

# FOR WHAT (?) FRIDA KAHLO'S WORTH

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In March of 2018, Mattel released a new line of its quintessential Barbie™ with a contemporary focus. This isn't the first time in recent history that Mattel has engaged in social commentary aiming to update its antiquated stereotypes, especially those that don't carry a tune in a trending, feminist conversation. In 2015, the multinational toy manufacturer launched an "Imagine the Possibilities" campaign, which showcased their mission to inspire their youth consumers<sup>1</sup>. After all, "when a girl plays with Barbie™, she imagines everything she can become" (Barbie). This was a heartening step for a brand known for its plasticized and problematic bodily proportions that wind up in the hands of and influence youths. The latest line, labeled Inspiring Women™, includes women across time and industries who have become celebrities, mascots even. Many of them are contemporary icons. Female achievements are being dignified for the first time during this fourth-wave feminism, which is marked by riding advancing technology for communicating ideals. These women are heroes to be remembered and celebrated because of the way that each and every one of them changed the course of their field. In the same week, *The New York Times* published a working project titled "Remarkable Women We Overlooked in Our Obituaries." The newspaper has committed to filling in the gaps of its publication – which dates back to 1851 and has been dominated by white men across sections. Specifically, *The Times* recognizes that obituaries are a testament to life and the unmarked deaths of pioneering women serve as a "stark lesson in how society valued various achievements and achievers" (Padnani). The achievements of these women and women throughout history have been diminished out of sole regard for their gender. All signs point to seminal conversations taking place in and around pop culture which in turn is shaping

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<sup>1</sup>The video ad is worth the watch and available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1vnsqbnAkk>

the modern culture of the United States, but this very culture has yet to transcend categorization and marginalization. More so, this culture is a crop rotation of supremacy, cultivating trends of ignorant fixation. This new line for Barbie™ is a window peering into questionable fascinations.

Barbie™ maintains an enduring-the-test-of-time-and-trend finger on the pulse of pop culture. It is important to note, however, that in the United States, pop culture has become a concentrated reflection of the demands of the privileged in an ever prosperous capitalist society. For \$29.99, you can purchase one of these newly simplified icons, including Frida Kahlo. Subsequent to the prioritized price tag is an inadequate description accompanying her belittled likeness, which does a modest job of summarizing her triumphs<sup>2</sup>. This brief explanation of her is a substantial step in the direction toward narrative erasure. Additionally, the physical doll exploits the plight of her intersectionality through flawed physical representation. Furthermore, there is immense irony in the precise way a multinational entertainment manufacturer has produced a counterfeit replica of her stature at all. Taking a thoughtful look at the position Mattel has taken through Barbie™ in an occasionally-progressive, ever-politicized discussion surrounding identity rights only sets the stage for considering just how communities are minimalized in the United States' modern culture. Specifically, the Mexican community in and

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<sup>2</sup>It reads: Barbie® recognizes all female role models. The Inspiring Women™ Series pays tribute to incredible heroines of their time; courageous women who took risks, changed rules, and paved the way for generations of girls to dream bigger than ever before. Born in Mexico in 1907, artist, activist, and feminist icon, Frida Kahlo, was and continues to be a symbol of strength, originality, and unwavering passion. Overcoming a number of obstacles to follow her dream of becoming a fine artist, Frida persevered and gained recognition for her unique style and perspective. With her vibrant palette and mix of realism and fantasy, she addressed important topics like identity, class, and race, making her voice, and the voices of girls and women alike, heard. The Barbie® Inspiring Women™ Frida Kahlo doll celebrates the groundbreaking achievements, heroism, and long-lasting contributions Frida made in the art world and for women. Her extraordinary life and art continue to influence and inspire others to follow their dreams and paint their own realities. Includes doll, doll stand and Certificate of Authenticity.

outside of the motherland is dehumanized through the appropriative and depoliticizing nature of cultural commodification, and Kahlo's reproduction embodies important commentary for combating these deep issues, especially in the United States.

Through her self-portraiture and courage of expression, Kahlo is perhaps the most recognizable female artist. The reproductions of her iconic self-depictions have elevated her as an immortal female spirit, but they romanticize her life as a woman – only celebrating the glamorous aspects and not at all what she celebrated: the life and strife as a Mexican woman. Upon first glance, anyone familiar with her portrait would know that the Barbie™ appears to have just visited an aesthetician who specializes in the deforestation of unified brows. Given that her image can be seen stretched across myriad articles of accessories and attire for purchase<sup>3</sup>, “anyone familiar” is nearly all-inclusive. In a 2015 claim that “Frida Kahlo is Having a Moment,” *The New York Times* explained her as a “universally recognized symbol of artistic triumph and feminist struggle” (Trebay). That is not to say that she has come to be understood. It would take someone with a sharp familiarity of her iconography to comprehend that a simplification of herself into especially that of the characteristic Barbie™ stature to which she has indeed been reduced is not what she embodied, physically or ideologically. Kahlo challenged every aspect of conformity and her commodified and commercialized reproduction is the antithesis of her narrative.

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<sup>3</sup>A pair of leggings described to “embody the [...] exotic style of your favorite female icon.” For a mere \$68.00, tax and shipping exclusive, you too can parade your celebration of Frida as a female and categorization of her other conditions as exotic. For sale here: [https://evolvefitwear.com/yoga-democracy-frida-cropped-legging?utm\\_source=google\\_shopping&gclid=Cj0KCQjw2KHWBRC2ARIsAJD\\_r3fOZBxNfvXLxappz5zFmfymbU07YEDkntk2egBMFQVdu5NoyliZ6V0aAjqyEALw\\_wcB](https://evolvefitwear.com/yoga-democracy-frida-cropped-legging?utm_source=google_shopping&gclid=Cj0KCQjw2KHWBRC2ARIsAJD_r3fOZBxNfvXLxappz5zFmfymbU07YEDkntk2egBMFQVdu5NoyliZ6V0aAjqyEALw_wcB)

There is a checklist of visible, physical qualities that Mattel failed to respect in a seemingly unlikely approach to accurately represent Kahlo. From head-to-toe, the accuracy starts and stops with perhaps the crown of flowers adorning her head. The first item of eminent injustice is the groomed unibrow which Kahlo actively preserved as to claim her control over the prevailing sexist pressures deeply imbedded in her culture. As a woman of Spanish and Mexican Indian descent, Kahlo naturally grew complimentary dark hair to her skin tone. She also maintained the hair on her upper lip. Kahlo's facial hair is symbolic of both her Mexican female intersectionality and her grasp on that relationship between her identities. The manufactured grooming of her hair strips her of her hold on that intersectionality and minimizes her to problematic beauty standards, which in turn is a misrepresentation. She has been produced to fit cultural and social norms in the United States, which diminishes the identity of her heritage that she preserved and the personal stake she took within her gender. The profiteering on Kahlo's physicality alone does not stop here.

Kahlo was physically challenged as a result of several life-altering complications. At a young age, she contracted polio and was left with a limp, which she painstakingly covered with long skirts for the remainder of her life (PBS). The skirts Kahlo wore were elaborately adorned in traditional Tehuana style by the hands of Mexican women in spirit of their heritage (Agencies in Mexico City). They were far more technical and delicate than the costume she has been subjected to. Also, as a teen Kahlo was in a tragic bus accident in which she was impaled by an iron handrail. Her spine was punctured and she spent the next several months of her life in intense recovery and the rest of her life recovering from associated complications (PBS). This Barbie™ stands tall and independent of a wheelchair or even braces. The disregard of Kahlo's

physical disabilities is more than theoretically diminishing. It applies erasure to the paralyzing physical pain one feels as a result of crippling disabilities and the internalized pain one endures in an ableist society. Problematic beauty standards are again being sustained. The failure by Mattel to incorporate physical aids or the proper style of Kahlo's apparel romanticizes her outward image – diminishing the inconveniences with which she prevailed – and assigns a costume to her culture.

Following the tragic bus accident, Kahlo's recovery period was equipped with inexhaustible time and monotonous solidarity. It was this pain she first channeled into art and was then that she began painting. Through the reproduction of her pain, she was able to manipulate its manifestation. Rather than disguise the pain, she coupled it with the beauty of her culture, which was of course palpable in her own image. Kahlo was not always truthful in the depiction of her own likeness. While she began painting in her teens, it wasn't until mid-life that she painted herself with her quintessential facial hair. In 1933, Kahlo painted *Self portrait with necklace*, which in 2001 was reduced to a US postage stamp marked \$.34. This was amid another wave of feminism, but the merit of this painting is ingrown in her very facial hair, despite her surfacing time and time again as a feminist icon. Having overcome a miscarriage, Kahlo was embracing and exposing a newfound confidence in herself (Frida Kahlo). Now she is fixated on as only an icon of feminism. Which, not to discredit, she is, but she is more than that.

Ideologically, Kahlo was a communist. She joined the Communist Party of Mexico in 1928, about the time she was the focal point of a Rivera mural depicting her at the helm of communism. Her commitment to the party was so much of her identity that rather acknowledge 1907 as her birth year, she insisted that her birth year be remembered as 1910, or

the year the Mexican Revolution began (PBS). This was in line with her fight for her own truth and she never allowed relative truth “to get in the way of a higher truth; the truth in this case being that she and modern Mexico were inextricably bound in both revolution and renaissance” (PBS). For political reasons alone, Kahlo would be ardently provoked for the misrepresentation of the body, which she endured and endured her. A strong supporter of communism, Kahlo was not shy with politicizing her art. Through not only the Barbie™ but also the buffet of Kahlo printed commodities, the politics of her art are trivialized. Therein lies great irony in her being depoliticized in a capitalist society.

Taking into consideration the infractions Mattel has committed on Kahlo’s legacy, it is no surprise that Kahlo’s living family spared no time in taking legal action against the misappropriation of her physical condition. From salacious gossip columns to reputable news journals, the issue has made headlines. Kahlo’s great niece claims to have the sole rights to Kahlo’s image and the use of it was not cleared by Mattel with the family. Mattel was quick with a counter-suit and claims granted permission through the Frida Kahlo Corporation with language that includes, "a legally binding agreement to make a doll in the likeness of the great Frida Kahlo" (Marine). Regardless, Kahlo’s family does not seek money, which is telling of the intent with which they proceed (Agencies in Mexico). The outcome of these legal threats will be telling of a posthumous value of Kahlo in a capitalist society. The misappropriated commodification of Kahlo’s physicality serves as an ill-fitting touchpoint for consumers across the board and her family’s diligent response is rightfully in-line with Kahlo’s own ideology for Kahlo would be inherently opposed to a doll of her likeness and its benefit to a capitalist producer.

Kahlo's immediate family is not the only voice taking a stand against Mattel's profiteering production. Actress Salma Hayek's has asserted her disbelief that a doll was made at all and agrees that her appearance has been holistically misrepresented (Valenti). Hayek played Kahlo in the 2002 film *Frida*, which she also oversaw as a producer. Hayek's input now is meaningful across Kahlo's identities. Not only does it shed light on the problems associated with the manufacturing of the doll in the first place and mislabeling it as inspiration for young women when Kahlo abhorred the problematic beauty standards Barbie maintains today, but also, the voices of glamorized women are just beginning to carry weight. Hayek has had a prominent voice in recent times and adds a weighted perspective to the conversation which is opening wounds that oppressors have aimed to erase across demographics with gender in common<sup>4</sup>. Hayek adds sophistication in an argument geared toward consumers only interested in the sophisticated qualities they associate with Kahlo.

The mass reproduction of Kahlo's likeness is in theory and practice not entirely unlike the popularity of Che Guevara's. A tee shirt with a printed image of Guevara's face has likely already come to mind. A single article of clothing has been produced on such a scale that "Che Chic" became a term at all as consumers praise a strain of rebellion and ignore a cause. Consumers romanticize a man who dismantled a nation's economy on top of waging war

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<sup>4</sup>In December of 2017, Hayek shared the brutal experiences she faced working with Harvey Weinstein. Her public statement in the midst of hundreds can be read here: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/12/13/opinion/contributors/salma-hayek-harvey-weinstein.html> Specifically, Hayek faced harassment for her prominent role in producing and playing the lead role in *Frida*. More so, she was forced into the nudity portrayed in the film without consideration. While women across the board were courageous enough to speak out against Harvey Weinstein and his years of abuse, Hayek is an important example of how intersectional women are portrayed and are forced to portray others. Considering her experience with studies of Kahlo, it is no surprise that she spoke publicly and immediately about the Barbie™.

against civilians. Simply put, “Che Guevara's longevity as a cultural symbol has been thanks to the very economic system he sought to destroy” (Berg). This is similar to the irony associated with a reproduction of Kahlo within a capitalist society surrounded by inconsiderate consumers.

Kahlo’s narrative will not be degraded to the political path of a Marxist guerilla and her plight reduced to a comparable ideology, but the reckless abandon with which capitalist consumers buy into the appropriation of Kahlo diminishes her into a vague symbol of feminism separated from her heritage. Kahlo is exploited and minimized to the glamorous ideas individuals have about the way she lived and learned and loved with the privilege of manipulating just how those aspects of her life become applicable to the consumer. The mass reproduction has normalized and fatigued her image as to erase away the plight of her intersectionality. Almost universally known by her face, so few know her for her work or the work her art embodies. Rather, she is identifiable through the commodification and misrepresentation of her physicality and further, the appropriation of her ideology and intersectionality.

### **Cultural Appropriation’s Natural Place in a Capitalist Society**

As a 19<sup>th</sup> century economist, sociologist, theorist, etc., Carl Marx was in summary a revolutionary. In his early works, Marx produced shattering effects that would shape political and philosophical ideologies to come. Albeit influential for communist parties and politics, his infamous *Communist Manifesto (1848)* is a controversial proclamation. However, his work should not be minimized to the bias of *The Communist Manifesto*, nor should he be remembered for his flawed prognostication of communism’s future, but rather for his

fundamental and unprecedented understanding of social life that holds truth in 21<sup>st</sup> century, conservative politics.

It is in the multi-volume, economic-focused *Capital (Das Kapital): Critique of Political Economy* that Marx would reveal his sustaining analyses of capitalistic patterns. At the helm of Marx's analysis is his methodology for observing these effects: historical materialism – through which Marx follows the tendencies humans arguably follow. More so in Marxist terms, this study of human societies reveals just how a society produces and reproduces its means of existence and how that very process shapes the development of said society. Through historical materialism, Marx uncovered social production relations – the relationships prescribed to exist in the very society that produces and reproduces the means of human existence. This includes relationships between people, social classes, and productive assets which are often protected by law. Conceptually, Marx uses the term,

“Capital, land, labour! However, capital is not a thing, but rather a definite social production relation, belonging to a definite historical formation of society, which is manifested in a thing and lends this thing a specific social character. Capital is not the sum of the material and produced means of production. Capital is rather the means of production transformed into capital, which in themselves are no more capital than gold or silver in itself is money. It is the means of production monopolised by a certain section of society, confronting living labour-power as products and working conditions rendered independent of this very labour-power, which are personified through this antithesis in capital. It is not merely the products of labourers turned into independent powers, products as rulers and buyers of their producers, but rather also the social forces and the future” (Vol III, Chapter 48)

More so, Marx recognized that human and cultural organization is the by-product of collective production and thus economic activity. Marx presupposed that societal development

throughout history was shaped by the way means of existence were produced and social production relations manifested.

Further analyzing societies through historical materialism, Marx outlined modes of production or the ways society produced the goods needed. Simply, this mode of production is the inputs driving the economic system. In addition to the production relations, the mode of production included classic factors of production (capital, human capital, technology, etc.).

“We have seen that the capitalist process of production is a historically determined form of the social process of production in general. The latter is as much a production process of material conditions of human life as a process taking place under specific historical and economic production relations, producing and reproducing these production relations themselves, and thereby also the bearers of this process, their material conditions of existence and their mutual relations, i.e., their particular socio-economic form. For the aggregate of these relations, in which the agents of this production stand with respect to Nature and to one another, and in which they produce, is precisely society, considered from the standpoint of its economic structure. Like all its predecessors, the capitalist process of production proceeds under definite material conditions, which are, however, simultaneously the bearers of definite social relations entered into by individuals in the process of reproducing their life. Those conditions, like these relations, are on the one hand prerequisites, on the other hand results and creations of the capitalist process of production; they are produced and reproduced by it.” (Vol III, Chapter 48)

The capitalistic mode of production is Marx’s critique of the political economy structure that emerged in the modern industrial society. Marx produced extensive theory on the relationships between a capitalist economy and the social lives of humans. A capitalist society is characterized by contractual, private possession of goods and services in a commodity market. Further, the purpose of production is to create a circulation of exchange in a market resulting in maximized money profits. In turn, a class structure emerges and competition for capital ensues. Ultimately, a capitalist society runs a finite course because of its vulnerability to economic

consequences. Marx predicted socialism would succeed capitalism and communism would succeed socialism. Communism was the final stage of production through a historical production lens.

Marx's glaring theoretical flaw was his forecast of victorious communism. He did predict that communism would arise from the fall of capitalism, which would come through advancing technology, perpetual exploitation of workers, and excess production in response to an indefinite surplus of labor. This has yet to be the crises cocktail for capitalism, but technology advances, exploitation continues, and the supply of commodities in our modern industrial society is overwhelming. Humans today seek the possession of goods and services more than ever, emphasizing consumerism expressed through capitalism in line with commodity fetishism, which is a frailty of a political economy. Marxist theory of commodity fetishism is realized through the social relationships surrounding production which are tied more to economic interest than to the people involved. This fetishism emerges in a capitalist society because a product's value is measured with money, rather than maintaining use-value.

"A commodity appears at first sight an extremely obvious, trivial thing. But its analysis brings out that it is a very strange thing, abounding in metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties. So far as it is a use-value, there is nothing mysterious about it, whether we consider it from the point of view that by its properties it satisfies human needs, or that it first takes on these properties as the product of human labour. It is absolutely clear that, by his activity, man changes the forms of the materials of nature in such a way as to make them useful to him. The form of wood, for instance, is altered if a table is made out of it. Nevertheless the table continues to be wood, an ordinary sensuous thing. But as soon as it emerges as a commodity, it changes into a thing which transcends sensuousness. It not only stands with its feet on the ground, but, in relation to all other commodities, it stands on its head, and evolves out of its wooden brain grotesque ideas, far more wonderful than if it were to begin dancing of its own free will."

Commodity fetishism is subjective, but relative to a society. Members of this society attach value to the goods and services they are manufacturing. Members engage in an economic transaction in which “commodity-form, and the value-relation of the products of labor within which it appears, have absolutely no connection with the physical nature of the commodity and the material relations arising out of this. It is nothing but the definite social relation between men themselves which assumes here, for them, the fantastic form of a relation between things” (Marx). This ultimate self-identification through market exchange lends itself to self-expression through commodities. In addition to uncovering how individuals act within a society, Marxist theory sheds light on how societies interact when considering cultural appropriation in a capitalist society.

Marxist social theory is a guideline for inspecting the capitalist society in which we live and breathe, learn and express ourselves. The theories on a capitalist society shed light on the social relations of production which points to just how culture is an expressive product of societies, and in a capitalist society, how commodity fetishism contributes to identification through goods. Cultural appropriation, then, is flourishing in a consumeristic expressed-through-capitalistic society. Cultural appropriation is a clear example of just how commodity fetishism operates. More specifically, economic activity has a quantitative way of determining the ontological relationship within and between societies.

Considering the foundation for culture in the US, a capitalist society is inherently linked to colonialism expressed through imperialism. These societal roots in the United States have set the stage for a culturally appropriative society in which imitation violates the significance productions hold to a community. One needn't leave to house to ingest a big gulp of capitalism.

Pick up your iPhone or put on your espadrilles – the cheap equivalent of summering in the Mediterranean if you execute the act with pastiche – and you’ve staked your claim in societies that interact through commodity fetishism.

Walter Benjamin was a successor to Marx but an amalgamation of Marxist theory with others including German idealism and Romanticism. His distinguished works include *The Task of the Translator* (1923) and *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (1936). *The Work of Art* contributes important considerations about what is happening to source communities with the commodification and reproduction of their culture. Benjamin outlines just how the reproduction of art, which is increasingly commonplace with advancing technology, has had on art in its traditional form.

“Even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art is lacking in one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be. This unique existence of the work of art determined the history to which it was subject throughout the time of its existence. This includes the changes which it may have suffered in physical condition over the years as well as the various changes in its ownership. The traces of the first can be revealed only by chemical or physical analyses which it is impossible to perform on a reproduction; changes of ownership are subject to a tradition which must be traced from the situation of the original.”

When threatened by reproduction, the original subject has exclusive rights to its artistic quality. Reproduction is a process that divorces the illegitimate clone from the item of artistic or cultural interest. Although now autonomous, without significance to a source community, this clone exists in contexts perhaps previously unimaginable to its original. Privilege plays a markedly large role here similar to the fascination with Kahlo’s iconography to individuals that do not share her status. Only source communities hold the worth of their commodities. A

commodity reproduced outside of its source community is detached and objectively worthless. Through commodity fetishizing, of course, this product has subjective value that places weight on societal hierarchy of a capitalist society. These claims lend consideration to specific ideas about ownership, such as: who has the exclusive rights of identity? This continues to be determined in a capitalist economy in which societal hierarchy prevails through monetized worth and a legal system prioritizes wealth.

Combining the theories of Benjamin with those of Marx make clear that cultural appropriation is diagnosable in the United States. There is a power struggle sewn into the appropriation of culture and one of the largest problems associated with such is blatant unawareness.

### **Cultural Appropriation in the United States**

Culture is perhaps the most enigmatic word in modern English. It is relative to the community in which it is sourced and different even in the context in which the conversation is taking place. In a brief attempt to understand just how culture is commodified we have seen a single doll with several appropriative facets of a source individual. The applied theory can be magnified onto a source community and cultural misappropriation becomes a challenge to identify and deny. While cultural appropriation is vast, it may be qualified as the imitation of culture, which has been produced by a society as a means of existence. More so, this imitation violates the significance for which the original was produced and further reproduced in said community. Culture manifests into the spirit of community and commodities across the board. Much of the cultural that is ripped from the source is ironically, yet unsurprisingly, the pieces of

culture that have been produced in response to marginalization – adding layers of sensitivity to some commodities and less so to others. In this era, while nearly impossible to dictate the responsibility of the consumer, it is important for consumer to acknowledge the obligation each has when justifying their experience and to not fetishize perpetually marginalized communities.

When considering American political ideology of present day, it is no surprise that cultural misappropriation – most commonly referred to as just ‘cultural appropriation’ – is an epidemic. Modern America is the culture of cultures, decorated with vast nationalities, but diseased with cultural misunderstanding and appropriation. Culture is overwhelmingly commodified and the externalities associated with reproduction run theoretically and practically deep on source communities – the groups of individuals to which culture holds original significance. The conversations surrounding cultural appropriation in the US are ripe and many widely acknowledge the appropriation of African Americans and the colonial roots of Africans in the US. It is time now to unpack the sensitivities of other cultures before sartorial is blurred with satirical. The politics of traditional art have manifested into political statements largely in support of xenophobic ideology. The politically correct discourse around maintaining political correctness is important. It is important that violations get called out. Albeit, the personal responses are typically emotional, but surfaced wounds are provided the opportunity to heal.

American culture is wholly engrossed in gluttonous consumerism. Despite the average American voter in 2016, the political climate of the United States is unclear with a forecast for white supremacy. These two vast topics are thoroughly intertwined at the crux of a market economy, but with a closer look, the interconnectedness of commodities and politics sparks a

new interest in the inspiration behind the demand for such commodities. The political landscape of Trump's America has made for quite the experiment as xenophobic rhetoric runs a consequential course, suffocating cultural communities seeking the American Dream. There are deep externalities associated with increased exposure to a given culture.

Mexico specifically is a politically charged noun – a nation and native home to more than 10% of America's population – and its natives are no less at ease. Interestingly, Mexican iconography has been increasingly relevant to pop culture in the US. Perhaps this is due to increased exposure to the culture as politically charged discourse is normalized. Regardless, the commodification of cultures runs its course on source communities in more ways than those that meet the eye. Pieces of Mexican culture including fashion and iconography have been removed from the source and shred amongst aspects of life in the United States serving as the wrong consumer's expression. Mexico's biggest threat is not Trump's corrupt claims of sending a multi-billion-dollar bill. Through culturally appropriative reproduction, the biggest cost Mexicans pay is the expense of cultural diminishment and dehumanization. This threat is imposed through the process of cultural commodification in a capitalist society and theory does a precise job of explaining just how cultural appropriation prevails in this society and its economy.

The conversation only begins here and leads into an entire industries that run their course exploiting the narratives of perpetually marginalized communities, leaving them voiceless. In an ever-politicized United States, political correctness is not intended to limit innovation and expression. Rather, producers and designers and creators and the like are challenged and must challenge themselves to reach beyond their periphery to garner

inspiration without the blatant ripping of culture from communities and their individuals. Otherwise, there becomes further imbalance in a capitalist society with entitlements and obligation, debtors and creditors perpetuating an ideology that capitalist consumers and politicians oppose. This comes full circle in a politically moving time. Supporters of capitalism will use and abuse source communities who face consequences of marginalization. Then capitalists punish the same source communities for their infringement upon modern life in the United States.

A queer, disabled, communist female has become a celebrity of pop culture, although not celebrated for the intersectionality of those things. Rather, she is honored as a woman but stripped by a capitalist society that depoliticizes the fight she fought. The holistic narrative of Kahlo's experience belongs as a coherent story – not as fragments of flirtation or failure. Her true narrative fights a good fight. The Barbie™ serves as a window into the senseless commodification and reproduction of Mexican culture in the United States has become deeply ingrained in our national culture and identity. Now, in 2018, Kahlo has a first class seat on the feminism bandwagon, while her native culture is trivialized and victim to a blatantly racist discourse driving a corrupt ideology. She is not a commodity of the US to exploit through artistic reproduction. In practice, Kahlo's image is surviving in a capitalist society as a result of an economic system that she challenged; in theory, that same system is running its course on cultural source communities diminishing their narrative through cultural commodification and unruly reproduction. So in a culture where the word itself can hardly be defined, it is important to preserve the individuals and communities which comprise the world in which we live and learn and express ourselves.

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