

Casos de

URBAN HUMANITIES

WESTLAKE/MACARTHUR PARK SUMMER 2019

comfort
"It's a matter of
perspective."



A CULTURAL FESTIVAL COMMENCES IN MACARTHUR PARK.



**AWOKEN BY THE COMMOTION,
CARLOS SAYS TO HIMSELF...
"THIS MAKES ME SO HAPPY, LOOK
AT ALL THE GUESTS I HAVE TODAY!"**

**HERE COME MARY AND KATE,
PROUD DOWNTOWN FEMINISTS!!**



**WHAT A
VIBE KILLER**

**AT LEAST HE'S
LEAVING**



**GOOD AFTERNOON EVERYONE!
WE ARE SO EXCITED TO HAVE YOU ALL
HERE, MY PEOPLE, MI GENTE**

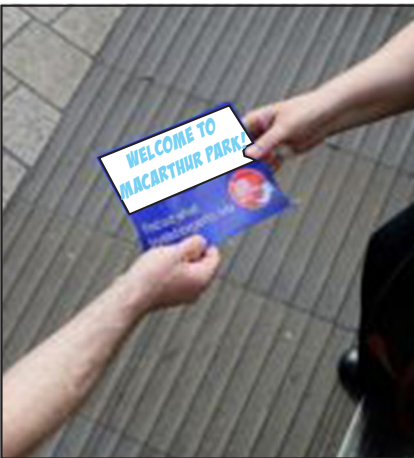


**ROGELIO, THE MASTER OF CEREMONIES
KICKS OFF THE FESTIVITES.**

**EL SALVADOR, NICARAGUA,
GUATEMALA, KOREA...
ENJOY THE PARK TODAY!**



**WELCOME TO
MACARTHUR PARK**





AMERICA HAS ONLY ONE CULTURE: AMERICAN! CHANGE MY MIND!

MAN ITS HOT AND GOSH THIS FOOD STINKS, NO WONDER THEY'RE ALL OVERWEIGHT. IT SEEMS LIKE GREASE IS A FOOD GROUP HERE



HEY LADIES! YOU KNOW WHAT IM TALKING 'BOU!
ONE NATION, ONE CULTURE, UNDER GOD!

AMERICA HAS ONLY ONE CULTURE: AMERICAN! CHANGE MY MIND!



USING HIS WHITE MALE PRIVILEGE TO TAKE UP SPACE

MUST BE A TRUMP SUPPORTER

WHAT AN IDIOT

WE WERE ALL IMMIGRANTS ONCE, WHETHER WE'RE WHITE, BLACK, OR PURPLE. AM I RIGHT?



HEY HOW'S IT GOING AMIGO?



AFTER HEARING ABOUT JOHN'S ANTICS, ROGELIO BRINGS HIM A PLATE OF FOOD AS A WAY TO INVITE HIM TO THE FESTIVITIES

IT'S GOING WELL FRIEND



NO THANKS, IM HAVING MY OWN A MERICAN PARTY RIGHT HERE

**YOU KNOW... COMO SE LLAMA, PAY IT FORWARD!
TRY THESE TAMALES, THEY ARE A DELICIOUS MEXICAN TREAT, YOU'LL LIKE IT.**

WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?



GROWING UP IN MEXICO IT DIDNT MATTER HOW POOR WE WERE, GUESTS ATE THE BEST FOOD WE HAD. IT'S THOSE PERSONAL CONNECTIONS THAT MAKE US FEEL COMFORTABLE HERE. YOU AMIGO, ARE OUR GUEST, WELCOME TO OUR HOME AWAY FROM HOME.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT...





This fotonovela is a **composite counterstory** (Cook & Dixon, 2012) that draws from myriad sources, ranging from personal experiences to researcher field notes and photographs to interviews with park-goers to crowdsourced reviews of the park across three popular websites. As a type of counterstory, it speaks back to the deficit-oriented dominant narrative of the park, with a focus on alternative notions of **what constitutes comfort in the park** setting from an insider's point of view.

In countering that story, it also functions as **speculative fiction** (Heinlein, 1947) through its meditation on what a more affirmative and equity-oriented future of the park could be, a future that recognizes a more inclusive community understanding of comfort and by extension, more comfortable sharing of the space. In the story we see John the outsider come to appreciate the many opportunities for comfort in a space previously foreign to him. In particular, the Central American custom of sharing food with guests re-orientates John into a more intimate position, causing him to reconsider his positionality.

When viewed in concert with the thick map, it becomes possible to further visualize the ways in which John's initial view of the park existed in diametric opposition to his ultimate understanding of the space and his place in it. Through **the dynamic act of layering interpretations of comfort in the park**, we simulate the development of more nuanced understandings of comfort for John and future park-goers as well.