

# Cinco de Mayo

by Gary Fouse



Today is Cinco de Mayo aka Drinko de Mayo. Today is the day in the US that Mexicans and Americans alike flock to bars and parties to get sloshed on Corona and Tequila. It is a day when all the disagreements about immigration and borders are put aside as we celebrate the victory of the Mexicans over the French. Of course, in Mexico, there is no holiday and nobody really does anything because they know that a military victory over the French is nothing to celebrate. We know that too but it is an excuse to drink and party just like we celebrate St Patrick's Day. That's when we put on green pants and pretend we are all a bunch of drunken Irishmen. Or Oktoberfest when all put on green pants, go to places in SoCal like Old World Village (Huntington Beach), listen to a German oompah band, eat bratwurst, and drink imported, pasteurized German beer that tastes more like American beer by the liter.

But I digress.

Think of it. The French, God bless them, have been defeated in wars by Mexico, Vietnam, and Algeria among others. I know what you wise guys out there are going to say: The US was also defeated in the Vietnam war. Not really. Our military won every major battle fought. We lost diplomatically and politically. The French left Vietnam (Indo China) after their disastrous defeat at Dien Bien Phu. We may have had better soldiers, but we didn't have better politicians (or college students).

But I digress again. Here is my thesis:

Before you UC Santa Cruz Community Studies and History of Consciousness majors (and all of you real university students as well) start gearing up for the big 5 tonight, remember you will be engaging in that big collegiate no-no.

Cultural appropriation.

That's right. You are stealing the culture of another people. They will be offended. Actually, only on a college campus. In the real world, we will come together, link arms, and toast each other. But not in the rarefied air of academia where all the smart people live. Of course, nobody cares if it's the Irish or Germans. That's because they are "privileged whites," and Western culture doesn't matter anymore anyway. Only the cultures of peoples of color matter. They cannot be touched—even affectionately. All we can do is salute them, but we cannot participate in them. That would be cultural appropriation. So all you UC Santa Cruz students who are occupying the president's office as I write, stay where you are for at least one more day.

And the rest of you can forget about rushing out to the store for Corona and Jose Cuervo. Unless you are of Mexican heritage, that is forbidden- verboten-haram. Of course, since my wife is Mexican, and I no longer work on a university

campus, I feel free to indulge tonight.

Except my wife says no way is she going to allow me to spend the night guzzling beer and drinking shots of tequila.