

Cultural Appropriation Is Love

Editor's Pick. Written by TJ Brown.

I've never been able to get into the Halloween spirit. Maybe that's because most of my childhood's trick-or-treating consisted of candy corn. But as I've grown, I've gained a new appreciation for this holiday. It's an exhibition and embrace of cultural diversity through costumes and tog.

Honoring the Other

When I see a beautiful Caucasian woman dressing up as a Salsa Dancer, or a group of Asian college students dressed as the Jackson Five, it resonates with me in a very positive way. The Salsa Dancer dressed as such because she sees the beauty of the culture, attire, and people that are associated. She adores this culture so much that she's willing to spend her own money to embody it for a single night. The Asian kids dressing up as the Jackson Five clearly have not only knowledge of the legendary African-American pop sensation, but have also been impacted by the cultural talents they delivered to the market.

This is why I see Cultural Appropriation as a gesture of love within humanity. It's a refreshing deviation from conventional US ethnocentric patriotism and isolation. I'm thrilled to see people dressing up as diverse identities from around the globe, and not just wearing American Flag trucker hats and Confederate bikinis.

As our culture becomes more and more politically correct and censorious of "offensive" displays of cultural mimicry, diversity has become less about expressions of humanistic cooperation, and more about competitive oppression.

In PC parlance, that Salsa Dancer costume is actually insensitive to the economic suffering of Hispanic women who had to subject themselves to patriarchal theater. That Jackson Five getup ignores the capitalist exploitation by the music industry of black artists during the American Civil Rights movement. This is the narrative you will commonly hear pushed on many progressive university campuses and blog sites.

Some find this to be annoying, but I'd actually go as far as to call it outright insulting and abusive. Who are you to tell someone that they aren't allowed to express their love for another culture because you arbitrarily hold exclusive claim to it? Who are you to micromanage identity and dictate what types of multiculturalism is tolerable and intolerable?

In the attempt made by progressives to socially abolish what they rule as problematic cultural appropriation, the actual effect is to make harmonious ethnic relations less likely to

occur.

That Which Separates Us

Once a white man dressing up as an Arabian Sheik or a black man dressing up as an Irish bagpiper was met with excitement and interest. Now there exists a mob to ridicule them into hiding for being racist bigots. Basically they are saying to these men, "You are different and should stick to your own kind."

How is that helpful to advancing equality or association? Now these two men are intellectually isolated, likely fostering resentment for diversity. This is dangerous for everyone, especially cultural minorities.

The far left and the Alt-Right have become enablers of each other. While the Alt-Right shames whites for abandoning their heritage and culture and demands that non-whites appropriate European culture, the far left shames whites (primarily) for embracing and adopting cultural differences and contrasts and demands they NOT appropriate.

Neither side wants to break down polarities; neither side wants a free and natural marketplace of voluntary inclusivity and association. I oppose both these factions, which is why I endorse more cultural appropriation not only on Halloween, but every day.

A world without cultural appropriation is a world without learning, emulation, aspiration, celebration, and progress. It is a frozen and dull world of isolation and insularity.

You don't have to be an assimilative glob of clay to be properly molded by the right or a self-hating ally of the left. Culture is spontaneous, and your expression of it should be as well. So to the white girls, wear box braids if you want. To the black girls, don't let haters stop you from rocking that blonde relaxer. Dress up as cowboys and Indians, black and white celebrities.

If you're trans and want to dress as a cis person or visa-versa, do it. Your life is not present to be ordered and manipulated by central planners, governments, fascists, or social justice warriors. Your life is present to pursue your own self-interests and to find what makes you happy. Accusations of degeneracy or racism be damned.

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