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ABE-GSA wants
your feedback on
#GradLife.
[Comment Here.](#)

ABE-GSA Biweekly Update

Purdue ABE Graduate Student Association

October 12, 2015 • News & Announcements

UPCOMING ABE-GSA EVENTS

Fall Cookout at Dr. Engel's Farm (2265 N. Bradbury Rd., Attica)

- **Friday 10/16 @6pm** – make sure to fill out [this survey](#) to indicate your food preferences, guests, and carpooling!

October Birthday Bash! October 19th

- Keep an eye on your emails to the date/time/location.

Meet-to-Eat! Tuesday October 20th at Noon

- More info to be announced!

Professional Development Seminar October 21st

- Dr. Ben Moussa, visiting scholar in Food Science will be speaking on his work in bioenergy and entrepreneurship experience!

Recurring Sports: Check with [Neal](#) or [Ravi](#) to get on the ABE-GSA sports emailing list!

UPCOMING PURDUE/LOCAL EVENTS

[Purdue Boilermaker Half-Marathon & 5K](#)

- Saturday 10/17 at 8:00am!
- Registration is open through 10/16

[Become a Purdue SafeZone Ally](#)

- Visit the LGBTQ Center website for more info on SafeZone training and resources at Purdue.
- The next training is Tuesday 10/27 from 2-5pm.



[Farmer's Markets in the Lafayette Area](#)

- Wednesday 4-7pm, Cumberland Park, West Lafayette
- Thursday 11-2pm, Memorial Mall, Purdue
- Saturday 7:30am-12:30pm, Downtown Lafayette

[Purdue Home Football Games](#)

- 11/7 vs Illinois (Homecoming) • 11/28 vs Indiana University

[Iran Beyond Politics](#): Photo Exhibition, October 14-23rd

- Patti & Rusty Rueff East Gallery in Yue-Kong Pao Hall
- See flyer on next page!

Visit these websites to discover events for yourself:

[Greater LaLa](#) • [Purdue](#) • [Downtown Indy](#)

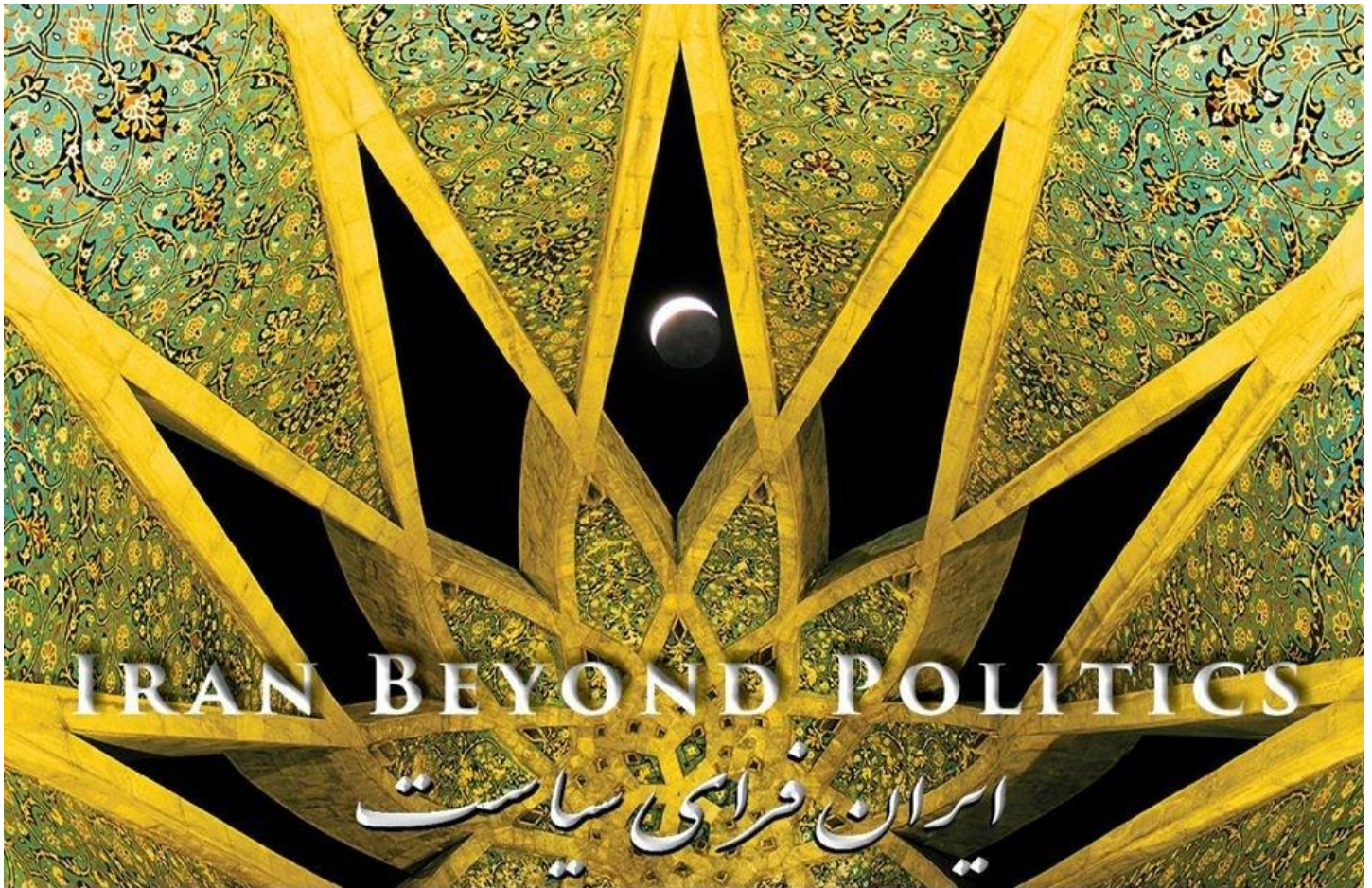


PHOTO EXHIBITION CURATED BY MARYAM GHADIRI

A collaboration between Purdue University and the Iranian Cultural & Geographical Studies Journal, *My Motherland*, funded by the Iranian Cultural Club (ICC) at Purdue University.

A showcase of the exquisite culture, nature and populace of a country supported by millennia of history; this exhibition aims to challenge the common political image portrayed by mainstream media. Join us in this journey across Iran, as witnessed through the lens of young Iranian photographers.

14-23 OCTOBER 2015
PATTI & RUSTY RUEFF - EAST GALLERY

YUE-KONG PAO HALL OF VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS
552 W. WOOD STREET, WEST LAFAYETTE, IN 47907

RECEPTION: FRIDAY OCTOBER 16, 5:30 PM

PURDUE
LIBERAL ARTS

PATTI AND RUSTY RUEFF
SCHOOL OF VISUAL AND
PERFORMING ARTS

**THINK BROADLY.
LEAD BOLDLY.**





Let's talk Culture vs. Costume, and Appreciation vs. Appropriation

ABE Grads – the Halloween season is upon us, and with pre-packaged costumes available everywhere and parties and breakfast clubs at which you can wear them, it may be time to take a look at your costumes and even your everyday wardrobe and **check yo'self** by asking: is my costume marginalizing and misrepresenting another culture? Is that cheap t-shirt I bought appropriating the style of a culture I know nothing about?

Let's explore the differences between appropriation and appreciation. Questions to ask yourself:

#1. What culture does this style reference, and what is my relation to that culture?

The most important thing to keep in mind, is that you're part of a global community, so whether you mean it or not, what you wear has meaning connected to that global context. If what you want to wear references a culture that is experiencing or has experienced injustice, violence, or a traumatic colonial past, appropriating the culture can offensively repeat patterns of unequal give and take- especially depending on how your own culture/past is related to that trauma.

If the item in question finds its origins in a culture you're not a part of, move onto question 2.

#2. Why are you wearing it?

Let's be real, half the time the reason you're wearing an item will reveal some of your own values to yourself.

YOU'LL LIVE WITHOUT IT IF YOUR ANSWER IS: "To be sexy!" "Just looks cool!" "To be crazy!" "Cuz its random!" "It's a costume!" "It's cinco de drinko!"

It's hard to imagine a time where shock value, "pure aesthetics", or sexualization is really worth furthering stereotypes or erasing a history. So you might want to consider putting down the drinking sombrero, especially if you're in the US where Mexicans are battling **anti-immigrant racism, systematic abuse of foriegn low-wage workers, and deportation brutality.**

OKAY, YOU MIGHT GET A PASS: "It is part of a cultural event I am a part of or invited to."

(Examples: celebrating a marriage or holiday)

"For educational purposes." (Examples: you read about something, or went abroad, and want to tell people the story, and believe in it)

None of this is to say that after you visit India for a week, or date a Japanese person that you should take on the entire look or act like you understand or own the culture now. But if you had a moment with a crafts-person, were moved by the story of a product, or found a shirt with a map on it and genuinely respect the culture and want to spread the word about issues of history, craftsmanship, or current events, more power to you.

Okay, so your intentions are decent. Let's see how well it's executed with our next question.

#3. Who made the product, and who's selling it?

An easy way to tell if you're empowering another culture with your style, is if what you're wearing is authentic or if profit goes back to the original cultural creators.

YAS!: Natives making "Native American inspired" items, African-made print swimwear, or gems from immigrant or indigenous mom-and-pop shops near you (and how rad would it be if they have sons or daughters who create contemporary pieces? You never know!)

OR NAH...: Urban outfitters designs "inspired by" Native American culture, or Pakistani-style necklaces

#4. How accurate/respectful is it to the source?

This is usually solved by knowing the story behind what you wear, which is easy if you buy it from a place where its made by people with some relation to the culture.

STOP PLAYING: Lady Gaga's see through veil accompanied by a hyper-sexual song [Aura/Burqa](#) (click for lyrics) in which she explicitly states that she's a pop star wearing a Burqa for style, not to make any type of statement. The style Gaga's going for is sexual, and the song replays classic colonial fantasy of wanting to see what's beneath the veil, while spinning the culture behind it as backward (making references to slavery and violence). Such fantasies position Middle Eastern cultures as a second class, exotic cultures worth dominating.

This train of thought was borrowed from

<http://interruptmag.com/article/appropriation-vs-appreciation>

Another good resources is this New York Times Article:
<http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2015/08/04/whose-culture-is-it-anyhow/consider-historical-and-political-context-when-appropriating-others-culture>

There's a difference between repurposing cultural symbols, and borrowing others' traditions for fetish, profit or social capital.



In the spirit of cultures and costumes, Min, Iris and Amanda offered some commentary and answers to the question “what is the best costume you have ever worn or seen?”



Min Xiao

ABE 316 • 2nd Year M.S.

• Guangzhou, China

“The best costume I’ve ever worn is a magenta wibes bosom skirt when I had a solo performance in the graduation evening party. It’s full of delicate lace on the surface and made of silk fabrics inside.

There’s also a bowknot in the middle of the dress as an ornament. It was my first time to wear formal dress, which made me excited and also, a bit nervous. ;-)”



Iris (Xiaoyu) Feng

ABE 113 • 2nd Year Ph.D. • China

“I would like to introduce “Qipao (cheongsam)” which is a body-hugging one-piece traditional Chinese dress for women. This costume was created in the 1920s in Shanghai and now is still very popular among modern Chinese. I wore Qipao for several times and all people especially foreigners compliment it. If you have a chance to wear one, you will love it!”



Amanda Kreger

POTR 236 • 2nd Year M.S. • Born in Austin, TX, raised in West Lafayette

“I’m very partial to my typical Breakfast Club/Halloween costume Katniss Everdeen, especially if paired with a complete Hunger Games posse. However, the best costume I’ve seen recently is “Netflix and Chill”; a true cultural representation of our time.”

