

# Punk Zines as a Medium of Resistance for Queer, Trans, People of Color in Los Angeles

Mia Recio,  
Faculty Mentor: Professor Mary Christianakis

## Introduction

- I conducted close analytical research into the zine collection of the group Los Angeles Queer Resistance (LAQR).
- I chose to look into this collective to explore the reasons queer, trans, people of color (QTPOC) utilize non-traditional art and expression, specifically in the diverse and complex Los Angeles area.
- The goal of this project was to provide another perspective of the Los Angeles punk scene, which is represented in its canon by cis-gendered, heterosexual, white men despite the significant participation of QTPOC.

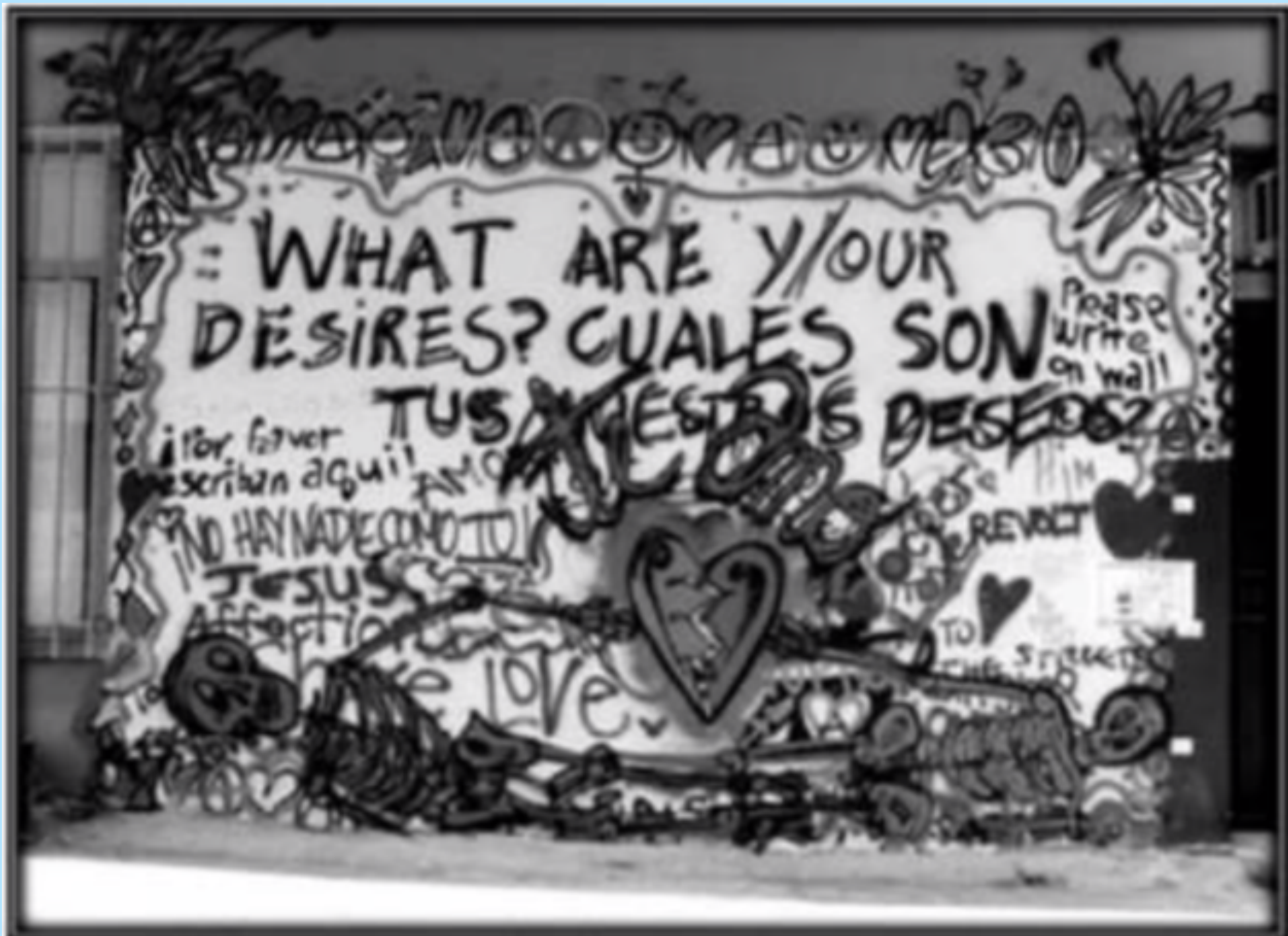
## Methods

1. Examine each of the nine zine issues from LAQR, observing greater recurring themes and documenting substantial examples of them.
2. Synthesize greater themes into clear statements and interpretations of the overall intentions and impacts the zines have.
3. Connect larger themes and examples to interpret theoretical frameworks built by the authors.

## Results/Conclusions

1. Through these zines, QTPOC define liberation as an end of oppressive systems of power (racism, cis-heteropatriarchy, capitalism, ableism), in contrast to the goals of mainstream queer struggles for legislative-approved rights and privileges, such as marriage equality.

## Queer punk artwork as an exploration of desires, trauma, oppression, and joy.



This photo, included in zine issue six (page eight), is of a graffiti-filled wall questioning its audience, “what are your desires? Por favor escriban aqui! [Please write here].” The LAQR zines allowed authors/artists to feel and engage with their emotions typically censored in dominant Western culture. Through these independent publications, artists were able to connect with others experiencing similar, yet unique, feelings; including pain, but also, joy and desire. Unnamed artist. Released November 2013.

2. Zines provide a space for QTPOC to express their experiences with gender-based, racial, and other forms of oppression, as well as their critiques and frustrations with capitalism, through an anti-authoritarian and counter-corporate art medium.
3. QTPOC document community frustrations and experiences of racism and other forms of oppression, and express **non-conventional forms of resistance such as spirituality**. In these zines, authors are able to describe methods of coping and resistance typically disregarded in U.S. dominant culture.
4. QTPOC are able to **explore their desires and affirm their gender, sexualities, and sexual experiences in zines**, in ways **they are not able to safely do so through public expression because of queerphobic repercussions**.



A drawing from the sixth zine of the Los Angeles Queer Resistance collective (page 7). This drawing depicts someone discussing the ways in which they’ve faced abuse for being queer, but are also powerful and can resist White supremacy through their ‘magic.’ Unnamed artist. Released November 2013.

**LAQR zines provided a platform for QTPOC to express themselves and find community in ways that prove dangerous in dominant society.**

**RESOURCES USED:**  
Los Angeles Queer Resistance (LAQR). Self-published. Zine Issues 1-9. 2012-2016.

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