



# Roadrunner Series

## Metaphorical construction of New Mexican Hispanic identity as portrayed in New Mexican local political cartoons and other visual media

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This paper presents a continuing research project that builds upon previous research (Chavez, 2024) which focused on the Spanish New Mexican identity narrative as articulated in Angélico Chávez's book *My Penitente Land: Reflection on Spanish New Mexico* (2012). This identity narrative portrayed by Chávez represents a widely held narrative of Spanish heritage by many New Mexican families who identify with the Hispanic identity label, including the author's own family. Utilizing Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framed by Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 2001/1980;1999; Kövesscs, 2005;2019), this study explores the intersection of identity and historical context through the lens of a variety of artistic representations of Hispanic identity contemporary to Chávez's publication period, including the political cartoons of John Trevor of local New Mexico newspaper *The Albuquerque Journal*. By analyzing these visual representations of Spanish identity such as statues, artwork, etc., I demonstrate that the same metaphors identified in Chávez's text—including the broad metaphor CULTURAL GROUPS ARE HUMAN BEINGS and Chávez's Eurocentric instantiation NUEVOMEXICANO CULTURE IS A 16TH CENTURY SPANIARD (2012)—are instantiated both linguistically, eg. speech bubbles in political cartoons, and non-linguistically, eg. the use of Spanish conquistador imagery as representative of Spanish identity in artistic works. This research aligns with Kövesscs' extended conceptual metaphor theory, which argues that metaphor is instantiated both linguistically and non-linguistically (2005,2019). This research only deepens our understanding of the Nuevomexicano Spanish/Hispanic identity and more broadly shows that ideological views in identity narratives and the historical interpretations that lead to such understandings of identity are metaphorically constructed. This work illuminates the broader sociopolitical implications of these metaphors as expressed in contemporary visual culture by multiple political cartoonists and brings to the forefront the need to critically examine narratives of cultural identity in light of their historical context.

**Location:**

Ortega Hall, Rm. 435

**Time:**

1 pm – 2 pm

**Date:**

Wednesday, April  
23rd 2025

