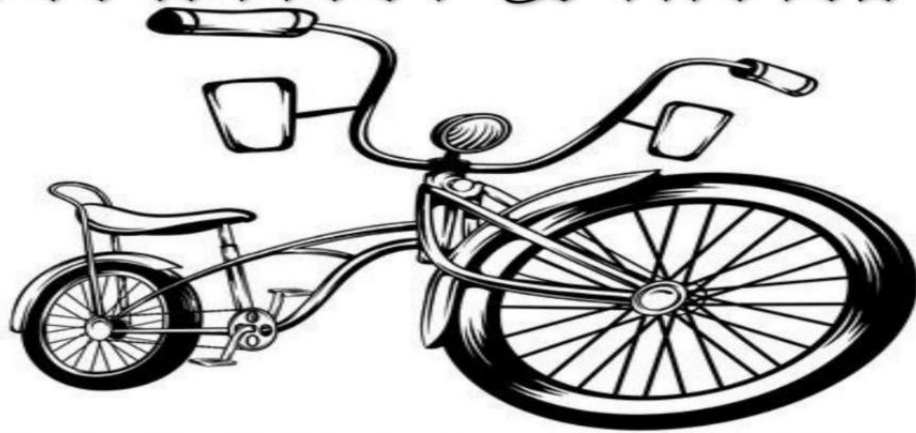


Lowrider Studies



JOURNAL

www.lowriderstudies.org

A project of Save the Kids

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1
April 2023



A project of Save the Kids

SPECIAL GUEST EDITOR

Anthony J. Nocella II, Ph.D.
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**Volume 2, Issue 1
April 2023**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

About Lowrider Studies Journal4

Submission Guidelines5-7

Editorial Team8

Lowrider Interview with Jose Morquecho on Lowrider Studies
Jerold Darrius Uchechi Acord.....9-11

Interview with Chris Cano, Reyes Duran, and Nicholas Peck on Lowrider Culture and Impact on
the Community
Haley Bryant.....12-14

Interview with Mel Garcia on Lowrider Cars and Culture
Ashley Tiftikchyan.....15-16

Lowrider Interview with Hondo Espil, Rene Mendoza, and John Ulloa
Grace Smyth.....17-19

Interview with Xris Macias on Lowrider Culture
Joey F. Kush.....20-21

Interview with Xris Macias on Lowrider Studies
Kimberly Judith Campos Gill.....22-24

Lowrider Show Interview with Nicholas Peck
Guillermo Sanchez Juarez.....25-27

Interview with Rene Mendoza on Lowrider Culture
Jesus Loya-Rodriguez.....28-30

Interview with Dr. Elizabeth Ramos on Lowrider Studies
Dylan Campbell31-32

Interview with Lowrider Nicholas Peck
Gabriella Barela.....33-35

About Lowrider Studies Journal

Founded in 2020, this is the premier international scholarly community-based peer-reviewed online open-access journal dedicated to the lowrider culture, history, philosophy, politics, economics, and social problems. This journal, grounded in critical theory and critical race theory, is an interdisciplinary, intersectional total liberation journal to promote work on the areas of identity politics, economic justice, racial justice, globalization, colonialism, oppression, domination, institutionalization, penal system, justice, liberation, peace, healing, community, spirituality, faith, religion, culture, familia, ethics, arts, music, dance, fashion, environmentalism, sustainability, technology, rituals, traditions, and skills.

The journal welcomes scholars, activists, and community organizers/leaders to submit. We hold to a caring, welcoming, and constructive process aiding in the publishing of your articles/reviews, rather than turning you away with delayed, harsh and deconstructive, review feedback. We encourage articles that interweave theory and practice and especially welcome articles on topics that have not yet been examined.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Please read these guidelines and then send your article, essay, review, research notes, interviews, reflections, poems, art, event summary, etc. to:

lowriderstudies@gmail.com

Value and Uniqueness of LSJ

1. The *Lowrider Studies Journal* was influenced in 2020 by discussions at the Annual International Lowrider Studies Conference.
2. The *Lowrider Studies Journal* publishes rigorously peer-reviewed scholar-activist work of the highest quality.
3. The *Lowrider Studies Journal* provides the utmost respect and care during the review process.
4. The *Lowrider Studies Journal* is a free-to-access electronic journal.
5. The *Lowrider Studies Journal* charges no fees for publication.
6. The *Lowrider Studies Journal* supports and encourages submissions that are excluded from mainstream journals, including photographic, video, MP3, art, poems, raps, and new media work.
7. The *Lowrider Studies Journal* is organized and edited by a radical, critical grass-roots collective of activist-scholars, community organizers, and current and former prisoners from around the world.

We Seek

1. incarcerated writings and art – of any length
2. research articles and essays – 2,000 to 10,000 words
3. student final papers – no more than 10,000 words
4. course/class summaries – no more than 2,000 words
5. research notes – no more than 2,000 words
6. commentary – no more than 2,000 words
7. tactic and strategy analysis – no more than 10,000 words
8. academic development – no more than 10,000 words
9. lecture/presentation summaries – no more than 2,000 words
10. conference/panel summaries – no more than 2,000 words
11. events/protests/resistances summaries – no more than 2,000 words
12. action alert summaries – no more than 2,000 words
13. film, book, art, and media reviews – no more than 3,000 words
14. interviews and dialogues – between 1,000 to 10,000 words
15. poems and stories – no more than 10,000 words

Style

1. All submissions should have appropriate references and citations. Manuscripts should be single line spacing, 12-point font, and conform to the American Psychological Association (APA) style format. We can help with this.
2. Submissions must be sent in Microsoft Word format. Submissions in other software formats will not be reviewed.
3. Authors should remove all self-identification from their submissions, but all submissions must be accompanied by a title page with author(s) name and affiliation, type of submission (e.g., article, review, conference summary, etc.), and contact information including e-mail, postal address, and phone number.
4. Authors must include an abstract of no more than 150 words that briefly describes the manuscript's contents.

Review Process

1. Upon acceptance for review, the Lowrider Studies Journal editors will send manuscripts, under a double-peer reviewed process, to no less than two, and generally three reviewers. Reviewers provide their recommendations to the editor, who makes the final decision to accept the manuscript.
2. The Lowrider Studies Journal holds to the utmost respect, love, and care when reviewing manuscripts. Each review we assure will be constructive, positive, and hopefully useful to the author. We strongly welcome first time authors, students, nontraditional students, activists, youth, community organizers, prisoners, politicians, and teachers.

Submissions will be assigned to one of the four following categories:

1. Accept without revisions
2. Accept with editorial revisions
3. Revise and resubmit for peer review
4. Reject

Every effort will be made to inform authors of the editor's decision within 100 days of receipt of a manuscript. Authors, whose manuscripts are accepted for publication, will be asked to submit a brief biography that includes their institutional or organizational affiliations and their research interests. The Lowrider Studies Journal only publishes original materials. Please do not submit manuscripts that are under review or previously published elsewhere.

Copyright, Republishing, and Royalties

1. All Work published by the Journal is copyrighted by the Lowrider Studies Journal.
2. Republication of Contributor's Submitted Work may be assessed a reasonable fee for the administration and facilitation to other presses. Such fee shall be determined at the discretion of the Lowrider Studies Journal.
3. Royalties: Contributor agrees and acknowledges that no royalty, payment, or other compensation will be provided by the Lowrider Studies Journal in exchange for or

resulting from the publication of the Submitted Work.

Publication Dates

LSJ uses a rolling submission process, allowing authors to submit at any time during the year without time restraints or quota of articles in an issue. Rolling submission, the most current scholarly method of accepting publications, allows for more timely publications and current scholarship to enter the public sphere in a timely fashion, rather than conforming to traditional academic print journal guidelines.

LSJ is pleased to accept your submissions at any time and will move quickly through the review process to ensure timelines.

For submission, please submit to:

lowriderstudies@gmail.com

EDITORIAL TEAM

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- Xris Macias, Founding Editor
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A project of Save the Kids

**Volume 2, Issue 1
April 2023**

Title: Lowrider Interview with Cody Kay and Jose Morquecho on Lowrider Studies
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Keywords: culture; family; community; charity;

Lowrider Interview with Cody Kay and Jose Morquecho on Lowrider Studies

Jerold Darrius Uchechi Acord

I started by interviewing an active member of the lowrider community, Jose Morquecho. He owns a 1963 Chevy Impala. In 2016, he began regularly attending car shows where he decided to film the cars that rolled up with a GoPro camera. His son convinced him to begin a TikTok account where he would be able to post the content he captured at these shows. He listened, and today he has one of the biggest lowrider focused accounts on the platform with almost 400,000 followers and over 4,000,000 likes (J. Morquecho, personal communication, March 11, 2023).

When asked how and when he decided to join the lowrider community, Jose explained that as a 14-year-old, he became enamored and fascinated with the culture through his uncle's involvement in the lowrider scene. "He was building car lowrider models at the time, so I started doing that" (J. Morquecho, personal communication, March 11, 2023). He says, that through doing that, he became even more involved in the scene, and at age 15 he bought his first car in Idaho. It was the same 1963 Chevy Impala he has today for \$1700. He went on to explain that he had worked since he was 12 years old as a busboy, at McDonald's, and in yard/field work. I went on to ask Jose if he could tell me one thing about lowrider culture that he felt others should know. He began by saying, that he wished others would understand that lowrider culture is an avid and growing community of people. He states that in the past, the culture was

given a bad rap due to the misconception that it was centered around gangs and violence. He says that in the past, there has been a connection between gang culture and lowrider culture, but this is not true anymore. Now, the lowrider community is focused on the cars, as well as building and supporting the community surrounding it (J. Morquecho, personal communication, March 11, 2023).

“Lowriding is now worldwide,” he says before telling me that he is not only filming shows in Utah, but that he often travels to other states to film lowrider car shows for his TikTok account (J. Morquecho, personal communication, March 11, 2023). He says that what others don’t see about the culture is that they value helping their communities and being a positive influence in their neighborhoods. He states that they are often doing fundraisers, and providing donations for those who are less fortunate. It is clear that today, the lowrider community is focused not only on the vehicles that enthusiasts are fascinated and interested in. Today, the lowrider community works to help others and bring about a sense of unity and family. I asked another member of the lowrider community, Cody Kay about his experiences being involved in the culture. I began by asking what he found in lowrider culture that was important to him. “Lowrider culture is a family [where] everybody comes together and helps one another. [It] doesn’t matter what it is where you’re at what time, it’s family [whether] you grew up with a small family or no family at all” (C. Kay, personal communication, March 11, 2023). He states that a main part of lowrider culture that spoke to him was this sense of family and the importance of creating these relationships between people in the community. He states that this helped him become involved with the scene and he has not only been treated like family by those in the community, but he also has seen others and has himself created familial-like ties with those who may not be involved in the community.

He goes on to explain that another part of the lowrider community that he values, is the disposition towards being open-minded and welcoming that many members have. He, like many others involved in the lowrider community, are disheartened by the negative perception that lowriders are given by people looking in from the outside. “Don’t always judge a book by its cover. Once you open that book and you learn [about] them it’s the sweetest, nicest culture you could ever get into” (C. Kay, personal communication, March 11, 2023). He states that this value within the community is important because it relates to him. For example, he is not only a member of the lowrider community, but he is also a bodybuilder, and he records live streams of gaming content in his spare time.

I asked Cody about the stereotypes pertaining to the lowrider community that are harmful, as well as what members of the community are doing to dispel these misconceptions. He states that the main stereotype pervading the scene is that all lowriders are connected or associated with gang activity. “I’m not the president of any club. I am in a club. What makes any harmful situations come about is if there [are] colors being thrown, meaning gangs” (C. Kay, personal communication, March 11, 2023). He states that while gang activity does become intertwined with the community sometimes, the community has worked hard to separate itself from that image. They are working towards bringing the community into the light so that it may be perceived as a positive force within the communities and areas it inhabits.

He says, that once a year, presidents across all states make announcements denouncing the use of

gang colors and gang activity being connected to lowriders and the culture. He states that the presidents and members of the community are actively involved in finding those in the community who are involved with gangs and violence. They seek to weed out those individuals and exclude them from the events and activities within many of the clubs so that these events can remain safe for all people to participate in. He says that the community values helping their neighborhoods as if they were their own family. “Every Christmas almost every single club finds a family that is in need, and we always go above and beyond by helping the family out” (C. Kay, personal communication, March 11, 2023).

Finally, I asked Cody how the lowrider community has been a positive force in his personal life. He began by saying that he is very involved with maintaining his own physical health as a bodybuilder. He says that he has many friends and connections within the fitness world. He has always been interested and fascinated by muscle cars as well as rebuilding engines and customizing cars. He stated that for a while, he had been interested in the lowrider community. He wanted to build his own vehicle and become involved in the culture. “I’ve always been into rebuilding engines, but for me to go and jump into something that was kind of out of my wheelhouse was kind of different” (C. Kay, personal communication, March 11, 2023). He states that it was important to him personally that he had found the courage to step into the community and do something that was not in his forte. He goes on to explain that the importance the community places on being a family was important for him as well. He states that the strong ties within the community have helped him become more involved and active within it. “I never thought I would ever get into a car club but when I did, it was one of the best things I’ve ever done” (C. Kay, personal communication, March 11, 2023).



A project of Save the Kids

**Volume 2, Issue 1
April 2023**

Title: Lowrider Interview with Chris Cano, Reyes Duran, and Nicholas Peck on Lowrider Studies

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Lowrider Interview with Chris Cano, Reyes Duran, and Nicholas Peck on Lowrider Studies

Haley Bryant

What interests you about the lowrider community and why?

The lowriding community is compelling for many reasons. One being that the cars express personality. With the possibilities being endless, lowriders provide the framework for a community of people to gather and work together to display their cultural, social, and aesthetic creativity. In an interview with Nicholas Peck, he wrote, "I have always been fascinated by the creativity of the lowrider cars. The adjustable suspension, the bright colors and paint schemes, and the fact that they usually are vintage Chevys" (N. Peck, personal communication, February 23, 2023). Another interview with Reyes Duran shows that interest in lowriders goes beyond the cars themselves. He wrote, "I grew up in it, and it's just become a hobby and addiction" (R. Duran, personal communication, February 23, 2023). A separate interview with Chris Cano reveals, and he writes, "the culture and the look of the cars. Partly because my father's family is Chicano, and I have had interests in Chicano culture" (C. Cano, personal communication, February 23, 2023). These interviews point out that lowriding is about community, family, self-interest, and creativity.

Why did you join the lowrider community?

Every person involved in the lowrider community has a story. Where they came from, who they are, and why they invest in the things they do. Nicholas Peck, a member of the lowrider community writes, “as a young kid I was sitting on my front porch with my grandparents and a caravan of lowriders came by. One of the cars laid out its hydraulic suspension and scraped the undercarriage on the ground emitting a shower of sparks. From that point I was hooked” (N. Peck, personal communication, February 23, 2023). Learning about people, what they do, and where they came from helps us to understand why they do the things they do. Chris Cano mentions how working as a photographer introduced him to the lowrider community. He wrote, “I’m a photographer, and I met some people from the lowrider community and started photographing their cars and events” (C. Cano, personal communication, February 23, 2023). Reyes Duran says, “My dad built them and now I do. I love cars of all types” (R. Duran, personal communication, February 23, 2023).

How has the lowrider community affected your life?

For many, the lowrider community is a safe space. For Nicholas Peck, it is a means to live. He says, “the lowrider community affects my life in many ways. I make my living on lowriders. I am a car builder. I buy and sell parts, transport cars. Buy and sell cars. Etc. etc. I would say the fact that I am fortunate enough to do what I love and make a good living doing it is the most important way the lowrider community affects my life” (N. Peck, personal communication, February 23, 2023). For others, the lowrider community is specifically about people. For Chris Cano it has been an opportunity to meet new people. He writes, “the community has affected my life by introducing me to new friends” (C. Cano, personal communication, February 23, 2023). Reyes Duran describes the lowrider community as “great. Meet new people and friends” (R. Duran, personal communication, February 23, 2023).

What characteristics about the people of the lowrider community do you appreciate? Why?

When asked about the people in their community and their attributes, there was nothing but kind words. Chris Cano wrote, “I appreciate the hard work, time, and money they put into their cars. How they support one another and the community” (C. Cano, personal communication, February 23, 2023). Reyes Duran wrote, “most are here to help, and always like to hang out. Organized events are a good place to meet people; like car shows” (R. Duran, personal communication, February 23, 2023). Nicholas Peck says, “I like the way the lowrider community functions as a family, albeit a big family, they look out for one another. I also enjoy the spirited and friendly competitive nature that lowriders share with their respective vehicles. Also, the pride that is reflected in our vehicles” (N. Peck, personal communication, February 23, 2023). The way these people interact with each other is truly special. It provides a framework of comfort and safety.

Do you feel being part of the lowrider community has formed your culture? Why or why not?

For most, the lowrider community is so prevalent, that cultures are formed. Chris Cano says, “I feel like it has had an influence on my culture. I have partaken and adopted its culture. The involvement and friendships I have gained from this community have influenced my culture” (C.

Cano, personal communication, February 23, 2023). Reyes Duran says, “no not really, I’m not the normal lowrider guy. I have a lifted truck as my daily [driver] and I have way too many hobbies to focus on just one” (R. Duran, personal communication, February 23, 2023). Nicholas Peck has everything to do with lowriding culture. Ever since he joined, his life has been transformed. He says, “It definitely has formed my culture. As I mentioned in question 3, I earn my living from the lowrider community. I am completely immersed in the lowriding culture” (N. Peck, personal communication, February 23, 2023).



A project of Save the Kids

**Volume 2, Issue 1
April 2023**

Title: Interview with Xris Macias on Lowrider Studies
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Keywords: Firme Image; gang violence; cruising, Apple Red;

Lowrider Interview with Mel Garcia on Lowrider Cars and Culture

Ashley Tiftikchyan

Last weekend I went to the Salt Lake City Autorama Car Show in Sandy. It was hosted by O'Reilly Auto Parts. The show lasted 3 days, and there were a lot of cars from classic to sporty. This was my second time going and I usually go with my dad. Two years ago, he entered his 1942 Chevy Fleetline and got second place. It is amazing to see all these cars that you don't usually see out on the streets.

While I was there, I interviewed Mel Garcia. He is the founder and president of the Firme Image Car Club. He told me that there are eleven car clubs in Utah. The Firme Club currently has twelve members with a total of twenty-three cars. The leaders of the car clubs work together to put on a barbecue for the whole family roughly every quarter, where they talk about news or club standards in their respective car communities. Mel first got into lowriders in 1976 (M. Gracia, personal communication, March 4, 2023).

I asked why the lowrider community and culture is important to him and he answered that it is a part of his heritage and that he loves that it shows a lot of art and different styles of art that everyone can show off. He wants everyone to know that lowriders are about more than just the beauty of the car. They also serve as a symbol for the community, calling out to fans and artists alike to come together and have fun (M. Gracia, personal communication, March 4, 2023).

I asked how old he was when he first started getting into lowriders and he answered that he was ten. I told him that I worked on cars with my dad at the age of 10 and that it was very frustrating when I couldn't find the right tools that my dad needed. He said that everyone goes through that and the more often you do it the easier it is to memorize the tools and tool names. Garcia recalls building model cars and a lowrider bicycle as a child; an interest that would later assist him in his own struggle to break free from gang affiliation (M. Gracia, personal communication, March 4, 2023).

Another one of the questions I asked was, who helped you get into lowriders? He told me when he was younger that he was with some friends and they saw some guys in their cars cruising. He met them and he got inspired and he worked on cars from there on. I also asked, what the first car he worked on was and he said it was a 1969 Grand Prix and that it was apple red. He worked on it with his dad (M. Gracia, personal communication, March 4, 2023).

My last question was if he ever had any problems with people thinking lowriders had anything to do with gang affiliations. Garcia says, "cars represent an image of who you are." So the club has high standards and initiations. Every candidate must undergo a one-year evaluation, during which current members can learn more about the candidate and determine whether or not they are a good fit. According to Garcia, the majority of their efforts during this time are focusing and ensuring that they will have a positive influence on those around them. The club's values of self-improvement, humility, and respect for the community must be adhered to by all members. Garcia knows that the greatest challenge the car clubs face is changing the public perception that lowriders are connected with gang violence. The year-long prospect, community fundraisers, and mutual respect standards are just a few of the ongoing efforts to keep everyone safe and happy (M. Gracia, personal communication, March 4, 2023).



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**Volume 2, Issue 1
April 2023**

Title: Lowrider Interview with Hondo Espil, Rene Mendoza, and John Ulloa
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Keywords: culture; paint; California; family;

Lowrider Interview with Hondo Espil, Rene Mendoza, and John Ulloa

Grace Smyth

On February 28th, 2023, the 4th annual winter lowrider bicycle show took place at the South City Campus at Salt Lake Community College. This event took place from 6 PM to 9 PM and it was a show to showcase lowrider bicycles in the lowrider community. I went because I had to interview a member of the lowrider community for an assignment for my criminal justice class. It was fascinating to see and learn more about lowrider bicycles at this event. I interviewed Hondo Espil and Rene Mendoza from the panel and John Ulloa over the phone.

What inspired you to join or be involved in the lowrider community in Salt Lake?

Mr. Espil likes the custom painting aspect of lowrider cars and bicycles. He first started painting when he was 11 years old in 1958. He went into the army during the Vietnam War and when he came back, he went to the University of Nevada. He bought a motorcycle to chop, so he could start painting motorcycles and many others. He then got into painting cars, more specifically lowrider cars, because lowriders were popular at the time for their intricate artwork and colorful designs. He loves getting crazy with all of the custom paintings of lowriders (H. Espil, personal communication, February 28, 2023).

Mr. John Ulloa was born into it and some of his earliest childhood memories are of lowriding. His older brother, who's 11 years older than him, had 2 lowriders as well as his friends and cousins who also had lowriders were always at the house. Lowriders were a big part of Chicano culture and cultural pride and expression. Lowriding never left him despite him not having a car. It's in his DNA and blood for him (J. Ulloa, personal communication, March 3, 2023).

How do you think lowriders foster peace?

Hondo states, "It gives the next generations of youths something to look forward to and put their own money into. Also, community and family involvement have a lot to do with fostering peace. Especially, at the lowrider bicycle event, there were lots of kids there with their parents who were a part of the lowrider community. Even 3 kids I saw at the event were standing by their dad's lowrider bike like they were bodyguards protecting the bike. Promoting the event as free to the public helps to advocate the welcoming lowrider community to those who want to learn more about lowriders or those who want to join." (H. Espil, personal communication, February 28, 2023)

"The Duke's car club, which is the oldest lowrider car club in the world, originated in Los Angeles and the guys that started this club were pachucos, so they started lowriding to get away from gang life. There are many people in the lowriding community who have either been involved with gangs or still are gang banging. A lot of the old timers who have been in the lowriding game for a long time are gonna be cool at an event or on the streets. Because at the end of the day, they're not looking for trouble, they're out to show off their cars and to take families out and have a good time. There are a lot of lowriding clubs, individuals, and now organizations of lowriders who are working to be community advocates, and when it comes to giving back to the community there right there for toy drives and sock and blanket drives for the homeless" (J. Ulloa, personal communication, March 3, 2023).

Do the police frequently pull you over?

Rene Mendoza states, "Yes, the police frequently pull him over, especially when they hit the hydraulics switch in front of the police" (R. Mendoza, personal communication, February 28, 2023). This is because a height adjustment suspension was banned in the United States from 1974 to 1981. Drivers violated the law if they lowered their cars past the lowest point of their wheels' rims. In Utah though, vehicles with less than a 100-inch wheelbase may have a mechanical life of two inches and an increase in height of two inches with oversized tires. Unfortunately, Utah has not been able to find a hydraulic suspension system that meets the minimum federal motor vehicle safety standards. This means that motor vehicles with hydraulic suspensions cannot be driven legally on state highways and cannot be registered within the state (Jackson, n.d, para. 3).

Back in the day, getting pulled over by the police was more frequent, and in the 90s, when gang activities were popular, he would get pulled over in his hometown of Modesto in his Impala. That was because the police were looking for probable cause for gang activity, although all his paperwork was straight and they never had anything on him. They'd always make sure to run their flashlight through his car during the stop and it did not stop them from trying to find something. While cruising at night with his wife, they got pulled over and he told the cop that he hasn't been pulled over since the 90s, but he was pulled over because he didn't have a license plate on the front

of his car. He would not say he was racially profiled as much as he was lowrider profiled in Burlingame, California as it was a wealthy little town (J. Ulloa, personal communication, March 3, 2023).

Why is lowrider culture important to you?

He has always loved cars, artwork, and seeing other people's work that they have done on their own cars. He appreciates all custom cars. He has also painted a couple cars for a lowrider club here in Salt Lake City, Utah (H. Espil, personal communication, February 28, 2023).

After asking Mr. Ulloa this question he asked me, "Well why is breathing air important to you?" and I said "because I can breathe," right, because he can not live without it. It's a way of life and a lifestyle, it's not a hobby or something cool you do on the weekends, it is literally blood, sweat, and tears. His DNA is in his car because when he built it he almost cut his finger off twice. When you're grinding, shaping, sanding, and welding metal, it is literally blood, sweat, and tears. "It is life, it's not a part of my life" (J. Ulloa, personal communication, March 3, 2023).

Do you think there are stereotypes towards those with lowriders?

Hondo states, "Yes, definitely I think because of its history back in the 1980s and 90s when lowriders were popular in California. People who were not part of the culture or communities of lowriders did not understand the culture. People also associated lowriders with gangs. But when you get to know people within the lowrider community it is more family-oriented." (H. Espil, personal communication, February 28, 2023)

"Of course, there are, 100% we get stereotyped," they get stereotyped as criminals, gangsters, thugs and the media doesn't help at all. He came out in a documentary called, "The Great American LowRider Tradition," he named names that were bad for lowriding like *Boyz n the Hood* and the *Friday Franchise*. These movies that put lowriding front and center are detrimental to their image and that's why he tries to be a cultural ambassador for the positive aspects of lowriding. Everything that he does before he agrees to it, he asks himself, "Is this good for lowriding or not," and if it's not he does not do it. Google called him to do a commercial, but they could not come to an agreement because they just wanted lowriders in their commercial because they're popular right now, but they have always been hot. It's just the general public catching on now (J. Ulloa, personal communication, March 3, 2023).

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A project of Save the Kids

**Volume 2, Issue 1
April 2023**

Title: Lowrider Interview with Xris Macias on Lowrider Culture
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Location: Salt Lake, Utah, USA
Keywords:

Lowrider Interview with Xris Macias on Lowrider Culture

Joey F. Kush

I went to the lowrider studies panel on February 28, 2023, at SLCC South City campus in the multipurpose room at 6:00 pm. I went there to interview someone about lowriders for credit in the week's homework. I asked a few different people some questions and I was able to record their answers on my phone. The interview I will be focusing on for the questions listed is with Xris Macias.

How and when did you get into Lowriding?

Xris Macias grew up locally here in Utah and met people who were into lowriding. He met people who had cars and bikes and got along with them. He was not able to be a lowrider until he got older and had more money to afford it. Xris said that for the last six years, he has had a car that he has been building. Before building his lowrider car he was able to afford bikes for years prior (X. Macias, personal communication, February 28, 2023).

What do you have to do to get into a Lowrider Club?

According to Xris, each club has its own different rules and standards. A lot of the car clubs set the standards for what the car or bike has to look like. Most clubs only allow you in if you build your own car. There are some exceptions but usually, you have to build your own. The clubs will only allow you in when you have met their standards because they want the club to be represented well (X. Macias, personal communication, February 28, 2023).

Do you think lowriding is a great way to keep kids out of incarceration and overall a way to provide purpose?

Xris said that lowriding can teach you a lot about math, science, and engineering, but it can also teach you the arts. Building a car involves many creative aspects, like the paint job, detailing, and interior. It can also teach financial reasoning and balancing. With lowriding becoming more and more expensive it helps people manage pricing and spending. With all of these things combined Xris said that there is no time for kids to get into trouble. If they are so invested in lowriding they will not have time to get into incarceration. “It is definitely an advocate against incarceration” (X. Macias, personal communication, February 28, 2023).

How would you explain lowriding culture to someone who has never heard of it?

“Preservation. They are taking cars, bikes, pedal cars, and modifying them, and instilling their own identities in them. It is an extension of their culture. Preserving the essence of the car, but changing it to reflect their own identities” (X. Macias, personal communication, February 28, 2023).

Personally, how is Lowriding culture important to you?

Xris states, “It is hopeful.” Xris explained how he has young children and is building a car to continue the tradition. For Xris, it is personal and it is family (X. Macias, personal communication, February 28, 2023).



A project of Save the Kids

Volume 2, Issue 1
April 2023

Title: Lowrider Interview with Xris Macias
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Keywords:

Lowrider Interview with Xris Macias on Lowrider Studies

Kimberly Campos

At first, I didn't know what a lowrider was when we started to talk about it in class. But I know that it had to do with something important in my culture that I didn't know about, for example, it turned out that my great-grandpa was once a lowrider. When I went to the event that they had at my college I was amazed by how many Hispanics were there, but what amazed me even more, was the fact that there were not just Hispanics, but other races too. I got the chance to interview one of the organizers that was at this event also known as Xris Macias. He was a friendly person to interview, and I like that he knew Spanish because it made me feel more comfortable because sometimes when I speak in English my Spanish tends to come out and I was glad that he was able to understand me when I did that.

One of the first questions that I asked Xris was "how and when did you get into lowriders?"

And he told me that he would see lowriders a lot in his culture when he was just a kid and would see them a lot in the world, for example, he would see them outside his house, and on the TV too. When he was younger, he had a lowrider that he loved, but he could not do much with it because he said that he did not have much money growing up. But now that he is

older he is finally able to do more things in the lowrider community. He also said that he is happy to still be able to be in the lowrider community and that he could bring his family into it too. He loves that he made friends along the way (X. Macias, personal communication, February 28, 2023).

The next question that I asked Xris was, “Why is lowrider culture important to you?”

He first told me that it was something that comes for generations and that he is happy that he was still able to use it. He loves to see people in the community build bikes, cars, little cars for kids, and see that they are happy making them. I feel what he means about this is that there are a lot of people in the world that want to do something but don't know what to do, but when it is something in your culture that you and your kids might also like. I remember when I was younger, I always wanted to do an activity or something, but I never had the time or knowledge of what to do, and still to this day I still don't know. What Xris also said that stood out to me was that he said that being a lowrider doesn't just mean you have to be an adult that has a fancy car. But it can be something that all ages can use, for example, he explained that sometimes there are preteens or even teens that want to be part of it but don't have a license, so there are other options for them to join by using a bike. He said it made me feel that it doesn't matter what extracurricular activities you like. You can never be too old or young to have as much fun as other people can also have it. And while I was at the lowrider event at Salt Lake Community College, I could see that there were a lot of people of different ages that were at this event, and they all looked like they were having so much fun and I loved seeing all of that (X. Macias, personal communication, February 28, 2023).

The next question that I asked Xris was “Do you plan on being in the lowriders culture in the future?”

He told me that he would love to still be in it in the future because it is something that he loves. He also wishes to be in it as long as he can in the future and still like it as much as he does now. I know a lot of old people that did cool and fun activities back in their days when they were young and now they don't do those kinds of things anymore. One of the reasons can be because they get old and tired and don't have the energy to do anything, but they can still like it and probably wish to still do it to this day. Other people might not want to do it because after doing it for a long time they can get bored of still doing it and just want to drop it when they get much older. Xris also said he always wanted to be in the lowrider community but never had the money, but now that he is older, he can be in it. Even though some of the lowrider parts can be expensive, it's worth it in the end, because if you do something that you love then it doesn't matter how much it is. One other thing that he told me was that he loves to still be in it if his family would still love to be in it too. Many teenagers are in activities that their parents are involved in. The teenagers don't like to be in these activities because they might not like it. But, the kids that were in the lowrider event at Salt Lake Community College looked like they were having fun so that was something good to see (X. Macias, personal communication, February 28, 2023).

One other question that I asked Xris was, “What significant moment in the lowrider culture affects you or your family, if so then what?”

He started to tell me that there was this important moment in his life that happened during COVID while we were all being safe. He and his lowrider friends wanted to still do some fun things for everyone to see, so they can also have some fun too and enjoy their hobby. But before all this COVID stuff started they used to have a lot of friends and family gathering in the lowrider community. And he told me that going to all these gatherings was something that he loved to do because he loved to have fun and see other people have fun too, and to be honest, I think that is cool too. What they did during COVID that made Xris have a nice memorable/significant moment was showing the people who they are and what they do. One thing that they did about this was while people still had to do social distancing they went around some streets, and showed all their lowriders. They would go around in their fancy cars, bikes, and other wheels, and people would hear or see them and would just go out of their houses and see what was going on outside. He also told me that people would just love to see what they were, which made him feel nice because there were sometimes people that were alone at home and had nothing to do, but seeing all the lowrider vehicles and all of the things going on will make them happy and not feel so lonely about anything that they had. I feel that is something awesome because I would like to be alone at home and not experience anything, and I would also love to see other people's hobbies, fun activities, and their cultures too (X. Macias, personal communication, February 28, 2023).

The last question that I asked Xris was, “How are Latino ex-culture related to lowriders, to you?”

He first started to tell me that the creation we know today, as the lowriders, was first created by Mexicans in the southwestern, United States. It is something that came from our culture and was made by us and is still used to this day, is also something cool that is what I think. As we know, lowriders were made in the southwestern side of the United States, some of the counties that started all these lowriders were in California, New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, and some parts of Utah. I must be honest I was surprised at first when I found out there were lowriders here in Utah, because when I think about it, Utah is the last place in the United States that I would think lowriders would be in, but that is still something cool to know, because I feel safe NOW knowing there are a lot of Mexicans here in Utah.

Some other things that Xris told me about how Latino culture is related to lowriders to him in general, is that it's Mexican. What he means about this is that there are a lot of activities in the United States and even around the world, but lowriders can be something that identifies us Mexicans. One other thing is the music and the language that they use is the Spanish that all Hispanics know, and we can also communicate with each other, without making someone feel left out or sad about not knowing English. But even though lowriders are something big in the Latino culture, they also welcome people from all around the world, they just want to show how great lowriders can be in the Hispanic culture. In the end, I loved the lowriders at the Bicycle Show at South Salt Lake SLCC campus, and it made me feel proud and happy that I am Mexican, and that people also care about us, because I love that people also feel what I feel about Mexicans. We are always wanted (X. Macias, personal communication, February 28, 2023).



A project of Save the Kids

**Volume 2, Issue 1
April 2023**

Title: Lowrider Show Interview with Nicholas Peck

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Keywords: hobby; culture; knowledge; cars; experiences;

Lowrider Show Interview with Nicholas Peck

Guillermo Sanchez Juarez

How and when did you get into lowriding?

The person that I interviewed mentioned how back in the early 70s when he was 10 years old, he saw a couple of lowrider cars cruising around in the Salt Lake, Utah area. He explains how at first it threw him off a little because it was something new to him. He emphasized how surprised he was because he had not seen anything like that before. He said that after the encounter he started to investigate what types of cars they were and started to connect with the culture. He said that seeing the cars was his first inspiration for what he would do in the future. He mentioned how during that time there were not that many lowriders in Utah, so he had to research for himself to learn more about the culture. He claims that he first got to know about the lowrider culture by looking at a magazine he bought at a magazine store called "Bob's". He mentions how the magazine gave him a vision of what was happening in the lowrider culture, so he became more interested in it. He mentioned how when he was able to, he started to buy cars and find ways to make them into lowriders (N. Peck, personal communication, February 28, 2023).

Why is lowrider culture important to you?

The person that I interviewed mentioned how he found a way to introduce lowriding culture into his lifestyle. He mentioned how he took it as a hobby. He said that lowriding introduced new things into his life that he had not known before. He mentioned that he got to see everything that went into the cars. He noticed that there was a lot going into the cars so he started to look more into them.

He explained that being involved in the lowrider community educated him. He specifically mentioned how lowriding culture taught him about how to work cars, it taught him what makes a car start, and things like why you use a battery. He explains that everything involved is what brought him more passionate about this culture. He said that learning about the little details were so important to him. The knowledge he has now is due to lowriding and that is what makes it important (N. Peck, personal communication, February 28, 2023).

Do you believe there is a stigma associated with lowriders?

He mentions how in every culture there is always negativity associated with it. Specifically, lowriding brought a lot of bad influence to kids, he claimed. This was due to gangs using the same types of cars that were part of the lowriding culture. He mentioned how when they were younger, they in a way brought that stereotype to themselves. He explained that time is what educated him.

He mentioned that as they grew older, they started to understand everything that was included in lowriding culture. He mentioned how he found out how much there was to lowriding than what he thought there was. He mentioned that lowriding was not only about driving around in the cars and fighting. There was more going on than what was seen on the outside. Lastly, he mentioned that he does believe that people from this community do get stereotyped (N. Peck, personal communication, February 28, 2023).

How did lowriding affect your personality?

He mentioned that lowriding affected his personality by making him work harder. He also said that lowriding made him want nicer things for himself. He mentioned that the saying “work hard, play hard” (N. Peck, communication, February 28, 2023) had driven him to own a lowrider. Not only that but also it has driven him to contribute to the community by using his knowledge and education. He said that he wanted to make a positive change in the community.

He mentioned the look of the cars pushed him to get nicer things, which introduced him to the lowriding culture. The uniqueness of every lowrider car out there, has opened his mind to creativity. By using his knowledge about the subject, he can now share that with other people. The knowledge about cars plays a role in his personality. Overall, everything that is involved in lowriding culture has been impactful in his life (N. Peck, personal communication, February 28, 2023).

How would it affect you personally if lowriding culture did not exist?

He stated that if lowriding culture did not exist it probably would not have affected him a lot. He said there is no way for him to explain how he would be impacted. He mentioned how when you wear something “cool” is because you saw it somewhere else. He explains that everything he has experienced is because he saw it somewhere else. If he had not seen lowrider cars because they did not exist, he would just have lived his life without them. Although, if lowrider culture did not exist, his life would have still been impacted by something. He may not realize it, but culture’s influences can be important to your life. He mentioned earlier that he learned a lot about how the cars work by learning about lowriders, if lowriding culture did not exist his knowledge and experiences on cars would be different. He could have a totally different life if his hobby was not around. Maybe all his knowledge and time would have gone to another thing (N. Peck, personal communication, February 28, 2023).



A project of Save the Kids

**Volume 2, Issue 1
April 2023**

Title: Lowrider Interview with René Mendoza on Lowrider Culture
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Lowrider Interview with René Mendoza on Lowrider Culture

Jesus Loya-Rodriguez

How and when did you get into lowriders?

I had the pleasure of interviewing René Mendoza, a Latino-American. In the context of the interview, Mendoza described his life revolving around lowrider culture: the art, the community, the people. Lowrider culture is an art form, the art of expression and building community; the deep-rooted culture rose from marginalized and criminalized communities: the Black community and the Latinx community.

When I interviewed René, he mentioned his early childhood life, he wasn't necessarily the good-type kid—getting into trouble. He described his finding of lowrider culture through books; he was intrigued by how different bicycles can be edited and contorted into different shapes and colors. A bicycle, an everyday item used for travel can be used to create art. Mendoza mentioned that he found it funny how bicycles can also be used to create art. He attached himself to the art form and the culture; he described it as his new home (R. Mendoza, personal communication, February 28, 2023).

Why is lowrider culture important to you?

The overall stemming of lowrider culture comes from criminalized groups like Black and Latinx communities specifically, Chicanos. Those specific communities, unfortunately, are prone to becoming incarcerated from over-policing and racism. They found the art of lowriding to build community and a family. This art form provided them with a distraction. For decades, it's always been a way for communities to join together.

René shares the concept of the importance of family, he covers the importance of how lowrider culture brings families together. He shared beautiful stories about times when his friends and family would go out to lowrider events, admiring the art, the people, and basking in all the greatness of lowrider culture. René included that he hopes lowrider culture continues to spread vastly through each generation (R. Mendoza, personal communication, February 28, 2023).

What would you do if lowrider culture didn't exist?

What a heart-wrenching question, the stripping of dignity it would cause if this community-influenced growth culture were to be taken away from these communities. Lowrider culture has become an incredible form of expression, storytelling, and overall, pop culture. Not only does lowrider culture provide a scope for entertainment and creativity, but it keeps people off the streets. People come from different backgrounds, some have seen people die, some have experienced abuse, and lowrider culture keeps trouble from entering the body of a helpless individual.

Mendoza, in the past, has mentioned his hardships in life, he sought an escape and discovered lowrider shows. I asked a rather cliché question to him, but his response left me feeling hollow and cold. René explained that without lowrider culture, many people, including him, would have ended up on the wrong paths in life. Not only is lowrider culture important to families, but it creates safe places for people looking for an escape from their own hardships (R. Mendoza, personal communication, February 28, 2023).

Who or what influenced you to immerse yourself in lowrider culture?

One of the many amazing outcomes of lowrider culture is the connections one develops from immersing into the community. A close-knit community, so supportive of each other, wanting everyone to succeed and strive for the best. Indulging in creativity, and learning new ways of expression, each member shows one another different ways of thriving within the culture.

René mentioned a story about how, at a young age, his parents would take him to lowrider events—the shiny colorful-filled bicycles filled his eyes with delight. He mentioned that lowrider culture was brought to him by family, they all enjoyed their weekends studying the history and going to social events containing anything vehicle-colored-related. A family within a family (R. Mendoza, personal communication, February 28, 2023).

How does lowrider culture affect society?

Culture is everywhere, it doesn't have to come from any ethnic background, it's all around us. Our

society has a culture, but if anything were to fall off balance, terror will rise within that society. Here in the United States of America, we all have the right to free will, and free living. This type of lowrider culture breaks the stigmatization of marginalized communities, Black people, and Chicanos.

René mentioned throughout our interview that he's seen less crime happen because lowriding is a form of entertainment—a distraction to people. He mentioned that many people would be out on the streets committing crimes if lowrider culture didn't exist. I am very grateful I got the pleasure to interview René Mendoza. He described views I would have never imagined regarding a bicycle show, and he informed me how important the culture is to him and others from his community (R. Mendoza, personal communication, February 28, 2023).



A project of Save the Kids

**Volume 2, Issue 1
April 2023**

Title: Interview with Dr. Elizabeth Ramos on Lowrider Studies
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Keywords: Chicano; culture; community; design;

Interview with Dr. Elizabeth Ramos on Lowrider Studies

Dylan Campbell

How and when did you get into lowriding?

Dr. Ramos responded by saying she was initially introduced to lowriding culture by her uncle, who owned a 1940s Chevy bomb. She has fond memories of riding in, playing in, and being around the car while her uncle worked on it. She was first introduced to car shows around 24 years ago, around the 1990s. She attended her first Lowrider Super Show in LA back around 1990. She explained that was the last year they held the event for some time until the lowrider the community rallied to make changes so the shows would be safe to return (E. Ramos, personal communication, March 22, 2023).

Why is lowrider culture important to you?

Dr. Ramos said that lowriding culture was important to her because it was rooted in Latino and Chicano history. The lowriding community represents the struggles Latino and Chicano peoples have experienced. To Dr. Ramos, lowriding is a symbol of pride, resilience, community, and brotherhood, which she believes are strong values in Latino and Chicano history and values she embraces every day of her life. She explained to me that the cultural meaning may be different among the individuals participating in lowriding. "For some, it may be an ethnic connection, and

for others, it may just be a passion for classic (American) cars. For me, it's a little bit of both" (E. Ramos, personal communication, March 22, 2023).

What role does color and design play?

Dr. Ramos' response to this was that color and design played a big part. While for some, color and design may not be as important as the car itself, many find painting their car a certain color or adding a custom design as a way of expressing oneself. It reflects a lowrider's culture, aspirations, memories, and themselves. As a psychologist, Dr. Ramos believes color and design are often very symbolic. Design isn't just what you see on the outside, but it's also the design of the interior, the engravings, murals, or just the display people choose when showing their car. Most things you find on a lowrider, whether that be design, color or both will have meaning (E. Ramos, personal communication, March 22, 2023).

What stigmas have you or others faced by being lowriders?

Dr. Ramos said she definitely has seen the change of facial expression at times when talking about lowriding. She explained that the change of expression can either be one of disappointment or of joy and excitement of finding another lowrider or an enthusiasm to learn and share. Some people will ask about connections with gangs or substance abuse and she's even experienced people yelling profanities when cruising by in a lowrider. In many ways, Dr. Ramos believes that lowriding is unfortunately still seen as something for the lower class of society (E. Ramos, personal communication, March 22, 2023).

Can anyone become a lowrider?

Dr. Ramos responded with, "Yes! Absolutely". While it may have its roots in the Chicano and Mexicano communities, it is not limited to that community. The lowriding culture is popular with many communities, including Black and Native American communities and many more. It has amassed an international community and the lowrider community encourages anyone who would like to be a part of the culture to do so. Some people may choose to be solo riders and others may elect to be a part of a group, both being important to the culture. With that said, owning a lowrider doesn't automatically make you a lowrider. The lowrider community has become very family-oriented, making lowriding events more family inclusive. You can't be a lowrider if you just want to gangbang and own a lowrider. You have to be a part of the community, engaged, and embrace the tradition and culture (E. Ramos, personal communication, March 22, 2023).



A project of Save the Kids

**Volume 2, Issue 1
April 2023**

Title: Interview with Lowrider Nicholas Peck
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Keywords: auto mechanics; culture; passion; lifestyle;

Interview with Lowrider Nicholas Peck

Gabriella Barela

Why is lowriding important to you?

“I was able to collaborate it into my life, I made it more of a lifestyle. I was able to learn multiple things when I first got into lowriding. I learned how to maintenance different cars, like what makes a car start, and what makes a battery, it was really just about my interest that persuaded me and got my attention with my first experiences with lowriding and the first steps from that were getting to know cars and how they work and the difference with them.” (N. Peck, personal communication, February 28, 2023)

“I wanted to make it more into my life, and more involved in my day-to-day activities like working with cars like of my own and or my friends, really just my interest in general and how it’s been really connecting to me and my lifestyle, really it was a big passion of mine you know, learning to make sense of different needs of what a car has to have, and your drive and motivation to fix anything wrong or want you know, something to add on simple or not.” (N. Peck, personal communication, February 28, 2023)

What would you do if lowrider culture did not exist?

“Well, really, I’d say if lowrider culture did not exist, I’d probably, I don’t know... I don’t think there’s a way to explain, really if you like- you did not see something, you would never know it exists or that it’s there. I don’t think there is a way to explain it, other than what I just said, if you don’t see something, you’ll never know. For me, I couldn’t answer your question for you, like I said you’ll never know if you never hear or see it. For me a lot of the things come from people seeing things, right? A lot of times you know mostly when you want to wear something cool, it’s because you heard it from somewhere or someone on tv, or a friend, or coworker of some sort. It’s in our vision that it all starts.” (N. Peck, personal communication, February 28, 2023)

What influenced you to get into lowriders and lowriding?

“Years ago when I was like about ten years old, I experienced seeing them for the first time, guys you know in the Salt Lake area and when I saw those kinds of cars, I realized I’ve never really seen them before like that there were 70’s, and after that I ugh, I started kind of finding out a lot about lowriders basically.” (N. Peck, personal communication, February 28, 2023)

“After knowing a couple of guys and getting to know them and seeing them cruise around with different cars. One of the things that inspired me was seeing those cars and that inspired me to start making models and lowriding, making them look like their cars. In the 70s there were a lot of lowrider magazines, and a lot from California. So that really trained my vision and the deeper questions of asking about lowriding and putting myself out there to start making those models.” (N. Peck, personal communication, February 28, 2023)

In what ways do you think lowriding benefits your lifestyle?

“Well, you know, I’d say how lowriding has benefited my lifestyle is how it has shaped my whole life since I mentioned before, at the age of ten seeing how the lowrider car operates and these older men cruising, seeing that, and reading and looking at those magazines really has made sort of an impact I guess you would say to how it’s been beneficial to me.

When you are passionate about something, like at such a young age too, it sticks with you. You know, when you put yourself out there to experience new things and learn in ways that can make an impact on your life and how it can be useful mostly, you know, yeah.” (N. Peck, personal communication, February 28, 2023)

How can younger kids in our society get into lowriding now?

“I got into cars and lowriding around the age of ten, by just going out there and just seeing cars, or when you are you know with your parents or friends driving and you see a cruise of cars down on state right here, it’s all about the experience and what we can take from seeing it. I also read tons of magazines about lowriding too and I think that sparked a light in me to get hands-on and start looking out for more of the people that were interested in the same thing.

Kids nowadays can watch videos on YouTube, or anything like that to get started and you know to even watch tutorials of how to basically become a mechanic yourself and to get into cars, read comments of people asking questions, reach out to lowriders, participate in cruises, hangout with people with the same interest as you can boost your interest and your confidence and finding your passion with lowriding.” (N. Peck, personal communication, February 28, 2023)