

# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

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## Film captures human aspects of girl gang

### Quik Facts

**Movie:** "Mi Vida Loca (My Crazy Life)"

**Rating:** R

**Stars:** Angel Aviles, Seidy Lopez, Jacob Vargas, Marlo Marron, Nelida Lopez

**Director:** Allison Anders

**Grade:** C+

**Five Words:** Unfulfilling Latin "Menace II Society"

**By Chad Johnson**

Staff Reporter

"Mi Vida Loca" is the story of the struggle of a girl gang in L.A.'s Echo Park neighborhood.

While the focus is on the gang, the story revolves around the human aspects of that gang, specifically the friendship of Sad Girl (Angel Aviles) and Mousie (Seidy Lopez) and the test their friendship endures when both women become pregnant by the suave and endearing Ernesto (Jacob Vargas).

The friendship comes under intense scrutiny as both women struggle to keep Ernesto, because in their neighborhood, all of the males are either "in prison, crippled or dead by 21."

Because of this trend, the women form their own gang as a support system and means of protection that contrasts from that of the men in the neighborhood.

While the story moves along at a fair pace, the plot seems predictable as it moves from one standard "gang-related incident" to another. In one, Ernesto is shot and killed by a client of his drug trade. In another, a rival gang lord is gunned down at a party. In yet another, an innocent is killed in the name of vengeance.

While each of these incidents are based on actual events, their inclusion in the story seems to echo films like "Boyz n the Hood"



Courtesy of Sony Pictures Classics

The Homegirls keep one-time friends Mousie (Seidy Lopez, left center) and Sad Girl (right center) apart in Allison Anders' "Mi Vida Loca (My Crazy Life)."

and "Menace II Society."

The acting in the film is very professional, even with a cast of mostly unknowns. The two exceptions to this unknown cast are Seidy Lopez ("Falling Down") and Jesse Borrego, who plays rival gang leader El Duran. Borrego's work includes the TV series "Fame."

The most impressive performance is turned in by Nelida Lopez (Whisper), a 16-year-old resident of Echo Park who plays herself with an intensity that rivals the professionals.

The direction by Allison Anders ("Gas

Food Lodging") leaves a lot to be desired. She seems able to motivate her actors well but does little creatively with the camera. Camera angles and movement seem constrained. The cinematography also seems tame; too few scenes capture the eye. This slows the film's momentum.

Other technical aspects hurt the movie's impact as well, especially in the fiesta scene when the boom mike is in the frame for the majority of the shots.

The editing is also somewhat standard. Anders attempts to use rapid intercutting to heighten suspense, but telegraphs it all the

way so the audience knows well in advance what is coming.

Overall, "Mi Vida Loca" is an interesting film that attempts to address the issues of the Echo Park "locas" and their attempts to survive in a harsh and unforgiving environment — an approach never before taken.

That new angle ends up appearing as just that, a new variable on the now-standard formula of L.A. gang-life films, but without the visceral impact of its predecessors.

"Mi Vida Loca" is playing Thursday through Sunday at the Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater.

## Huey's serves up plenty of food and fun

**By Jeff Zeleny**  
Editor

Take a step into the Gunny's building, walk down a flight of stairs and turn the corner into a medieval English pub — in the heart of downtown Lincoln.

Huey's Fine Food & Spirits, 245 N. 13th St., replaced Chesterfield's in June. The menu that was featured at the 23-year-old Chesterfield's is similar to the new one at Huey's, but the decorations have changed a little.

Huey's is divided into three sec-

tions: the restaurant, gaming parlor and dance club.

Four televisions line the deep-green walls of the restaurant to accommodate sports fans, according to general manager Mike Miller.

The gaming parlor still features billiards, but games now can be

played on new pool tables. The former Underground dance club also has been remodeled.

Despite the additions, Miller said, Huey's focus is still food and fun.

"You can have it all down here," Miller said. "It is a place for all types of people."

On a recent weekend night visit to Huey's, this certainly was true. The dining room was about three-fourths full of children, students and adults.

The service at our table of five was swift for a busy Friday evening. We began our dinner with an "Appetizer," which according to the menu is where the quest for the perfect meal begins.

See HUEY'S on 10

### Quik Facts

**Restaurant:** Huey's Fine Food & Spirits

**Opened:** June

**At:** Lower level Gunny's building, 245 N. 13th St.

**Hours:** Monday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 1 a.m.; Sunday, 3 p.m. to 1 a.m.

**Trademark:** Burgers and steaks

**Comment:** A tasty, relatively inexpensive casual dining spot



Jeff Haller/DN

Matt Cederburg, left, a senior UNL accounting major, serves Rev. Don Hanway and Steve Linney, a UNL actuarial science professor, during lunch at Huey's.

## Comic act fills Union with fun

From Staff Reports

Yuk it up tonight at 7:30, when the University Program Council presents the Los Angeles comedy team of Jackie Guerra and Willie Barcena.

Guerra, a Latina comedian by night and Yale freshman by day, digs deep at alcohol awareness, stress management, censorship, eating disorders and self-esteem.

Are these topics anything to laugh about? Evidently they are, especially since Guerra has appeared in Comedy Central's "2 Drink Minimum," "Comedy Compadres" and "Short Attention Span."

Her partner, Barcena, has been featured on "Comic Strip Live," MTV's "Comikaze" and A&E's "Evening at the Improv." He focuses on his Mexican American heritage and the similarities of the two cultures.

So, take a serious break from studies for an hour of laughs at the Nebraska Union. Tickets are \$5 for UNL students at the door and \$8 for the public.