

Interchange Conference Transcript

I:\DIWE5NET\CLASSES\KWong01\CHAT\GwenStefani

[Message #1 02:09:07 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Karen Wong:

Determine which chapter you'd like to write about, and then take fifteen minutes to write a response to one of the following four prompts, being sure to include in your response at least one supporting quote:

Prompts:

o Chapter 4: "Rules of the Road" – (a) What insights do you gain about Efrem (Manny's brother) from his inner thoughts, his interactions with others, and his past history? In what ways does he exist on the border, literally and figuratively? OR What insights did you gain about race relations in LA? OR What is a major theme that is present in this chapter, and how does it manifest itself? Include in your response a quote according to MLA format.

o Chapter 5: "Yo Soy El Army" – (a) What insights do you gain about Manny Mendoza, Jr., (Efrem's brother) from his inner thoughts, and his relationship with family members such as his father, brother, wife, and son? OR What is a major theme that is present in this chapter, and how does it manifest itself? Include in your response a quote according to MLA format.

o Chapter 6: "The Hustler" – (a) What insights do you gain about Freddy Blas (Cristina's lover, after Hector) from his inner thoughts, his interactions with others, and his past history? In what ways does he exist on the border, literally and figuratively? OR What is a major theme that is present in this chapter, and how does it manifest itself? Include in your response a quote according to MLA format.

o Chapter 7: ""Cool Kids" – (a) What insights do you gain about Angie (Cristina's daughter) from her inner thoughts, her two major friendships with Duchess and Debbie, and her relationship with Juan? In what ways does she exist on the border, literally and figuratively? OR What is a major theme that is present in this chapter, and how does it manifest itself? Include in your response a quote according to MLA format.

[Message #2 08:17:50 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Karen Wong:

(Chapter 7) Angie is torn between two worlds, that of her Mexican American neighborhood, and that of the white suburbs where she works. That may be why she's so drawn to Gwen Stefani, who so seamlessly is able to represent both. Though Gwen is a white pop singer, she also wears and designs clothing that is inspired by the chola style (125). The fact that someone as cool as Gwen is inspired by a Mexican fashion statement indirectly elevates that fashion in the general public's eye. More importantly, Angie admires that Gwen can easily exist between two worlds, "...Gwen acts like a bad-ass chola, but you can tell she's a straight-up rule girl at heart; she wants to hang with the bad boys but doesn't want to do anything bad. I think that's why I like her. I didn't think you could make that type of choice. I never believed you could live in two worlds at once" (127). Unlike Gwen, Angie feels that she has to choose between the two possibilities, as represented by Duchess and Debbie.

Angie initially is drawn to Duchess because, unlike her, Duchess doesn't care what others think. She marches to her own beat, as exemplified by her clothing style that everyone else wants to imitate (not the ho-bag style so dominant back then) and is very much in touch with her Mexican American identity. As a result, Angie "...was in awe. It was love at first sight, and by love I mean 'I want to copy everything this girl does and maybe a tenth of her coolness will rub off on me'"(130). Angie becomes like a chameleon, adopting some of Duchess' sayings and her style, perhaps because she feels insecure about her own identity, and perhaps because "when you act like your friend, you no longer feel alone" (135). She wants to be a part of something, even if it may not really capture who she is. Yet isn't that search for identity something every teenager goes through?

[Message #3 08:18:06 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Rennie Zhang:

Angie looked up to Duchess as a role model because Duchess was confident and pretty. She said the same phrases that Duchess said. They had a falling out after Angie said she wanted to work at the Glendale shopping center instead of at the bank in Echo Park. They realize they don't see eye to eye on the same things. Duchess is proud of where she came from whereas Angie wants to get away as far as possible. Debbie replaces Duchess but it's an empty relationship. They don't share a real connection like Angie had with Duchess. All they do is meet white guys. Angie went on a series of dates with Juan but after sleeping together, she is afraid to be with Juan because to her, Juan represented the Mexican identity she wanted to escape from. She didn't make an effort to become friends with Duchess again but later she regrets it. She married Juan right away saying "I realized some things make more sense after a tragedy" (148). She exist on the border figuratively because she desperately wants to erase her Mexican identity but she can't do it because it's in her blood. She came back to the neighborhood after

graduating. She is happy about the changes in Echo Park but there are still people that remain in Echo Park like Duchess and Juan.

[Message #4 08:18:12 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Luis Rubalcaba:

(a) What insights do you gain about Freddy Blas (Cristina's lover, after Hector) from his inner thoughts, his interactions with others, and his past history? In what ways does he exist on the border, literally and figuratively? OR What is a major theme that is present in this chapter, and how does it manifest itself? Include in your response a quote according to MLA format.

Freddy has always been a hustler, he has spent most of his life in prison and when he actually gets out of prison he thinks his old hustler ways are going to work but they don't. He sees that the "game" has changed and that's when he decides to get out of town. I wouldn't blame Freddy for moving out of his old neighborhood, I would probably do the same because if you go back to your old neighborhood then you're bound to go back to your old ways and your old days will eventually get you back to prison.

[Message #5 08:18:18 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

nicole allen:

Efren follows the rules and doesn't associate with anyone that breaks them. He left his house and family behind at the age of 12 and began working in a taqueria. His brother and father were both gang members, yet Efren didn't want to waste his time with that, instead he'd rather learn English and read books. He doesn't agree with people that come to America and refuse to learn to speak English which causes him to look down upon immigrants, even people of his own race. When a fight emerges between a Mexican and a black on his bus, Efren decides to throw only the black boy off considering the outnumbering amount of Mexicans aboard versus blacks, "There were eighteen Mexicans onboard, a late-night zombie army of classroom cleaners headed to USC, and about two or three blacks..." (83). Afterwards, Efren accidentally hit and killed the black boy running alongside the bus. When he got out, neighbors started piling out. Because it was a black boy that was killed and involved Mexicans, the community saw this as a hate crime. There was no way this was an accident. Efren sates he didn't see the boy running alongside him and someone shouts, "Oh, you didn't see him... Cause it's night and he's black you didn't see him" (85)? This suggests that racism was highly sensitive back then. People didn't anything positive when it came with mixing races which is a theme seen throughout all the chapters. One race must always somehow supersede the next, when in relativity they are all equal.

[Message #6 08:19:00 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Bin Qiu:

Elfin was responsible guy and likes to follow the rule; he also likes to reading book and learning English, even though his family want him to join the street gang instead of going to school, he didn't give up education because he understand how importance it is. Elfin states, "My father, Manny Sr., was in the street gang Echo Park Locos and got my spoiled older brother, Manny Jr., to drop out of sixth grade to join. I was never into gangs. Running around the streets at night didn't interest me. I liked books and school, learning English, being educated. ... When I turn fourteen, Manny Jr. tried to "jump" me into the gang by pretending he had Dodgers tickets then beating the shit out of me in a blind alley" (73).

[Message #7 08:20:05 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Sally Chen:

Chapter 4: "Rules of the Road" - (a) What insights do you gain about Efren (Manny's brother) from his inner thoughts, his interactions with others, and his past history? In what ways does he exist on the border, literally and figuratively? OR What insights did you gain about race relations in LA? OR What is a major theme that is present in this chapter, and how does it manifest itself? Include in your response a quote according to MLA format.

Based on Efren's inner thoughts, you can clearly see he have people issues. He lives is present life as an transit operator who follows all the rules and isn't lenient towards anyone. The quote, "They're angry at me that I don't speak Spanish in my country? They've played th fucking habla espanol card from the fucking Jalisco to here - that's how they get here so easy - and when they meet a Mexican who won't play that game with them, they have the nerve to challenge me on my fucking Mexican-ness!" shows he see his interactions with people (especially his own Mexican cultural people) as a game of "cheating others or be cheated". It also shows he sees himself more on the American side than his Mexican side since he is a legal citizen who attended school, has a job with great benefits, and higher pay than the illegal immigrant of his own cultural background. In a way he sees himself as better than them because of the opportunities he was able to receive compared to the limited opportunities illegal immigrants have. He lives this life of loneliness, while following all the rules because that is how he got where he is now as he was trying to run away from his father's gang affiliated life.

[Message #8 08:21:49 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

nicole allen:

I like the quote Bin chose about how Efren decided to run away from his life with a gang related dad and borther in search for a more stable and reliable one that would offer a brighter future. The irony of it, is

how Efre at the end commits an accidental murder and is now engulfed into a life of crime, similar to the one he was running away from.

[Message #9 08:22:31 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Karen Wong:

Interesting point about Juan representing the Mexican identity that Angie wants to run away from (message #3). All, why does Angie want to escape her Mexican identity? Are there any hints?

[Message #10 08:23:16 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Luis Rubalcaba:

i believe we are all born with a script maybe angie didnt want to fulfill hers?

[Message #11 08:23:28 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Luis Rubalcaba:

or maybe she wants to flip that script

[Message #12 08:23:51 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Bin Qiu:

agree with Luis

[Message #13 08:24:09 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Karen Wong:

How does Efre view Mexicans, and why does he have such views?

[Message #14 08:24:44 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

nicole allen:

@Sally: I agree that Efren considers himself to be more American than Mexican. He doesn't take into consideration the hardships maybe others have gone through just to come to the United States to try to make a better life for themselves and family. And how does speaking English make you any more American than someone that can't? I know many people that don't speak English yet they know more about my culture than I do; and I'm an American.

[Message #15 08:25:14 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Karen Wong:

In what ways is Efrem marginalized, living on the borders?

[Message #16 08:25:22 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Luis Rubalcaba:

ouch^lol

[Message #17 08:25:33 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Rennie Zhang:

i think Angie wants to escape her Mexican identity because of her mother, Cristina and also because white suburbs had nicer things (she says so on page 147)

[Message #18 08:26:02 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Karen Wong:

Sally and company, why does Efrem feel a need to elevate himself over others?

[Message #19 08:26:15 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Rennie Zhang:

I agree with Nicole about how even though Efren was straight edged, he still ends up killing someone even though it was an accident.

[Message #20 08:26:43 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

nicole allen:

@ #9: I think Angie wants to escape her Mexican identity because she sees Mexicans as the poor people and Whites as wealthy people. She believes if she was born a different race, her life would be easier and she'd have many more opportunities given to her.

[Message #21 08:28:06 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Luis Rubalcaba:

i agree with nicole ^

[Message #22 08:28:11 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Rennie Zhang:

Efren wants to elevate himself because I think he's insecure about himself, that's why he sounds so bitter. He resents every race and talks about their bad qualities. He's insecure because he feels like he has to prove to other people that he's not the typical Mexican, rather he's Mexican-American.

[Message #23 08:30:57 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

nicole allen:

@#13: Efren sees Mexican's that don't speak English as, "...country hicks, mojudos who've made no effort to assimilate, learn English, and do the hard work to become a part of American society the way I did" (77). He constantly refers to undocumented immigrants from Mexico as mojudos, which is a racist slang for wetbacks. He believes that everyone should follow the rules just like him and work just as hard as he has otherwise they don't deserve his respect.

[Message #24 08:32:24 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

nicole allen:

@ 22: I agree with Rennie. He definitely sounds insecure and always has to prove his Americanness.

[Message #25 08:32:46 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Luis Rubalcaba:

efren is just small minded in my opinion.

[Message #26 08:34:05 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Rennie Zhang:

yea i agree with Luis. He's so petty that he even ratted out on Connie, the co-worker he dated because she brought her kids onto the bus. He should have been understanding since everyone is just trying to make a living.

[Message #27 08:34:38 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Karen Wong:

Might the point about Efren's downfall be that a person of color can't get a fair shake in America? Or do you suppose it was karma for having such prejudiced beliefs toward others?

[Message #28 08:35:38 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Sally Chen:

@18: I think Efren feels the need to elevate himself over others because that's kind of how he got where he is with the success of living the American Dream of making money and making a good living. His relationships with others are kind of based on how he views relationships. He mentioned how "women can be a beautiful thing at arm's length, but get too close and you find they are distractions, there to manipulate men who have succumbed to accepting mediocrity and need someone to share it with"(75).

[Message #29 08:36:05 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

nicole allen:

@#15: Efren is living on the borders between his Mexican heritage and American values he was raised up with. He can't seem to find the balance of being a Mexican American. He struggles with not being American enough for the whites and almost resents his race for everyone not living up to his standards. Another way is now he is living a life of always following the rules to now a life on the run with a murder on his hands. He is scared and finds himself instead of running away from his past, he is now headed straight to it. A life of crime like his dad and brother.

[Message #30 08:38:18 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Luis Rubalcaba:

everyones heard the saying karmas a i personally don't believe that a person of color can't get the a fair share in america, everyone can get a fair share of everything if they take the oppurtunties that are given to them, regardless on your color or race.

[Message #31 08:38:33 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Karen Wong:

Message #29-- I see a potential essay.

[Message #32 08:39:28 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Sally Chen:

I agree with Nicole about Efren not feeling like he is American enough and taking frustration out on his own race

[Message #33 08:40:54 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

nicole allen:

@#9: I think a good hint that Angie gives is when she heads to Glendale to look for a job and she says, "In Glendale, the streets were clean, there were tons of movie theaters and real air-conditioned restaurants (not the ones with crappy plastic oscillating fans that trap flies), and you could walk around wearing whatever you wanted without getting hustled by every cholo on the block... [and] the gabachos, the white boys, were cute" (136). She finds herself attracted to the white boys rather than the mexican ones in her neighborhood. She also found herself wanting to wear the clothes that were in the white stroes rather than the ones at the local tienda discuenta.

[Message #34 08:41:10 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Karen Wong:

Social psychologists refer to this phenomena as "displaced aggression."

Interchange Conference Transcript

I:\DIWE5NET\CLASSES\KWong01\CHAT\Madonna

[Message #1 02:08:52 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

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[Message #2 08:18:30 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Karen Wong:

(Chapter 7) Angie is torn between two worlds, that of her Mexican American neighborhood, and that of the white suburbs where she works. That may be why she's so drawn to Gwen Stefani, who so seamlessly is able to represent both. Though Gwen is a white pop singer, she also wears and designs clothing that is inspired by the chola style (125). The fact that someone as cool as Gwen is inspired by a Mexican fashion statement indirectly elevates that fashion in the general public's eye. More importantly, Angie admires that Gwen can easily exist between two worlds, "...Gwen acts like a bad-ass chola, but you can tell she's a straight-up rule girl at heart; she wants to hang with the bad boys but doesn't want to do anything bad. I think that's why I like her. I didn't think you could make that type of choice. I never believed you could live in two worlds at once" (127). Unlike Gwen, Angie feels that she has to choose between the two possibilities, as represented by Duchess and Debbie.

Angie initially is drawn to Duchess because, unlike her, Duchess doesn't care what others think. She marches to her own beat, as exemplified by her clothing style that everyone else wants to imitate (not the ho-bag style so dominant back then) and is very much in touch with her Mexican American identity. As a result, Angie "...was in awe. It was love at first sight, and by love I mean 'I want to copy everything this girl does and maybe a tenth of her coolness will rub off on me'"(130). Angie becomes like a chameleon, adopting some of Duchess' sayings and her style, perhaps because she feels insecure about her own identity, and perhaps because "when you act like your friend, you no longer feel alone" (135). She wants to be a part of something, even if it may not really capture who she is. Yet isn't that search for identity something every teenager goes through?

[Message #3 08:18:42 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Steven Luong:

Insights I gain about Efren (Manny's brother) would be that he despise Mexicans who have not assimilated to being an American. In chapter four he says, "No, these are country hicks(Mexicans), mojudos who've made no effort to assimilate, learn English, and do the hard work to become a part of American society the way I did" (193). This quote leads me to believe that he is Americanized. He dislikes Mexicans who don't speak English and "steal" the jobs from Americans, take advantage of the free health care, and use his tax money. He views them as freeloaders. He is okay with legitimate Mexicans who are the ones that assimilated. He also always follows the rule and protocols. He exists on the border between Mexican/ American. In chapter four, some insights I gained about race relations would be the tension between Mexicans and African-Americans. In chapter four the African-Americans all ganged up on the Latino after Efren closed the bus door.

[Message #4 08:19:12 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Steven Luong:

(Chapter Four)^

[Message #5 08:19:52 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Karina Sandoval:

Freddy Blas has been in and out of jail for quite some time. Before his release he thinks about how he wishes time outside of jail would slow down until he gets out. He also states how people take for granted the sunlight and the simple things in life that people in jail go long without. He never felt that he had to be in a gang to have a sense of belonging. Freddy stated, "That's why I can't stand Mexicans who come to this country and keep their mouths shut because they never bothered to learn English" (106). Freddy gets annoyed with Mexicans who have not assimilated into American Culture. He believes that those who have come to the US should speak English so that they can have a voice and actually protect and defend themselves. He has this don't care attitude. He also has a connection with Echo Park because his homies never sold him out. When he does get released he realizes that things are not the same. Freddy spent most of his life cheating on Cristina with multiple women, but he would always come back to her. When he got out and found out that she died.

[Message #6 08:19:56 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Alex Leong:

Insights that I learn gained from chapter 6 about Freddy Blas is that he is a hustler and likes to take what he can in order to survive the streets. He has been in and out of prison for stealing as a driver. He was Christina's new lover and it seems that Freddy is really smart but just does not apply himself and would rather cause trouble than to learn something that is boring. "Same reason I dropped out of high school. I was smart never failed a class I showed to, got suspended dozen of times for mouthing off a teacher because I was bored, but the education I wanted came from hustling, an education that continues every day you are on the streets." He seems like he would rather have skills that would help him survive than to have things that will better him in knowledge.

[Message #7 08:21:37 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Kevin Wu:

(Chapter 5) He believes he is full American. He follows the rule. He does not think he has any association to the illegal Spanish worker. Figuratively, I think he is characterized as not being accepted by the

American or the Mexican. He tries to tell audience that he believes he is full America but not being accepted as an America. He is believes he is American, which put him in between both races."They aren't even Mexicans who, from what I've learned about the Mendoze name in libraries, became Americans when the border flipped on us, vanishing years of MExican heritage with a quill stroke, turning rich landowners into migrant settlers in a new and hostile country." (329)

[Message #8 08:22:08 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Steven Luong:

@Karina: Do you think Freddy and Efren have similar beliefs? They both seem to hate Mexicans who have not assimilated.

[Message #9 08:24:41 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Steven Luong:

@Alex: In what ways do you think Freddy Blas existed on the border?

[Message #10 08:25:56 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Caroline Livai:

@steven: I like how you supported your quote. Broke it "Americanizes" down. How Efren viewed other minorities especially Mexicans.

[Message #11 08:27:03 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Karen Wong:

All, why do you suppose Efren is so hostile toward undocumented or immigrant Mexicans?

[Message #12 08:27:35 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Karen Wong:

And even Freddy-- why are they so hostile toward immigrant Mexicans?

[Message #13 08:27:47 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Alex Leong:

@Message #9 Freddy exists on the border because how he lives his life. He does not work with the system but insteads resents it and does his own thing.

[Message #14 08:28:58 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Karina Sandoval:

@Steven I think so, they both have negative attitudes towards them. Efren's opinion of Mexicans is partly due to the relationship with his father or lack there of and the violence within the culture itself. I wonder why Freddy has such harsh attitudes towards Mexicans...being in and out of jail has probably had something to do with it. He doesn't like how Mexicans are not voicing their opinions like Black people do because some have not learned the language

[Message #15 08:29:00 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Steven Luong:

I believe he dislikes undocumented Mexicans because they didn't have to experience the difficulties of learning English and the rules.

[Message #16 08:29:15 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Alex Leong:

@Message #11 I guess that Efren is hostile towards undocumented or immigrant Mexicans because they do not follow the rules and he feels that they should have the privilege of this country if they are not even citizens?

[Message #17 08:30:36 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Alex Leong:

I agree with Steven, Efren had to work his way to get to where he is now while there are others that just sneaky pass everything that he had to do to get there

[Message #18 08:30:42 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Kevin Wu:

because he categorize himself in a different category than undocumented or immigrant Mexicans. He wants to show that he not part of the immigrants, by showing other that he is an American. Immigrants and Undocumented workers does not seem to be his "type".

[Message #19 08:31:40 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Karina Sandoval:

Efren has had such a different life course than Manny and probably went the extra mile to avoid ending up like him. He probably associates his family with his negative opinions of Mexicans

[Message #20 08:32:55 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Steven Luong:

@Karina: I like the way you're thinking about this. This could also relate to his brother. He might dislike his brother for being such a bad role model in his life.

[Message #21 08:33:42 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Caroline Livai:

@alex Yeah, I agree about how Freddy just free willingly chooses not to apply himself. With the abilities that he acquires he uses that energy in a negative way that he believes to be beneficial (Obviously not). The mentality that he has is considered dangerous in my opinion just because it may build up to him accepting and trusting that he can do whatever he wants because he has nothing to lose.

[Message #22 08:35:10 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Karina Sandoval:

At the end of Ch. 4 Efren stated, "I would get [Freddy] where he needed to go no matter how long it took me. I would learn new set of rules. I would find another way home" (88). I did not know what to make of this when I read it...does anyone have any ideas as to why he intentionally took Freddy where he needed to go? Or why he "would learn a new set of rules?"

[Message #23 08:35:45 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Steven Luong:

@If he has used his abilities for something beneficial, he would have never had to go to jail. That means he could have stuck around for his girl and the changes. So he should have used his abilities for something better.

[Message #24 08:36:10 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Karina Sandoval:

I wonder what "home" Efren was referring to?

[Message #25 08:36:44 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Steven Luong:

@Karina: Perhaps when he said finding another way home was meant to mean find a new home because his old home has changed so much. And by "learning a new set of rules" would mean adapting to a new lifestyle?

[Message #26 08:38:10 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Karina Sandoval:

Possibly, he seemed to be very sympathetic which is not his typical personality

[Message #27 08:39:42 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Karen Wong:

Good points about that last scene-- a good habit in reading literature is to note oppositions, with a clear one being Efren, the solo person who lives by himself, to now being with Freddy, as they escape the neighborhood.

[Message #28 08:41:02 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Alex Leong:

Both Freddy and Efren wants change within their lives and for that to happen they need to leave the neighborhood

[Message #29 08:41:53 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Karina Sandoval:

He seemed to have a connection with Freddy or a sense of responsibility to do the right thing because it is his job.

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I:\DIWE5NET\CLASSES\KWong01\CHAT\Morrissey

[Message #1 02:09:26 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

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o Chapter 5: "Yo Soy El Army" – (a) What insights do you gain about Manny Mendoza, Jr., (Efrem's brother) from his inner thoughts, and his relationship with family members such as his father, brother, wife, and son? OR What is a major theme that is present in this chapter, and how does it manifest itself? Include in your response a quote according to MLA format.

o Chapter 6: "The Hustler" – (a) What insights do you gain about Freddy Blas (Cristina's lover, after Hector) from his inner thoughts, his interactions with others, and his past history? In what ways does he exist on the border, literally and figuratively? OR What is a major theme that is present in this chapter, and how does it manifest itself? Include in your response a quote according to MLA format.

o Chapter 7: "'Cool Kids'" – (a) What insights do you gain about Angie (Cristina's daughter) from her inner thoughts, her two major friendships with Duchess and Debbie, and her relationship with Juan? In what ways does she exist on the border, literally and figuratively? OR What is a major theme that is present in this chapter, and how does it manifest itself? Include in your response a quote according to MLA format.

[Message #2 08:19:05 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Alan Ma:

(a) From Chapter 7, there are 4 main characters, Angie, Duchess, Debbie, and Juan. Angie grew up with a crazed obsession for Gwen Stefani, who resembled to be her childhood best friend, Duchess. Angie looked up to Duchess for being a beautiful chola. Sometime during high school, Angie was looking for a job, where she ended up applying for a store at the galleria. During this time, Duchess and Angie were both caught in an argument because Duchess worked at a Bank of America, where as Angie pursued for a job at the galleria, a much nicer, cleaner, "Caucasian" neighborhood. This was where Duchess questioned Angie about her identity, putting Angie on a border of identity. Angie then encounters her new best friend, Debbie, a "wanna be surfer girl with propane eyes whose vacuous stare one could mistake for intensity or Zen" (P. 370). The two pretty much parted ways until their high school graduation. During the graduation, both Angie and Duchess exchanged a brief conversation where Duchess introduces her "boyfriend" Juan. It turns out that Juan was only dating Duchess (who's actual name is Maria) because it made his mother happy. Juan then asks to hang out/date Angie which I think puts her on another border because she was about to secretly date a guy that's already dating her childhood best friend Duchess. Time goes by and Angie dated Juan a few times, earned an English degree from UCLA which left her in \$60,000 debt. Angie had to put her house up for sale, in the mean time she looked for a temporary job. She thought about going to apply for the Bank of America where Duchess worked at, but couldn't bare the fact that she'd be the boss of Duchess. She settled with working at McDonalds and paid off her debt. Later on it turns out that while Duchess was at work, a young chola girl came in and slit her jugular vein, causing instant death. Angie soon has a daughter with Juan and surprisingly she's named Maria. This makes me wonder if Angie and Juan named their daughter after Duchess or not because Maria was Duchess' actual name.

[Message #3 08:19:15 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

genevieve ortilla:

"Running around the streets at night didn't interest me. I liked books and school, learning English, being educated. I knew more at twelve than Manny Sr. did at forty. When I turned fourteen, Manny Jr. tried to 'jump' me into the gang by pretending he had Dodgers tickets then beating the shit out of me in a blind alley...." I left home and moved into an abandoned house (Echo Park had plenty back then). I'm glad I ran off when I did. Living on my own taught me my sense of responsibility." (Chapter 4, page 73)

It must be to grow up in an environment that you clearly don't agree with or relate too. If I was Efren, I'd run away too. Family is supposed to stand together and support one another. The fact that he would rather study than gang bang was a good thing, but his father and brother didn't acknowledge the person that he was. I would be heartbroken if my family didn't back me up on my interests, likes and life in general.

[Message #4 08:19:47 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Alexander Chan:

In Chapter 4 you can tell how the gentrification of his neighborhood shook his earlier beliefs that they (the locos) "own these streets". As "one by one, the houses on my block of Laveta Terrace sprouted For Sale signs... taking with them veteranos and future veteranos alike." As he sees how everything in his life from his neighborhood to his family begins to change, we are able to gain deeper thoughts of Manny Jr. Before his wife Jr. treated women as "unexpected gusts of cool air" saying that women were nothing more than a passing joy. The hardened 2nd generation gangster Mendoza was beginning to soften on his hardened outlook. His allowance of his son to date an Asian whereas the mother was opposed is another look inside the mind of Jr.

[Message #5 08:19:48 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Giselle Williams:

Chapter 4- When I read about Efren I you can immediately tell that he is really a person who is for himself. He is someone that doesn't want to be bothered with trouble and who likes to follow protocol. From the way he interacts with others his attitude towards his own people lets you know that he feels he is better than the non-american Mexicans that come into the country illegally. He gives off almost an attitude of hatred towards his own people and feels that these illegal Mexicans are, "...men looking to take our jobs, and their woman who pop off babies for free health care, freeloaders who focus unwanted attention on us legitimate Mexicans, who had to learn the rules and suffer the stings of becoming Americans. Get Mexico to take care of fucking Mexicans for a change" (77). He has very strong

feelings against illegal Mexicans. He also seems like a guy who just likes to engage in work and no other outside activities or pleasures. He states that sex is the last thing on his mind and then goes into two negative stories about women and how it didn't work out for him. In many ways he has assimilated into American culture. After reading the chapter there is not much about him that I would say strikes me as Mexican other than he states that he can speak Spanish, which he doesn't like to talk to people on the bus in because he feels that they should know English. The only good thing that he does for his Mexican people on the bus is warn them when they are about to go into the "black" part of town. He talks a lot about there being areas that people should be aware of and since he is responsible for his bus and the people's safety he likes to let people know.

[Message #6 08:20:26 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Karen Wong:

(Chapter 7) Angie is torn between two worlds, that of her Mexican American neighborhood, and that of the white suburbs where she works. That may be why she's so drawn to Gwen Stefani, who so seamlessly is able to represent both. Though Gwen is a white pop singer, she also wears and designs clothing that is inspired by the chola style (125). The fact that someone as cool as Gwen is inspired by a Mexican fashion statement indirectly elevates that fashion in the general public's eye. More importantly, Angie admires that Gwen can easily exist between two worlds, "...Gwen acts like a bad-ass chola, but you can tell she's a straight-up rule girl at heart; she wants to hang with the bad boys but doesn't want to do anything bad. I think that's why I like her. I didn't think you could make that type of choice. I never believed you could live in two worlds at once" (127). Unlike Gwen, Angie feels that she has to choose between the two possibilities, as represented by Duchess and Debbie.

Angie initially is drawn to Duchess because, unlike her, Duchess doesn't care what others think. She marches to her own beat, as exemplified by her clothing style that everyone else wants to imitate (not the ho-bag style so dominant back then) and is very much in touch with her Mexican American identity. As a result, Angie "...was in awe. It was love at first sight, and by love I mean 'I want to copy everything this girl does and maybe a tenth of her coolness will rub off on me'"(130). Angie becomes like a chameleon, adopting some of Duchess' sayings and her style, perhaps because she feels insecure about her own identity, and perhaps because "when you act like your friend, you no longer feel alone" (135). She wants to be a part of something, even if it may not really capture who she is. Yet isn't that search for identity something every teenager goes through?

[Message #7 08:21:05 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Lawrence Woo:

Chapter 5:

Manny Mendoza Jr. he regrets the way he had treated his wife in the past. His son enlisted into the army and is soon being sent out. Manny feels weak compared to his wife because he wants to tell his son that he shouldn't go due to the war that was going on and that he could be killed in it. "I'm sorry-and I was sorry, for being such a worthless father, for not loving Ofelia with the proper amount of respect, the drug scores, the anonymous dick-sucking tricks in men's rooms for money, the untold number of late nights I stumbled home drunk and punched Juan in bed at three in the morning to teach him to always be prepared to be attacked- here was my plea for forgiveness, for him not to leave me here alone in a neighborhood that was being stripped away one memory at a time and replaced with something foreign, cancerous, and final" (103). All of his inner thoughts of regrets, he wished he was strong enough to apologize to his son for all the bad things he has done in the past. "If I could shoot a little girl, I could shoot my own son" (102). Manny's father wasn't the best role model for him. When Manny always went out all he could picture was an image of a girl bleeding to death.

[Message #8 08:22:45 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

genevieve ortilla:

@ lawrence: i thought it was really disturbing that manny sr. didnt show any remorse and had the audacity to brag about the little girl that he shot. that made me really angry, but i guess that lifestyle teaches you not to care.

[Message #9 08:23:49 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

loraine caram:

Chapter 6-" Hustler"

Freddy seemed to be too smart to be in school and that's why he got bored easily. He ended up using his skills and knowledge as a bad boy or a hustler. He was too smart that he can steal money from his customer but he ended up in prison anyway. Being a hustler, Freddy was proud to be able to beat up the most wanted Mexican in L.A. However, he was disappointed because the LAPD never kept their promise to give him a price. Freddy seemed to be popular in his neighborhood and he is very proud of it. He had many women but got married to Cristina and moved in with her and her daughter Angie. Freddy spent so many years in prison but stayed in touch with Cristina. He wrote her love letters. However, when Freddy became a freeman, he was expecting too much that he became disappointed. Freddy was sad to find out that Cristina passed away and was hoping to see Angie. Freddy didn't know where to go and end up in a bar that caused him to a fight with a stranger. At the end, Freddy took the bus and went somewhere. Deep inside, Freddy had hopes that he will have the chance to start all over again.

In this chapter, Freddy was always hopeful that no matter what life brings him, there is always a chance for him to start a new beginning. As he stated in the very beginning of the chapter, " I've seen that

sunrise over a dozen times, each one a promise that this will be the one that changer my life, this dawn will be the witness to a new set of priorities, a new sense of hope" (104).

[Message #10 08:24:40 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Giselle Williams:

@ genevieve- I feel you I would definetly run away if my brother, sister, or any family member was pushing me to be in a gang. Efrens brother really went to far with beating him up to jump him in when Efren didnt even really want it.

[Message #11 08:24:56 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

genevieve ortilla:

@lorraine: it's a shame he didnt use his smarts for better things. his life would definately be diffrent-better.

[Message #12 08:24:58 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

alexander chan:

I think the fact that Manny Jr. showed such remorse for shooting the little girl was a testament to who he truly was.

[Message #13 08:27:28 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Giselle Williams:

I think Manny should feel bad for the terrible things he did. Beating up on Juan to teach him to always be ready for an attack is wrong.

[Message #14 08:28:07 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

alexander chan:

@karen I think that not only teenagers but almost everyone wants to feel like they belong. I think its a basic human nature to want to be part of something bigger then themselves

[Message #15 08:28:42 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Lawrence Woo:

@giselle: well Manny was drunk at the time he beat Juan, Im pretty sure he would never had done that to his son.

[Message #16 08:28:43 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

genevieve ortilla:

@alexander ; i totally agree with your statement, well put!

[Message #17 08:28:58 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Karen Wong:

Good point, Alexander. All, how is that desire to belong true for any of the other characters, too?

[Message #18 08:29:13 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Alan Ma:

Manny did seem to participate in many wrong doings as mentioned but like Alexander said, due to the fact that he showed so much remorse, being unable to escape from his past and constantly reminded of the little girl being shot. He truly just wanted to have a second chance and start all over I suppose.

[Message #19 08:31:32 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Karen Wong:

As much as I felt badly for Freddy upon returning to his neighborhood, I felt really badly for Cristina. I wish her character was fleshed out more, but I wonder if Angie witnessing her mother's decline contributes to her wanting to get our of her neighborhood or perhaps not associate with Mexican American men.

[Message #20 08:32:16 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

genevieve ortilla:

@karen: in efren's case, he wanted to belong to America. He followed the rules and made sure everything was done by the book. I guess this was his way of saying thank you to the land that provided him with education. He didnt wanna waste his time here gang banging like his brother and father.

[Message #21 08:33:12 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Karen Wong:

Interesting point, Genevieve (#20). He goes so straight and narrow as if to compensate for the path that his father and brother wanted to take him down to.

[Message #22 08:33:33 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

genevieve ortilla:

@karen: im sure Angie witnessing her mother's health deteriorating had a lot to do with her wanting to leave the area. If you witness enough tragedy in one place, the natural thing to want is to get out and start fresh

[Message #23 08:34:10 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Alexander Chan:

I think that he was straight and narrow because it would've been so easy for him to completely fall off the right path otherwise, given his circumstances.

[Message #24 08:34:28 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Giselle Williams:

@ genevieve- I felt Efren was a little over the top with his opinions of his people. Some of the comments he mad such as the one about the men taking all the jobs are a little harsh. I have learned that most of the jobs those men take are ones that no one else wants to do and if it helps them to get money for their families then no one should judge them.

[Message #25 08:35:56 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

genevieve ortilla:

@giselle: i suppose he was harsh, at the same time i don't blame him for feeling that way since he's worked hard to get to where he was at

[Message #26 08:36:03 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Alan Ma:

@Genevieve I agree. With everything that Angie has gone through in her own neighborhood, it makes complete sense that she would like to escape from all of it.

[Message #27 08:37:01 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

loraine caram:

I was impressed with Efron's dedication to his work but I guess I just don't agree on how he handled things. He is too focused on his job-which is very superficial and seemed to be numb all the time. The death of the back kid didn't matter to him which shows no remorse at all.

[Message #28 08:37:35 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Giselle Williams:

I know Efron worked hard so he doesn't have to take hard labor jobs that pay nothing, but what I'm saying is that in reality no one wants to take these jobs so if the illegal Mexican men are willing to do it to survive then he shouldn't judge them for it.

[Message #29 08:38:28 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Lawrence Woo:

This seems very ironic, Efron has no remorse for killing a kid, but his older brother shows a lot of remorse for his dad killing a child, it would seem that they have changed roles

[Message #30 08:38:56 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Alexander Chan:

Not only should you not judge them, but you should be thankful as some of these jobs are seen by us as basic necessities.

[Message #31 08:38:56 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

genevieve ortilla:

@loraine: yeah i think he's gotten so used to "protocol" that his emotions have checked out

[Message #32 08:39:08 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Alan Ma:

@Giselle I agree with you. Those illegal mexicans only took the job because they had very little to no other options to support their family. I'm sure that if they had any other options than to take those jobs that no other men would want, they would take that chance without second guessing.

[Message #33 08:40:38 PM, Monday, April 30, 2012]

Giselle Williams:

@ Alan- Im sure if the men were offered the same equal chances we are given here in the US they wouldnt be trying to come over to the US and work, but things in Mexico must not be very good for them so they feel they need to come to the US.