

**CULTURAL COUNTERPOINTS:
Examining the Musical Interactions between the U.S. and Latin America**



**Mena, Michael (University of Texas - Panamerica):
“Audioscapes: Interpreting Nationalistic Perspectives Through
Transnational Death Metal (Band: Brujeria)”**

Abstract:

The California-based Mexican-American “activist” metal band Brujeria, uses a powerful, yet conflicting, blend of nihilism, anarchism, and racism with a dose of hyper-patriotism in its attempt to convey the voice of oppressed Mexicans on both sides of the border. My research on this band has revealed a peculiar concentration of live performances along the U.S.-Mexico border. While it is uncertain whether or not Brujeria is intentionally political, their live performances and song lyrics are highly critical of both the U.S. and Mexico regarding immigration policy, border-crossing, and other issues which have resonated among the binational youth of South Texas and Northeastern Mexico (locally referred to as “border kids”). In this paper I explore the conflicting notions of space, performativity, binationality and U.S. Mexico relations within the context of Brujeria performances in the South Texas Borderlands. As a participant/observer of the South Texas Death Metal scene, I have witnessed the emotional impact that Brujeria has on border kids. This audience is deeply confused about its social identity, and Brujeria appear to have developed a devoted following by tapping into the emotions of such a volatile binational youth audience. While on the surface, it might appear that Brujeria’s primary ambition is to prey on such a young and influential audience, I argue that Brujeria promotes and nurtures a new form of bicultural and biracial pride among the border kids that might be considered in response to a long history of exploitation and oppression of Mexicans in the region.

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Editorial Disclaimer:

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