MANUFACTURED LATINA/O: PERCEPTIONS OF LATINAS/OS WITHIN U.S. PRIMETIME TELEVISION FROM 1950S TO 2000S

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Alexandria C. Vazquez

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The Undersigned Faculty Committee Approves the

Thesis of Alexandria Vazquez:

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John Putman, Chair
Department of History

Paula De Vos
Department of History

2019

William Nericcio
Department of English

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For the Latinx community.

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Manufactured Latina/o: Perceptions of Latinas/os within U.S.
Primetime Television from 1950s to 2000s
by
Alexandria C. Vazquez
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This thesis examined how television portrayed the Latina/o community since its network-broadcasting inception in the 1950s to the 21st Century. This thesis delved into three select primetime programs (*I Love Lucy*, *Chico and the Man*, and *Ugly Betty*) that featured a Latina/o character as one of their main characters with a pivotal role in their respective show. Perceptions gained from these programs engaged with misconceptions and stereotypes of this community by either reinforcing or challenging these perpetuated images. This thesis argues that the journey towards presenting a Latina/o on television exists through the inclusion of this community in the development process and in positions of authority within the programs. This argument emerged through a critical viewing of the episodes and insight from the creators of each program. This thesis conveyed misconceptions and stereotypes promoted by television, until the 21st century when *Ugly Betty* directly challenged these images and seamlessly presented an inclusive Latina/o community and culture.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Television in the U.S. created a world with limited problems - a picturesque reality.[1] These fictional worlds, which existed during primetime,[2] created a world of escapism for viewers. As such, it has become one of the most popular mediums for U.S. citizens to absorb their popular culture, effectively competing with film.[3] Between the time of its inception to present day, television has gradually increased minority representation within its programs. One of the minority groups to experience this increased representation was the Latina/o community.[4] The initial presence of Latinas/os within television created a perceived Latina/o character, one that modeled the chosen narrative of these people. Over time, this character developed and not only began to reflect the Latina/o community, but interact with their heritage and culture. However, the accepted and understood presence of the Latina/o on television came to fruition after decades of programs reinforcing these falsities.

The presence of Latina/o people on television took decades to consistently exist and present an encompassing representation of the community. As a result, this thesis examined

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[1] Neal Gabler, "Cable vs. Broadcast: TV's Different Mindsets," *Los Angeles Times*, April 4, 2010.

[2] In 21st Century programming within the United States, primetime television is defined as programs that air from 8 pm until 11 pm, Monday through Saturday and Sunday, from 7 pm until 11 pm.

[3] Jim Cullen, *The Art of Democracy* (New York: NYU Press, 2002), 205.

[4] Throughout the duration of the paper, Latina/o will serve as the main title to speak of the community as it encompasses the people and culture. Chicana/o will be included when speaking about the movement and ideologies that came from that movement as it is a more specific identity. The only instances when Latina and Latino (as well as Chicana and Chicano) will stand alone will be when speaking of an individual. The term Hispanic will only appear if utilized within a direct quote as I link this identity to Hispaniola and the conquering of the people that occurred.

the manner in which the Latina/o community emerged to audiences through utilizing U.S. primetime television programs. Moreover, in displaying this community, this thesis sought to answer what misconceptions or stereotypes appeared in the programs that they either reinforced or challenged to provide a representative image of this community. In addition, what factors attributed to the narrative of Latinas/os highlighted in the series to audiences. To examine the role of Latinas/os in television, this thesis will utilize three primetime television programs as the basis of study: *I Love Lucy*, *Chico and the Man*, and *Ugly Betty*. These three programs served to provide a longevity argument to the presence of Latinas/os in television, as the first premiered in 1951 and the last in 2006. Furthermore, this tactic delves into the evolving history of television through displaying the growing acceptance of minority people into primetime television. While studying the changing television climate, a look into the Latina/o community's actions will allow their voice to emerge in this thesis, as well as contextualize the series.

This thesis emerges from a rich historiography of television, but one that has neglected to include the voice of the Latina/o. The historiography surrounding Latinas/os in television seldom exists, especially sources written from historians. This community and their presence in television has yet to undergo a proper analysis through individuals in the field. Instead, the scholarly outlook on television started mainly in the 1970s, growing significantly during the 1980s, and rarely discusses the television in terms of ethnic minorities. However, individuals have written about the television since its inception. Prior to the 1970s, scholars who studied the television mainly either focused on its technological aspects or studied it through a social science lens. Those who studied its technological aspects, focused on attributing it as another wonder that science had produced. Otherwise, scholars had simply studied its effects and tended to deem the television as having a negative impact on the US lifestyle. The writing on television has since grown and the academic profession has turned their focus to the phenomena. Scholars have approached the television from a broadcasting perspective, as a player in mass communication through media studies, and have even created the television studies profession that utilizes a cultural lens to analyze this medium. The scholars surrounding the historiography of television stem mainly from media or communication studies, while some of the writers directly worked in the industry, providing different angles of understanding. Yet, scholarly work surrounding the presence of

Latinas/os within television seldom exists, failing to analyze the role of this people within the popular medium. Instead, the work surrounding television mainly focused on its functionality, impact on viewers, and its affect on the U.S. Thus, the history of television follows three main approaches: technological, social, and cultural.

HISTORIOGRAPHY

The first historical approach to the television was through its technological history. One of the writers who wrote about the television was Orrin E. Dunlap, Jr., a prominent individual in the radio world as a broadcaster. Dunlap, who had also written extensively on the radio, produced an almanac on the television in 1948, describing to individuals its history, purpose, and usage.[5] The historical approach that Dunlap took focused on its technology, breaking down every aspect of the television to help readers understand the new technology. As Dunlap viewed the television as a miracle of science, he focused on the men involved in the creation of the television. Dunlap referenced various monographs on television to compile this reader, as well as statements and papers from the Radio Corporation of America and their laboratories.[6] He often did this through connecting it to the radio, a medium he and his audience knew fairly well. However, his main focus was to help the average individual understand and utilize this new technological creation.

Interestingly, Dunlap also included a chapter, "What Performers Should Know about Television", in which he advised those who would appear on television on how to best utilize the technology.[7] Dunlap advised performers to "be yourself"[8] as television focused on the interaction between the performer and the audience at home, watching their every move for authenticity.[9] He also briefly mentioned that the television provided another means of

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[5] Orrin E. Dunlap, Jr., *Understanding Television: What It Is and How It Works* (New York: Greenberg Publisher, 1948).

[6] Dunlap, *Understanding Televison,* 124-125.

[7] Dunlap, 66-88.

[8] Dunlap, 67.

[9] Dunlap, 67-69.

"influencing public opinion".[10] The discussion of these two topics in his almanac, despite the short length, would prove influential in future scholars' writings of television.

The next individual to produce a prominent work on the television and its history was Albert Abramson. In 1955 Abramson, an engineer for CBS, covered the technology of television in his book, *Electronic Motion Pictures*, with great emphasis on the change in camera from motion to electronic picture. This technical account began with Henry D. Hubbard's, Secretary of Motion Picture Engineers, who envisioned a camera in 1921 that functioned like an electronic camera:

> with automatic focusing, automatic aperture adjustment, a camera recording in full color, with bi-visual stereoscopic effect, developing the picture instantly, telegraphing the pictures, exactly as recorded automatically to be filled, and with mechanism for instantly locating any film without index, and exhibiting it immediately, a camera with self-sensitizing plates on which no separate pictures but a continuously changing picture is formed and erased after being telegraphed to the storage room.[11]

Abramson argued that the envisioning of this device would lead to an entire new market to emerge, the television.[12] He utilized sources from the Radio Corporation of America, reports by the Technical Committee on Television and Facsimile, newspapers, monographs, and journals to formalize this argument. Abramson showed that through the creation and improvement of the electronic motion camera created for television, it revolutionized the medium and even influenced film in creating a better viewing image.[13] Abramson produced a technical account that many readers found accessible, making his book prominent in the technological history field. While not a scholar, this account by Abramson provided a basis for technological history in the field.

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[10] Dunlap, 66.

[11] Albert Abramson, *Electronic Motion Pictures: A History of the Television Camera* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1955), 2.

[12] Abramson, *Electronic Motion Pictures*, 2-3.

[13] Abramson, 163-164.

Breaking away from the technological view, Erik Barnouw produced multiple works on television from a social perspective and was one of the most influential scholars to write on television. Barnouw studied at Princeton University and immersed himself in the entertainment and broadcasting fields prior to publishing his works. In 1956, Barnouw wrote *Mass Communication,* exploring the communications revolution in order to understand both its scope and its meaning.[14] Instead of viewing television as a piece of technology, Barnouw included the device as a form of mass communication. In doing so, Barnouw studied the influence of the television on society in a more intellectual manner, not just as a viewing device.

Barnouw first studied the rise in newspaper and accessibility to the working class and immigrants.[15] The influence of television heightened after World War II, when its central purpose during the war no longer existed and the technology permitted its usage in homes.[16] While Barnouw had briefly explored the technological aspect of the television in this section, he quickly switched focus back onto mass communication where he argued that advertisers led the acceptance of the television into homes.[17] Barnouw utilized monographs, Orrin E. Dunlap Jr.'s almanac, as well as a reference guide published by Princeton titled *Propaganda, Communication and Public Opinion* to support his argument.[18] In viewing the television as a form of mass communication, Barnouw highlighted the importance of television as a form of ideological and social influence. *Mass Communication* served as the beginning of Barnouw's interest into viewing the television from a different perspective, later establishing the first works that broaden the field.

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[14] Erik Barnouw, *Mass Communication: Television, Radio, Film, Press: The Media and their Practice in the United States of America* (New York: Rinehart and Winston, 1956), 3.

[15] Barnouw, *Mass Communication,* 5, 9-10.

[16] Barnouw, 37.

[17] Barnouw, 37.

[18] Barnouw, 46-47.

While Barnouw began to view the television as a social influence in 1956, the next year a study was published that viewed at television from an entirely new perspective. This new perspective viewed the television as a form of popular art and influencer of culture in the US. For instance, the access to television began to question how this medium rose in popularity and challenged common perceptions held in the US, such as gender roles. Prior to the publishing of academic scholarship from a cultural and historical perspective, the history of television had undergone various studies questioning and fearing the affect of the television on individuals. One study that addressed this concern, through both an optimistic or skeptic view was published in 1957.

Bernard Rosenberg and David Manning White, editors of *Mass Culture*, had gathered individuals from various fields together in order to discuss mass culture and showed the perceptions individuals had about it from various outlets, such as literature, film, radio, and the television. The television section provided articles that argued if the television posed to have any benefits on society and culture within the US. One of the authors in particular, completely disagreed with the premise that the television as a benefit to society. Gunther Anders, a German philosopher, in his essay "The Phantom World of TV", articulated the perspective that condemned the television and its "collective consumption".[19] This collective consumption ruined individualism and turned individuals into passive citizens.[20] Anders felt that the presence of television failed to accomplish any good, just alienate each other through uniformity.[21]

Another essay within *Mass Communication* actually directly challenged and rebutted Anders claim and was written by Henry Rabassiere. Rabassiere, a historian and political scientist, deconstructed Anders claim based on his misunderstanding of economics,

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[19] Bernard Rosenberg and David Manning White, eds., *Mass Culture: The Popular Arts in America* (Glencoe, IL: The Free Press, 1957), 359.

[20] Rosenberg and White, *Mass Culture*, 361.

[21] Rosenberg and White, 367.

technology, and sociology.[22] Rabassiere did not believe that individuals were mislead by the television and would turn into passive citizens. In fact, he argued that everyone understood the creative liberties taken by television and asserted that, “even the children who used to believe in Santa Claus know that Hopalong Cassidy is an actor”.[23] Rabassiere further defended television by arguing that it broadens experiences of viewers and gave citizens a larger voice.[24] While these are merely two examples of the essays contained in *Mass Culture*, they reflect the approaches taken by authors. Many of the authors and topics covered in this book influenced scholar's writing and challenged them to understand the relationship between culture and television.

While Barnouw's television account in *Mass Communication* (1956) traced its technological history, his later books furthered the technological history and explored the television on its political and social influence in terms of broadcasting. His three volume *History of Broadcasting in the United States* spanned from around 1876 when Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone, until 1970 when Barnouw published the last segment, *The Image Empire*. The first two volumes, *A Tower in Babel*[25] and *The Golden Web*,[26] explored the history of broadcasting until 1953 and mainly covered topics such as the telephone and radio.

Barnouw's *The Image Empire* focused on the broadcasting that occurred in America from 1953, encompassing much of the television and its history. In this volume, Barnouw traced the expansion of the television "as a reflection of a growing United States involvement in the lives of other nations."[27] He concluded that companies had utilized broadcasting

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[22] Rosenberg and White, 368.

[23] Rosenberg and White, 370.

[24] Rosenberg and White, 374.

[25] Erik Barnouw, *A Tower in Babel*, vol. 1, *A History of Broadcasting in the United States to 1933* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966).

[26] Erik Barnouw, *The Golden Web*, vol. 2, *A History of Broadcasting in the United States 1933-1953* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968).

[27] Erik Barnouw, *The Image Empire*, vol. 3, *A History of Broadcasting in the United States from 1953*

systems, such as the television, in order to further their agenda and increase their wealth.[28] Barnouw consulted various manuscript and oral history collections to prove his argument, such as the Columbia University Oral History Collection in New York and the University of Southern California Doheny Library in Los Angeles.[29] An example of this manipulation of the broadcasting systems was in the 'Kitchen Debate' between Vice President Richard Nixon and Premier of the Soviet Union Nikita Khrushchev in 1959. Nixon, while being filmed and recorded, had attempted to create a narrative that depicted Russians as "a mute country bumpkin listening to explanations from the centers of progress and civilization".[30] Khrushchev challenged Nixon's attempt and goaded Nixon into a debate about American foreign bases. Both had aimed to create a big enough event in order to appear on each other's home television networks and "seize the [country's] attention".[31] Barnouw argued that this event, and others similar to it, showed that the television was used to further a country's political and social agenda. Barnouw's work proved revolutionary to the profession as it validated the studying of television, especially because of its publisher, Oxford University Press.

A pioneering scholar who approached television history from a cultural approach was Horace Newcomb. Horace Newcomb received his PhD in English from the University of Chicago in 1965 and published *TV: The Most Popular Art* in 1974. Newcomb's book addressed the television in relation to its place in the entertainment realm, something that scholars had yet to explore.[32] In this study, Newcomb aimed to learn why certain television formulas, as in the structure of the television program, received better viewings. He also wanted to study how the television has influenced other formulas of popular art. Newcomb's

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(New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 3.

[28] Barnouw, *The Image Empire*, 335.

[29] Barnouw, 355.

[30] Barnouw, 120.

[31] Barnouw, 119.

[32] Horace Newcomb, *TV: The Most Popular Art* (New York: Anchor Books, 1974), 1.

work was also influenced by the essays found within Rosenberg and White's *Mass Culture* (1957), thus the nature of his study on the television and its impact on culture within the US. Newcomb focused on the television programs themselves from an aesthetic and cultural perspective, breaking them down thematically. Newcomb found that the television, through the illusion of life that these programs portrayed had created "a set of values for living"[33] and portrayed the drama that audience experienced to keep their attention.[34] Thus, Newcomb established a new perspective for studying the television, case studies.

In 1978, John Fiske, who was a professor of Communication Arts at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and John Hartley, currently Dean of the Creative industries Faculty at the Queensland University of Technology, Australia, first published their book that aimed to understand the relationship between the television and societal standards. Fiske and Hartley studied television programs to find this relationship. In conducting their research, they found that the television mimicked or displayed societal issues and connected the images displayed on the screen to the audience watching. For instance, if the program were a sitcom, otherwise known as a situational comedy, family drama would occur on the screen and the audience was most likely watching as a family.[35]

Fiske and Hartley focused on the impacts that television had on the U.S. society, yet introduced cultural topics that many scholars have written about since around the emergence of a social understanding. Through identify the work of mass communications as the first to study the television from an academic background, Fiske and Hartley included this view in their book when studying the "relationship between the television message, the everyday reality of the audience, and the functions performed by television for that audience".[36] Horace Newcomb, referred to within the book by Fiske and Hartley, was one of the first to question the presence and role of the television in the lives of US citizens from an

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[33] Newcomb, 134.

[34] Newcomb, 109.

[35] John Fiske and John Hartley, *Reading Television*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2003), 83.

[36] Fiske and Hartley, *Reading Television*, 51.

entertainment angle. Having released a new edition in 2003, Fiske and Hartley included the work of one Lynn Spigel. Spigel further broadened the field of television history through the inclusion of white women in the narrative overall and influenced Fiske and Hartley's work through their inclusion and discussion of gender in the narrative.

One of the most influential scholars in the history of television produced their monograph in 1992. Lynn Spigel wrote *Make Room for TV* and studied the popular thinking that surrounded the television in relation to family ideals and gender roles. Spigel's social understanding conveyed that the success of the television originated from the renewed family structure and the domestic ideals prominent after World War II.[37] Spigel traced the change in domestic ideals from the Victorian era to the 1940s within the US and how this allowed for the television to enter into homes. She pinpointed that the purpose of the television was to bring leisure time back into the home. In constructing this narrative, Spigel challenged the narrative that women were passive actors in their homes. Women led the television acceptance movement, making them active agents and not as just another item in the household.[38]

The deconstruction of the idea as women as passive in their own homes that Spigel depicted, echo Barnouw's arguments. Barnouw had challenged the role that television, or broadcasting in general, had played in homes and the world, portraying it as an active agent and not merely as a piece of furniture. Spigel's work changed the historiography because it showed women as active agents in their homes and further established the cultural approach to the history of the television. However, Spigel failed to take into account the different experiences for women of different classes and color. In her introduction, Spigel had claimed that the readership of women's magazines "were no doubt more heterogeneous in nature" and then moved onto her next point.[39] While women of color may have read these

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[37] Lynn Spigel, *Make Room for TV: Television and the Family Ideal in Postwar America* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992).

[38] Spigel, *Make Room for TV*, 125.

[39] Spigel, 5.

magazines, Spigel did not provide evidence of such, this did not necessarily equate to the two groups of women having the same experience with the television in their home.

Few exceptions exist to the scholars who have neglected to study Latinas/os within television. One exception occurred when broadening the medium analyzed to include film and Hollywood overall. In 2009, Mary Beltrán, an assistant professor of communication arts and Chicana/o and Latina/o studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, published her study of Latinas/os within film and television in *Latina/o Stars in U.S. Eyes: The Making and Meanings of Film and TV Stardom*.[40] Beltrán studied stardom through the mediums of film and television, focusing on the individual Latina/o. A focus on the individual Latina/o allowed that talent to shine through in the greater context of U.S. entertainment history. However, Beltrán focuses directly on only two Latinos from television, Dezi Arnaz and Freddie Prinze. This direct focus on just the individual fails to acknowledge the context in which they achieved success. Focusing on the individual disregards the root of the Latina/o and the Chicana/o, its community. The Chicana/o community helped increase the presence of Latinas/os in popular entertainment through its activism, such as the Puerto Rican Media Action & Educational Council.[41]

Scholarly works on Latinas/os in popular culture and on the Chicano movement have also neglected an aspect of this research: television. Again, an exception to this lack of inclusion is Beltrán. While she has offered insightful analysis to Latinas/os on screen, she has not studied television and its programs in its historical context. Instead, Beltrán focuses on the individual Latino (Desi Arnaz or Freddie Prinze) and his success, and not exclusively on the image of the Latino and the community portrayed. The studies of Latinas/os in popular cultures have analyzed Latinas/os in film, art, literature, theater, music, and sports at length.[42] Yet, television is constantly overlooked from any form of analysis, attributed

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[40] Mary C. Beltrán, *Latina/o Stars in U.S. Eyes: The Making and Meanings of Film and TV Stardom* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009).

[41] Vicente Aceves Madrid, "The Controversy Surrounding NBC's 'Chico and the Man,'" *Latin Quarte*r, October 1974, 5.

[42] Arture J. Aldama, Chela Sandoval, and Peter J.García, eds., *Performing the US Latina and Latino*

perhaps to the lack of television shows that feature this population. Furthermore, scholars of the Chicano movement tend to focus on the political movements made, with the occasional analysis of any cultural implications towards the Anglo-American population.[43] These disciplines do not examine television in the manner deserved. Scholars of film have included the Latina/o and their role in Hollywood but, unfortunately, have failed to study the Latina/o within television.

The historiography of television currently fails to pay attention to the Latina/o within the small screen. This thesis sets out to understand the perceptions of Latina/os portrayed by television, and how it managed to challenge preconceived ideas of these people, or merely reinforce those notions. A close analysis of three selected U.S. primetime programs, *I Love Lucy, Chico and the Man,* and *Ugly Betty*, shows the progression of Latinas/os and their culture being included into television, garnering a greater understanding of this people over time. Since television's inception, too many programs have neglected the Latina/o and relied on stereotypes for the portrayal of the community. The culmination of this thesis provides insight into the 21st century television primetime network through the utilization of *Ugly Betty*. This show will serve as the example to the idea that a positive and powerful Latina/o character and culture can exist in television without relying on Latina/o stereotypes for the comedic drive.

Borderlands (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012); Frederick Luis Aldama, ed., *Latinos and Narrative Media* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Frederick Luis Aldama, ed., *The Routledge Companion to Latina/o Popular Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2016); Michelle Habell-Pallán and Mary Romero, eds., *Latino/a Popular Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2002).

[43] Armando B. Rendon, *Chicano Manifesto: The History and Aspirations of the Second Largest Minority in America* (New York: Collier Books, 1971); Carlos Muñoz, Jr., *Youth, Identity, Power: The Chicano Movement* (New York: Verso, 1989); Rodolfo F. Acuña, *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos*, 6th ed., (San Francisco: Pearson Longman, 2007); Alma M. Garcia, ed., *Chicana Feminist Thought: The Basic Historical Writings* (New York: Routledge, 1997).

I LOVE LUCY, *CHICO AND THE MAN*, AND *UGLY BETTY*

To understand the manner in which the Latina/o community featured on television since its inception, these three programs and their episodes will serve as the foundation to the thesis: *I Love Lucy*, *Chico and the Man*, and *Ugly Betty*. Utilizing the shows in this order will create a chronological argument of the change in television and increasing presence of the Latina/o in television. In *I Love Lucy*, the Latino created had assimilated to U.S. society to inhibit arguments of injustices arising. In *Chico and the Man*, the Latino initially presented modeled the Chicano, effectively engaging with the community, but quickly reduced the show to a stereotype before the end of the first season. The last series to undergone analysis, *Ugly Betty*, presented a Latina fully immersed in her culture and heritage, utilizing this identity throughout the series in multiple avenues.

The thesis starts with a brief overview of *I Love Lucy* and Dezi Arnaz, the featured Latino actor. This show, the first to feature a Latino in a pivotal role on television, did not actively engage with Desi Arnaz as a Latino besides through his profession and accent on the sitcom. Instead, this show featured Arnaz as an assimilated Latino within the U.S. and ignored his culture, unless when utilized for comedic purposes which, in turn, presented a warped image. *I Love Lucy* contradicted the Latina/o experience during this era as they were struggling with defining their citizenship within the U.S. Many Latinas/os had served during World War II but remained as second-class citizens to the broader U.S. citizenship. *I Love Lucy* ignored this citizenship struggle experienced by many Latinas/os.

The next era to directly engage and feature a Latina/o in a prominent role was in the 1970s though *Chico and the Man* with Freddie Prinze. *Chico and the Man*, attempted to engage directly with social issues in the U.S. in its portrayal of the Latina/o stereotypes and discussion of the Chicana/o movement. The first season of *Chico and the Man* aimed to create a positive image of Latinas/os, especially through its inclusion of the Chicana/o identity. It drew in relevant socio-cultural language from the population and presented this community in both blue and white-collar professions. However, as the season progressed, the show relied on reinforcing stereotypes for its comedic value and, ultimately, neglected the active inclusion of the Latina/o until it disappeared from the sitcom.

The next era to undergo analysis will be the 2000s through the sitcom *Ugly Betty*. This influential show in the United States created a positive image of Latinas/os throughout,

all while rarely directly mentioning America Ferrera as a Latina. Instead, this show relied heavily on imagery to show audiences the ever-present Latina/o culture through the clothing and location. This show also presented Latina/o characters to television in avenues that had never graced the screen. It integrated this culture without compromising its meaning, the opposite of how this population emerged in *I Love Lucy*. In Latina/o history, this era encapsulated the time when Latinas/os from diverse ethnic backgrounds united to present a signified identity, fighting for their place within the United States. *Ugly Betty* captured this movement through its ability to present the Latina/o culture to audiences, in a seamless manner.

This analysis on the three televisions shows, *I Love Lucy*, *Chico and the Man*, and *Ugly Betty*, presented an important understanding of Latinas/os on television in their historical context and broadened the current historiographical work that fails to understand Latinas/os in television. Furthermore, it shows how television evolved and ultimately created a positive image of a Latina/o. In order to show the progression of the Latina/o perception on television, the primetime television shows themselves will serve as the basis of primary source material. Articles from various newspapers, primarily The New York Times, will sporadically emerge into analysis, but the bulk of the thesis stems from the episodes of the series. *I Love Lucy*, *Chico and the Man*, and *Ugly Betty* presented the Latina/o community in varying degrees of racial appropriateness, but all did manage to include the Latina/o people on the popular entertainment medium, television.

CHAPTER 2

I LOVE LUCY

During the 1950s in the U.S., networks and producers experimented with television and its programming. This era, later referred to as the Golden Age, sought to understand the role of television through the four broadcasting networks: American Broadcasting Company (ABC), Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS), DuMont Television Network, and National Broadcasting Company (NBC). Many of the first programs on this medium originated on the radio, and transferred to television as it provided the visual aspect to programs already captivated by audiences. The 1951-1952 television season continued this practice and created a program which, according to the Nielsen ratings,[44] "10,753,000 families" tuned in to view.[45] That program, *I Love Lucy*, became the first to feature a Latino in a prominent role. As such, *I Love Lucy* found itself within a pivotal moment of television history, and with the responsibility of portraying this community. Ultimately, the sitcom failed this responsibility. Instead, *I Love Lucy* appropriated the argument of assimilation promoted by members of the community and completely ignored the inequality and racism experienced by the Latina/o community in the U.S.

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[44] The Nielson rating system is the measurement utilized to understand the popularity of an item. In the case of television, it collects data on a certain number of television sets tuned to a particular program. Based on that number of sets, it calculates what percentages of American homes tuned into the program and thus, its popularity.

[45] "Ratings," *The New York Times*, June 1, 1952, X9; Jack Gould, "Radio and Television: Return of 'I Love Lucy' to C.B.S. Establishes Lucille Ball as a Top-Notch Video Comedienne," *The New York Times*, September 17, 1952, 44; Florence Crowther, "About 'I Love Lucy': Hard Work and Four Days Make a Half-Hour Show," *The New York Times*, September 28, 1952, X13.

I Love Lucy, sponsored by Phillip Morris, aired from 1951 - 1957 on CBS.[46] The stars of *I Love Lucy* were real-life couple Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz. Ball had reached stardom through her radio program, *My Favorite Husband*, and decided to switch mediums to adapt the radio program to television.[47] The creator of *I Love Lucy*, Jess Oppenheimer, succinctly describes the nature of the program through the registered title for the program:

> This is a title of an idea for a radio and/or television program, incorporating characters named Lucy and Ricky Ricardo. He is a Latin-American orchestra leader and singer. She is his wife. They are happily married and very much in love. The only bone of contention between them is her desire to get into show business, and his equally strong desire to keep her out of it.[48]

The program relied on the relationship of Ball and Arnaz to portray the happily married couple. This relationship between the two was the heart of the program. As such, producers knew Arnaz would play a vital role in either the failure or success of the show.

Arnaz not only played a pivotal role in the show, but also in the manner that audiences perceived the Latina/o community. As stated earlier, the program reached over ten million views. Thus, audiences absorbed the image of Ricky projected by *I Love Lucy*, "the single most visible Hispanics presence in the United States".[49] The narrative Latinas/os created prior and during this era revolved around a fight for equality. Some joined World War II efforts to gain societal equality. Others stayed at home to demand equal treatment under U.S. law, promoting assimilation. Another portion of the community fought against societal norms for their collective equality in the face of blatant racism, believing they should have equal treatment at home before fighting for such ideals abroad. *I Love Lucy* ignored the efforts of these people, instead choosing to create a reality showing that the Latino already

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[46] "'Goldbergs' Sign N.B.C. Contract: Gertrude Berg in Long-Term Pact for Television Show - Miss Truman in Pageant," *The New York Times*, August 22, 1951, 30; Bob Crosby, "Lucille Ball, Desi Arnaz Signed to Replace Heidt; MacRae Talks of TV Singers," *Los Angeles Times*, August 27, 1951, 24.

[47] Jess Oppenheimer and Gregg Oppenheimer, *Laughs, Luck... and Lucy: How I Came to Create the Most Popular Sitcom of All Time* (United States of America: Syracuse University Press, 1999), 132.

[48] Oppenheimer and Oppenhiemer, *Laughs, Luck…and Lucy*, 3 and 139.

[49] Gutavo Pérez Firmat, *Life on the Hyphen: The Cuban-American Way* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2012), 1.

experienced equality under the law and had successfully assimilated into the grander U.S. societal culture without having ever experienced racism.

To show how *I Love Lucy* ignored Latinas/os fight for equality and created the ideal assimilated Latino through Ricky, this chapter will discuss the lives of the Latina/o population during the 1940s. This era influenced the manner in which Ricky's character in *I Love Lucy* portrayed the Latina/o community to audiences. The thesis will then analyze the character of Ricky within the context of the episodes. The episodes will show that Ricky projected a false and manufactured narrative of the Latina/o community. Through dissecting the various actions taken by Latina/o communities in the 1940s, it will show that *I Love Lucy* failed to understand the Latina/o. Instead, it appropriated the assimilation argument and created a picturesque reality between Euro-Americans and Latina/o Americans.

The first section of this chapter provides the contextual knowledge surrounding the Latina/o communities' actions during the 1940s. This section will delve into two different methods utilized by the Latina/o community to advocate for their equal treatment prior to the release of *I Love Lucy*. The first method will explore members of the Latina/o community who fought for the assimilation of their community. They fought for equality within the structured socio-political structure in the U.S. This section will start through understanding the efforts of Latina/o World War II veterans and how the U.S. eradicated knowledge of their actions to the public. Due to this erasure from history, a shift towards the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), the organization behind the assimilation narrative for this community, will then discuss their efforts to ensure Latina/o Americans no longer were erased from history. A member of LULAC, Jose R. Moreno, published the following statement within *LULAC News* providing the reasoning behind assimilation: "The American citizen of Mexican ancestry is weak because he is a minority-citizen. Discrimination will pursue him until he blends with the majority group of this country enough to lose his present identity."[50] Documents from the LULAC organization published during the 1940s will

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[50] Jose R. Moreno, "The Price We Must Pay for Equality," *LULAC News* 13, no. 5 (November 1946): 12.

demonstrate the organizations commitment to assimilation through avenues such as imagery and published editorials. This assimilation argument centers on positioning Latinas/os in positions of influence within U.S. society to combat racism and oppression.

The second method within the first section of the thesis will explore members of the Latina/o community that fought for equal treatment through challenging societal standards. A brief exploration of the *pachuco* movement will serve to represent these members as they endured countless acts of violence within the U.S. This community of individuals, who strove to understand their identity, were targeted for challenging the accepted image of 'American'. This section will utilize newspaper articles, primarily from *The New York Times*, to describe the Zoot Suit Riots of 1943. Furthermore, for not meeting the standard image of 'American', these newspaper articles will show that the media's negative portrayal of these Latinas/os ultimately influenced the characterization of Ricky Ricardo on *I Love Lucy*. This contextual section will show that by the time *I Love Lucy* hit the airwaves, the only possible narrative for Ricky Ricardo to embrace would be one of assimilation.

The second section focuses on *I Love Lucy* and understanding the Latino the show portrayed to audiences. Analysis of *I Love Lucy* will stem mainly from the sitcom itself, as well as the personal account of creator Jess Oppenheimer, and newspaper articles that provided commentary on the perception of the program. This section will dissect various episodes of *I Love Lucy* to show that the sitcom strove to show the character of Ricky as an assimilated Latino without any acknowledgment of the community's hardships. As such, this decision depicted an ideal community, eradicating any notion of struggles experienced by this community to achieve equality. It silenced the voice of the community and ignored their efforts and fights for inclusion, while defining their identity. This struggle for identity presented itself through *I Love Lucy* with the rarity of the program defining Ricky's ethnicity and projecting multiple stereotypes from various Latina/o ethnicities onto this one character. The sitcom ignored the challenges faced by the community in attempting to define their role in the larger societal normative U.S., adapting a warped version of the assimilation narrative. Instead, *I Love Lucy* presented a manufactured Latina/o because of the programs inability to display to audiences an understanding of this community's efforts towards equality.

"SWEEP UNDER THE RUG": LATINAS/OS IN THE 1940S

The infamous attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 and the official introduction of the U.S. into World War II efforts led to an influx of military recruits. Individuals from various cultural, social, and ethnic backgrounds pledged their lives to the war effort. The Latina/o populations were no exception, joining the war efforts and enlisting in the military to defend *their* country. As Latinas/os had previously categorized themselves as white in the census, the exact number of individuals that enlisted varies. Estimates show 250,000 to 750,000 Latinas/os, with 250,000 to 500,000 of those being of Mexican descent, enlisted in the war efforts.[51] This moment of solidarity with the U.S. served to prove their allegiances to America. This nationalism mentality that emerged from within Latinas/os, bewildered Euro-U.S. citizens as they had yet to receive the full acceptance of Euro-Americans into the larger society. When Latinas/os enlisted, they challenged the misconstrued beliefs that Latinas/os were not U.S. citizens and did not hold any form of nationalism due to them being 'others'.[52] However, Latinas/os did not perceive themselves in this 'other' manner, especially Mexican Americans who had lived in the U.S. for generations.

Mexicans had owned most of the western lands that now belong to the U.S. government, including the land in present day California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. The U.S.-Mexican War, 1846 - 1848, resulted in the U.S. buying a vast amount of land from Mexico through the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo signed in 1848.[53] Through the terms of the Treaty, Mexicans currently occupying the Northern lands of Mexico remained living within the newly defined U.S. borders as allowed in the Treaty. The Treaty had promised that: "There shall be firm and universal peace between the United States of America and the

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[51] Rodolfo Acuña, *Occupied America*, 198. Manuel G. Gonzalez, *Mexicanos: A History of Mexicans in the United States*, 2nd ed., (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2009), 164.

[52] George J. Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1993), 251.

[53] David G. Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the Politics of Ethnicity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 13.

Mexican Republic, and between their respective countries, territories, cities, and towns, and people, without exception of places or persons".[54] However, unless the family was wealthy, they "became second-class citizens."[55] They had lost their property and voice, forcing them to turn to hard labor for work, such as agriculture, in order to sustain themselves.[56]

As Latinas/os settled to the U.S., they challenged and fought to protect rights not automatically afforded to their community. Even more, these people had to balance their ethnic culture with the new one forming around them. For instance, a popular Latina/o newspaper based in Los Angeles, *La Opinion*, would translate English ads into Spanish starting in the 1920s.[57] They also mixed articles about American culture and rallying "against the deportations and repatriations of the 1930's".[58] *La Opinion* demonstrated the need of Latinas/os to embrace both aspects of their culture. For instance, with the rise of the flappers in the 1920's, young Mexican American females balanced this American style with Mexican customs. They pleaded for the bob haircut and less conservative style of clothing, such as shorter skirts.[59] The influence of the U.S. onto Latinas/os created a balancing act in terms of culture for these individuals. They felt connected to both cultures. This connection to the U.S. led to Latinas/os striving for inclusion and equality, thus their need to join World War II efforts and struggle with identity.

Latinas/os pledged their lives to their home country. While the amount of Latinas/os that enlisted varies, enough had pledged their involvement that LULAC, which formed in 1929,[60] experienced a few dormant years during World War II.[61] Yet, their home country of

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[54] Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, US-Mexico, February 2, 1848

[55] Vicki L. Ruiz, *From Out of the Shadows Mexican-American in Twentieth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 5.

[56] Ruiz, *From Out of the Shadows*, 5.

[57] Ruiz, 56.

[58] Ruiz, 58.

[59] Ruiz, 54-55.

[60] Benjamin Márquez, *LULAC: The Evolution of a Mexican American Political Organization* (United States of America: University of Texas Press, 1993), 1.

the U.S. strove to eradicate their efforts during World War II. Their accomplishments were written out of the grand historical narrative; their actual efforts acknowledged, but credit was never pointed towards the Latina/o. These actions were appropriated and then put on the face of someone deemed worthy. One such example of this revolved around veteran Guy Gabaldón. His World War II efforts in Japan were adapted for the film, *Hell to Eternity*, and the actor who represented him in the film was blonde and blue-eyed. This misrepresentation of Gabaldón served to ignore his ethnicity completely and the efforts of the community. [62]

The Latina/o population during the 1940s and 1950s struggled to prove their worth to Euro-Americans. Their presence within the United States experienced constant scrutiny and questions, even after having served during World War II. This marginalized population bled and died for the United States, yet were treated as if they did not belong. This 'othering' notion of these people served to differentiate them from the Euro-Americans, to the point that the remembrance efforts in place for these people were nonexistent. One Mexican-American GI, Private Felix Longoria, was denied the right to be buried in the state of TeFxas.[63] The basis of this denial stemmed from the fact that, according to a manager of the funeral home "'Other white people object to the use of the funeral home by people of Mexican origin'."[64] With this statement, Private Longoria efforts in the war were stripped from him. These people could not see beyond Private Longoria's ethnicity. The manager of the location corrected the statement made, saying that he merely "discouraged the use of the chapel."[65] Even adding that he did not discriminate against this veteran as he has "many good friends of Latin-American ancestry... and I have fought alongside many Latin Americans."[66] The

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[61] Márquez, *LULAC*, 39-40.

[62] Acuña, *Occupied America*, 199.

[63] William S. White, "GI of Mexican Origin, Denied Rites In Texas, to be Buried in Arlington," *The New York Times*, January 13, 1949, 1 and 11.

[64] White, "GI of Mexican Origin." 1.

[65] White, 11.

[66] White, 11.

inability of the manager to acknowledge and his attempts to explain his discriminatory actions, resulted in a Latino World War II veteran returning home to face discrimination in his afterlife after dying for equality. The efforts of these individuals during World War II and their fight for equality failed to infiltrate societal U.S. As such, those who survived the war joined in LULAC's efforts to assimilate Latinas/os to the U.S. and achieve their goal for equality.

LULAC led the assimilation tactic for equality in the U.S. It aimed to position Latinas/os on an equal level to Euro-Americans and eradicate advantages only experienced by Euro-Americans. LULAC's primary goal was "to reform American society and fit in with the white majority."[67] This ideal manifested itself within LULAC's periodical, The Pan-American. The title of the periodical, featured at the heading, included imagery reflecting the inclusivity sought. Under the title, two phrases appeared, separated by the face of George Washington in the middle: "one continent, one thought, one ideal" and "liberty equality and justice for all."[68] The faces of Simón Bolivar and Miguel Hidalgo also featured, as did the Statue of Liberty, with the words, "Hemispheric Solidarity," running along the bottom of the heading.[69] This powerful imagery connected various Latina/o communities, seen though the historical figures selected as they each led revolutions in their respected countries, all within the Americas. LULAC acknowledged their ethnic roots, thus the inclusion of Bolivar and Hidalgo, but ultimately understood that their loyalties lay with the U.S. first. The placement of Washington in the middle of the heading, as well as the Statue of Liberty shedding light onto these historical figures, further reflected the central placement of the U.S. in LULAC's policies.[70] These ideals promoted by LULAC garnered the attention of World War II veterans, resulting in numerous returning to the organization.[71] World War II veterans joined

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[67] Márquez, *LULAC,* 1.

[68] *The Pan-American* 1, no. 4 (January 1945): Front Cover.

[69] *The Pan-American,* Front Cover.

[70] *The Pan-American,* Front Cover.

[71] League of United Latin American Citizens, *LULAC News* 13, no. 5 (November 1946), 7.

in LULAC's efforts to promote equality in the U.S.[72] as they had pledged their lives to the war for this very reason. The inclusion of veterans in these efforts provided a demographic of people that had previously proven that their loyalties to the U.S. during an alarming time for the U.S. in terms of domestic and foreign affairs.

The attack on Pearl Harbor had heightened alertness in the U.S., causing "any discussion of a group's un-Americanness [to]... acquire more threatening connotations."[73] Thus, any community that did not appear '*American'* fell under scrutiny. One community to face these sentiments was the Latina/o youth population in Los Angeles, CA. Those of this population, primarily those associated with the *pachuco* movement and Zoot Suit Riots, endured a great deal of violence. These Latina/o youth were targeted for challenging the social norms in the U.S. when, in fact, they were merely struggling to define their identity within the U.S.

The *pachuco*, otherwise known as zoot-suiter due to the fashion trend, described a young Latina/o, most likely of Mexican descent, struggling to find their identity within the U.S. They were learning to balance both their Mexican and American identities, within terms approved by their parents/culture and Euro-Americans.[74] This identity granted these young Latinas/os control over their narrative. In June of 1943, the tensions in the U.S. from World War II came into fruition and the *pachucos* endured the violence that ensued in what was dubbed the Zoot-Suit Riots. The *New York Times* provided news coverage on the riots, which lasted from June 3, 1943 through June 13, 1943. The riots resulted from Euro-Americans enlisted in the Navy who declared war on these zoot suiters "when the wives of two sailors were criminally attacked by the youths."[75] Another article stated that the riots

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[72] Márquez, *LULAC*, 40.

[73] Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors*, 125.

[74] M. Gonzalez, *Mexicanos*, 169; Gutiérrez, 123; Ruiz, *From Out of the Shadows*, 83; Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American*, 268.

[75] "28 Zoot Suiters Seized on Coast After Clashes With Service Men," *The New York Times*, June 7, 1943.

started because "the seamen... were tired of being 'shoved-around' by the youngsters."[76] Regardless, the coverage provided by the newspaper continuously acknowledged the starting role of Euro-Americans in the riots, yet skewed the events to place the blame on the youth.

These marginalized youth members pitted against the service men resulted in an assault on the public image of this community as a whole. As previously mentioned, articles attributed the start of the riots to service men who decided to challenge these zoot suiters. Yet, these same articles failed to mention any violent actions taken by service men. One article described their actions as heroic, stating "the service men routed the gangs, depriving them of crude weapons."[77] Even more, Mayor Bowron of Los Angeles released a statement in which he failed to acknowledge the responsibility of the service men in the riots and stated the root of the problem stems from the zoot suiters:

> We have here, unfortunately, a bad situation as the result of the formation and activities of youthful gangs, the members of which, probably to the extent of 98 percent or more, were born right here in Los Angeles. They are Los Angeles youth, and the problem is purely a local one. We are going to see that members of the armed forces are not attacked. At the same time, we expect cooperation from officers of the Army and Navy to the extent that soldiers and sailors do not pile into Los Angeles for the purpose of excitement and adventure and what they might consider a little fun by beating up young men whose appearance they do not like.[78]

While acknowledging that adult service men are attacking youth zoot suiters, the mayor assured that the service men would not come to any harm. The zoot suiters, the youth population, did not receive the same assurance. Instead, these individuals were painted as the sole problem source in the riots. The media portrayed these individuals as the enemy against those who had enlisted in the World War II efforts, conveniently ignoring the fact that numerous Latinas/os too enlisted in the war efforts. The only lasting image of the community that challenged the social normative image of 'American' derived a negative

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[76] "Los Angeles Barred to Sailors By Navy to Stem Zoot-Suit Riots: Army and Civilian Authorities Join in Measures to Halt Outbreaks and All Patrols Strengthened," *The New York Times*, June 9, 1943.

[77] "28 Zoot Suiters Seized on Coast After Clashes With Service Men," *The New York Times*.

[78] "Not a Race Issue, Mayor Says," *The New York Times*, June 10, 1943.

connotation. They were the people to cause mayhem at home with the U.S. actively fighting abroad. The ability to overlook their silent fight for equality through their *pacucho* identity made the narrative of assimilation easier to grasp within societal U.S.

The struggle between identity and treatment of inequality experienced by these people led to them and their issues eventually being 'swept under the rug'. Instead, *I Love Lucy* utilized the narrative of assimilation, propelled by groups like LULAC and World War II veterans. Any other efforts made by these people remained ignored, as the media had villainized any other voice. The narrative of assimilation became the easier and less confrontational choice as it did not speak ill of the Euro-American community. It acknowledged the avenues of inequality and aimed to right them for Latinas/os within the socio-political normative community. The creation of *I Love Lucy* portrayed a version of this assimilated minority. The sitcom utilized Arnaz to portray a Latino that existed without any complaints and in complete devotion to his Euro-American wife, essentially negating any arguments created by the Latina/o population about equality and fairness that persisted in the U.S. *I Love Lucy* featured a Cuban U.S. citizen in a lead role at the inception of programming television. Unfortunately, this decision reflected to viewers that Latinas/os were accepted and assimilated into the U.S. culture, eradicating their history.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF TELEVISION: *I LOVE LUCY*

I Love Lucy starred real life married couple Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz. Prior to *I Love Lucy,* Lucille Ball starred in films, performed in vaudevilles, and was featured on her very own radio program. With the emergence of television, executives of the major primetime networks sought out stars to feature on their programs. The offer to Ball resulted in the cancellation of her radio program, *My Favorite Husband,* for at least a season,[79] and decreased her involvement in the medium of film.[80] Her later official acceptance of the role

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[79] Bob Crosby, "Lucille Ball, Desi Arnaz signed to Replace Heidt; MacRae Talks of TV Singers," *The Los Angeles Times,* August 27, 1951.

[80] Bob Thomas, "Hollywood," *Santa Cruz Sentinel-News,* October 9, 1951, 10.

made her "one of the first of current top Hollywood stars to jump into video".[81] Ball's stardom granted her the opportunity to ensure that Desi Arnaz would play opposite her on *I Love Lucy*.

Ball's enlisting of Arnaz to play opposite her as her husband on the program led to him being the first Latino to play a major role in primetime television. Initially, executives were displeased with Ball's insistence to have Arnaz on the show, as they did not believe audiences would respond well to Arnaz due to this ethnicity. Ball and Arnaz disagreed. To prove that they could achieve success, the two traveled throughout the U.S. with their successful comedy routine to gain attention. Due to the popularity of their act, Ball and Arnaz were green lit by producers to move forward with *I Love Lucy*, under the sponsorship of CBS, Phillip Morris, and creator Jess Oppenheimer.[82] The role of Ricky in *I Love Lucy* would establish itself throughout the series, but primary the pilot episode, in which "Arnaz was used... as a kind of salsa: he was a flavoring applied from time to time but never allowed the status of a main taste."[83]

I Love Lucy premiered on October 15, 1951 airing the episode, "The Girls Want to go to a Nightclub".[84] As explicitly stated in the title, this episode surrounds an attempt to attend a nightclub, led by Lucy and her neighbor Ethel Mertz, for Ethel and her husband's, Frank Mertz, anniversary. The initial dispute arose from the inability of Ethel and Frank to agree on the destination of their anniversary. The options were between a nightclub and boxing ring to watch the fights. As such, the two sought the help of Ricky and Lucy to help them convince the other to attend the event of their choosing. At this point in the episode, it became clear to viewers that this pilot episode would fail to introduce the characters

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[81] Crosby, "Lucille Ball, Desi Arnaz signed to Replace Heidt; MacRae Talks of TV Singers."

[82] Tanya González, "A Mainstream Dream: Latinas/os on Prime-time Television," in *Latinos and American Popular Culture*, ed. Patricia M. Montilla (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2013), 6.

[83] Susan M. Carini, "Love's Labors Almost Lost: Managing Crisis during the Reign of 'I Love Lucy'," *Cinema Journal* 43, no. 1 (Autumn, 2003), 44.

[84] *I Love Lucy*, season 1, episode 1, "The Girls Want to Go to the Nightclub," directed by Marc Daniels, aired October 15, 1951, on CBS.

gradually. Instead, the episode immediately places the viewer into the middle of the happy couple's lives, affording viewers the opportunity to absorb the daily activities of these fictional characters.

The lack of gradual introductions to the characters in the pilot episode left viewers to their own assumptions. In the case of Ricky, this meant viewers absorbed his character as a Latino based on his accent alone, as the program failed to define his cultural heritage. Their first interactions with this character left viewers knowing that he worked in a nightclub as a bandleader and spoke English with a heavy accent.[85] This lack of definition allowed viewers to pour all of their various assumptions about this group onto this one character, without understanding the differences that exist between the ethnic groups. Oppenheimer did not indicate that this was his intention at all, even referring to Arnaz as Cuban in his autobiography.[86] Yet, the episode itself never defined Ricky's ethnicity, supporting the narrative of assimilation that did not wish to differentiate this community, but render it nonexistent though an external need to mold it within the U.S. societal norms.

The assimilation narrative further presented itself in Ricky's accent. Arnaz naturally spoke English with a Spanish accent. This often led to mispronunciation of words, which the crew of *I Love Lucy* thoroughly utilized for further humorous material within the sitcom.[87] As highlighted in *The New York Times,* this made some of his English difficult to understand for viewers. A reporter from *The New York Times* transcribed these mispronunciations, referred to as "'desi-isms,'"[88] with their translation written within parenthesis: "lo-shickle splenation (logical explanation); Fabrierry (February); dunt (do not); parneb (apartment); inner essen (interesting); for worth (forward); ness (next); feel mim (filming)."[89] The direct

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[85] *I Love Lucy*, "The Girls Want to Go to the Nightclub."

[86] Oppenheimer and Oppenheimer, *Laughs, Luck…and Lucy,* 173.

[87] Oppenheimer and Oppenheimer, 173.

[88] Walter Ames, "Arnaz Brings New Worlds to Hollywood; Roy Rogers to Guest," *The Los Angeles Times,* December 16, 1951, Part IV - 8.

[89] Ames, "Arnaz Brings New Worlds to Hollywood; Roy Rogers to Guest."

translation of Arnaz's English words calls attention to Arnaz's 'outsider' status. He was playing opposite his wife in the most popular television program of the year and yet, this article failed to comment on the success of the sitcom once. Instead, Arnaz's acting was ignored and reduced to his accent: "his talents come from applying his native Cuban accent to an American script and letting the words fail as they may."[90] The only positive note of this article came from it accurately identify Arnaz's ethnicity as Cuban, a fact ignored in the first episode of *I Love Lucy*.

The failure of the show to define the Latina/o identity within the pilot left the character open to absorb various misconceptions, all without the ability to defend itself. This clearly manifested itself at the end of the pilot episode when Ricky sings "Guadalajara", a song about a city in Mexico even though Arnaz is Cuban.[91] Professor of Media Studies Mary Beltrán argued that Arnaz was able to sing this song because he was combining "Latinidad" cultures.[92] This combination of cultures further promoted the narrative of assimilation. There was no desire to create a distinction between the different Latina/o cultures as Euro-Americans absorbed this community as one group. The second episode further intertwined various cultures when Lucy attempted to bring Cuba to Ricky. In the living room, paraphernalia from various Latinas/o cultures placed throughout: such as a donkey, sleeping man wearing a sombrero, chickens, and music from Brazilian Carmen Miranda.[93] These images presented to audiences reinforced the stereotypes surrounding the individual ethnic groups and then appropriated them on to all of the ethnic Latina/o groups as one.

The assimilation argument further reinforced itself through Ricky's identification to 'American' in an episode titled "The Adagio".[94] In this episode, a Frenchman who Lucille

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[90] Ames, "Arnaz Brings New Worlds to Hollywood; Roy Rogers to Guest."

[91] *I Love Lucy*, "The Girls Want to Go to the Nightclub."

[92] Mary Beltrán, *Latina/o Stars in U.S. Eyes*, 54-55.

[93] *I Love Lucy*, season 1, episode 2, "Be a Pal," directed by Marc Daniels, aired October 22, 1951, on CBS.

[94] *I Love Lucy*, season 1, episode 12, "The Adagio," directed by Marc Daniels, aired December 31, 1951, on CBS.

rehearses a dance with, falls in love with her, and challenges Ricky to a duel for her hand. When Ricky accepted the duel, the Frenchman cowered and explained he only challenged Ricky because he had been under the impression that "American men would be afraid to duel".[95] When Ricky heard himself identified as 'American', he laughed and made a joke about his "Brooklyn accent".[96] In this scene, the Frenchman equated Ricky to 'American'. His innocence to the U.S. lifestyle made it so he could not distinguish the hyphenated ethnicity associated to Ricky. Ricky's abrupt dismissal of this notion as 'American' expanded on the assimilation narrative promoted through the series, showing the extent of acceptance of this practice. As soon as this character, who served as a global voice, associated Ricky with 'American', Ricky had to ensure audiences that this was not true, which he did through laughter. Ultimately, Ricky could only symbolize 'American' when he was also apparently Latino.

Progressing further into the pilot episode, the role of Ricky in contrast to the other male character on the program became apparent. The couples began disputing about whether to attend the nightclub (Copacabana) or the fights.[97] As neither could agree, the group eventually decided that they would each attend the events separately. When mocking the ability of the girls to attend the club without them, Ricky questioned who would lead. Lucy answered that she and Ethel had dates for that evening. Frank and Ricky eventually left the room to avoid further discussing the events that transpired. As they were leaving the room, Ricky slowed down and turned back to Lucy, expressing sadness on his face at the possibility of Lucy having a date. Ricky's reaction is in direct contradiction to that of Frank, who stormed out of the room without any hint of remorse or concern towards Ethel. This brief moment on screen showed that Ricky relied on Lucy for his happiness and did not want to disappoint her. On the other hand, Frank explicitly belittles Ethel every chance he gets, with

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[95] *I Love Lucy*, "The Adagio."

[96] *I Love Lucy*, "The Adagio."

[97] *I Love Lucy*, "The Girls Want to Go to the Nightclub."

no sign of tensions existing between the couple that could lead to separation or divorce. In fact, when Lucy mentioned in the episode that Ethel wanted to divorce Frank, Frank looked ecstatic while Ethel was mortified that Lucy even suggested this as a possible scenario that could or would ever occur.[98] The unapologetic nature of Frank directly contradicted Ricky's devoted nature to Lucy.

Ricky's unwavering love to Lucy manifested itself in subtle manners. For instance, while reading a mystery novel, Lucy convinced herself of Ricky's plan to kill her based on the plot of the book. When Lucy told Ricky of her suspicion, he confined in Fred, who replied, "every married woman decides that her husband wants to kill her. She's usually right".[99] Ricky immediately defended her feelings, "Look, Fred, please, this is no time for jokes. She's really upset".[100] Even while completely exasperated by her actions, Ricky defended Lucy to Fred. Another example of Ricky's devotion to Lucy occurred when he proceeded to assist her in getting ready to leave for the movies. While Lucy applied nail polish to her fingernails, Ricky brought her dresses from the closet for her to decide what to wear. Again, while irritated by her actions, Ricky continued to assist her in finding a dress.[101] As further explored in the next paragraph, the character of Ricky in the pilot presented a husband who differed from other husbands on television during the 1950s.

During 1950s programming in the U.S., the role of husband, played by Euro-American men, was in a position of authority over their spouse. For instance, in the popular variety television program, *Your Show of Shows*, featuring comedic legends Imogene Coca and Sid Caesar, the two performed multiple sketches per program. While the sketches differed, the two were often opposite each other in roles of husband and wife. One sketch in particular, "Auto Smashup", which aired on April 21, 1951, featured Coca playing the role of

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[98] *I Love Lucy*, "The Girls Want to Go to the Nightclub."

[99] *I Love Lucy*, season 1 episode 4, "Lucy Thinks Ricky Is Trying to Murder Her," directed by Marc Daniels, aired November 5,1951, on CBS.

[100] *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy Thinks Ricky Is Trying to Murder Her."

[101] *I Love Lucy*, season 1, episode 33, "Lucy's Schedule," directed by Marc Daniels, aired May 26, 1952, on CBS.

wife.[102] This sketch opened with Coca speaking with her fictional mother about the car accident she had gotten into that day in a boisterous and matter of fact manner. Once Caesar's character arrived home, he took on the commanding role, diminishing Coca to a meek and submissive wife.

In contrast to Sid Caesar's role as a husband, Ricky did not appear to have any 'power' or 'control' over Lucy, nor did he have the ability to speak over her. Ricky attempted to be stern with Lucy, which proved futile as she pointedly told Ricky, "don't push me too far."[103] This interaction between the two portrayed Ricky in a weak manner. Lucy quickly dismissed his attempt to exert his power, without any care, disputes, or remorse. The character of Ricky was not there to 'lay down the law'. Ricky's inability to exert his voice over Lucy's actions reemerged towards the end of the first season in the popular episode, "Lucy Does a TV Commercial".[104] Ricky had an opening for a female spokesperson on a TV commercial, which Lucy managed to hoodwink herself onto in place of another girl. When Ricky walked by and realized, he proceeded to question her presence and direct challenge to his authority. Instead of answering, Lucy began to deliver the rehearsed lines for the advertisement.[105] This characterization, which could also be attributed to the strong and independent nature of Lucy, actually speaks to Ricky's nationality. As explored briefly, other Euro-American male characters on television were not treated in such a manner. They held the authority in their relationships, without having to ask. Instead, it was expected. Ricky attempted to command the same within his relationship as he too was 'swept under the rug', and dismissed of this role as husband.

Furthermore, this expectation of Arnaz to live under the presence of Ball manifested itself in the title of the program alone. Creator Jess Oppenheimer struggled with a name for

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[102] David M. Inman, *Television Variety Shows: Histories and Episode Guides to 57 Programs* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2006), 40-46.

[103] *I Love Lucy*, "The Girls Want to Go to the Nightclub."

[104] *I Love Lucy*, season 1, episode 30, "Lucy Does a TV Commercial," directed by Marc Daniels, aired May 5, 1952, on CBS.

[105] *I Love Lucy*, "Lucy Does a TV Commercial."

the program, simply titling the project LUCY until an adequate name could replace the title.[106] At the same time, Arnaz wanted to ensure that he would appear in all aspects of the program with Ball, even wanting to be the first listed on the credits that introduced him and Ball as the leads in the program.[107] With the title finally selected, Oppenheimer hoped "it would convey the essential nature of the show - an examination of marriage between two people who truly love each other."[108] Even more, he realized that the 'I' in *I Love Lucy* would represent Arnaz and his love for Ball.[109] This realization of Oppenheimer's presents a contradiction to his initial reasoning behind his selection of the title. The title's objective was to show the love between two people, but Arnaz's represented position put him in reference to Lucy. Without Lucy, he would not exist in the title. Further analyzing the title, Pérez Firmat argued that the utilization of Lucy's name kept her in the forefront of the series, casting away Ricky and reducing his character to "the bystander, or worse, the victim".[110] The expectation surrounding Arnaz's behavior was one of gratefulness and devotion, as he gained privilege through his marriage to Ball. A privilege that the *Los Angeles Times* continuously reminded Arnaz of having and needing to safeguard; "Desi Arnaz had best treat her with kindness and respect because I Love Lucy and millions of other Americans are of the same opinion."[111]

Another characterization of Ricky's explored in the pilot was his naivety. Ricky was expected to be naïve to traditions or common practices in the U.S. due to his minority status. The pilot introduced the concept of an address book, one that held contacts from previous relationships. In the pilot, Lucy utilized hers in an attempt to find dates for herself and Ethel

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[106] Oppenheimer and Oppenheimer, *Laughs, Luck…and Lucy,* 138.

[107] Oppenheimer and Oppenheimer, 138.

[108] Oppenheimer and Oppenheimer, 138.

[109] Oppenheimer and Oppenheimer, 138.

[110] Pérez Firmat, 21.

[111] Walter Ames, "Lucille Ball Rolling Along at Desi Pace on Top of TV Heap," *Los Angeles Times*, April 20, 1952, Part IV 4 - 5.

for when they would attend the nightclub in the pilot episode. When Frank asked Ricky about his address book, Ricky informed him that he burned it, as he "hadn't been in this country very long and Lucy said it was part of the American marriage ceremony."[112] This naive and gullible action by Ricky reinforced his 'outsider' and foreigner status for succumbing to Lucy's obvious trick. Scholar Tanya González summarized Arnaz's role in the series simply, "Ricky presented a sympathetic foil to Lucy's antics".[113]

I Love Lucy presented audiences with a Latino that enjoyed his assimilated lifestyle. Not once did the episode hint at the efforts this community endured that afforded Arnaz the possibility of embodying such a character. As the season progressed, the character of Ricky did not embrace his cultural heritage and instead advanced the assimilation narrative. *I Love Lucy*'s inability to interact with the Latina/o population became clearer. The show failed to discuss this people and their struggles. Instead, it created a picturesque illusion. It focused on the narrative of assimilation, ignoring the struggles and fights for equality undertaken by this community. When Lucy presented Ricky with 'Cuba' during the second episode, he quickly dismissed any desires for his home country. He assured Lucy that he would have stayed in Cuba if that was the lifestyle he had wanted.[114] Ricky's immediate disassociation from Cuba and embracement of the U.S. aligned with the narrative of assimilation that put the U.S. first for Latinas/os. This reaction to even the possibility of feeling positive thoughts toward Cuba directly contradicted the assimilation goal of LULAC. LULAC acknowledge that their fight for equality fit within the U.S. systems, but did so through a remembrance and acknowledgment of their past.[115] To disown his home country completely, Ricky's character appropriated LULAC's argument of assimilation to present audiences with a Latino that ignored the inequality and racism experienced by his community.

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[112] *I Love Lucy*, "The Girls Want to Go to the Nightclub."

[113] González, "A Mainstream Dream," 7.

[114] *I Love Lucy*, "Be a Pal."

[115] *The Pan-American*, Front Cover.

I Love Lucy ensured that the Latina/o American portrayed on television reinforced the story of assimilation, promoted by members of the Euro-American and Latina/o communities, in the characterization of Ricky Ricardo. While the inclusion of Arnaz provided U.S. viewers with an image of a Latino, the ultimate perception gained through the role of Ricky was the reassertion of assimilation and the nonexistent racism experienced by this group of people. Two major schools of thought existed about the Latina/o community: assimilation or fight against inequality. The narrative of assimilation sought to create one group of people, embedding Latinas/os into the larger societal U.S. This stood in direct contrast to the narrative that promoted equality, which sought to distinct Latinas/os from the larger societal U.S., keeping their ethnic roots intact. Yet, both agreed in their ultimate goal of fighting racism. The nation experienced the Latina/o population in *I Love Lucy* in a manufactured manner. Ricky absorbed various misconceptions from differing Latina/o communities and portrayed them to audiences. The images used were racist, yet no attention was drawn as the show depicted a society 'above' racism. The actors then accepted the events, and this acceptance transferred to the audience.

The nature of *I Love Lucy* provided the program with the possibility of interacting with the marginalized Latina/o community. Oppenheimer stated that the program and script revolved around an idea called "holding up the mirror".[116] This idea had the writers reflecting on their everyday lives and writing the script around these events that they deemed their audience would also have experienced. As such, this meant that the program would revolve around domestic issues. This concept alone did not immediately eradicate the possibility of the Latina/o community's experiences reflected on the television. The eradication came from the fact that the creator and writers did not understand this community. They disassociated completely. As U.S. culture, society, and politics shifted to include liberal ideas, broadcasting television would evolve and do the same. Overtime, the image of the Latina/o would grow to reflect its community more accurately. However, for *I*

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[116] Oppenheimer and Oppenheimer, *Laughs, Luck…and Lucy,* 180.

Love Lucy, this community was resorted to its idealist notion of the assimilated minority that had effectively combated all notions of marginalization and racism in the U.S. prior to the 1950s.

CHAPTER 3

CHICO AND THE MAN

The decade of the 1970s introduced a new era of prime-time television shows in the U.S. Prior to the 1970s, television shows avoided discussing any topics that garnered great controversy. This new era of shows, primarily primetime sitcoms, directly interacted with and openly debated highly contested issues within the U.S., such as the Civil Rights. One of the first sitcoms that publicly discussed these issues was *All in the Family* (1971-1979) in dealing with topics such as cancer, rape, and systematic racism. With the release of Norman Lear's *All in the Family* serving as a model, other sitcoms began to challenge audiences with these hotly debated issues. The hit 1970s television sitcom, *Chico and the Man*, attempted to continue this "issue-oriented" style in its portrayal of the Latina/o stereotypes and discussion of the Chicana/o movement.[117] This thesis will examine how the first season of *Chico and the Man* aimed to create a positive image of Latinas/os, especially through its inclusion of the Chicana/o identity. However, as the season progressed, the show relied on reinforcing stereotypes for its comedic value and, ultimately, neglected the active inclusion of the Latina/o until it disappeared from the sitcom.

In 1974, the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) aired the first season of *Chico and the Man* (1974-1978), one of the first shows to feature a Latina/o actor in a prominent reoccurring role since *I Love Lucy*. The show follows Ed Brown (played by Jack Albertson), a grumpy European-American, World War II veteran who owns his own auto garage within the East Los Angeles *barrio*. Ed meets Chico (played by Freddie Prinze), a young Chicano

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[117] Lawrence Mintz, "Ideology in the Television Situation Comedy" *Studies in Popular Culture* 8, no. 2 (1985): 48.

Vietnam veteran with a heavy Spanish accent, when Chico goes to Ed to ask for a partnership in running his garage. The two must learn to work together, creating an odd sort of friendship along the way. This bilingual sitcom focuses on the relationship that forms between these two characters that come from differing ethnic, social, and generational backgrounds.

The creator of *Chico and the Man*, James Komack, intended to create a show that informed the U.S. about the Chicano.[118] The relationship Komack created between the two characters served to reflect the state of the U.S.: "Albertson is the white consciousness of America who knows nothing about Chicanos in the show. Freddie Prinze is the one who teaches him".[119] The education Prinze provides to Albertson, and in turn the U.S., in the sitcom expands the understanding of the Latina/o community. Chicano is a specific identity referring to Mexican-Americans born in the U.S. When the movement started, Vicki Ruiz cites Mexican American youth as the catalyst behind this movement, fighting against discrimination and for "social justice and social change".[120] Chicanas/os focus on their community's needs and struggles, as further emphasized by Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales's epic poem "I am Joaquin".[121] As powerfully reiterated throughout the *Chicano Manifesto*, written by Armando Rendon in 1971, "the Chicano from the earliest phases of his uprising in the 1960 has sought equality and respect for his way of life, for his culture, for his language".[122] The Chicana/o sought to establish their presence within the U.S., and break through the systematic oppression felt by the community for decades.

Chico and the Man introduced US audiences to the Chicana/o in a graspable and comedic manner. Komack set out with the intentions of creating a show that celebrated the

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[118] Vernon Scott, "Chicanos Most Neglected on TV," *Atlanta Daily World*, May 31, 1974.

[119] Scott, "Chicanos Most Neglected on TV."

[120] Vicki Ruiz, *From Out of the Shadows: Mexican-American in Twentieth-Century America*, 10th anniversary ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 98.

[121] Ruiz, 105. Rodolfo Gonzales, *I Am Joaquin* (Santa Barbara, CA: La Causa Publications, 1967).

[122] Rendon, *Chicano Manifesto*, 4.

Latina/o culture. Including the voice of the Chicana/o in the character of Chico illustrated the knowledge that the creative team had about the Latina/o community. At the same time, it also incorporated common misperceptions of this culture for comedic value, as the show was a sitcom. However, the continuous use of these misperceptions and stereotypes eventually overpowered any positive images Komack may have intended to put forth. *Chico and the Man* continuously returned to such beliefs about Latinas/os as lazy, dirty, and "illegal". The sitcom had presented such contradictory images of the Latina/o throughout the first season that negative stereotypes utilized immediately overshadowed any positive images. Therefore, the Latina/o was not accurately presented on the television and led to the community being further ignored, aspects which mirror the scholarly work surrounding Latinas/os in television. This thesis analyzes the role of the Latina/o within television and situates *Chico and the Man* into historical context. Inclusion of the Chicana/o movement within the sitcom and into the analysis will narrate how any positive images of the Latina/o diminished as the show progressed.

To understand how *Chico and the Man* initially presented a positive view of the Latina/o, but then merely reinforced stereotypes, this chapter will cover the preparation, airing, and response to the sitcom. Splitting the chapter into these distinct segments will create a chronological narrative tracing how the Latina/o image factored into the creation of the show, and how it changed as the season progressed. In examining the first season of *Chico and the Man*, a portion of the chapter will be devoted to understanding the creation of the show and the ways in which the show was promoted. It discusses the intentions of the creators when they had created the television show, and conveys that *Chico and the Man* had intended to celebrate the Latina/o culture, especially through the inclusion of the voice of the Chicana/o. As a result, a look into the Chicana/o movement's writings, such as the *Chicano Manifesto* and the infamous epic poem "I am Joaquin", will provide the historical context to understand the Chicana/o voice present within *Chico and the Man*. In the initial creating and advertising for the show, Komack continuously spoke to newspapers, primarily The New York Times, to ensure audiences that he was creating a positive image of Latinas/os in the show. The various newspaper articles function as the primary base to display the initial intentions of *Chico and the Man*. The various promotion conducted by those involved with the show led to the greatly anticipated pilot, which aired on September 13, 1974.

With the anticipated premiere of *Chico and the Man*, the first episode faced the daunting task of addressing the Latina/o and Chicana/o community concerns, as well as ensuring that the episode succeeded in generating an audience. Utilizing the pilot, "The Man Meets Chico", as the basis of analysis will show how it incorporated the Chicano identity through its language, images, and by the act of challenging of stereotypes. The pilot promoted the Latina/o in a positive manner, especially when denouncing racial profiling and challenging stereotypes. However, the episode relied on stereotypical images, ideas, and phrases for comedic purposes to create the illusion for audiences that the show remained loyal to its positive Latina/o image. These stereotypical images, ideas, and phrases overpowered the positive images of Chicano/Latino displayed. The response to the episodes as they aired challenged the show and the stereotypes it portrayed.

The duration of the first season exhibited a decline in positive representation of Latinos in *Chico and the Man*. By the last episode of the season, "Long Live the Man", the only promotion of the Latina/o community was the bilingual nature of the show and one mention of "La Raza". These episodes compiled through the first season reflected Latinas/os in differing lights inciting varying responses from audiences about the season as it aired and how, ultimately, the popularity of the show led to *Chico and the Man* returning for three more seasons despite its portrayal of Latinas/os. Mainly utilizing the series and newspaper articles from Chicago Defender, Los Angeles Sentinel, New York Times, and San Diego Union, this section will show the reactions and conversation that occurred throughout the nation about *Chico and the Man*. Moreover, it will show how the series responded to the conversation in the nation between those who enjoyed the series and the Latina/o community response. The differing responses highlight the direction of *Chico and the Man*, ignoring and misunderstanding the voices of the Latina/o community. Towards the end of the season, any attention to the Latina/o disappears, until the only element remaining referencing the initial structure of the show being the bilingual nature of the sitcom. While *Chico and the Man* had attempted to challenge the accepted image of the Latina/o, the first season of *Chico and the Man* inevitably reinforced stereotypes and failed to incorporate the community continuously in the sitcom.

THE PREPARATION FOR *CHICO AND THE MAN*

At its inception, *Chico and the Man* intended to create a sitcom that celebrated the Latina/o culture. As the series progressed, this initial mission failed to come to fruition. However, prior to the release of the pilot episode, any inclination of these events occurring did not exist. Those associated with the sitcom conducted numerous interviews to reassure the public that the show would not make a mockery of the Latina/o community. This community woven within the sitcom would project an understanding of the people to general viewers. Intentions of a show that projected positive Latina/o images in *Chico and the Man* appeared in the discussion, incorporation, and appreciation of Chicanas/os, as well as the overall presence of Freddie Prinze in various interviews and newspapers.

The creative process behind *Chico and the Man* started with James Komack. Komack had the idea to create a show about the Chicana/o when he had return from Mexico after he had finished directing Tarzan and realized that the Latina/o community surrounded him.[123] It was the act of leaving which made him conscious of this community and what it offered to his neighborhood in Hollywood. This realization made him aware of the unique opportunity he had to create a show that appreciated this community, a community that he had lived with for 17 years.[124] This Los Angeles community of Chicanas/os he lived amongst in Hollywood had been fighting to have their voices their heard by the larger Anglo population. Komack created this show to convey his appreciation of this ignored community and to put a community on television that are often marginalized in the U.S.

Before delving into *Chico and the Man*, a brief overview of this neglected community will serve to provide a contextual understanding to the Chicana/o identities. The Chicana/o movement organized during the Civil Rights Era, around the mid-1960s, sporadically. Different movements from this community occurred throughout the U.S., all inter-connected in its ideology. Each of the events stood alone as no one individual or organization planned

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[123] Scott, "Chicanos Most Neglected on TV."

[124] Scott, "Chicanos Most Neglected on TV."

the demonstrations that occurred throughout the U.S. This community organized its own events to make its voices heard, such as the high school walkouts in Los Angeles in 1968. These walkouts emerged in response to the neglectful treatment experienced by the Chicana/o students, such as the overcrowding of schools with a large minority presence and a curriculum that ignored the history and culture of the Chicana/o.[125] The Chicana/o movement united to challenge the ways in which Chicanas/os were treated. The identity of the Chicana/o "is a fusion of three cultures: a *mezcla* of Mexican Indian, Spanish, and the North American".[126] Chicanas/os learned to navigate life in the U.S. while balancing these three identities. Furthermore as "it declares the assimilation of bloods and heritage", the three identities reinforce the complex nature of the Chicano.[127] The Chicano movement fought for their right to be heard in the political, social, cultural, and educational spheres, striving to balance their mixed-heritage.[128] The historical *Chicano Manifesto* defines the Chicana/o, their movement, and encompasses the ultimate end goals for this community. A brief analysis of this movement, and the inclusion of the text, will situate the Chicana/o portrayal within *Chico and the Man* into its larger historical context.

The basis of the Chicana/o view centers on its community. The community is the driving force behind all actions by the Chicano. No matter her or his chosen profession, the Chicana/o reflects her or his actions to better his or her community, which is seen when describing "La Raza". The phrase, "La Raza", is a deeply personal and cultural word used to speak of a community brought together. It is also "a further reassertion and profession of that principle of a cosmic Chicano existence. We can think of ourselves as a community of the future and of the past seeking its destiny in the present".[129] The utilization of this phrase encompasses a community, and thus, the spirit of the Chicana/o. “La Raza” becomes the

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[125] Acuña, *Occupied America*, 258 – 60.

[126] Rendon, *Chicano Manifesto*, 13.

[127] Rendon, 13.

[128] Rendon, 5.

[129] Rendon, 9-10.

basis of their salvation in an Anglo-society filled world that seeks to oppress Chicanas/os because of the color of their skin.[130] "La Raza" also signifies home and a sense of belonging. This sentiment, eloquently expressed in Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales epic poem that traces Chicano history and state of mind "I am Joaquin", is seen in the excerpt below:

> I am Joaquín, lost in a world of confusion,
> caught up in the whirl of a gringo society,
> confused by the rules, scorned by attitudes,
> suppressed by manipulation, and destroyed by modern society.
> My fathers have lost the economic battle
> and won the struggle of cultural survival.
> And now! I must choose between the paradox of
> victory of the spirit, despite physical hunger,
> or to exist in the grasp of American social neurosis,
> sterilization of the soul and a full stomach.
> ...
> I have endured in the rugged mountains
> Of our country
> I have survived the toils and slavery of the fields.
> I have existed
> In the barrios of the city
> In the suburbs of bigotry
> In the mines of social snobbery
> In the prisons of dejection
> In the muck of exploitation
> ...
> And in all the fertile farmlands,
> the barren plains,

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[130] Rendon, *Chicano Manifesto*, 181.

the mountain villages,
smoke-smeared cities,
we start to MOVE.
La raza!
Méjicano!
Español!
Latino!
Chicano!
Or whatever I call myself,
I look the same
I feel the same
I cry
And
Sing the same.
I am the masses of my people and
I refuse to be absorbed.
I am Joaquín.
The odds are great
But my spirit is strong,
My faith unbreakable,
My blood is pure.
I am Aztec prince and Christian Christ.
I SHALL ENDURE!
I WILL ENDURE![131]

This lengthy excerpt of "I am Joaquin" encompassed the struggle and mindset of the Chicana/o. They have endured and fought for their place in society amidst the Anglos:

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[131] Gonzales, *I Am Joaquin*.

"caught up in the whirl of a gringo society".[132] The Chicana/o movement strived to free itself from its oppressors and integrate into society without losing their cultural heritage. The adherence to culture was what made Chicanos different from a Mexican-American who may have integrated into society at the expense of losing her or his culture, as remaining true to one's culture was part of the movement's ideology: "I am the masses of my people and/I refuse to be absorbed".[133] Komack utilized the spheres that the community wished to influence to outline the presence of Chicana/o within the sitcom clearly. The series incorporated the political, social, cultural, and educational agendas set by the Chicana/o movement.

Understanding the importance of creating a show about Latinos and the Chicano community, Komack did seek out Chicano talent when creating *Chico and the Man*. Komack hired Chicanos as part of the creative team, including Roy Andrade, hired as an associate producer to the show, along with five other Chicanos, four as technicians on the sitcom.[134] When searching for the actor who would play Chico, Komack and the crew interviewed various actors before casting Freddie Prinze as Chico. The top three had been "a Mexican-American, Issac Ruiz; a Cuban, Lazaro Perez, and [a Puerto Rican/Hungarian, Freddie Prinze]".[135] In the end, Komack, Jack Albertson, and Prinze himself stated that he won the role because he was the most compatible with Albertson, who played the role of Ed Brown. Issac Ruiz, a Chicano, would return to the show to play Chico's friend Mando within a couple of episodes of the first. The on-screen chemistry between Albertson and Ruiz was missing, making the interactions between the two awkward. This performance cemented the fact that Prinze and Albertson worked wondrously for audiences. Regardless, Dan Lewis, a journalist for The New York Times, speculated that Prinze received the role

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[132] Gonzales, *I Am Joaquin*.

[133] Gonzales, *I Am Joaquin*.

[134] Scott, "Chicanos Most Neglected on TV."

[135] Jeffery Buck, "Freddie Prinze, 'I Know One Thing, I'm Funny" *San Diego Union TV Week December 1, 1974 to December 7, 1974*, December 1, 1974.

because he and Komack were raised in the same neighborhood.[136] This hiring process illustrated that the Chicano, through Ruiz, had been included in the hiring process and even actually considered for the role of Chico. He was also hired within the sitcom to play the role of a Chicano, just not the lead character. Moreover, ultimately chosen for the role of Chico was a Latino, a powerful enough statement as it stands.[137]

Another important element to creating the show was the set design. Roy Christopher was chosen as the head set designer, although he was not a Chicano. In an interview with Television Academy years after the show had ended, Christopher explained his hiring process and the creative process to ensure that the set remained authentic to the Chicano. As such Christopher, Komack, and Albertson traveled throughout East L.A. to gain research in how to create the set: "we visited East L.A., and we took pictures".[138] They mirrored the texture, grittiness, and the graffiti that they had encountered in their research.[139] Christopher also talks about allowing the painters and the carpenters to design the shop however they saw fit: "they added that layer of reality and texture".[140] While the identities of the painters and carpenters were not revealed, Christopher did relay that they knew "a whole lot better [about garages] than [he] did".[141] This adherence to images gained from going to East L.A., reinforces that *Chico and the Man* had, at its start, aimed to portray the Latina/o community accurately.

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[136] Dan Lewis, "Freddie Prinze: Attempting to Kill Clichés - School Dropout is TV luminary", *The San Diego Union TV Week October 20, 1974 to October 24, 1974*, October 20, 1974.

[137] This same situation occurred when Enrique Tomas Delago of Puerto Rico had been searching for work in the entertainment industry. As Delgado, he was not offered many parts. However, once he changed his name to Henry Darrow, he gradually received a greater number of invites to audition for more roles. Ironically, Darrow received an offer to audition for a Spanish officer after changing his name. Don Freeman, "Don Freeman" *San Diego Union*, October 22, 1974.

[138] Roy Christopher, interview by Karen Herman, *Television Academy Interview*, June 30, 2006.

[139] Christopher, interview by Herman.

[140] Christopher, interview by Herman.

[141] Christopher, interview by Herman.

Prior to the pilot airing, the cast and crew were constantly reassuring the press and the Chicana/o community that the show was not going to portray the Chicana/o in a negative light. Chicanas/os had fought for their voices to be heard and the show was going to honor that struggle. The constant addressing of the community's concern about their portrayal reflects the need of the show to ensure that they gather their viewership. As part of these efforts, Komack and Jack Albertson, who plays Ed Brown, put on a press conference before the show aired to generate attention for *Chico and the Man*. According to Vicente Aceves Madrid, the Art Director for Latin Quarter and a member of the audience at the press conference, their main concern was to "'impress the network executives' especially in the light that 'Chico and the Man' had already received harsh criticism for not hiring a Chicano to play role of a Chicano".[142] This was the main issue expressed by the Chicana/o community prior to the release of the pilot episode. This important factor in the hiring of Prinze for the role of Chico does enforce the image of the community, because Komack could have ignored the voice of the Latina/o community and chosen an Anglo actor to play the role of Chico.

Yet, one way the inclusion of the Chicano emerged right away was through the title of the show itself, *Chico and the Man*. The title identified itself as a "melting-pot flavor... with certain ethnic embellishments".[143] The utilization of Chico, which is similar to the word Chicano, alludes to a further awareness of the incorporation of the Latina/o and Chicana/o community. On the other hand, it is true that Chico also means "boy" or "dude", which is fitting for the show's generational gap element between Chico and Ed Brown (the Man). Either way, titling the show *Chico and the Man* reflects an understanding of this culture and its language. At this point of the creative process, the fact that Prinze was not a Chicano did not deter from making *Chico and the Man* a pro-Latino sitcom.

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[142] Madrid, "The Controversy Surrounding NBC's 'Chico and the Man,'" 5.

[143] Les Brown, "Fall TV Schedule: Old Formulas, New Time Slots" *The New York Times*, April 27, 1974.

One of the earliest interviews conducted about the show was from Freddie Prinze himself on May 21, 1974, when Prinze had gone on the Johnny Carson show to introduce *Chico and the Man*.[144] As a comedian, Prinze filled the interview with Carson with humor. He began by performing a stand-up routine lasting approximately six minutes, mainly filled with jokes about the Latina/o community. For instance, Prinze talks about his childhood growing up in New York City with a Puerto Rican mother, utilizing a Spanish accent as the voice of his mother:

> "Puerto Rican mothers are mean, they're like very rough you know. They always tell you, 'don't get hit by a car. I don't want to hear about it'. [Laughter] And I got hit by a car once but it was light, just a brush, and I fell down and my mother goes "Ay dios mio mi hijo, my son, he's dying", you know, I wasn't. But I found out later I *should* have been. [Laughter] Uh, I said "no ma, I'm okay". "You made me cry for nothing?" Boom [Air slap/Laughter].[145]

Prinze also managed to discuss systematic oppression in this routine when talking about Puerto Ricans as the new minorities forced to do dirty jobs, such as clean toilets. The inclusion of this in his stand up routine shows that Prinze was aware of role he had to play for the Latina/o community in his new stardom. This awareness of his role as a comedian should have satisfied the passionate Chicana/o community, realizing that Prinze was still part of the larger Latina/o community and would advocate for his people. In the actual interview with Carson, Prinze continued to incorporate humor aimed at the Puerto Rican population to humor Carson and the audience:

> Carson: You start your new show in September and just like that, all happened within a year didn't it? That's great.
>
> Prinze: I've been busier than a set of jumper cables at a Puerto Rican funeral.[146]

Carson and his audience were laughing hysterically and nodding along to what Prinze was saying about this population of people, failing to understand the comedic nature of the jokes. Instead, it appeared as if they were taking his jokes as reaffirmation of their beliefs. This was

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[144] Freddie Prinze, interview by Johnny Carson, May 21, 1974.

[145] Prinze, interview by Johnny Carson.

[146] Prinze, interview by Johnny Carson.

visibly seen when Prinze was telling Carson about how the older Puerto Ricans act to his jokes, utilizing a Spanish accent for the voice of the Puerto Rican: “Why you make trouble? Don’t rock the boat. Better they don’t know we are in the country”.[147] The actions of these viewers within this interview modeled the viewers of *Chico and the Man* who greatly appreciated Prinze’s humor, leading to the rising inclusion of stereotypes within the series.

During the interview, Carson asked Prinze if "the Puerto Ricans ever get mad about you for uh... doing the ethnic stuff".[148] A pause occurred between the two phrases, alluding to an awkwardness felt by Carson in asking this question, most likely because he found these jokes humorous and knew that they portrayed the Puerto Ricans in a negative light. Regardless, it seemed that Carson sought affirmation in laughing at these Puerto Rican jokes from Prinze as the voice of the Puerto Ricans. Furthermore, one joke in particular that Prinze delivered during the interview about the Puerto Rican Mobile was later used in the pilot of the episode, absorbing the Latina/o through the direct utilization of Prinze's comedic routine:

> Prinze: A '64 Chevy, pom-poms on the antenna's, your precious lover on the side, a little dog in the back with the head". The last part of this sentence was paired Prinze's head moving up and down, while simultaneously moving side-to-side, imitating the dog.[149]

While no direct discussion of *Chico and the Man* occurred on the Johnny Carson interview, the presence and aura of Prinze gave audiences a glimpse of the role that he was to play as the voice of the Latino, an educator through humor, for the white audience to grasp on *Chico and the Man*. This interview highlighted the need to have a positive Latino voice on television to combat ignorant beliefs about a largely marginalized people.

As the series premiere loomed closer, the amount of advertising escalated throughout the newspapers. Multiple display ads featured prominently in newspapers to generate attention for the premiere in September 1974. These advertisements displayed throughout

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[147] Prinze, interview by Johnny Carson.

[148] Prinze, interview by Johnny Carson.

[149] Prinze, interview by Johnny Carson.

and on various pages, went beyond the entertainment/television sections of newspapers,[150] transferring to politics, Presidential information,[151] information about the Housing crisis,[152] and the sports section.[153] The differing pages that featured these advertisements were chosen to reach a greater audience. Throughout the various pages that these ads were displayed, the same picture was utilized: Ed Brown standing in front of Chico, making a pained face with his lips pursed, and Chico behind him in a relaxed manner with his left hand up, leaning into Brown as if attempting to speak to him. This image alluded to the tension that viewers could anticipate seeing, as emphasized by the face Ed made, that existed between the two characters due to both the differing generational and ethnic standpoints. Each of the ads were paired with text, reinforcing the comedic nature of the show as it was constantly referred to as "funny".[154]

In its lead-up to the premiere, Komack took various steps to ensure that the Latina/o community was embedded in the television show. The interviews conducted and presence of Prinze show that Komack sought to appreciate this community. The Chicana/o community felt angered that Prinze was hired to portray a Chicano and that Komack missed the perfect opportunity to grant a member of this oppressed community a role in television.[155] Komack did miss this perfect opportunity to hire a Chicano for the role of Chico, however he did keep true to the larger community in hiring a Latino. Komack could have hired an Anglo-American to the play role instead, which would have truly angered the Chicana/o community that have been, "unwillingly dragged by that monstrous, technical/ industrial giant called Progress and Anglo success".[156] Komack stayed true to his initial goal of portraying the

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[150] "Display Ad 304," *The New York Times*, Sept 8, 1974.

[151] "Display Ad 46," *The New York Times*, Sept 13, 1974.

[152] "Display Ad 50," *The New York Times*, Sept 13, 1974.

[153] "Display Ad 94," *The New York Times*, Sept 13, 1974.

[154] "Display Ad 304," "Display Ad 46", "Display Ad 50", and "Display Ad 94".

[155] Madrid, “The Controversy Surrounding NBC’s ‘Chico and the Man,’” 7.

[156] Gonzales, *I Am Joaquin*.

Latina/o and Chicana/o in a positive light. That is, until the pilot episode of *Chico and the Man* aired on NBC on September 13, 1974.

SEPTEMBER 13, 1974 "THE MAN MEETS CHICO", AS DOES TELEVISION

The pilot, titled "The Man Meets Chico", first aired on September 13, 1973.[157] As indicated by the title, this episode follows the initial encounter between Chico and the man, Ed Brown. The two meet when Chico entered Ed Brown's garage looking to establish himself as a business partner. Ed automatically declines but Chico continues to persist. The episode follows this continuous attempt of Chico to enter into business with Ed. The humor that occurred from the differing ethnicities and generational backgrounds led to the episode receiving No. 3 ratings in the A.C. Nielsen ratings, falling just behind the esteemed *All in the Family*.[158] All of the research and press interviews Komack and the cast had done to ensure that the show would adhere to the Latina/o community was about to be witnessed by the entire U.S. population for the first time, and this episode had the potential to "put Chicanos on the sit-com map".[159]

The pilot episode of *Chico and the Man* successfully incorporated the Chicana/o identity, but still managed to reinforce stereotypes of the Latina/o community. The sitcom intertwined these positive and negative images of the Latina/o community, making it impossible to differentiate these moments. As a result, what follows is an analysis of various scenes throughout the pilot episode. *Chico and the Man* incorporated the Chicano identity through the language used, images displayed, and challenging of stereotypes throughout the pilot episode. Within the pilot of *Chico and the Man*, Chico identifies as both a Mexican and Chicano. Chico first identifies as a Mexican when speaking to Ed Brown about his

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[157] "Friday," *The San Diego Union TV Week September 8, 1974 to September 14, 1974*, September 8, 1974.

[158] "Rhoda Series Tops Ratings," *San Diego Union*, September 20, 1974.

[159] John O'Connor, "TV: 'Plant of the Apes,' 'Kodiak' and 'Chico and the Man' Bow", *The New York Times*, September 13, 1974.

reputation as "super Mexicanic".[160] This self-identification introduces another Latina/o identity for the show to stereotype, which they take full advantage of later in the episode and throughout the first season. Within the same conversation, Chico also identifies as Chicano when informing Ed Brown that he would like to become business partners and help Ed run his garage: "I would like to be the very first Chicano associated with this founding enterprise".[161] Chico delivered this line in a British accent to Ed, as Ed has told Chico to speak English after he had called Ed *"amigo*", to the laughter of the live-audience.[162] Both of these identifications, Mexican and Chicano, occur within the first six minutes of the episode, which informs the audience that a difference exists between the two identities. More importantly, they draw attention to the political weight that the word Chicano carried throughout the latter part of the 1960s.

This dual identification of Chicano and Mexican allowed the writers of the show to blend the two cultures. One scene where this dual identification plays a substantial role occurred towards the end of the first episode. At this point of the episode, Chico had moved in and cleaned the entire garage the night before, unbeknownst to Ed Brown. Ed wakes up the following morning to find that Chico had moved into his old, broken down van and had organized his entire garage. When Ed stepped out of the room, in exasperation over what Chico had done, he pleaded to God to do something about this “Mexican jumping bean”.[163] The phrase received great laughter from the audience. This offensive phrase and the reaction received, relied on the audience’s preconceived notions of Mexicans. If this presumed context had not existed, this line would not have entered into the script, for no laughter would have ensued. When the laughter did die down, two police officers entered the garage in search of someone who was "over six feet tall, 185 pounds, Hispanic descent, dark brown

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[160] *Chico and the Man*, season 1, episode 1, “The Man Meets Chico,” directed by Peter Baldwin, aired September 13, 1974, on NBC.

[161] *Chico and the Man*, “The Man Meets Chico.”

[162] *Amigo* means friend in Spanish.

[163] *Chico and the Man*, "The Man Meets Chico."

eyes, long black hair, wears a thin musta-".[164] At this point, Chico put his hands up to cut the officer off as both the police officer and Chico came to the realization that Chico fit the description of this criminal while he was reading the description. This scene served to both expand and reinforce ideas about Latinos/Chicanos to viewers.

The following conversation that occurred between Chico and the police officers reinforced multiple stereotypes through comedy. After the officer frisked Chico and stated he was 'clean' the conversation went as such:

> Chico: Sure I'm clean man, I just took a 'ch-ower'.
>
> Officer 2: Don't be a wise guy pancho.
>
> Chico: Hey, how did you know my name man?
>
> Officer 1: Don't get smart beaner. What are you doing here?
>
> Chico: It's my job man! I work here!
>
> Officer 2: You... work for Ed Brown? Don't make me laugh. He hates Mexicans.
>
> Chico: He does? Let's arrest him.[165]

The live-audience laughed throughout this exchange. Chico's heavy accent when saying shower and telling the police to arrest Ed received the strongest reactions. The use of the Spanish accent to gain laughter made Chico appear less American because he was unable to pronounce the word 'correctly'. Furthermore, the use of the derogatory words "pancho" and "beaner" went unchallenged by Chico, the character Komack stated was created to educate the US.[166] These words, and the manner in which spoken, minimize Chico's position and show that the officers think very little of him. Officer 2 had quickly challenged the notion that Chico worked in a garage for Ed Brown merely because he was Mexican. The police threatened to take Chico 'downtown' until Ed re-entered the scene and vouched for Chico.

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[164] *Chico and the Man*, "The Man Meets Chico."

[165] *Chico and the Man*, "The Man Meets Chico."

[166] Scott, "Chicanos Most Neglected on TV."

Chico's response to the officers when they were going to take him to the police station served to incorporate ideas about the Chicano movement.

Chico reflected ideas and language present within the Chicano movement when challenged by the police about his current immigration status. As Chico was being led to the officers' car, he stops them and states that he would press charges for they never read him the Miranda Rights. When asked how he knew about these Rights and if he could prove that he was born in the US, Chico responded: "Why? Do you got papers to prove where you were born? I'm a Chicano man. I was born in this Country. And what's more we had it first. *Le gusta fregar a esta chota*. You people are the outsiders. I *habla* your English. Why can't you *habla* a little of my *Español*?".[167] This passionate response by Chico incorporated the socially conscious language present in the Chicano movement. Chicanos fought for their place in society and fought against discrimination. The racial profiling conducted by the police in this scene and Chico's challenge to the unfair behavior reflected that fight. Ed then steps in and states that Chico was there all night, finally culminating when Chico says "Viva la Raza", a slogan from the Chicano movement, with his right fist clenched in the air.[168]

Chico and the Man also relied on imagery to reinforce the influence of the Chicano Movement on the sitcom. When Chico had moved into an old broken van of Ed's, he proceeded to decorate it with common serape-like designs and displayed posters of Pancho Villa, Zapata, and "El Barrio".[169] These images of cultural affiliations reinforced the incorporation of the Chicano movement. The appreciation and acknowledgment of Mexican history reflects Chico's Mexican identity and one of the goals of the Chicano movement - to fight for their role in education. Chicanos fought for their historical icons, like Pancho Villa and Zapata, to be included in the larger historical narrative discussed in classes. As such, the inclusion of these images broke away from the stereotyping occurring throughout the

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[167] *Chico and the Man*, "The Man Meets Chico."

[168] *Chico and the Man*, "The Man Meets Chico."

[169] *Chico and the Man*, "The Man Meets Chico."

episode, instead offered educated viewers an opportunity to appreciate these images. Chico displaying these images in his room, his space, reinforces Chico's ties to the Chicano Movement.

One of the most powerful images that used that depicts an appreciation for this community within *Chico and the Man* occurs in the opening credits. The opening credits were a compilation of B-Roll, supplemental images gathered which do not drive the narrative, throughout East L.A. The images used focused on the community gathering at a local park, celebrating, eating, and breaking a piñata in merriment. The nature of the celebration was unknown but presented the community living naturally, providing viewers with an unarming view of this people. These images were shown with the theme song of *Chico and the Man* playing over. The lively, guitar led theme song, also titled "Chico and the Man", was performed by Jose Feliciano and narrated the general concept of the show. For instance, the first words of the song describe the relationship between Chico and Ed: "Chico don't be discouraged, the man, he ain't so hard to understand".[170] This opening sequence occurs before every episode and, as the first image seen by audiences with the show aired, it presented an appreciative view of the Latina/o and Chicana/o community.

The pilot of *Chico and the Man* reflected ideas from the Chicano movement as shown through the language used, images displayed, and challenging of stereotypes that occurred, nut still reinforced stereotypes of this community. The pilot introduced ideas from the Chicano movement in powerful moments, primarily when Chico confronted the police officers. Yet, the reliance on stereotypical images, ideas, and phrases overpowered the positive images of Chicano/Latino displayed. Following the rest of the series, this pattern continuously occurred until the images of the Chicano movement decrease significantly. Chico's passionate response to the police of being a Chicano and refusing to tolerate their discrimination stands as the last resonating image of the Chicano movement. The show turns into just another sitcom and *Chico and the Man* loses its Chicano identity. The Chicano

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[170] *Chico and the Man*, "The Man Meets Chico."

presence dwindles and returns sporadically. Chico's identity as a Chicano no longer becomes a main part of the story line. However, his identity as a Mexican remains present throughout for comedic purposes, and also to create the illusion for audiences that the show remained loyal to its pilot episode's intent. Regardless, this strong Chicano influenced pilot educated audiences about this identity and displayed an episode on television which celebrated this culture. The stereotypes present problematized this powerful display – but not enough to completely overshadow the presence of the Chicano movement.

RESPONSES TO *CHICO AND THE MAN*

The pilot of *Chico and the Man* was received warmly by the entire nation in the U.S. The rest of the first season continued in this direction. By its season end, *Chico and the Man* became the most popular new show of the year.[171] Both white and non-white households watched this sitcom, [172] engrossing 40 million Americans.[173] As the series progressed, it also gradually changed from its original intentions as a pro-Chicana/o television show. Slowly, any positive portrayal was overshadowed by the comedic nature of the show to reinforce stereotypes that by the last of episode of the series, the only two direct connections to these communities were the bilingual nature of the show and a single mention of the phrase, "La Raza". The first season of *Chico and the Man* failed to create a show that celebrated the Latina/o and Chicana/o community, losing its purpose to construct a positive narrative, instead molding the show to appease the white audience as the show's popularity increased.

The response to the pilot of *Chico and the Man* differed depending on the audiences. As the pilot did receive the No.3 spot in the Nielsen ratings, it is fair to say that a majority of audience member found the show humorous. The show was also at the top of the rating

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[171] Jeff Greenfield, "The fight for $60,000 a half minute: How NBC decided what millions will - and won't - see on their TV screens this fall," *The New York Times Magazine*, September 7, 1975.

[172] Les Brown, "Nielsen Finds Nonwhite Homes Spending 16% More Time at TV," *The New York Times*, September 30, 1975.

[173] Jeanie Kasindorf, "'If I Was Bitter, I Wouldn't Have Chosen Comedy,'" *The New York Times*, February 9, 1975.

charts for most of the first season, battling for the No. 1 spot with *Rhoda* from CBS, another sitcom that was a spin-off of *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*.[174] The popularity of the show led to *Sanford and Son* not liking *Chico and the Man* air directly after it did for the themes were similar and they felt that it would lower their ratings.[175] However, the response from the Chicana/o community did not necessarily match the Nielsen findings, as the community found itself debating the merits of the show.[176] According to John H. Brinsley, chairman of Human Rights Section of the Los Angeles County Bar Associate, many Chicanas/os felt disappointed with the show for its portrayal of Chico and the reinforcement of stereotypes present throughout.[177] These feelings of anger and disappointment lasted throughout the majority of the entire season.[178] This community felt that Chico's character was made to look subservient to Ed, directly contradicting the goal of the Chicana/o movement: "this continuation of traditional belittling of Mexican-Americans… has caused the furor".[179]

The series responded to the feelings of the Chicana/o movement, refining the ethnicity of Chico in episode 6, "E Pluribus Used Car". This episode aired on October 25, 1974 and follows Chico and Ed attempting to sell the garbage man's car.[180] In attempting to sell the car, Chico and Ed enlist in the help of Mando, Chico's friend. After a mishap with the car, Mando goes over to the garage to inform Chico that his name is mud around the neighborhood. The exchange that occurs between the two results in Chico defending himself

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[174] "Video Vignettes," *New Pittsburgh Courier City Edition*, Dec 21, 1974.

[175] Buck Biggers and Chet Stover, "'Sanford' doesn't like having 'Chico' as television neighbor," *The Sun-Telegram*, Oct 10, 1974.

[176] Jon Nordheimer, "Chicanos of East Los Angeles Seek a Voice to End Despair," *The New York Times*, November 24, 1974.

[177] John H. Brinsley, "Letters to The Times: 'Chico and the Man,'" *The New York Times*, November 18, 1974.

[178] Bill Lane, "People - Planes 'n' Situwayshuns" *Los Angeles Sentinel*, Feb 27, 1975.

[179] Brinsley, "Letters to The Times: 'Chico and the Man.'"

[180] *Chico and the Man*, Season 1, episode 6, "E Pluribus Used Car," directed by Peter Baldwin, aired on Oct 25, 1974, on NBC.

in light of the allegations Prinze was receiving about not being fit to play the role of a Chicano:

> Mando: Look Chico, I know you were born in this neighborhood, but when your mother got sick and you had to go live in New York City with your aunt for a while, you picked up a lot of *bad* New York habits my man.
>
> Chico: I only lived there for five years.
>
> Mando: Yes but psychology speaking those were the formative years! You don't even sound like us anymore.
>
> Chico: What does it matter how I sound, man? It's how I feel.

This brief interaction with Mando about his identity reflected Prinze's personal feelings to all of the protest he was receiving for play the role of Chico. It also alludes to the powerful weight of the Chicana/o community, as they were able to influence the writers of *Chico and the Man* to address this greatly debated topic. This feelings expressed by Chico resemble the sentiment embedded in Gonzales' poem, "I am Joaquin": La raza!/ Méjicano!/ Español!/ Latino!/ Chicano!/ Or whatever I call myself, I look the same/ I feel the same".[181] Furthermore, while not to ignore the protests from the community about Prinze not being a Chicano, they did fail to acknowledge the fact that a Latino was cast in the role of Chico.

As the season progressed, Prinze took to speaking to newspapers about the protest he was receiving from the Chicana/o community. Prior to "E Pluribus Used Car" airing, Jack Albertson, who plays Ed Brown, and Prinze conducted an interview and the two commented on the relationship between Ed and Chico. Albertson asserted that the sitcom was there "to entertain, and at the same time bring out the problems of the Chicanos".[182] Prinze also commented on the intentions of the show, modeling those of Komack's: "'We're attempting to kill all the clichés and images identified with these people, and hope to give viewers a chance to see what they are really like'".[183] In a separate interview, Prinze reiterated that *Chico and the Man* presented the perfect opportunity to highlight the talent of the Latino, as

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[181] Gonzales, *I am Joaquin*.

[182] Lewis, "Freddie Prinze," 3.

[183] Lewis, 3.

Puerto Ricans and Chicanas/os were experiencing the "same social changes".[184] Prinze's constant defending of *Chico and the Man* alludes to the fact that the series' portrayal of the Chicano failed to meet the expectations the show had set for itself. The Chicana/o community had been lulled into a false sense of security, only to be betrayed by the performance of Prinze as Chico.

The episodes following the pilot drastically decreased any resemblance of the positive portrayal of the Latina/o and Chicana/o included in the pilot. The second episode in the series, "Second Thoughts", was an extension of the first episode, replaying the conflict that Ed had about working with Chico and did not further portray the Latino/a or Chicana/o image.[185] The next episode to interact directly with the Chicana/o community occurred in Episode Five, "Borrowed Trouble".[186] When writing this episode, Madrid, the Art Director for Latin Quarter, stated that Komack referred to the Chicano Associate Producer, Ray Andrade, to include the Chicana/o view because of direct feedback received by the Chicano.[187] As a result, this direct inclusion of Andrade created an episode which featured the Chicana/o community in an, overall, positive light, modeling the positive aspects of the series set in the pilot episode. Unfortunately, the sentiments expressed in this episode failed to reappear as the season progressed and Andrade's voice diminished as the popularity of the show increased.

"Borrowed Trouble" opened with Chico explaining to Ed the beauties of Spanish as a language, even stating, "you can insult someone and they wouldn't even know it".[188] Chico proceeds to insult Ed in Spanish and no translation of the insults were provided. This lack of translation consistently occurs in episodes, providing the Latina/o community with an insight

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[184] Vernon Scott, "Freddie Prinze 'Mugs' His Way Into Series", *The San Diego Union*, Sept 21, 1974, D-2.

[185] *Chico and the Man*, season 1, episode 2, "Second Thoughts," directed by Peter Baldwin, aired on September 20, 1974, on NBC.

[186] *Chico and the Man*, season 1, episode 5, "Borrowed Trouble," directed by Peter Baldwin, aired on Oct 11, 1974, on NBC.

[187] Madrid, "The Controversy Surrounding NBC's 'Chico and the Man,'" 7.

[188] *Chico and the Man*, "Borrowed Trouble."

to the show over those who do not understand Spanish. This episode continued its positive portrayal of the Chicana/o when Chico explained to Ed how credit functioned within the U.S., after stating that they could borrow the money in order to purchase parts for the garage. The exchange not only puts Chico in the position of teacher to an Anglo-American, but also ends with him utilizing a line heard often told to many minorities in this country:

> Chico: Man, it's simple, you just *borrow* the money.
>
> Ed: Borrow the money! I've never borrowed money before in my life!
>
> Chico: That's un-American! Everybody borrows money. If you don't borrow money and pay it back, when you do go to borrow money, if you haven't borrowed money before and paid it back, when you do go to borrow money they give you a funny look because how do they know you pay it back if you've never borrowed it before and paid it back
>
> ...
>
> Chico: Our whole country is based on credit.
>
> Ed: *Our* country? Since when is this *our* country?
>
> Chico: Well if you don't like it here why don't you go back where you came from?
>
> Ed: I can't, they're moving in there too.[189]

This episode features Chico in a powerful position. Not only is he educating Ed, but also tells him that his actions are "un-American". As a Chicano, Chico was perceived as un-American, so to utilize that line Ed shows him claiming that phrase and showing the audience that he too was American. Chico telling Ed to “go back where you came from” further reinforces Chico as an American and highlights the Chicana/o mentality that this land (East L.A.) belonged to them first.[190] However, Ed later contradicted this in the episode when he stated that he currently lived out of the country because he lived in a *barrio* surrounded by Latinas/os and Chicanas/os.

The rest of the episode followed Ed and Chico attempting to obtain a loan to purchase supplies for the garage. The two go to a Chicano community banker to ask for the loan when

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[189] *Chico and the Man*, "Borrowed Trouble."

[190] *Chico and the Man*, "Borrowed Trouble."

Ed blew the deal in anger and was unable to obtain a loan. Chico enters into the discussion and the two begin to speak Spanish incoherently and rapidly, ending the deal with Chico obtaining the $2,000 loan.[191] This animated, muddled dialogue became the focus of humor, mocking Spanish speakers from the perspective of someone unfamiliar with the language who would also hear jumbled words. If Chico had not been present, then Ed would have failed in obtaining the loan because of his temper. Overall, this episode featured Chico as a teacher and negotiator, two roles that put him in a position of importance. Unfortunately, this episode was the last to feature a positive Latina/o image.

For the duration of the season, a majority of the episodes failed to include the Latina/o or Chicana/o directly. The constant reference to this community came from the image of Chico himself and the bilingual nature of the program. While these two aspects are crucial in portraying the Latina/o and Chicana/o communities on television, which was more than other programs were doing at the time, they were overpowered by the constant reliance of perpetuating stereotypes. This reliance stemmed from the need to maintain their high viewership amongst audiences, especially in a season where new television shows were networks were constantly dropping from the line-up.[192] *Chico and the Man* needed to maintain their high rating and captivate the 40 million Americans watching because,[193] as stated by Les Brown, the broadcasting journalist for the New York Times, "never have there been such comings and goings in a single TV Season".[194] By December of 1974, even Ray Andrade, the Chicano Associate Producer hired by Komack, believed that the image of Chico actually failed to encapsulate the identity of Chicano: “He has the wrong accent. I’ve offered to take him to the barrio, but he doesn’t want to go”.[195]

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[191] *Chico and the Man*, "Borrowed Trouble."

[192] Les Brown, "TV Notes: Series Failure Rate Is Soaring," *The New York Times*, March 9, 1975.

[193] Kasindorf, “"If I Was Bitter, I Wouldn't Have Chosen Comedy.'"

[194] Brown, "TV Notes: Series Failure Rate Is Soaring."

[195] Buck, "Freddie Prinze, 'I Know One Thing, I'm Funny," 2.

Episode Nine, which aired on November 15, 1974, failed to present the Latina/o or Chicana/o in any form besides as a stereotype. In this episode, "No Room in the Garage", a heavily pregnant woman who can only speak Spanish enters into Ed's garage at night. [196] As the episode progresses the audience was made aware of the fact that this woman was Chico's cousin Dolores from Sonora, Mexico. She had traveled all the way to the U.S. in order to deliver a baby that would be a U.S. citizen.[197] Before she could go to a hospital to give birth, Ed's daughter, who had come to the *barrio* to visit, escorted Dolores to Chico's van to give birth to her son. This entire interaction portrayed the offensive term 'anchor baby', which referred to the assumption that an undocumented woman who would enter into a country and give birth to their child in order to provide their child with citizenship of that nation, in hopes that they would be granted citizenship too. Put more simply, it refers to children with citizenship status whose parents are undocumented. Historically, doctors had taken it upon themselves to inhibit women, primarily of Mexican descent, to continue this alleged intended practice that they resorted to sterilizing these women without their knowledge. In 1978, twelve women filed a lawsuit against USC/Los Angeles County Medical Center for sterilizing them during the late 1960s and early 1970s after they had given birth at this hospital, *Madirgal v. Quilligan*.[198] The inclusion of this assumption in the series presented this event as fact to viewers; cementing the anchor baby in a sitcom. Regardless of any

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[196] *Chico and the Man*, season 1, episode 9, "No Room in the Garage," directed by Peter Baldwin, aired on November 15, 1974, on NBC.

[197] *Chico and the Man*, "No Room in the Garage."

[198] Ruiz, 113; For more information on this court case see, Virginia Espino, "'Woman Sterilized As Gives Birth': Forced Sterilization and Chicana Resistance in the 1970s.," in *Los obreras: Chicana Politics of Work and Family*, ed. Vicki L. Ruiz, (Los Angeles: UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center Publications, 2000); Adelaida R. Del Castillo, "Mexican Women in Organization," in *Mexican Women in the United States: Struggles Past and Present*, ed. Magdalena Mora and Adelaida R. Del Castillo, (Los Angeles: UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center Publications, 1980); Adelaida R Del Castillo, "Sterilization: An Overview," in *Mexican Women in the United States: Struggles Past and Present*, ed. Magdalena Mora and Adelaida R. Del Castillo, (Los Angeles: UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center Publications, 1980); Elena R. Gutierrez, "Policing 'Pregnant Pilgrims': Situating the Sterilization Abuse of Mexican-Origin Women in Los Angeles County." In *Women, Health, and Nation*, ed. Georgina Feldberg, Molly Ladd-Taylor, Alison Li, and Kathryn McPherson, (Montreal and New Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 2003); A documentary was also released in 2016 that exposed this horrific event, including direct commentary from the women and the doctors themselves: *No Más Bebés*, directed by Renee Tajima-Peña, (Virginia Espino, 2016).

intentions, this image portrayed the Latina/o as a welfare community, moving to the U.S. only to give birth to U.S. citizens to leech off the U.S. government, completely ignoring economic, social, or political factors that may cause people to leave their home countries.

This episode of *Chico and the Man* aired during one of the three months that are crucial to the world of television in terms of overall ratings and advertising. As such, networks will alter their lines up to increase their ratings for "their affiliated stations have their local audiences measured by the rating services".[199] One of these three months is November, coincidentally the same month that the episode "No Room in the Garage" aired. The other two episodes of *Chico and the Man* that aired during November 1974 were "Lifestyle"[200] and "The Veterans",[201] both avoid interacting with the Latina/o community in any way. As discussed earlier, "No Room in the Garage" perpetuated the negative misconception that undocumented women traveled to the United States to deliver an 'anchor baby'. Airing this episode in this month was deliberate to increase their ratings at the local station, allowing NBC to charge companies more in advertising. Komack and producers understood the importance of these months so the airing of this episode was intentional. This episode generated great laughter from audiences, and reinforced this negative stereotype of the Latina community.

Chico and the Man lost its connection to the Latina/o and Chicana/o community as the season progressed. Out of the 22 episodes that compose the first season, only six episodes make a direct connection to the Chicana/o community in the series. The last episode of *Chico and the Man*, "Long Live the Man", featured two direct links to the Chicana/o community, the inclusion of Spanish and the powerful Chicana/o slogan, "Viva La

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[199] Les Brown, "TV Notes: How 'Sweep Weeks' Hype the Ratings" *The New York Times*, December 7, 1975, 205.

[200] *Chico and the Man*, season 1, episode 7, "Lifestyle," directed by Peter Baldwin, aired on November 1, 1974, on NBC.

[201] *Chico and the Man*, season 1, episode 8, "The Veterans," directed by Peter Baldwin, aired on November 8, 1974, on NBC.

Raza".[202] The popularity of the show led to great success for *Chico and the Man* as a television sitcom, but not as voice for the Latina/o and Chicana/o community. In the end, the Chicana/o aspects of the show could not withstand the pressures of viewers, causing the view of the Chicana/o to be integrated and absorbed by the show, masked to its general audiences.

By the time *Chico and the Man* returned to television in Fall 1975 on September 12, 1975, any resemblance to the pilot episode and its intentions were long forgotten.[203] The Chicana/o traits of the show had become integrated to the series without including any of its context, merely utilizing it for comedic purposes. The great intentions of Komack and other members of the crew diminished as the series progressed and it grew in popularity. The success of the first season continued throughout the duration of the series. In its second season, networks moved their television shows to a time when *Chico and the Man* was not airing in an effort to avoid losing viewers.[204] In 1976, CBS deliberately moved the hit television show *All in the Family* to coincide with *Chico and the Man* to challenge its place in the ratings.[205] These actions taken by networks reinforced the popularity of the show, especially with the movement of *All in the Family*. Unfortunately, this occurred at the expense of the audience who the show had initially been tailored towards.

The Latina/o and Chicana/o deserve to have their community shine on television, the medium most accessible to the vast majority of U.S. citizens. These communities have been forgotten for long enough and must be acknowledge within the U.S. The efforts of the Chicana/o movement to promote their community without compromising their culture need to be embraced by television. This ability to embrace a culture without making a mockery of the show is certainly possible. Moreover, when is the Latina/o and Chicana/o going to be

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[202] *Chico and the Man*, season 1, episode 22, "Long Live the Man," directed by Jack Donohue, aired on March 14, 1975, on NBC.

[203] *Chico and the Man*, season 2, episode 1, "The Paint Job," directed by Jack Donohue, aired on September 12, 1975, on NBC.

[204] Richard M. Levine, "As the TV World Turn," *The New York Times*, Dec 14, 1975.

[205] Les Brown, "Notes: 'All in the Family," *The New York Times*, April 18, 1976.

acknowledged by television and no longer be the integrated or forgotten? Well, the new millennium brought a completely new era of television that aimed to do just that.

CHAPTER 4

UGLY BETTY

Between the 1970s and the 2000s, the presence of a Latina/o focused program failed to appear in primetime programming. With the emergence of the new millennium, Latinas/os reentered television and in 2006, the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) aired a show revolving around a Latina. The U.S. program originated from a Columbian *telenovela*, called *Yo Soy Betty, La Fea*, which translates to 'I am Ugly Betty' but titled *Ugly Betty* in the U.S. Since its Columbian inception, 19 versions of the show exist in various countries, such as Germany and India.[206] Each version of the show was adapted to fit the country, resulting in the lost of Latina/o presence in the show. However, the U.S. maintained the inclusion of the Latina/o community in the show, as these people were involved in the production of the series. As a result, *Ugly Betty* presented an encapsulating image of the Latina/o community through its reflection and integration of the culture in the program and the systematic creation of characters that set out to challenge stereotypical notions of the community.

Betty Suarez, played by America Ferrera, was the face of the hit television program, *Ugly Betty*. *Ugly Betty*, which aired on ABC from 2006-2010, followed the character of Betty as she attempted to find employment with a magazine company. She was eventually hired as an assistant to the editor-in-chief, Daniel Meade, of a high-class fashion magazine, called 'MODE', by the head of the publication company, Bradford Meade, to dissuade Daniel from sleeping with this 'unattractive' assistant. The show then follows Daniel and

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[206] Janet McCabe and Kim Akass, eds., *From Telenovela to International Brand: TV'S Betty Goes Global* (New York: I. B. Taurus, 2013), 4.

Betty adjusting to life at 'MODE', while having to deal with the magazine's creative director, Wilhelmina Slater, attempts to overthrow Daniel as editor-in-chief. The drama/comedy show wagered its success on the shoulders of the young Latina, which paid off as the show won two Golden Globe's in its first year; Best Television Series, musical or comedy and Best Actress in a Television Series, musical or comedy to America Ferrera.[207]

Talks to adapt the original Columbian *telenovela, Yo soy Betty, la fea,* to the U.S. stemmed from producer Ben Silverman. While not Latino, Silverman had a talent in adapting shows from abroad to the U.S. market, while maintaining the bulk of the original show. For instance, Silverman produced *The Office (U.S.)* under the guidance of the original British *The Office* producer and creator, Ricky Gervais.[208] As such, when Silverman gained control of the rights to the Columbian *Yo Soy Betty, La Fea,* he brought in Salma Hayek as an executive producer due to her previous experience starring in *telenovelas* and understood the concept.[209] Silverman also enlisted the help of Silvio Horta to write the U.S. adaptation of the program, entitled *Ugly Betty*. The involvement of Hayek and Horta ensured the inclusion of the Latina/o voice. Horta commented on Hayek's involvement, stating, "Selma was very insistent that the lead remains Latina and she wanted to tell an immigrant story as well".[210] Horta's agreement with Hayek's vision guaranteed that a Latina would lead *Ugly Betty* and, through Hayek's insistence, the hiring of America Ferrera to portray Betty. The involvement of Latinas/os in the development of *Ugly Betty* gave the community a voice, affording them the opportunity include the Latina/o in the program and to maintain a strong Latina/o presence throughout.

The inclusion of the Latina/o community within *Ugly Betty* encapsulated this community's work from the 1990s through present to create a unified culture. As captured

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[207] "The Golden Globe Winners," *The New York Times*, June 16, 2007, E5.

[208] Bill Carter, "The Whole World Is Watching, And He's Watching Back," *The New York Times*, September 17, 2006.

[209] Carter, "The Whole World Is Watching, And He's Watching Back," 29; "Becoming Ugly: DVD features," *Ugly Betty*, DVD, (Buena Vista Home Enteratinment/Touchstone, 2007).

[210] Silvio Horta, interview by Nancy Harrington, *Television Academy Interview*, October 31, 2013.

through the U.S. 2010 Census, the Latina/o community stemmed from multiple ethnicities, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Dominican Republican, Guatemalan, and Salvadoran.[211] Instead of creating a national voice for each subset of ethnicity, these ethnicities converged to form an inclusive Latina/o identity. This move manifested itself through the Latina/o march on Washington D.C. in 1996.[212] This march, which came two years after California voted to pass Proposition 187,[213] strove to ensure their voices were heard and that they would not be forgotten.[214] They united to fight against the discrimination and inequality experienced by their community. Furthermore, as explored in an article from *Newsweek*, Latina/o Americans even started to embrace the term 'Generation Ñ' to unite across ethnic backgrounds while living in the U.S.[215] 'Generation Ñ' replaced the term of Generation X for the first generation Latina/o American that balanced between their two cultures, not feeling tied to one identity over another. The convergence of these communities all had one goal in mind, to demand respect for their people. This movement led by the Latina/o community differed from the assimilation narrative promoted through *I Love Lucy* as this new unity goal acknowledged the racism experienced by their community. *Ugly Betty* captured this movement through its ability to present a holistic view of the Latino culture to audiences in a positive manner.

During the 1950s to 2000s, the Latina/o community's presence within television programs failed to present an accurate image of the community. As displayed in previous chapters, *I Love Lucy* ignored the struggles of inequality endured by this community and *Chico and the Man* utilized stereotypes of the community through its program, presenting a

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[211] U.S. Census Bureau, "Hispanic or Latino Origin by Specific Origin: Calendar Year 2010," American Community Survey.

[212] Pamela Constable, "Latinos Demand Rights, Respect at D.C. March," *The Washington Post*, October 13, 1996.

[213] California's Proposition 187 aimed to restrict undocumented individuals from having access to all public benefits, including K- 12 education for undocumented children. Before this proposition took effect, judges ruled the proposition as unconstitutional.

[214] Constable, "Latinos Demand Rights, Respect at D.C. March," A1.

[215] John Leland and Veronica Chambers, "Generation Ñ," *Newsweek*, July 12, 1999, 52-58.

warped image of the Latina/o. On the other hand, the Latina/o community presented to audiences through *Ugly Betty* went beyond the mere inclusion of the individual, reinforcing the notion of a comprehensive analysis on this group. Its ability to achieve this type of program was due to the creator, producers, crew, and television network. Collectively, these people understood the community. This basis of understanding stemmed from the fact that these individuals came from this community and experienced the same struggles firsthand. Creator Silvio Horta discussed how he adapted the original Columbian program, *Yo Soy Betty, La Fea,* to the U.S. culture by tapping into his childhood memories and ensuring that his community was heard.[216] One of the producers, celebrated actor Salma Hayek, came from Mexico and rose to fame as an actor through her work on a Mexican *telenovela*. Due to the direct involvement of writers and producers familiar with the Latina/o, this culture's role in primetime television featured organically throughout the series.

The first section of this chapter analyzed the manner the creator immersed the Latina/o community into *Ugly Betty*. This section focused on three factors: the set design, integration of family, and the implementation of Spanish in the narrative. Together, these elements presented an encapsulating image of the Latina/o community and culture. The set design portrayed an understanding of the culture through minute details, such as the inclusion of the *serape* and *piñata*. *Ugly Betty* revolved around the family unit, discussing and interacting with struggles faced by this community within the U.S., such as immigration. The inclusion of Spanish introduced the concept of a Latina/o without full command of the language, an attribute often put onto all members of this community. The program seamlessly reflected this community, displaying its culture, values, and interacting with the language.

The second section synthesized how the deliberate creation of the character stood in direct contrast with popularized narratives of the Latina/o community. The program challenged multiple stereotypes and misconceptions held about this community, such as the

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[216] Silvio Horta, October 31, 2013.

sexy, air headed Latina through the protagonist, Betty and three other characters on the series. The other characters, Salma Hayek, Justin Suarez, and Ignacio Suarez, introduced a new type of Latina/o never before featured on primetime television. Utilizing their behavior as a base, *Ugly Betty* proved that its treatment of the Latina/o community presented a holistic portrayal of this diverse people.

To determine the ability of *Ugly Betty* to portray the Latina/o community, this paper relied on the series and interviews. Most of the analysis stems from a dissecting of *Ugly Betty*'s first season, as this paper strives to convey that the series understood the Latina/o community in its depiction. Subsequent seasons feature throughout the paper, however the first season set the tone for the rest of the series in the manner it represented the Latina/o community to maintain continuity. The cast and crew also provided accounts of the show's creation and its adherence to the Latina/o community to create a program that modeled this people. They also met at a panel ten years after the show's inception, discussing its lasting impressions, and commenting on the nature of the show years later. Overall, *Ugly Betty* captured the complexity of the Latina/o community, managing to highlight the community and negate misconceptions held through the characters characterization and actions.

REFLECTION OF LATINA/O IN *UGLY BETTY*

The presence of the Latina/o community within *Ugly Betty* remained constant throughout the show's four seasons. While not always blatantly obvious, the show infused the culture throughout, in a way that *I Love Lucy* and *Chico and the Man* neglected to include within their programs. The Latina/o culture merely appeared in *I Love Lucy* and *Chico and the Man* when convenient to the storyline, *Ugly Betty* reflected a true understanding of the community. An analysis of the set design and locations, inclusion of the family unit, and utilization of the Spanish language aim to prove that the series captured the culture and presented it to audiences in a manner that conveyed an understanding of the Latina/o community.

In 1997, scholar David Frankfurter introduced the term "bizarreification",[217] to Greco-Roman witchcraft historiography in reference to Greco-Roman's label of Egyptian priests' ritualistic actions as 'magic'. This notion of bizarreification transfers to television and its reflection of ethnic communities. As seen in *I Love Lucy* and *Chico and the Man*, the misunderstanding of this community led to warped storylines about this people, due primarily to the fact that the creators and producers were not part of the community. However, this was not the case for *Ugly Betty*. Instead, this show represented the Latina/o within primetime television and engaged with the culture in a holistic and understanding manner. The ability of *Ugly Betty* to create such a show stemmed from the fact that the creator and producers were Latina/o and had the authority to incorporate their voices into the series, a change that had slightly appeared in *Chico and the Man*, but not within any positions of power towards the ultimate creation of the show.

Ugly Betty intertwined the Latina/o community seamlessly in the series through the design of the sets and locations filmed. The main set that reflected the Latina/o community was that of the Suarez household. This hub of Latina/o culture played a consistent role in every episode, as the series followed Betty's life at work *and* at home. Audiences first encountered this set within the first two minutes of the pilot episode.[218] The transition scene into the Suarez household started with a close-up shot of the television playing a *telenovela*. The program continued, featuring highly dramatized acting, while the camera zooms away from the screen until the voice of Betty's nephew was heard stating: "I hate *telenovelas*".[219] The presence of the *telenovela* in the first scenes of the entire series immediately reinforced an understanding of this community and their reverence for these programs.

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[217] David Frankfurter, *Religion in Roman Egypt: Assimilation and Resistance* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 1-11.

[218] *Ugly Betty*, season 1, episode 1, "Pilot," directed by Richard Shepard, aired September 28, 2006, on ABC.

[219] *Ugly Betty*, "Pilot."

Throughout the remainder of the series, the Suarez household continued to feature a *telenovela* playing on the television, with its very own subplot. The *telenovela*'s prominence within the Latina/o household emerges in the show as many scenes in the Suarez household either started with a member of the household fixated on the program, or ended with them turning towards the screen. For instance, in season 1, episode 4, Betty's father Ignacio was watching the program when the door rang. Instead of getting up to answer, his face immediately reflects annoyance and he moves himself closer to the television to avoid missing any crucial moments.[220] The act of watching t*elenovelas* in the Latina/o household was a family affair. In the Suarez household, Betty's father, Ignacio, ensured the consumption of the program. He was also the only individual devoted to the program in the home, as he would ask what he missed, and Hilda even implored her son to let him watch the *telenovela* in peace. Its constant inclusion in the program reflected its importance within the Latina/o household, as these programs were the foundation of popular entertainment.[221] Lastly, the constant presence of the *telenovela* throughout the series also hinted to its usage as an homage to the original Columbian *telenovela*, *Yo Soy Betty, La Fea*.

The Suarez household set persisted in its representation of the Latina/o culture through items presented in a *serape* style. The *serape* items manifested itself in two distinctive manners within the home: as a blanket draped casually along the back of the couch and as decoration on the wall in the kitchen.[222] Instead of stereotypically appearing in the form of a poncho paired with a sombrero and mustache, it appeared in a manner that exists in almost Latina/o households, as a blanket. While not part of the Suarez household set design, this type of styled item reappeared in the form of Betty's shoulder bag. The usage of the *serape* style as Betty's shoulder bag resulted in the bag constantly entering the world of Manhattan and 'MODE'. As Betty entered the world of 'MODE', the Latina/o culture

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[220] *Ugly Betty*, season 1, episode 4, "Fey's Sleigh Ride," directed by Tricia Brock, aired October 19, 2006, on ABC.

[221] McCabe and Akass, 35.

[222] *Ugly Betty*, "Pilot."

often lost its importance; instead, the characters of Manhattan utilized it to at the expense of Betty. For instance, when reclaiming her desk from the receptionist, Amanda, she informed Betty: "it doesn't matter if you're sitting on a chair, or a stool, or a donkey".[223] The unnecessary inclusion of donkey served as a reminder to Betty that the characters see her ethnicity, and treat her differently as such. However, Betty stood steadfast in the face of such ignorance and ignored these remarks, as did the constant presence of her *serape*. The presence of the *serape* in these various scenes and situations served as a silent reminder of the shows Latina/o presence and this community's ability to exist in the face of adversary.

Another prominent set within *Ugly Betty*, serving as a reflection of the Latina/o, was the city of Queens. Queens, where the Suarez household lived, emerged as the hub of Latina/o culture because the world of 'MODE' equated Betty as a physical representation of the city, referring to it as "*el barrio*",[224] which is Spanish for neighborhood. Thus, to make Queens an extension of the Latina/o people, the set incorporated minute details associated with the culture. For instance, the music utilized over images of Queens further reiterated this city's role as Spanish music would play when transitioning scenes to this area. Alternatively, in season 1, episode 3, while Betty walked down the street in Queens, various storefronts came into focus, highlighting another minute detail, the fact that they sold *piñatas*.[225] The presence of the *piñata* at Latina/o celebrations is a staple, and the celebration would be incomplete without. It inclusion outside of the store, in its various forms, reflected the popularity of this item and its importance within the culture. The ease of access potential consumers had to the *piñata* in Queens, reflected a Latina/o focused community.

Beyond the set design, the show continued to reflect the Latina/o culture through the Suarez household and the implementation of the Latina/o family. In an interview with the

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[223] *Ugly Betty*, season 1, episode 13, "In or Out," directed by Michael Spiller, aired January 18, 2007, on ABC.

[224] *Ugly Betty*, season 1, episode 3, "Queens for a Day," directed by James Hayman, aired October 12, 2006, on ABC.

[225] *Ugly Betty*, "Queens for a Day." *Piñatas* are paper or cardboard shaped animals or characters, filled with candy and other treats inside.

Television Academy, creator Silvio Horta stated that one of his main goals with the program was to ensure that the Latina/o family felt both "real and relatable".[226] The basis of the Latina/o culture revolves around family and the Suarez household managed to reflect and celebrate the multi-generational Latina/o family prominent in the culture. Actor Tony Plana, who played Ignacio Suarez in *Ugly Betty*, agreed and attributed the success of the program to its "multi-dimensional" depiction of the Latina/o family.[227] The multi-dimensional household became apparent in the series when the family learned of Ignacio Suarez's undocumented status and faced the U.S. immigration system firsthand.

The issue surrounding immigration remains prominent within the Latina/o community. Ever since the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the Latina/o community struggled to define their place within the U.S. *Ugly Betty* displayed the issue of immigration in 21st century U.S. through the character of Ignacio Suarez. Ignacio's citizenship status was slowly revealed throughout the first season. In season 1 episode 4, Betty first learned that Ignacio had utilized a deceased person's social security number for employment.[228] In the next episode, Betty confronted Ignacio, who refused to answer. Later in the same episode, Ignacio confirmed that he knowingly utilized a deceased individual's social security number, affirming his undocumented status.[229] As the family struggled to combat against the possibility of deportation through seeking legal counsel, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) showed up at the Suarez household and arrested Ignacio.[230] The ultimate arrest of Ignacio reflected a reality experienced by many in the Latina/o community,

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[226] Silvio Horta, October 31, 2013.

[227] Tony Plana, interview by Jessica Shaw, "'Ugly Betty' 10-Year Reunion presented with Entertainment Weekly," *ATX Festival Panel*, December 2, 2016.

[228] *Ugly Betty*, "Fey's Sleigh Ride."

[229] *Ugly Betty*, season 1, episode 5, "The Lyin', the Watch and the Wardrobe," directed by Rodman Flender, aired October 26, 2006, on ABC.

[230] *Ugly Betty*, season 1, episode 9, "Lose the Boss?" directed by Ken Whittingham, aired November 23, 2006, on ABC.

humanized this process for audiences, and showed how the Suarez's dealt with Ignacio's immigration issues.

In an effort to stall the deportation of their father, the Suarez sisters sought legal aid and Ignacio worked with a U.S. government official. The portrayal of these two events reflected the vulnerability of this individual, as they are at the complete mercy of a larger entity. When speaking to the various lawyers, the sisters were made aware of the astronomical cost, as one of the lawyers starting cost was $20,000.[231] Another lawyer offered her services for a quarter of the cost.[232] This price still proved too high, but manageable for the sisters. Hilda, Betty's older sister, reached out to her son's father, Santos, for the $5,000, who had walked out of Hilda's life when they learned of her pregnancy.[233] Hilda endured this conversation for the sake of her father and keeping him in their lives in the U.S. However, as the sisters later found out, this lawyer with the $5,000 fee proved untrustworthy, swindling them out of the money.[234] Instead of reporting this to the appropriate authorities, they suffered in silence as the fear of deportation outweighed their desire for retaliation. As a result, Ignacio was forced to endure working with a caseworker, who later proved unstable as she almost forced him to marry her.[235] While working with her, Ignacio constantly felt belittled, having the following conversation with Hilda about his treatment:

> Ignacio: She's rude, she's obnoxious, she's-
> Hilda: -the United States government. What'd you expect?

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[231] *Ugly Betty*, season 1, episode 6, "Trust, Lust and Must," directed by Jamie Babbit, aired November 2, 2006, on ABC.

[232] *Ugly Betty*, "Trust, Lust and Must."

[233] *Ugly Betty*, season 1, episode 7, "After Hours," directed by James Hayman, aired November 9, 2006, on ABC.

[234] *Ugly Betty*, season 1, episode 8, "Four Thanksgivings and a Funeral," directed by Sarah Pia Anderson, aired November 16, 2006, on ABC.

[235] *Ugly Betty*, season 1, episode 19, "Punch Out," directed by Miguel Arteta, aired April 19, 2007, on ABC.

Ignacio: Respect.[236]

Hilda's equation of the U.S. government to rude and obnoxious reflected her feelings of powerlessness in this situation. They merely wish for a positive end to the unpredictable nature of the U.S. immigration system, portrayed in Ignacio's demand for respect. As eloquently put by scholar Tanya González, *Ugly Betty*'s incorporation of the immigration narrative "[countered] the popular rhetoric of hate associated with immigration debates."[237]

The reflection of the Latina/o household further emerged through the multi-generational household. This inclusion of the multi-generational family in the sitcom reflected an understanding of this culture as family is the heart of the Latina/o culture. Economical reasons existed for putting the Suarez three generational household into one home as the professions bestowed onto the Latina/o characters in the sitcom would not have afforded them the possibility to live separately. Despite this reason, having these three generations living in the same home showed the value the Latina/o culture puts onto family. Furthermore, the grasp of the Spanish language by these characters from different generations reflected the Latina/o household within the U.S.

A large part of the Latina/o community's portrayal on television has surrounded the utilization of the Spanish language. In *I Love Lucy* and *Chico and the Man*, the Latina/o characters utilized the language within non-ethnic spaces. Meaning Spanish was spoken within context of the Euro-American characters, leaving the language vulnerable to their perceptions. Without another character present to defend the language, and by extension the community, the Spanish became a comedic tool. *I Love Lucy*, the guiltiest party, relied on the language heavily by Ricky to convey his exasperation of Lucy's antics. However, *Ugly Betty* had created a setting for this language to exist without ridicule through the Suarez household.

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[236] *Ugly Betty*, season 1, episode 12, "Sofia's Choice," directed by James Hayman, aired January 11, 2007, on ABC.

[237] Tanya González, "A Mainstream Dream," 12.

Ugly Betty incorporated Spanish throughout its series to reflect this aspect of the Latina/o community and featured it heavily in the Suarez household. The main usage of the language in the series came from the *telenovelas* as all of the dialogue in the scenes was done entirely in Spanish. Even at the beginning of season 2, episode 1, when characters who do not speak Spanish on the show that were dreamt into a *telenovela* by Betty, they speak all of their lines in Spanish.[238] The Suarez household, where the *telenovela* plays, saw Ignacio and Hilda speaking the language most frequently. Their command of the language at home came mainly through discussion food or delivering insults, and with the lines delivered mainly by Ignacio. However, in episode 22 of season 1, the family travels to Mexico for Ignacio to wait the granting of his visa. This trip highlighted Ignacio and Hilda's ability and Justin and Betty's inability to speak Spanish.

The use of Spanish in Mexico highlighted the characters differing command of the country's most commonly spoken language. Before leaving for the trip, Betty tells Justin that it will serve as a great experience to practice their Spanish,[239] as both characters struggled with the language. After telling Justin this, Betty then proceeded to state: "*Hola! Comí a tu sobrina*".[240] When translated, this phrase states "Hello! I ate your niece", which serves to emphasize Betty's inability to speak the language. Betty further butchered the language again when told her family "*soy muy embarazada*",[241] when attempting to state she was embarrassed. Instead, Betty informed them that she was currently pregnant, which she quickly corrected. Hilda demonstrated her command of the language in Mexico through translating a type of warning said by the *curandera*, or healer, to Betty.[242] Ignacio attempted to do the same for Betty when she met her maternal grandmother. However, Betty did not

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[238] *Ugly Betty*, season 2, episode 1, "How Betty Got Her Grieve Back," directed by James Hayman, aired September 2007, on ABC.

[239] *Ugly Betty*, season 1, episode 22, "A Tree Grows in Guadalajara," directed by Lev L. Spiro, aired May 10, 2007, on ABC.

[240] *Ugly Betty*, "A Tree Grows in Guadalajara."

[241] *Ugly Betty*, "A Tree Grows in Guadalajara."

[242] *Ugly Betty*, "A Tree Grows in Guadalajara."

need him to, as she had understood.[243] The characters displayed different levels of understanding and command of the language. Yet, their level of ability to speak Spanish never translated in the series as a measurement of "Latina/o-ness".

The ability to speak Spanish has become synonyms with Latina/o, so displaying an inability to speak the language translates as inability to 'be Latina/o'. Within the Latina/o community, those unable to speak the language face mocking and ridicule by the community. Those outside of the community reiterate this behavior. Furthermore, if the Latina/o can speak Spanish, but their accent does not translate as authentic, they faced the same mocking and ridicule by the community. Ultimately, if the Latina/o cannot speak Spanish authentically, they enter the category of American, or simply less Latina/o. However, *Ugly Betty* steered clear of this behavior. Betty hardly speaks Spanish, confuses words, and utilizes an inauthentic accent when she does speak the language. Yet, she serves as a constant reminder of the Latina/o community on television. Betty's inability to speak Spanish presents a new type of Latina/o, one that would identify with 'Generation Ñ'. While an argument that Betty's struggle with Spanish occurred to garner a greater audience exists, it seems as if the series utilized this character to make a statement against the mocking of a Latina/o's ability to speak the language. The series reflected a new age Latina, balancing between two cultures and identities.

The Latina/o characters were not the only ones to embrace Spanish. Daniel, Betty's boss, attempted to learn a line in Spanish from Ignacio in order to convey his love to another character on the program, Sofia Reyes: "*te amo y no puedo vivitar sin ti*".[244] Daniel misspoke the line, but the sentiment behind remained and showed him embracing the language. The next instance occurred with Betty's coworker, Amanda. In season 1, episode 4, Marc, another of Betty's coworker, and Amanda visited Betty at her home. When Betty

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[243] *Ugly Betty*, "A Tree Grows in Guadalajara."

[244] *Ugly Betty*, "Lose the Boss?"

introduced them to her father, Amanda stated "Hola", emphasizing the 'H'.[245] Ignacio attempted to correct her, informing her that the 'h' was silent. But Amanda insisted that it was pronounced as "there [was] an H in it".[246] Amanda's comedic interaction with Spanish also show her embracing the language, albeit incorrectly. However, Daniel and Amanda attempted to speak the language as they recognized its importance within their respective contexts.

Lastly, the show's grasp of the Latina/o community did not inhibit its ability to infuse a dialogue between characters that touched on issues faced the by this community in the U.S. throughout the series. One example occurred in season 1, episode 2, titled "The Box and the Bunny", when Betty brought home the final version of the "MODE" magazine, referred to as the book.[247] The Suarez household gathered around the book in their living room when Betty's father, Ignacio Suarez, commented on the final mock-up: "It's all nice, but what's the problem with having some Latinas somewhere in here, huh? You gotta give these things a little *flava*, you know?"[248] This comment from Ignacio broached the conversation surrounding the lack of diversity within popular culture, as well as the discussion behind seeing one's community reflected in such avenues.

Another example of the program's ability to engage with societal Latina/o issues occurred later in season three of *Ugly Betty*, when Betty and her co-worker Marc fought for a spot at a prestige internship. Towards the end of the episode, Betty learned that she landed the spot over Marc. When she confronts him to offer her condolences, Marc informs Betty that, "They picked you… because you're Latina. You're the token ethnic girl".[249] While companies and organizations strive for inclusivity and diversity, Marc's statement

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[245] *Ugly Betty*, "Fey's Sleigh Ride."

[246] *Ugly Betty*, "Fey's Sleigh Ride."

[247] *Ugly Betty*, season 1, episode 2, "The Box and the Bunny," directed by Sheree Folkson, aired October 5, 2006, on ABC.

[248] *Ugly Betty*, "The Box and the Bunny."

[249] *Ugly Betty*, season 3, episode 9, "When Betty Met YETI," directed by Victor Nelli Jr., aired November 20, 2008, on ABC.

completely devalued all of the work completed by Betty. The ability of the program to engage seamlessly with these truths faced by the Latina/o community further conveyed that *Ugly Betty* understood this population, transferring to a realistic representation of the community. The seamless interaction with the set designs, the reflection of the Suarez household, and utilization of the Spanish language through the duration of the series shows that this program went beyond merely representing the Latina/o community. *Ugly Betty* continuously managed to reflect the Latina/o culture throughout the series, normalizing their presence and combating against "bizarreification" within U.S. primetime television. The series continued its projection of an inclusive Latina/o community through the characters developed and their ability to challenge misconceptions.

CHALLENGE OF LATINA/O IMAGES IN *UGLY BETTY*

I Love Lucy and *Chico and the Man* each presented the Latina/o community to audiences in differing manners. *I Love Lucy* presented a picturesque Latina/o community without any flaws or difficulties. *Chico and the Man* introduced the concept of the Chicana/o to audiences in an attempt broaden their knowledge of this community. Instead of presenting an inclusive Latina/o, these programs merely reinforced misconceptions, failing to reflect the community. In the 21st Century, *Ugly Betty* emerged and challenged the Latina/o image created by *I Love Lucy* and *Chico and the Man* through the characters created.[250] The dynamic Latina/o characters presented in the program refuted various misconceptions held of the community and perpetuated by the media, such as lazy. Furthermore, the series presented these characters in context not previously presented in U.S. primetime television, such as the editor-in-chief of a magazine. The creators directly challenged various misconceptions through the Latina/o community present within *Ugly Betty* through the creation of the following characters: Betty Suarez, Sofia Reyes, Justin Suarez, and Ignacio Suarez.

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[250] Between the release of *Chico and the Man* and *Ugly Betty*, the Latina/o community continued to act on the television screen. The year before *Ugly Betty* premiered, ABC had two Latina/o television programs airing, *George Lopez* and *Freddie*. However, this paper jumps to *Ugly Betty* as this program was led by Latina character.

As the protagonist of the series, Betty Suarez defined *Ugly Betty*, and presented a face for the Latina/o community not found on television at the time. Betty's inheritance of the label 'ugly', reiterated itself throughout the series through her physical appearance, and became the basis of her identification. The defining quality of 'ugly' perpetuated itself through her wild and untamed hair, red glasses, bushy eyebrows, and bright blue braces, as these characteristics were not synonymous with attractive. Understanding that 'ugly' was the foundation of Betty's character, America Ferrera recalled that the character did not feel complete for her until she found the iconic red glasses her character dons to complete her look.[251] Throughout the series, Betty constantly found herself placed next to super models and/or immensely attractive people. For instance, the series opened with an up-close image of Betty's face. The first image of the character showed her wearing her red glasses, her hair worn down and disheveled, and anxiously biting her lip, all while wearing a red and blue plaid suit with a frilly green suit. She then smiles off camera and viewers learned that on top of her ill put together appearance, she also sported braces. In the next moment, a model like female, tall, thin, and with a wardrobe comprised of designer clothing, sat next to her.[252] The juxtaposition between the two solidified the characteristic of 'ugly' bestowed on Betty within the opening of the series. The label and physical appearance immediately disassociated Betty with the stereotypical image of Latina, broadening perspectives and expectations of this community.

The deconstruction of the Latina image provided by Betty challenged the Latina image popularized through television and various additional methods of popular entertainment. The Latina often portrayed on screen was thin and sexy, especially if the character played a vital role in the storyline. For instance, in ABC's hit television show, *George Lopez*, which aired during the same era as *Ugly Betty*, the wife of George Lopez in the program reflected this type of Latina. The wife, Angie portrayed by Constance Marie,

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[251] America Ferrera, interview by Jessica Shaw, "'Ugly Betty' 10-Year Reunion presented with Entertainment Weekly," *ATX Festival Panel*, December 2, 2016.

[252] *Ugly Betty*, "Pilot."

was referred to as "so skinny",[253] and was often ogled by George's friend, Ernie, especially when he saw her half naked.[254] While Angie's character revealed great depth throughout the series and showed a deep commitment to her children, her attractive appearance remained integral to the overall narrative of George achieving the 'American Dream'. The stereotypical image of Latinas perpetuated through popular entertainment creates a vacuum of roles for these women. The introduction of the character Betty deconstructed this narrative, displaying a Latina that did not explicitly exhibit these same features. Instead, Betty's character manifested itself, at least initially, through her depiction of 'ugly'.

This deconstruction of stereotypes continued through the fashion utilized on the show as it created a space for Betty to embrace the Latina/o culture. For instance, on her first day at work at a fashion magazine, Betty walked in wearing a bright red poncho with the word "Guadalajara" splashed across the front.[255] The secretary immediately asked: "You the 'before'? Before and after photo shoot?"[256] She then continued, much slower in order to ensure Betty would understand, "Are you delivering something?"[257] The outfit Betty wore to 'MODE' immediately served to present her as both an outsider and unconventional, as gathered from the secretary's reaction. New York Times Television Reviewer, Virginia Heffernan, felt that this image went too far and questioned this outfit, "what kind of college graduate… wears a gift shop poncho on her first day at work, thinking it's what she's seeing in magazines?"[258] At first glance, this entire outfit made Betty appear as unintelligent, oblivious, and 'ugly' for it was ill put together. However, this outfit actually served to root

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[253] *George Lopez*, season 2 episode 11, "Meet the Cuban Parents," directed by Lee Shallat Chemel, aired December 11, 2002, on ABC.

[254] *George Lopez*, season 4, episode 4, "Home Sweet Homeschool," directed by Joe Regalbuto, aired October 19, 2004, on ABC.

[255] *Ugly Betty*, "Pilot."

[256] *Ugly Betty*, "Pilot."

[257] *Ugly Betty*, "Pilot."

[258] Virginia Heffernan, "A Plucky Guppy Among the Barracudas" *The New York Times*, September 28, 2006, E8.

Betty within the Latina/o culture. Instead of wearing an outfit that catered to the outside world, she entered 'MODE' unapologetically Latina. Betty embraced her culture and did not attempt to fit within the preconceived guidelines of acceptability. Instead, this outfit, that initially reinforced Betty's 'ugly' appearance, stood as a symbol for the immersion of the Latina/o culture at 'MODE' and, more importantly, within the series.

Betty continued to challenge misconceptions of Latinas through her employment at 'MODE'. Initially, Betty's boss, Daniel, forced her to perform various odd and demeaning tasks, such as removing all of the cabbage from a bowl of coleslaw and wearing a tight red spandex outfit when the model failed to attend the photoshoot.[259] However, she soon proved her worth beyond those mindless tasks, ending many episodes as the savior and contributing to the success of the magazine. In one particular episode during season 1, Betty unofficially assumed the role of editor-in-chief when Daniel could not make it to work. When initially stepping into the role, Betty struggled with garnering respect for the staff. For instance, when she informed the stylist to share his thoughts of the featured shoot with her, he dismissed her, telling her: "Well, my first through is coffee. I like it hot".[260] He continued to dismiss her, seeing her as beneath him. When seeing this dynamic, a white male versus a Latina female, the Latina has to tread carefully when exerting her voice. If Betty were immediately challenged the stylist, she would have received any number of labels set to devalue her presence. However, when Betty finally did get the confidence to demand her respect, she fired the stylist for refusing to change his concept and work with her. As the stylist storms out the building, he stops to question Betty's role, when Sofia, an editor-in-chief in of another magazine, answers, "For today, she's the boss".[261] Betty commands the room and, in ten minutes, comes up with an entirely new photo shoot and concept, 21st century Adam and Eve. While not ultimately used as Daniel introduced a different concept,

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[259] *Ugly Betty*, "Pilot."

[260] *Ugly Betty*, "Lose the Boss?"

[261] *Ugly Betty*, "Lose the Boss?"

Betty proved herself to the workers of 'MODE' in her ability to create a concept worthy of the acclaimed magazine. Ultimately, she served as a model of Latina success in her ability to command 'MODE', widening the perception of work that she could accomplish.

Another significant character presented that challenged perceptions of Latinas/os was Sofia Reyes. This character, played by Salma Hayek, presented herself as a powerful, independent woman. The first-time audiences met this character was during season 1, episode 6 through the male gaze of Betty's boss, Daniel Meade.[262] Through his eyes, Sofia's presence within the series immediately reduced to a sex object as Daniel saw her for her beauty, and nothing beyond that. Sofia had spilled coffee on her blouse and proceeded to remove the garment. As a result, Daniel immediately assumed that their relationship would progress to sex. Instead, Sofia quickly shot down his assumptions.[263] In this brief interaction, the character served to show her independence, a characteristic not historically associated with Latina women, and added dimension to the sexy Latina trope.

Later within the same episode, the character of Sofia challenged the misconstrued notions of Latina women working in positions of power. Daniel attended an Editors-In-Chief Only party, where he reunited with Sofia. Sofia was pouring herself coffee when Daniel approached and the following conversation ensued:

> Daniel: I like mine black. Two sugars.
>
> Sofia: You want *me* to get *you* coffee?
>
> Daniel: I think that's why you're here.
>
> Sofia: Oh, and what gave it away? Was it my accent?
>
> Daniel: Actually, the fact that you're the only person here who doesn't edit a Meade Publication.[264]

In these initial encounters with this character, Daniel sexualized, demoted, and turned Sofia into a mere object. To him, she did not go beyond her stereotype. As the scene progress,

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[262] *Ugly Betty*, "Trust, Lust and Must."

[263] *Ugly Betty*, "Trust, Lust and Must."

[264] *Ugly Betty*, "Trust, Lust and Must."

Daniel and the audience eventually learn of Sofia's accomplishments as an esteemed author and new Editor-In-Chief to her own magazine, M.Y.W.[265] With this news revealed, the character's dynamic completely shifts in the eyes of Daniel. She went beyond his simple accusations, perspective, and label as either a sex machine or 'help'. In that moment, she introduced a new narrative into television, conveying that Latinas/os exist in positions of power.

As the series progressed, Sofia utilized her position of power to comment on the status of Latinas/os within a societal context. When having dinner with Daniel, whom she started a relationship with, and his parents, Sofia acknowledged the house cleaner and thanked her for taking her dish.[266] While Daniel and his parents ignored her, Sofia took the time to recognize the house cleaner's hard work as her mother once held the same position, forcing her to accompany her when they would clean the homes of the elite.[267] Sofia would later reveal she was from Mexico, equating her with the first generation Latina/o Americans that learn to balance their Latina/o and American cultures. As a first generation Latina American, they never forget their origins. They constantly acknowledge the hard work of their parents, and strive to work as hard to achieve great success as a way to thank them, fully understanding their good fortune in being in such a position. Prior to the end of Sofia's vindictive story arc, where she betrays Daniel on national television, she provides one final comment on the societal place of Latinas/os, stating, "Statistics would state that I shouldn't be here right now".[268] This final comment displayed the heart of Sofia's character who strove for the persistence of the Latina/o community.

Ugly Betty continued its introduction of multi-dimensional characters through the character of Justin Suarez. The inclusion of this character steamed directly from creator

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[265] *Ugly Betty*, "Trust, Lust and Must."

[266] *Ugly Betty*, "Sofia's Choice."

[267] *Ugly Betty*, "Sofia's Choice."

[268] *Ugly Betty*, "Sofia's Choice."

Silvio Horta, who utilized his own experience to integrate a gay character into the series.[269] This fact ensured that Justin's character developed over multiple seasons, instead of with a single episode of his 'coming-out' experience. Actor Mark Indelicato, who played Justin Suarez in *Ugly Betty*, applauded this narrative, as it never forced the character to state the words "I'm gay" explicitly, or to have a coming out experience on the program as this sentiment featured primarily through the character's behavior.[270] Indelicato also spoke about how his portrayal of Justin and his journey reflected that of his own. The care in which the narrative of Justin emerged served as an example for his own coming out experience, in which he did not feel the need to have a dramatic and invasive coming out story.

This characterization of Justin's character was set within the first minutes of the series and gradually developed. When Justin, Betty's nephew, first emerged on the series, he proceeded to comment on the fact that he wanted to watch fashion TV and did not want to eat *flan,* as it would make him fat.[271] The first season included additional moments such as these, which utilized tropes of the gay community to convey Justin's homosexual nature. The season also featured Justin's dad, Santos, struggling to come to terms with Justin's sexual orientation. While decorating their Christmas tree with Daniel, Justin kept showing him items that he had created. Santos finally succumbs to his own level of comfort and discomfort with Justin's sexual orientation, imploring Justin to go outside with him and play football. When Justin refuses, Santos begins to question Hilda's parenting skills. She pulls him aside and the following conversation ensued:

> Hilda: Who are *you* to come here after *all* this time and judge *anybody* or *anything* in this family?
>
> Santos: You want me to just sit by and watch him play with chenille and not say something about it?

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[269] Silvio Horta, October 31, 2013. Silvio Horta and Mark Indelicato, interview by Jessica Shaw, "'Ugly Betty' 10-Year Reunion presented with Entertainment Weekly," ATX Festival Panel, December 2, 2016.

[270] Mark Indelicato, interview by Jessica Shaw, "'Ugly Betty' 10-Year Reunion presented with Entertainment Weekly," ATX Festival Panel, December 2, 2016.

[271] *Ugly Betty*, "Pilot."

> Hilda: No, keep talking, you're gonna leave here with a few less teeth.
>
> Santos: Look, if his own *family* doesn't put a stop to this, then I am-
>
> Hilda: A stop to *what*? He is comfortable with who he is, and so am I. If you got a problem with him, or with us, then you don't belong here.[272]

While no direct comment of Justin's sexual orientation was made, the topic of this conversation revolved around Santos's uneasiness with this aspect of Justin's identity. Instead of excusing the behavior or offering an explanation, Hilda stood steadfast in her support of Justin and challenged Santos presence. In this scenario, Santos represented the stereotypical *machismo* Latino, who demanded that he have the final decision in every matter, as he knew what was best for everyone as the head of household. Instead, Hilda created a safe space for Justin to exist, challenging the misconception of Latina/o households as conservative and old-fashioned.

Another character added to the series that proved unconventional was Ignacio Suarez. Ignacio, the patriarch of the Suarez family, presented a new type of Latino to television. As the patriarch of a Latina/o family, the expectations for Ignacio differed from that of a matriarch. Ignacio would not have been expected to cook, clean, nor ensure the daily management of the home. However, these were his main tasks in the Suarez household for himself, his daughters, and his nephew. The reliance the household had on Ignacio to complete these tasks come to fruition during season 2 of *Ugly Betty*. When Ignacio lived in Mexico to await his visa, the home was filthy with paper and clothes thrown all over and there were no groceries in the house, sending Justin to camp without having any breakfast.[273] Ignacio challenged gender roles within the Latina/o household, presenting a new type of Latino character on television never before seen.

The creation of Betty Suarez, Sofia Reyes, Justin Suarez, and Ignacio Suarez widened the scope of possibility in terms of Latina/o characters. Betty presented a new type of Latina, a Latina whose main narrative did not revolve around her attractiveness. Sofia proved that

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[272] *Ugly Betty*, "Lose the Boss?"

[273] *Ugly Betty*, "How Betty Got Her Grieve Back."

Latinas/os were capable of holding positions of authority, and that they understood the importance of such a role. Justin completely broadened the Latina/o identity through including sexual orientation. Latina/o identity in the U.S. mainly revolved around balancing the Latina/o and American cultures, but Justin introduced the conversation of sexual identity for this community. A discussion not often held in Latina/o homes. Lastly, Ignacio differed from the stereotypical Latino who did not help around the home, through serving as the foundation of the household and ensuring it ran smoothly. Together, these characters challenged misconceptions of Latinas/os held and perpetuated by television. *Ugly Betty* wrote a new Latina/o into television, due in large part to the creator and executive producers who brought this show to the U.S.

In 2016, the cast of *Ugly Betty* and creator Silvio Horta attended the ATX Festival, ten years after the start of the series. At the panel, they received the following question: "why is it so hard to have Hispanic families on television?"[274] Ferrera and Horta each responded with identical answers, that writers and network executives determine the creation of shows. If these individuals do not have a grasp of this community, nor are willing to represent this crowd, comprehensive Latina/o series will never be included for primetime television seasons.

Ugly Betty presented a primetime television program that understood the complexity of the Latina/o community. The show provided the community the opportunity to have a Latina as a series lead, the first do so. It broadened the roles afforded to Latinas/os on primetime television; introducing characterizations to these characters never previously explored without having anyone "[apologize] for their character".[275] This complete challenge of the created Latina/o identity perpetuated through television in *Ugly Betty* only manifested itself because of the position of Latinas/os at the helm of the creative process.

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[274] America Ferrera and Silvio Horta, interview by Jessica Shaw, "'Ugly Betty' 10-Year Reunion presented with Entertainment Weekly," *ATX Festival Panel*, December 2, 2016.

[275] America Ferrera, interview by Barbara Dixon, "Ugly Betty: Cast & Creators Live at the Paley Center," *The Paley Center for Media*, 2007.

Through the inclusion of the Latina/o culture in the series and direct challenge to misconceptions of the community, *Ugly Betty* presented the people beyond a stereotype.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

I Love Lucy, Chico and the Man, and *Ugly Betty* each presented their own version of the Latina/o community to audiences, invoking different perceptions of this culture. As time progressed, the ability of the series to engage with an inclusive Latina/o increased. *I Love Lucy* created a manufactured Latino in the series, who lived in an ideal world where racism never existed. This warped presentation of the Latina/o community served as a disservice to these people who had fought for equal treatment during the 1940s and 1950s. The emergence of *Chico and the Man* in the 1970s engaged with the Latina/o community that fought for justice for their people, the Chicana/o. The inclusion of this specific identity featured a show that appeared to understand this people. However, as the series progressed and the ratings increased, the show lost its initial appearance and relied on stereotypes of the community for comedic values. *Ugly Betty* broke away from these narratives. Instead, the show challenged stereotypes and misconceptions of this community through incorporating the Latina/o community covertly in the series to normalize their presence, equating the Suarez household to an 'All-American' family. It also featured new types of Latina/o characters never presented in programs prior to broaden perceptions of this people. This change in representation also created an image of the Latina/o that people from this community could identify with and made the consumption of such programs easily accessible to audiences.

The growth experienced by the Latina/o character in television in fifty years was substantial. In 1951, *I Love Lucy* presented Ricky Ricardo to audiences, utilizing his Spanish accent to label him as Latino to audiences. In 2016, *Ugly Betty* emerged and Betty Suarez adorned the Latina label in a subtle manner and mainly through the reflection of the community in her surroundings and actions. She also spoke English in the same manner as a Euro-American born in the U.S., because she too was born in the U.S. While *I Love Lucy*

utilized a superficial tactic to convey Ricky's ethnicity, *Ugly Betty* interacted with the culture through incorporating pertinent aspects of the culture in the series. This change in perception of the Latina/o on television comes down to one major point, the people in charge of the programs and networks were from this community.

The creation of television programs stems from producers, network executives, and the writers. *I Love Lucy*'s only Latina/o was Dezi Arnaz, whose voice did not carry as much weight as his wife's, Lucille Ball, and creator, Jess Oppenheimer. *Chico and the Man*'s Latinas/os were part of the crew and cast. The crew would offer their opinion on certain storylines and imagery and Freddie Prinze managed to incorporate bits of his stand-up into the series to provide an authentic Latino voice, but the choice ultimately fell to Kormack, who focused mainly on Nielsen ratings when planning episodes. *Ugly Betty* included the Latina/o community in its cast, producers, crew, and writer's room. The presence of these people in almost all aspects of the creation of the show ensured the authentic display of the Latina/o culture. They experienced the culture firsthand and wrote directly from their experience. However, while *Ugly Betty* managed to incorporate the community, the lack of representation of the Latina/o community remains a relevant problem in the 21st century television.

On July 16, 2019, the 2019 Emmy nominations were announced and only four Latino actors were featured.[276] Moreover, to make matters worse, not a single Latina received a nomination. This did not stem from the fact that Latinas/os did not participate within television series, but does raise the question as to who is in charge of nominating these individuals and selecting the individuals to receive the official nomination. The Latina/o community needs to enter into these positions of authority to ensure the accurate reflection of their community on the screen, hindering any misconstrued images of the people from emerging.

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[276] 2019 Primetime Emmy Awards: Nomination Press Release.

The presence of television within the U.S. will remain a standard, even if the method used to consume this content has differed since the time of *I Love Lucy*. Perceptions of Latinas/os within television must continue to challenge stereotypes and misconceptions of this community. The accessibility of this popular medium to a wide range of audience members conveys the vulnerability that the culture experiences, especially when non-Latina/o individuals perpetuate their narrative. The longevity argument created through studying *I Love Lucy, Chico and the Man*, and *Ugly Betty* showed that programs have the ability to implement at least one series that understands the culture and its people. With these programs as its predecessor, the future of television remains wide open for its ability to feature Latinas/os and their culture in programs.

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