. Finally, as I plan to travel to Mexico this summer for a recurring mission trip, the connections I have made through this class will allow me to have more meaningful and sustainable relationships with the people I meet there. These courses have taught me to be more receptive to the differences of other cultures.

Now that I have finished this coursework, I am excited for new jobs and future opportunities where I can apply this knowledge as well as work to continue expanding my worldview through experience. A lot of culture is based around change as the people of the culture changes, and I can continue to expand my worldview throughout my life as the culture around me continues to change.