Abstract

German and Mexican music have a shared musical ancestry due to immigrants interacting since the late 1800s in central Texas. Comparing these genres reveals both commonalities and distinctions regarding style, orchestration, and thematic material. The differences between the genres create cultural boundaries reflecting nationalism that sometimes reinforces racial tension, while the commonalities are opportunities for empathy and open-mindedness through the globalization that occurs from shared musical experiences.

While the historical connections between Germans and Mexicans in Central Texas are well-documented, the present-day status and effects of these connections have not been researched thoroughly. This project builds cultural profiles of both a present-day German polka and Mexican conjunto ensemble. The cultural profiles provide one example of how the historical connections of the music have changed or stayed the same. Beyond the musical considerations, these cultural profiles also reveal cultural boundaries in present day Central Texas that may contribute to or ease current ethnic tensions.

The cumulative outcome of the project was a collaborative concert between the ensembles. This concert included an educational presentation of the historical and present-day connections between Mexican and German music. The concert called for empathy and open-mindedness as Central Texans of Mexican and German descent have an opportunity to identify similarities and celebrate differences as valued diversity. The shared musical experiences of the groups influenced both group members and community members who witnessed the concert, as well as those who learned about it later through reading this research.
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Chapter I: Introduction

Overview of the Project

The field of research defined for this thesis project is the intersection of German and Mexican music in Central Texas and how shared musical experiences create empathy between disparate socio-racial groups. This topic is closely related to my identity. I am a descendant of German immigrants, and I have always lived in Central Texas where there is a heavy influence of Mexican culture.

My desire for social justice is driven by my firm conviction that God desires all people to be treated with dignity. I have participated in many social justice causes, from marching to end human trafficking to working with a local thrift store that donates all profits to local nonprofit organizations. In addition, I view my calling as a teacher through a social justice lens. I teach socio-economically disadvantaged minority students, and my vision is to break cycles of poverty and systems of oppression through education. I am from a middle class, white upbringing, and I work in a lower class, black and brown setting. The duality of my experience provides me with unique access to both German and Mexican communities for my research. My time spent working downtown has caused growth of relationships and networking with community stakeholders. Every day that I show up with an authentic heart to connect and serve, I am building trust and rapport with my students and their community. I realize that these authentic, reciprocal relationships take time, and I continue to invest in this community with my time and resources.

The topic for my master’s project is the intersection between German and Mexican music in Central Texas. The literature review for this topic displays a direct historical connection between these two people groups as early as the mid 1800s. Immigration, cultural exchange, and
economic factors contributed to similarities in performance practices between the music of the two groups, particularly in regard to the use of the accordion, metric styles, and the construction of and use of dance halls in community music making. The literature review also establishes that though Mexicans and Germans in Texas had many similarities and cross-cultural exchanges, differences in literacy and assimilation through the centuries has sharpened the divide between the two cultural groups. Overall, participants of Mexican music culture prided themselves on being different and resisted Anglicization, whereas participants of German music culture gave up much of their culture in favor of Anglicization and the upward mobility that came with it.

Today in Central Texas, some distinct cultural boundaries exist between Latinx and white people groups. While there are crossovers where people enjoy the music from the other group occasionally as a form of exoticism and escape, a strong sense of distinct musical identity remains. These musical differences and boundaries reflect deeper identity boundaries based on race and culture. Tensions in the area are evident in the differences in people’s political views, especially regarding immigration and allocation of resources. My hometown (San Antonio, Texas) is one of the most economically segregated cities. The poorer, largely minority areas are towards the center of town inside of highway loop 410 and the wealthier, largely white areas, make up the circumference of the city, increasing in wealth and assimilated whiteness toward the outer edges. These socio-economic disparities affect the quality of education in the respective areas, perpetuating cycles of wealth and poverty. Though Hispanic people live throughout the city, even in the affluent areas, in general, the culture that they associate with and display is more Anglicized than that of the Latinx people living towards the inner city.

My research project involved eight different steps. The first step was providing historical evidence of the musical connections between Mexican and German people in Central Texas.
through the literature review. The second step was to persuade two ensembles (one German polka and one Mexican conjunto) to participate in this project with me and perform in a collaborative concert. The research by Roberta King on musical interfaith dialogue is applicable in this situation as well, with the hope that “as women and men come together and share what is precious, deeply meaningful, and emotionally profound in their visual arts, literature, dance, and music, it initiates an experiential appreciation of each other, igniting the imagination with the possibilities of living together.”

Progress towards such outcomes has been made through this research, and empathy has increased between these disparate groups.

I found the ideal group to represent the Mexican conjunto: Los Texmaniacs. They were ideal because they have already included talking about their historical connections with German ancestry and are widely known as Grammy Award winning artists who have also recorded with the Smithsonian Institute. Their booking manager, KT Gardner of RootStock Artists, encouraged me to apply for a grant through the Texas Commission on the Arts to pay for the artists. The solution to finding a German polka group was solved through Gardner as well, who arranged for Max Baca of Los Texmaniacs to find a polka group through his connections to be included in the performance. He brought in Off The Grid, a polka group well-known at many local German festivals. One portion of the grant requirement remained: finding a non-profit organization to submit the grant and sponsor the project, which became the third step of my project.

I approached various performing arts non-profit organizations in San Antonio, and while I met with one promising group for months about the potential of the project, they ultimately turned the opportunity down. At this point I had to display perseverance and an ability to adjust in the moment. I reached out to Jeremy Brimhall, Director of Education and Community

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Engagement of the San Antonio Symphony, who I have worked with throughout my years as a music teacher bringing students to their Young People’s Concerts. He recommended a few local organizations, and I reached out to them with my proposal. The Tobin Center responded positively to the possibility, and after several meetings, they officially agreed to sponsor the grant, as well as provide a venue, sound systems, stage crews, production ideas, videography, and advertising.

The fourth step was collaborating with the Tobin Center to plan the event. Working with the Tobin Center for the Performing Arts was an honor. As I met virtually with Rick Frederick, the Director of Resident Company & Community Engagement, Mandie Sullivan, Engagement Coordinator, and others from their organization, we developed a vision for the event, which we named Oktobinfest. We envisioned an outdoor cultural festival that celebrated the unique fusion of Mexican and German influence of our region, complete with an educational concert presented by Los Texmaniacs, Off The Grid, and myself.

The fifth step included designing the educational presentation. I took key facts from the literature review and summarized them. The Tobin Center projected these facts on a screen throughout the event, which was another way for the information to be absorbed by the event attendees. Once I had my core key facts, I met with Max Baca from Los Texmaniacs, and Joe Klaus from Off The Grid. After sharing the key facts with them, I asked if they had anything to add, and we decided together what songs would work best in which order to go with the flow of the presentation. One surprising part of the planning process was when they invited me to perform with them on clarinet. Though just a week and a half remained to the concert and the only time we would have to rehearse together was at sound check, I downloaded the sheet music
and learned Roll Out the Barrel, the grand finale of the concert that both ensembles played together.

The sixth step was designing and testing the post-concert survey. I wrote questions, received feedback on them from my thesis advisor, George McDow, and incorporated them into an online format that would include the option of either Spanish or English, the consent waiver, and questions designed to gather the impact of the concert. I tested it several times and created a QR code for the survey that would be printed on large posters that stood around various places at the event. A QR code is a barcode that can be scanned with any smart device and opens a desired webpage link.

The seventh and most crucial step was the event itself. I arrived early to witness the event set up and coordinate with local filmmaker Alejandro DeHoyos who had agreed to record the interviews with the musicians, as well as the educational performance. I was surprised and excited at the scope of the event. Food and craft vendors stretched out beyond the plaza. I did not expect the storytelling and local arts performances before the main concert, but they were a delightful addition. The performance itself went extremely well, eliciting spontaneous dancing from the crowd. After the educational presentation, Los Texmaniacs continued to play, this time featuring local legend Flaco Jimenez. More details and analysis of the Oktobinfest event is included in Chapter 4 of this document.

The final step of this process was the research and analysis stage. This stage included compiling and analyzing data from the surveys, analyzing the recorded videos of the interviews and the Oktobinfest performance, and overall reflecting on the impact and results of the entire study. The results of this stage are reported in Chapters 4 and 5 of this paper.
My formal thesis statement guided the project: German and Mexican music have a shared musical ancestry due to immigrants interacting since the late 1800s in central Texas. Comparing these genres reveal both commonalities and distinctions regarding style, instrumentation, and thematic material. The differences between the genres create cultural boundaries reflecting nationalism that sometimes reinforces racial tension, while the commonalities are opportunities for empathy and open-mindedness through the globalization that occurs from shared musical experiences.

**Significance of the Project**

This project had a life beyond my thesis in both a local and general sense. Locally, this project contributed to the journey of cross-cultural exchange and empathy in Central Texas. San Antonio, my hometown and where I currently reside, is extremely segregated by socio-economic levels. More wealthy people who express an Anglicized culture live on the outer edges of the city, while the inner city is poorer and expresses more diverse culture, particularly that of Latinx and African-American groups. Designing and executing a performance that bridges the cultural ancestry of two influential groups from opposite sides of this spectrum has contributed to empathy and open-mindedness between the cultures that these groups represent. Generally, this project provided a model for bridging ethnic differences through common cultural practices. The model provided may be used by ethnographers in varying locations within varying cultural contexts. The core model of the research project was finding common history or performance practices between two disparate groups and utilizing a shared fine arts experience to begin to bridge the gap between people groups. The applications for this model are innumerable. Though this research was inspired by several sources including King’s model of shared musical experiences from disparate religious groups, the specific model I designed had unique aspects
and applications that could help other researchers. The Tobin Center has already expressed the desire to begin to hold this event annually in order to continue to develop the narrative of these connections. In addition, the German-Texan Heritage Society of Austin, Texas, has conveyed their interest in holding a similar event. It is unclear but exciting at this point to see how far the concept will spread.

This work served to help others by offering a practical solution to ethnic tension. As an ancestrally German white woman who has many ties both in the inner city and outer suburbs of San Antonio, I have personally witnessed the tension between groups. Whereas many discussions and experiences of difference may result in the construction of both symbolic and physical separations or walls, this research project was designed to build bridges instead. The cultural bridge embedded in this research project invited participants to cross over to unfamiliar territory in a safe environment under the umbrella of the shared love of music. Significantly, this bridge invited, not demanded. Both musical participants and audience members had a choice of whether or not to engage in this cultural mixing. However, those who chose to engage and found a positive experience have spread word of that experience to others, contributing to the ripple effect mentioned earlier. The empathy and open-mindedness garnered throughout this research project has positively affected the Central Texas community by inspiring an attribution of value to the humanity of the other. The hope of this research project was that recognizing the value of each other’s humanity will increase the demand for equitable systems and interactions between all. This demand will then translate to policy changes and greater unity in improving people’s quality of life.
**Purpose of the Project**

The overarching purpose of the project was to achieve the significant impacts listed previously, mainly, to increase empathy and open-mindedness between people in Central Texas with German and Mexican heritage. Within this overarching purpose were several core purposes. The core purposes of the project were: 1) to identify connections between German and Mexican music in the present day, 2) to provide shared musical experiences between the two groups, and 3) to invite the community into these shared musical experiences.

The first of the core purposes was to identify connections between German and Mexican music cultures in the present day. The literature review establishes a firm historical connection, but research into present-day practices was necessary to reveal the extent that these connections have survived and/or evolved. Connecting with a typical ensemble representative of each genre has provided a snapshot of present-day practices. The evolutions and connections have been easy to trace because both ensembles displayed a grasp of both historical and modern repertoire. Dialogue and observation revealed additional dimensions of music culture beyond the performance practices themselves. These additional dimensions included: beliefs and attitudes about music and musicians, cultural celebrations and traditions surrounding music, and support systems surrounding the process of musicking. I constructed a Cultural Profile Comparison Chart (Figure 14), which was useful in analyzing these two music cultures of polka and conjunto.

The second core purpose of the project was to provide shared musical experiences between the German and Mexican ensembles. I facilitated musical and verbal conversations between the groups to emphasize connections and celebrate differences. The main shared musical experience was the final performance, but the online meetings of planning the musical performance also created time and space for cross cultural communication. Performing music
together increased empathy and open-mindedness between the two groups and those who witnessed them working together.

The third core purpose of the project was to broadcast these shared musical experiences and their impact to the community. While the personal impact of the collaboration spread through familial and friendly interactions of the ensembles in a grassroot manner, I also coordinated a public collaborative concert, designed to educate the community. The event, Oktobinfest, took place on October 30, 2021, at the William Naylor Smith Riverwalk Plaza. Just as there were performing ensembles from both German and Mexican cultures, the audience members were also from German and Mexican identifying heritages, as well as others. The positive interactions of the musicians and the educational presentation increased empathy and open-mindedness for nearly all involved in the event.

**Intended Outcomes of the Project**

The ramifications of the project included ethnographical products that informed and transformed local societal norms. These ethnographical products included a formal musical performance from both the German and Mexican musical styles. The data collected from this performance has been catalogued and presented in the form of song analyses and charts which compared and contrasted the musical cultures. This research and analysis captured an internal process of cultural exchange and exposure, resulting in mutual celebration and increased empathy. By highlighting commonalities and framing differences as opportunities to celebrate diversity, the two groups transcended cultural barriers and ethnic tension for the sake of their shared love of music. The result of this internal process was an informed, collaborative performance of the two groups.
The second portion of ethnographical products were the result of the transformative stage. The first stage informed the two performance groups in an internal setting, and the second stage transformed societal norms through an external setting. The segue of the first to the second stage was the performance. While the performance was the culmination of the internal workings of both groups, it was the beginning of the external process. The people who witnessed and continue to learn about the collaborative performance were and are challenged by the diverse unity presented in the concert. The performance caused audience members to challenge their own assumptions about cultural boundaries and encouraged them to seek similar diverse connections in their own lives. On a larger scale, other musical and cultural organizations who witnessed the performance have expressed interest in seeking a similar process of cultural sharing. This second stage of external transformation has had rippling effects beyond the original scope of the research project.

An additional product of this ethnographic research project was the media associated with it. The first such product was a Facebook advertisement created by the Tobin Center, which described the details and purpose of the event and included a small questionnaire. One hundred people responded to this webpage as “Going” to the event while another six hundred five people check that they were “Interested.”\(^2\) The description and information in this webpage was then disseminated to several other webpages about events or things to do in San Antonio. A reporter from Texas Polka News came to cover the event, and this coverage was another ethnographic product documenting this project. The most impactful and lasting product is the recording of the educational concert, which is available through this research paper via a link to an unlisted

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YouTube video in Chapter 4. These ethnographic products not only provided closure and evidence for this study, but also offer resources for future research endeavors.

System of Assessment of the Project

The system of assessment for the project was divided into phases, with each phase having specific, measurable goals. The goals were measured by the creation of a concrete deliverable, which contributed to the body of research and development of the project. Three phases were employed: project planning, concert planning, and concert and event follow up.

The project planning phase included receiving a sponsorship from a local organization, building a team for the project, and identifying ensembles for participation. The assessment for this phase was an informal agreement between parties. This agreement was communicated over a series of e-mails and Zoom communication as it evolved organically based on the needs of the moment. These agreements, though developed at differing times, marked the end of phase one.

The concert planning phase involved coordinating with the ensembles, planning the logistics of the educational concert, as well as advertising for the concert. The assessment for this phase included a collection of notes to build the input from the musicians, the educational presentation, and the performance setlist. These combined into a final run of show document for the concert. An additional assessment for the concert planning phase included advertisements for the concert, which proved that the logistics of the concert have been worked out. The advertisements (Appendix A) and final run of show document (Appendix B) marked the end of phase two.

The concert and event follow up phase consisted of conducting the event itself, surveying project participants, and processing the results. The assessments for this phase were the audio
and video recordings of the final concert, as well as the participant surveys. A link to the video recording of the concert and analysis of the survey data are available in Chapter 4, and the raw survey data is in Appendix D. These tangible items chronicled the impact of the project and marked the end of phase three.

In addition to these macro means of assessment, micro means of assessment were also needed throughout the process. Micro means of assessment included checking in with and realigning to the following core values throughout the process: research integrity, valuing people over results, and open-mindedness. The project maintained both impact and direction since these core values remained in operation throughout the process.

The first recurring core value kept in mind throughout the process was research integrity. I focused on “respecting the desires and rights of those studied… aims of research and boundaries for information and material gain should be clear and agreed on beforehand.”\textsuperscript{3} These principles, along with other guidelines set forth by the American Anthropological Association, provided clear boundaries for the research ethics.

The second ever present core value was respecting people over results. In the process of research, the relationships built with people unfortunately often become secondary to achieving and recording results; “friendship and camaraderie are tainted with the pragmatic uses that could be made of them.”\textsuperscript{4} I avoided this pitfall by prioritizing people throughout the research and project process. A small shift in mindset accomplished this task: instead of making the project


about proving a point, I committed to representing the humanity of those involved in a way that honors their dignity. Centering others in the process helped identify red flags of potential issues.

The third guidepost that needed to be continually checked was open-mindedness. Throughout this process, challenges and obstacles arose and needed to be overcome. Remaining open-minded helped maintain a growth-mindset in solving problems. In addition, if the project needed to take a new direction based on new data, I remained open-minded in assessing and pursuing the best path for the project. The biggest example of this was when I had to find a new non-profit to sponsor the research. These macro and micro assessments were put in place to ensure both the external, data-driven success and internal, humanity-inspired fidelity of the project.

**Limitations of the Project**

The project is limited in three main ways: scope, bias, and the Covid-19 pandemic. The scope of the project favors a deep dive into one ensemble of each genre instead of a shallow, broad survey of many ensembles across each genre. The benefit of this choice is the richness of thick texture analysis, but the limit is that it is a snapshot of only a piece of the whole entirety of these music cultures. Since the sample size is very narrow, the conclusions of the project only speak to these particular ensembles, which may or may not apply to the genre members as a whole. Not enough data in this study is available to draw broad conclusions about all ensembles in each genre. Instead, this study provides a starting point for possible future broad conclusions.

This project is also affected by my own bias. Though I do have connections with both the Mexican and German culture, I still have internal biases that may show up in my research choices and writing style. This bias has been checked and limited by my own increasing awareness and through mentors, colleagues, and research partners reviewing my work. Though
my bias should not reign unchecked, my unique perspective is valuable to the research. Therefore, I have adopted the same philosophy as ethnomusicologist Michael Bakan. He elevates the musical experience of people in general to an equitable level, naming that there is ethnomusicological value in the musical experiences and perspectives of any people that come into contact with a music, whether that is insider, outsider, or someone in between. In this project, I have used his “alternative ethnomusicology in which culture’s authority over music is decentered in ways that allow for the subject positions of all experiencers and potential experiencers of any music to be treated as ethnomusicologically relevant.”

Doing so added value to the perspectives of all of the survey participants, regardless of their cultural background.

This project was limited by the worldwide pandemic of Covid-19. The planning of the project was always in danger of being disrupted by spikes in case numbers. The event was able to happen safely outdoors during a time between spikes, and safety measures were put in place to ensure the health of all performers, as they were required to be vaccinated or present a negative Covid test. Though the event was in person, all the planning took place digitally through Zoom, phone calls, and e-mails. Recording the concert and broadcasting it digitally if it became unsafe or stopped by mandate was always a possibility, and this mindset prepared our research team to make the video of the concert available to those interested in this research project. In this sense, the limitation of Covid-19 has turned into an asset of making sure a digital version was available, which has and will continue to reach more people.

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**Glossary of Terms**

**Anglicization**: to make or become English in sound, appearance, or character\(^6\)

**Bajo Sexto**: Twelve-string instrument sharing some similarities with an acoustic guitar. The instrument is tuned lower than a typical acoustic guitar, hence the bajo part of the name; the sexto, or six, refers to the original number of strings. Changes to the instrument were made to increase its volume, including an expansion of the body (to around 30\% larger than an acoustic guitar), a larger bridge, and a widened neck\(^7\)

**Conjunto**: “Tex-Mex” Popular music genre originally from southern Texas… the basic duo of accordion and bajo sexto (12-string bass guitar) has grown to include other instruments (drum kit, bass guitar etc.) but these two instruments still characterize the sound of the ensemble\(^8\)

**Dance Hall**: especially in the past, a special building or large room for dancing in\(^9\)

**Empathy**: the ability to share someone else's feelings or experiences by imagining what it would be like to be in that person's situation\(^10\)

**Ensemble**: a group of musicians who perform together, whether instrumentalists, singers, or some combination; performance practice\(^11\)

**Ethnomusicology**: the anthropological study of music\(^12\)

**Genre**: a style, especially in the arts, that involves a particular set of characteristics\(^13\)

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\(^12\) Ibid., 298.

Globalization: the development of closer economic, cultural, and political relations among all the countries of the world as a result of travel and communication becoming easy.\textsuperscript{14}

Instrumentation: the particular combination of instruments employed in any musical piece; orchestration\textsuperscript{15}

Latinx: a person who lives in the United States and who comes from, or whose family comes from, Latin America; used in gender neutral situations\textsuperscript{16}

Mexicanidad: Mexicanness, the quality of being Mexican; Mexico, Mexican identity, especially as provided from indigenous culture and national heritage\textsuperscript{17}

Nationalism: traditionally has denoted the use in art music of materials that suggest a national or regional character\textsuperscript{18}

Open-Mindedness: the quality of being willing to consider ideas and opinions that are new or different from your own\textsuperscript{19}

Polka: a fast, active dance from eastern Europe, or a piece of music for this dance\textsuperscript{20}

Song: a form of musical expression in which the human voice has the principal role and is the carrier of a text\textsuperscript{21}

Style: features that characterize the works or performances of a period, region, genre, or individual composer or performer; analysis; history of music\textsuperscript{22}


\textsuperscript{18} Randel, The Harvard Dictionary of Music, 548.


\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., 846.
Chapter II: Literature Review

Introduction

I was born and raised in San Antonio, a city in southwest Texas with a heavy Latin influence, specifically from Mexico. Though my family’s heritage is a mix of German and British, I identify strongly with the Hispanic culture of San Antonio and delight in participating in cultural events and rituals that have roots in Mexico. Mixed with the delight are feelings of tension as conflict arising from immigration and border issues infiltrates interactions I have with friends, coworkers, and students who have extremely close ties to Mexico.

This paper delves into the history “of Texas music, arguably the state's most important and influential indigenous artform,” specifically that of German and Mexican music in Central Texas from the mid-1800s to the present day. The music of both ethnic groups developed along similar lines, with distinct differences that created separate cultural identities reflecting regional pride mixed with nationalism. This literature review uses a perspective of a “musical lens through which one could observe culture and identity.” The purpose of this research is to prove shared musical ancestry between Germans and Mexicans in Central Texas in order to facilitate empathy and open-mindedness between the groups in today’s world of globalization.


German Music in Central Texas

Historical Development

Germans were “the largest influx of Europeans into the Lone Star State during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.”

On the world stage, both the Central Powers and the Allies courted the United States as a desirable partner. To Germany, England, and France, America was a “battlefield where the European powers would fight their last battle for global cultural preponderance.” While the British claimed literature and the French took art, the Germans spread their music with evangelistic fervor.

German musicians taught and composed in Texas. Johann Menger, Franz Xavier Heilig, and others became educators, including Julius Weiss, who “taught a young student named Scott Joplin, destined to become ‘King of Ragtime’. Famous composers in the Texas German population included “Gottfried Joseph Petmecky (New Braunfels), Adolph Douai (San Antonio), Simon Menger (San Antonio), and C. Wilke (La Grange).” Overall, each town had a German music professor. These quintessential German music professors were “arbiters of musical culture and taste for the citizenry.”

25 Gary Hartman, The History of Texas Music (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2008), 100.


27 Ibid.


29 Ibid.

30 Lawrence Clayton and Joe W. Specht, The Roots of Texas Music (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2003), 133.
German Texas instrumental music utilized high quality instruments such as “violin, guitar, flute, clarinet, zither, and drums,” along with the piano and accordion. German bands ranged from militia bands to entertainment. The German bands played for cultural and social events such as parades, picnics, outdoor concerts, and dances. The German band bridged serious and popular music, as they “might perform the works of European masters in one hour to be followed in the next by drinking songs and polkas for dancing.”

The folk genres played by these German ensembles were “most notably music for couple dances like the schottische, waltz, vaarsouviene, and later the polka, but also contra dances.” Germans used music to build their cultural diaspora, to where “public dances in the German-American communities enjoyed an even stronger existence than in Germany itself.” These styles traveled through circuses, show boats, minstrel shows, touring brass bands, and country fiddlers. This music had themes common to that of the other immigrants of the area.

Some of the longest lasting contributions of Germans to Texas music history are the institutions that were established, including singing societies, dance halls, and music publishing companies. It is estimated that they “built as many as one hundred lodges, pavilions, or society halls during this period.” These dance halls are more common in Central Texas than in other areas of Texas or the rest of the United States. Singing societies proliferated “in roughly ninety

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32 Clayton and Specht, 127.

33 Hadamer, 16.

34 Ibid.

35 Ibid., 18.

Texas communities.”37 Another German institution was the Hauschild Music Company, which was “one of the largest publishers of sheet music throughout the Southwest from 1891 to 1922.”38 Overall, these German institutions served as cornerstones of their communities and helped solidify their cultural identities.

German immigrant communities were largely isolated and slow to assimilate, due to their self-sustaining societies,39 rural settings, and literate notation. In 1854 San Antonio held a Sangerfest in English for the first time. This event was supposed to be viewed as a display of American patriotism, but it did not overcome the suspicion amassed as the Germans formed a political platform with an antislavery position.40 This suspicion worsened with the onset of WWI.

Germans became cultural suspects at the beginning of World War I. German communities denied their culture and closed many singing societies and dance halls, reflecting a “decline in the open display of German customs and music.”41 These actions that German Texans took to protect themselves in a vulnerable state “caused German ethnicity to disappear.”42 However, classical German music remained a symbol of art music. The music of Beethoven, Bach, Brahms, Mozart, Wagner, and others provided membership to “a universally admired cultural club.”43 Symphonies were established throughout Texas with the help of

37 Albrecht, n.p.
38 Ibid.
39 Lena, 96.
40 Clayton and Specht, 125-6.
41 Albrecht, n.p.
42 Hadamer, 13.
43 Gienow-Hecht, 592.
German musicians. The assimilation of Germans, caused by industrialization and the stigma of the World Wars, caused distinctly German music to become more anglicized.

General Current Expressions

Today, German music still has an impact on Texas’ musical scene. When the mainstream turned against German culture, the German dance halls that survived did so by opening “their doors to the public”\textsuperscript{44} and supporting lesser-known local artists. German polka has many organizations dedicated to its preservation and performance, with “a stretch of highway I-10 between Houston and San Antonio known as ‘Polka Road’.\textsuperscript{45} German bands are still socially important dimensions of communities of German or Czech heritage.\textsuperscript{46} After World War II, German Texans established cultural festivals, such as “Wurstfest in New Braunfels, Oktoberfest in Fredericksburg, and Maifest in Brenham.”\textsuperscript{47} San Antonio still has one of the largest German communities and is home to the historical performance groups Beethoven Mannerchor and the San Antonio Liederkranz.\textsuperscript{48} North of San Antonio lies Boerne, a German community that boasts the Boerne Village Band, which “is the oldest continuously active German band outside of the Republic of Germany.”\textsuperscript{49} The German emphasis of high quality music in Texas has “created the foundations for the high level of choral, symphonic, and operatic music that the state enjoys.

\textsuperscript{44} Hartman, 110.
\textsuperscript{45} Lena, 96.
\textsuperscript{46} Clayton and Specht, 128.
\textsuperscript{47} Albrecht, n.p.
\textsuperscript{48} Hartman, 106.
today.” These examples show that German music is still a significant cultural presence in Central Texas.

Current State of Dance Halls and Polka Music

Out of all the musical contributions of the German settlers, polka music and dance halls are the ones most related to Tejano music, as styles and performing locations were often shared. The German and Czech settlers erected many dance halls throughout Texas, and “such weekend music and dancing provided much needed entertainment, but also a forum for romantic courtship, community solidarity, and ethnic-class consciousness.” Whether the music was polka, Conjunto, zydeco, or country, “most Texas music is crafted specifically for active audience participation.” These social dances were a family event, and generations of Texans two-stepped across years of regional music. These dance halls were the site of many genres fusing, as “polka and traditional dances blended with the rest of Texas’ rich cultural melting pot, and the dance halls became incubators of Texas country, western swing, Tejano, and conjunto.” These dance halls reflect Texas music history.

In the past thirty years, however, “the allure of dance halls faded. People didn't want to spend their Saturday nights dancing, especially with their families. Teens didn't want to test the waters dating while their parents watched from a few feet away. Farmers and ranchers started

50 Clayton and Specht, 119.


moving to the cities for different kinds of work.”

The family orientation of farmers and ranchers has given way to different socio-economic profiles that don’t naturally fit into the dance hall tradition. In recent years, an effort has been made to “preserve dance halls and the authentic culture and music that was found in them” by organizations like the Texas Dance Hall Preservation Society. These attempts are focused on reviving the communal importance of the dance halls, as well as preserving the history they represent.

Similar to the fading popularity of dance halls, the polka genre has diminished from a prominent, vibrant style of German Texan music to “a style of music that was the butt of jokes and rarely taken seriously in the mainstream.” One of the largest blows to the polka world recently was its elimination from the Grammy awards. This action demonstrated that polka, “once capable of supporting artists with million-selling hits, but long since relegated to micro-niche status, had slipped off the mainstream radar entirely.”

Though the genre has dropped in popularity, it retains a solid foothold among folk traditions and German festivals. Polka music rarely has new compositions anymore; groups that perform the music are more about preserving the history.

One such project of preservation was done by Jimmy Brosch, who researched and published “a book and accompanying CD that documented the lives, music and culture of

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musicians who played polka throughout the state.”⁵⁸ He reflected that polka music was always popular, but it was no way to make a living. He said that if groups raised the charge of admission, people would just not show up. He stated that “polka, it seems, is a rare corner of the country unaffected by inflation.”⁵⁹ It could be that this reflected the growing gap between worker’s wages and living expenses. The result of this gap may have been a lack of support of polka music, which was once central to Texas communities.

_Mexican Music in Central Texas_

_Historical Development_

The roots of Mexican music in Central Texas have ancient origins, as the Mexican people descended from indigenous tribes such as the Olmeca and the Mayan. Throughout history, Mexican Texans endured political shifts: Spanish Texas, Mexican Texas, French Texas, the Republic of Texas, the Confederate States, and the United States of America.⁶⁰ These shifts, along with tumultuous events like World Wars and the Great Depression, have caused “remarkable cross-pollination of musical influences that has taken place throughout the Southwest over the years, as Tejanos, or Texans of Mexican descent, combined the older traditions of their ancestors with those of other ethnic communities to create a distinct Texas Mexican musical idiom.”⁶¹ This process has included the “blending of early Spanish and

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⁶⁰ Texas State Historical Association, _The Handbook of Texas Music_ (Austin, TX: Center for Studies in Texas History, 2003), 221.

⁶¹ Hartman, 106.
Mexican music, French-European dance music style, styles filtered through Mexico, and Mexican and American popular music.”

Throughout this fusion, Mexican Texans have maintained a distinct cultural identity amidst varied circumstances.

The main influence in the development of Mexican Music in Central Texas was the connection between the city of Monterrey in northern Mexico and cities in Central Texas like San Antonio. This connection was solidified by routes of commerce, along which also flowed cultural and musical influences, which were coming to Monterrey from Europe. One of the main cultural influences was that of salon music, which included dance genres of “polka, schottische, mazurka, and redowa as well as the older and more traditional huapango.” This influence also brought new instrumentation to Mexican Texans, including the accordion, which came from either Germans in northern Mexico or German immigrants in Texas. This instrument especially appealed to the working class as an economic choice that could play both accompaniment and melody. Monterrey also contributed “a number of highly respected profesores [sic.],” such as Beto Villa and Vicente Cerda. This cultural influence of Monterrey continued “until the 1920s when American economic expansion into deep South Texas finally closed off the border” and supplanted Monterrey’s influence, both economically and culturally.

Mexican Texans have many genres of music. Early forms of Mexican music include the corrido, “a ballad of eight-syllable, four-line stanzas sung to a simple tune in fast waltz time,

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62 Texas State Historical Association, 221.


65 Peña, 28.

66 Peña, 29.
often in polka rhythm.” Corridos tended to spike in composition and development in response to times of struggle, including border conflict with immigration issues, the Kennedy assassination, and the terrorist attack of 9/11. The formation of Mexico as a nation included nationalistic attempts to reduce regionalism and forge an international symbol of Mexican identity, which was crafted into the genre of mariachi. This musical style was forged from a combination of rural music from Jalisco and tributes to American style jazz trumpeting and vocal timbre. Other genres of Tejano music include “orquesta, conjunto, norteña, corridos, rancheras, canciones, polkas, cumbias, mariachi, Chicano country, Tejano, rap, hip-hop, and others.” These genres developed through a combination of cultural sharing and distinct group identity.

Several significant musicians stand out in the history of Mexican Texan music. Santiago Jimenez and Narcisco Martinez “were responsible for pioneering the norteña style on recordings and radio broadcasts in the 1930s.” Bruno Villareal, Jose Rodriguez, and Jesus Casiano were some of the primary Tejano musicians who increased the popularity of the accordion “throughout Texas and northern Mexico during the early 1900s, and they are largely responsible for helping lay the foundation for the early conjunto style.” Other significant musicians include Lydia Mendoza, the first recorded chicana star; Selena, the queen of Tejano music; and Emilio...

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67 Texas State Historical Association, 63.


69 Hartman, 20.

70 Texas State Historical Association, 221.

71 Hartman, 29.
Navaira, the king of Tejano music. The popularity of these musicians spread Tejano genres of music across the nation and world.

Current General Expressions

Mexican music is still extremely popular in Central Texas, from performances of mariachi on the Riverwalk in San Antonio, to the inclusion of Latin American music studies in local colleges, to numerous norteña music clubs. The pervasive presence of Tejano music has created the sense that the border region of Texas that is closer to Mexico has its own cultural community. One contributing factor to this was the border radio stations that broadcasted both country and Mexican music from the 1930s to the 1980s. These outlawed stations often overpowered network programs in the United States, as the United States and Canada had divided up all of the long-range radio stations, leaving none for Mexico.

A popular idea among Mexican Texans is that there are two Mexicos; one is the political and physical place, and the other is the diaspora of those who identify with Mexico and are spread throughout the United States. Increased communication due to technology, rising numbers of immigrants from Mexico, and “the large percentage of undocumented travelers unable (or unwilling) to assimilate into Chicano or North American populations have reinforced these long-distance ties to Mexico.” Mexican music, whether that is orquesta, mariachi, or Conjunto, reinforces the cultural identities of Mexican Texans today.

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72 Hartman, 29.
73 Texas State Historical Association, 31.
74 Ragland, 19.
Figure 1. Spectrum of Anglicization and Mexicanidad Across Mexican Music Genres

- **Mexican Texans:** people who live in Texas and identify with Mexican descent to any degree
- **Mexican immigrants:** Texans who have recently immigrated from Mexico; openly display Mexican culture more and are not Anglicized
- **Tejanos:**
  - Texans who identify with Mexican descent but who have lived in Texas for generations; though they are proud of their Mexican culture, they also display a measure of Anglicization
- **Upper Class**
  - **Orquesta Music:**
    - Mexican orchestra with more expensive string instruments, representative of the upper class
- **Middle/Working Class**
  - **Mariachi Music:**
    - Mexican folk music from Jalisco infused with a jazz trumpet style and bel canto singing style
  - **Conjunto Music:**
    - Mexican ensemble with bajo sexto and accordion, representative of the working class
  - **Tejano Music:**
    - Mexican conjunto music with fusions of jazz or swing
- **Lower Class/Immigrant**
  - **Norteño Music:**
    - Mexican conjunto music with more raw sound and more illicit topics
  - **Anglicization:** fitting into mainstream America
  - **Mexicanidad:** expressing Mexican identity, rejecting American
Conjunto is the Mexican music that grew out of German polka music, and Norteño and Tejano are genres that have grown out of Conjunto. Conjunto’s instrumentation was traditionally the *bajo sexto* and accordion. The *bajo sexto* is a guitar-like instrument that has twelve strings, combining the strings of an acoustic guitar and a bass guitar. Conjunto has changed due to “the impact of American culture, regionally recording companies, increased socio-economic opportunities, and other factors.” These factors have given rise to related genres of conjunto: Tejano and Norteño. Tejano music is socially acceptable by the same fan base as conjunto, but it relies more heavily on fusion with other genres like jazz and swing. Norteño music, however, has become the named enemy of conjunto music, as the radio stations and commercial recording industry has largely turned to Norteño, leaving conjunto music behind. This transition to focusing on Norteño is a result of the fanbase of Norteño being largely single Mexican immigrants who often have more money to spend on music and bars, rather than the family base of conjunto music.

Stylistically, the two opposed genres have distinguishing characteristics. “Tejano music is more refined, more delicate, more difficult to play, but rhythmically it is steadier.” Conjunto/Tejano music is more likely to be instrumental, and “when its songs have lyrics, they are often about love and heartbreak.” Conversely, “Norteño is faster, with a more insistent beat” and lyrically deals with more illicit topics, akin to the *narcocorrido*, which regale stories of

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the illegal drug trade over the border. Overall, these stylistic differences paint a picture of conjunto music being more refined and traditional and Norteño music being more edgy and popular. Musical differences aside, the ultimate difference, from the perspective of Tejanos, is “conjunto is Tejano. Norteño is Mexican.”

This distinction may seem confusing at first, but it reflects a difference in immigration. Tejanos are Mexican Americans whose families have been in Texas for generations. Mexicans, in this sense, are more recent arrivals. Due to immigration controversies, “Tejanos have watched with concern as the wider culture became more and more intolerant of Mexican migrants—which, they are worried, will include them.” Therefore, Tejanos wish to distinguish themselves from Mexicans, to elevate themselves above the recent Mexican immigrants. One way they set themselves apart is musically. In doing so, Tejanos are “reproducing the racial and class dominance of the larger Anglo society against the most vulnerable sector in American society, the Mexican immigrant.” Therefore, conjunto music both represents an escape from cultural imperialism of Anglo society and itself becomes a tool of such dominance toward a different group, recent Mexican immigrants.

Mexican Texans had to overcome obstacles based on ethnic discrimination and ever shifting immigration policies. This tension increased pressure for them to assimilate into the mainstream in order to gain economic mobility and civic rights. Therefore, Mexican music began to have a distinct divide based on class. Figure 1 relates anglicization and mexicanidad to Mexican genres and social classes. The upwardly mobile class claimed the more refined orquesta

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79 Elbein, 1.
80 Ibid.
music as representative of both their assimilation to American ways as well as retaining their mexicanidad identities, while the poor, working class Mexican Texans identified with and performed Conjunto music and its related genres, which was developed out of a need to express the experiences of the immigrants from Mexico, as well as the economic choice of instrumentation, either an accordion or a guitar accompanying one or two voices. These two groups are polarized, each one disdaining the other. Mariachi and orquesta music featured Revolution music, folk songs, and ballads, but Conjunto “emerged as the voice of the present-day Mexican migrant experience.”

In addition, within the genre of Conjunto, a divide has arisen between Norteño and Conjunto music. All of these divisions reflect a response to the pressure to Anglicize and pursue upward mobility.

Historical Comparisons

Shared Musical Ancestry

Though Germans and Mexicans were significant people groups in Central Texas, they were both minority groups when compared to the Anglo-majority. Both groups prioritized preserving their unique culture, and both groups felt pressure to assimilate in order to advance economically and politically. These two minority groups tended to vote similarly: “like Tejanos and Mexicans, German Texans tended to vote for Democratic candidates… most of the pro-union votes throughout central Texas could be attributed to each county’s German residents.”

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(along with Mexican and Tejano residents in Bexar County).”

The anti-slavery platform of Germans caused Anglos to believe that the singing groups were “secret subversive societies.”

Germans and Mexicans in Central Texas represented other homelands and had similar thematic material in their cultural music. Song texts in both ethnic groups featured themes of “love and breaking up, social life and politics, heroes and villains, migration and missing home, regional identity and pride.” In addition, both ethnic groups experienced a divide in song genre based on class; each group had working class genre (conjunto in Mexican and polka in German) and a high class genre (orquesta/mariachi in Mexican and classical in German). These divides represented the success of the upwardly mobile of both groups, as well as the struggle of the poor, in the quest to assimilate and Anglicize.

The performance practices of both groups also had similarities; the main convergence of German folk and Mexican conjunto music performance practice is that of the accordion. The accordion was a European invention that was brought to Mexico and Texas in the mid 1800s. It started as a central feature of German folk music, such as the polka, and then spread to the Mexican working class due to its ideal features of being “affordable, portable, and allowing one person to play both melody and harmony simultaneously.” Conversely, the instrumental


84 Clayton and Specht, 125-6.


symbol of both highbrow genres (classical and orquesta) were the more expensive string instruments and the complex ensembles that went with them. The adoption of the accordion and the salon dances from Germany led to the “creation of the distinctive norteno or conjunto music in the early twentieth century.” 88 These elements of shared musical ancestry “represented the merging of Mexican and European influences.” 89

This fusion of German and Mexican music is especially prominent in the Central Texas city of San Antonio. In this city, where German and Mexican influences are extremely evident, accordion players are “the most loyal to the German Hohner three-row Corona II diatonic button accordion [and] are devoted to simple, memorable melody lines based on polka, waltz, and schottische dance rhythms.” 90 This stands in contrast to other Texas cities where different accordion models and performance practices with less German influence are common. Historical evidence indicates that Tejano musicians in San Antonio “learned tunes by ear from German bands” 91 and attended German music performances in San Antonio’s Brackenridge Park. Such examples indicate that “hostility and segregation could not keep music [from] flowing between Europeans and Tejanos.” 92


88 Clayton and Specht, 129.


90 Ragland, 100.


92 Ibid.
Through shared experiences as immigrants, similar class struggles and divides, and sharing of musical styles and instruments, the German and Mexican communities in Central Texas have a related musical ancestry. This commonality is symbolized in the instrumentation of the norteña music: “the musical core combination of bajo sexto and accordion represents the merging of two distinct music cultures that have come to symbolize the border life experience.”

Through their separate but connected struggles to define their cultural identities as displaced people, they created a new cultural identity based on this border and fusion reality.

Points of Divergence

Though German and Mexican instrumental music are similar, key differences exist. The instrumentation of a German band and a Mexican norteña group is different, save the accordion. Though both genres use a basic polka meter and style, they belong to distinct subgenres, as defined by polka scholars Charles and Angaliki Keil. German polka is its own category, and Mexican polka falls under the category of Southwest polka. Additionally, while song text themes may be similar, the traditional language of each genre is either Spanish or German, with an occasional English word or phrase.

Another key difference between these two people groups is how they handled assimilation into mainstream Anglo-culture in Texas. The difference in this response is captured in the Mexican song, the Ballad of Gregorio Cortez. In this song, a Mexican rebel is offered riches and ease if he will marry a white girl. The image of a German farmer comes to his mind.

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and he rejects it, symbolizing the Mexican rejection of “the ultimate Americans: complacent, prosperous, and unquestioning.”\textsuperscript{95} The ultimate source of this rejection is a deep sense of loss of Texas as a part of Mexico, and this song represents how Mexican Texans view the private lives of German Texans “as an endorsement of U.S. territorial conquest.”\textsuperscript{96} These differences, especially the fact that Germans accepted assimilation more readily than Mexicans did, contribute to ethnic tensions today.

\textit{Current Cultural Identities}

Distinct Boundaries and Nationalism

Today in Central Texas distinct geographic and cultural boundaries exist for Mexican and German culture. German culture today is less noticeable and consciously celebrated than Mexican culture is; this is due to the past erasure of German culture during World War I and World War II, as well as the German desire to assimilate to Anglo traditions. Mexican culture is vivaciously celebrated in my hometown of San Antonio through distinct clothing, music, and holidays, like Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead).\textsuperscript{97}

The highbrow German tradition of classical music, both choral and instrumental, is extremely active today in Central Texas. One article speaks to this phenomenon about how “sustained migration of Hispanics and Anglos into Texas's historical ‘German belt’ has contributed to a significant decline in the proportion of Central Texans claiming German

\textsuperscript{95} Brookins, 163.

\textsuperscript{96} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{97} Dia de los Muertos is a Mexican holiday that honors deceased family members through altars of pictures, food, and candles.
ancestry,” and German cultural festivals have increased as a result. These festivals invite other racial groups to participate as well, which is also an invitation for Hispanics to participate in “‘whitening’ their racial status.” The intricacies of cultural boundaries in Central Texas today are a result of how “cultural transmission… fine-tunes relations between these attitudes to tacitly produce complex structures that collectively aggregate into shared understandings.” These complicated and shifting boundaries reflect ideas of nationalism and classism.

Blurred Boundaries and Globalization

Today’s world of connectivity invites people to identify with whatever music or culture they choose; many music cultures are available at the click of a button, thanks to technology. This has increased contact between cultures, which has also blurred boundaries and increased globalization. An example of this is in the city of Chelsea, Massachusetts, where a Mexican performing group blends mariachi and norteña styles, which has significantly reduced racial tensions in the city between differing Latin groups. This fusion represents a “performed multiethnic inclusiveness that is powerfully intimate and symbolically meaningful.” Another example of the breaking down of musical boundaries is found in the current use of the accordion, which has experienced a renaissance in countless global music cultures. Playing the accordion


99 Ibid.


now represents “nostalgia, the search for authenticity, [and] eclecticism… The accordion today is old, new, certainly vital, and undeniably global.”\textsuperscript{102} This globalism is also true in the microcosm of Central Texas, where cultural ideas continue to be shared, changed, and transferred to new groups of people.

**Opportunities for Empathy and Open-mindedness**

In today’s world of polarization, whether that is political or cultural, it is more important than ever to build bridges between differing groups of people. The National Association for Music Education published an article about the need for international-mindedness among students, and how “in an increasingly interconnected world, students need tools to help them deal with a wide variety of people and cultures. World musics can help them do this.”\textsuperscript{103} Programs like the International Baccalaureate curriculum tout open-mindedness as an essential character trait for students; I have seen firsthand the healing that can happen between students of different backgrounds when empathy is fostered in this way. Music is an ideal venue to celebrate both commonalities and differences among diverse groups of people. Models of teaching this skill exist within education and need to be available to adults of society as well. Fostering empathy is complex: “it is not a matter of grasping parts of a whole, but a matter of grasping the dynamic transitions between parts.”\textsuperscript{104} Doing so requires higher level thinking and deconstruction of bias.


but the reward for such work will be an increased richness of relationships and a more unified, yet diverse, community.

Conclusion

German and Mexican music history in Central Texas developed along similar paths; both had divisions of working class and elite genres and had to deal with issues of assimilation into mainstream Anglo society. This is symbolized in shared instrumentation of the accordion of the working or folk classes as well as the string instruments of the upwardly mobile classes. Despite shared performance practices and similar experiences as immigrant diaspora communities, Germans and Mexicans ultimately diverged in how they responded to assimilation. Germans actively put away much of their culture and embraced Anglicization, whereas Mexicans combined efforts to assimilate with holding on to their core mexicanidad, as well as the belief that the land of Texas should ultimately belong to Mexico. This core difference of land ownership and the struggle for power and control is at the heart of ethnic tensions today. However, shared musical experiences may be a path toward empathy and healing between the groups in a time where globalization is beneficial to the upwardly mobile. Musical similarities are already embedded in the history of both people groups; all that remains is an impetus toward open-mindedness through shared musical experiences.
Chapter III: Project Design and Implementation

Overview of the Project Design

The project design combined critical theory and interpretivist paradigms, as it dealt with issues of power structures as well as individual experiences. I used both qualitative and quantitative methods, leaning on qualitative more often due to cultural aspect of the study. When comparing the two music cultures in the cultural profiles, I maintained a balance between a qualitative thick texture analysis and comparative statistics. The post-concert surveys measure the impact of the project with qualitative questions. The trends within the answers to these questions were then quantified to draw conclusions.

I discovered and presented underlying similarities in both the performance practices and in the cultural values of people who associate with the German and Mexican music in Central Texas. I utilized the partnership of a local organization, the Tobin Center of the Performing Arts, to sponsor the project. When interviewing ensemble members and observing the musicians’ interactions, I found key similarities in function and identity formation. I used these comparisons as the main theme to design a collaborative concert that emphasized these similarities and celebrated the differences. Through this process, I discovered that the people in each of these musical cultures desire to interact with people outside of their normal cultural circle. I also discovered that the shared musical experience, along with realizing cultural and musical similarities, promoted increased empathy and open mindedness between the groups. Throughout this process, I measured my research-based expectations against the data and facts before me and adjusted accordingly; I adjusted my ideas at varying steps through the research journey.
Relationship of the Literature to the Project Design

The literature review provided a blueprint for conversation with both the German and the Mexican ensembles, as well as the community. Retracing the historical similarities and divergences between these prominent groups in Central Texas helped people understand more of their heritage and the history of the region. The story of the region helped explain the current state of cultural boundaries, as well as providing key points for building bridges.

For people of German ancestry, engaging with this research project was and is a chance to rebuild their cultural heritage, much of which was lost due to assimilation and the stigma of Germans during World War I and II. Rediscovering the way that their German ancestors acted, voted, and made decisions as immigrants in Central Texas influenced hopefully current people of German descent to view immigrants from Mexico, as well as other marginalized groups, with more empathy and dignity.

For people of Mexican ancestry, learning about this research project was and is a chance to understand how and why their ancestors made the choices they did, which contributes to understanding and shaping their own current cultural identity and how they relate to others. Learning about the similarities they used to have with German immigrants most likely brought up painful realizations of assimilation and open-minded thoughts of how to move forward in the future, particularly in how they treat recent immigrants from Mexico.

Project Plan

The project plan was divided into two main portions. The first portion was made up of questions driving the research, and the second portion was a proposed partnership.

The main, overarching research question was: To what extent do historical connections between Mexican and German music influence group identities and interactions in the present
day? Several questions fall under this main question. How has traditional German and Mexican instrumental music changed in Central Texas since the late 1800s? What historical influences remain? How do the changes reflect cultural changes in the separate yet co-existing cultural groups? These questions reflected a need to connect the historical literature with present day practices. Though historical connections have been proven, the extent to which historical connections still exist and impact today is, as of yet, an area ripe for discovery, even after this research. Investigating the extent of historical influence and present-day connections has been a key component of this project, yet this study has only hit the tip of the iceberg.

The next group of research questions reflects the who and the how of my research methodology. What German and Mexican musical groups in Central Texas should I pursue to be part of my research project? How do I go about making connections with these groups? Constructing an ideal list of characteristics of the groups helped in making these decisions. Groups should: 1) consider their participation in this genre as an expression of their cultural identity 2) have a sense of history in their given genre, 3) be proficient and representative of typical group of that genre, 4) be willing to grant an outsider access to rehearsals and interviews as a part of the learning process, 5) agree to participating in a culminating collaborative concert with the other genre, and 6) agree that empathy and open-mindedness are desirable qualities when interacting with the other group. In working with Los Texmaniacs and Off the Grid, both groups fulfilled all six requirements.

Other detailed research questions included issues of logistics and organization in the methodology of the research. How long should the research project take? The pace of the project was controlled mainly by the securing of a partnership with a non-profit organization, which caused the project to be delayed for two semesters. The question of compensation to participants
was solved during my interactions with the Institutional Review Board of Liberty University.
While the Tobin Center and the musicians had a contract drawn up to detail the funding between
them, I learned that I could not reward survey participants randomly in the form of a drawing
because that is considered illegal gambling in Texas. I revised my method to state that no
compensation would be given to survey participants, which should be taken into consideration
when assessing the number of attendees that actually completed the survey. The research
question of how to track people’s attitude toward each other throughout the process was
answered through designing specific survey questions. The measuring of open-mindedness
needed to be quantified or qualified to research standards, yet flexible enough to reflect the
humanity of the data. Phenomenological data from participants provided the most authentic
depiction of their experiences to include in my ethnographic study. Another driving question for
my research was deciding what data would be necessary to gather about the two musical groups
in order to perform a thorough comparison of cultural identity and musical performance
practices. Constructing a list of aspects to consider has provided structure and flexibility in
describing and analyzing the two groups.

The second portion of the project plan involved procuring a partnership with a local
organization. The goal of associating myself with this local organization was to help provide
physical resources for the event and societal trust when interacting with the community. The first
non-profit organization that I sought for this partnership was Musical Bridges Around the World.
I spent several months meeting with them about the possibility of partnering. Though their
mission statement aligned with the project and they seemed interested, they ultimately chose to
part ways with the project due to an already full program. I then sent e-mails to various musical
non-profit organizations throughout San Antonio based on the recommendations of Jeremy
Brimhall of the San Antonio Symphony. The non-profit organization that responded positively and ultimately sponsored this project was the Tobin Center for the Performing Arts. Their mission statement is “to provide a world-class venue that promotes a diverse range of cultural, educational, and artistic experiences that improve the quality of life in San Antonio.” I sent this initial e-mail to Kimberly Stephenson, Director of Education, on April 7, 2021:

Hello,

My name is Amy Beckman, and I am a local music teacher and Native San Antonian. Jeremy Brimhall from the San Antonio Symphony has recommended that I contact you about a potential partnership opportunity.

I am currently a graduate student at Liberty University in their ethnomusicology department. I am writing my thesis on the historical and current relationship between Mexican and German instrumental music in Central Texas. My goal is to create a collaborative, educational concert between a Mexican conjunto group and a German polka group that communicates the historical connections between the groups and celebrates their diversity. The hopeful result of this concert would be to increase empathy and open-mindedness between those who identify with German or Mexican heritage. My projected timeline for this concert is during the Fall of 2021.

I have identified the groups I would like to work with: Los Texmaniacs for the conjunto group and the Austin Polka Band for the polka group. Los Texmaniacs has been recognized by the Smithsonian for their folk music and has won Grammys, and they have already done many presentations on the history of their genre. In order to afford hiring this group, I need to apply for the Texas Arts Commission Grant, and I need to do so through a non-profit organization. I am wondering if the Tobin Center Education Program would be interested in being the non-profit liaison for this grant application.

Please let me know if you would like to set up a meeting to further discuss this project via video chat, phone call, or e-mail. Thank you for your consideration.

with joy,

Amy Beckman

Stephenson responded the next day with a positive attitude and said she would reach out to others at the Tobin Center. I then was connected with the Community Outreach Department, which led to a phone call on April 19, 2021 with Mandie Sullivan and Rick Frederick. These representatives from the Tobin Center responded enthusiastically to my idea, and my partnership with the Tobin Center officially began. The process of finding a non-profit local organization required perseverance and adjustments along the way. The resulting partnership with the Tobin Center was well worth all the efforts.

*Project Implementation*

The project data was gathered through several enhanced techniques: cultural profiles helped describe and analyze each musical culture and collecting and cataloguing cultural artifacts provided concrete evidence of each musical culture. Other methods of data collection included observation, ethnographic interviews, and audiovisual methods. Observation has been the most pervasive of my research activities, as I continually sought patterns and connections. Though the observations were mainly guided by the predesigned topics and questions, I also kept an open mind regarding any unforeseen insight possibilities.

Ethnographic interviews were key when comparing and contrasting the musical cultures of German and Mexican instrumental music in Central Texas. Interviews helped me gain insight into the nuances of the people’s musical culture. How people chose to communicate about the music also revealed characteristics of their culture. When conducting ethnographic interviews, I paid attention to the cultural values of the person speaking, whether these values were stated directly or implied. In the ethnographic interviews, I wrote open ended questions while avoiding leading questions to provide for authentic answers, which were then conveyed by the
videographer Alejandro DeHoyos. DeHoyos also recorded the performance itself and edited it to have better sound quality. These audiovisual methods helped capture the results of the study. Recording the performances in the moment allowed me the freedom to absorb myself into the experience, which also provided more insight. I have incorporated my own perspective of the ethnographic experiences as a valuable ethnographic voice.

I built the cultural profiles of each genre through interviews, observations, and recordings. I created categories of information that can be compared between the two musical cultures. Musical categories include musical behaviors, instrumentation, formal structure of songs, thematic content, metric/rhythmic considerations, texture and arrangement, and so on, utilizing ideas found in the CAP or Community Arts Profile tool.\textsuperscript{106} Recording and comparing this information pointed out similarities and differences between the two musical cultures. Identifying differences helped people recognize the cultural boundaries between the two groups. Identifying similarities helped people recognize opportunities for empathy and open-mindedness between the two groups. These cultural boundaries and opportunities are evident upon reading this research.

The people who were able to help me find the answers to my questions were mainly the ensemble members of each genre. I found an ensemble of the Mexican conjunto genre and an ensemble of the German polka genre and asked them a series of preliminary questions to see if they would be a good fit for the research project. The top requirements for the ensembles would be 1) willingness to grant me access as a researcher to rehearsals, performances, and interviews and 2) openness to a collaborative concert with the other genre. In reality, the answers to the questions came through their booking manager, KT Gardner, rather than from the musicians.

themselves (See Appendix C). Her promises of their answers indeed proved true upon interacting with the musicians. In addition to the musicians of the ensembles, other people who helped provide a more complete picture of each musical culture were fans of that genre, as communicated in the post-concert survey.

In summation, the scope and results of this project have been guided largely by the field experience itself. Though a detailed plan was set up in advance, I, as a researcher, had to be flexible and nimble, ready and quick to respond to situations that arose organically. The project has maintained integrity by adhering to the ultimate purpose: increasing open mindedness and empathy between people of German and Mexican heritage in Central Texas through shared musical experiences. The event’s unique nature and successful results showed that similar events and studies are needed in this topic area.
Chapter IV: Project Results

Oktobinfest: An Atmosphere of Celebrating Diversity

The team at the Tobin Center did vastly more than just help me with the details of my research project. They internalized the central concept (empathy for those from diverse cultures) and created new ways to share illustrate that concept. I felt a deep gratitude and satisfaction that the Tobin Center believed in my central idea, took it to heart, and ran with it through implementing concepts of their own, which I saw unfolding all around me on the day of the event. These portions of the occasion outside my original scope included event visuals, vendors, and additional performers.

The event visuals added a professional and intentional atmosphere to the venue. The main area for the Oktobinfest event was the Will Naylor Smith River Walk Plaza, a garden and courtyard tucked against the back of the Tobin Center. When I first arrived at 10 a.m. on the day of the event, the sound crew was already busy setting up, and a large stage had been built. In addition, banners for the event were everywhere, and jumbotron video screen was scrolling through the main facts I had put together as key to the presentation. This provided an additional, inclusive way for attendees to absorb the information rather than just listening to the presentation. The plaza was filled with a sense of cultural magnitude, as all the logistics had been delivered with an elevated and artistic air. The logo for the event, as seen in Figure 2, was designed by the Creative Manager from the Marketing Department at the Tobin Center, Rigo Ortiz. He took the common German image of hops and combined it with the pink and yellow traditional Mexican colors for celebration.

Figure 2. Oktobinfest Logo
Beyond the main plaza, vendor tents and tables were set up to sell food, crafts, and more. Nineteen small business set up to participate in celebrating the shared history of German and Mexican culture. Participating vendors included ChickRocks, Mi Dulce Vida, Libelula Leather, Lucky Panther Soap Co., Familia Lorenzo Art, Galacticfish Productions, Nana’s Nuts, Neon Dragon, Mpwoven Fiberart, In The Weeds, LLC, Enchanted Needle Designs, Tim Olson, Quinto Punto Cardinal, Potters on the Creek, Micro Terra, I.M. Creating, The Dream Corner Shop, Manola and Maria, and Beaded Inspirations by Bianca. These vendors were chosen painstakingly by Mandie Sullivan of the Tobin Center. She told me she wanted to make sure they were the right fit to celebrate the theme of the day: diversity.

The last additional element to the event beyond my intended scope was the entertaining and heartwarming addition of more performances. The first storyteller, Tami Kai, involved the families of young children in the audience in a dramatic telling of the children’s book, Madlenka by Peter Sis, in which a little girl travels around the world to different cultures to share news of her loose tooth. The storyteller’s energy and fun props kicked off the event on the right note: many cultures connected through family, as seen in Figure 3. The Cavazoses Storytelling (Figure 4) duo presented their children’s book, Bein’ With You This Way by W. Nikola-Lisa through music. The book, sung by the performers, described various differences in people: light skin, dark skin, long legs short legs, thick arms, thin arms, brown eyes, blue eyes, straight hair, and curly hair. These differences were celebrated with a chorus of “Isn’t it beautiful, simply unusual, bein’ with you.
this way.” This musical presentation continued to set the tone for the event. A local school, Bonham Academy, had two groups perform: the Bonham Academy Ballet Folklorico (Figure 5) and the Bonham Academy Conjunto (Figures 6a and 6b). The Folklorico group, though a Latinx tradition, included students of a variety of ethnic groups, which demonstrates the local diversity, even within a specific Latinx dance tradition. The presence of the student conjunto groups gives insight into the multigenerational importance of the genre, which confirms the validity of using the conjunto genre as one of the main genres of this research. The Tuba Meisters (Figure 7) performed at the end of the event. Their unique line up featured performers from both German and Mexican heritages, and their repertoire list included songs and pieces from both Mexican and European cultures.

All of these performances, vendors, and visuals exemplified the driving force behind the event: the communal desire to unite within diversity. These events and experiences that happened before and after the main educational presentation and served to prepare and reinforce the audience’s senses of open-mindedness and empathy. The full slate of vendors and performers
communicated that the community was eager to participate in such an event; they embraced this opportunity to be part of building cultural bridges.

**Oktobinfest: Educational Concert**

The following section is a summary and analysis of the educational concert that consisted of a demonstration of German polka, Mexican conjunto, and a joint performance of the two, interspersed with an explanation of the historical ways in which the two genres and cultures were, and still are, connected. Local filmmaker Alejandro de Hoyos captured the entire educational concert on film, which can be accessed on YouTube\textsuperscript{107} by holding down CTRL and clicking \url{HERE}. The video is divided into the following segments:

- 0:00 - 4:00: Introduction
- 4:00 - 24:00: Traditional polka, Off the Grid
- 24:00 - 41:43: Traditional conjunto, Los Texmaniacs
- 41:43 - 47:00: Combined performance, Roll Out the Barrel, combining Off the Grid and Los Texmaniacs with Amy Beckman on clarinet
- 47:00 - end: Los Texmaniacs and Flaco Jimenez music concert

The first 47 minutes of the video is the educational presentation discussed in this paper.

The educational presentation started off with remarks from Vangie Flores, the chairwoman of the Tobin Center’s Board of Directors. She proclaimed, “Today is a celebration of two distinct yet connected cultural heritages that make our city, our region, the amazing place that it is. The fusion of Mexican and German culture has created a distinct community in the border region between Texas and Mexico.” After she introduced me, I explained the heart and

reasoning behind this project: my biculturalism stemming from growing up in San Antonio and my heart to ease ethnic and racial tensions through shared musical experiences.

The group called Off the Grid (Figure 8), the event’s featured polka band, is from South Austin, though band leader and accordionist Joe Klaus grew up in San Antonio. His reminiscences of biculturalism provided a wonderful framework for their performance that fit well with the educational presentation. He told the crowd, “My mom’s Mexican and my dad’s German, so I can identify with the bicultural diversity of what the event is all about today.” In between upbeat, happy polkas, he told of going to local dance halls for various social events and how the music “brought families together as a group and there were never any barriers between the Hispanics and the Germans and everybody just got along and drank beer.” The educational presentation of this portion of the concert had two main focuses: the long lasting institutions that the Germans established, particularly the Texas Dance Halls, and the values that early Mexican and German Texans shared, which included anti-slavery beliefs, family values, and a love of community dancing.

Off The Grid’s playlist for this event included a polka medley of songs common at German or Polish weddings, the Harmonica Express, Snow Waltz, and the Traditional Austrian Wedding March. This snapshot of traditional polka music gave insight into the kind of atmosphere such music would provide. Even removed from the dance halls and traditions of their ancestors, modern attendees of the event broke into spontaneous dancing throughout the polka

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108 De Hoyos, “Oktobinfest Presentation 2021.”

109 Ibid.
music. From an older couple gliding through practiced waltz steps (Figure 9) to parents turning toddlers in circles, this polka demonstration showed how easily this music inspires dance.

The polka music, dancing audience, and playful attitude of the band contributed to an overall celebratory atmosphere. The Facebook description of Oktobinfest read that the Tobin Center was “throwing a party,” and the polka group delivered on that promise. Whether it was Joe Klaus shouting, “Where’s the party table?,” the drummer singing in so-called Polish (only used the syllable “la”), or the energetic shouting of the traditional German toast to health, “Ziggy Zaggy Ziggy Zaggy; Oi, oi, oi!,” the merry atmosphere celebrated the historical facts and helped them come to life.

The next section of the performance was a highlight of traditional conjunto, presented by Max Baca on bajo sexto and Josh Baca on accordion of Los Texmaniacs (Figure 10). This group is nationally renowned for preserving and presenting the historical version of conjunto. As Max put it, “I like the original way it was done back then, the real deal.” They have presented for and recorded with the Smithsonian many times, and Max’s bajo sexto was recently immortalized with its own display in the

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110 De Hoyos, “Oktobinfest Presentation 2021.”
Smithsonian National History Museum (Figure 11).¹¹¹ These qualifications, along with their familial and professional heritage with the original players of conjunto music, made Los Texmaniacs the quintessential group for this portion of the presentation.

Max explained the accordion’s connection between conjunto and polka and the difference when played with each genre while asking Joe Klaus and Max Baca to demonstrate as he described. He showed the difference between Joe’s chromatic accordion and Josh’s button accordion. The chromatic accordion, more traditionally played in polka music, plays the same note on push and pull, and the left-hand plays chord accompaniments. The button accordion, more traditionally played in conjunto music, plays a different note on push and pull, like a harmonica plays a different note with exhaling and inhaling. Each row of buttons acts as a different harmonica in a different key. In addition, in the conjunto style, the accordion just plays the melody, and the bajo sexto takes the place of the left-hand accordion accompaniment. The bajo sexto is a twelve-string instrument played like a guitar. It includes six strings identical to the acoustic guitar and the other six strings are for bass notes. Max concluded, “Therefore, we created our own style and our own sound and we called it ‘Tex Mex.’” He pointed to the accordion, saying, “That’s the Tex,” and pointed to the bajo sexto, “And this is the Mex.”

Max also told the history of how the Mexican Texans adopted the accordion and polka style from the Germans, but with a personal perspective. He said that Narciso Martinez, widely known as the father of conjunto music,¹¹² directly influenced Santiago Jimenez, and that these two were among the first to hear the Germans and adopt their instrument and make their style

into their own. Santiago Jimenez was Flaco Jimenez’ father, Flaco Jimenez was one of Max’s own legendary influences as well as collaborators, including sharing the stage with him later in the day at Oktobinfest. By outlining this musical ancestry, Max Baca showed how he has inherited the mantle of traditional conjunto.

Max concluded his presentation on the historical conjunto by explaining that this conjunto music was the main entertainment for migrant farm workers. He said that at the end of a week of work, they would have a community dance to relax and celebrate. They played various dance beats, such as the redova El Porrón (The Slow Mover) and the chotís Labios de Coral (Lips of Coral). The audience showed their appreciation by shouting “Andele” at the ends of songs, performing gritos (exclamations during a song to show support), and by dancing during the songs (Figure 12), as had occurred with the polka group. Overall, the conjunto portion of the concert continued the celebratory, educational tone that the polka portion started with.

As exciting as it was to hear and experience both groups separately, the height of the event came during the last song, when both groups, and myself on clarinet, came together (Figure 13). We decided to do a song that both groups knew and possibly the most famous polka song, “Beer Barrel Polka.” Max described the combination as “a beautiful thing, to be able to mix cultures together… We’ll just make a big caldo (soup) over here, man.” The
textures of all of the instruments coming together created an impressive moment, from the start of the major descending scale of the introduction. The audience responded in the most modern, positive way, by many people having their phones out and recording. The chorus of this song goes, “Roll out the barrel, we'll have a barrel of fun; roll out the barrel, we've got the blues on the run.” Though the lyrics were not sung in this instrumental version, the sentiment of joyful partying and unity was communicated through this joint performance. In combining these separate yet connected cultures, something new was made, a fusion that merits its own allotment of admiration. Joe Klaus knew this fusion well, as he grew up on “enchiladas and sauerkraut, schnitzel in mole sauce, tamales and red cabbage.” It seems as though this musical fusion was appetizing in the same new and intriguing way that these culinary fusions of his childhood were. After the last song, I concluded the educational concert by stating, “We hope that this performance has inspired all of you to dig a little deeper into your own heritage and feel more empathy and open-mindedness to those around you who might have a different heritage.” At this point, I also implored the audience to participate in the study by scanning the QR codes around the event to fill out the post-concert survey.

**Genre Profiles: Polka vs. Conjunto**

The following chart (Figure 14) constructs a cultural profile that compares the separate polka and conjunto genres as heard in the Oktobinfest event.

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114 De Hoyos, “Oktobinfest Presentation 2021.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Profile Element</th>
<th>German Polka Performance (Off the Grid)</th>
<th>Mexican Conjunto Performance (Los Texmaniacs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instrumentation</td>
<td>Piano accordion, Zendrum, electric guitar</td>
<td>Button accordion, bajo sexto, bass guitar, drum set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percussion Timbre</td>
<td>Dynamically static, clean-sounding, electronic</td>
<td>Dynamically changing, resonant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percussion Musical Role</td>
<td>Set meter, keep tempo, emphasize accented notes with cymbals</td>
<td>Set meter, keep tempo, emphasize accented notes with cymbals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accordion Timbre</td>
<td>Loud dynamics, thick texture, echoey sound at ends of phrases</td>
<td>Loud dynamics, thin texture, pure sounding notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accordion Musical Role</td>
<td>Right hand melody; left hand chord accompaniment that reinforces meter.</td>
<td>Right hand melody, some chords</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>String Instrument Timbre</td>
<td>Soft dynamics, struggled to hear it over the accordion and Zendrum</td>
<td>Bajo sexto: resonant, clear notes, dynamically present but not overpowering Bass guitar: more felt rather than distinctly heard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Profile Element [continued]</td>
<td>German Polka Performance (Off the Grid) [continued]</td>
<td>Mexican Conjunto Performance (Los Texmaniacs) [continued]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>String Instrument Role</td>
<td>Reinforces meter and chordal structure with accompaniment patterns</td>
<td>Bajo sexto: switches between accompaniment and mirroring melody, also improvises Bass guitar: reinforce chordal and metric structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meter</td>
<td>Up tempo duple on all except Snow Waltz; Snow Waltz was a medium tempo triple meter</td>
<td>Up tempo duple; medium tempo triple; mixed meter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythmic Patterns</td>
<td>Pick up notes, contrast between syncopated and sustained sections; endings included a ritardando or a stinger, depending on style</td>
<td>Pick up notes; many sixteenth note passages; accents on off beats during fast note runs with cymbals and bajo sexto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonality</td>
<td>All major</td>
<td>All major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melodic Patterns</td>
<td>Highly ornamented (turns, trills, glissandi, arpeggiating), particularly on repeated sections; melodies often include sequences; repetitive notes on suspended notes before resolution</td>
<td>Highly ornamented (turns, trills, arpeggiating); changing octaves for repeating sections; repetitive notes on tonic that alternate with ascending notes of major scale; some chords on phrase endings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form</td>
<td>Verse-Chorus, though few words were actually sung</td>
<td>Verse-Chorus, though few words were actually sung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Happy mood, drinking beer to celebrate, weddings, dancing</td>
<td>Happy mood, drinking beer to celebrate, social events, dancing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal Exclamations</td>
<td>“Down the ree, down the rye, down the ree, rahahahahahahaha” “Ziggy zaggy, Ziggy zaggy, oi oi oi” repeated three times</td>
<td>“Prost” borrowing the German “cheers” “Andele” said by singer and audience members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sang “la la la etc.” as “Polish” lyrics
Shouted “woo” at the end of some songs
“Salud” borrowing the Mexican “cheers”
Gritos: exclamations in the middle of a song to add excitement

| Performance Dress | Liederhosen with traditional German hats | All black: Max Baca with a western shirt and cowboy hat and Josh Baca with a black polo and bowler hat. |

The main similarities between the two genres based on this data were the tonality, melodic patterns, form, content, percussion musical role, and vocal exclamations. The tonality of both genres was major throughout all the example songs, and the melodies followed similar patterns that relied heavily on ornamentation. The form and content of these songs are completely similar, as they are based on the same themes of dancing at social events and celebrating. The common occurrence of vocal exclamations is interesting to find, as both served as ways to include the audience in the performance. These core elements being extremely consistent within both genres supports the idea that some songs in each genre are the same song, but just in a different style. As both genres often play their own versions of “Beer Barrel Polka” as evidenced by the finale, there are a couple of other songs that cross genres and cultures: La Paloma Blanca (The White Dove) and En el Cielo No Hay Cerveza (In Heaven There is No Beer). Whether the genre is conjunto or polka relies on the other musical elements not discussed yet.

The elements that were somewhat similar included meter, accordion musical role, and rhythmic patterns. While all the songs performed by Off the Grid were in either simple duple or simple triple, Los Texmaniacs had one song in mixed meter. In the polka tradition, the accordion has both the melody and an accompaniment role, yet in conjunto, the accordion is mainly melody as the left-hand accompaniment is abandoned for the bajo sexto to take over. The rhythmic patterns in the conjunto examples were a little more syncopated and accented, whereas the
rhythmic patterns in the polka examples tended to have more contrast between sections of sustained notes and sections of syncopation. These slightly different cultural elements help contribute to the details that define each genre.

The elements that were completely different were performance dress, string instrument role, string instrument timbre, percussion timbre, and instrumentation. The performance dress for Off the Grid, as other standard polka groups, is lederhosen, leather culottes with suspenders. Originally, this clothing was meant “as work wear for peasants” in the eighteenth century, but it has now evolved into a universal symbol of traditional German culture. The performance dress for Los Texmaniacs was an all-black combination: Max Baca wore a western shirt and cowboy hat, and Josh Baca wore a black polo and bowler hat. Though these clothing choices are overtly quite different, they are all tied in some way to the working-class roots of both genres of music.

The percussion timbre was extremely different from both groups because in Off the Grid, the drummer was playing a Zendrum, a cutting-edge type of electronic drum set some musicians are using for “its visual possibilities on the concert stage as well as for the unlimited array of sounds it [makes] available to drummers and percussionists.” This visual and aural anomaly sounded and looked much different than the more traditional drum set used by Los Texmaniacs. The most impactful and deciding difference between the two genres was the choice and use of string instruments. In Off the Grid, the guitar was barely heard and used for harmonic and metric back up. In Los Texmaniacs, the bajo sexto was so versatile that it can’t be described using one role. The bajo sexto as wielded by Max Baca easily and frequently switched between accompaniment


and melody and improvised during both. Max has been quoted as referring to the bajo sexto as “the grizzly bear of guitars,” and it is clear from this performance that he has trained that bear to dance.

*Creativity: Improvisation and Genre Evolution*

One common musical element evident in both their performances and in private interviews is their penchant for improvisation. In Max Baca’s book he describes, “Music expresses feeling. How can you chart out what someone is feeling? You can’t do it. You can play with a metronome, and put the right notes in the right spots, but it’s not going to have a feel. It’s just going to be mechanical.” Joe Klaus expresses a similar sentiment in his Oktobinfest interview, “I play from the heart, and that’s my expression through the music. The band guys will tell you, ‘He never plays anything the same way twice,’ and that’s because I feel the music different each time I play it.” The lively feeling of music in the moment is a crucial piece for both polka and conjunto. When playing traditional music, it could be easy to simply recreate previous performances. Yet these two groups are examples of preserving historical traditions while still implementing personal creativity.

These two musicians not only play traditional music with a flair of improvisation, but they have also stretched the boundaries of their own genres through fusion with other genres. In his book, Max Baca describes being influenced by many different types of music, and his hero

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119 De Hoyos, “Oktobinfest Interviews.”
and musical inspiration Flaco Jimenez filled his career with ground-breaking conjunto fusions with rock, jazz, and other genres.\textsuperscript{120} At the Oktobinfest concert after the educational performance, Los Texmaniacs played a set of their own current music, and there were many moments of genre crossing and fusion, from references to rock tunes to Cajun music. Similarly, Off the Grid has made their mark in the polka scene by also fusing traditional polka with other genres. They are known as “not your grandfather’s polka band.”\textsuperscript{121} Yes, they would play the classic polkas and knew all the traditions, but they put their own twist on it. Mike Campasa, the group’s drummer, describes his favorite song of theirs morphs a song by the Rolling Stones called “Paint It Black into our own polka.”\textsuperscript{122} Both of these groups that are grounded in a traditional, historical genre have evolved to fuse with other popular genres and have therefore demonstrated some of the next stages in the genre’s evolution.

Perhaps one of the reasons for the inherent nature of improvisation in these two groups is that conjunto and polka are, at their core, music for dancing. The music is supposed to get people involved, to inspire foot tapping, twirling, and lively social interactions. These genres are not meant to be stunning replicas of the composer’s detailed notation to be enjoyed by the elite sitting in rows. This music lives and breathes; it reflects the dynamic emotions of the working class as they strive to seize opportunities and celebrate what they have worked for. Mike Campasas expresses this essential part of their music when he describes how small children react to their music. He says the kids “are wiggling and dancing because they haven’t been taught yet

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\textsuperscript{120} De Hoyos, “Oktobinfest Interviews.”
\textsuperscript{121} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{122} Ibid.
\end{flushright}
not to do that. They just feel it naturally. It’s so awesome.”

Letting the dance and the music flow naturally is the heart of these interrelated and coexisting music cultures.

**Audience Survey Results**

The goal of this study was not only to observe and analyze conjunto and polka as music cultures, but to find a way to measure the effect of the concert and educational presentation on the audience. The method devised to do so was an online survey, made available to anyone at the event through a scannable QR code displayed on several signs. The survey started by asking which language the participant would like to complete the survey with two choices: Spanish or English. Then the survey proceeded to a question of consent to participate which contained the waiver required by the Institutional Review Board of Liberty University. The participant had to select Yes to move on to the next stage. If the participant selected No, the survey would end immediately. The next section contained the five main research questions:

1) Do you identify more with the German music group or the Mexican music group?
2) Before this concert, did you know that the two groups were historically connected?
3) What did you learn about their connections today?
4) How did you feel about the other group before this concert?
5) How do you feel about the other group after this concert?

The purposes of questions 1, 2, and 4 were to ascertain a respondent’s cultural identity, previous knowledge base, and previous feelings towards a different cultural group, while the purpose of questions 3 and 5 was to see how the educational concert had affected the respondent. The survey ended with a question asking if they had finished all their questions.

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123 De Hoyos, “Oktobinfest Interviews.”
Out of fifty-three respondents, only thirty-three of the surveys are valid for the research. Four of the respondents were sample surveys that I used to test the functionality of the survey. I tested the Spanish and English versions twice: once after initially creating the survey and again on the day of the event. Three of the respondents were disqualified, meaning that they answered No to the Consent Waiver question. There were thirteen incomplete surveys, meaning that respondents started the survey but did not finish it.

The survey had two main limitations: incomplete surveys and lack of incentives. The large percentage of incomplete surveys may indicate that many more people intended to complete the survey, but got distracted, had trouble filling out the survey, or had another reason for abandoning it. The online survey, while simple to technologically savvy individuals, may have been beyond the reach of some of the attendees of the concert. This limitation of the survey should be kept in mind for future studies. Perhaps creating other avenues of participating in the survey, such as a handwritten response, someone recording audio responses, or someone available to help with accessibility to the online survey would have provided more inclusivity to gather more responses. In addition, it would have been helpful to have an incentive for completing the survey amidst such a busy and engaging event. Texas law prohibits drawings or raffles, so incentives would have to be for every respondent. Again, these are considerations for future studies to contemplate.

Despite these survey limitations, thirty-three valid responses were collected providing considerable material for analysis. The following section explores the survey results (see Appendix D for raw survey data). Questions one, two, and three are analyzed individually, and then questions four and five are combined and analyzed based on the identity of the respondent.
1) Do you identify more with the German music group or the Mexican music group?

Figure 15 demonstrates the cultural heritage categories addressed in this study. The purpose of phrasing this question as a binary was to identify a respondent’s cultural association between the two music groups featured in the study. On the outside, German and Mexican groups may seem starkly different, so it is initially easy for most people to identify with one or the other. Forty six percent of respondents identified more with the Mexican group, and thirty three percent identified more with the German group. One possible reason for the largest group identifying with the Mexican group could be that Los Texmaniacs and Flaco Jimenez have quite a bit more fame and a larger following than Off the Grid. Conversely, the number of people associating strongly with German culture has decreased as assimilation and anglicization have increased. Twelve percent of the respondents stated that they identified with neither group. The smallest group was those who identified with both, which was nine percent. When adding
together those who identified with German, Mexican, or both, it is obvious that eighty-eight percent of respondents culturally resonated with the groups represented in the event. Since the purpose of the study was to build bridges between polar groups, these eighty-eight percent are the main focus of the study.

2) Before this concert, did you know that the two groups were historically connected?

![Respondents Prior Knowledge Chart](image)

Figure 16. Respondents Prior Knowledge Chart

Answers to this question were sorted on a yes or no basis as shown in Figure 16. If the respondent put yes at all, they were classified under the Yes category for this question, even if they wrote that they learned more during this event because that portion of their answer would be captured in a following question. This question shows that thirty-nine percent of respondents, over a third, did not know anything about the connections between the music and cultures of Mexicans and Germans in Central Texas. If knowing about the historical connections is important to increasing empathy and open-mindedness, as this research purports, then thirty-nine percent is a urgently high number of people to be missing this information. If this percentage is reflective of the larger society, this number shows that there is much room for education in this
area so that empathy and open-mindedness will increase overall. Most likely people who are not actively seeking out such an event as this are even less aware of the historical connections, which strengthens the previously mentioned educational imperative.

3) What did you learn about their connections today?

![Figure 17. Word Cloud Chart](image)

Figure 17 is a word cloud generated by counting the frequency of words used in the responses to this question. The larger the word is, the more frequently it was used in the responses. Overall, people learned the most about the depth of the connection between the two genres through the accordion, and people were most surprised to learn of the anti-slavery connection. Words that did not register as the same but hold comparable connotations include common, together, similar, intermixed, connected, contributed, and influenced. These words connote that people learned about and experienced the deep connection between the two musical and historical cultures.
4) & 5) How did you feel about the other group before and after this concert?

German Heritage

The data in Figure 18 is pulled from the respondents who identified strongly with the German group. “Steady Positive” means that the before and after questions were both answered in similarly tiered positive ways. An example of “Steady Positive” is Respondent 33, who answered, “Liked them too,” for the before question and “Still like them both” for the after question. “Increased Positive” means that the before question was responded to positively, and the after question had a noticeable increase in positivity, including desiring to learn more. An example of “Increased Positive” is Respondent 48, who answered, “I have enjoyed the culture and the music,” for the before question and, “I have more appreciation for it,” for the after question. Noteworthy insights from this data include that one hundred percent of the German heritage respondents viewed the Mexican music culture in a positive light. The thirty six percent of German heritage respondents who increased in their positivity indicate that the educational concert experience influenced a change in them. The long-term hope for this snapshot of
increased positivity is that these people will demonstrate increased empathy and open-mindedness towards people they meet who are of Mexican heritage.

4) & 5) How did you feel about the other group before and after this concert?

Mexican Heritage

The data in Figure 19 is pulled from the group that strongly identified with Mexican heritage. The categories of “Steady Positive” and “Increased Positive” mean the same thing as described before, but this graph has a new category: “Negative to Positive.” This means that respondents actually voiced negativity towards the German heritage in the before question but changed to a positive view as a result of the educational concert. This result is extremely important in researching how to decrease negativity and conflict between these two cultural groups in Texas. The main reasons for the transformation that these respondents wrote about was community bonding and learning that German settlers were anti-slavery. Adding the “Negative to Positive” and “Increased Positive” categories together shows the forty three percent, nearly half, of the Mexican heritage respondents changed their perspectives towards the German culture.
as a result of the educational concert. The percentage of people who increased their positivity instead of staying the same is seven percent higher for the Mexican heritage group than for the German heritage group. This number is important to note for future studies to see if the data correlates to form a trend.

4) & 5) How did you feel about the other group before and after this concert?

Both or Neither Heritage

![Both or Neither Heritage Chart](image)

The graph shown in Figure 20 introduces another category of responses: “Neutral to Neutral.” These responses did not have a positive or negative tone; they felt indecisive feelings about either group, either before or after. The only people to respond with this neutrality were the people who identified with either both or neither of the heritage groups. It is likely that the absence of a strong association with one of the groups contributed to their ambivalent responses.

As stated before, the main purpose of this research is to bridge the cultural gap between those who identify strongly with one culture or the other, so this data is more on the fringe for this particular study.
Overall, the survey data shows that the educational concert did have its intended effect on the people who chose to and were able to answer the survey. This data is likely a microcosm of what would have been revealed if everyone in attendance had submitted a response, but only repetitions of similar studies will prove, alter, or disprove that theory. Hopefully, future studies will decrease the limitations of the survey and continue the important work of educating the community on the important topic of the historical connections between German and Hispanic music cultures.
Chapter V: Conclusion

On the whole, this study has accomplished what it set out to research, test, and prove. The literature review conclusively demonstrated a strong historical connection between the Germans and Mexicans in the nineteenth century, particularly in their music style, communal value of dancing, and their anti-slavery politics. The research has proven that the musical connections of polka and conjunto continue to this day, as the genre of conjunto, also known as Tex-Mex or Tejano, is descended from the polka genre and became its own when the bajo sexto replaced the left-hand accompaniment of the accordion. Furthermore, dance halls are still symbols of community gatherings, and traditional Mexican and German dances have been passed down through these institutions through generations.

Though these connections are strong and undeniable, they are also widely unknown to the public at large. While knowledge ranges from absolute ignorance, to being somewhat aware, to knowing in depth, this study shows that when people are educated about the historical and current connections between German and Mexican music cultures, their perspective of the other cultural group increases in positivity. This positivity will lead to appreciation, then to understanding, and then to empathy and open-mindedness. The number of people in the survey that did not know about the connections is probably smaller than those of the population at large, for the survey respondents actively sought out an event where they knew both cultures were being celebrated. Therefore, the need for education on this subject, especially in the geographical area of Central Texas, is high. This narrative is especially important to communicate to those who are new or transient in the area. If people who move to this area are aware of the deep historical friendship across cultures, it may help them join in that narrative of unity instead of
defaulting to an attitude of othering. Education on this topic could help ease tensions regarding immigration in this border region by increasing empathy and open-mindedness.

During the concert, an unforeseen issue threatened to bring the educational presentation to a crashing halt. After the first conjunto song, Josh Baca, the conjunto accordion player, communicated to those on stage that the glue on his accordion’s buttons were melting in the heat of the South Texas sun. While he tried to fix the issue, Max Baca asked Off the Grid to play a few more tunes. While this snafu was mainly cut out of the recording due to editing by the videographer and may have caused some confusion in the flow of the event, I think it speaks to the heart of the whole project: kindness towards those who are different. In the moment where Off the Grid stepped in to cover for Los Texmaniacs while they found a different instrument for Josh Baca to play, the illusion of us versus them disappeared and it became clear that all the musicians were on the same team. To those watching, it became an object lesson: when someone’s accordion buttons are melting off, step in and do what you can to help! In addition to one group helping the other in this example, the two groups created an atmosphere of positivity and appreciation by recognizing each other, praising each other, and participating in the vocal exclamations. The two different groups performing could have had a separatist mindset, but they were clearly for each other, and this appreciative and supportive attitude was contagious to the audience.

The main goal of the concert was to increase empathy and open-mindedness between the two cultural groups. However, measuring lasting empathy and open-mindedness goes beyond the ability of the survey. The survey and the recording of the event demonstrates an environment of understanding and appreciation. Within these circumstances, there was an opportunity for empathy to develop. The effects of cross-cultural musical sharing on empathy is an area that has
not been thoroughly researched, but this project contributes to that growing body of insights and knowledge.

Another issue that is worthy of note is the idea that both Germans and Mexicans in the 1800s were largely anti-slavery. This fact was the most surprising information learned in the survey and proved to be the point of the most dramatic attitude change. I want to delve into, for a moment, why this fact about German settlers was surprising to some of Mexican heritage. Throughout the generations, it is apparent that most German settlers anglicized and assimilated their culture (as described in the literature review) and as a result adopted pro-slavery views. Pointing out this historical transition is an opportunity for current German heritage people to return to their roots as advocates for black, Latinx, and other marginalized people. Pointing out this historical transition also invites the conversation with current Mexican heritage people to explore how the pressure to anglicize and assimilate has affected the way they themselves view and treat black people or even recent Mexican immigrants. This conversation about racism may seem out of line with the scope of this research, but, truly, it is central, for the point of this research is to increase empathy and open-mindedness between disparate people.

In conclusion, this research opens many doors to future possibilities. Those could be future events like Oktobinfest, such as Pachanga de San Patricio hosted by the Tobin Center that celebrates the Irish and Mexican cultural connection around St. Patrick’s Day. Another possibility could be finding new ways to disseminate this research to the general public or presenting these findings through academic articles or conventions. Oktobinfest of 2021 was a strong starting point, and it is exciting to think of the future possibilities. In regard to the potential relationship between German and Mexican heritage Texans, I concur with what Respondent 46 said, “We could be incredible friends.”
Appendices

Appendix A: Oktobinfest Advertisements

From https://www.tobincenter.org/box-office/2021-10/oktobinfest

ABOUT THE SHOW

WILL NAYLOR SMITH RIVER WALK PLAZA
OCT 30, 2:00 PM

Oktobinfest is an exploration and celebration of the cultural blend that makes San Antonio great, and it’s free!

On October 30th, 2021, 2pm - 7pm the Tobin Center for the Performing Arts is throwing a party featuring a polka and conjunto presentation by Los Texmaniacs with Flaco Jimenez featuring Off The Grid! The musicians, along with music teacher and ethnomusicologist Amy Beckman, will present an informative and exciting program sure to thrill all ages at 4pm, with additional pop up performances throughout the day.

The event also features crafts, art and food that highlights the cultural richness of our region, resulting in a collaborative and educational conversation between Mexican conjunto and German polka that communicates our historical connections and celebrates diversity of our city.

Texas is as diverse as its population! The Tobin Center celebrates San Antonio’s history and its own unique style. Our state is the birthplace of conjunto, a mix of traditional Mexican music and European polkas. When Texas-born Tejanos adopted German dance and musical styles, they created a musical genre that reflects the cultural heritage of both communities.

Key to this connection is the accordion. Conjunto evolved into Tejano music, which incorporates brass and electronic music, bringing fame to such performers as Flaco Jimenez, Oscar Martinez, and Selena.

Are you interested in participating in the Maker’s Market as a vendor?
Click here to apply!
Deadline to apply is September 23rd
From https://www.facebook.com/events/tobin-center-for-the-performing-arts/oktobinfest/1069781570496567/

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When Texas-born Tejanos adopted German dance and musical styles, they created a musical genre that reflects the cultural heritage of both communities.

Key to this connection is the accordion. Conjunto evolved into Tejano music, which incorporates brass and electronic music, bringing fame to such performers as Flaco Jimenez, Oscar Martinez, and Selena. See less

Music & Audio
Representative from Tobin Center:

Today is a celebration of two distinct yet connected cultural heritages that make our city, our region, the amazing place that it is. The fusion of Mexican and German culture has created a distinct community in the border region between Texas and Mexico. This event is a community collaboration inspired by the academic research of local music teacher and ethnomusicologist, Ms. Amy Beckman, for her master’s thesis from Liberty University.

Please welcome, Amy Beckman.

Amy: Hello, I am Amy Beckman. I was born and raised in San Antonio and have taught elementary music here in the heart of San Antonio for close to ten years. My cultural identity is a combination of German heritage and Hispanic customs of this city. This bi-culturalism led me on my academic research journey, which investigates the historical connections between German and Mexican music. We start out with a highlight of the German polka. Please welcome the band Off the Grid!

Song – medley of polkas

Joe: Welcome, this is who we are

Amy: Germans were “the largest influx of Europeans into the Lone Star State during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.” Some of the longest lasting contributions of Germans to Texas music history are the institutions that were established, including singing societies, dance halls, music publishing companies, and more.

Song – a traditional German song – Harmonica Express – the Happy Polka

Amy: German polka has many organizations dedicated to its preservation and performance, and there is “a stretch of highway I-10 between Houston and San Antonio known as ‘Polka Road.’”

Song – Waltz

Amy: Texas Dance Halls, founded by mostly German settlers, have been host to musicians from largely German and Mexican genres, these performances becoming central to the rural communities. Public dancing helped build immigrant communities and became a symbol of their cultural identities.

Song – Traditional Wedding March - Bavarian

Joe: [anecdote about going to different types of weddings as a child] The dancing and playing of both conjunto and polka music has always been a family-based event, with traditions and skills being passed on from one generation to another. The music is a chance to come together and strengthen the community. [personal connection to both cultures from Joe]

Amy:
Tejanos, or Texans of Mexican descent, combined the older traditions of their native ancestors with those of other ethnic communities to create a distinct Texas Mexican musical style. One prime example of this is the conjunto genre. Speaking of conjunto, it is my pleasure to welcome Grammy Award winning, Smithsonian recording, home grown in San Antone --- Los Texmaniacs!

Song – Simple polka with full ensemble

Max: Who we are, Germans brought up the button accordion, compare the types of accordion, this is what it sounded like back then

Max: History of the bajo

Song – polka with just bajo and accordion

Max: later we incorporated the upright bass

Song – redova/waltz/schottise

Amy: The musical core combination of bajo sexto and accordion represents the merging of two distinct music cultures that have come to symbolize the border life experience. It is our hope that learning about these historical connections creates empathy and open-mindedness among those who identify with either musical genre. As a symbol of this unity, we will now have both groups perform together.

Collaboration – Beer Barrel Polka in the Key of G – third part, roll out the barrel add clarinet on the third one Key change into C for third part, back to beginning and all play

Amy: We hope that this performance has inspired you to dig a little deeper into your own heritage and feel more empathy and open-mindedness to those around you. Before I turn it back over to Los Texmaniacs, I have one important request. Please consider filling out the post-concert survey. This survey is crucial to my research, and it is available in English and Spanish. All you have to do is scan the QR code with your phone. Thank you!
Appendix C: Ensemble Consent Signatures

Your Consent
By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the researcher using the information provided above.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

☒ The researcher has my permission to quote me as part of my participation in this study.

☒ The researcher has my permission to audio-record/video-record/photograph me as part of my participation in this study.

KT Gardner on behalf of
Los Texmaniacs & Flaco Jimenez

Printed Subject Name

Signature & Date

10/28/2021

Your Consent
By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the researcher using the information provided above.

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☒ The researcher has my permission to audio-record/video-record/photograph me as part of my participation in this study.

KT Gardner on behalf of
Off The Grid

Printed Subject Name

Signature & Date

10/28/2021
Appendix D: Raw Survey Data

Disqualified Surveys: Respondents 1, 8, 42; total of 3

Sample Surveys: 2, 3, 5, 6; total of 4

Incomplete Surveys: 4, 7, 10, 11, 16, 19, 20, 25, 30, 37, 49, 51, 53; total of 13

Complete Surveys: all other numbers, see below; total of 33

1) Do you identify more with the German music group or the Mexican music group?

2) Before this concert, did you know that the two groups were historically connected?

3) What did you learn about their connections today?

4) How did you feel about the other group before this concert?

5) How do you feel about the other group after this concert?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent #</th>
<th>Question 1</th>
<th>Question 2</th>
<th>Question 3</th>
<th>Question 4</th>
<th>Question 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># 9</td>
<td>Mexican</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>They are cool</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 12</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>That accordion is dope</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 13</td>
<td>Mexican</td>
<td>I did not</td>
<td>I learned they are connected through instruments</td>
<td>I liked both but did not know much about either</td>
<td>I want to keep learning more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 14</td>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>No, I did not</td>
<td>How the accordion was used in both styles that contributed to conjunto</td>
<td>I had no feelings about either group but it's cool to see the connections and learning more about the history of the style</td>
<td>:D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 15</td>
<td>Mexican</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>How the bajo sexto helped to connect the keyboard accordion to the button accordion</td>
<td>It was great!</td>
<td>Great!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 17</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>They these two cultures</td>
<td>I enjoyed it, but didn’t know the</td>
<td>Excited to learn about the impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent #18</td>
<td>About equal</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Influences on each other created a new and unique genre of music</td>
<td>History or origin of it.</td>
<td>And close association to my culture.</td>
</tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Respondent #21 | German | Came here in 1972 when I was first introduced to the two culture music's together | How the two Strattera Stoddard started with the German then the Hispanic came together | I liked them already | Equally great. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent #22</th>
<th>Mexican</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>The music is connected by an instrument</th>
<th>Great music.</th>
<th>Also, great music.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent #23</th>
<th>Mexican</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Very similar</th>
<th>Great musicians</th>
<th>Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent #24</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Very little</th>
<th>I did not pay attention to them</th>
<th>I will not pay attention to them still</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Respondent #26 | Neither | No | Historically the cultures grew up side by side | Neutral | Neutral |

| Respondent #27 | Mexican | Yes | I learned the difference between the diatonic and keyboard accordion. | Unfamiliar but desiring to learn more about them. |

| Respondent #28 | Mexican | Yes | Accordion connection | Loved both! | Loved both |

| Respondent #29 | Mexican | No | They are historic, working class, and anti-slavery | I had heard them both and enjoyed both. | It didn't change my view since I like both. |

| Respondent #31 | Mexican | Yes | Nada | I dislike the fact that both the accordion and the drummer we're playing electronic instruments!! | I love Los Texmaniacs and Flaco Jimenez!!! |

80
<p>| Respondent #32 | Neither | Yes | Both were Anti slavery | Fine | Electronic drums and electronic accordion for a German polka band that's freaking ridiculous… LAME!!! |
| Respondent #33 | German | No | They were harmonious | Liked them too | Fine | Still like them both |
| Respondent #34 | Mexican | Absolutely. Love German accordion music too. | A bit more about history, accordions, and slavery objections! | I thought they supported slavery and had some negativity about their presence in Texas. | Still like them both | Warmer |
| Respondent #35 | Mexicana | No, no lo sabia | La influencia de los instrumentos y la evolucion de sus sonidos | Fue algo diferente y me sorprendio mucho los instrumentos que tocaron | Creo que comprendo much mas su influencia |
| Respondent #36 | Mexican music group | Yes | Musical collaborations between the two groups *specific to the San Antonio area. As a fan of Banda Musica common in Mexico I had learned previously the connections to German music from the 18th and 19th centuries. | Interested but unaware of certain specific characteristics of the music. Aware that many German immigrants came to this area of Texas and northern Mexico. | Same as before. Interested in the music and its influence on conjunto and Banda music. |
| Respondent #38 | German | Yes | All is interrelated | Love the mix. Reason we moved here | Love them all |
| Respondent #39 | German | No | The cultures bonded through music. | I liked it a lot. | I liked it. |
| Respondent #40 | German | Yes | I learned something about how and when those things | I looked forward to seeing them. Flaco Jimenez was a particular draw. | I liked them, and remembered we had seen them at Beethoven Manichord |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent #41</th>
<th>Mexican</th>
<th>Yea</th>
<th>They sound the same</th>
<th>They were great</th>
<th>Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondent #43</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Music and movement connect people in different cultures</td>
<td>Mostly aware but not familiar</td>
<td>Want to listen more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent #44</td>
<td>Mexican</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>The similarities and the cultural significances</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Interested in the historical community in SA and Texas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent #45</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>I learned how German immigrants influenced Hispanic music and music in Texas as a whole</td>
<td>I have lived here for many years and have gained a love and respect for the Hispanic culture and music</td>
<td>I have a greater love for them, knowing my heritage is incorporated with them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent #46</td>
<td>Both equally, German bloodline, grew up in Mexican culture</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Similar history, Similar instruments</td>
<td>I feel like they would naturally collide</td>
<td>We could be incredible friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent #47</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>The intermixing of cultures through social interactions. While Anglos and Mexicans have intermixed and married since the first Anglo arrival, I did not know the larger scale they intermixed socially (public dances) beyond commercial interaction.</td>
<td>Grew up in California around all races and ethnicities so I was indifferent in the sense that I had no opinion of other cultures. When I moved to Texas, I continued to be indifferent - aside from discovering Tejano and Conjunto music which I now enjoy.</td>
<td>Again... indifferent. I love people. Culture makes no difference... aside from wanting to learn more about it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent #48</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>German influenced Tejano music and they have the use of the</td>
<td>I have enjoyed the culture and the music</td>
<td>I have more appreciation for it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent # 50</td>
<td>Mexican</td>
<td>accordion in common</td>
<td>Importance of music family and traditions</td>
<td>Never really identified with it</td>
<td>I feel more of a community bonding</td>
</tr>
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<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent # 52</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>A little but, not as much as I know now that I've been taught in more detail</td>
<td>How the Germans settled here first then the Hispanic came and the two combined their musics together. Sorry I heard the words but don't know how they are spelled.</td>
<td>I been in Texas since 1972 and was introduced to the music at the age of nine.</td>
<td>I've enjoyed the music blends since a young age, and I still enjoy them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bibliography


