Culture

[Name of the Writer]

[Name of the Institution]

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**Introduction**

The country of the United States of America is full of different communities. It is home to many people who live in different communities, tribes, and civilizations that follow their own culture. Culture is the collection of customs, traditions, norms, and values that a specific community follows. This collection is developed over a period of time. One of the prominent societies among these civilizations is Slab City.

Slab City is one of the snowbird communities or squatters’ community in the Sonoran Desert that is present in the Imperial County, California. It is probably “the last free place on Earth” and a culturally rich area to see and stay.

**Discussion**

**Culture Shock**

Slab city, one of the lawless cities in right around hour’s drive from the Mexican border, is a culturally rich and fun place to visit. Various snowbirds and artists from all over the country especially northern parts travel down to the south to avoid the chilling weather of north. This gathering of people at a same place at the same time gives rise to unique and colorful culture.

**Ethnocentrism**

Ethnocentrism is the act of evaluation of the other culture base on the preconceptions that are found in the values and standards of one’s own culture. The factor of ethnocentrism can be clearly and predominantly seen in Slab City as a number of people come together in a same area and celebrate their culture.

**Material culture**

The material culture in Slab City is very unique and colorful. There is the area of east Jesus and the Range. East Jesus is actually an art community where the visitors can find a number of art and craft objects made out of refused and re-purposed material.

**Non-material Culture**

The non-material culture of the Slab City is very simple and strict. There have been defined rules and regulations for the visitors which are defined for their safety and security. Otherwise, every person is free to follow their own will and live as they want in the Slabs.

**Language**

Normally the language spoken at the Slab City is English but other languages are also spoken by the people who come and stay at the “lawless land”.

**Social Control**

Although Slab City is known as a lawless land and there are no typical rules and regulations to be followed by the visitors but this does not mean that they are free to do anything (any crime). There are strict rules and regulations regarding all the criminal activities which are according to the laws of the United States of America.

**Values and Norms**

One of the simplest values that are followed in Slab City is “live and let live”. No person is bound to obey the other person and everyone is free to live and act according to their heart.

**Ideal Culture**

Ideal culture of a place is the norms and values that a community is supposed to follow. Ideally, a culture should have the values of respect and dignity for the members of the community (OpenStax, 2015). Every person should be free to follow their ideas and beliefs without hurting the sentiments of the other person.

**Real Culture**

Real culture of a place or a community is the actual set of values or norms that are being followed at that place. The real culture of the Slab city is almost the same as ideal culture. People follow their hearts, draw paintings, do artwork, create music and live their lives to the fullest but at the same time respect the values and personal space of each other.

**Conclusion**

In a nutshell, it can be seen that Slab City is a place where everyone is respected and everyone does what they like. Although it is called a lawless land but not in the meaning of crime and illegal activities. It is a lawless land in terms of no obligations and everyone can have their share of fun without worrying about the rules and obligations.

**References**

OpenStax. (2015). *Introduction to Sociology.* Houston, Texas.