

## **Radical Arts and Multicultural Antenarrative: Time and Space in New Mexico**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This essay fuses together storytelling insights about time and place from Russian writers Nicolas Berdyaev, Mikhail Bakhtin, Brazilian writer Paulo Freire, and French existential philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre. The contribution is a dialogical theory of storytelling and its application to arts and culture organizations of Las Cruces, a mid-sized city in Doña Ana County, New Mexico that increasingly views arts and culture as a way to revitalize time and place after Urban Renewal. Specifically I look at the interplay of a web of living stories of people and organizations in a time and place with a Grand Narrative (Urban Renewal), and several antenarratives: abandonment, rebirth, and evolution of downtown. Living stories have answerability, as relationships in the moment of being, and are dialogical to one another, and to various narratives of the past (including Grand Narratives), and to antenarratives shaping the future. Antenarrative is loose storytelling that shapes the future in a bet of something before narrative coherence. The living stories of 2009 are sorting several antenarratives in search of a future after Urban Renewal and several rounds of urban development that could not bring Las Cruces back to its pre-Urban Renewal vitality. Narrative is all about backward looking retrospection, but as we will explore, can be an annihilation of the past. Antenarrative is prospective sensemaking, and can combine with a Grand Annihilation Narrative: in this case Urban Renewal frenzy of 1960s and 1970s, a movement that swept across U.S. small and mid-sized cities.

This essay raises the question: what are the implications of creating a dialogical ‘*CREATIVE ECONOMY: Arts & Cultures Convention*’ to change the collective memory construction in the borderlands of Doña Ana County? This is a multicultural place where the arts and culture that is urban and rural meet, here and there, at the crossroads. The *CREATIVE ECONOMY Convention 2009* is a kind of intervention in a multicultural and gendered context within which arts and cultures are bought and sold, and artists struggle to find audiences and paying customers for their creative visual, performing, literary, and culinary work. The dates are Oct 2, 3, & 4 2009, with Friday event at Rio Grande Theatre, hosted by the Doña Ana Arts Council (request pending board approval), followed by master artist workshops and collective storytelling of the future of the arts economy to be held Saturday and Sunday at Alma d’arte (approval received). For more information visit <http://talkingstick.info> See video of 2008 arts Convention held at NMSU KRWG archives and the video is at [http://krwg-tv.org/almanac/AA\\_99.html](http://krwg-tv.org/almanac/AA_99.html)

**What is Creative Economy?** Richard Florida (2006 p.1) suggests that Creative Cities are "cauldrons of creativity." John Hartey (2005" 2) suggests that ‘Creative Industries’ of a city or county attract artists, professors, scientists, and musicians (see also Florida, 2004, 2008). ‘Creative Cities’ writes Jinna Tay (p. 220, in Hartey) says they "are spaces you want to be in, places to be seen." There are several historic preservation areas

in Dona Ana County that can be drawn into clarity of artistic purpose: Las Cruces Downtown (including Rio Grande theater & Amador Hotel), Mesilla Plaza, Amador-Depot and Mesquite Historic District Neighborhood (Las Cruces Historic Buildings Survey, 1982). These areas are the heart of the Las Cruces rural creative economy. It attracts a creative class of families to move here. The Creative Class expects an active arts and music scene, including 'edgy arts events' and a vibrant street life as reasons to move to a city (Florida, 2004: p. 224, 231-2). Besides urban creative economy the surrounding rural economy of Las Cruces is important to consider.

The trouble with evolution and revolution is they can be disastrous. The post-WWII evolution of downtowns across the U.S. repeated a pattern of destroying history that became a sort of Grand Narrative. The Great Depression generation looked to modernistic architecture as a way to not think about the past, its poverty. Forgetting the past, in Urban Renewal became wed to a particular antenarrative (Boje, 2001, 2008): shaping the future by putting modernistic architecture in place of frontier adobe home and businesses.

An antenarrative is defined as a bet on the future, which has not become its own narrative. This antenarrative is radical destruction when it combines with such Grand Narrative in an anarchistic revolution that hates the past to the point Urban Renewal becomes Urban Removal of traditional architecture. After the Urban Renewal craze, these same Great Depression citizens and their children looked in horror at what they had done. As this next photograph shows the Urban Removal left an existential abyss of historic time and place.

In Las Cruces, a city in New Mexico, "Whole neighborhoods of adobe homes and finally St. Genevieve's Catholic Church fell to the wrecking ball (Harris, 1993/2006: 115). One of the most affected by 1973, was the Mesquite neighborhood of mostly Hispanic families and businesses, east of downtown. "They took half the neighborhood and all of downtown," said Sylvia Camuñez, who is active in community groups, was born in Mesquite and has lived here for the last 20 years" (Chamberlain, 2005). The heart of the city was no more.



**Photo 1: Aerial Photo of Las Cruces Downtown after Urban Removal of 1960s & 1970s – Courtesy of New Mexico State University Rio Grand Archives**

The aerial photograph shows the upper part of downtown Las Cruces. Church and Water Streets were made into a one-way counter clockwise traffic loop, and a three-block portion of Main Street was closed to auto-traffic and made into outdoor pedestrian mall. The Grand Narrative of Urban Renewal became a frenzy to destroy the past, particularly the Hispano past as adobe homes and small businesses within and surrounding the loop. The Downtown pedestrian mall with a Yellow Brick Path, like the one in Wizard of Oz was no Futuristic Emerald City. It was an Oz nightmare, a Grand Narrative of hatred of the past that wed to an antenarrative of an emptied out history promising a progress that delivered instead ugliness and emptiness. “Before the pedestrian mall, a six-block stretch of Main Street was home to approximately 160 businesses, struggling to be sure, but surviving. Within three years of the mall's completion, that number dropped to 90. Today, there are fewer than 10” (Chamberlain, 2005).

Doña Ana County is borderland: Mescalero Apache at North border, Missile Range to the East border past the San Andres & Organ Mountains, with Mexico on the most Southern border, and Sierra De Las Uvas & West Portillo Mountains to the West.

As per U.S. Census & Vision 2040 estimate, Doña Ana County population for 2006 is 193,888. By 2009 it is estimated by Community Development Department to surpass 200,000. According to American Community Survey (2007) the percent of total population below poverty is 25%, and families below poverty is 30.7% (with related children under 18; 29.2% for families with related children under 5). Despite the relative

poverty there are pockets of wealth, and despite scuttlebutt, art does sell here. According to the 2000 census, the racial makeup is “67.82% White, 1.56% Black or African American, 1.48% Native American, 0.76% Asian, 0.07% Pacific Islander, 24.74% from other races, and 3.58% from two or more races. 63.35% of the population was Hispanic or Latino of any race”.<sup>1</sup> 50% of the county’s population prefers to speak Spanish at home.



**Photo 2 – Las Cruces Downtown Main Street 2009 with most small businesses, shops, and restaurants closed, awaiting a time when the place regains life; Photo by D. Boje**

Photo 2 is the worst of the six pedestrian blocks of Main Street. “Main Street had been the business, social and religious hub of the city, even to the Saturday night phenomenon of teen age drives by hundreds ‘cruising Main’” (Owen, 1999: 194). Since Urban Renewal began in 1965, there has been a 44-year evolutionary decline in business mixed with increased resident apathy and skepticism, despite the series of revitalization projects (Rio Grande Theatre, opening up part of Main Street to auto-traffic, etc.) implemented piecemeal, a thriving Farmer’s Produce and Crafts Market that for two mornings a week, and several galleries and museums that took up residence, and the monthly Arts Ramble (from 5 to 7 PM 1<sup>st</sup> Friday) that helps bring people back into downtown Main Street.

Yet these efforts, till recently, are a shallow reminder of what was. In the second block of the Yellow Brick Main Street is a monument commemorating St. Genevieve’s Church and to the 200 buildings that were demolished. Through the monument is a bank parking lot.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doña\\_Ana\\_County,\\_New\\_Mexico](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doña_Ana_County,_New_Mexico)



**Photo 3 – 1998 Modernist Monument to St. Genevieve’s Church, which was demolished in 1967 in the Urban Removal frenzy; Photo by D. Boje**  
At the dedication in 1998, the substituted monument did not impress an older generation of Las Cruces who had known the original church.



**Photo 4: One of the Revitalized City Blocks as Main Street Opened to Traffic<sup>2</sup>**

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<sup>2</sup> Photo Courtesy of Downtown Mains Street Partnership Las Cruces. This a photo when block opened and residents walked about to see the new look.

They were heard to say, “This is not the downtown that I remember.” Let us take a walk through that past to see what was destroyed forevermore. To this day the Urban Removal of St. Genevieve’s Church will prompt verbal altercation.



**Photo 5: St. Genevieve’s Catholic Church about 1900; Courtesy of Rio Grande Historical Collections, New Mexico state University Library**

St. Genevieve’s was the heart of Las Cruces, not only an architectural landmark, but a place where multiple cultures gathered for events.

This church, constructed in 1859, was where a mostly Hispano community and Native Americans and Gringos gathered for baptisms, weddings, funerals, and in the plaza on front of the church for fiestas.



**Photo 6 – Matachine dancers, St. Genevieve Catholic Church, Las Cruces ca. 1930s-40s; Courtesy of New Mexico State University Rio Grand Archives**

Matachine dancers come from local Our Lady of Guadalupe Church (Tortugas) just south west of New Mexico State University in Las Cruces. One of the things the CREATIVE ECONOMY: Arts & Cultures Convention is trying to do s to bring more presence of

Tortugas (not recognized as a tribe by U.S. government), Mescalero Apache and other tribes of the region to continue an annual Powwow.

Entrepreneurs investing in land development have been a tradition since arrival of the railroad in 1881 to Las Cruces. A New Mexico Town Company subdivided land it purchased into residential lots and gave the Santa Fe Railroad acreage for tracks (Las Cruces Historic Builds Survey, 1983: 45). In 1959 Frank Papen organized another investment company that began looking for a new location for the then 47-year old First National bank, located on Main Street (See photos 6 & 7). “Bishop Metzger offered him the St. Genevieve’s property for \$126,000” (Harris, 1993/2006: 114). The plan was for the bishop to demolish St. Genevieve and rebuild it on the old Loretto property. There was massive public outrage and the plan was shelved.

The 44-foot St. Genevieve towers made it the tallest building in Las Cruces, was the architectural signature of the city, until it was demolished in 1967, as they say, to make room for Urban Renewal. A key informant tells me that the congregation split into two, with half investing the money from the sale of the property in a new St. Genevieve, in a location several block east of downtown, with a very modernistic style many feel lacked the grandeur of what it replaced.



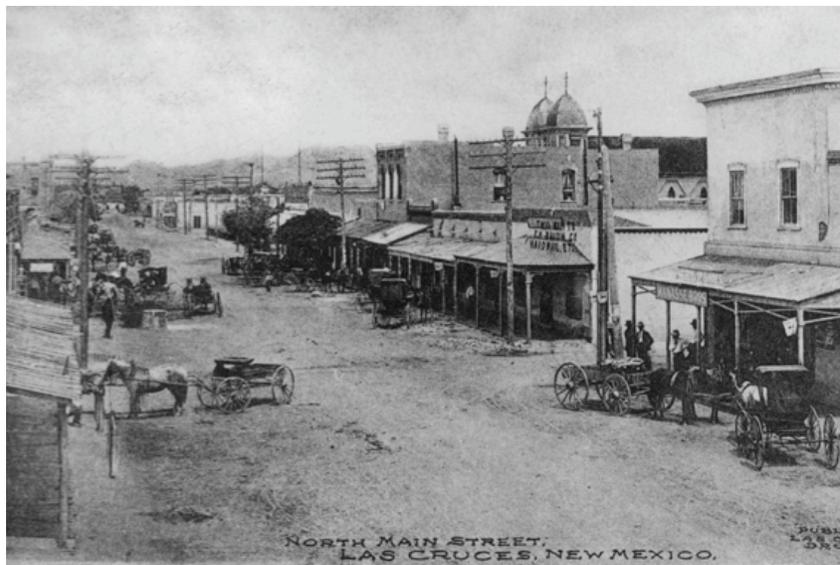
**Photo 7 – St. Genevieve’s after Urban Renewal, in a new place (photo from St. Genevieve’s website)**

The other half of the congregation invested the proceeds in a Holy Cross School, which began as a cafeteria, and a few classrooms, with tables in cafeteria resorted for Sunday service. They bought land on Miranda Street and built a school instead of a church. Years later an actual church was built. School goes to 10<sup>th</sup> grade (\$4,400 a year tuition) and no longer connected to Archdiocese.



**Photo 8 – Holy Cross School - Las Cruces Catholic School – from their website<sup>3</sup>**

What was downtown like before the Urban Removal? In the next photo you can make out the tops of the church towers, when horse drawn carriages and the Model T parked on an unpaved Main Street. From the turn of the century until the 1960s, the City of Las Cruces had a heart.



**Photo 9 – North Main Street – Las Cruces, NM – Courtesy of Rio Grande Historical Collection, New Mexico State University**

Next is a nostalgic postcard of downtown as it appeared in 1940s.

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<sup>3</sup> Holy Cross School website <http://www.zianet.com/lccatholicschool/>



**Photo 10 – Historic Postcard – Courtesy of Rio Grande Historical Collection, New Mexico State University**

This next photo is 1950s downtown Main Street. On the left is the First National Bank, a mainstay of downtown since 1910. The majestic building to the right is the Renault Hotel (in both photos).



**Photo 11 – 1950s Downtown – Courtesy of Rio Grande Historical Collection, New Mexico State University (This reprint is from Bicentennial Display)**

Just to the south of the six-block Yellow Brick Main Street pedestrian walkway was to be a commercial center, which continued the revolution, in an “abandonment and then demolition of [more] historic buildings” (Owen, 1999: 194). The Sisters of Loretto Academy was a Spanish-style building erected in 1890.



**Photo 12 – Sisters of Loretto Academy photo from 1908 – Courtesy of Rio Grande Historical Collection, New Mexico State University.**

Loretto Academy was disestablished in 1943 when one in El Paso opened, then sold in 1944 to Franciscans who operated it as a place to train priesthood novices until 1959 when a group of investors bought it as part of First National Bank president, Frank O. Papen’s expansion project (Simpson, 1998: 59). It was between 18890 and 1943 the première private school in southern New Mexico. There is a forgotten history of school segregation.



**Photo 13 - Booker T. Washington School in Las Cruces, 1930s<sup>4</sup>**

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<sup>4</sup> Segregated African-American School in Las Cruces, NM  
<http://www.nmsu.edu/~english/hc/hctradcult.html>

“In 1914, Central School was built as a high school. The name changed to Las Cruces Union High School in 1925 when it moved to a new building on Alameda Avenue. While Las Cruces schools were fully integrated from the beginning, students were prohibited from speaking Spanish on school grounds. In 1926, Black students attended school at Phillips Chapel. In 1935, Booker T. Washington School was completed for the Black students. Las Cruces schools remained segregated until 1954.”<sup>5</sup> African Americans settled in segregated Las Cruces neighborhoods in Las Cruces and on the ‘East Mesa’ where I currently live. Life is more desegregated nowadays.

In the Urban Renewal was a relocation program, including the establishment of what was to be a commercial center, as envisioned by banker Frank O. Papen. Papen’s commercial center never materialized, but his “Cruces” investment group used the Federal and City Urban Renewal money to build a 10-story office building, First National Bank Tower, and the city’s first indoor shopping mall (with air-conditioning), called Loretto Mall. Businesses in the downtown loop and pedestrian walkway, called Downtown Main Street moved into the bank tower, the Loretto Shopping Mall. The bank tower, and became the new tallest building in Las Cruces. The building was renamed Wells Fargo Tower, when Papen sold his bank to First Security, who was acquired along with many other community bank chains by Wells Fargo. Nine million dollars of Urban renewal money went into developing the seven downtown blocks. Main Street businessman, Rex Ross in 1965, headed the Urban Renewal Agency and its executive director was Earl Whelpley (Owen, 1999: 194-5). 84 families and 52 individuals got grants of \$5,000 to rebuild or relocate. 160 businesses used the money: 22 to go out of business, 38 to remodel, and 100 to relocate. Part of the evolution was a jump in population between 1950 and 1960, as Las Cruces grew from 12,000 to over 29,000.



**Photo 14: Wells Fargo Bank Tower 2009; photo by D. Boje**

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<sup>5</sup> Photo of Booker T. Washington School [http://www.las-cruces.org/public-services/museums/history\\_exhibit/railroad.html](http://www.las-cruces.org/public-services/museums/history_exhibit/railroad.html)

Today, there are vacancies in the Fargo Tower, and the Loretto Mall failed miserably, and was put to death in 1980 when, yet another land development company formed by entrepreneurs to develop a new and improved air conditioned 'Mesilla Valley' Mall that became the new location of JC Penny's, and brought in Dillard's, Sears and a gaggle of shoe and jewelry stores.

There are reminders of the past, here and there, that survived Urban Renewal. The next photos (4 & 5) are in the Wells Fargo parking lot. The *Pieta* statue was deed to First National Bank when Frank Papen acquired the Loretto Academy property, to remain in perpetuity on the site. When Wells Fargo acquired the site, it asked the Archdiocese to move it elsewhere, but nephew Frank Papen Jr. reminded them of the covenant terms, and as of Mar 2009 it remains where it is.



**Photo 15: Bronze reproduction of the *Pieta* given by Chaplain F. John Conneghan to the Loretto Sisters Sep 24<sup>th</sup> 1941 – Photo D. Boje**

Below is a photo of a Grind Stone from a corn and flourmill. Farmers gave the miller about half their wagonload in exchange for the milling.



**Photo 16: Old Grind Stone from the Mill**

The brass plaque was stolen some years ago and never replaced. In the background is the old adobe Court House that just this year was disestablished, and bought by investors seeking to establish condominiums.



**Photo 17 – Looking inside Store Window of Gutted Building Awaiting Revitalization**

There are several of these unkempt windows, which my students as a civic engagement service learning project are working with Cindi Fargo, executive director of Downtown Partnership, and artists Virginia Maria Romero and Susan McNeill, in what is called the Phantom Window project. The idea is to put pieces of art and historical photos in about 15 of the downtown building windows. There have been valiant efforts to renovate several downtown buildings.

The global economy is translating itself into two-tier class hegemony in Doña Ana County, New Mexico where I live and work. Joan Jenson (1993), who also lives here, described it this way:

At the top a gender-mixed and ethnically mixed work life is possible, whereas at the bottom a disproportionately high number of women and men of color are being left with no waged work life at all and decreasing access to the means of communication.

It is in this context that I have initiated a liberatory project, at the request of artist Ruth Drayer, and subsequently artist, Virginia Maria Romero. We organized the 2008 Arts & Culture Convention in the urban area of Las Cruces and Mesilla Valley, New Mexico. For 2009, we are expanding it to a countywide event. The convention uses storytelling, and what I will call postmodern history, as well as antenarrative work to develop a liberatory project. These photos give some idea of what we have been attempting to do.



**Photo 18 – Callejourada Winterfest Dec 6 2008; Photo by D. Boje <sup>6</sup>**

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<sup>6</sup> Source of photo – taken by D. Boje – see <http://talkingstick.info> website



**Photos 19 Cindi Fargo, David Boje, & Grace Ann Rosile Callejourada Winterfest  
Dec 6 2008 – Photo by Boje’s student participating in the event**



## Photo 20: Staged Marketing Photo of New Downtown<sup>7</sup>

This last photo was staged as a way to market revitalized downtown. It shows the recently revitalized Rio Grande Theatre. As the previous photos show, there are still vacant buildings, and several blocks of Main Street are still closed to traffic. About 130 arts and culture organizations are working to make arts and culture a strategic priority for Las Cruces city, Town of Mesilla, and Doña Ana County.

The 2009 *CREATIVE ECONOMY: Arts & Cultures Convention of Doña Ana County* has a liberatory agenda, where an anticipated response to the dialogical storytelling action at the event. For the postmodern history and antenarrative of liberatory potential to succeed, arts and culture must become accessible to a wider audience. We need to get past the limiting jargon of critical postmodern theory. The critical postmodern theory and methods are useful in the critique of the global economy and the resultant two-tier classism, and the poverty of the arts and culture economy locally. There is a Wal-Mart effect going on as a 3<sup>rd</sup> Wal-Mart Supercenter opens soon, draining the life out of small business, and keeping the City and County from having an identity other than Big Box shopping. What is coming forth in the analysis is the level of cultural fragmentation in the borderlands where somehow the marketplace of cultures meeting and exchanging at the crossroads is being circumvented by globalization, where arts and cultures are ‘Made In China.’

I have been doing this work for over three years, which involves fielding teams of students in my small business consulting, leadership, storytelling, and complexity theory classes to do ‘civic engagement’ service learning projects in arts and culture. As part of that work, we did Talking Stick Circles in 2007 (Oct & Nov), Arts & Culture Convention for Las Cruces & Mesilla Valley (NM) in 2008 (Sep 8, 15, & 22<sup>nd</sup>), and are planning this ‘Creative Economy’ one for Oct 2009.

I find in doing the Wild South West arts and cultures work ‘with’ the arts organizations that I am working with private businesses (galleries, private museums, performance theatres), public entities (government at all levels, my university, state museums, Downtown Las Cruces Partnership), and grassroots enterprises (associations, councils, federations, guilds, and cooperatives). They play by different rules, are oriented to different spaces, and quite different temporalities.

At the subterranean level is a multicultural and socioeconomic class based phenomenon explains much of the dynamics on the surface of the kinds of artistic styles, aesthetics, and cultural preferences of working, middle, and elite classes. It is within and between these subterranean and surface relationships that we find dialogical in opposition to antialogical forces of discourse (discourse means here, storytelling, metaphor, & trope).

For Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin (1981) one of the important dialogisms is the dance of different chronotopes. Chronotopes are dialogical, in a relativity of time and space. Each way of telling has its chronotopes. Some are an adventure narrative; others are idyllic global images or local ones. Some are chivalric, others more folkloric such as Rabelaisian resistance or masks of clown, rogue and fool. It is suspected that Nicolas

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<sup>7</sup> Photo source is [http://www.livinginlascruces.com/assets/images/clc\\_fa071.jpg](http://www.livinginlascruces.com/assets/images/clc_fa071.jpg)

Berdyayev (1874-1948) influenced the writings of Bakhtin (1895-1975). Both Bakhtin's and Paulo Freire's (1921-1997) work develop a dialogical theory. Both posit dialogical action as being different than monologic, and not at all like what managerialists call 'consensus' or 'dialogue.' Jean Paul Sartre (1905-1980) in his classic *Being and Nothingness*, looks at nothingness, not as emptiness (or non-being) but as space and time where what we commonly call emergence happens. It is out of being and nothingness that art and culture happen, adapt, and emerge. And this relates to Bakhtin, whose work on being in the moment of being, as where answerability ethics happens.

When we enter the arts and culture arena, doing something dialogical puts a change intervention up against many people and organizations that would rather be anti-dialogical, or have some kind of pseudo dialogue, that is called consensus. Urban Removal left an existential void, a nothingness in our community. It is a nothingness that haunts the present. Being dialogical is up against what Freire (1970) calls elite leadership that can at times be anti-dialogical (or keeping elites in-voice, & others voiceless). Freire like Berdyayev differentiates between an antidialogical revolutionary, and one that is shaping a more just and equitable participation to bring birth a new future. This to me is the basis for the work I am doing. Following Bakhtin there can be co-generative results of dialogical modes of interaction that can be polyphonic, multi-stylistic, chronotopic, or architectonic (see Boje, 2008a for more on the types of dialogisms and their interplay).

The kind of cultural dialogism we as organizers (<http://talkingstick.info>) mean is between Postfrontier Native-American and mostly Anglo or Hispanic-Cowboy rancher, and settlers and retirees moving into the county with West-European-Anglo, African-American, and some Asian and Arab cultural heritages. Now, for me, all these heritages are in an encounter between Post-frontier, modernist, and postmodern aesthetics one finds in the galleries, museums, performance theatres, and studios of Doña Ana County. And there is something quite postcolonial going on, since the art this is Mexicano (though 50% of families speak Spanish at home) does not have the niche that Anglo versions of Western European and U.S. modernism (from CA and NY) has in the arts economy (what is sold, what is bought).

At issue are what Jensen (1989: 148) calls "the old modernist metanarratives" such as the grand narrative of Urban Renewal that exclude the subordinated tier, of mainly rural arts and culture from the urban crossroads. And the postmodern jargon in a bicultural county just gets in the way of a truly liberatory project that is what Paulo Freire (1970) calls a theory of dialogical action. Art and culture get made, but not all of it gets exhibited in the galleries, museums and stages of the main urban center, Las Cruces, and many of the rural groups lack access to media to communicate. Some of this has to do with the oral tradition, and a bilingual population where records that get longevity in institutions are in English not Spanish or any of the Native American languages. The result is that the rural arts and culture is the least likely to become part of the historical record, or the collective memory, and its academic or popular literature.

The result is an Anglo narrative *presentation* of the past. The word "*presentation*" is problematized in Jensen's (1993: 145) work, by questioning what get presented, and who is included or excluded in the presentation of the past that does influence the present. Critical history work is at the nexus of three posts: Postmodern, Poststructural, and Postcolonial. And all three intellectual paradigms, while offering useful analyses of grand narratives, and methods such as deconstruction, and lenses such as cultural invasion in

late modern capitalism, are way to jargon-ridden, to reach a mass audience. Yet, the three posts are their own crossroads on the borderlands of social theory, and raise questions about mainstream, about Anglo male memory of arts and culture.

Doña Ana County is all about how people can cross cultures at the crossroads, as places in the marketplace of a multicultural fabric of rural and urban people, who are making arts and culture together, but not selling all that much of it. Jensen calls it creating ‘anotherness’ (1993: p. 144). Erna Fergusson (1951/1973: 281) calls New Mexico a pageant of three peoples (Gringo, Spanish, & Indian) and the split between Anglos settling from North (Union/Republican) and South (Confederate/Democrat) posed such different standards and beliefs about art are “too incendiary to make Crossroads possible” after the civil war.

There is a politics of collective memory, in a interanimation of aesthetics, cognitive, and ethics (what Bakhtin, 1981, 1990, 1993 calls dialogical architectonics). The dialogical storytelling at the 2009 *CREATIVE ECONOMY: Arts & Cultures Convention* is a way of intervening into collective memory of the borderlands ways of narrative, where Anglo male memory was such a strong part of the Frontier and Post-Frontier phases of history. The Anglo male presentations of the past still have too much nostalgia sensemaking currency in the storytelling of arts and culture of Doña Ana County, some would argue, though very quietly. This is the Wild West, the Wild South West, to be exact, home of Billy the Kid, and Pat Garrett, and Col. Albert Fountain. Albert Fountain and his son went on a buggy to serve some cattle rustlers with warrants in 1894 and were never heard from again.

Rivalry between North and South, Republican and Democrat was so strong, for some time, In August 1871, in Old La Mesilla Plaza, Democrats and Republicans scheduled parades at the same time and place. The two parade met head on the north end of the plaza in front of San Albinos church. Some angry words, and a shot fired, and nine were dead, and 50 wounded’ some shot, and one Republican hit over the head with a pick handle by an angry Democrat, and killed. The case never went to trial. The democrat Albert Fall was able to get several ranchers suspected of being the murders of the Fountains acquitted, three years after the disappearance of the bodies. The disputes spilled over into university politics. Hiram Hadley was founder of what is now called New Mexico State University in 1888, and a Republican, with a Republican Board of Regents. When Democrats took more elections in the state, in 1894, Democrats replaced him and the regents.

## CONCLUSIONS

The borderlands of Dona Ana County is not just a geographic space, it is a cultural place, for the nostalgia economy to fashion Wild South West myths about Anglo males, about the progress of European Imperial forces of Spain, France, and Britain, bringing genius and progress and superior technology, and yes, European art, to the primitive Frontier of the Wild South West. The elite mainstream of arts and culture continues to be wrapped up in this progress myth, in what is now the Post-Frontier, and yes, the Postmodern, Poststructural, and Postcolonial crossroads of art and culture critique of Cowboy and Indian Wild South West popular culture. If one looks closely at the elite arts scene of Dona Ana County there is still some exclusion of people of color, from the more elite galleries, as artists, audiences, and as critics.

A liberatory project, of 2009 *CREATIVE ECONOMY: Arts & Cultures Convention* that is highly dialogical action, multicultural, and invites rural participation in the urban Las Cruces is an affront to some (not all or most) in the mainstream arts and culture of the city. The name “Las Cruces” comes from three crosses being found on a hill, but no one is sure which hill. “There is a legend to the effect that the crosses were erected in memory of Spanish colonists who were massacre during early nineteenth century” (Ferguson, 1951/1973: p. 384). I have head versions where its three Indigenous, or three Gringos killed.

There is a delicate relationship between business and art. Being from the Business College, can make people suspicious. It has to do with ways in which business has changed art and culture in New Mexico.

In closing, the borderlands of Doña Ana County is not just a geographic space, it is a place the crossroads of aesthetic traditions, folkways, political parties, age groups, races, ethnicities, rural/urban, and socioeconomic classes meet. *CREATIVE ECONOMY: Arts & Cultures Convention* is a dialogical intervention, one that raises eager anticipation, and some resistance. The narrative of the Wild South West is apt to get deconstructed in a multicultural convention where dialogical storytelling is the focus. Mainstream arts organizations are being invited into a dialogical space at the crossroads, on the borderlands, and they are somewhat chilled about the event. The word ‘fine’ paired with ‘art’ is a loaded term, one meant to enforce boundaries, to keep standards of one group in force over another group. As a critical postmodernist, I see as well a clash of traditional folk cultures, modernist abstract aesthetics, and postmodern, poststructural, and postcolonial critiques of modernism, colonialism, and the cultural invasion of business, including me, into the arts scene. There is lots of history, an excess of history (out theme at sc’MOI from 2008), where antiquarian past, over codes the monumental art future,, and there is a need for a critical history. I work and live on the borderlands between modernisms and postmodernisms, and everywhere there are narrative lines of exclusion to the living stories of artists struggling to make a living, to exist among different aesthetic ways of art.

We are dealing with a postcolonial aesthetic criticism that is after postmodern, which is after postcolonial, which is after colonial settlers, which is after conquistador Spanish empire, and after the time from 100 AD in Mesilla Valley along the Rio Grande River along the trade trail from Chihuahua Mexico to Santa Fe New Mexico. Since there are many postmoderns, the one I mean hear is in the work of Joan Jensen (1993) in here history (more of a Foucauldian genealogy) of women artists of the southwest (from California to west Texas). For Jensen there are these historic periods of frontier, postfrontier, modernist, and postmodern. By postmodern she means a plurality of cultural heritages: Anglo, Hispano, and Native-American being the primary ones.

When I ask for more dialogical participation among leaders of arts organizations, and among artists of any of the organizations, I am entering a multicultural arena, with a deep-seated history of hegemony, empire, colonialism, modern universal themes, and postcolonial-postmodern. There is a good deal of hope and a good deal of unforgiveness mixed with new residents that wonder what are people going on about. Business is at a crossroads, where it is being called to move beyond Utilitarian Ethics. Utilitarian Ethics is style-less, an empty aesthetics, not a compelling living story upon which to ground

business conduct or strategy as antenarrative. The task now is to find a collective storytelling that preserves all the individualistic identities of artists and arts organizations working in a variety of traditions trying to establish quite different futures. My radical antenarrative is to suppose that the region will find a collectively imagined identity.

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